Advanced Strategy Guide to Workplace Engagement

Aims and Objectives

Working Transformations is happy to provide you with a logical, proactive template for a sustainable Engagement Strategy, enabling you to optimise the talent pool currently available within your company's existing workplace culture.

Clarify and align objectives for all concerned in advancing your mission to excellence through people-centric strategic planning.

There is no need to fire the unhappy people, 'cut out dead wood' or grab at 'low-hanging fruit'. Everyone has their own story, filled with unique pressures and challenges they are seeking to resolve. By aiding their quest for fulfilment, you are assured of loyalty and commitment to goals and objectives best serving your company.

Here in this Guide you will find discussion documents, exercise tools, strategic tips and informative resources.

In many fields of modern life, reimagining what we already have is a wise move often overlooked.

This document can help you achieve the optimisation you seek.
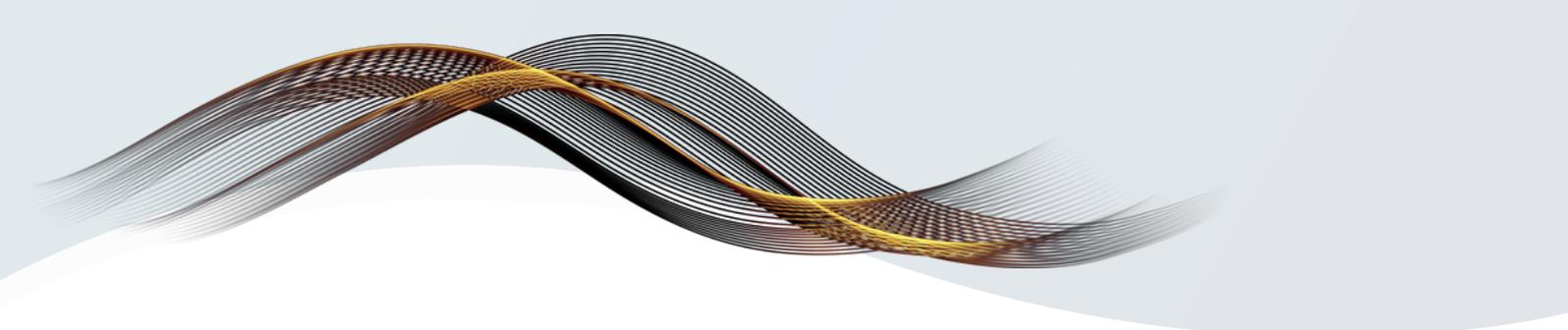
Terms of Engagement

To establish realistic goals and priorities, your team needs to identify the root principles of workplace engagement and the mechanisms necessary to introduce and sustain it.

As a starting point, create an identification template with these components in the mix;

Operational	**Undercurrents**
issues that cause recurring workplace problems, such as communication blocks or accountability trails.	fuelling fire-fights.
Where do they occur? Which areas are impacted?	Trust and autonomy - what do they look like in your workplace? How would you rate employee confidence?
Key Personnel	**Key Factors**
needing developmental support to address undercurrents and tackle operational issues.	defining your culture. Which habits and protocols serve you well? Which ones don't help anybody?
Who are they? Do they lead others? What do they need?	How are people treated? What does Excellence look like?

Estimate ongoing cost implications for each of the above as they currently stand, for realistic goals to be set and buy-in assured at all levels.

Now you are able to explore potentials, solutions and implementations from an informed perspective to begin the process of workplace optimisation.

What Engagement Means to Your Workforce

You have an opportunity right now to impact positively on your workplace culture.
Talk to your team; ensure they are fully supportive of your drive to engage the
business. Their **commitment to your workforce is key** to its future success.

Fear fuels negative attitudes, distrust and resentment;
deal with fears that could disrupt this strategy at the outset.
Everyone loves an empathic, proactive leader who understands their needs.
To advance into excellence, you must energise positivity,
instil trust, and motivate with creativity, autonomy and reward.
Once the bar is raised to everyone's benefit, no-one will want to look back!

Build trust between teams!

Create projects wherein managers can work alongside instead of above.
Customer visits allow operators to see their achievements in action. Volunteering
gives back to the wider community. Working parties enable those directly affected
by situations to address them, ensuring swift resolutions on-site, in-house.

So lighten your approach, and let your working world smile with you!
Have fun with the process - keeping human needs for advancement central to the
implementations you action, enhancing the quality of workplace existence which
positively affect your employee's quality of life.

With elevated morale comes loyalty. Your company - *a company of people* - will rise to
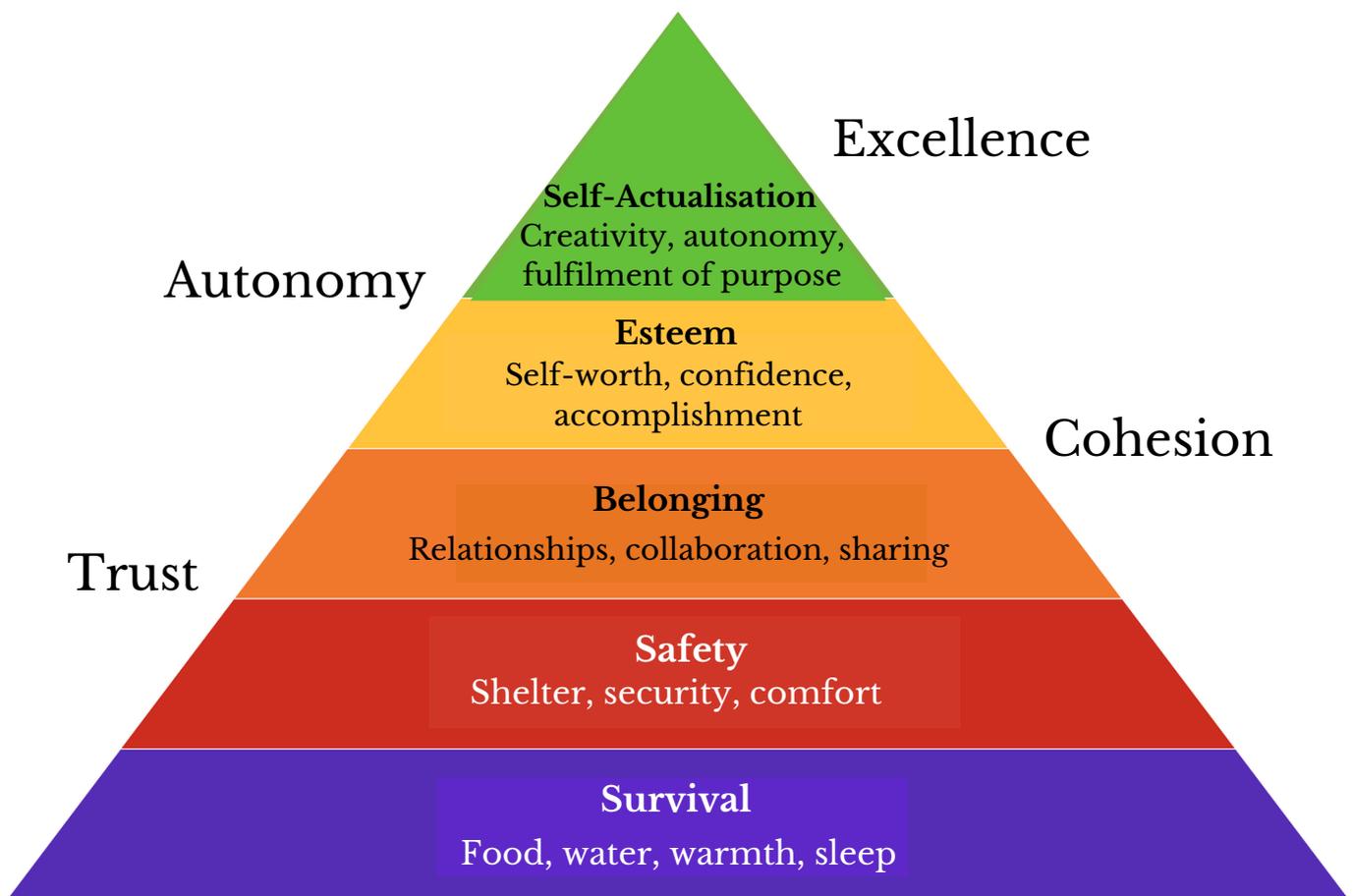unimaginable challenges given the opportunity to express, enjoy, and support itself.
In raising the energy quotient, tasks become easier, targets are readily met,
and continuous improvement becomes a sustainable reality.

A Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow created a pyramid bar-chart to illustrate
fundamental needs in chronological order.
Each bar represents an area of need to satisfy
before advancement to the next level is possible.

Alongside each stage of advancement, a feature of engagement
illustrates how these steps translate into the character and capability
of the workplace.

Excellence

Self-Actualisation
Creativity, autonomy,
fulfilment of purpose

Autonomy

Esteem
Self-worth, confidence,
accomplishment

Cohesion

Belonging
Relationships, collaboration, sharing

Trust

Safety
Shelter, security, comfort

Survival
Food, water, warmth, sleep

Beyond basic safety, workplace environments often fail to accommodate higher levels of need which, if served, would ensure greater productivity, loyalty and co-operation.

Engagement and workplace advancement enables people to achieve more by meeting these needs realistically. To do so is not costly, nor overly demanding of time. Creativity, however, is essential to sustainable optimisation.

People like change that's enjoyable - they can only enjoy it when it's manageable. Imposing change on a culture without considering this element is demoralising and fiscally dangerous, causing backslides and making the next innovation that much harder. By introducing creative opportunities for furtherance, you develop a strong platform for change management to build upon.

Your Priorities

As you make the transition from inertia to innovative change,
new priorities arise from the increased communication you are experiencing.
This exercise helps to align primary objectives with real-time needs.
With a clear picture of what you want your company to become,
optimisation moves within reach.
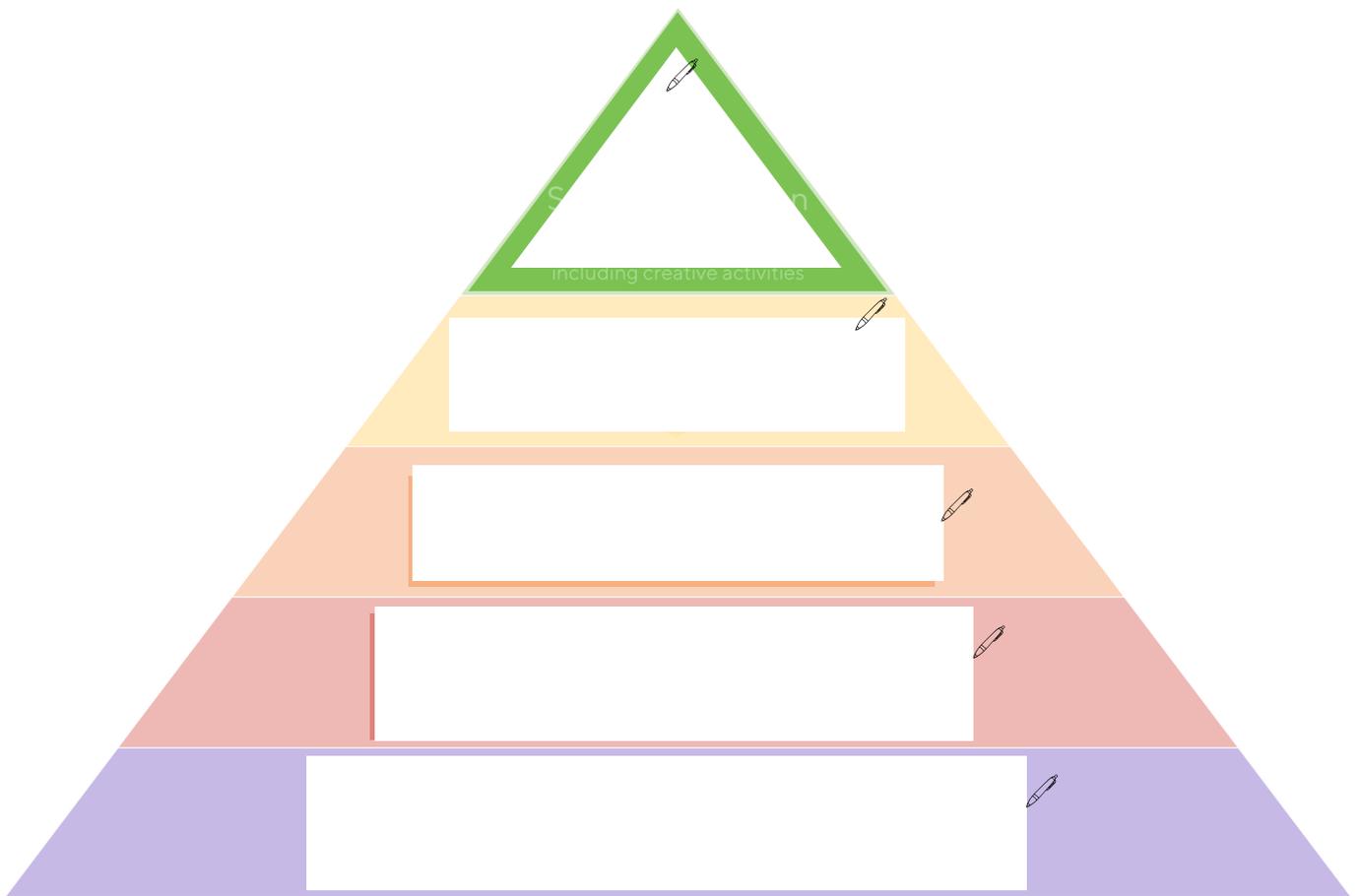
Map out your steps to Advancement here to build a solid foundation
for your ongoing journey.

What are your basic survival needs?
How do you reach safety?
When will you know self-esteem has been strengthened?

Attainment of these goals is essential in actualising what your company can be;
when the steps are illustrated visually your vision can be successfully translated.

Engagement needs purpose; you must give it a mission to bring it to life!

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Disengagement in the workplace has been estimated to cost a modest SME* in excess of

£800,000 per year.

What does it look like in your working environment?

- ✗ Communication Issues - resource guarding, confusion, lack of confidence
- ✗ Inertia & Resistance - low proactivity and collaboration, fear of mistakes
- ✗ Quality Issues - disillusionment, lack of pride, stress, resentment
- ✗ High Turnover of Staff - people leave when unhappy

Estimates record a ROI of £4 for every £1 spent on people-centric implementations.

Harvard and Gallup are just two of many respected sources advocating cultural advancement as a major boost to company fortunes. Their research has established substantial increase in profitability fuelled by engagement, typically averaging 20-35%.

Engaging your company's community turns a disillusioned, resistant workforce into a proactive, motivated enterprise. Set high standards of achievement with the help of committed, enthusiastic employees. Your ideal strategy will satisfy intrinsic human desires for connectivity, reward, autonomy and psychological safety along with providing communication opportunities on all levels to generate ideas. By involving employees in choices elected, you will gain;

- ✓ **Advancements in communication flow**
- ✓ **Increased co-operation, collaboration and commitment**
- ✓ **Greater productivity and quality improvements**
- ✓ **Staff retention, attendance and loyalty**

With helpful, empathic guidance, humans *consistently* choose progress over inertia.

Strategic Essentials for Cultural Advancement

Priorities in cultural advancement are typically;
Communication Flow Improvements - enabling reliable collaboration.
Morale, Recognition and Reward -
Autonomy and Personal Development

In strategising for these advancements, you will need;
Identification of blocks in communicative channels
Development of people-management skills for all leaders
A win-win reward system with constants *and* variables
Opportunities for contribution to organisational goals
Recognition templates to identify progressions

Some useful examples of working implementations are;
Instalment of communication channels and boosters,
e.g. video outreach, seminars, learning partnerships and literary updates.
Recognition schemes; get creative here... brainstorm with colleagues!
Upskilling by buddy-training with experienced mentors.
Soft-skill development courses and programmes.
Working parties to innovate on projects
CSR / ESG policy implementation

Fruitfully set goals to include;
Positive communication across teams
Achievable productivity targets with associated rewards
Co-operative opportunities to support responsible ethics
Broadcasting visible accounts of personnel contributions
Empathic policies aligned across the management structure

Notes

Stabilising Strategy

Integration	Culture	Productivity
diversification	communication	collaboration
inclusion	behaviour	recognition
collaboration	morale	motivation

This template for brainstorming can help your team decide
on and prioritise implementations and new protocols

Introduce elements to activate your strategy
and plan their timing in a schedule of development

Communication	Collaboration	Recognition	Reward
Literature	Working Parties	Diverse KPIs	Treats
Meetings	Volunteering	Awards	Visits
Protocols	Skill Sharing	Positive Feedback	Events

In optimising your workplace environment, energy is vital. Keep actions easy,
make some KPIs fun and provide opportunities for enjoyable involvement.
All implementations invite familiarity to readily breed contempt;
keep windows open for winds of change to breathe in new life with ideas.

Your strategy will swiftly produce visible results and you can look forward
to the outcomes of innovations as uncertainty works in favour of belief.
Look for traps such as confirmation bias, with a sharp directorial awareness
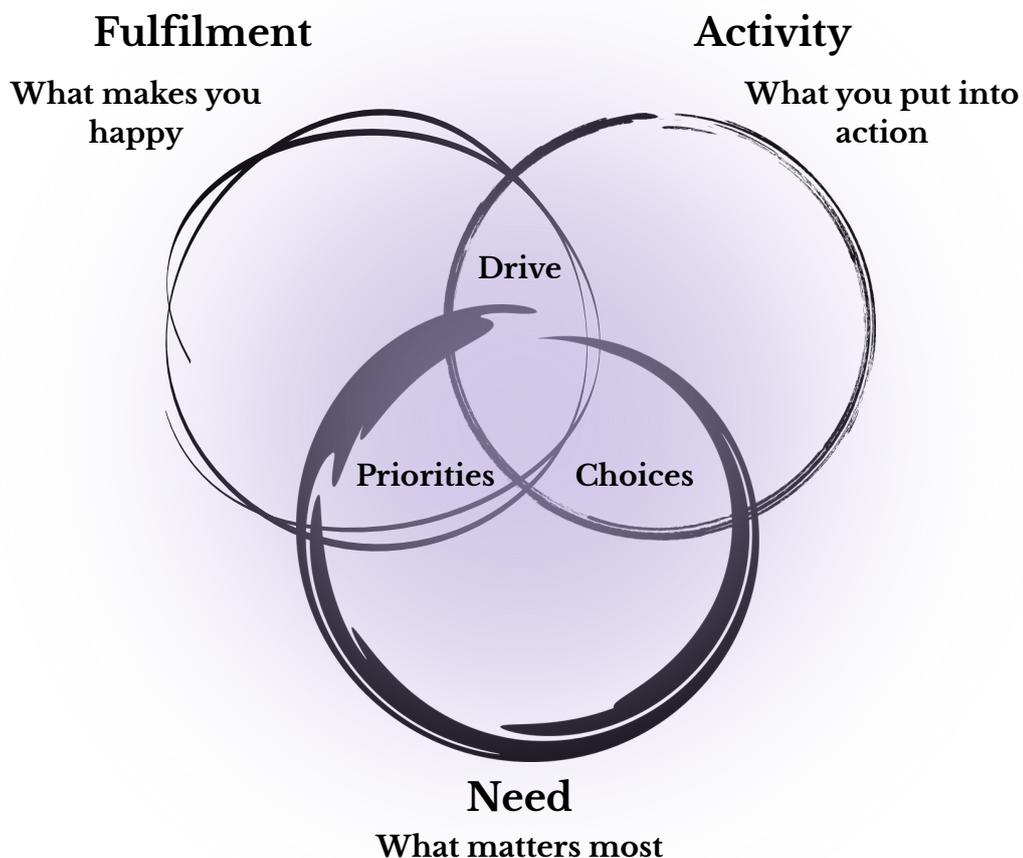of the fears that block change.

People value what is best for them, their quality of life and familial care;
through adapting your business model to meet more of their needs,
engagement becomes self-sustaining in mutual commitment.

Reforming Characters

In every workplace, there are people who thrive on negative impact. They love to subjugate, tease, bully and harass people for effect, and they have (usually) been subjected to such treatment themselves at an early age.

Most people, given the opportunity, choose to move towards self-improvement, especially when it affects many areas of their lives. Logically, then, you have first to get these tricky characters to admit to their pain and appreciate the damage it is doing to their relationships. The workplace won't be the only place where people will be impacted by their habitual behaviour.

The FAN Wheel

Fulfilment
What makes you
happy

Activity
What you put into
action

Drive

Priorities   Choices

Need
What matters most

This exercise helps people identify 'where they are' within themselves in relation to their motives, priorities and choices. There will be things they find fulfilling that they don't put into action, and things they act upon that don't fulfil their needs. Left to our own devices we have no hope of seeing ourselves, which is why coaches and psychometrics are so popular.

When you perceive and interact with difficult people empathically and give them a chance to further their own progress, they become loyalists who never forget the opportunity you gave. Negativity is its own best friend, which is why we are blind to our own versions of it much of the time.

Workplace Transformations

What can you expect to see from an engaged workforce that has adopted a productive, proactive mindset and has a healthy attitude shared across its matrix?

Let's say you employ 60 people and 10 of them appear to be doing fine. All creatures including humans instinctively hide vulnerability where they can. This is what your culture may look like when the workforce is disengaged;
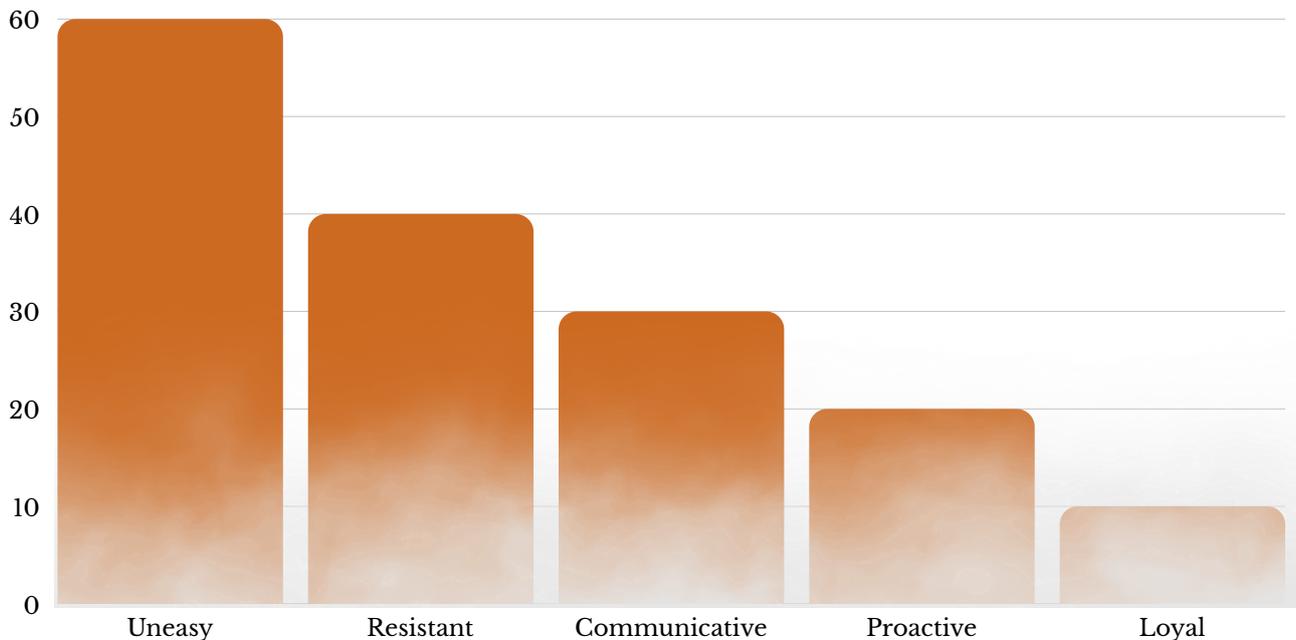
Once these same people have found better ways of working, more enjoyable modes of conduct, and are experiencing results from their contributions through recognition and reward, the graph will look something like this;
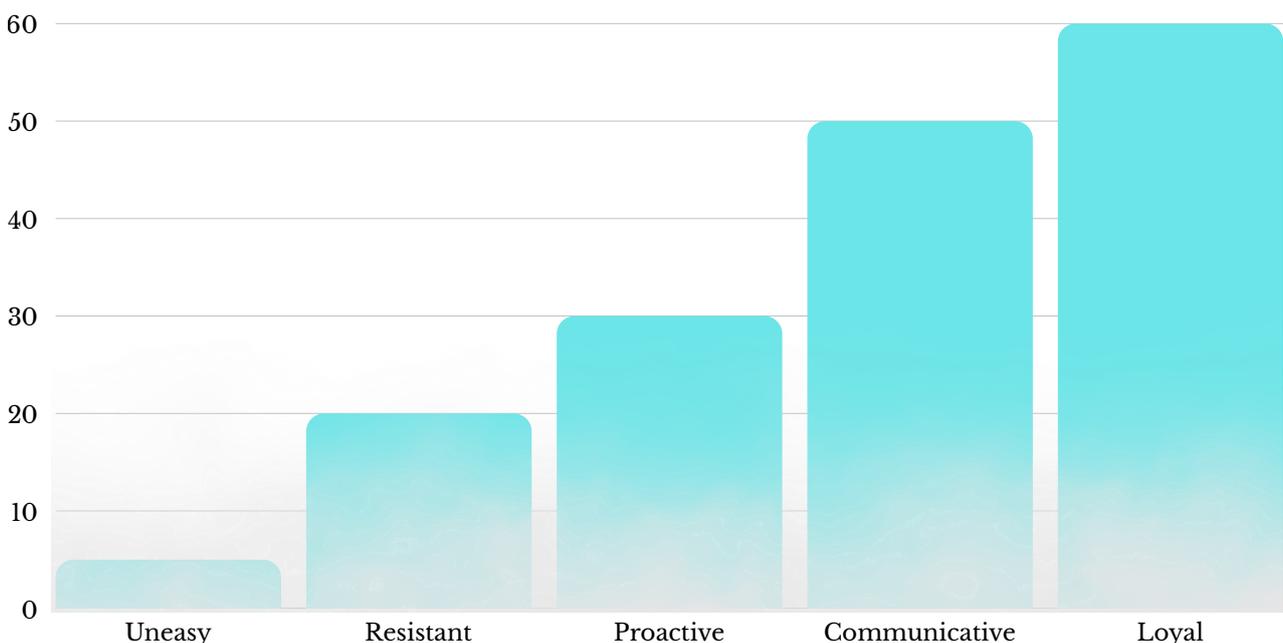
Quotes

"Psychological safety is the ability to show our true selves at work, without fear of repercussion. There are considerable proven benefits to psychologically safe workplaces, including better decision-making, more inclusive teams, and a higher willingness to take risks. Employees will often be the first to notice when things aren't working as they should and, if they feel safe to speak out without repercussions, this presents an early opportunity for a business to act and make adjustments to correct."

Mental Health at Work

"ISO 45003 addresses the many areas that can impact a worker's psychological health, including ineffective communication, excessive pressure, poor leadership and organizational culture... While many have felt powerless about the impact of recent events, there are many things that can be done to build the resilience of staff and promote a strong organizational culture. This standard brings together international best practice in this area and is relevant to companies of all types and sizes."

ISO.org

"Employee engagement typically measures employees' willingness to stay with their employer, recommend it to others as a place to work, and give their best efforts. Gaining that elusive "discretionary effort" of people and teams is a complex leadership challenge. It requires a leader to create an environment where it happens naturally because people want to give their best—not because they are pressured to do so."

Harvard Business

"If the world's workplace was fully engaged, Gallup estimates that $9.6 trillion in productivity could be added to the global economy, the equivalent of 9% in global GDP.

The future of global productivity depends on an engaged and thriving workforce. Gallup estimates that improving employee engagement through science-based management could unlock trillions in economic potential."

Gallup

Further Information

Find out more about engagement, the cost of disengagement, and what can be done to safeguard your company's cultural health and profitability by accessing these articles (electronic links provided on request)

From *Business Leadership Today*

https://businessleadershiptoday.com/how-does-engagement-improve-performance/

Extensive information from advocacy company *Everyone Social*

https://everyonesocial.com/employee-engagement

***Forbes* on profitability via engagement**

https://www.forbes.com/sites/rhettpower/2024/07/21/employees-in-action-unlocking-profit-through-an-engaged-workforce/

From *Harvard Business Review*;

https://hbr.org/2021/10/how-companies-can-improve-employee-engagement-right-now#:~:text=Engaged%20employees%20perform%20better%2C%20experience,critical%20period%20of%20renewed%20uncertainty

From *Gallup*;

https://www.gallup.com/workplace/285674/improve-employee-engagement-workplace.aspx

An initiative from *UCAS* for the next generation;

https://www.ucas.com/business/project-next-generation

For support on any of the issues raised in this Guide, please get in touch.

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Engineering Engagement