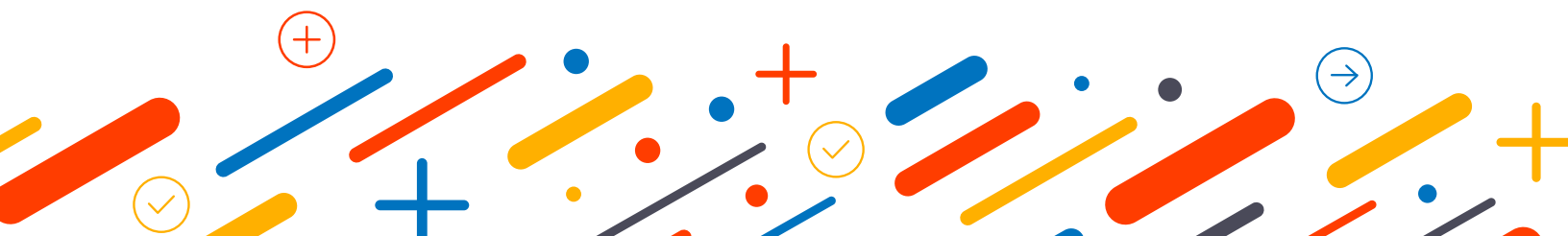engagedly

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8 Strategies Every Business Needs to Enhance Employee Productivity in a Hybrid Workplace

Employee Productivity in a Post-Pandemic World

In today's business world, employee productivity is of prime essence. Leaders throughout the world are worried about the impact of hybrid work on the performance and productivity of their workforce. So far, multiple research studies have indicated that a hybrid setup is as productive as traditional ones. But the catch is, not every organization is able to make the best of the hybrid work culture.

Even though some companies are able to achieve the same or even higher levels of productivity in a hybrid model, most businesses are still facing the grunt of inefficient systems, processes, and technologies.

Higher employee productivity is a result of the right culture, technology, and processes. By offering the right mix to employees, organizations are able to cultivate a dynamic, skilled, and productive workforce.

In this article, we talk about some pragmatic and time-tested strategies to enhance employee productivity. Whether you have adapted to a hybrid setup or are planning to move towards it, these strategies will help you create an environment that boosts productivity, performance, and engagement in the workplace.

Strategies to Enhance Employee Productivity in a Hybrid Setup

It is indeed true that the hybrid setup has the potential to improve employee productivity. When employees are offered the right balance of work flexibility and social connectivity, they are able to produce better results.

There are multiple factors that lead to a more productive workforce, and we will discuss them in detail and also provide a process to implement them in the organization.
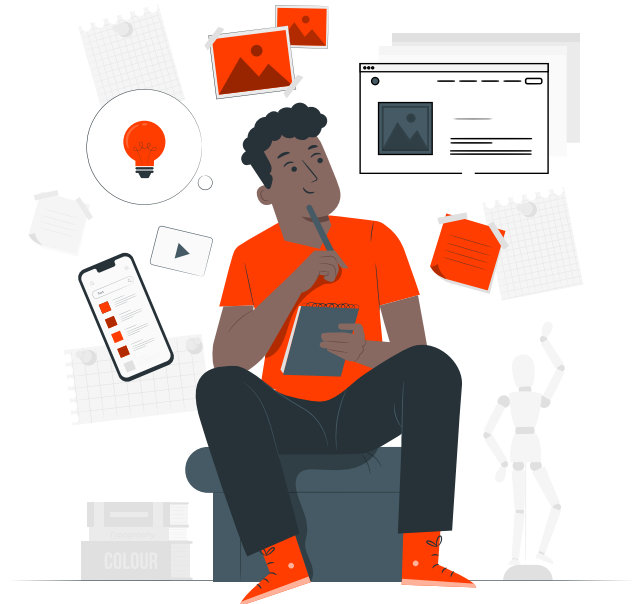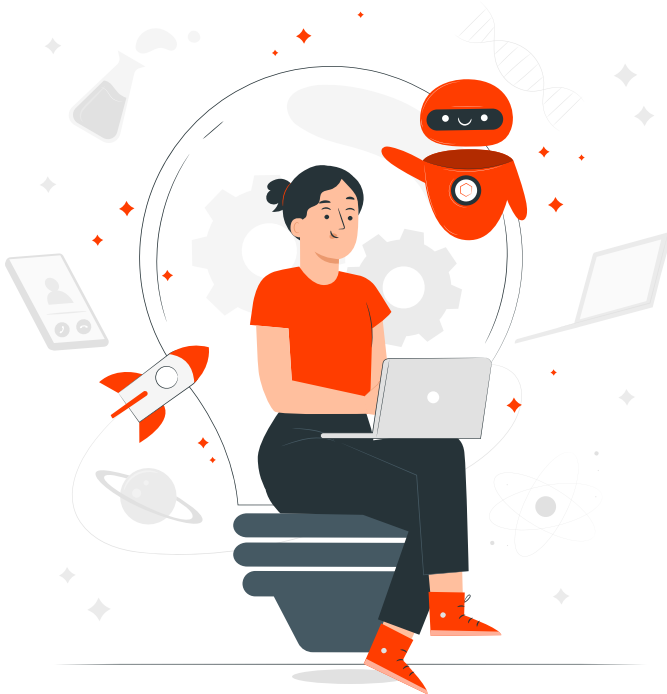
Improve Hybrid Communication

Even with all the benefits of flexibility, better work-life balance, and limited distractions, the hybrid work model has made workplace communication a challenge for organizations.

As team members are working from different locations and time zones, it gets difficult to communicate in real-time and some employees might feel left out during important meetings. It can have a negative impact on the productivity of employees and can further lead to substandard results.

Effective communication is the key to building productive and result-driven teams. But with the impediments of hybrid communication, organizations are losing billions of dollars every year.

A survey conducted by Harris Polls and Grammarly to uncover obstacles to employee productivity in the hybrid era found that US businesses are on the verge of losing $1.2 trillion annually due to ineffective communication.

> **Leaders have already started feeling the impact of poor communication in the hybrid workplace—increased costs, missed deadlines, and deteriorating brand reputation are some of the concerns raised by global leaders.**

Process to Improve Internal Communication for Hybrid Workplace

The success of a hybrid work setup hinges on effective communication between teams, employees, and the organization as a whole. It is therefore important for organizations to adapt internal communication to hybrid teams to maintain employee efficiency and productivity.

As [Tatsiana Kerimova](#), CEO at Orangesoft, puts it, our company has strengthened communication protocols and calibrated management processes to enable our employees to stay productive regardless of their actual whereabouts.

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I recommend writing a communication charter that outlines your team's preferred communication methods and schedules. This document works equally well for remote and hybrid work settings and makes up for the lack of in-person cues.

Tatsiana Kerimova
CEO & Co-Founder at Orangesoft

The following steps will help organizations that have moved to a hybrid setup or are planning to switch to it.

✓ The first step is to identify the probable causes of ineffective communication in the workplace. There could be multiple reasons for broken communication in a hybrid environment. It could be because of the following

→ Confusing chain of command

→ Ineffective or lack of hybrid communication tools

→ Scheduling too many meetings leading to digital exhaustion

→ Biasness for in-office employees

→ Issues in organizational culture

→ Ineffective leadership style

→ Communication policies not aligned with hybrid setup

✓ Plan out an organization-wide survey to understand the causes of poor communication. Ask employees about their preferred communication styles and medium. Do not hesitate in asking questions related to organizational culture and leadership that inhibit communication.

✓ Once you have identified the probable causes, it is time to plan out solutions. Create a team of communication strategies to design effective hybrid communication policies. You can also hire a consultant to help with the policy design.

✓ Chart out the policies and structure for one-on-ones, feedback, reviews, weekly/monthly meetings, and daily communication.

✓ Balance asynchronous and synchronous communication through collaboration tools and software.

✓ Measure effectiveness of policies through surveys, key business metrics, and employee productivity.

✓ Revisit policies frequently to make adjustments to it.

Set Right Goals and Expectations

Goals are the lifeline of a business. They help organizations streamline their workforce activities and tasks to achieve short-term and long-term objectives. Furthermore, they give a sense of direction and purpose to employees and provide them with visibility as to how their efforts contribute towards organizational success.

Multiple studies conducted throughout the history of work have helped establish an important link between goal setting and organizational performance.

It has been found that effective goal setting leads to higher productivity, performance, and profitability. By aligning employees' personal goals with organizational goals, companies are able to produce better outcomes and create a strong brand reputation in the marketplace. In addition, it boosts employee morale and keeps the workforce motivated towards better performance.

Besides all these benefits, many organizations still find goal setting a cumbersome and tedious task. The ineffective and dysfunctional goal setting processes mars organizations of all its benefits and leads to inferior results.

In a hybrid setup where the workforce is distributed between different geographies and time zones, it is imperative for leaders to create an effective goal-setting process.

By using SMART goals and OKRs, organizations are able to enhance employee productivity and engagement, and thereby achieve their targets.

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Talking about employee goal setting, Ruben Gamez, Founder & CEO at SignWell, says we don't want our team to burn out, so we create productivity goals together. We have regular, open dialogues with our employees about realistic task expectations and focus on investing in tools and apps that aid productivity instead of slowing it. Our team helps us build our productivity stack, and they take part in our quarterly assessment of it, too. Who knows better about these platforms' effectiveness than the teammates using them daily?

Ruben Gamez
Founder at SignWell

How to Set the Right Goals for Your Hybrid Teams

Goal setting is both an art and a science. Managers need to understand the psychology behind the goal setting process and use their skills to get their team members onboard.

The following process will help you set goals strategically and get your employees on the path to success.

- ✓ Setting goals in silos is ineffective. You need to involve employees in the process and understand their personal and professional ambitions.

- ✓ Fix one–on-one meetings with team members and find a common ground between company and employee goals

- ✓ Show employees how their efforts help in achieving organizational objectives. Make them a part of the organizational journey and highlight their achievements frequently.

- Make career development a part of goal setting. Discuss the opportunities and possibilities with employees

- Use SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals and OKRs (Objectives and Key Results) to have better clarity and focus.

- Discuss the goal setting process with employees and schedule check-ins to understand obstacles and find solutions.

- Give your employees freedom to set their own goals and guide them on how to achieve more consistently

Create a Positive Hybrid Work Culture

An organizational culture is a set of values, beliefs, ideologies, and principles that affect the behaviors, attitudes, and activities of employees. It is one of the most important factors that influences employee productivity and experience in the long run. It enables employees to work at their highest potential by supporting them in their day-to-day activities.

By working as a sociocultural fabric of an organization, workplace culture helps employees create bonds and relationships with others and directly affects employees' attitudes towards work.

A strong and positive organizational culture leads to a productive, engaged, and happy workforce that ultimately results in better outcomes. Furthermore, happy and satisfied employees act as evangelists, creating a positive organizational brand image in the market.

On the flip side, a negative work culture hampers the productivity, efficiency, and health of the workforce. It leads to excessive mental stress and burnout among employees, further deteriorating their productivity. If left unchecked, it can lead to a lack of trust, clashes between management and employees, and plunging revenue streams.

Organizational culture is a key business parameter for the success of a hybrid workplace. The PwC Global Culture Survey, conducted with 3,200 participants, highlighted the following regarding organizational culture in a hybrid setup.

67%

Workplace culture topped the list of leadership's agenda with 67% senior leaders acknowledging it as important for growth

67%

67% of leaders cited **culture more important than strategy or operations** for higher performance
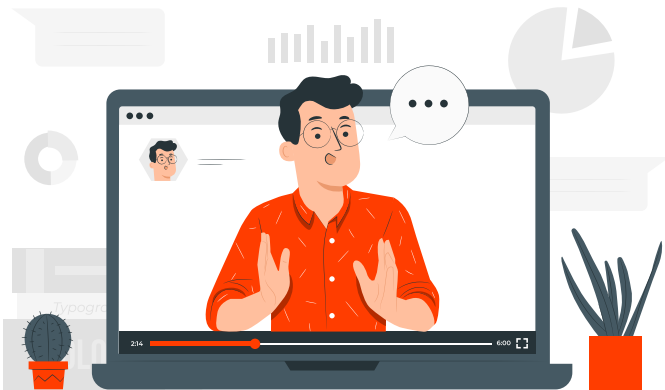
72%

72% of senior leaders reported the organizational **culture helps successful change initiatives** to happen

48%

Companies with distinctive culture reported a likely growth in revenue by 48%, employee satisfaction by 80%, and customer satisfaction by 89%

How to Create a Positive Hybrid Work Culture

There is no doubt that a positive organizational culture harbingers great business results, but creating it is a slow and tedious process. Especially for a hybrid setup where multiple geographies, time zones, and people from different backgrounds are involved, creating a supporting culture can be a daunting task.

Many organizations are in dire need of a major cultural shift, but without a structured process, they are unable to achieve results. The following steps will help you get started with cultural change.

- Identify the perpetrators of the negative culture. An organizational culture echoes the behaviors and attitudes of its leaders and you need the right people in the team who can lead the change with you.

- Create a team of leaders who are trusted by employees. The change will be ineffective if the leaders driving it are not trusted by the workforce.

- Find the behaviors, attitudes, and characteristics that lead to a negative culture. It requires taking a thorough review of the organization and talking to people from multiple teams.

- Define the desired culture you wish to create: Embed the characteristics of that culture in the core values of the organization and discuss them with the leadership team.

- Spread the word: Every employee in your organization must be aware of the change the organization is headed to. Involve everyone in the process to get a buy-in from them and discuss the expected outcomes.

- Use metrics to measure the performance of the change initiative. Conduct surveys to understand the pulse of the workforce.

- Encourage employees to share feedback and ensure action on it.

Focus on Employee Well-being

Hybrid work comes with a different set of challenges that employees face on a daily basis. Excessive stress, burnout, isolation, self-care, and family responsibilities are the common problems faced by hybrid employees.

With global employee well-being falling sharply, it is important for businesses to redefine their employee well-being programs to have a stable, motivated, and productive workforce.

Poor well being can be extremely costly for organizations. Currently, global businesses are losing over $322 billion dollars annually due to lost productivity caused by employee burnout. An additional $20 million dollars are lost in additional lost opportunities for every 10,000 employees due to struggling or suffering employees.

With the current global employee well-being in shambles, it could be a game changer for organizations. By taking corrective action and a structured approach towards well-being, they have an opportunity to create a healthy, dynamic, and happy workforce.

How to Enhance Employee Well-being in a Hybrid Setup

According to WEF, over 74% of organizations say that employee well-being is important to them, but only 55% of employees report that their employers support well-being initiatives. There is a lot of disconnect between employees and employers around the well-being perspective, and it is important to plug in the gaps.

The following steps will help you support employee well-being in the hybrid workplace.

✓ Understand the gaps between the current support extended by the organization and the actual needs of employees.

- ✓ Conduct an organization wide survey to gauge the well being interests and needs of every employee

- ✓ Conduct health risk assessment to determine which programs will be suitable for the workforce

- ✓ Make employee well-being a priority for the organization by appointing leaders responsible for determining the needs of employees and taking appropriate action

- ✓ Understand that every employee has a different need and you will need to tailor the benefits based on the requirements

- ✓ Make well being easily accessible by offering insurance cover and medical benefits that includes mental health issues and other problems highlighted by employees

- ✓ Keep track of employee well-being by measuring metrics such as sick days, productive days, absenteeism, and attrition.

Shift to Empathetic Leadership

In the current business environment, leaders are faced with the challenge of leading a diverse and geographically distributed workforce. They have to be considerate of the cultural differences, feelings, emotions, and needs of their employees in order to lead them effectively.

As cases of employee burnout and stress surge, it is important for managers and leaders to switch to empathetic leadership to infuse motivation among employees and help them resolve their issues.

Empathy is no longer a "good-to-have" trait; it has become a key business imperative with effects on all the organizational elements. Empathetic leadership not just helps in improving overall performance but aids in building a creative, innovative, and dedicated workforce. Research has shown that empathy in the workplace leads to happier employees that are able to produce strong results consistently.
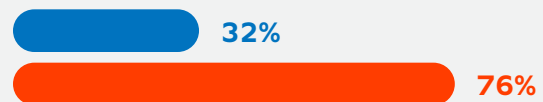
How **Senior Leader** Empathy Impacts Employee Innovation and Engagement

ABILITY TO INNOVATE

13%

61%

% OFTEN OR ALWAYS INNOVATIVE AT WORK

WORK ENGAGEMENT

32%

76%

% OFTEN OR ALWAYS INNOVATIVE AT WORK

Source: Catalyst.org

Empathetic leadership is about identifying with your employees, connecting with them, understanding their concerns, trusting them, providing them with resources, and offering them constructive feedback. By showing curiosity and genuine interest, empathetic leaders are able to win the hearts of their employees.

How to Boost Empathy in the Workplace

Empathy in the workplace is about understanding and acknowledging your employees' values, perspectives, differences, ideologies, and concerns and being thoughtful of their personal and professional needs. It is a valuable quality that helps leaders connect and bond with their employees.

Use the following tips to make your workplace more empathetic.

- ✓ Creating an empathetic workplace requires incorporating empathy into every aspect of the business–from hiring employees to offboarding. Make empathy a core value of your organization.

- ✓ Get buy-in from your leadership team by helping them understand the benefits of empathetic leadership.

- ✓ Frequently connect with your employees to understand their concerns, challenges, and aspirations. Take out time to interact and have meaningful conversations with them.

- ✓ Understand that employees come from diverse backgrounds and they have different needs. You will have to tailor your approach for each individual.

- ✓ Look out for the signs of stress, burnout, exhaustion, distrust, and polarization and try to understand the reason behind them.

- ✓ Organize empathy training for managers and help them understand the need and outcomes associated with it.

- ✓ Conduct surveys to gauge the pulse of the workforce

- ✓ Take feedback from employees and intently work on it

Train Your Employees

The current business environment is marred by inflation, economic downturn, extreme competition, and geopolitical instability. The sudden changes in technology are also adding to the woes of the employees. In such times, it is imperative for employers to hold on to their most important assets and provide them with the opportunities to learn and grow within the organization.

So far, employers have been concerned about the effectiveness of learning and development programs in a hybrid setup, but with the data flowing in, it appears that a hybrid setup not only supports employees' development and productivity but also makes employees more accountable for their learning and growth.

In [a study conducted by Gallup](#) to understand how hybrid workers spend their time while working from home, it was found that learning and development are among the five activities employees regularly perform.

On the flip side, employees working from the office are not able to devote much of their time towards learning.

Another important finding is the focus on wellness activities. Employees working from home are using the flexibility to indulge in wellness activities that employees working from the office are lacking.

How Hybrid Workers Spend Most of Their Time While Working From Home

Which of the following activities do you focus on most while working remotely from home? Select up to three. (% Mentoring)
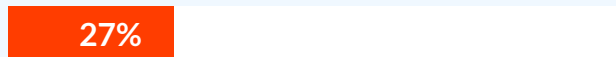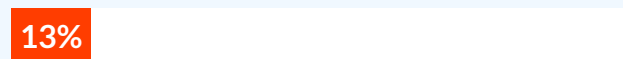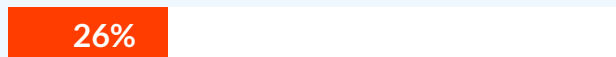
Working independently

86%
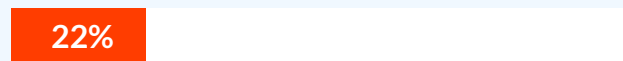
Training or other learning and development opportunities

27%

Product development or other innovative work

26%

Meetings or collaborative work with my colleagues

24%

Wellness activities (e.g., gym)

22%

Meeting with customer prospects

13%

Meetings with my manager or supervisor

10%
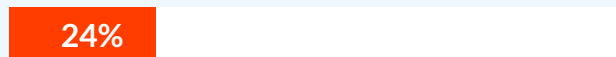
Using technology I don't have access to elsewhere

5%
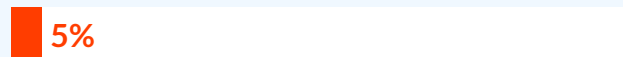
The study highlights the advantages of hybrid work that employers can make use of. There is no doubt that learning and development enhance employee productivity by helping with better decision-making, problem-solving, and preparedness for unprecedented changes.

Mark Blakey, CEO & Advertising Manager at Autism Parenting Magazine, shares her experience of how training managers in the workplace helped their organization.

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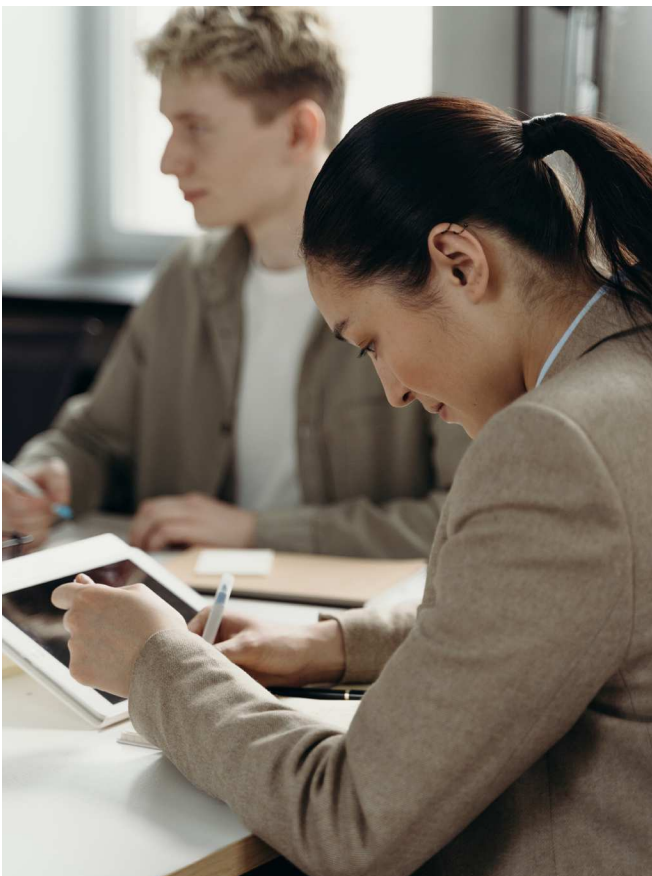
This is one of the most successful strategies we tried during both the remote and hybrid work models. It especially helped in the latter case, where a lot of manager bias was reported. With more trained managers, you bring to the table various mentors who would know how to manage different types of workers. Their focus would be on rewarding those who excel through their work and not the workplace setting. This has created a positive environment in our company, both for the employees and clients.

Mark Blakey
CEO

By making use of the right technology and overcoming the hurdles of effective communication and collaboration, employers can use hybrid setups to create a highly productive and dynamic workforce.

How to Enhance the Learning and Development of a Hybrid Workforce

Collaboration, meetings with managers and peers, mentoring sessions, feedback, and discussions with teams are all important for the growth and development of employees. And the good news is, in a hybrid setup, the effectiveness of these activities gets amplified.

The following steps will highlight how to adapt L&D to the hybrid workplace:

- ✓ Conduct an organization-wide skill gap analysis to understand the present and future skills your employees need to work efficiently.

- ✓ Offer free subscriptions to online learning platforms to engage employees in their learning journey

- ✓ Create customized learning programs based on performance reviews and assessments

- ✓ Create internal mentoring programs that are aligned to on-job training and skills development

- ✓ Create customized learning programs based on performance reviews and assessments

- ✓ Invest in learning technologies that are suitable to business needs

Focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

DEI (Diversity, equity, and inclusion) is one of the most important factors that affect employee engagement, productivity, and performance. Organizations that rank higher in workplace diversity and inclusion are able to recruit and retain top talent and are more profitable in the long run.

A diverse workforce is able to create a stronghold in the market by bringing in more ideas, perspectives, life experiences, skills, and unique ways of seeing the world. Furthermore, diverse workplaces are better at problem solving, innovation, creativity, and decision making.

Over the years, businesses have understood the importance of diversity and inclusivity in the workplace and have been strategizing their efforts towards making a more supportive and inclusive workplace. Around 75% of leaders surveyed by PwC in its global diversity and inclusion report stated that they believe diversity is a priority for their organization.

Diversity in both the leadership team and lower management can help drive higher levels of productivity in the workplace. At the upper management level, diversity leads to greater depth and breadth of experience and perspectives, which leads to more complex strategies. And at the lower management level, it helps with better problem solving, implementation, and innovation at work.

How to Create a More Diverse and Inclusive Workplace

To bring about a change in the organization, leaders must focus on both diversity and inclusion. While diversity refers to the representation or makeup of the workforce, which includes people from different geographies, backgrounds, cultures, minority groups, and ethnicities, inclusivity, on the other hand, means providing equal access to opportunities and resources to people and providing them with a safe and respectful environment.

To fully leverage the potential of a diverse workforce, organizations need to be more inclusive and must create an environment where people from diverse groups are able to express themselves openly.

The following steps help in making your workplace more diverse and inclusive.

- Educate and train the organizational leaders regarding the importance of diversity and inclusivity. Present real-life scenarios to help them overcome unconscious bias and guide them on how to make decisions based on the D&I framework.

- As managers are on the frontline executing the initiatives, they should be provided with appropriate D&I training to help them overcome any challenges.

- Include DEI in the core organizational values and spread the word about it.

- Create a D&I committee responsible for setting and executing DEI goals for hiring and retaining diverse talent. The committee members must be directly involved in resolving the problems and complaints of the underrepresented employee groups and must look forward to advancing diversity in the workplace.

- Create a D&I committee responsible for setting and executing DEI goals for hiring and retaining diverse talent. The committee members must be directly involved in resolving the problems and complaints of the underrepresented employee groups and must look forward to advancing diversity in the workplace.

- It is better to have people from diverse backgrounds, geographies, ethnicities, and cultures in the D&I committee to help employees easily connect with them.

- ✓ Create an environment where individual differences are valued and people should feel comfortable bringing their authentic selves to work

- ✓ Conduct surveys to understand the concerns and challenges of underrepresented employee groups.

- ✓ Regularly conduct audits to gauge the effectiveness of the DEI initiatives in all the people processes—recruitment, hiring, onboarding, employee development, and conflict resolution.

Performance Management Software: The Key to Creating an Engaged and Productive Workforce

Performance management is the holistic process of meeting organizational objectives by effectively managing the workforce. It involves aligning individual goals with organizational objectives, setting SMART goals, tracking, analyzing, and evaluating employee and organizational performance, and rewarding employees suitably. Additionally, it helps in finding the skills gaps and provides customized learning opportunities for employees to grow and prosper in their career.

Performance management involves setting up the right processes and technologies that help hybrid teams stay aligned and committed to their goals.

When applied effectively and strategically, it increases overall organizational productivity, reduces employee turnover, and boosts motivation and performance.

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Linda Shaffer, Chief People Operations Officer at Checkr, shares her experience of how performance management helped her organization: We have seen significant improvements in employee productivity since implementing a performance management software solution. It has enabled us to do a better job of tracking and measuring individual performance, as well as provide more personalized feedback and training resources for employees. As a result, we have seen improved engagement and satisfaction levels among our team members and higher levels of productivity in key areas like project management and client service.

Linda Shaffer
Chief People Operations Officer at Checkr

Real-time performance management software like Engagedly enhances employee performance and engagement and boosts productivity. Its three-pillar E3 platform helps in engaging employees, enabling development, and executing performance. Through cutting-edge technology and an employee-centric approach, it helps organizations overcome workforce challenges and create a competitive advantage in a tight labor market.

Start Engaging Your Workforce With Engagedly

Concluding Words

The global business environment is changing rapidly, and organizations need to quickly adapt to maintain their competitiveness, innovation, creativity, and productivity. Employees are the most valuable yet vulnerable assets of a business, and maintaining their productivity and performance is a challenge. But with the right processes, strategies, and technologies in place, leaders can create a dynamic, adaptive, and productive workforce that is ready to take on challenges head-on.