

A man with short grey hair, wearing a blue button-down shirt, is smiling and looking towards the right. He is in a meeting with other people, whose backs and heads are partially visible in the foreground. The background is a bright, out-of-focus office setting. A large yellow circle is overlaid on the top left of the image, containing the text.

Driving Business Success Through Employee Engagement



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Why is engagement so important for driving business success?

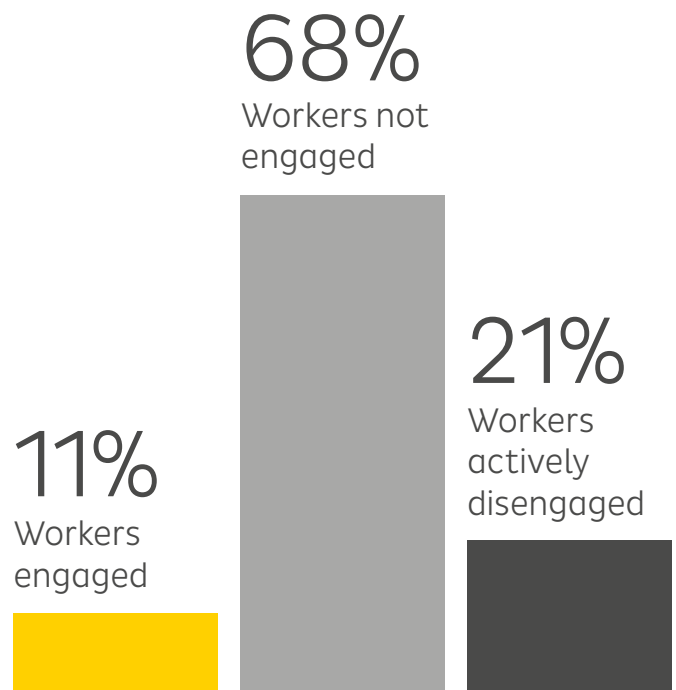
Motivated and engaged workers take ownership of and deliver the organisation's purpose. They have a deeper sense of pride in the work they deliver. Creating an engaged workforce will deliver personal rewards and benefits for the individual, but also rewards for the organisation in helping it to achieve its goals and strategic imperative.

No longer considered merely an intangible, immeasurable HR concept, 'employee engagement' is now widely accepted as a key driver of motivation, commitment and productivity in the workplace, and the link between an engaged workforce and business success is recognised across industries.

Yet according to data from Gallup's State of the Global Workplace report, the UK is facing an engagement crisis. Just 11% of workers are 'engaged', with the rest either 'not engaged' (68%) or 'actively disengaged' (21%).¹

High rates of disengagement have a huge impact on productivity for several reasons. Disengaged employees are more likely to make mistakes, get distracted at work, have a higher rate of sickness absence, and complete tasks to a lower standard than their engaged colleagues. All of this reduces outputs across the company, and ultimately impacts your bottom line.

Furthermore, disengaged employees are more likely to leave. With the cost of replacing an employee estimated at anything from a fifth to a third of their salary, it's no wonder that employers want to keep staff in post and performing at their best for as long as possible.²



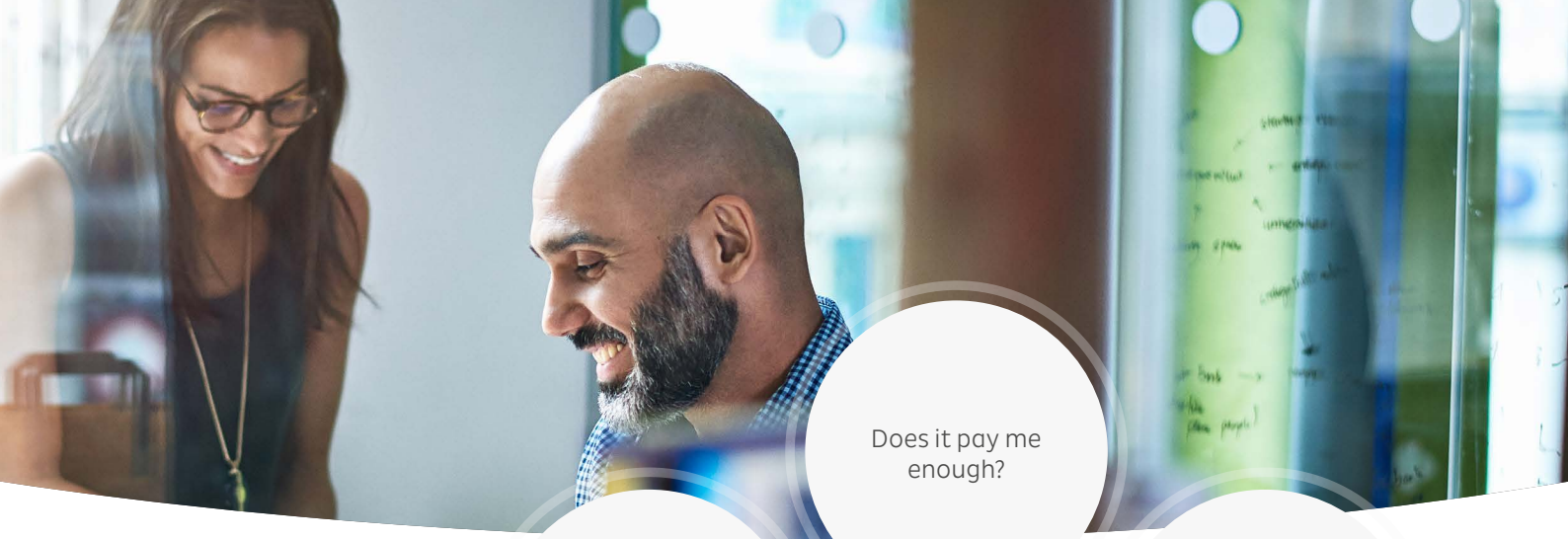
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¹ Gallup, 'State of the Global Workplace' (2017), p.81. Accessed at <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/257552/state-global-workplace-2017.aspx>

² CIPD, Employee turnover and retention (21 Jul 2020). Accessed at <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/strategy/resourcing/turnover-retention-factsheet>

The employee lifecycle





Why do people come to work?



Common problems with engagement programmes

Despite widespread belief in the power of engagement, programmes are often under-utilised. Typically, one of these common problem causes them to struggle:

- **Inflexible** – From overly rigid time frames to stringent small print, making use of a scheme sometimes feel like more trouble than it's worth to the employee.
- **Impersonal** – When some third-party packages are deployed, they tend to contain offers and incentives from large national chains that may not have any local presence.
- **Rewards that don't reflect the need of the workforce** – A common complaint among employees is that “a free coffee once a month is nice, but not very relevant.”
- **Difficult to access** – Despite cutting-edge innovations in consumer technology, accessing benefits schemes can often be tedious, time consuming and leave employees wading through multiple log-in screens.
- **Unresponsive** – Any platform has to reward and engage with the user each time they visit; too often platforms are ‘flat’, unchanging and offer little back to the employee.

Instead of finding the programme engaging, too often employees switch off from the software, and the employer.

Understanding the specific problem around engagement in any organisation is often challenging. In a busy working environment, employees struggle to make time for feedback forms and surveys.

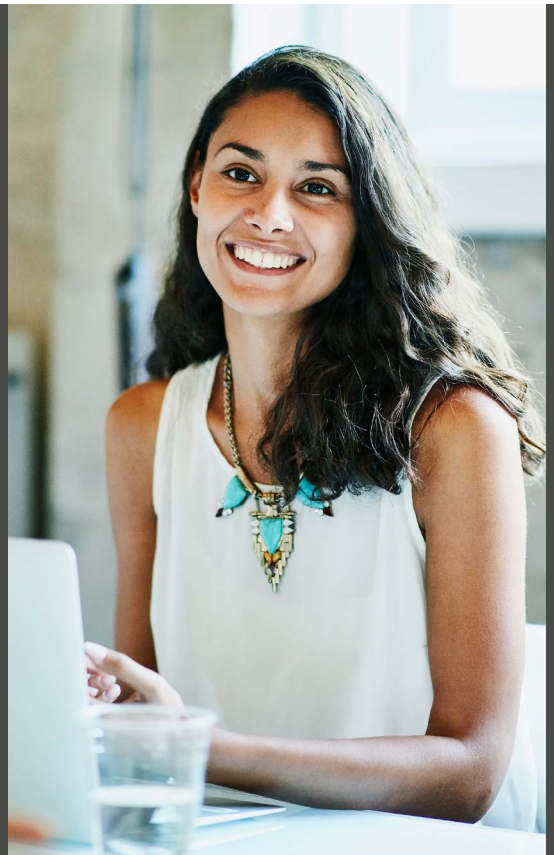
Unfortunately, even though many engagement programmes are operated digitally, the platforms do not typically offer user-friendly and detailed analytical capability. There is often no easy way for rewards and benefits managers to spot trends, insights and patterns.

So what is the solution?

The keystone of any modern engagement strategy should be the employee engagement platform. This serves as an aggregation point for employee benefits and can also act as intranet / communications hub for employees.

An organisation that provides an effective platform can:

- Maximise your employee lifetime value, resulting in better cost savings, improved engagement, and productivity.
- Improve performance by showing that you are a supportive and caring employer.
- Become more attractive as an employer to those looking for new opportunities and increase engagement among existing employees.
- Gain a competitive advantage within your industry by adapting to a changing workforce.
- Create a happier, healthier and more productive workforce where individuals have access to rewards they understand and are relevant to them.



What does a good employee engagement platform look like?

By now you should be convinced of the need to implement an employee engagement platform. Or perhaps you have a system in place but it's not delivering the results you need.

We've put together a checklist of features to look for. How does your current system compare?

- ✓ **Does it fit the business?**
Take a look at the kind of roles you have and what they require from an engagement platform. Are they office-based, shift workers, geographically dispersed? Do you have contingency staff on different employment terms? Do you have the means to communicate with everyone?
- ✓ **Flexibility**
Is it easy to add services, tailor your offer, or integrate an existing provider? Does the platform fit your internal brand and is it appealing to your workforce?
- ✓ **Scalable**
Can the provider offer a solution to fit your budget? Will the platform be able to support your business as it evolves?
- ✓ **Communications**
Is the platform designed to reach today's multi-generational workforce? How well do the mobile site and app compare to desktop site?
- ✓ **One stop shop**
Does it connect everything employees need? Think about comms, benefits, wellbeing, training, pay, CSR, recognition... And for HR teams, does it provide real-time reports to help you optimise your offering?
- ✓ **Engagement**
How will the provider help you launch and embed the platform? Will they work with you to keep adoption rates high?
- ✓ **Technical specifications**
What platform is it built on? Is it secure? Is it easy to configure and implement? What about user experience?

The changing workforce

An effective engagement strategy needs to connect with every employee. However, some organisations face a big problem - when you have a computer-based intranet, how do you reach employees who don't have email?

Millions of UK workers don't drive a desk. What's more, many engagement strategies fail to consider zero-hour workers, agency staff, and the wider gig economy.

So to stay connected to their workforce, employers are turning to tech-driven solutions. The best employee engagement platforms allow employees to access everything they need: anytime, anywhere. Being enabled for mobile is key, since people check their smartphones, on average, every 12 minutes of the waking day.³ It's important to recognise that the way we access information is changing and relying on desktop intranet won't cut it anymore.

People in the UK now check their smartphones, on average, every 12 minutes of the waking day



COVID-19

The COVID-19 crisis has massively accelerated the rise of flexible working. Practices like working from home, flexi-time, and compressed hours are widespread and allow employees to accommodate other demands like childcare, exercise, or chores.

The enforced rise in remote working – which at its peak in April 2020 included 46% of the UK workforce – has meant that many employees have experienced a better work-life balance.⁴

Research suggests that nine out of ten (88.2%) employees who worked at home during the lockdown would like to continue working at home in some capacity.⁵ This is a seismic shift which will not snap back after COVID-19. Employers need to adapt to this new expectation and offer flexible and remote working as standard.

Whether employees are working on-site or remotely as a result of COVID-19, companies need to develop better strategies for communicating with, and connecting and recognising their employees. One example is push notifications, which allow you to send critical communications to large groups of employees in real time e.g. "Site B closed from Thursday" or "Extra shifts available now."

³Ofcom, A decade of digital dependency (2 Aug 2018). Accessed at <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/latest/media/media-releases/2018/decade-of-digital-dependency>

⁴ONS, Coronavirus and homeworking in the UK (April 2020). Accessed at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/coronavirusandhomeworkingintheuk/april2020>

⁵Felstead, A and Reuschke, D 'Homeworking in the UK: before and during the 2020 lockdown', WISERD Report, Cardiff: Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research (August 2020). Accessed at <https://wiserd.ac.uk/publications/homeworking-ukand-during-2020-lockdown>

To find out more about how Personal Group can support your employee engagement strategy, email hellohapi@personalgroup.com

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