

Employee Engagement Global trends to note

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Employee engagement is one of the most important differentiators for organizations, and it's an issue that nearly every organizational leader has thought about recently. It's the emotional commitment an employee has to their role, their organization, and stakeholders. Engaged employees feel like part of a larger mission, are aware of how their work helps them grow, and understand the impact they make on others.

When employees feel engaged, results have shown that organizations benefit from higher customer satisfaction levels, improved productivity, and greater profits. So what can you focus on this year to reap the benefits of employee engagement in your own organization?

In this article, we'll review some important global employee engagement trends that you can leverage on.

1. Employers have a to work on increasing employee engagement

Around the world, employee engagement is trending low. The differences from one country or region to the next are slight, making it clear that around the world employers have work to do to improve the experience for their people in 2020. On average all countries are below 60% in terms of employee engagement index.

1. Confidence in senior leadership is top engagement driver

Employee engagement reflects employees' willingness to go beyond the status quo, emotional connection to the organization, intent to stay with the organization, and dedication to the work itself. In this study, we measured several key drivers of employee engagement, such as opportunities for growth & development, manager effectiveness, support & resources, etc., to better understand what aspects of the employee experience have the greatest impact on engagement. Our results show that people's confidence in senior leadership to make the right decisions for the company as well as their experiences with growth and development, strategic alignment, and manager effectiveness are the top drivers of engagement among employees around the world. 53% of the participants value confidence in senior leadership to make the right decisions for the company.

1. Tenure has no significant impact on engagement

While tenure doesn't significantly impact engagement, we found that the drivers of engagement differ slightly by tenure group.

The most important engagement driver for employees with less than two years of tenure is

‘opportunities for learning and development’ whereas ‘confidence in senior leadership to make the right decisions for the company’s rose to the top for more tenured employees (4+ years).

1. Asking for feedback boosts engagement

While global engagement is relatively low at 53%, our results show that having a feedback program dramatically improves engagement. Employees want to provide feedback, but they care about organizations and managers taking action even more. Those who said their company provides a feedback program are more engaged. 59% of employees who said their company provides a feedback program are engaged and 42% of employees who said their company does not provide a feedback program are engaged.

1. Employers should not just ask, they should listen and act

For those that have an opportunity to provide feedback, 2 in 3 indicate it is “very important” that their employers listen to that feedback. 63% of respondents reported having an opportunity to give feedback, however only 35% of them indicated that their company turns their feedback into action “very or extremely well”.

1. Turning feedback into action leads to higher engagement

Engagement score for those who feel their company turns their feedback into action really well, regardless of the frequency, was 80% compared to 40% for those who feel their companies do not turn feedback into action “well at all” or even “slightly well”.

Our study shows that while asking for employee feedback and the frequency with which organizations ask have an impact on employee engagement scores, it is whether the employee feels the company turns feedback into action that really moves the needle when it comes to engagement.

1. Career development and management are one of the key employee retention strategies.

Employee turnover is very costly for organizations and can directly impact business performance. But understanding and improving employees’ experiences in the workplace can help reduce those costs. At Qualtrics, we use a time-bound question in the hopes of identifying the experience gaps and reducing flight risk between employees who have one foot out the door and those who are planning to stay for the long haul.

Our study found that 18% of employees around the world intend to stay at their company for less than a year while 16% intend to stay for less than 2 years.

1. Direction as key driver of intent to stay around the world

People need clear direction. They need to understand their role and its connection to the company’s goal. Investing in providing that direction whether through their own career trajectory or through

initiatives to get them closer to the company's objectives will have a clear impact on retention.

60% of the participants indicated that their company provides me with the opportunity for learning and development. 56% of the employees have confidence in the senior leadership team to make the right decisions for their company and 57% can see a clear link between their work and company's strategic objectives.

The retail industry is the highest when it comes to attrition risk with 26% of employees reporting they intend to stay for less than a year, while only 14% of employees in IT & Tech reported intending to stay less than 1 year. There's a significant variance in intent to stay across countries and regions. Workers in the UK, Australia and New Zealand are the most likely to leave.

1. Focus on employee and workplace wellness

60% of companies offer wellness programs to employees. Whereas only 14% of companies have identified the culture of health. (Optum)

More and more companies are taking up wellness initiatives for its employees. 2020 will only take this employee engagement trend further.

Employees spend a huge amount of their waking hours in their workplaces. Naturally, health has a lot to do with the work environment and work culture offered by the company.

"A healthy mind resides in a healthy body". Naturally, a healthy individual outperforms others. Health has a direct correlation with the productivity and performance level of employees. Hence, the bottom line of the company.

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