

A Guide To Transforming Employee Engagement

How to improve your workplace wellbeing.

Your Employees Are Disengaged. It's time to take action.

A guide for leaders.

It's 2024. And the modern workplace culture is broken. It's increasingly draining our life force energy, leaving us depleted and managing a workforce of unwell beings.

Around the world, employees are disengaged. In fact, engagement is now at an all-time low.

This isn't just a health crisis, but a significant barrier to organizational success and personal fulfilment.

At the center of it all is stress – with you and your teams feeling overwhelmed and exhausted day to day.

So what can you do? The first thing to understand is that stress is more than just an individual issue. Far from it. It's actually a systemic problem you'll find in most organizations.

That's why tackling it head-on needs a more holistic approach. One that recognizes stress as a deep-rooted organizational issue – which requires an organizational solution.

But there is something you can do about it. And simple changes can have a massive impact.

3 things

If you take just three things away from this guide, it should be this...

- You should feel equipped as a leader to identify disengagement and stress in your teams – and how to address it in your organization head-on.
- You should understand the importance of your own personal wellbeing – because a healthy leader sets the tone for a healthy team.
- You should know how to access Pavelka's wellbeing resources for leaders – and your organization as a whole.

State of the Global Workplace 2024

The latest from Gallup

Gallup, the world's leading analytics firm, has published their latest report on the global workplace*.

Looking at engagement at work in 2024...

...the results are shocking.

*Gallup's State of the Global Workplace Report 2024.

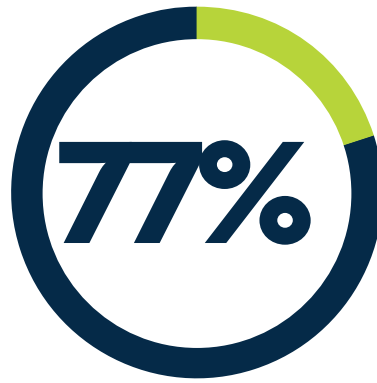
Global employee engagement has plummeted to a new low of

23% ↓

64%

say they experienced toxic behavior*

This means a staggering



are either actively disengaged or not engaged at all.

66%

of workers report they are struggling or suffering at work

83%

say they would take a pay cut to be happier at work

Overall employee wellbeing has declined.

Having leaders and managers who are engaged at work has a massive impact on their teams.

70%

of the variance in team engagement can be attributed to the manager.



But the most dramatic statistic is even more worrying.

52%

of employees say they are watching for or actively seeking a new job.

This is clearly a ticking time bomb in the modern workplace.

It's time to take action.

Excerpts from the report

"In the last 10 years, the number of people expressing stress, sadness, anxiety, anger or worry has been on the rise, reaching its highest levels since the Gallup surveys began."

"Leaders know workplace stress is a problem — they've seen the data, heard it from their colleagues, and experienced it themselves. A quarter of leaders feel burned out often or always, and two-thirds feel it at least sometimes. Many are trying to address it, but often in ineffective ways."

"Because managers often provide emotional support to employees and direct them to mental health resources, any initiative to address employee mental health and wellbeing should recognize that managers are not immune from suffering — in fact, they may need the most support in some cases."

"Those who work in companies with bad management practices (actively disengaged) are nearly 60% more likely to be stressed than people working in environments with good management practices (engaged). In fact, experiencing "a lot of stress" is reported approximately 30% more frequently by employees working under bad management than by the unemployed."

"Mindfulness and wellbeing apps aren't the problem, but when bad management uses them as a fix, it can make things worse... So, what works better? [The solution] is changing the way people are managed at the organizational level."

These are just a few examples that need your attention.

The people behind the numbers.

When looking at statistics, it's easy to forget that these are real people. They are not just numbers on a report.

What we are seeing is a human story of disconnection, burnout and yearning for a better work experience.

These are your people. They're your employees, your colleagues, but also your friends, your neighbors and your family. Let that sink in for a moment.

But if the numbers tell us anything, it's this. Most leaders are failing to nurture the wellbeing of their most valuable asset – their people.

The traditional approach of 'fixing' the employee often misses the mark. Instead, you need to address the root cause – a culture of stress and burnout that's systemic in your organization.

As a leader, you have the power to be a catalyst for change, fostering a thriving workplace where engagement and wellbeing flourish.

But to make real changes to the overall wellbeing of your team, you must implement meaningful changes to your company culture.



Understanding Employee Engagement.

Begins with Acceptance.

This isn't simply about your employees feeling satisfied with their role and their salary. It's about a deep sense of connection, of purpose, and the feeling of thriving at work.

You could start by asking yourself these questions. Be honest.

Thriving at work

Do your employees feel supported, equipped and empowered to reach their full potential?

The chance to grow

Does your company offer opportunities for growth and development, fostering a sense of career progression?

Community spirit

Do employees feel a sense of belonging at your organization?
Is it easy to collaborate and connect with their teammates?

Leadership

Do the leaders and managers in your organization inspire trust, provide clear direction and champion employee wellbeing?

Whole person

Does your company acknowledge employees as multifaceted individuals with lives outside of work?

Are these personal stories and achievements shared internally and celebrated?

Tackling stress in the workplace.

Today, tomorrow and beyond.

It's clear. The root cause of disengagement is systemic stress. And it doesn't switch off when the work day is done. Stress makes a greater impact on the lives of your team, as they juggle personal work-life integration every day.

Not everything can be changed immediately. But culture change begins at the top. It begins with leaders. And you can start putting wellbeing into your daily practices – today!

What can I do... right now?

Open up a conversation

Schedule a meeting or forum with your team about stress and burnout. Be courageous! Let them know you're there to support them – encourage them to be open about their workload and overall wellbeing.

Begin workload reviews

Put in place a quick audit of current workloads. Can any tasks be redistributed or delegated? Prioritize essential projects to streamline their work.

Encourage breaks and vacations

Everyone needs time to mentally recharge. Be proactive and take your breaks, and make sure your team do the same. All vacations should be positively encouraged. Perhaps suggest short walks or mindfulness exercises during the day – resources are available through Pavelka's employee wellbeing portal.

Recognize the early signs

Always be mindful of changes in behavior. Things like missed deadlines or disengagement. Schedule a friendly one-on-one to check in and offer support.

What can I do... in the next few months?

Schedule training and development

There are a lot of resources out there, and the right training programs can improve efficiency and reduce workload. Pavelka offers a variety of online courses on time management, stress reduction and effective communication skills.

Switch up performance reviews

Realign your performance reviews – make them an opportunity to discuss workload, wellbeing and stress at work. They'll appreciate having a voice and feeling like their concerns are heard.

Meaningful team-building activities

Forget the cliches. Get together and create tailored activities your team will actually want to participate in. Done well, they can foster stronger relationships and improve communication within your teams.

What can I do... longer term?

Always look to a culture of wellbeing

As we know, there are no quick fixes. A long-term strategy to tackle stress will require a longer-term shift in your company culture. This starts with the healthier habits we've talked about.

Look at work-life integration initiatives

Can your organization offer benefits and programs to promote work-life integration? These can be subsidized gym memberships, home delivered recipe boxes, and on-site childcare options.

Regular, open feedback

Last but not definitely not least. You need to listen. Make sure employee satisfaction surveys are in place, and the results openly discussed and actioned.

A Workplace Re-engagement Action Plan.

Leading by Example.

To re-engage you need to tackle your own stress levels. And the key to heading off systemic stress at your organization is to pause, recognize and reset. Asking yourself these questions is a great place to start.

What was just for me today? You can't pour from an empty cup. So just like your team, you need to recharge. Schedule time for activities that nourish your mind, body, and spirit – Pavelka's Four Elements support this. Choose to do something for yourself each day in order to keep your own energy levels high.

Did I express myself today? Bottling up emotions will lead to stress and burnout. Openly communicate with someone you trust about your challenges. Prepare what you want to say and who you want to say it to in advance. This means you'll feel confident in your words and are able to express yourself clearly.

Did I share today? It's important to release your thoughts and feelings, even small ones. Lots of leaders struggle with this. But sharing your own challenges is the best way to normalize mental health discussions within your team. Always strive to be more open, every day.

What am I doing tomorrow? To help manage stress levels, try not to think too far ahead and to stay present in the moment. Stay focused on today's tasks, and allow yourself only to think about tomorrow – not a distant date in the far future. What do you need to do today, to feel prepared for tomorrow?

Your leader's workplace action plan

Step 1

Watch the video...



Step 2

Complete your action plan

2. Today the person I will share with is

1. Today I will do this just for me

3. Today I will express myself in the following way

4. The one thing I can expect tomorrow is

"It's essential to start with introspection before looking outward at your team. Empower your team to cultivate safe spaces, reinforce their sense of purpose, address their needs proactively, and deliver support. While driving engagement is a critical business objective, recognizing and meeting human needs is the way it is achieved. And there are practical steps can you take today."

Jessie Pavelka, CEO and co-founder

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