

Chat Summary: Activating Employee Engagement After The “Great Pause” Webcast

Thanks to everyone who took part in the webcast. It was amazing to see everyone so generous and open to sharing their ideas. Here is the summary of comments and ideas from both the live and encore presentations.

Workplace preferences

- 75% of attendees preferred to have a hybrid workplace where they get to choose the days they come into the office; contrast this against the fact that only 52% of organizations (represented on the webcast) are prepared/able to allow employees to select which days they are in the office.
- Another option to having the organization choose the days is to allow a team to select their office days as a group
- Communication is key - Create specific reasons why it's mandatory to come into the office and when, for example, celebration or to collaborate on a large project.
- I'd like to see us work more closely between manager and employee to come up with a mutually agreeable hybrid solution

Mitigating and Preventing Burnout

- Simon Sinek recently talked about “Duvet days” which was a strategy they used to address mental health in the workplace. In addition to “sick days” they had these days as well.
- De-prioritize our corporate objectives
- Re-prioritize deliverables
- We had resiliency training provided by our organization
- Schedule meeting free times/days. Uninterrupted work/planning time is so important!

Returning to the Office Comments

- Hybrid is the most popular response from what we can see in the chat. A few exceptions...and differences between managers and employees in some cases
- Employees are very nervous about reintegration back into the office and looking to leaders for guidance and vaccination policy
- Indirectly related: How to deal with the ‘vaccinated or not vaccinated’ - we need to develop and provide tools for our leaders to deal with the vaccine discussions. It is a passionate topic
- We have multiple offices across Canada - it is challenging to be consistent with so many moving Covid parts by province

Ideas and comments on Engagement

- Non work connects are incredibly important
- Coffee connects have become more popular in my last organization. It was common to book 15-20 min meetings to chat with co-workers but also across different teams to broaden networks (especially for new employees)
- We do team building activities once a week with my team. It's really helped with morale and connecting everyone
- Each member can share 5 things about themselves that no one else knew, I compiled it into a power point and everyone had to guess who they thought the person was.
- Play games like 3 truths & 1 lie, Pictionary, word scramblers
- Scavenger hunts, tongue twisters, debate teams (pineapple on pizza)

Refuel and Refocus: Comments and Ideas:

- We run non-structured manager learning communities. show up and talk about what you want to discuss, share, or ask
- Having meeting-free days!
- We went with a reduced communication summer - so any communication was more focused
- We introduced no meeting Monday as a company mandate - this message came from the CEO and was followed by him as the example
- Ideas around conversations starters would be helpful for managers too... some people aren't natural at these types of convos
- We need more understanding of the bigger goals and purpose of the organization in order to feel more engaged, not just our team's little piece of it.
- Lead a self-reflection exercise followed by a guided team exercise of what we need individually and collectively to be at our best, productive and happy at work
- Yes, to smaller teams and smaller span of control. Leaders need to be available for more 1:1 time
- A company directive that was undertaken this year for us was regular One on One meetings with a manager's team members which I have found very useful in getting back on point with issues my team are having and where I need to engage and assist.
- Providing ideas around conversations starters would be helpful for managers too... some people aren't natural at these types of convos
- Build trust and creating psychological safety

Transform Conversations – comments and ideas

- Some staff (and leaders) don't seem to engage in these kinds of deeper non-work conversations when invited, via zoom or in person... don't want to cross their personal boundaries if they seem uncomfortable. Any tips?
- We have held discussions on workload and possibilities to share - Important for both those who find themselves with too much to do and those who do not have enough to stay focussed on work
- Have walk and talk one-on one meetings: no zoom but walk while talking to your direct reports
- The value of a leader saying thank you with sincere authenticity is priceless
- Head Office issued return to work on alternating weeks. At our desks there was a little gift bag to welcome us back (Choc, Coffee, Hand Sanitizer, Mask)
- Ideas on Appreciation:
 - We've done appreciation boxes sent to homes: 1) coffee / tea / snacks
 - We send handwritten thank you cards to employees home address. Always get thank yous for the thank you!
 - We now send birthday cards signed by the president to each associate
 - We also have gratitude calls set up for our organization where people can share ideas on how to find gratitude and help keep each other positive
 - Gratitude calls
 - Kudoboards

How do you stay connected to your leadership team?

- Leadership team: immediate team - weekly meetings, Director: bi-weekly meetings: regional team monthly meetings, Upper leadership team: quarterly meetings townhalls
- We use Slack, for non-related topics: kids, vacations, weather complaints, etc.
- We have a virtual happy hour with my team once a month, non-work talk
- We do biweekly meetings and keep them short and to the point. Items that need extra time are rescheduled to another time to respect everyone's time

Who has changed the content and approach your one-on-one meetings?

- Our 1:1 meeting have changed to walk/talks. Director meets with individual in their area of town and walks their neighbourhood or meets at a park. Conversations are organic and flow without guidance. Meeting people in their space in person makes a huge difference for feeling included and seen
- I have found that if I have a struggling staff, booking a regular touchpoint with them is important aside from any team meetings- has been effective for some- and allowing them to lead the conversation

How Can We Support You?

Whether it's free resources, or support with your learning strategy, or just to discuss what we're seeing in the marketplace, we are here for you.

Email us at cmcinfo@cmcoutperform.com or call us at 1-866-929-1590