GuardingMinds @ WORK

Suggested Actions and Resources

ENGAGEMENT

OBJECTIVE: A work environment where employees feel connected to their work, co-workers and their organization and are motivated to do their job well.

Engage your employees to improve engagement

Putting engagement On the Agenda is easy with these resources. A workshop slide presentation and facilitator guide help you have a productive conversation with your team about this psychosocial factor and each of the relevant statements from the Guarding Minds at Work survey.

If this factor shows up as a relative strength in your workplace, have a team discussion to find out why they scored this factor higher than the national average. This can lead to appreciation and understanding of what is already good. Policies and processes can also be developed or refined to continue to support positive engagement.

If this factor has been flagged as an area of concern in your workplace, engage all stakeholders in discussion about which actions might provide the best solutions. You can use ideas from the list below to begin the conversation. When everyone contributes to improving psychological health and safety, the responsibility is shared, the outcomes are more effective, and the effort is sustainable.

Below are actions and resources related to improving engagement. This list does not contain every solution. There may be other ideas that you find or think of and want to try. However, these suggestions can help provide a strong and cost-effective foundation for addressing engagement.

The practical strategies come from research studies, have been recommended as best practices, or have been applied effectively in workplaces. The resources included here are free. You can also find excellent services available at a cost from a variety of reputable providers.

Actions by statements

If there are specific engagement statements from your Guarding Minds at Work survey that you want to address you may want to consider one of the actions or resources provided directly under the statement below. More general actions and resources, relevant to engagement, are also included at the end.

Ultimately, engagement is about how people feel about the workplace and the work they do. The only way to know how employees feel is to ask them. One question may be, “What would you need to feel great about working on this team?” and listen carefully to all the answers.

The following statements are available to help you consider areas of employee engagement within the workplace. You may ask, “What is it about your work that you enjoy? How would you like to improve the areas of your job that you are responsible for that perhaps don’t bring you as much enjoyment?”

1. I enjoy my work.
2. I am willing to give extra effort at work if needed.
3. My work is an important part of who I am.
4. I am committed to the success of my organization.
5. I am proud of the work I do.
6. I am committed to the success of my team.

Additional actions and resources

- The following are basic human needs, and these will impact both engagement and performance. Most are covered by other psychosocial factors. A brief description of how each one may fit into the workplace follows. You can use these examples to help be more specific when asking employees to determine what exactly they need to be more engaged in their tasks.

  Physical and psychological safety – covered in other factors, but when this is present, employees can work without fear (refer to the three factors psychological and social support, protection of physical safety, and psychological protection)

  Self-worth/Self-esteem – when employees feel good about their ability to accomplish the work assigned, they are more likely to put in the extra effort when needed (workload management, balance, psychological competencies and demands, growth and development, and recognition and reward)

  Esteem/Accomplishment – being supported to be successful and then being recognized for the success and effort (recognition and reward, clear leadership, organizational culture, civility and respect, and growth and development)

  Social justice – fairness in the workplace helps build a sense of commitment and loyalty (clear leadership, organizational culture, workload management, and balance)

  Self-efficacy/Autonomy – being given what is needed to be successful and then being trusted to carry out the work (clear leadership, growth and development, involvement and influence, recognition and reward, psychological competencies and demands, and workload management)

  Belonging – being included as a valuable member of the team goes a long way to encouraging engagement and commitment to both organization and team (psychological and social support, civility and respect, and involvement and influence)

- To strengthen leadership skills and build stronger teams, Building Stronger Teams is a free, downloadable workbook that can also help to build team resilience.

- Part of a psychologically safe workplace is having solutions available for how an employee's success can contribute to their well-being. Supportive Performance Management offers additional information to assist you in Developing a Workplace Plan to address performance issues, taking mental health into account.
- To inform the development of an effective workplace plan between the employer and employee, Supporting Employee Success is a tool that can be used on its own, or as part of an existing approach to support an employee's accommodation need. It includes ideas intended to be no cost or low-cost to implement. Most require a small investment of time and/or a change in communication approach.

Once you have reviewed the actions and resources below, we encourage you to use the Action Planning process to help you think critically about which combination of free, paid, or internal resources will best meet the needs in your workplace.

- There will likely be employees who are not working in the job of their dreams. We can still affect engagement by addressing the basic human needs described above and ensuring a positive and supportive work environment.
- Commit to "people-first" values at the organizational level. For example, hire managers with the appropriate skills to lead by example.

  The hiring procedure is the first impression of your organization and its leadership – what it's like to work with you, how your organization values its employees, and the workplace culture a recruit can expect.
- Recognize and appreciate employee's willingness to "go the extra mile" at work. For example, helping others during illness or absence, participating in optional job-related activities or special committees.
- Proactively monitor engagement among employees and take pre-emptive and appropriate action before someone leaves and becomes disengaged.
- Foster conditions in which team members can use their talents to the fullest.
- Create a pleasant and welcoming work environment. For example, plants, artwork, natural lighting, or a common staff room where employees can gather.
- Train leaders to be competent in building employee engagement.
- Focus on talent development and coaching of team members to help them grow.
- Train and support employees to be "ambassadors" to enhance recruitment and help build and sustain a positive public profile.
- Communicate organizational mission, values and ideology to employees and the public.
- Publicly acknowledge individual, team, and organizational accomplishments and successes.
- Solicit input from employees via focus groups on things that can be done to build their engagement at work.
- Ensure that employees have a voice in the creation of organizational goals.
- Ensure leadership accountability for retention and engagement. For example, use metrics to document leaders' impacts on retention and morale among their teams.

- Provide monetary and non-monetary incentives tied to length of employment and individual performance.
- Support employees in temporary, casual and precarious positions. For example, those in temporary or contract positions, or who may be impacted by upcoming layoffs or restructuring.
- Incorporate a job preview component in the hiring process, to increase job satisfaction and retention.
- Systematically review Policy Recommendations to see where opportunities exist to improve how they impact psychological health and safety.

Use this space to jot down additional ideas and suggested actions:

To consider which actions are most likely to result in the outcomes you desire, use the Action Planning process to guide your decision making and help you identify timelines, milestones, budgets, responsibilities, and measures of success.

Thank you to Workplace Safety and Prevention Services for their generous contribution to the development of these action items. For more tools and resources, please visit Think Mental Health.ca

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