EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Demonstrate a proactive approach to understanding challenges your employees are currently experiencing, and those that are top of mind as you approach a new work structure. Consider the different areas of concern you might explore with your employees such as stress, mental health, and emotional well-being; equipment or systems challenges; or difficulties in collaboration across work types and locations.

- Gather feedback from your workforce through anonymous surveys and time-limited suggestion boxes.
- Facilitate focus groups and town hall meetings where employees can openly discuss the new work norms of a hybrid workplace.
- Pose questions that can help inform your hybrid approach such as:
  - What do you find the benefits and disadvantages to be of onsite vs. remote work?
  - What do you consider to be the most important aspects of the workplace culture for onsite vs. remote work?

TECHNOLOGY

Ensure employees have the tools they need to effectively work from home. Insufficient equipment and programs will impede even the most engaged employees from reaching full productivity and will be an added stressor during an already turbulent time.

- Complete an audit of the equipment employees have at home to perform their duties. If they don’t have what’s needed, supply them with the necessary technology.
- Ensure remote employees all have equal access to efficient communication channels such as high-speed internet, phone, etc.
- Check company firewalls and security measures. Do remote and onsite employees have the same ability to access all systems and programs, even when not logged in through a company server?

Integrate systems that enhance equitable communication and collaboration between remote and office employees.

- Use voice-activated directional cameras and audio so participants know who is speaking during meetings.
- Encourage employees to collaborate in real-time with electronic whiteboards or other collaborative tools.
- With remote employees, avoid using technology as surveillance and tracking. Instead, focus on results, metrics, and overall job performance.

Notes
LEADERSHIP

Strong, engaged leadership can help minimize employee anxiety. Good leaders will foster a sense of stability and build trust among their teams.

- Develop and follow a robust communication plan for keeping employees informed of any changes to policies, the office environment, or the hybrid structure.
- Integrate and communicate your organization's safety measures and policies. Clear expectations and transparency around thorough safety measures will instill peace of mind for onsite employees.
- Schedule brief daily huddles, 30-minute weekly recaps, or hour-long monthly meetings to discuss strategy, planning, and professional development. Ensure remote attendees are able to see and hear clearly so they can effectively participate as appropriate.
- Consider making recordings of any onsite meetings available on-demand for employees who are remote or who may otherwise find it difficult to be available at each scheduled session.

Prioritize mental and physical well-being, both through leading by example and relevant policies.

- Set and model boundaries for work hours
- Promote your employee assistance program (EAP) benefits to increase employee utilization. Ensure remote employees have access to EAP contact information.
- Establish expectations for email response time and off-hours for not responding.
- Schedule onsite employee activities that foster connection and camaraderie, while accounting for hybrid schedules so that every employee has the opportunity to participate.

Notes