

# Top



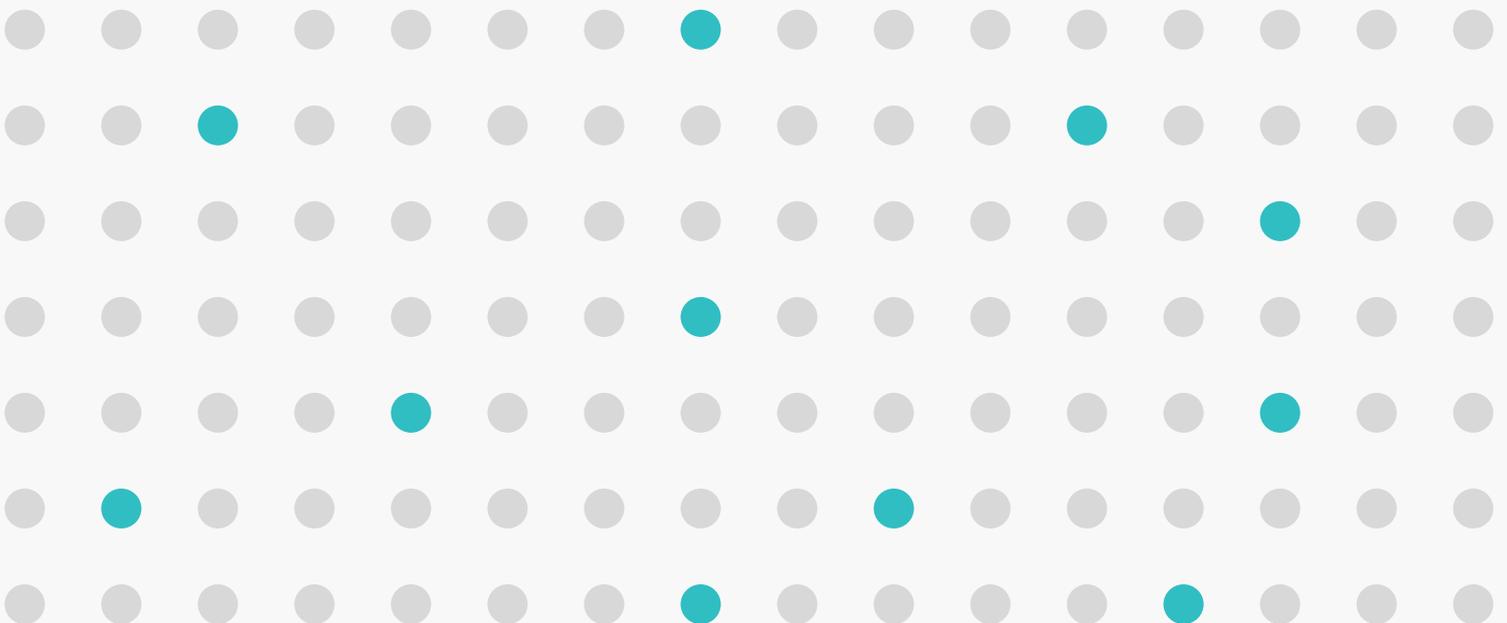
Porpoise

# 10 Ways

# to Engage

# Your

# Workforce





With these changing times and industries has come a change in people's values, aspirations, and expectations. We're in a time where people's trust has never been lower

yet their expectations have never been higher. People are no longer satisfied with companies that put profits before people.

A PWC study found that 88% of those questioned said they were looking for an employer with values that reflected their own, and 86% said they would consider leaving an employer if they found their CSR values to be lacking. In other words, people want both a paycheck and purpose. Consumers also want to make their purchases from responsible companies that operate with a defined purpose.



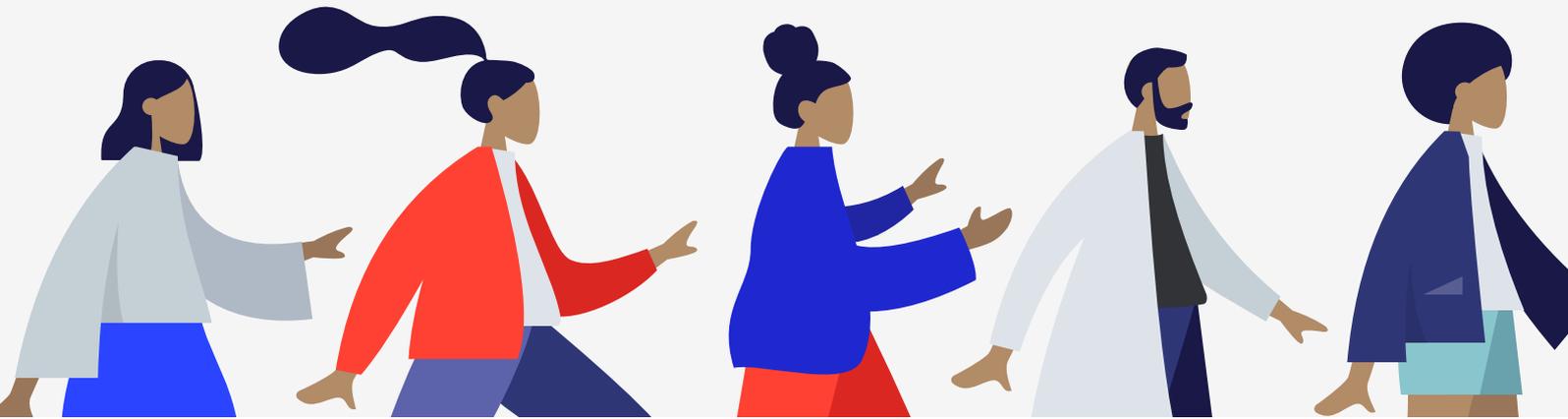
Consumers also want to make their purchases from responsible companies that operate with a defined purpose. According to UK Small Business Consortium, 88% of consumers said they were more likely to buy from a company that supports and engages in activities to improve society.” With a secure pension being a luxury of the past, today's employees are no longer as motivated by pay. and more apt to be less loyal if they are dissatisfied with their job.

Unfortunately, a number of companies aren't adapting fast enough, and employees aren't happy or engaged in their work. This increased level of disengagement has led to higher levels of turnover, costing roughly 11 billion dollars per year in the US alone. The companies that recognize this, and put measures in place to engage and support their people are reaping the benefits, reporting 37% lower levels of absenteeism, 41% fewer safety incidents, and 41% fewer quality defects.



**Companies that put measures in place to engage and support their people, report 37% lower levels of absenteeism, 41% fewer safety incidents, and 41% fewer quality defects.**

The way you treat your people will directly impact their performance. Do they feel valued and recognized? Is their time and other resources being met with correlating benefits?



The most important resource for any organization is people. If you manage people in any setting, you need to ask yourself one question

**What can I do to make it possible for these people to not only perform at the best of their abilities but also WANT to perform at the best of their abilities?**

As humans we are constantly evaluating our inputs and comparing them to the returns we receive. When we invest our money in something, we want to achieve a return, and the greater the return, the more satisfied we are. This same principal applies to the workplace. In return for our inputs (time, energy, emotion, sacrifices), we hope to receive correlating outputs (money, status, title, purpose, recognition, and impact).

# So what can you do to engage your employees?

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## **Give them a sense of purpose**

A sense of purpose drives business growth. In order for employees to feel a sense of purpose in the workplace they need to feel like they are creating a positive impact in the world while achieving personal growth. Unilever reported that their purpose driven brands are growing 30% faster than their others. Grant Thornton found that 70.5% of high growth companies have clearly defined non-financial purpose. When people feel that the work they are doing is creating positive value, levels of pride, engagement, and satisfaction increase. Knowing this, as managers we can cultivate work environments that encourage and reward people finding this sense of meaning and purpose in the workplace.

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## **Support their career advancement**

If you invest in your employees, they will be grateful. A great way to invest in your people is by offering opportunities for career advancement and upward mobility. Conduct performance reviews to determine strengths and areas that could use improvement. Be transparent by asking employees what their aspirations and goals are, and work with them to identify how they can achieve them. Another way to support career advancement is by sponsor further education or tuition reimbursement. You can also support them by organizing networking events and funding their conference attendance.

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## **Support the causes they are passionate about**

A growing number of companies are offering volunteer time off (VTO) for their employees. This offers an opportunity for employers to support their employees, and provide them with a meaningful experience. Explain to your employees that volunteering is a way for them to develop skills, practice gratitude, and support the community they live and work in. It has been shown that for every employee involved in an employer supported volunteer program, greater than \$2400 is generated in the form of reduced turnover and increased performance.

# So what can you do to engage your employees?

## **Create a social environment**

Organizing social events both in and outside of the office is a great way to engage your people. Setting up a social committee that organizes these meetings can be a great way to ensure that the events are a reflection of what people are interested in participating in. These events are a great way for people to meet and connect on a more personal level. If we're going to spend approximately 90,000 hours of our life in the workplace, it's important that we have a little fun while we're there.

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## **Reward with a tangible gift**

Whether it's a coffee, lunch, a bonus, or quarterly performance award, providing employees with a tangible reward can be motivating. It also provides them with something to hold on to and be proud of, reminding them that they are valued. I've always been impressed with Salesforce's "Riding The Wave" Program. Through this program, Salesforce rewards their employees with a small trophy and money for a charity of the employee's choice as they achieve tenure milestones.

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## **Tell them you appreciate them**

Rewards don't have to be tangible. It can go extremely far to write someone a note or tell an employee in person that you value their contribution to the workplace. It's also important to celebrate and recognize people's accomplishments. It shouldn't be the case that managers only connect with employees during performance reviews. Impromptu check-ins are a great way to show employees that you genuinely care.

# So what can you do to engage your employees?

## **Make it clear that failure is necessary**

John C Maxwell wrote a book titled, “Sometimes you win, Sometimes you learn”. I love this quote because it says that you shouldn’t consider loss to be failure, you should consider it a learning experience. It’s important for companies to instill a culture that supports and encourages employees to fail. Failure shouldn’t be a negative word, it should be a synonym for discovery or learning. If employees are afraid to fail, they will be more likely to become complacent rather than innovative.

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## **Encourage Time Off**

If employees are overworked, their performance, engagement and satisfaction levels are going to less than optimal. Especially in startup environments where non-traditional working hours are the norm, it is important to encourage employees to take care of themselves. For people to be at their best, they need some time to rest their minds and bodies.

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## **Be transparent**

One of the best ways to improve business performance is to openly communicate with your employees. According to a study conducted by the American Psychological Association, ¼ of employees don’t trust their employers. How can they reach goals and improve if they aren’t aware of expectations and current practices. One company that is excelling in this area is Buffer. They have a dashboard containing employee salaries, company funding, product roadmaps, pricing, values and diversity. If anyone has a question, chances are it can be answered right on their website!

# So what can you do to engage your employees?

## **Measure everything**

Measuring is extremely valuable for engagement. By measuring different data points, people will be able to see how far they've come in certain areas, and identify gaps in others. Measurement also incites a sense of accountability and competition in organizations. Creating targets and leaderboards gives people a benchmark to work from. People are also likely to become engaged in their work if they can see progression.

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**Create a culture that recognizes and supports employee's efforts both in and outside of the workplace. You might be surprised by the immediate impact it can have on the health and performance of your business. Your people are your greatest asset, and when you provide them with a culture that is engaging it will be extremely rewarding.**

**Culture doesn't live within a department in your organization, it should be a commitment that is the backbone of every decision and strategy adopted by your organization. Don't expect culture and engagement to be an overnight success. It's the shared values and practices that your company stands behind that will create a culture that attracts and retains top talent.**



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