



THE BIG E

What true engagement
at work looks like

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limeade®

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EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IS MORE THAN A BUZZWORD

Employee engagement. Company leaders want it for their employees, but very few push beyond program participation to address and feel the true benefits of engagement. In fact, employee engagement has been stagnant for decades despite deep investments in this space.¹

At Limeade, we believe it doesn't have to be this way — and we're here to help.

In the next few pages, you'll learn what employee engagement is, why it matters and what practices and policies need to be in place to help boost employee engagement at your company. Most importantly, we'll give you some tips on how you can start improving employee engagement today.



SECTION 1: THE WHAT

WHAT IS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT?

AT LIMEADE, WE DEFINE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AS A DEEP CONNECTION AND SENSE OF PURPOSE AT WORK THAT CREATES EXTRA ENERGY AND COMMITMENT.

Engaged employees feel a sense of purpose and energy. They never say, “That’s not in my job description. I’m not paid enough to do that.”

IT’S ALL ABOUT ENERGY...

People often confuse job satisfaction with employee engagement. But that burst of energy people feel actually comes from being engaged in their work — not just with how satisfied they are while at work.

It’s like being “in the flow” — when you get so caught up in what you’re doing that you lose track of time. You’re challenged, but not overwhelmed.



SECTION 1: THE WHAT

WHAT DOES EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT LOOK LIKE?

Engaged employees are focused, energized and enthusiastic. This leads to:

PERSISTENCE: They work harder over longer periods of time, and won't give up when something tough comes along.

INITIATIVE: They take action early, without waiting for a manager to tell them what to do.

ADAPTABILITY: They can change with the environment — including interpersonal adaptability, learning, dealing effectively with unpredictable situations and solving problems creatively.

UNDERSTANDING THEIR ROLE IN

THE BIGGER PICTURE: They go above and beyond, and see how their responsibilities impact the business.

ROLE EXPANSION: They think of their role broadly — and often go one step further, displaying more discretionary effort than their counterparts who aren't engaged. They help others, fix mistakes someone else made and step out of the box to solve a problem for the business.

COMPANY SPOTLIGHT



Mercury Insurance is one of the largest auto insurance companies in the country. They launched into wellness more than a decade ago, but found the traditional health risk program didn't drive action. In 2016, Mercury partnered with Limeade to create a new program built on mutual trust and whole-person well-being. They eliminated biometric screening requirements, made all challenges self-reported and increased resources associated with stress management, financial well-being and teamwork.

They also empowered Well-Being Champions and department managers to adapt the program to their own sub-cultures. Paired with key changes around trust, manager support and spouse participation, Mercury's program helped employees feel a deeper connection and sense of purpose at work. And they have the business results to prove it: Since launch, well-being and productivity have measurably improved, and employee engagement is up by 5.8 percent — suggesting a \$930,000 annual revenue increase, according to an Aon Hewitt formula.

LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

Engagement isn't an all-or-nothing game. Employees can be invested in their work but not in their company. Or they might feel connected to their team but not feel aligned with their higher purpose. Here are the main levels of engagement to keep in mind:

WORK ENGAGEMENT:

How an employee is connected with the actual work she does. If she doesn't feel a strong connection to her work, then consider redesigning her job to better reflect her talents and interests.

TEAM ENGAGEMENT:

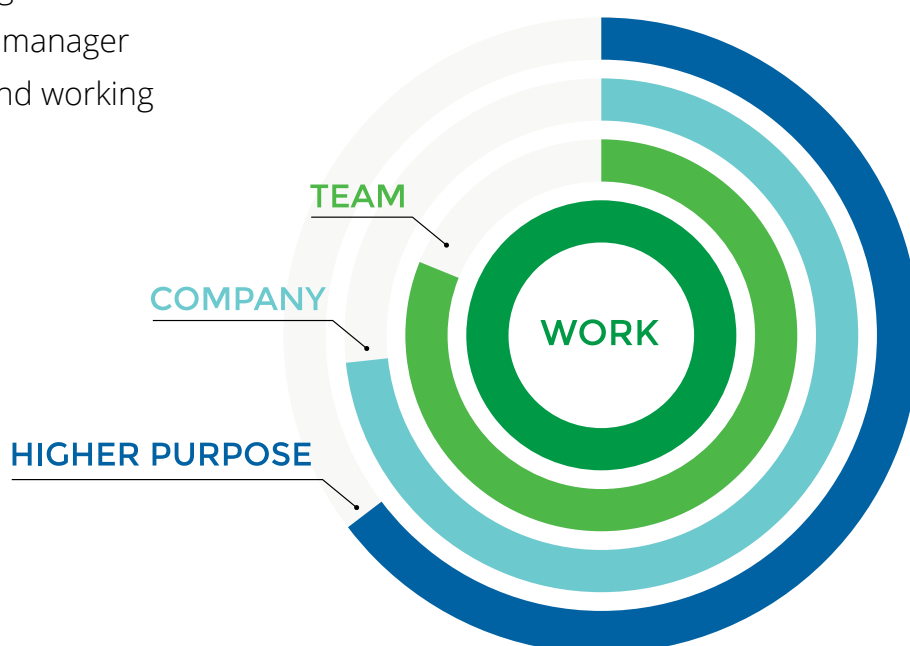
How an employee is connected with her immediate team. To create a stronger connection, the team must be aligned to a common goal, have a supportive manager and feel they're all contributing and working well together.

COMPANY ENGAGEMENT:

How an employee is connected with the company. It's largely up to a company's leadership to help employees feel connected to their work. It starts when leaders create a shared vision and inspire employees to achieve it.

HIGHER PURPOSE ENGAGEMENT:

How an employee is connected with her higher purpose for work. To strengthen a weak connection, employees need to feel their work is contributing to something bigger than themselves. This can be a higher purpose that the company is trying to achieve — the company's mission or reason for existence.



SECTION 2: THE WHY

WHY ENGAGEMENT MATTERS

Engaged employees means better business results, plain and simple. Engaged employees are focused, energized and enthusiastic. They enjoy their work.

They help boost productivity and profits. In other words, boosting engagement is good for people and for companies.

COMPANIES WITH HIGH ENGAGEMENT:

OUTPERFORM THE STOCK MARKET ¹

More than

65%

have **higher shareholder** returns than average

ARE MORE LUCRATIVE ²

78%

more profitable and 40 percent more productive

HAVE STRONGER INTERNAL METRICS ³

5x

more likely to achieve **high performance** with high engagement

BENEFITS OF AN ENGAGED WORKFORCE:

PERFORMANCE ⁴

Employees with the highest level of commitment perform **20 percent better** and are

87%

less likely to **leave the organization**

SAFETY ⁵

5x

less likely to have a safety incident

GROWTH ⁶

Firms with engaged employees have stock price growth nearly

2.5x

that of peers

¹ Macey, Schneider, Barbera and Young, 2009

² Aon Hewitt (2009). What Makes a Company a Best Employer?

³ Gallup, Inc (2011). Employee Engagement.

⁴ 2007 SHRM Research Quarterly, Leveraging Employee Engagement for Competitive Advantage: HR's Strategic Role.

⁵ SHRM "Employee Engagement and Commitment," Robert J. Vance Ph.D.

⁶ Giving Everyone the Chance to Shine, Hay Group, 2010.

SECTION 3: THE HOW

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ENGAGEMENT AND WELL-BEING

Employee engagement isn't something that will change overnight. It takes time, effort and an intentional strategy to build a strong connection between companies and their employees. The best way to think about how to drive engagement is to start with well-being.

At Limeade, we believe true engagement comes when people feel good and have a sense of purpose, both in their jobs and outside of work. That's why we think the best way to approach employee engagement is through the lens of whole-person well-being.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND WELL-BEING ARE CONNECTED.

COMPANY SPOTLIGHT



Known for its Maggiano's and Chili's restaurants, Brinker is recognized for its exceptional customer service and team members who demonstrate integrity, teamwork and passion. But in the fast-paced restaurant industry known for 73 percent turnover year-over-year, keeping employees engaged and productive is a key goal for Brinker. The "Brinker Well-being Program" addresses five essential elements of well-being: social, community, financial, physical and career.

They also recognize the power of manager support for well-being, especially in fast-paced restaurant settings, which is proven to help reduce turnover and ultimately boost engagement over time. As such, the company provides extra resources to managers to improve their own well-being, and support their employees. They've also started to see better business results. Employees registered for their well-being program have 22.6 percent lower turnover rates!

SECTION 3: THE HOW

ALIGNING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT WITH WHOLE-PERSON WELL-BEING

WE DEFINE WELL-BEING AS FEELING GOOD + LIVING WITH PURPOSE.

When you consider everything in an employee's life — their physical, emotional, financial and work well-being — you're acknowledging that what happens in one part of a person's life affects every other part of their life. In seeing employees as

whole people, organizations can better support employee well-being and reconnect employees to what motivates them in their jobs.

Research shows that when employees have well-being in their lives, they're more engaged. More engaged employees means better business results.

WHEN PEOPLE FEEL THEIR EMPLOYER SUPPORTS WELL-BEING, THEY ARE:

38%

more engaged¹

18%

more likely to go the extra mile²

28%

more likely to recommend their workplace as a great place to work³

17%

more likely to still work there after one year⁴

SECTION 3: THE HOW

ALIGNING ENGAGEMENT WITH ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

Many leaders assume employees are responsible for their own well-being and engagement at work — so they hire for passion or energy. But once these enthusiastic employees start working, your organization needs to support them in ways that keep them engaged. **WE CALL THIS ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT FOR WELL-BEING.**

When a company has strong organizational support, an employee feels like their company really cares. The resources, communication, reinforcement and encouragement leaders give their employees ultimately helps them become engaged.

IN FACT, WHEN EMPLOYEES HAVE HIGH WELL-BEING AND FEEL HIGH LEVELS OF ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT, YOU SEE REAL BUSINESS RESULTS:

99%

recommend their company as a great place to work¹

91%

say they intend to stay²

88%

feel engaged at work³

SECTION 3: THE HOW

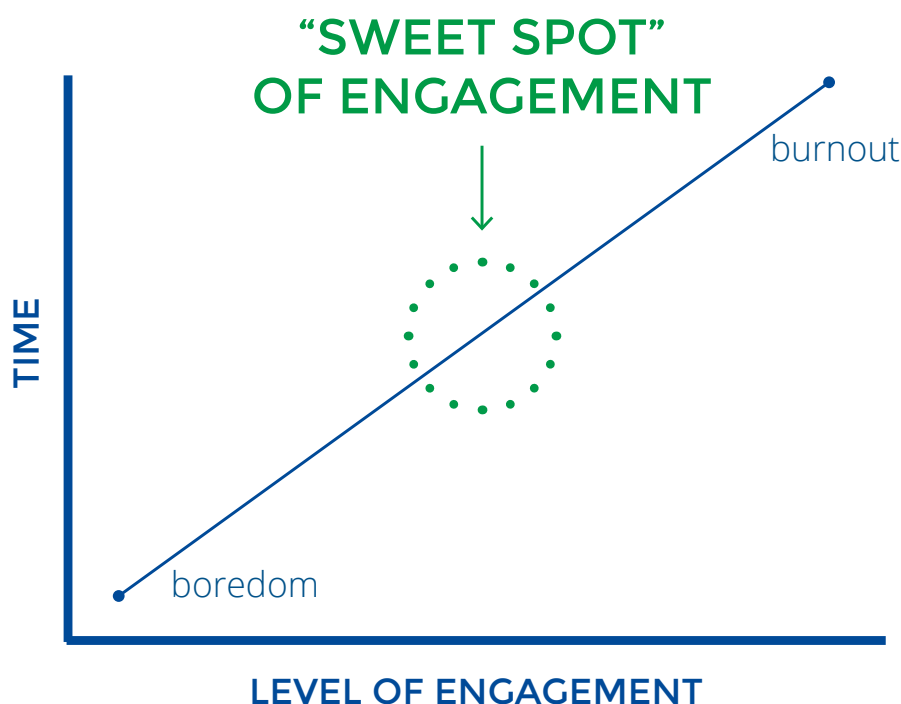
ALIGNING ON THE SWEET SPOT OF ENGAGEMENT

The reasons why an employee might perform poorly, have low morale or quit can usually be attributed to two things — **they're either disengaged or working so hard that they burnout.** So how do you find that sweet spot?

Employees who have lost trust in the organization or don't feel supported can be disengaged.

They see their job as just a job or a paycheck. And they tend not to exert extra energy or go above and beyond.

On the flip side, employees who are deeply invested in their work over long periods of time without recovery have a higher risk of burnout and exhaustion. That means your most engaged employees have the potential to become “hyper-engaged,” which is not sustainable over long periods of time.





SECTION 3: THE HOW

HOW DO YOU HELP PREVENT BURNOUT?

It's critical that employees are not continuously tapped dry. There must be time and intention behind recovery. Not only does this hyper-engagement lead to exhaustion (physical and emotional), but it also leads to cynicism and feelings of inefficacy that can have a negative impact on other employees. Most importantly, hyper-engagement can turn a high performing employee into a disengaged one over time.

The goal is to find the sweet spot — engaging employees without burning them out —which requires organizational awareness and support.

An organization focused on employee well-being is one way to ensure your people replenish and recharge — so make this a priority for them!

Facilitate trust and support employees in their pursuit of meaningful work, while encouraging balance and well-being so burnout and disengagement can be better prevented.

Managers are a critical partner in helping reduce burnout, so equip them with the tools, training and resources they need to support their employees.

SECTION 3: THE HOW

SUSTAINING ENGAGEMENT

Companies can create a supportive environment to encourage sustained engagement in their employees. Here are some elements that must be in place to help employees feel engaged:

- **AUTONOMY:** Employees need to have autonomy to make decisions and “own” aspects of their work
- **CHALLENGE:** Employees need opportunities to grow and develop in their work
- **FEEDBACK:** Employees need to receive regular, constructive feedback
- **MEANING:** Employees need to see the connection between their work and the organization’s mission
- **MANAGER SUPPORT:** Employees need to have a manager that supports them
 - Employees are more productive, efficient and loyal when they have a strong relationship with their manager
 - Employees who rate their manager as excellent are 5x more engaged than those who rate their manager as poor¹
 - Managers account for up to 70 percent of variance in employee engagement²



TAKE ACTION

TOP TIPS FOR IMPROVING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Now that you know what employee engagement looks like, why it's important and how to achieve it at your company, it's time to put insights into action. Not only will your employees thank you, but your executive team will, too.

HERE'S HOW ...

1

BE THOUGHTFUL ABOUT JOB DESIGN (AND REDESIGN)

It's easy to spend a lot of effort trying to measure and improve engagement, without even considering the actual work employees do. Often, little thought has been given to the actual design of the job — what are the business problems the job is solving? Is there the “right” amount of ownership? Is there inherent meaning in the job? Are employees challenged enough and are they realizing their potential? If employees indicate they're bored, not challenged or lacking purpose, re-engage them by redesigning their roles.

2

GO DEEPER WITH EMPOWERMENT & GIVE EMPLOYEES MEANING

When employees feel like they have a purpose at work and authority to make decisions that impact their job, they feel a greater sense of ownership and commitment to their organization. Create mechanisms for employees to have a say and take action based on what you hear. Push decision-making and autonomy to the front lines (your greatest assets). Have managers frequently talk with employees about how their job contributes to the overall mission of the company. These things combined will help employees feel more connected and invigorated.



3

ACTIVELY SUPPORT GROWTH & LEARNING — WITH REGULAR FEEDBACK

To feel engaged, employees need to feel like they're developing and growing. This means creating opportunities for challenge and career movement (not just up) — and making sure managers understand and support employees' career aspirations. Ensure employees are learning new skills and

are offered stretch assignments and new opportunities. Most importantly, make sure you're providing regular feedback on areas of improvement, so your employees can actually grow. Think beyond positive feedback or just poking holes in their work. Employees crave clear, constructive suggestions.

SUPPORT EMPLOYEES HOLISTICALLY

Individuals feel more valued when their organization values the whole employee — their physical, emotional, financial and work well-being. And feeling valued is an important precursor to employee engagement. It's important to simply connect on the human level and ask people how they're doing.

- **FOSTER GOOD MANAGERS:**

Managers are one of your most important assets when it comes to supporting employees. Uphold high standards for your managers and support their growth through training, articulating expectations for their role, arranging new manager meetups and more. If managers aren't supported and treated well, it will be difficult for them to do the same for their employees.

- **FOCUS ON LEADERSHIP:** The quality of your organization's leadership can either support engagement or be an engagement inhibitor. Make sure leaders walk the talk and understand what's expected of them — and hold them accountable. One way to engage leadership is to have them sponsor activities as a way to demonstrate support.
- **SUPPORT EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING:** Offer activities and benefits that help employees improve across their physical, emotional, financial and work well-being. Things like healthy activities at work, stress relief breaks, remote working opportunities and financial skills training.
- **VALUE EMPLOYEES AND TREAT THEM FAIRLY:** Ensure your employees are working reasonable hours and give them time off to recharge. Make sure there is a good balance between input and reward by encouraging frequent recognition for a job well done, leadership opportunities and adequate manager support.

CONCLUSION

THE WORLD OF WORK IS CHANGING. LIMEADE IS HERE TO HELP.

We're an employee engagement platform that builds great places to work by improving well-being and strengthening workplace culture. At Limeade, we believe true engagement comes when people feel good and have a sense of purpose. That's why we focus on the whole person and the whole company, with tools and programs that support both.

Our technology is simple, compelling and backed by science. We pull together well-being, engagement and social recognition software into one seamless experience — one that brings workplace culture to life and helps employees and companies feel more connected. Through personalized challenges, social activities and interactive learning, we help people improve their overall well-being and reconnect to what motivates them in their jobs. This boosts engagement at work — and gives companies the business results they want.



About the author

DR. LAURA HAMILL

Laura is the Chief People Officer at Limeade, an employee engagement platform that builds great places to work by improving well-being and strengthening workplace culture. She leads the People Team and nurtures the Limeade culture of improvement while developing groundbreaking people practices and architecting employee engagement strategies for Limeade and its 100+ enterprise customers.

Laura is also the Managing Director of the Limeade Institute, which conducts research, establishes market points of view and keeps a pulse on the latest employee well-being and engagement trends. She earned her Ph.D. in industrial/organizational psychology from Old Dominion University and a B.S. in psychology from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Laura lives in Woodinville, Washington, with her husband, two children and a very large dog.

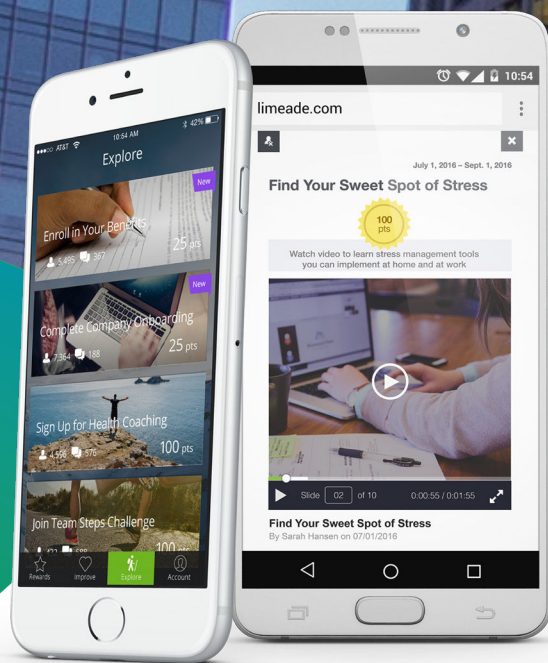


Limeade is good for people
and for companies.

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