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THE WORLD
OF EMPLOYEE
ENGAGEMENT
IS CHANGING.

Are
you
ready?



Find out now ►

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It's time for companies to step up for their employees like never before. With new tools. Renewed inspiration. Strengthened communities. Expanded pathways. And cultures that invite employees in, connect them to what matters and bolster them with support.

The rules of employee engagement are changing—are you ready?

At AHA, we've spent this last year helping global leaders define the future of their workforces. Now, with this seven-question assessment, we're helping you take the next step toward defining yours.

59%

of leaders agree that employee experience impacts the bottom line.¹

60%

of leaders agree that their own organization needs to improve the employee experience.¹

1. *How Monitors Deepen Your Employee Experience and Support Your Distributed Workforce*, a Forrester Consulting thought leadership paper commissioned by Dell Technologies, July 2020.



**BEST SELF =
BEST WORK.**

Are you doing enough to nurture employee health—inside and outside of work?

🔥 **We'd like to think so, but we're always checking in to find out for sure.**

❄️ **Wait—there's life outside of work?**

Pandemic burnout is real. And if your employees aren't able to thrive, neither will your business. We're all trying new things—meeting-free days, flexible work schedules, health tips emailed out regularly. But is it enough?

Offering flexibility, compassion and empathy in the workplace helps to create a psychologically safe workplace. But that's just the start.

Employees also need concrete tools and avenues to achieve their health and wellbeing goals while navigating change. They also need regular opportunities to provide feedback on what's working and what's not. Leaders shouldn't assume that simply responding in new ways checks all the boxes.

23%
more employees report improved mental health with employer support.¹

21%
more employees are high performers in organizations that offer support for mental and physical health.¹

1. "9 Work Trends That HR leaders Can't Ignore in 2021," Gartner, January 21, 2021.



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**YOU NEED
A HYBRID-
POWERED
CULTURE.**

Will your culture survive virtualization?

🔥 You bet—changing it up has brought us closer than ever!

❄️ We're just focused on keeping the business going.

What makes an office special isn't the building or the furniture (or the snack room). It's the connections. Most companies contain a multitude of generational, social, racial and gender diversity. How and where it merges is part of the magic that defines each organization.

When most knowledge workers went virtual during the pandemic, it threw a wrench into a lot of the traditional culture-building avenues. And now, many businesses are facing a new issue—how to ensure they're building a single, cohesive culture rather than two, as some employees come back to the office and others stay remote.

While we're all waiting to see what the world at large will look like on the other side of COVID-19, getting intentional about fostering togetherness in your own little world doesn't need to wait—and it shouldn't. For employees, a sense of belonging has never been more urgent.

-5pts

Employees' sense of belonging was rated -5 points on a scale of -100 to 100 in Q3 2020.¹

1. "Moving Beyond Remote: Workplace Transformation in the Wake of COVID-19," Slack, October 7, 2020.



**LET THE
PROCESS SERVE
THE PEOPLE.**

How's your technology change management?

🔥 Everyone's on board, on the same page and ready to roll.

❄️ Is "communication" a required update?

When in-person meetings came off the table in 2020, remote collaboration rose to the fore. New tools and technology can help keep critical work going, as long as your employees are primed for it.

Most employees have been asked to disrupt their usual workflow to use a slew of new technologies and processes over the past year—some with success, others ... not so much.

Change always comes with challenge, and clear communication is the key to getting it right. Our advice is to start with the people, not the tools. Before you can even begin to talk about the tech itself, you have to acknowledge your team's pain points and promote the change in terms of benefits to them. Employees don't feel burdened when the change is wrapped in an engaging package that's customized just for them. They feel genuinely cared for, and adoption soars.

1 of the top 10
predictors of employee engagement
is company-provided resources and
technology to get their work done.¹

1. Forrester's EX Index, Q4 2020.

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Is your purpose still relevant to your people?

🔥 **100%. As the world changes, we're evolving, too.**

❄️ **We're scheduled to review our purpose every five years. Has anything changed?**

People crave purpose. If we want employees to be present on Zoom calls, it has to be clear why they're here and why it matters. And as major shifts in the social and cultural landscape occur, that purpose needs to be revisited and expressed in new ways to stay meaningful.

That doesn't mean just another feel-good campaign—it means action. Look to causes that are at the forefront of your employees' minds right now. And discover how your organization can contribute to them in unique and meaningful ways.

Substantive company initiatives that address human rights, sustainability, equity and social impact demonstrate you care enough about doing good that you're willing to invest in solutions and be held accountable for your impact. People can tell the difference between commitment and box-checking—especially your employees.

Ethical drivers are 3x
more important to company trust than competence.¹

74%
of employees expect their employer to become more actively involved in the cultural debates of the day.²

1. 2020 Edelman Trust Management Tracking Study.

2. Gartner 2020 ReimagineHR Employee Survey, April 2020.

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EMPLOYEES WANT A COMPANY THAT STANDS UP.

Are your leaders prepared to take an external stand on leading issues?

🔥 They're already standing!

❄️ Why rock the boat?

No one wants to wind up in the crosshairs. It's the number one reason we hear when companies say they're not ready to take a stand. They're afraid of becoming the target of the latest undercover investigation, protest or social media trending topic.

But here's the truth: Neutral is no longer an option. Not for your customers—and not for employees. People want leaders who aren't afraid to speak out.

If you're staying quiet, you're allowing others to tell your story for you. And it's one you may not like. It's better to be fully transparent about your shortcomings and intentions. Your employees are watching, and they'll be the first to post or tweet if they don't think you're walking the talk.

92%

of people surveyed agree that it's important that their employer's CEO speak out on one or more key social issues.¹

74%

of people surveyed agree that CEOs should take the lead on change rather than waiting for government to impose it.¹

1. 2020 Edelman Trust Barometer.

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LANGUAGE CAN FUEL BELONGING.

How inclusive is your inclusivity message, really?

🔥 **Every word matters—and we run each one through a careful lens.**

❄️ **We have a lot of diverse stock photos on our website.**

“Seat at the table.” “Inviting diverse voices.” “Minority.”

Without knowing it, most companies talk about diversity in ways that actually make people from marginalized communities feel unwelcome. That’s because the language most companies use—however well intentioned—springs from stereotypes and assumptions of cultural dominance that permeate our society.

How can companies change what they struggle to see? By getting intentional about the words they use and where their metaphors come from. Checking their internal biases. Listening to their people and striving to understand how they hear things. And doing the work of learning what it truly means to be a multiracial, multi-gender workforce.

Language alone won’t solve systemic oppression. But there’s a key role for language on the pathway to better.

68%
of employees reported experiencing bias in the workplace.¹

84%
of those same employees categorize the bias as microaggression.¹

¹ *The Bias Barrier: Allyships, Inclusion, and Everyday Behaviors*, Deloitte, 2019.



**EMPLOYEES
DESERVE
CLARITY.**

How clear is your message?

🔥 **Clear as a bell.**

❄️ **Clear as mud.**

The world can feel overwhelming right now. Questions about the future. Fallout from the past. Endless streams of digital noise and confusion. Your employees—along with everyone—are craving focus and connection.

Offer it to them with the gift of clarity.

Clarity is a powerful thing. When you reveal it by stripping away the chaos and vague language, it creates a deeply personal response. It's the excitement of discovery, paired with the sense of calmness and focus that comes from that defining moment when your understanding suddenly shifts, expands, and reverberates.

Many of the challenges and pitfalls of connecting with employees fall away when clarity enters the picture. It unifies your people and accelerates your impact. Clarity is what creates the “us.”

Just $\frac{1}{2}$
of employees believe their
employer is providing clarity
on how they will work.¹

1. COVID-19 and the Future of Business, IBM Institute for Business Value, 2020.



What are you ready for?

Summarize your answers to find out.

<p>1. Are you doing enough to nurture employee health—inside and outside of work?</p>	<p>We'd like to think so, but we're always checking in to find out for sure.</p>	<p>Wait—there's life outside of work?</p>
<p>2. Will your culture survive virtualization?</p>	<p>You bet—changing it up has brought us closer than ever!</p>	<p>We're just focused on keeping the business going.</p>
<p>3. How's your technology change management?</p>	<p>Everyone's on board, on the same page and ready to roll.</p>	<p>Is "communication" a required update?</p>
<p>4. Is your purpose still relevant to your people?</p>	<p>100%. As the world changes, we're evolving, too.</p>	<p>We're scheduled to review our purpose every five years. Has anything changed?</p>
<p>5. Are your leaders prepared to take an external stand on leading issues?</p>	<p>They're already standing!</p>	<p>Why rock the boat?</p>
<p>6. How inclusive is your inclusivity message, really?</p>	<p>Every word matters—and we run each one through a careful lens.</p>	<p>We have a lot of diverse stock photos on our website.</p>
<p>7. How clear is your message?</p>	<p>Clear as a bell.</p>	<p>Clear as mud.</p>

 **You're ready to engage.**

 **You're ready to discover and grow.**

Learn more about how we can help.



WE HELP COMPANIES CONNECT WITH THEIR MOST IMPORTANT AUDIENCES.

People want to believe—in their value, in the meaning of their work and in each other. They want to know that what they do matters. That they matter.

By clarifying the core of why you stand together and what you face as you move forward, your organization will open the door to powerful and lasting engagement—for every member of the team.

For more than 25 years, AHA has helped our Fortune 500 clients like Charles Schwab, Nike, VMware, Johnson & Johnson and Comcast NBCUniversal connect with their internal audiences to earn a meaningful place in their lives.

Today, we're helping inspired leaders reimagine the future of how and where employees gather, work and collaborate.

Ready?
Let's talk.



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