

Q01. I know what is expected of me at work.

FOCUS ME

Perhaps the most basic of employee needs in the workplace is knowing what success on the job looks like. Employees need to know what is expected of them at work so that they can commit, deliver and focus on what matters most.



Expectations serve as an employee's point of focus, helping them know what to do and where to go. And, importantly, expectations provide direction on how each person can meet the desired outcomes of their roles.

On average, **about half** of workers are not completely clear about what they are supposed to do at work.

At face value, providing focus and clear expectations for employees seems simple — but it's not.

Role clarity is much more than just a job description or a list of things to do. It is about an employee understanding their contribution, value and fit within the team.

The most effective managers define and discuss both the explicit and implicit expectations for the role and the team. Defining expectations paints a picture of outstanding performance. As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ Are my team members always clear about what to do and when to do it?
- ✓ What do I hope for beyond the basics?
- ✓ How do I measure my team members' basic expectations?
- ✓ How often do I sit down with my team members to discuss their progress?
- ✓ Am I helping my team members to prioritize their daily and weekly tasks?

Groups with high scores on this item are more productive, cost-effective, creative and adaptive.

Substantial gains on the first engagement element are often associated with productivity gains of 5% to 10%.

Three Types of Expectations

- 1 Functional.** The role's tasks, responsibilities and metrics.
- 2 Emotional.** The expectations of the working environment and the organization.
- 3 Relational.** The team's collective expectations and expectations of one another.

Recognizing What Success on the Job Looks Like

High performance in every role starts with the manager consistently communicating expectations, the purpose of the role, a clear understanding of priorities, and objective targets for improvement and growth. This communication helps employees understand what is expected of them and why.

Engaging Conversations

The most effective workgroups consistently communicate expectations, goals, priorities, and targets of improvement and opportunity. This communication helps each person on the team understand what is expected of them and why. Asking individual employees and the collective team the following questions can help ensure that they understand what is expected of them at work, even if situations change:

- What does excellence look like in your current role?
- Are there times when you just don't know what your top priority should be? How can we as a team help one another communicate needs and priorities during these times?
- What do you get paid to do?
- How can we communicate better when work is hectic and we have to quickly move from one task to another?
- How can we be clear in terms of our expectations of others?
- What is expected of us at work? What are our essential responsibilities? How does this help you understand what is expected of you?
- List your goals for the year. What do you want to accomplish?
- Have you talked to your peers in the past six months about what they expect of you? What did you learn?
- Have you talked to your internal customers in the past six months about what they expect of you? What did you learn?

Best Practices

The most effective managers provide employees focus and direction by incorporating the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Define excellence in each role. Be clear on what excellence looks and sounds like.
- Communicate each employee's role and responsibilities, and ensure that the entire team knows each person's responsibilities.
- Set aside time to explain to each employee how they contribute to the team's success.
- Conduct regular team meetings to ask about the clarity of expectations as they relate to performance goals.
- Seek opportunities to provide informal feedback to clarify expectations. Help employees make sense of the changes around them and better understand how they can expect team members to respond and interpret events and issues at hand.

Q02. I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.

FREE ME FROM UNNECESSARY STRESS

Nothing is more frustrating than feeling as if you want to do a good job at work but don't have the right equipment to do so. When employees lack the means to do their work well, frustration with their inability quickly follows, as does anger with the manager or organization for placing them in such a difficult spot.



One of the most insightful findings from Gallup's research on this element of engagement is the variability of perceptions among workgroups. Even in the most legislated working environments where materials and equipment are essentially the same across business units, ratings on this element fluctuate significantly. The variation in ratings lies in front-line managers' involvement, judgment and action.

About **one in three** workers globally strongly agree that they have the materials and equipment to do their jobs right.

Despite the functional nature of the statement, this engagement item measures both physical resource needs and the potential barriers that exist between manager and employee.

The most effective managers listen to their employees' needs and are transparent about what can be provided and when.

These managers respond to the material and emotional needs that fuel their employees' requests.

As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ Do my team members have all of the things they need to meet the expectations that I have set for them?
- ✓ Does my team understand how to handle requests for materials and equipment when the business case is strong?
- ✓ Do I provide honest and acceptable explanations when requests cannot be fulfilled?

On average, only one in three workers strongly agree that they have told their manager the one thing they need most to get their work done and why.

Managers with bottom-quartile performance on this measure average 20% to 40% higher employee attrition than their top-quartile peers. This represents millions of dollars in direct and indirect turnover costs.

Three Material and Emotional Needs

- 1 Hardware.** The tangible tools and equipment necessary to do the work.
- 2 Software.** The systems and processes in place (including access to information) that maximize productivity.
- 3 Humanware.** Appropriate staffing and the acceptable handling of equipment requests.

Identifying the Barriers to Performance

The most effective managers know that they can affect engagement by how they focus on and respond to the resource needs of their employees. Great managers involve their employees in the process of identifying resource requirements and solutions to the challenges they face.

Engaging Conversations

The best managers know that they can influence engagement on this item by focusing on hardware, software and humanware when responding to their team members' requests for materials and equipment. Employees are typically vocal during discussions about this item. Asking your employees the following questions can help diagnose challenges or barriers you might face regarding this item:

- What do you need to get your job done?
- What are the essentials? What materials and equipment are essential to doing your job well? How happy are you with the availability and functionality of each of these needs?
- Does your work equipment (or lack thereof) lead to any stress? How can we help alleviate this stress?
- Do you have all of the information you need to do your job right?
- Are there things that distract you or keep you from being positive, productive or accurate in the work you do?

Best Practices

The most effective managers respond to their employees' workplace needs by incorporating the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Continuously look for materials and equipment that will assist employees in performing their jobs efficiently and effectively.
- Follow up regularly with employees to make sure they have the tools and information they need to perform their jobs effectively.
- Teach employees how to access the information they need to do their jobs right.
- Promptly respond to requests for tools and equipment that employees need to do their jobs properly, even if you cannot grant the request.
- Hold open conversations that encourage team members to talk about what they need to perform their jobs.
- Come up with operational alternatives together as a team to navigate barriers that might be getting in the way of the team's performance.

Q03. At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.

KNOW ME

The most powerful benefit a manager can provide employees is to place them in roles that allow them to apply the best of their natural selves — their talents — as well as their skills and knowledge every day.

Regardless of role, having the opportunity to develop one's strengths is more important to success than the description of the role, a title or even pay. Managers whose employees' talents are aligned with their job demands have more sales, greater profits, fewer unscheduled absences and lower employee turnover.



Employees want to maximize their contributions. To do this, managers need to remove barriers and put them in roles in which they can do what they do best. When employees have an opportunity to do what they do best, they act with more confidence, direction and hope — an attitude that every employee needs to be successful.

About **one in three** employees can strongly agree that they have the opportunity to do what they do best every day.

Outstanding performance is a result of each person knowing what they do best and having the opportunity to do it in the role every day.

The best managers build an environment where there is ongoing dialogue and an awareness of talents. They routinely recognize the unique contribution each individual makes using their strengths while making regular adjustments to help align work with team members' talents.

As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ Do I know what each individual enjoys most about their work every day?
- ✓ Are there team-level issues or organizational barriers that are keeping or distracting individuals from being as productive as they could be?
- ✓ Have I aligned each person to do what they do best in the role every day?
- ✓ What can I do to make it easier for individuals to do what they do best every day?

People who focus on using their strengths are six times as likely to be engaged in their jobs.

People who receive feedback on their strengths have 7.8% greater productivity.

Three Ways to Help an Employee Appreciate and Use Their Strengths

- 1 Name It!** Help each person gain awareness of and keep in mind their individual talents and strengths.
- 2 Claim It!** Help each team member appreciate the value and opportunities their talents and strengths offer.
- 3 Aim It!** Help each team member intentionally invest in the development of their talents and strengths.

Helping Your Employees Maximize Their Contributions

Helping people get into roles in which they can most fully use their inherent talents and strengths is the ongoing work of great managers. Learning about individual differences through experience and insight can help a manager position people efficiently within and across roles and remove barriers to high performance.

Engaging Conversations

The team's ability to achieve excellence and get the most out of each team member's natural talents is connected to the extent to which the manager and team understand, appreciate and start to use this information in a meaningful way. Asking your employees the following questions can help ensure that they understand and appreciate how each person contributes to the team's success:

- What do you do best in your role?
- What do you enjoy most about the work you get to do every day?
- What aspects of your work do you think you do really well?
- What do you look forward to doing at work each day?
- Are there things that keep you or distract you from being as productive as you expect to be?
- Are there parts of your role you find difficult?
- What do you enjoy the most about your work? Which parts of your current job bring you the most satisfaction or greatest sense of accomplishment?
- What could I do to make it easier for you to do what you do best every day?
- How do you use your team members' strengths to accomplish goals?

Best Practices

The most effective managers recognize that one of their most important roles as a manager is to help each employee appreciate and claim the particular genius of their most dominant talents and strengths. The best managers incorporate the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Reaffirm others' strengths. Look for activities that employees are drawn to, activities that come naturally to them, tasks that they pick up quickly, or glimpses of excellence into those things that they do brilliantly.
- Individualize your approach. Learn as much as you can about the talents and strengths of each employee you work with. The best managers can provide a detailed description about the unique talents and strengths of each of their employees, including what drives each one; how each one naturally thinks, feels and behaves; and how each one builds relationships. Great managers then use this information to enhance each person's work experience.
- Set employees up for success. Organize tasks and activities based on each employee's talents and strengths.
- Help your employees (individually and collectively) identify specific ways that they can use their talents and strengths to improve how they interact, coordinate and collaborate with one another.
- Celebrate your employees' strengths. When you glimpse moments of success and strength, provide recognition and look for more opportunities in which this person can use these strengths.
- Incorporate the language of strengths into describing and discussing each person's talents.
- Identify if there are any organizational issues that need to be addressed. Escalate the issues that are outside of your team's control to the proper person or team.

Q04. In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.

HELP ME SEE MY VALUE

This element of engagement may represent one of the greatest lost opportunities for managers. Employees rely on praise and recognition to better understand their manager's expectations and values. Praise and recognition are tools that managers can use to communicate what is important and help an employee see their value.

Gallup's research shows that managers who do not use the power of positive feedback hamper their own managerial effectiveness and diminish the power of their employees and teams.



Individuals who receive recognition and praise increase their individual productivity, boost engagement among their colleagues, are more likely to stay with their organization, and receive higher loyalty and satisfaction scores from customers.

Globally, **one in four** employees strongly agree that they have received recognition for doing good work in the past seven days.

At any given company, it's not uncommon to find between **one-fifth** and **one-third** of people saying, "My best efforts are routinely ignored."

Great managers know that they can never give too much recognition if it is honest and deserved.

The most effective managers always look for opportunities to recognize and praise individuals. This creates a workplace where individuals know the value of their work and the emotional reward that comes with it.

As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ Do I regularly praise my employees for their efforts?
- ✓ Have I created an environment in which my employees are encouraged to recognize one another for doing good work?
- ✓ Do I know how each employee likes to receive recognition? Given this knowledge, do I then individualize my approach to providing that recognition?
- ✓ How often do I celebrate my team's success? Do I make it a priority?

Globally, in the typical workgroup Gallup has studied, about one in four employees strongly agree that they have received recognition for doing good work in the past seven days.

Employees who are not adequately recognized at work are twice as likely to say they'll quit in the next year.

Three Attributes of Effective Recognition

- 1 **Authentic Recognition** that feels genuine, real and heartfelt.
- 2 **Meaningful Praise** that highlights the value of the work and the person doing it.
- 3 **Motivating Recognition** that taps into what matters most to the individual.

Helping Your Employees See Their Value

The best managers consistently offer recognition. They build an environment in which employees are empowered and encouraged to give and receive recognition and praise. This positive feedback helps every team member see the value in their work. In short, outstanding performance is a result of authentic, meaningful and motivating recognition that is individualized, deserved, specific and timely.

Engaging Conversations

Managers who fail to deliberately use the power of positive feedback are not only handicapping their own managerial effectiveness, but they are also diminishing the power of their employees and teams. The challenge is that what is meaningful recognition to one person may be less valuable to the next. Asking your employees the following questions can help you identify what motivates them:

- How do you like to receive recognition?
- What is the best recognition you have ever received? What is the best recognition you have received in the past six months?
- What type of recognition do you prefer? What are you most comfortable with?
- From whom would you like to receive recognition?
- Think of three colleagues who help you the most in your job. How have you thanked them or recognized them for their help?
- Who are your biggest cheerleaders at work? Who helps you believe in your success?
- How can we build a culture that encourages and values recognition and praise as a team?

Best Practices

The most effective managers promote a recognition-rich environment with praise coming from every direction and with everyone knowing how others like to receive recognition. They do this by incorporating the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Praise individuals for doing good work.
- Recognize employees for achieving their goals.
- When you praise your employees, emphasize why the recognized act was important.
- Recognize team members' individual talents and strengths.
- Recognize outstanding customer service when you see people on other teams or in other departments performing it.
- Introduce a unique way to facilitate and encourage individualized recognition.
- Learn how each team member likes to receive praise, and tailor an approach to meet each individual's recognition needs.
- Encourage your employees to recognize one another and their partners on different teams or in different departments.
- Identify how each of your team members likes to receive recognition.
- Make recognition an agenda item at regularly scheduled meetings.
- Be an advocate for your employees by promoting their areas of competence and expertise.

Q05. My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.

CARE ABOUT ME

Employees need to know that they are more than just a number. They need to know that someone is concerned about them as people first and as employees second.

Gallup's research indicates that employees don't leave companies; they leave managers and supervisors. Great managers know that putting the right people in the right roles is not enough. They are aware of their employees' needs and manage with each person's engagement in mind.



If you truly understand and appreciate each employee's unique strengths, motivations and workplace needs, you can create a caring and productive workplace. A caring environment is one in which each person feels safe — safe enough to experiment, challenge, share information and support others — and in which employees are prepared to give you and the organization the benefit of the doubt. None of this can happen if team members do not feel cared about.

Only 27% of workers strongly agree that they can talk with their manager about nonwork-related issues. Only 37% of workers strongly agree that they can approach their manager with any type of question.

Great managers build caring and respectful relationships at work to strengthen their team's performance.

The most effective managers make each person feel valued, respected and genuinely cared about as a person.

As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ Do my employees believe I care about them as people?
- ✓ What am I doing to increase my understanding and appreciation of each individual on the team?
- ✓ How do I let team members know that I am here to support them?
- ✓ What can I do to foster a caring work environment?

When Gallup asked employees what they were thinking about when they responded to this item, employees used words like acceptance, trust, fairness, consistency, understanding and authenticity.

Three Aspects of a Caring Work Environment

- 1 Valued.** Each person feels like a valued member of the team and organization.
- 2 Genuine.** Each person believes that their supervisor or manager takes a personal interest in them.
- 3 Respected.** Employees treat one another with respect.

Building a Cohesive, Cooperative and Collaborative Team

Each day provides opportunities for your team members to identify ways they can help and support one another. This happens when you encourage cohesion and cooperation among team members and genuine support for one another. When this happens, your team members will start to rely on one another to get work done.

Engaging Conversations

Each person might have a different idea of how someone demonstrates care. The best managers listen to individuals and respond to each one's unique needs. Asking your employees the following questions can help ensure that you learn more about the issues at hand — and, more importantly, discover what they are looking for from you and others:

- What makes you feel like a valued member of this team? What is your unique contribution to the team?
- What could we do to let our team members know that we care about their accomplishments?
- How do you show your team members that you respect and care about them?
- What could we each do to more effectively set up our team members for success?
- Who cares most about your success?
- Can our customers or internal partners sense an uncaring environment? How does this feeling affect their engagement?

Best Practices

The most effective managers build a culture of cooperation and collaboration by incorporating the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Reinforce each employee's strengths and the value they bring to the team. Regularly tell your employees how and why you value their contributions.
- Treat everyone with respect. Respect their values. Value their opinions.
- Encourage people to share their ideas and opinions with one another.
- Be an active listener. Give your employees ample time to share their ideas, frustrations and concerns.
- Greet your employees at the start of each day.
- Encourage your employees to get to know one another. Create opportunities for team members to get to know one another beyond who they are at work.
- Address each person's concerns and model supportive behavior during times of change or turbulence.
- Be supportive, and individualize your approach. Doing these things will help communicate that you are not just focused on the numbers, but that you genuinely care about each person and their success.
- Have one-on-one discussions with each person about their CliftonStrengths report. Share your strengths report. This is a great way to build trust. Talk about each employee's talents, strengths and valuable contributions.
- Maintain a calendar of important dates for each individual, such as family members' birthdays, work anniversaries and wedding anniversaries. Send notes to the family members on these occasions.
- Learn more about your employees' lives and their interests. Connect with them on a more personal level.

Q06. There is someone at work who encourages my development.

HELP ME GROW

Human beings cannot be successful alone. We learn more, apply what we learn faster, and grow and develop all in response to others. Given this, we know that employees need a manager who encourages their development.

Each employee needs help navigating the course of their career. At times, employees need sponsorship, coaching, protection, exposure and visibility, and challenging work assignments. At other times, employees look for counseling, friendship, and acceptance and confirmation that they are doing well.



The manager-employee relationship is one of the most important in a workplace. Your employees' relationship with you should help them define who they are and what they can become professionally. They should be able to trace their successes to their relationship with you.

In the typical workgroup Gallup has studied, about **three in 10** employees worldwide strongly agree that there is someone at work who encourages their development.

While all 12 elements of engagement require manager-to-employee and/or peer-to-peer interactions, managers must put in extra effort to personally invest in their employees to have success with the sixth element of engagement.

Personal and professional development does not occur in a vacuum. It takes intentional effort and attention. Gallup's research suggests that the most effective managers are intentional in their effort, individualize their approach and provide ongoing developmental support.

As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ Do I understand which development opportunities are most important to each team member?
- ✓ Do I understand which opportunities are most relevant to each team member's career growth?
- ✓ Have I created shared goals and established expectations with my team?
- ✓ Do I regularly celebrate my employees' successes and achievements?

Less than 1% of employees who report having someone at work who encourages their development are actively disengaged.

Less than 1% of those who have no mentor are able to achieve real engagement with their employer through the other 11 elements of engagement.

Three Ways to Encourage Development

- 1 Individualized.** Customized for each team member and consistent with their current role.
- 2 Intentional.** Directed and purposeful for each person.
- 3 Ongoing.** Continuous process throughout each person's work life cycle (from onboarding to promotion).

Investing in Your Team's Growth and Development

One common misunderstanding that many people have about this element of engagement is that “development” means “promotion.” Development is a process for understanding each person’s unique talents or strengths and finding roles, positions and projects that meet them.

Engaging Conversations

Employees want to learn, grow and maximize their contributions to their personal mission, their organization and the people they provide services to. To do this, you need to discuss your employees’ professional growth and development more than once a year. Asking your employees these questions can help ensure that you learn more about their growth and development needs:

- What do you enjoy most about your work?
- Are you being challenged at work? What challenging experiences are you facing? What challenges would you like to take on?
- What is the best way for me to encourage your growth and development?
- What are some ways we develop as a team? What are ways you would like to see our team develop?
- What do you want to accomplish in the next six months?
- If you could learn anything that would have an effect on your current role, what would that be?
- When you are “in the trenches” getting the job done, what are some ways we as a team can help you?
- What can I do to help you achieve your goals?
- When you achieve your goals, how would you like to receive recognition?
- Where do you see opportunities for growth within yourself? Are there opportunities I can help you with?

Best Practices

The most effective managers create opportunities for employees to learn, grow, acquire new skills, try new ways of doing things and take on new challenges. These managers try to build a culture of encouraged development by incorporating the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Teach employees the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in their roles.
- Help each employee identify, document and track performance goals.
- Don’t look at development as a finished product. Keep moving the goal posts to encourage next steps. Meet regularly with team members to talk about their development. Learn about employees’ development goals, help them set reasonable expectations, and revisit their goals often.
- Look for coaching opportunities to provide greater clarity and improved understanding of a role.
- Help employees track and celebrate personal bests.
- Meet with each employee regularly to review progress on their development plans.
- Identify your role in the development process so that you can support and provide any information necessary for employees to achieve their development goals.
- Consider what development opportunities you can offer your team. These opportunities could mean job shadowing or additional responsibilities for a specific employee.
- Pay special attention to your long-serving employees. They need development opportunities too.

Q07. At work, my opinions seem to count.

HEAR ME

This element of engagement can be viewed as an employee's "internal stock price." It measures the sense of value that employees put on their work and their organization.

Employees want to feel valued. They want to know that their input is important and that they are making a significant contribution and a difference to their work environment. This feeling creates a greater sense of inclusion among workers and reinforces their self-worth.



Asking for individuals' input and considering it can lead to better decision-making in two ways:

- 1) First, employees are typically closer to important matters than the manager, so their ideas are often good.
- 2) Second, when people feel involved in making a decision, they typically have a greater sense of responsibility or psychological ownership of the process, which can mean better business results.

Nearly half of employees who say their opinions count at work also feel their current job brings out their most creative ideas. Among those who are neutral or negative on this element, **only 8%** feel their creativity is well-employed.

How a manager listens and processes an employee's thoughts and ideas shape whether the employee feels valued for their contributions.

As a manager, sometimes the ideas you hear won't be the best. But listening to and giving feedback on ideas helps employees feel like you heard them and considered their opinions. Appreciating and responding are what's important. It makes employees feel valued.

As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ How do I show my appreciation for employees' opinions and ideas?
- ✓ What do I do with my employees' opinions and ideas?
- ✓ How do I follow up on my employees' opinions and ideas?
- ✓ How often do I ask how my employees feel about their work?
- ✓ How am I making sure my team members feel comfortable sharing their feedback or ideas with me?

On average, fewer than one in five workers strongly agree that they receive meaningful feedback when they make a suggestion about improving performance. Improving the proportion of employees who rate this item highly can substantially affect customer ratings, productivity, employee retention, safety and profitability.

Three Ways to Create a Culture of Idea Sharing

- 1 **Accepting.** Be open to each team member's opinions and feedback.
- 2 **Proactive.** Regularly contact others to get their opinions.
- 3 **Responsive.** Provide feedback on opinions you solicited.

Creating a Greater Sense of Responsibility and Ownership

The best managers are always listening to what's happening on the ground floor. Asking for employees' input is valuable because it shows employees that their manager cares about what they think. It promotes open, creative dialogue between manager and employee. Asking for opinions also fuels new ideas that can positively influence business results.

Engaging Conversations

Employee engagement depends on the circulation of ideas and opinions that make the team more effective in meeting the demands before them. Discussing, refining and implementing new ideas is productive and invigorating. It builds employees' confidence in their roles, creates a sense of belonging, and helps employees see that their efforts can and do make the organization and everyone it provides services to better. Asking the following questions can help managers ensure that their employees feel like they count:

- What makes you feel valued here?
- How do you know your opinions matter?
- Who needs to hear your ideas?
- In the past six months, when have you felt your opinions mattered?
- Do you have any ideas or suggestions on how the team can improve the quality of service we provide to our internal partners and customers?
- Do we need to add quality checks? Are there areas in which you see risk of errors or mediocre performance?
- What is your best idea for improving our team?
- Are there areas in which you see room for improvement? How do you think we should fix these areas?
- Do you feel comfortable enough to tell it like it is? How can I make you feel more comfortable sharing your thoughts and ideas?

Best Practices

The most effective managers make employees feel like their opinions count at work by incorporating the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Be open and receptive to feedback.
- Think of new ways to solicit employee feedback, opinions and ideas.
- When an employee asks to talk about something, immediately schedule time to listen.
- Schedule regular times to talk with employees to specifically ask for their opinions.
- Follow up regularly with employees about their ideas, even if action did not occur.
- Provide open and honest feedback on employees' opinions and ideas.
- Treat your team like business partners by sharing information about the company that you would not typically think to share.
- Advocate for your employees' good ideas. Get others to consider their opinions and suggestions.
- Create a safe environment for ideas. Make sure every employee is comfortable enough to tell it like it is.
- Celebrate the implementation of employee-generated suggestions or ideas.

Q08. The mission or purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important.

HELP ME SEE MY IMPORTANCE

Employees want to believe in what their employer does. Excellent performance occurs when people are deeply attached to a sense of purpose in their lives. When employees feel that their job is important, they want to do more of it.

At a fundamental level, we all need something to do — and ideally, this is something that we believe in and look forward to doing at work every day.

When people believe in what their employer does and feel a connection between their work and their personal mission, they are more likely to stay with the organization and feel like they are an integral part of something bigger than themselves.



While many see money as the best motivator at work, this is often not true. It is common for employees of highly engaged workgroups, from entry level to senior executives, to mention having turned down higher pay to join or remain with a company they believed would provide more meaningful work with a more enjoyable team.

A belief that one is doing **something meaningful** is important to a person's psychological and even physical health.

At face value, connecting an employee with a company's mission or purpose seems simple — but it's not.

The most effective managers help cultivate a feeling of purpose among employees by clarifying the organization's mission and how it relates to their daily work.

As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ Does my team understand the organization's mission or purpose?
- ✓ How does my team live out the organization's purpose every day?
- ✓ How am I living out the organization's mission or purpose?
- ✓ How am I setting priorities based on the organization's mission or purpose?

In Gallup's database, 25% or more of workers in retail trades, financial services and chemical manufacturing strongly agree that the purpose of their company makes them feel their job is important.

Three Important Things to Focus on

- 1 **Take It Seriously.** Create a shared mission that guides the team's actions and decisions.
- 2 **Do What Is Right.** Mission, vision and values inform thoughts, actions and behaviors. Your employees will feel successful when they experience a sense of purpose every day.
- 3 **Be the Torchbearer.** Bring the company's mission or purpose to life.

Helping Your Employees Appreciate Their Importance

It is common for employees of highly engaged workgroups — from housekeeping to senior executives, from nurses to physicians, from accountants to radiologists — to mention having turned down higher wages to join or remain with an organization they believed would provide more meaningful work with a more enjoyable team.

Engaging Conversations

The best managers recognize that front-line employees need to feel connected to the company's mission or purpose for that company to translate its passion and vision to its customers. To help employees feel united with the company's mission, great managers ask their employees:

- When do you feel your job is important?
- What about your role makes it fulfilling to you?
- Has a customer ever told you that you helped them or made a difference?
- What causes you to take pride in working here?
- How would you describe our company's mission or purpose?
- What is your personal mission or purpose in life?
- What about our company's mission or purpose connects with you?
- How are you living out our company's mission or purpose in your everyday interactions with our customers?
- Do you feel that your team members share a sense of mission with you? Why or why not?
- What could we do more of as a team to embrace and fulfill the organization's mission or purpose?
- What is most important to us as a team?

Best Practices

The most effective managers bring the organization's mission or purpose to life by incorporating the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Discuss the organization's mission and how each person connects to it.
- Make the organization's mission or purpose a discussion point in team meetings.
- Connect daily tasks to the bigger purpose.
- Encourage opportunities for teamwork and a sense of belonging.
- Help build support for and commitment to the organization's mission.
- Model the behaviors and actions you want your team members to live out.
- Recognize when team members go above and beyond their duties to connect with the organization's mission or purpose.
- Involve your employees in writing a team mission statement.
- Celebrate outstanding performance. Talk about the implications of these types of performance.

Q09. My associates or fellow employees are committed to doing quality work.

HELP ME FEEL PROUD

Trusting that one's coworkers share a commitment to quality is vital to excellent team performance. All employees need to be in an environment where there is mutual trust and respect for one another's efforts and results. This starts with a deep awareness of work standards and team expectations.



For highly productive employees, there is a vast difference between being assigned to a team and actually identifying with that team. Employees want to know that everyone on their team is pitching in to get the job done. Few factors are more damaging to teamwork than one employee who skates through their work, taking advantage of others who work much harder.

On average, about **one in three** employees strongly agree that their associates are committed to doing quality work. When a team perceives one of its members is not pitching in, that proportion drops to one in five.

But when the team feels that everyone is pitching in equally, about **one in every two** employees agree that their associates are committed to doing quality work.

Improving the team's level of natural talent is a manager's most powerful weapon in the battle against poor quality.

One of the worst feelings for an employee is having a slacker for a coworker and a manager who doesn't do anything about it. Unfortunately, the worst performer on your team sets your team's standards. As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ How am I selecting and recognizing hardworking employees?
- ✓ How do I define quality work? Does my team know what quality looks like?
- ✓ Have I talked with my team members individually about their quality goals?

By a 6-to-1 margin, people are more upset with a colleague who has the ability but doesn't try than a colleague who tries hard but doesn't have much ability.

Three Important Things to Focus on

- 1 Culture.** Quality is a priority in the organization, and standards are upheld at all levels.
- 2 Individual Commitment.** Individuals take responsibility for their actions and deliver the highest quality standards.
- 3 Team Commitment.** Teams feel comfortable questioning, confronting and being vigilant about what's right.

Creating a Team Focused on Quality Results

If you want to see great business results from your team, as a manager, you have to ensure that all team members are committed to doing quality work. Even just one team member not giving it their all can mess it up for everyone else. Think of your team as a rowboat. If you have three team members rowing as hard as they can and one team member sitting there doing nothing, it makes rowing for the entire group a little bit harder.

Engaging Conversations

As a manager, you set performance standards and ensure that your team members adhere to them. Doing this creates an environment in which your team members understand the work expected of them and promotes a culture of superior work. Make time to talk with your team members about what quality means to them by asking some of these questions:

- How do we know when we have done good work as a team?
- When do you feel like quality is important to our team? To our organization?
- When do you feel the most pride in your work?
- When was the last time you spoke with a team member about quality?
- When do you feel like your team members are committed to doing quality work? Why?
- How do you/we measure your own work and quality?
- What is a recent example of when you did more than your normal work to ensure quality? When did you last see a fellow employee do more than their normal work to ensure quality?
- What do you do when you see employees not doing quality work?
- What gets in our way of doing quality work every day?
- What improvements do you think we could make within our team that would enhance quality?
- What can I do to help you produce more quality work?

Best Practices

The most effective managers foster an environment that consistently produces high-quality work by incorporating the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Outline quality standards for each task or function.
- Confirm that new team members know the importance you and your team place on quality by setting expectations early on.
- Be on the lookout for employees producing high-quality work. Take time to recognize these employees, and share with the rest of the team what high-quality work looks like. Provide a way for team members to recognize one another when they witness exemplary quality or a person going the extra mile to ensure quality.
- Have each team member share their expectations for quality work during team meetings. This will help clarify and set expectations. It may also provide an opportunity for you to redefine quality, if needed.
- Share and exchange best practices as a team that demonstrate quality.
- Create a way for team members to share their concerns if a fellow employee is not producing quality work.
- Produce high-quality work yourself. Remember, your team looks to you for guidance. If you do not produce quality work, they won't either.

Q10. I have a best friend at work.

HELP ME BUILD MUTUAL TRUST

Throughout our lives, we spend a lot of time at work. Accordingly, we instinctively look to develop friendships at work in which we feel respected and trusted. Going a step further and having a best friend at work can help employees feel more engaged — and with best friends, teams will be more likely to see a positive impact on business results. It's simple: People with friends at work are happier at work.



If you have a best friend at work, you are significantly more likely to:

- engage your customers and internal partners
- get more done in less time
- have fun on the job
- have a safe workplace with fewer accidents or reliability issues
- innovate and share ideas

While we spend the majority of our waking hours at work, only 30% of employees Gallup surveyed report having a best friend at work.

If you are fortunate enough to be in this group, you are **seven times** as likely to be engaged in your job.

Only 20% of employees dedicate time to developing friendships on the job.

It is important to note that Gallup research indicates teams should only work on improving the Best Friend item after the first six elements are at the 75th percentile. If worked on before these Basic Needs and Individual Contributions are strong, commiseration may emerge.

The best employers recognize that people want to build meaningful friendships and that company loyalty is built on such relationships.

The best managers encourage friendships in the workplace by creating the conditions under which such friendships and relationships can thrive. As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ Do my employees trust one another and me?
- ✓ Does my team work well together?
- ✓ How am I building friendships at work?
- ✓ How do I create more opportunities to foster friendships?

*The **best** predictor of having higher wellbeing and engagement at work is not what people are doing — it's whom they are with.*

Without a best friend at work, the chances of being engaged in your job are one in 12.

Three Characteristics of a Well-Connected Team

- 1 Trust.** Confidence in one another's reliability and dependability.
- 2 Teamwork.** Appreciation of one another's talents and strengths; can tackle challenges together.
- 3 Emotional Loyalty.** Loyalty to the team is passionate, expressive and deep-seated.

Creating an Environment That Promotes Interaction and Develops Relationships

Of the 12 elements, “I have a best friend at work” is the most controversial. At first glance, you may wonder, “Are friendships really necessary at work?” Maybe you’ve heard stories about employees fraternizing too much on the job, or you think close relationships are messy at work. But Gallup’s research shows that having a best friend at work is the best predictor of whether someone is engaged in their job. There is a simple explanation: People want to build bridges, not walls, and they want to trust the people they work with. Ultimately, employees need to know that someone is looking out for them.

Engaging Conversations

Individual and team conversations are opportunities for your employees to think about and discuss topics that affect engagement. Conversations can help identify actions that the team should take to improve engagement and foster a culture of trust. Asking the following questions can help you build connections among your team members:

- When did you have the most fun at work during the past few months?
- How can we make sure that we have more of these moments?
- Are there team members whom you can trust and depend on?
- Can you think of a time when you depended on someone else from our team for success?
- How do you help make our work environment positive and productive?
- How do relationships that you have at work help you do your job better?
- What can we do as a team to build stronger friendships at work?

Best Practices

The best managers recognize that friendships at work are beneficial because they help build trust and engagement and have a positive impact on a team’s morale and productivity. Great managers encourage friendships at work by incorporating the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Look for opportunities to get the team together for friendship-building events.
- Share stories about yourself, such as when you started working for the company, what you did before that and where you’re from. Sharing a story helps people connect with one another.
- Plan for a time to socialize at work when it won’t disrupt customers. Think about bringing in donuts, spending five minutes during a group meeting to share fun facts, or celebrating birthdays and work anniversaries.
- Look for ways to pair up team members to complete certain tasks. Doing this can create friendships and help accomplish an assignment.
- Check in with your employees regularly to see how team dynamics are working.
- Talk individually with your employees to learn why they joined your company and what keeps them coming back to work every day.
- Create opportunities for individuals who have complementary strengths to work together and focus on a goal.
- As often as you can, make time for employees to take a break together, whether it is an off-site event or informal lunch. If possible, include family members.

Q11. In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress.

HELP ME REVIEW MY CONTRIBUTIONS

Few things are more important to an employee than knowing that they are progressing at work. Feedback is vital and beneficial to both an employer and an employee.

The best managers recognize that honest, positive and constructive performance feedback provides time to discuss an employee's progress and growth. Feedback can help employees understand themselves better and give them a clear perspective on how their contributions make a difference to the organization.



This element has an impact on productivity and safety. When a manager regularly checks in on their employees' progress, team members are more likely to believe that they get paid fairly, more likely to stay with the company, less likely to have accidents and more than twice as likely to recommend the company to others as a great place to work.

The best employers provide informal and formal feedback on an employee's progress on a regular and consistent basis.

The best managers know that for employees to grow in their jobs, they must first know where they stand. They need to know where they are in their professional journey, and they need to understand how they can get to their goals.

As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ Do I regularly show my team members how far they have come in their professional development?
- ✓ How do I lead conversations about progress? Do I lead with positive intent and emphasize the employee is doing well, or do I tend to focus only on weaknesses?
- ✓ Am I helping my team understand its progress? How so?

One in three employees in Gallup's global database strongly agree that someone has talked with them about their progress in the last six months.

Three Characteristics of the Most Effective Performance Feedback

- 1 Strengths-Based.** Focus on improving strengths and managing weaknesses.
- 2 Engagement-Focused.** Ensure that your employees' workplace needs are met.
- 3 Performance-Oriented.** Concentrate on making sure that performance outcomes are clear and objective.

Individualizing Your Feedback Approach

Employees might feel anxious when they hear the words “performance review.” They might anticipate a harsh conversation full of examples about when they didn’t meet expectations. If so, they are likely to dread their performance review and might have negative feelings associated with feedback. As a manager, you can change this perception among employees by helping them realize that this review should be a positive interaction involving praise, constructive feedback and an opportunity to set a career path.

Engaging Conversations

You can’t move forward if you don’t know where you are on a path. Likewise, for an employee to develop, they must first understand their progression. This understanding helps motivate employees to move forward and allows for redirection, if necessary. Great managers know this and often ask their employees about their progress. Questions like the ones listed below help employees feel like someone is helping them navigate their professional career:

- What were our team’s greatest accomplishments this past year?
- How do you think we are doing as a team? Where do we excel? Where do we need some help?
- What topics should our team address at our midyear review?
- How do we determine if we are successful?
- How often should we get together as a group to talk about progress?
- What have been your greatest accomplishments this past year?
- Tell me about your past three months here. How about the past six months? The past year? Where have you been, where are you now, and where do you want to go?
- How often should we get together to talk about your progress?
- What do you appreciate about how I give you feedback? What could I do differently?
- Are you surprised at any of the feedback I’ve given you? Do you think it is fair?
- Are there things that help you accomplish your work? What distracts you from completing tasks?
- How do you think you have performed since our last discussion about your performance?

Best Practices

Great managers recognize that feedback is essential to an employee’s engagement and success on the job. The most effective managers modify their feedback to fit the employee’s personality, the circumstances and their potential. High-performance managers help employees know how they are performing in their roles by incorporating the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Clarify what each employee needs to accomplish related to tasks, priorities and metrics.
- Develop and track team performance metrics. Celebrate when employees achieve their performance goals.
- Spend time with each employee individually to learn their goals, and help this person chart their progress.
- Find creative ways to help employees reach their goals. Check on their progress and provide constructive and positive feedback on a regular basis.
- Provide honest, direct feedback. When employees do great work, praise them — and when they could have done work better, provide constructive feedback.
- Make sure employees feel continuously successful but always challenged to do more. Look for opportunities to help employees feel challenged.
- Don’t be afraid to let your employees try something on their own. If they make mistakes, coach them through what to do next time.

Q12. This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.

CHALLENGE ME

The desire to learn and grow is a basic human need. One way employees can learn and grow is to find more efficient ways to do their jobs. The best teams are never quite satisfied with their work. They always strive to find better, more productive ways to work. And where there is growth, there is innovation.



Challenging employees to meet goals motivates higher performance. Teams that score high on this element of engagement produce more innovative ideas, build and maintain better customer relationships, and have higher financial metrics.

One in three employees worldwide strongly agree that they have had opportunities at work to learn and grow in the past year.

When employees feel they are learning and growing, they work harder and more efficiently.

The most effective managers continuously discuss progress and opportunities for growth and development for employees.

For many people, progress in a role distinguishes a career from employment that is “just a job.” To improve and progress, employees need to feel someone or something is challenging them. As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ How am I creating an environment in which my employees can grow and develop?
- ✓ What have I done in the past six months to help my team learn and grow?
- ✓ What are my employees’ goals? Do I know them, and am I helping them actively achieve those goals?

Employees who have an opportunity to learn and grow at work are twice as likely as those on the other end of the scale to say they will spend their career with their company.

Three Ways to Challenge Employees to Learn and Grow

- 1 Continuous.** An environment that encourages continuous learning.
- 2 Expanding.** Short-term “stretch” goals that motivate employees to expand their current knowledge or skill set.
- 3 Aspirational.** Career-oriented development plans that align with each person’s strengths and aspirations.

Learning, Developing and Growing

The best managers know that an organization's growth depends on employees' capacity to learn, develop and grow. These managers create a structure for learning and opportunities to align and challenge employees with new tasks. These opportunities encourage and motivate employees to develop and grow — sparking innovation and positive business results.

Engaging Conversations

People want to know that they are developing and progressing in life. Managers can empower employees to feel that they have had a chance to grow at work by helping them identify learning opportunities and encouraging them to develop. The most effective managers make time to discuss growth with employees by asking some of the following questions:

- Are there things you need to learn to do your job better?
- How can we build a team environment that emphasizes acquiring new knowledge?
- In what situations in the past six months have you felt that you were learning new things?
- What are you looking forward to in your job this year?
- What experiences are you challenging yourself with this year?
- What types of learning opportunities are you interested in?
- What goals do you have right now? How can I help you accomplish these goals?
- What was your most significant achievement in the past year? What was your most significant accomplishment since you have been here?

Best Practices

The best managers create learning opportunities at the individual level. These managers understand that learning and growing is a never-ending process and look for ways to align individuals' current capabilities with their long-term goals and aspirations. Managers do this by incorporating the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Invest time in getting to know your employees' career goals and strengths to help match each one with the right opportunities to grow and develop.
- Involve the entire team in charting the team's completed learning outcomes. Identify individuals who are subject-matter experts whom others can call on to help answer questions.
- Consider partnering employees with complementary strengths to work on a task together. These partners might learn something new that they did not know before.
- Match a new employee with a veteran employee to help the new employee learn about the job more quickly and provide an opportunity for the veteran to take on a new role.
- Create personalized development paths with your employees. Check in on their progress often, and ask them what they are learning and how they are applying it to their roles.
- Help employees find opportunities to use their strengths and talents to meet the needs of their jobs and move forward in their careers.
- Create stretch goals for your employees. These goals should involve acquiring new knowledge and skills that already align with team members' goals.

+ At work, I am treated with respect.

A CULTURE OF TRUST

A culture of trust starts by listening to each employee's perspectives. Respect is the most basic human requirement at work — it's about appreciating each person's unique contribution. Disrespect is toxic and is highly correlated with burnout. Respect is fundamental to making diversity, equity and inclusion efforts work. Managers help create a respectful work environment when they lead by example and are upfront about their expectations for their team.

Employees who strongly agree they are treated with respect are more than five times as likely as others to recommend their organization as a place to work. They are also less likely to report discrimination or harassment — for every 1,000 employees, disrespect can cost \$1.6 million to \$2 million in discrimination and harassment settlements or losses if legal action is taken.

Employees who strongly agree that they are treated with respect are nearly half as likely as others to be actively looking for another job or watching for opportunities.

Employees want to work somewhere with positive team dynamics. Do not back away from conversations about new ideas because you feel you cannot adopt a suggestion. How you listen effectively in these situations fosters a culture of trust. Healthy feedback can only exist in a respectful environment. Employees' motivation to work toward team goals is strongly tied to their belief that their manager values and respects them.

Q12® Drivers

The best way to increase engagement related to respect is to coach toward the key Q12 items that will deliver results. Listening and acting on what you hear in your weekly ongoing conversations demonstrates trust and accountability. The below Q12 questions are most closely correlated with respect. They are listed in order of relative importance to improving the culture of respect.

Q07. At work, my opinions seem to count.

Q05. My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.

+ At work, I am treated with respect.

Engaging Conversations

The team's ability to respect one another comes from the top down. As a manager, you must foster a respectful workplace every day. Your team members trust that when they come to you with a consideration or issue, you will act on it. By focusing on Q07 and Q05 and asking your employees the following questions, you can help foster respect and ensure that they understand and appreciate how to respect one another:

- Are you comfortable expressing opinions in a group setting? How can I help you voice your opinions?
- What makes you feel valued? In the past six months, when have you felt appreciated for your contributions?
- What else do you think our team could be doing to maintain a culture of respect?
- Do you believe our company acts on the feedback employees share?

Best Practices

The most effective managers recognize that one of their most important roles is to foster an inclusive and respectful work environment. Implement individual and team conversations that are open and honest. By focusing on Q07 and Q05, the best managers incorporate the following behaviors into their management style:

- Managers must set positive, consistent expectations for all workplace interactions. A respectful workplace is everyone's responsibility, but you should actively help others to feel valued.
- Every employee's actions contribute to the overall workplace environment. Do not allow disrespect to occur among your employees.
- Lean into communication. Be proactive and transparent. Build a supportive climate by offering an open door to your employees — it lets them know that you are there to listen.
- Actively advocate for your team members' opinions and suggestions.

+ My organization cares about my overall wellbeing.

LISTEN TO ME

Before the pandemic, millennial and Generation Z workers expected their employers to improve their overall lives and wellbeing, not just provide a job. This need has only intensified. By focusing on conversations, culture and listening, managers can prove to employees that their organization cares about their overall wellbeing.

Employees who strongly agree that their organization cares about their overall wellbeing are 71% less likely to report experiencing burnout “very often” or “always” and 36% more likely to be thriving in their overall wellbeing.

Employees need to know that they are more than just a number to their organization. As a manager, intentionally get to know your employees as people. Managers are uniquely positioned to learn about their employees’ lives outside of work. With the rise in burnout and the decline in emotional wellbeing, it’s important to connect with your employees weekly, even for just 15 to 30 minutes. A good manager is the fastest conduit to wellbeing — but not the solution. Take time to understand the situation and the employee’s needs, and control what you can to improve their overall wellbeing. Taking those small and purposeful steps shows your employees that you care.

Q12® Drivers

The best way to increase engagement related to an overall sense of wellbeing is to coach toward the key Q12 items that will deliver results. The below Q12 items are most closely correlated with an overall sense of wellbeing. They are listed in order of relative importance to improving the culture of caring:

Q07. At work, my opinions seem to count.

Q05. My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.

Q08. The mission or purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important.

- + My organization cares about my overall wellbeing.

Engaging Conversations

A person's job influences their overall wellbeing — and their manager plays a vital role in that equation. Focus on Q07, Q05 and Q08 by regularly connecting with your employees, developing a habit of coaching, and asking the following questions to demonstrate that the organization cares about them as employees and as people:

- How do you feel about your current work-life balance? Have there been times when it has felt too one-sided?
- How do you prefer to share your thoughts and ideas with your manager? How do you prefer to share ideas with your team?
- In the past six months, when have you felt that someone on your team acted with your wellbeing in mind?
- When you set goals and priorities, are you intentionally connecting them to the mission and goals of our organization?

Best Practices

Gallup has studied the wellbeing and human behavior of 98% of the world's population and uncovered the common elements of thriving wellbeing. As a manager, you influence an employee's career, social, financial, physical and community wellbeing. By focusing on Q07, Q05 and Q08, the best managers incorporate the following behaviors into their management style:

- Be supportive and individualize your approach. Doing these things will help communicate that you genuinely care about each person and their success.
- Identify opportunities to connect your organization's employee resources to the five elements of wellbeing.
- Take small actions weekly to connect with your employees on a more personal level.
- Celebrate the small wins by creating a safe environment for employees to convey their ideas.
- Create an environment where people appreciate and look out for one another.