

WHAT ACTUALLY DRIVES ENGAGEMENT?

A Research-Backed Program That Proves ROI

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Every HR team has a mystery on their hands when **engagement is dead**

We all felt it—the day engagement died.

- meetings where everyone's on mute
- sprints you can't wait to end
- your best people are just going through the motions

And despite every new initiative...

nothing sticks for long.

- eNPS scores fall
- Burnout rises
- Top talent walks

**So maybe it's time to stop managing the symptoms—
and *start investigating the cause.***

Who Killed Engagement?



\$9.6 trillion in productivity would be added to the economy if the global workforce was fully engaged.

That would represent a 9% increase in global GDP.

But if leaders seize the moment, a productivity opportunity awaits. In fact, some organizations are already enjoying the benefits of a highly engaged workforce.

Manager engagement is the key to reversing declining productivity, improving employee wellbeing and unlocking trillions in economic potential.

CASE FILE #2025-ENG

VICTIM:
Employee Engagement

TIME OF DEATH:
2024

CAUSE OF DEATH:
Multiple suspects

Gallup, 2024
Engagement Recedes for the First Time in Four Years

Only 21% of employees globally are engaged

65% of employees reported experiencing burnout in the past year

Median U.S. job tenure dropped to 3.9 years – the lowest it's been since 2002

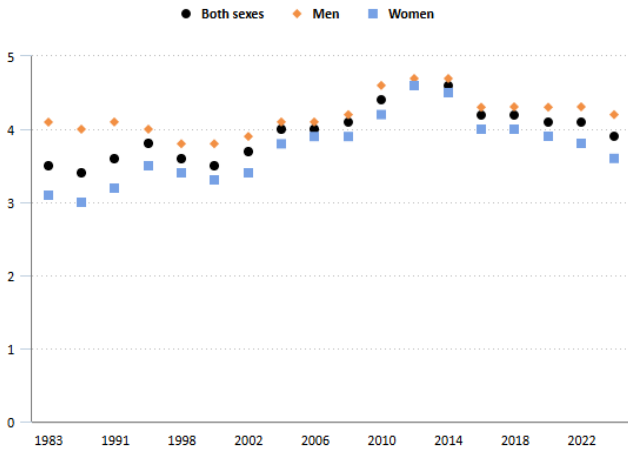
PR Newswire, 2024
Employees Are Still Burnt Out: isolated's 2024 HR Trends Survey Finds 65% of Employees Are Suffering from Burnout

Deloitte + Workplace Intelligence, 2024
New Deloitte Research Reveals 80% of CEOs Feel Pressured by Employees, Customers and Boards to Improve Human Sustainability

80%+ of executives say engagement is a priority

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024

Median years of tenure with current employer for wage and salary workers, 1983–2024



Click legend items to change data display. Hover over chart to view data.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The Detective's Framework

What separates amateur detectives from professionals?

The Amateur Investigator
guesses based on hunches

The Professional Detective
uses a framework



XXXX

In murder mysteries:

Motive • Means • Opportunity

In I/O psychology:

An engagement model

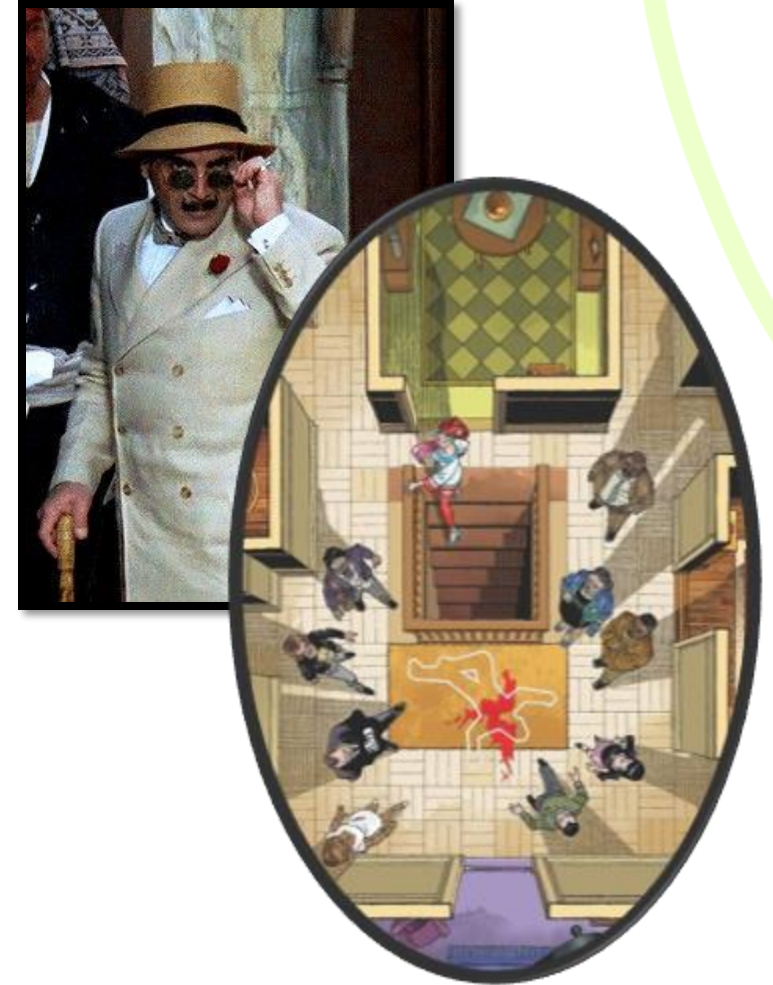
where to start?

Poll 1

INVESTIGATING THE DEATH OF ENGAGEMENT

Which factor is most holding back **engagement** in your organization?

1. **Purpose** - Employees struggle to connect daily work to meaningful outcomes or company mission
2. **Empowerment** - Employees lack authority to make decisions or access resources needed to succeed
3. **Leadership** - Actions don't match words, creating trust issues and undermining cultural initiatives
4. **Equity** - Recognition and opportunities aren't distributed fairly across all teams and employee groups
5. **Wellbeing** - Workplace demands regularly exceed capacity, leading to burnout and decreased productivity
6. **Belonging** - Team members don't feel they can be authentic or that their unique perspectives are valued
7. **Uncertain** - We lack clear data on what's truly impacting our engagement levels



EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

A Case Worth Solving

Purpose

Do employees feel their work accomplishes significant, valuable, or worthwhile goals?

Allan et al. (2019). "Outcomes of Meaningful Work: A Meta-Analysis." Journal of Management Studies

Empowerment

Are employees granted appropriate authority, resources, and support?

Seibert et al (2011). Antecedents and consequences of psychological and team empowerment.... Journal of Applied Psychology, 96(5), 981–1003



Leadership

Do leaders highlight the value of daily objectives, inspiring employees to think beyond their own interests?

Podsakoff et al., Transformational leader behaviors and their effects..., The Leadership Quarterly, 1(2), 1990, 107-142, ISSN 1048-9843

Belonging

Are employees feeling acknowledged for their talents, interests, and experiences? Are they finding acceptance of their expression of these?

Belle, S. M., Burley, D. L., & Long, S. D. (2014). Where do I belong? ... Human Resource Development International, 18(1), 76–96.

Well-being

How do employees feel about their life as a whole? How do they function on a daily basis?

Jarden, A., & Roache, A. (2023). What Is Wellbeing?. International journal of environmental research and public health, 20(6), 5006.

Equity

What are employees' perceptions of fairness and justice in processes, outcomes, and interactions within the workplace?

Yochi Cohen-Charash, Paul E. Spector, The Role of Justice in Organizations: A Meta-Analysis, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 86(2), 2001, 278-321, ISSN 0749-5978

PLATFORM VALUE

Your All-in-One Employee Experience Program

Bridge physical symbolic awards with all-in-one engagement software that connects recognition, rewards, wellness, and insights.



Listen

Capture employee sentiment with built-in surveys



Recognize

Celebrate daily wins and career milestones



Reward

Offer flexible redemption options and create custom gifts



Support Well-Being

Gamify health and encourage wellness engagement

TERRYBERRY'S

Academic Advisory Board

Peer Bargaining and Productivity in Teams: Gender and the Inequitable Division of Pay

Article

March 2020 · 31 Reads · 31 Citations

Manufacturing & Service Operations Management

Lamar Pierce · Laura W. Wang · Dennis J. Zhang

To Ask or Not to Ask: The Effects of Broadly and Narrowly Adopted Peer-Recognition Systems on Help Seeking

Article

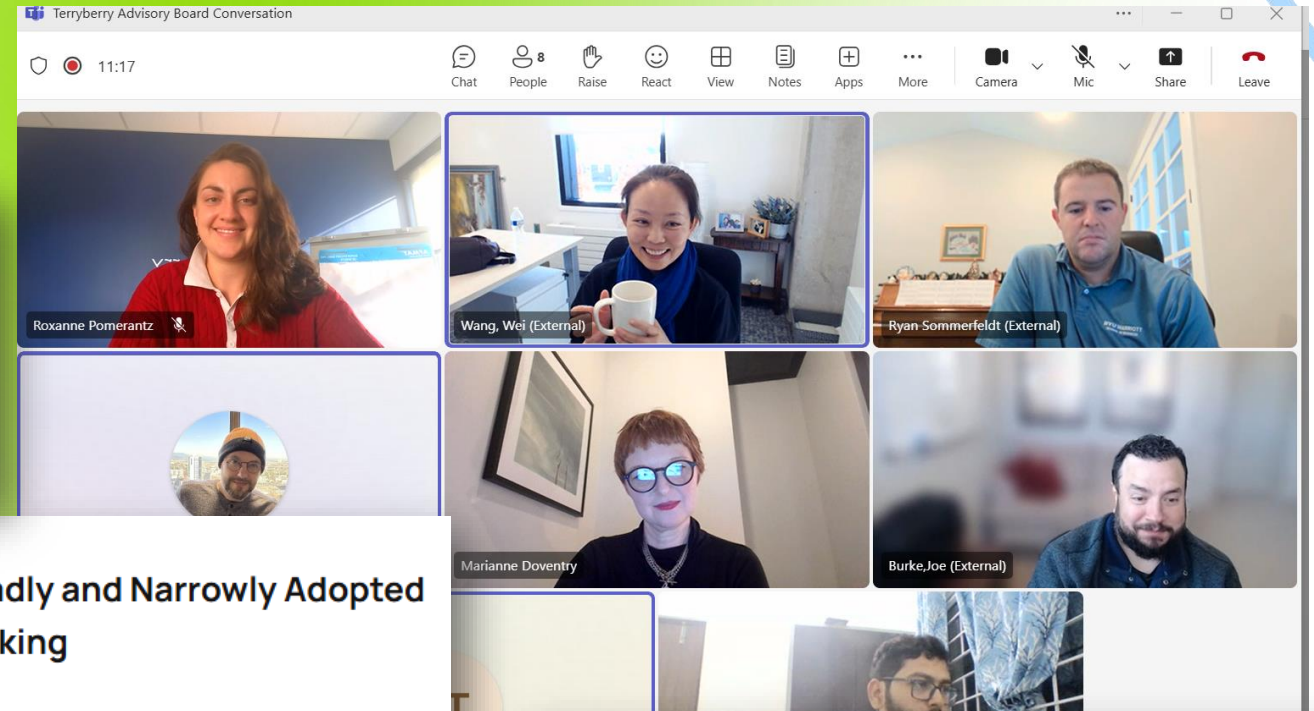
January 2025 · 16 Reads · 1 Citation

Management Science

Joseph Burke · Ryan Sommerfeldt · Laura W. Wang

<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ryan-Sommerfeldt-2>

<https://www.researchgate.net/scientific-contributions/Laura-W-Wang-2158792763>



Article

Using Artificial Intelligence to Evaluate Employees: The Effects on Recruitment, Effort, and Retention

Journal of Management Accounting Research

September 2025

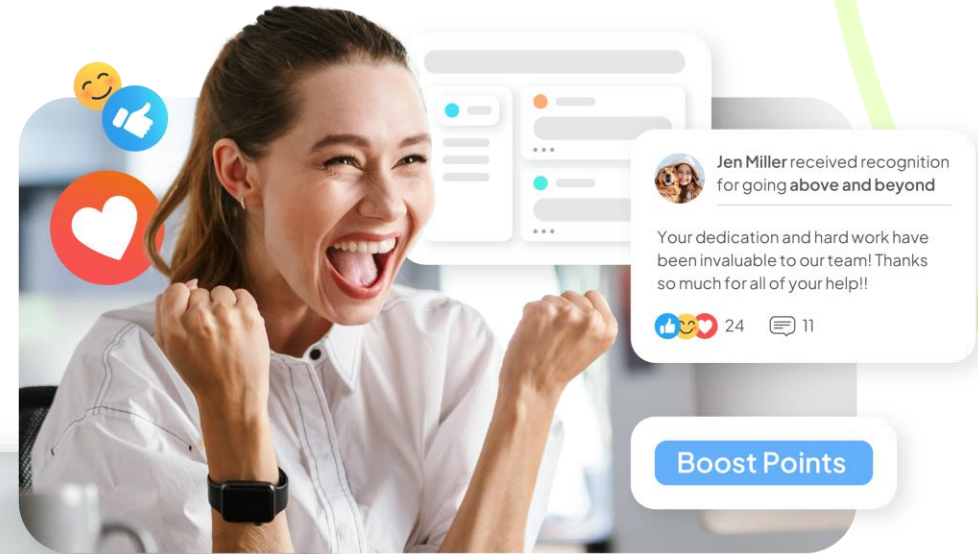
DOI: [10.2308/JMAR-2024-009](https://doi.org/10.2308/JMAR-2024-009)

Poll 2

IDENTIFYING PURPOSE GAPS

How well are employees aligned with the company's **purpose and values**?

1. **Thriving:** Our values energizes daily work
2. **Inconsistent:** Purpose exists but varies by team
3. **Underdeveloped:** Values aren't driving our culture yet
4. **Nonexistent:** We haven't defined our company's purpose clearly
5. **Unknown:** We lack data on how employees connect with our purpose



Why Purpose?

“CEOs rate purpose importance at 9.1/10
...but purpose effectiveness scores only 6/10”

Harvard Business Review

WHAT IS PURPOSE?

The sense that one's work is contributing to something larger and more significant than oneself, especially when aligned with the broader goals and mission of the organization.

Retention

Up to **3x higher turnover** in low-purpose environments

Productivity

Companies with clear purpose **outperform markets by 42%**

Innovation

Purpose connects **individual creativity** to organizational goals.

What Drives Purpose?

Meta-analysis of 23,144 workers shows **purpose is an engine**



- **Powers 70% higher engagement**
- Fuels commitment and satisfaction
- Drives improved performance and retention

Allan et al. (2019). "Outcomes of Meaningful Work: A Meta-Analysis." Journal of Management Studies

Zookeeper study on meaningful work reveals **purpose is a compass**



- Directs meaningful identity and significance
- Points toward greater sacrifice and commitment
- **Guides higher ethical expectations of employers**

Bunderson & Thompson (2009). "The Call of the Wild: Zookeepers, Callings, and the Double-edged Sword of Deeply Meaningful Work." Administrative Science Quarterly

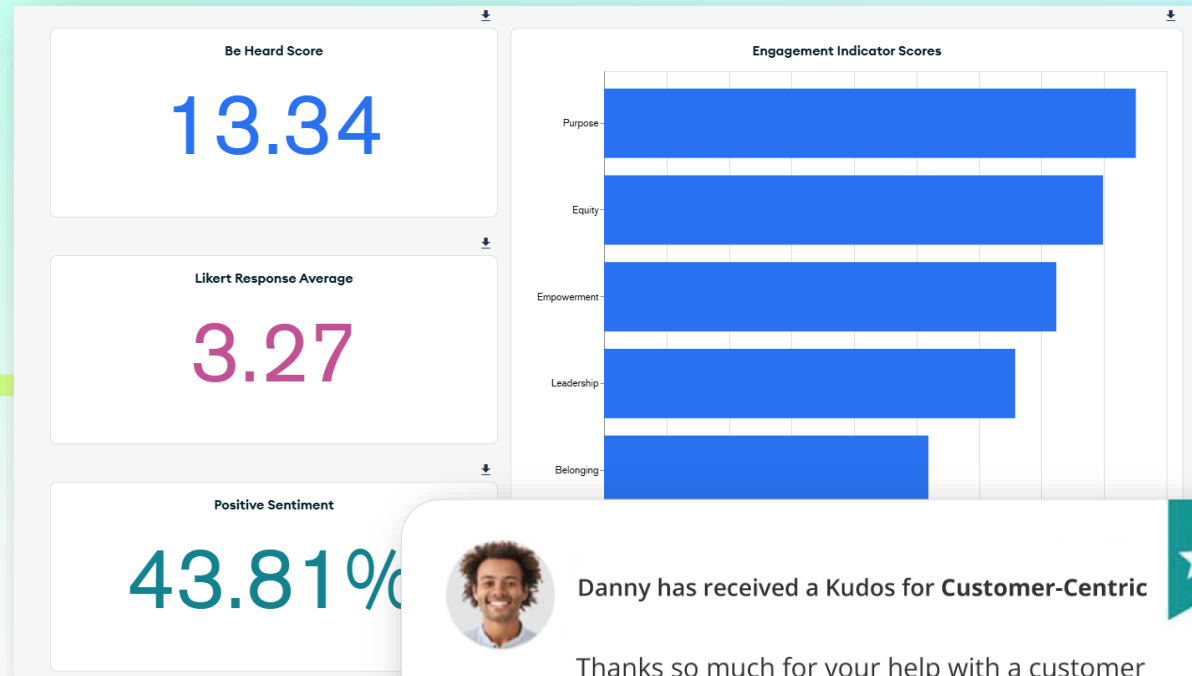
Hannah Arendt's philosophy positions **purpose as foundation**



- Builds lasting impact beyond daily tasks
- **Supports connection between individual and collective**
- Establishes durable meaning that transcends time

Based on Arendt's "The Human Condition" (1958) as referenced in Allan et al. (2019)

How to Measure Purpose & Company Values



- ☐ Shout Out
- ☒ Kudos
- ☐ Round of Applause

- ☐ Above & Beyond
- ☐ Courage
- ☐ Innovation
- ☒ **Customer-Centric**
- ☐ Collaboration

Purpose BEST PRACTICES

1. Value-tagged recognition feed
2. Nomination for values-based awards
3. Purpose pulse survey drilldown capabilities
4. Identifying purpose gaps across demographics & departments
5. Filtering purpose metrics by recognition & rewards
6. Predictive analytics on retention and engagement

Poll 3

IDENTIFYING EMPOWERMENT GAPS

How **empowered** do your employees feel to make decisions and drive results?

1. **Highly empowered** - they consistently show initiative and ownership
2. **Moderately empowered** - some take initiative but many wait for direction
3. **Somewhat empowered** - they follow processes but rarely innovate
4. **Minimally empowered** - most wait for explicit instructions
5. **Disempowered** - employees feel micromanaged and restricted
6. **Unknown** - we don't have clear data on employee empowerment levels



Why Empowerment?

“Human beings can be **proactive and engaged** or, alternatively, **passive and alienated**, largely as a function of the social conditions in which they develop and function.” (Ryan & Deci)

WHAT IS EMPOWERMENT?

- Employees' perceptions of control, autonomy, and participation in decision-making
- Increased *intrinsic motivation*: sense of impact, competence, meaningfulness, and choice
- Has two dimensions: **Psychological and Structural**

Empowerment effect

Empowerment accounts for **58% of job stress and job satisfaction**

Job strain

Having access to resources and control accounted for **47% of stress levels** at work

Job satisfaction

Having tools, support, and a say at work increases confidence and reduces stress

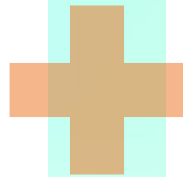
What Drives Empowerment?

Kanter's Empowerment Model a.k.a. the Structural Empowerment Theory



Structural empowerment

Access to resources, information, support, and development opportunities



Psychological empowerment

Feelings of competence, self-determination, meaningfulness, and impact

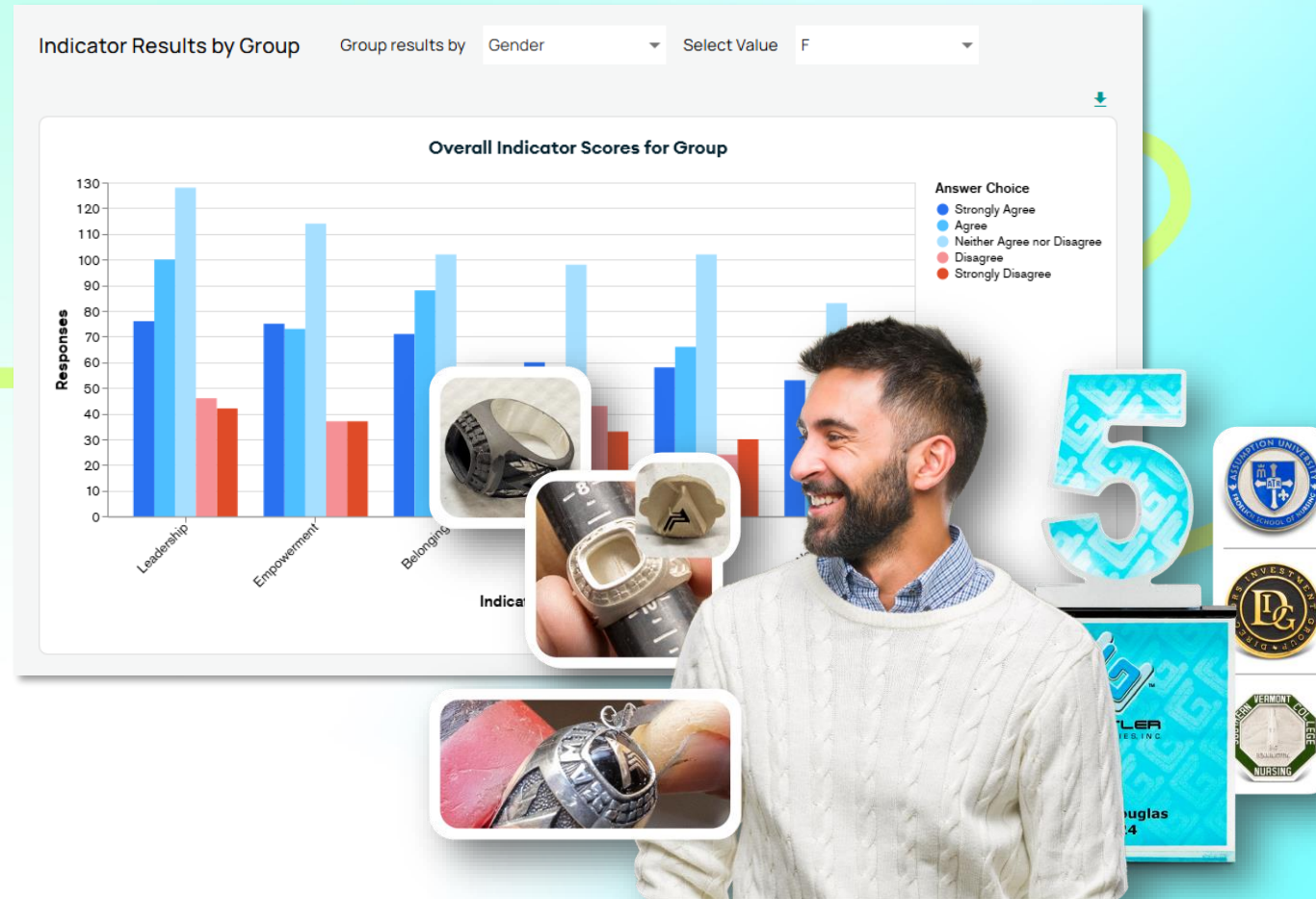


Performance outcomes

- **higher job satisfaction** and reduced turnover
- **increased effort** and task performance
- **enhanced morale** and psychological well-being

Laschinger, H. K., Finegan, J., Shamian, J., & Wilk, P. (2001). Impact of structural and psychological empowerment on job strain in nursing work settings: expanding Kanter's model. *The Journal of nursing administration*, 31(5), 260–272. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00005110-200105000-00006>

How to Create a Culture Infrastructure



Empowerment BEST PRACTICES

1. Milestone recognition builds empowerment over time
2. President's clubs and leadership awards emphasize trust
3. Personalization demonstrates organizational investment in individual achievement
4. Demographic segmentation for targeted interventions
5. Empowerment drill-down surveys using validated research scales
6. Adjusting recognition programs based on survey insights

Poll 4

IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP GAPS

How would you rate your ability to measure **leadership's impact** on employee wellbeing?

1. We have comprehensive data with clear insights
2. We collect data but struggle to connect leadership to outcomes
3. We have anecdotal evidence but limited metrics
4. We rely on periodic engagement surveys only
5. We struggle with low response rates or honest feedback
6. We lack the tools to measure this relationship effectively



Why Leadership?

“Manager engagement is the key to reversing declining productivity, improving employee well-being and **unlocking trillions in economic potential.**”

Gallup

WHAT IS TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP?

Behaviors exhibited by the leader that make followers:

- more aware of the importance and values of task outcomes
- activate their higher-order needs, and
- transcend self-interests for the sake of the organization

70% of team engagement

is attributable to the manager

27% of managers

globally are engaged at work

\$9.6 trillion

Could be added to the global economy

Philip M. Podsakoff, Scott B. MacKenzie, Robert H. Moorman, Richard Fetter, Transformational leader behaviors and their effects on followers' trust in leader, satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviors, The Leadership Quarterly, 1(2), 1990, 107-142, ISSN 1048-9843.

What Drives Transformational Leadership?

APA's Work and Well-being survey shows **leadership is a catalyst**



- 73% with supportive leaders develop healthy lifestyles vs. 11% without
- Only 30% of workers and 40% of managers participate in health promotion programs at work
- **Leaders increase motivation (91% vs. 38%) and retention (75% vs. 49%)**

American Psychological Association (2016). "Work and Well-Being Survey." American Psychological Association

McKinsey & Company's Psychological Safety survey describes **leadership as climate**



- Only 20-26% of leaders consistently demonstrate supportive behaviors
- **43% report a positive team climate** – the most important driver to psychological safety
- Psychological safety starts at the very top of an organization

McKinsey & Company (2021). "Psychological Safety and the Critical Role of Leadership Development." McKinsey Quarterly

Hannah Arendt's philosophy positions **purpose as foundation**

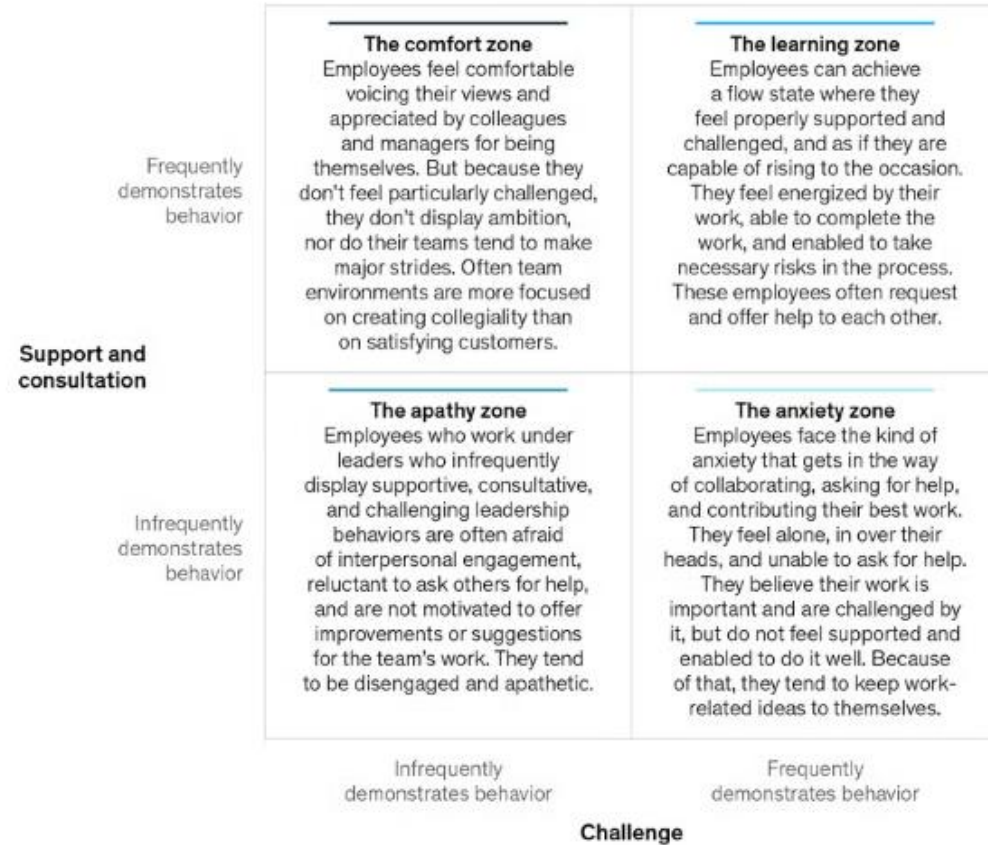


- Transformational leadership is associated with an average **30% reduction in employee emotional exhaustion**, a key indicator of burnout.
- Employees report significantly higher psychological well-being and job satisfaction

Thomas W.H. Ng, Transformational leadership and performance outcomes... The Leadership Quarterly, 28(3), 2017, 385-417, ISSN 1048-9843.)

How to Champion Psychological Safety

Effects of leadership behaviors on employees' mindsets and quality of work



McKinsey
& Company

Leadership BEST PRACTICES

1. Reporting and analytics tools for HR
2. Incentivize goals with points for prizes
3. Analyze leadership & well-being metrics
4. Identify gaps by demographics and by manager
5. Link recognition activity to outcomes



5

IDENTIFYING EQUITY GAPS

Write in the chat:

What's one thing you wish you knew more about, when it comes to your employee's **perception of fairness?**



Why Equity?

“Perceptions of fairness improve performance by 26% and retention by 27%. “

WHAT IS EQUITY?

Refers to perceptions of fairness and justice in organizational processes, outcomes, and interpersonal interactions

9 in 10

Of Fortune 100 companies list equity as one of their corporate values

Only 18%

Of employees feel they work in a fair environment

1/4 of unfairness

Concerns hiring, promotion, and compensation. The rest happens in day-to-day work.

What Drives Equity?

Four Elements of an Equitable Experience according to the Harvard Business School

Transparency

...only **33%** of
organizations
*practice information
transparency*

Support

...only **32%** of
employees feel
*supported at work
despite efforts*

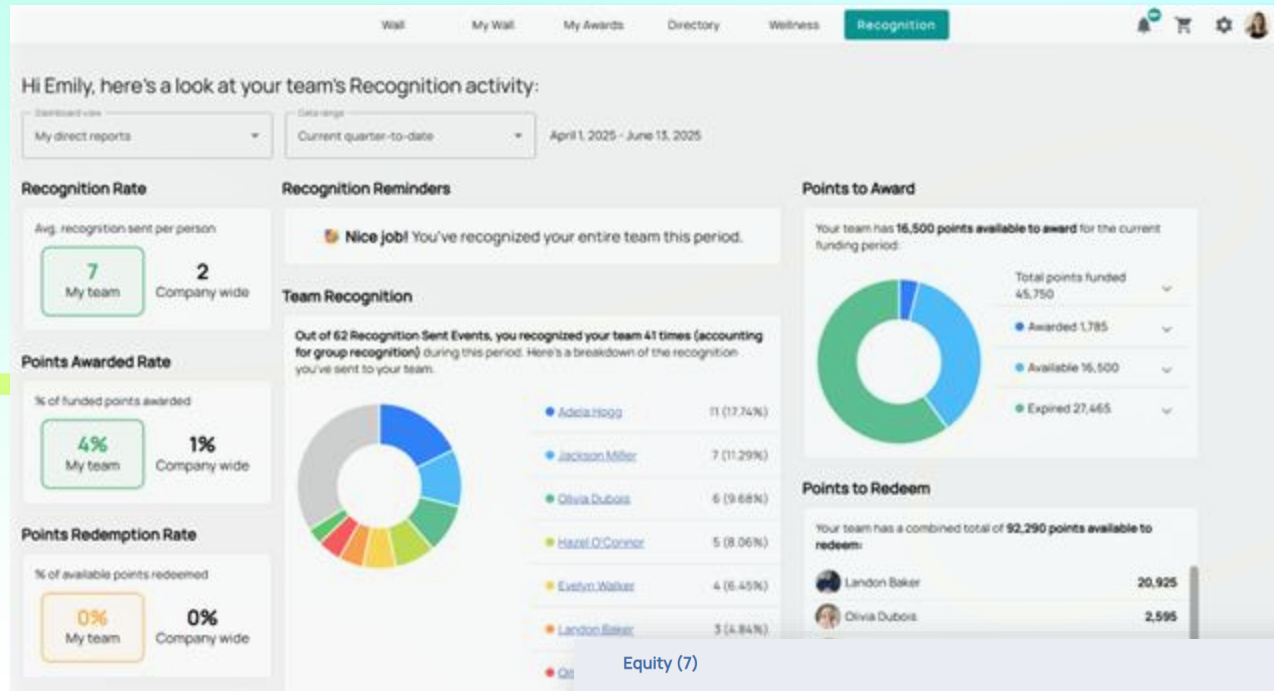
Fairness

...only **18%** of
employees feel they
*are considered for
opportunities*

Recognition

...only **24%** of
employees feel
*acknowledged for
their contributions*

How to Build a Fair and Transparent Culture



Equity (7)

- Overall, survey results indicate that employees feel somewhat positive about Equity within the company. Specifically, these scores are highest in Manager (Tyler Wong): 100 and Manager (Lauren Bell): 100.
- Here are other key areas where your team has performed the best:
 1. Manager (Emily Olson): 100
 2. DepartmentName (Executive): 100
 3. Title (Sales Representative): 100
 4. DepartmentName (Sales): 95
 5. Tenure (20+ years): 28
- We've noticed that Manager (Adela Hogg): -98 and DepartmentName (Corporate IT): -98 are not performing as strongly as other areas. These are key dimensions to keep an eye on.

Wellbeing (2)

Equity BEST PRACTICES

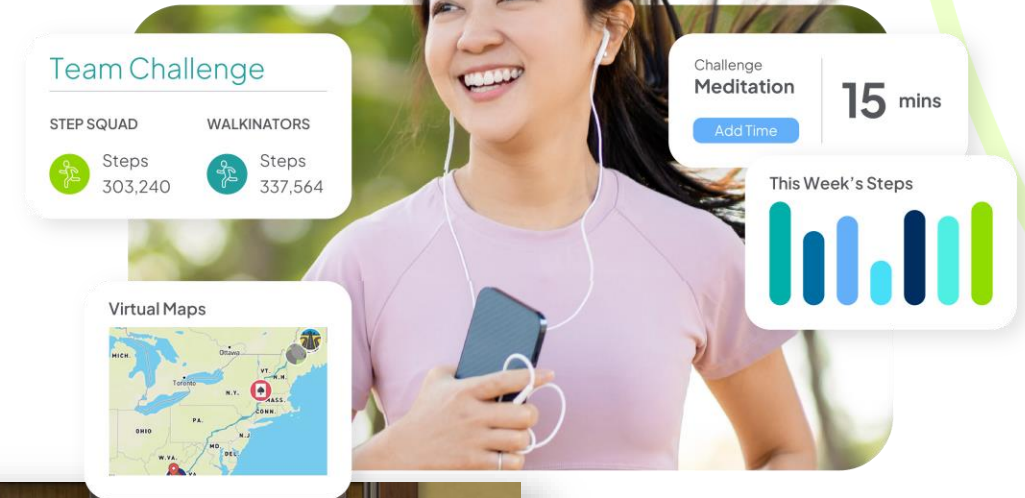
1. Manager dashboard with recognition reminders
2. Companywide social recognition platform with mobile app
3. Recognition and reward distribution analytics
4. Equity indicator insights
5. Trend analysis showing equity dips during specific periods
6. Program design tips for less visible positions (i.e. factory vs. office staff)
7. Accessibility tools for employees who don't have email addresses

6

IDENTIFYING WELL-BEING GAPS

Write in the chat:

Share a win with us about your workplace **wellness** initiatives!



Why Well-being?

“Gen Zs are more focused on work/life balance than climbing the corporate ladder—**only 6%** say their primary career goal is to reach a leadership position.” Deloitte

WHAT IS WELL-BEING?

How an individual feels about their life as a whole and how they function on a daily basis, related to their physical, mental, and emotional health.

Employee wellbeing can lead to increased productivity, happier, and healthier employees.

8/10 employees believe

mental health and well-being trainings are important to create a positive workplace culture

38% → 21% report productivity

suffers due to mental health; 17% lower among employees who receive mental health trainings

since its peak at 35% in 2022...

employee wellbeing has been declining. Older managers and female managers experienced the biggest decreases in the past year.

What Drives Well-being?

Money, meaning, and well-being are tightly interconnected for GenZ, according to a recent survey by [Deloitte](#)

Money

- The survey finds that without financial security, **Gen Zs and millennials are less likely to have a positive sense of well-being** and less likely to feel their work is meaningful.
- But financial insecurity is on the rise since last year with nearly **half of Gen Zs (48%) and millennials (46%) saying they do not feel financially secure.**



Meaning

- **Roughly nine in 10 Gen Zs (89%) and millennials (92%) consider a sense of purpose** to be important to their job satisfaction and well-being. But purpose is subjective.
- Some want to have a positive impact on society. Others want to earn money or learn new skills so they have the resources to drive change outside of working hours.



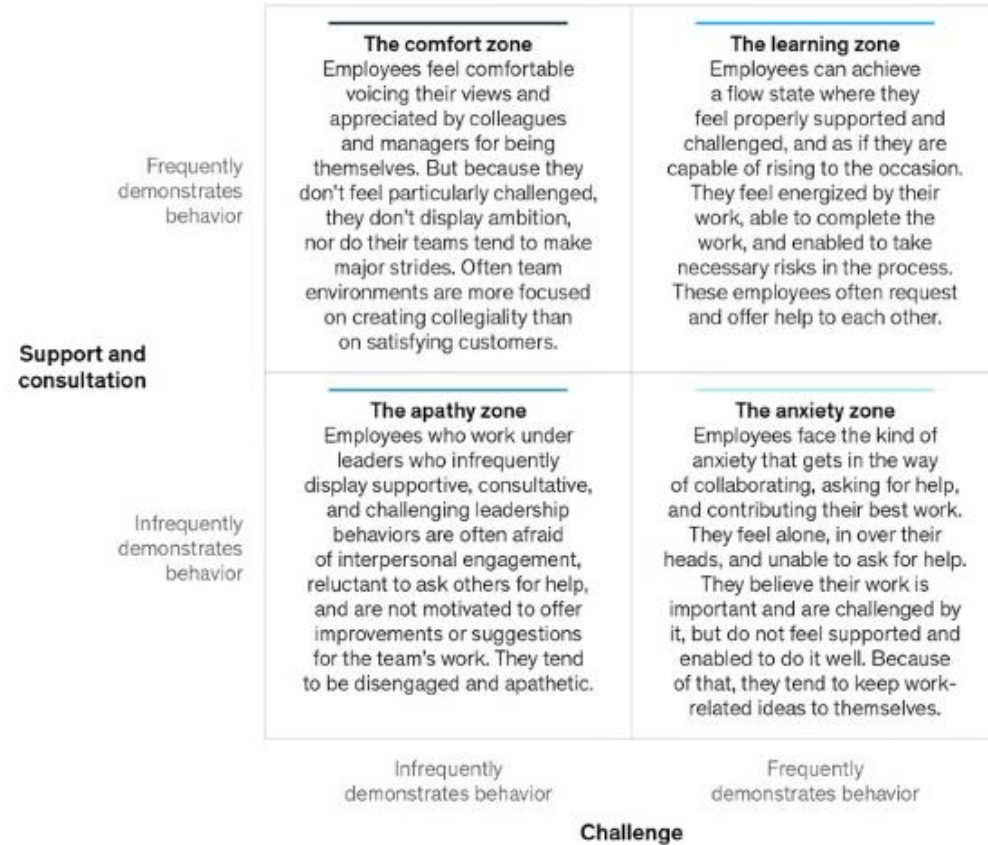
Well-being

- Positive well-being supports a sense of purpose at work.
- Among those who report positive mental well-being, **67% of Gen Zs and 72% of millennials** feel their job allows them to make a meaningful contribution to society compared to **44% of Gen Zs and 46% of millennials who report poor mental well-being.**



How to Champion Psychological Safety

Effects of leadership behaviors on employees' mindsets and quality of work



McKinsey
& Company

Leadership BEST PRACTICES

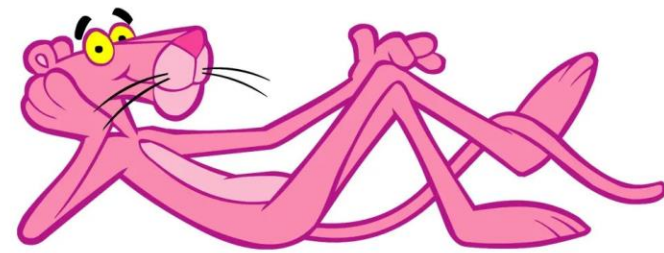
1. Reporting and analytics tools for HR
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7

IDENTIFYING **BELONGING** GAPS

What is one thing you are doing to support **belonging** at your organization today?



Why Belonging?

“If all workers at a 10,000-person company felt a high degree of belonging, productivity gains would top **\$52 million a year.**”

WHAT IS BELONGING?

Employees’ experiencing an acknowledgment of one's talents, interests, and experiences, and finding whole acceptance of oneself expression of these.

82% of people

worldwide said they feel lonely at work

46% added

they were likely to leave a job because of loneliness

\$8B spend annually

on diversity trainings that miss the mark because they neglect belonging & inclusion

What Drives Belonging?

A sense of belonging and acceptance is essential for psychological well-being



Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Maslow (1968)

argued that survival needs must be satisfied before the individual can satisfy the higher needs.

What Drives Belonging?

New validated scale for Organizational Belonging ([Goldberg & Keyer, 2023](#))

Be Myself

the freedom to voice a contrary opinion without fear of negative consequences

* significant impact on productivity

Acceptance

Finding whole acceptance of one's self expression of talents, interests and experiences

* significant impact on intent to stay

Value Diversity

Appreciating and honoring differences; culture that encourages open communication and collaboration

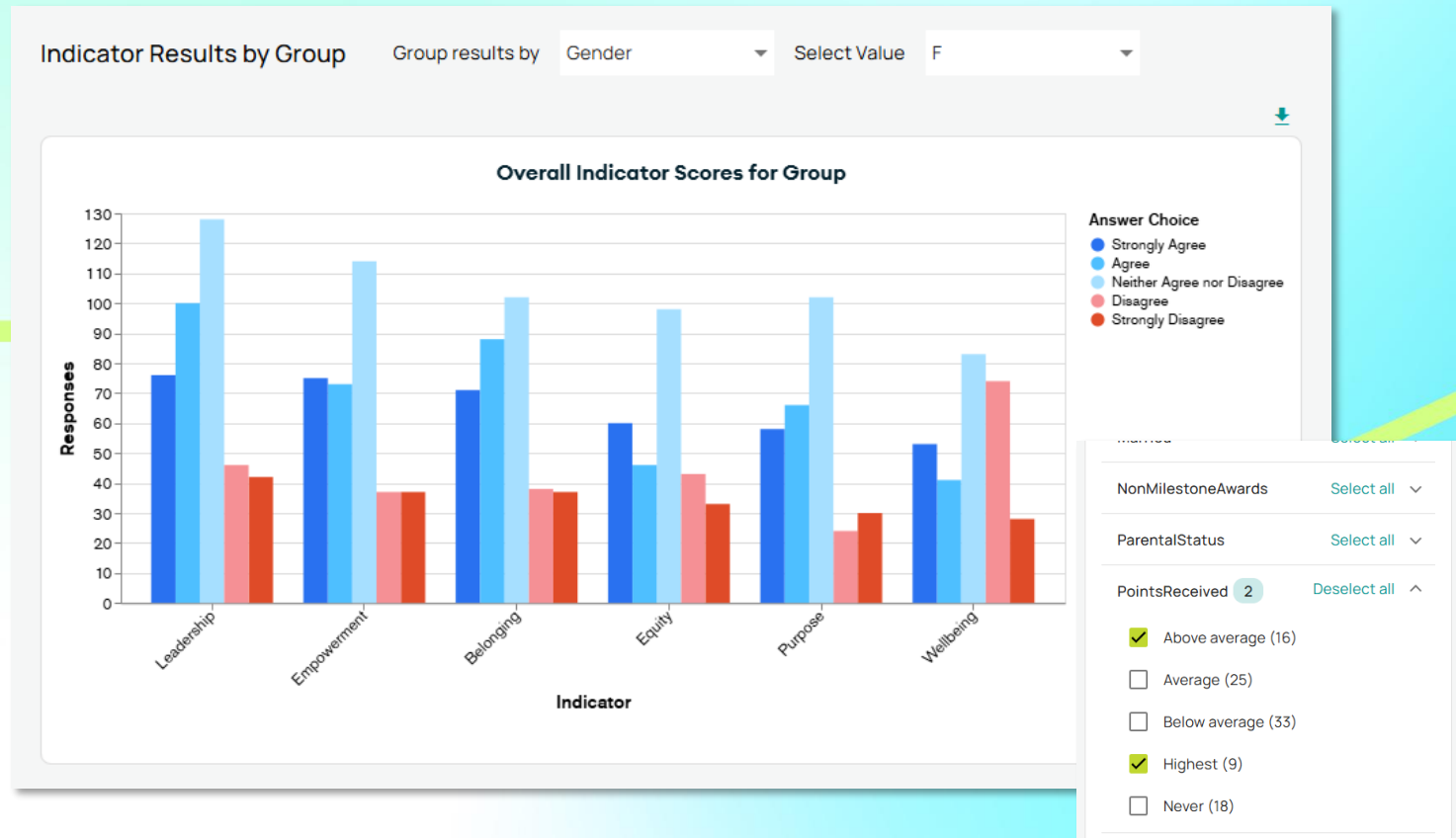
Connection

Cohesion with others; feeling connected and part of something together

Management level employees perceived higher Be Myself and Connection than non-management employees.

It may be easier to “speak freely” when you have more authority.

How to Drive Belonging with Recognition



Belonging BEST PRACTICES

1. Recognize specific achievements based on core values and personal milestones
2. Analyzing survey results by individual questions
3. Remote locations, part-time, full-time segment analysis
4. Analytics showing recognition's impact on belonging factors
5. Leadership tools to promote inclusion and belonging, driving autonomy and productivity

Questions?

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Thank You!

terryberry

