

Employee engagement has a tremendous benefit to both the workplace and the employee. Research has found:

“Employees who are engaged in their work and committed to their organization are more likely to stay and perform more effectively than those who are not ... importantly, engagement also relates positively to employees’ own physical and psychological well-being.”

Source: *The Science of Engagement at Work*, Professor John P. Meyer, Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Western University. Revised December 2022

How Leaders Can Foster Engagement

Several workplace factors influence employee engagement. Below is a list of common engagement drivers, as well as tips for leaders to strengthen these. When present, they support engagement; when absent, people can become disengaged.

Review the items below and indicate if you see yourself “Doing Well” or if you need to “Increase” your focus on this driver.

Drivers of Employee Engagement

Working with Individuals

Driver	Action	Assess
Meaningful Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate the goals and objectives for your team/department/unit Reinforce to each person, the importance of their role and how it contributes to program or service objectives Where possible, provide individuals variety in work assignments and opportunities, to tap a range of the colleague/team member’s skills Give people ownership for delivering on key outcomes (vs small tasks) 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doing Well <input type="checkbox"/> Increase
Role Clarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure colleagues and team members know the duties they are accountable for, and the outcomes or results they are expected to achieve Ensure they have the orientation, training, and resources they need to be successful 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doing Well <input type="checkbox"/> Increase
One-on-One Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide regular opportunities to discuss work related issues Be open to listen and receive suggestions 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doing Well <input type="checkbox"/> Increase
Individual Recognition and Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide regular appreciation and constructive feedback for work assignments (e.g., Verbal thank-you’s, cards, emails, etc.) Provide formal feedback at least annually to review progress made, and discuss future work interests and goals 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doing Well <input type="checkbox"/> Increase
Timely Performance Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address any work performance concerns promptly so the individual can get back on track quickly 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doing Well <input type="checkbox"/> Increase
Professional Growth and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and support others to take on new work challenges and opportunities Encourage and support others to participate in learning opportunities and professional development 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doing Well <input type="checkbox"/> Increase
Personal Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage people to maintain their well-being and resilience (e.g., support others to stay home if ill, take regular breaks, lunch, and vacation). 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doing Well <input type="checkbox"/> Increase

Working with Teams

Driver	Action	Assess
Collaboration and Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage colleagues/team members to support each other, share information, and communicate regularly Provide opportunities for colleagues/team members to learn about each other's work priorities and how they can help each other Encourage cooperation and constructive relationships when colleagues/team members are working with other areas across Western 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doing Well <input type="checkbox"/> Increase
Involvement in Decision Making and Workplace Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When possible, involve team members in planning and decision making for aspects of work that affect them Ensure colleagues/team members are aware of work changes and the reasons for the change When implementing change, provide colleagues/team members with the needed information and supports to successfully adopt the new approach 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doing Well <input type="checkbox"/> Increase
Support Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage colleagues/team members to come up with better ways to do things Commit to explore ideas and suggestions offered 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doing Well <input type="checkbox"/> Increase
Team Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly recognize and celebrate team or department achievements through announcements, cards, lunches, team socials, etc. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doing Well <input type="checkbox"/> Increase

Creating a Positive Work Environment

Driver	Action	Assess
A Safe Workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expect colleagues/team members to work safely and complete all safety training related to their role Encourage colleagues/team members to report safety concerns Promptly act on safety concerns identified 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doing Well <input type="checkbox"/> Increase
A Respectful and Inclusive Workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the work environment is respectful, free of harassment, fear, or intimidation and act if this is not the case Ensure the work environment is supportive of diversity and all members of the team are included, feel welcomed and valued for their contributions Model respect and inclusivity in your own interactions 	<input type="checkbox"/> Doing Well <input type="checkbox"/> Increase

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References:

Driving Engagement from the Middle, Conference Board of Canada, September 2018

The Science of Engagement at Work, Professor John P. Meyer, Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Western University. Revised December 2022

The Leadership Challenge 5th Edition, Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership, James Kouzes, Barry Posner, 2012. Model of Engagement, Metrics@Work, St. Catherines, Ontario