



How to Strengthen Connection in the Workplace



Every Moment Matters™

The Questions

At the highest level, the four pillars of employee engagement are answers to questions every team member is asking themselves, whether they know it or not. We are constantly assessing the answers in both our personal lives and in the workplace.

The questions are as follows:

- 1 DO I FEEL CONNECTED?**
Employees feel a connection to co-workers, the organization, and/or to the work itself.
- 2 DO I FEEL INFORMED?**
Employees are aware of what's going on in the organization, both good and bad.
- 3 DO I FEEL VALUED?**
Employees feel that their individual efforts and contributions are appreciated.
- 4 DO I FEEL MY OPINION MATTERS?**
Employees feel they have a say in both their own work and the direction of the organization.



The answers to these questions can vary significantly between different employees, which is why it's helpful to have them rate themselves on a scale. Their answers are meant to be a starting point so you can dive deeper into why they may rate themselves high or low in each category.

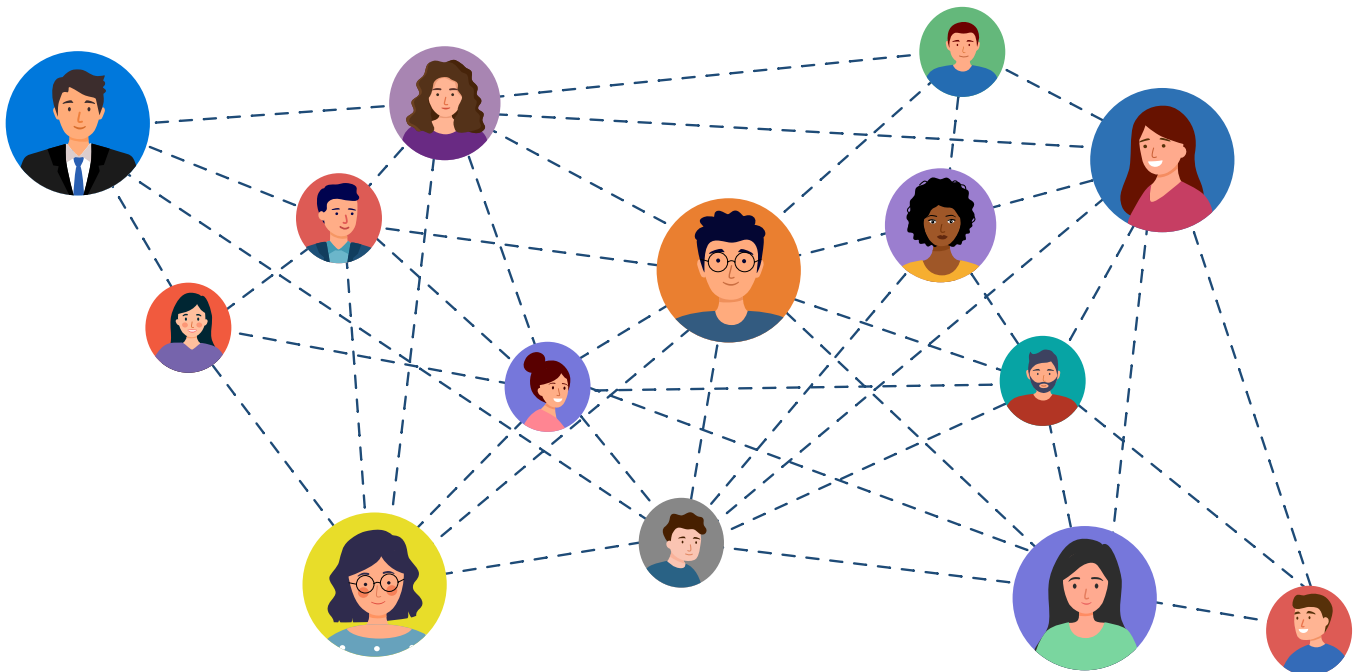
Connection

Do I Feel Connected?

Human connection is critical in many things we do. It's at the heart of every healthy, thriving relationship - and the workplace is no different! Connection is not just about having that best friend at work. It can have to do with multiple work relationships, the work itself, or the organization.

As a people leader, you have the power to impact your employees' level of connection. The most important step is to find out what makes each team member tick. Do they value being close with co-workers? Do they value being connected to the organization's overall purpose? Once you know the answers, you'll know which area to focus the most on for each employee.

We'll break down tips for improving each of the three categories of connection: **Work, People, and Organization.**



Work

Employees like to feel connected to the work they are doing. Some people may feel that they have a “calling” and naturally find purpose in their profession, but connection to a job can be created by any employee.

Play Into Employees’ Strengths

It is easy for people to feel connected to their work when they are good at what they are doing. Keep an eye out for specific tasks your direct reports excel at and increase their frequency. Coach them to strengthen areas needing improvement, and when possible, offload tasks they find the least interesting.

Invest in Learning & Development

Learning new skills and growing keeps employees engaged in their work. As they rack up new talents, they can connect to even more aspects of their position. There are many ways you can upskill and reskill. Pay for conferences and specialized training, or provide an experienced mentor they can work alongside.

Encourage Autonomy

Provide your team members with a sense of ownership and autonomy over their work. Allow them to make decisions on how, when, and where they work. Ask them to contribute ideas to increase innovation and creativity. Flexing these muscles fosters a deeper connection to work.



People

The people in an organization can make or break the connection pillar. Most humans seek out connections with others. Since we spend so much of our lives at work, it's natural that we want to connect with people in that setting.

Peers

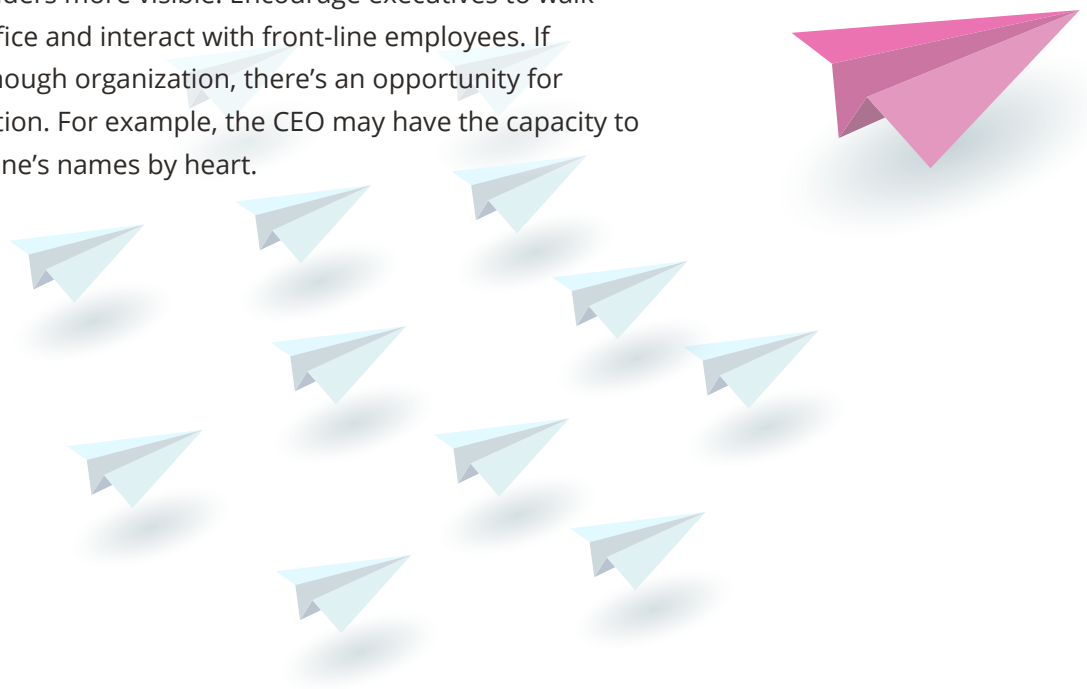
Organize team-building events and activities to foster camaraderie amongst peers. Create an environment in which collaboration is encouraged for projects so people work together frequently. Set up spaces where “water cooler moments” can happen and employees can socialize, increasing personal connection.

Direct Manager

As a people leader, you have the most influence over the relationship with your direct reports. Check in with them often, but not just about work. Get to know their personal life if they are open to it. It shows them you genuinely care and deepens the relationship.

Executive Leadership

Make your key leaders more visible. Encourage executives to walk the halls of the office and interact with front-line employees. If you are a small enough organization, there's an opportunity for increased connection. For example, the CEO may have the capacity to remember everyone's names by heart.



Organization

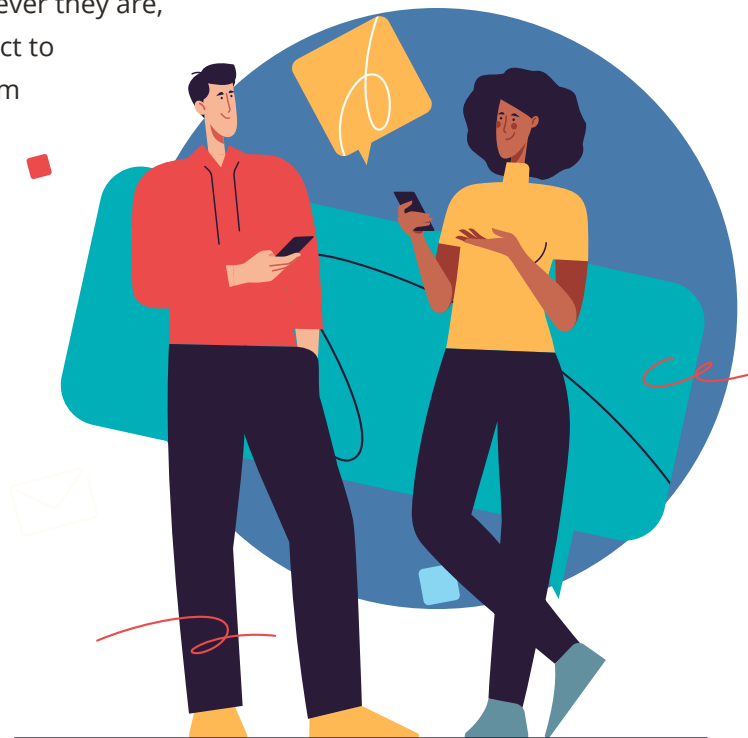
The final area of connection is to the organization as a whole. Many employees, especially younger generations, want to connect with their company's work. They don't want to see working there as a transactional-only relationship.

Articulate a Clear Vision

Familiarize employees with your organization's purpose from day one. Ensure they understand how the mission helps others. Then, draw a connecting line between their role and the organization's purpose. This will help team members feel more connected to your company and to their work itself.

Make Positive Commitments

Commit to positive initiatives. They may be related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. They may be related to sustainability and combatting climate change. Whatever they are, involve your people so they can connect to those initiatives. Volunteering as a team or company is an impactful way to give back to the community while increasing connections across the organization.



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