

INTRODUCTION

Engaged employees tend to perform better, remain with their employers for longer, and enable organizations to innovate and maintain competitiveness.

and lower retention rates. Those organizations that give the topic due attention and creativity, however, will reap dividends in the form of trust, loyalty, and



1 World Economic Forum (2020). [The Future of Jobs Report](#)

THE WAY AHEAD

Employee engagement is integral to enhanced Employee Value Propositions — getting it right and ensuring it is well communicated require planned actions from leaders.

to engagement outreach is handled by HR; in others, it is driven through an internal communications function; and and the potential confusion over who owns employee engagement within organizations.

their satisfaction with the job, and their commitment to the organizations they work for.² But what is the balance of responsibilities between the employee and the employer? Is the onus on employees to make the

a positive experience and environment to bring out

leadership, we found that companies tend to take a

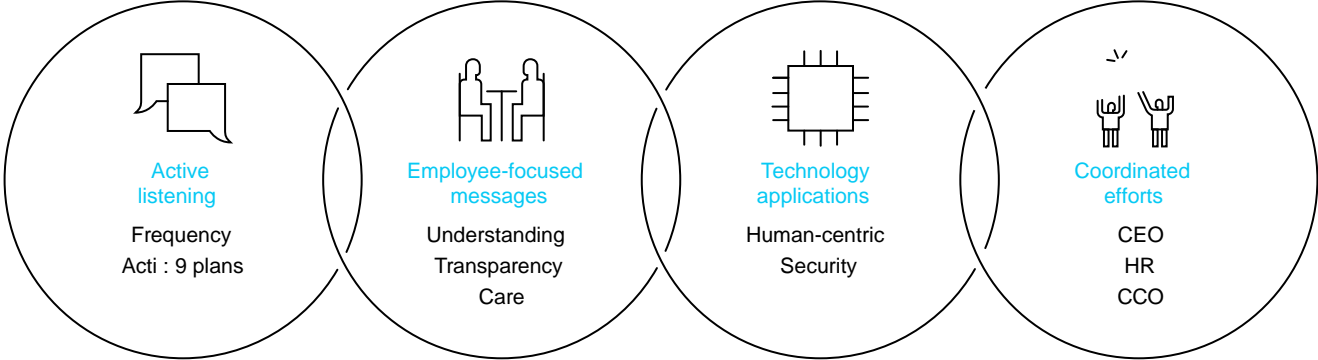
resources professionals oriented toward outcomes while communications professionals were more focused on

Exhibit 2

Ownership of employee engagement initiatives within

2 Society for Human Resources Management (2006). [Employee Engagement and Commitment](#).

Exhibit 3: Four imperatives of employee communication



Demonstrate an understanding of workforce heterogeneity, and leaders need to balance employees feel that their concerns and priorities are recognized.

Many businesses already have a hybrid workforce that includes gig workers, independent contractors, and remote and on-site permanent employees — and the

workforces are often also multigenerational, with up to

in their motivating drivers, expectations, and how they prefer to be communicated with. Remote employees are more concerned about their mental wellness and work-life balance than those who work onsite.³ generations prioritize opportunities to learn while their older counterparts tend to focus on recognition.⁴

Increasingly, companies are facing the demands of

to contribute to the social good. As one interviewee

growing concern over economic, political, and social

that

their employers will share those concerns and play an

Investing in Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives and

practices across the core business. Indeed, analysis suggests that top employers, as measured by employee

Communicate with transparency

Employees expect transparent and truthful communication

such as in the thick of corporate, economic, or political

3 The World Economic Forum (2020). *The Future of Jobs Report*.

4 Mercer (2020). **ORED O 7DOHQW 7UHQGV*

5 Edelman (2021). *Trust Barometer*.

6 Marsh & McLennan Advantage (2020). *ESG as a Workforce Strategy*.

Place care for employees at the center of communications

Employees engage most when they feel their organization cares about them. To this end, senior leaders need to display concern and care toward employees, particularly during a crisis. After all, without a healthy workforce, there

more than two-thirds of surveyed employees thought their chief executive needed to do more in handling the crisis and fewer than half of the respondents thought that companies were doing well enough in implementing

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Workplace mental health issues have been rising for some time and will continue to linger long after the pandemic is over. Factors that contribute to employee

New technologies are driving workforce restructuring, and many companies are preparing their employees to adapt.⁹ However, technology is not only enabling operational innovations — it's also enhancing processes

their own way, methods of workforce engagement and communication.

The pandemic revealed that many businesses are struggling to engage properly with their workforces in a virtual work environment, a situation that is likely to continue well beyond lockdowns. Filling out online employee surveys or broadcasting video town halls can speed up two-way engagement processes, but some

separate study, nearly a quarter of employees who

responded said that the digitalization of human resources processes had resulted in the loss of some necessary human interactions.¹⁰ Online focus groups

as to how technologies can assist human-centric employer-employee communications when face-to-face opportunities are limited.

When leveraging digital solutions, two additional

information collected via digital communication channels needs to be analyzed with a human mindset to shed

scan of single data points or top-line results can lead to erroneous conclusions. Second, in rolling out digital communication strategies, companies should address the risks of data security and anonymity. Failing to abide by appropriate protocols may result in irreversible damage to organizational

9 World Economic Forum (2020). [The Future of Jobs Report](#).

10 Mercer (2020). [Global Talent Trends](#).

Enhancing employee engagement via communications processes requires the CEO, the HR function, and the communications function to work in lockstep.

involves setting goals and designing initiatives; the second entails implementation; and the third enhances the role of the other two.

The pandemic has demanded more from each of these stakeholders, necessitating that they adjust their roles

and set new norms for the future. The prominence of employee well-being has placed greater expectations on the human resources function. The importance of clear, timely, and repeated interactions with employees has elevated the communications function, with some

[here.](#)

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