



HOW TO NAVIGATE A CONSOLIDATING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT MARKET

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The corporate wellness industry grew up. And with maturity comes mergers, acquisitions, private equity fire sales and sometimes reinventions, re-invigorations and rebirths. There's been a surge of activity in recent years — like Marlin Equity Partners acquiring RedBrick Health and Virgin Pulse; the consolidation of players like Castlight and Jiff; and most recently, LinkedIn acquiring Glint. All this change can be confusing — but it also can lead to advances in innovation and meaningful differentiation. **Eventually.**

For now, some vendors will double down on their clinical legacies, others will focus on solving the nitty gritty of benefits administration and some will put their chips on the path from well-being to an “employee engagement platform” moving well beyond wellness.

Most industry veterans have seen similar scenarios play out in other HR categories, and these changes can be overwhelming. They've heard all the promises and seen more hype than help. But this change might be easier to keep up with than they think.



WOULDN'T IT BE NICE TO CONSOLIDATE EVERYTHING

INTO A SINGLE, INTEGRATED SOLUTION THAT TOUCHES ALL AREAS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT?

Of course — and solid platforms with integration capabilities are being merged, acquired and hacked together. But few are intentionally developed to solve the needs of employees first, while still checking most boxes for most budget owners across various HR functions. From learning to inclusion to well-being and more.



“ 2018 WILL SEE THE FULL EMERGENCE OF THE INTEGRATED ENGAGEMENT PLATFORM...”

...which will combine features and benefits from closely related technology categories, such as well-being, recognition, learning, and engagement measurement... Expect new leaders to emerge at the platform level as vendors expand beyond their traditional categories. Companies will be best served with an integrated approach to engagement.”

BRET STARR,

Founder and CEO of The Starr Conspiracy

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH: EVOLVING TO EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

The wellness mindset goes something like this: a healthy employee is more productive and costs less to insure. Now ask yourself... where does the real life, multi-faceted human fit in here? Does this approach account for employee choice, their habits, the characteristics that make them unique? The truth is, real well-being is a whole person thing, and wellness doesn't begin to scratch the surface.

Physical, mental, social, work and even financial well-being factors are hard to separate. Companies that invest in their employees' whole-person well-being — broadly defined — see lower turnover, greater employee engagement, improved health outcomes, enhanced workplace cultures and measurable returns on investment.

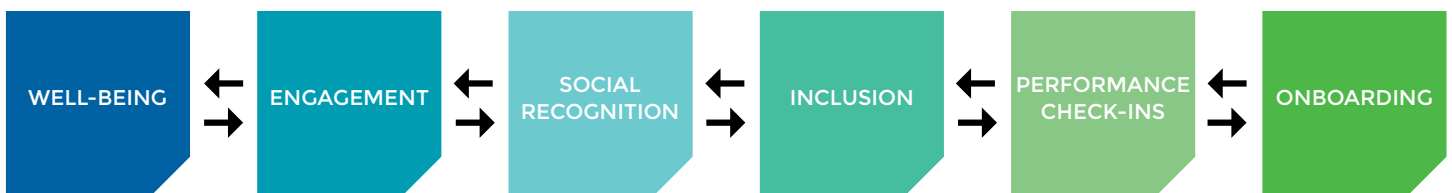
The importance of engagement cannot be

overstated. Well-being and engagement are statistically inseparable. Engaged employees — those who go the extra mile because they have real emotional connections to their work — are more productive, cost less and stay longer. Their purposeful work is the engine of all great companies.

In fact, research from Gallup, Limeade and many others shows that engaged employees are healthier and employees with better well-being are more engaged. So, which should companies focus on?

The answer's simple: **Both.**

Employees who are engaged and have high well-being miss 70 percent fewer workdays because of poor health over the course of a year¹. And 88 percent of employees who feel they have higher well-being are more engaged at work, which results in lower turnover².



CAN YOU REALLY BE ENGAGED AT WORK WHEN YOU HAVE LOW WELL-BEING IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE?

Or vice versa? Can you leave work energized if your boss never lets you be yourself, or corporate rules prohibit you from stepping out for some fresh air? Companies have realized that employee wellness, or even well-being, wouldn't work in the benefits silo — not for a lack of goodwill or good tech — but for a lack of personal and perhaps more importantly, **organizational relevance.**

TIP:

This “employee experience” buzz is not going away.

By creating an immersive experience that spans whole-person well-being, whole-company support for people and the connections that promote the right company benefit or program to the right person at the right time, employers can finally do what they've wanted to all along. They can offer relevant programs. They can see the proof that it's working. Their own data is showing them how well-being drives engagement, how engagement drives business results and the exciting relationships between ideas that once lived in different silos.



EMPLOYEES WANT A SIMPLE EXPERIENCE

Today, employers expect technology solutions to embrace a whole-employee approach to well-being, while addressing other key elements of the employee experience. Buyers are looking for an immersive experience that weaves together well-being and employee engagement with other elements like social recognition, inclusion, learning, performance management and more.

They want an authentic employee brand experience. This means consistent messages and predictable norms, values and behaviors (AKA culture) from pre-hire to first meeting to daily grind to promotion to pregnancy to offboarding to alumni status. They know that

their brands are built every day, at every touchpoint and at every step of the employee journey. Most old-school, transactional HR solutions have failed to achieve the relevance to promise anything close to this.

And savvy HR leaders, vendors and investors see a roadblock up ahead: The market is heavy on stand-alone solutions, and light on seamlessly connected user experiences. Services for learning, performance management, engagement, analytics, recruiting, rewards, recognition and well-being are competing for the hearts and minds of our employees.





TO REALLY ATTRACT THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF EMPLOYEES, LEADERS MUST UNDERSTAND THAT LAUNCHING A NEW TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM ALONE ISN'T GOING TO SOLVE EVERYTHING.

Leaders must look at how they're authentically supporting employees through their culture, the work environment, managers, leaders, team structure, process and much more.

Authentically supporting employees goes much further than finding the silver bullet technology. And it's definitely not just a wellness steps challenge. In fact, when employees feel like their company authentically cares about them, they're 38 percent more engaged at work³. And when they have well-being and feel supported, they're 99 percent likely to recommend your company as a great place to work⁴.

And of course, Limeade is addressing employee engagement through the lens of well-being. We believe this is the most powerful lens — because it's all about people — and helping them take meaningful action. We're thrilled to see our organically grown, award-winning culture innovate, and excited to be the only company to combine employee engagement, well-being, inclusion, social recognition and HR program aggregation in one top-rated employee experience.

THREE AREAS TO FOCUS ON TODAY

HERE ARE SOME BEST PRACTICES TO FOLLOW WHEN YOU'RE PURCHASING TECHNOLOGY IN AN UNSTEADY ENVIRONMENT:

1. PRIORITIZE YOUR NEEDS AS AN ORGANIZATION:

What major issue is your organization trying to solve? In a crowded market, many challenges and solutions exist — but you need to prioritize what's critical to your success. So, you must start with business goals. Only then can you prioritize the key capabilities you need to meet your overarching business goals. What features aren't as important? What can be consolidated to make your life easier?

2. ADDRESS THOSE NEEDS:

Today, one platform that “does it all” simply doesn't exist. There are dozens of silos to unite. But the solution you choose should solve at least three or four related, “we care about our people” problems. List your highest priority areas like well-being, engagement, social recognition, inclusion or “tying it all together” in one experience. If your main goal is to improve employee engagement, look for a partner that specializes in engagement as its main driver— not for a benefits provider with a small engagement feature, or a fun but ultimately irrelevant stand-alone offering.

3. CONSIDER CONFIGURATION AND INTEGRATION CAPABILITIES INSTEAD OF ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL:

One positive development of the consolidation phase? Companies want to make it easy for you to map your culture and goals in their own brand voice, and to connect all your vendors. Choose the (integration-ready) platform with the right core strengths that you love — and tailor it to meet your own unique needs. Ask to see their developer toolkits and APIs, even. This will help you optimize your current program investment, while curating a seamless, immersive experience for your employees.

CONCLUSION

MERGERS, ACQUISITIONS AND FUNDING DRIVE INNOVATION AND GROWTH — BUT IT'S NOT ALL FUN AND GAMES FOR CLIENTS AND BUYERS.

TODAY'S WELL-BEING SOLUTIONS FOLLOW THREE PATHS:

- Remaining focused on lowering healthcare costs with a clinical approach
- Doubling down to solve the nitty gritty of benefits administration
- Evolving to drive real employee engagement with an immersive experience that weaves together well-being with elements like social recognition, inclusion, engagement and more

What does your organization need right now and in the future? You're the only one who can answer these questions for your organization. When you do, you'll find the provider that aligns best with your business strategy — and your employees' needs.



Limeade is an employee engagement company that builds great places to work by improving well-being and strengthening workplace culture. Limeade integrates well-being, engagement, inclusion and social recognition software into one seamless experience that brings workplace culture to life and inspires a strong connection between employees and companies.

With Limeade, employees reconnect to what motivates them at work, which boosts engagement and gives companies the business results they want. Recognized for its own award-winning culture, Limeade is helping the world's best companies change the way they work.

To learn more, visit limeade.com.



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