



E-book

## **From Burnout to Balance:** The Modern Challenges of Employee Engagement and Well-being

Discover what makes an effective wellness program with 7 proven engagement strategies





## Introduction

**Fostering employee engagement is one of the most crucial elements in creating a healthy, happy workforce, yet it is elusive for many companies today.** While seven out of ten executives surveyed agree that robust employee engagement is crucial to business success, only 30% of employees reported feeling engaged at work in 2023.<sup>(1)</sup>

Companies must understand the employee engagement issue holistically to implement comprehensive business policies that address its root cause to maximize impact and boost company performance.

## Employee Engagement Continues to Lag in 2024

Employee engagement has been a problem globally for over a decade. While global engagement metrics have seen a modest improvement since their lowest point in 2020, engagement reached an eleven-year low for U.S. employees of 32% in 2022 and only increased by a single point in 2023.<sup>(2)</sup> And it's not hard to see why.

A global pandemic, skyrocketing housing, food, and healthcare prices, and mass layoffs in many industries have all made life challenging for employees and employers. Burnout, depression, and anxiety are all reported at record rates, and while the cost to the individuals experiencing them is incalculable, their impact on business performance is not.<sup>(3)</sup>





# The Hidden Consequences of Disengaged Employees on Business Performance

Employee engagement is not simply a matter of employee happiness – though highly engaged employees do report higher job satisfaction. Instead, it's a crucial metric that predicts profits and staff turnover and can provide vital insight into your organization's culture.

Unengaged employees are also expensive. On average, low employee engagement costs the global economy \$8.8 trillion yearly. Conversely, highly engaged employees:

- Incur lower healthcare costs [\(4\)](#)
- Take fewer sick days [\(5\)](#)
- Have higher job satisfaction [\(6\)](#)

In addition, teams with highly engaged employees also have less turnover, less product shrinkage, fewer safety incidents, and fewer quality defects. [\(4\)](#)

For all these reasons, organizations with high employee engagement tend to perform better financially. Higher productivity, better customer service, lower turnover, and a positive organizational culture contribute to these improved financial outcomes. [\(8\)](#)

It's clear then why engagement is crucial to business performance. Thankfully, we have proven tools and strategies to improve employee engagement and help foster a healthy workplace culture. One of those proven strategies is your employee wellness program.



# The Role of Wellness Programs in Fostering Engagement

Modern executives understand the importance of their employees' health and wellness and how it impacts the business' performance. Healthier employees are more engaged, and higher engagement leads to better outcomes across the organization. That is why nearly two-thirds of U.S. employers have invested in wellness programs already.

Wellness programs can help improve employees' health and performance in many ways, depending on which interventions are offered and how they are implemented and incentivized.

From on-site fitness classes and mental health counseling to health risk assessments and biometric screenings, there are numerous offerings that companies can provide their employees to create an environment that positively impacts their lives.

Companies that invest in wellness programs see a host of benefits, including [\(8\)](#):

- Higher employee retention
- More internal job referrals
- Reduced absenteeism
- A recruitment advantage
- Higher morale
- Lower healthcare costs
- Higher employee performance

## Research Study

Wellness programs are also one of the best ways for employers to show their dedication to the health and success of their employees. That perception is crucial.

According to Gallup, employees who felt their employer cared about their wellbeing were:

- 69% less likely to actively search for a new job
- 71% less likely to report experiencing a lot of burnout
- 5x more likely to strongly advocate for their company as a place to work and to strongly agree they trust the leadership of their organization
- 3x more likely to be engaged at work
- 36% more likely to be thriving in their overall lives



## Wellness Program Pitfalls

A wellness program will only be effective if employees know about it, can access its resources, and are incentivized to do so. Therefore, the rate at which employees engage with their wellness program, called participation, is essential. Despite the impressive benefits of these programs, many companies need help improving employee participation.

## What Makes an Effective Wellness Program?

No matter which wellness services you offer, your company's size, or your wellness budget, your program must have a few of the following essential design elements to succeed.

### Be Easy to Use

Employees today are busier and more stressed than ever. For a wellness program to succeed, it must make every step on the employee's journey easy to use and as convenient as possible. One of the most common ways this is done is by utilizing a [comprehensive digital wellness platform that keeps all an employee's personal data, educational materials, assessment results, and more in one place.](#)

Digital wellness platforms allow employees to access their information from anywhere, making program administration easier. Some modern wellness platforms go even further and have built-in integrations with popular health and fitness platforms such as Fitbit and Apple Health. These seamless integrations allow more data sharing from each employee, resulting in a more tailored experience for them.



## Be Highly Personalized

Wellness programs that fail to personalize each employee's journey face an even harder time eliciting employee participation. Health risk assessments and biometric screens are evidence-based employee wellness program tools that provide exceptional value to employees.

These standardized interventions give the employee a data-driven understanding of their current health status and provide endless opportunities within the wellness program to provide personalized education, health coaching, resources, and support.

## Be Engaging

Many wellness programs are abandoned because they didn't receive enough employee participation to justify their cost. The most common culprit? Employees didn't even know they had a wellness program.

For your program to succeed, it must be attractive, well-advertised, and engaging. The fitness industry has led the way in creating innovative wellness solutions, especially in the wearable and app sectors. These fitness tech companies have perfected the art of constant, daily engagement by gamifying participation and making the process of moving more fun.

## Have the Right Buy-in & Support

For your wellness program to succeed, it must have support from leadership. It's crucial that employees are aware of the program and its benefits and encouraged to participate. Leadership teams that lead by example and model participation have higher success rates.

## Use the Right Behavioral Incentives

Employees must be motivated to take an active role in their health and participate in the various initiatives offered by the wellness program. Behavioral incentives have long been used to motivate employees and increase program participation. The best incentive models will address both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Two of the best behavioral motivators available are financial incentives and gamification.



# Transform Your Workplace: 7 Proven Engagement Strategies

Below are seven proven strategies that boost employee engagement by creating a rewarding work environment and strong organizational culture.

## 1 Offer Flexible Work

The pandemic proved that many jobs can be done successfully at home, and remote and hybrid work arrangements soared in popularity. In fact, 65% of employees polled would prefer a fully remote position. [\(9\)](#) By offering remote or hybrid roles and flexible working hours regardless of location, you're demonstrating a greater dedication to employees' well-being. This increases job satisfaction, employee tenure, and job engagement.

## 2 Encourage Work-Life Balance

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### 3 Provide Regular Feedback & Communication

Poor or inadequate management is one of the most commonly cited sources of burnout and disengagement from work. For two years in a row, the [Gallup State of the Global Workforce Report](#) has listed poor management as the single biggest leading cause of the global engagement crisis.

One of the easiest ways to improve your management skills is by opening communication channels with your team. If you're a manager, make sure you're conducting regular one-on-one meetings and team check-ins to ensure that employees feel heard and supported.

### 4 Offer Professional Development Opportunities

Nothing kills the engagement of a star employee faster than realizing they have no upward mobility opportunities available to them. Providing opportunities for professional growth, such as training programs, mentorship, and clear career paths, helps employees feel valued and engaged. And remember to acknowledge and recognize an outstanding performance too.

### 5 Provide Mental Health Support

Awareness around the prevalence of mental illness, burnout, and stress has increased dramatically, but the stigma around asking for help and seeking services remains. Offering access to confidential counseling services, either in-person or via telehealth, helps employees manage stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues. It also helps to normalize taking mental health days, just like we do for physical health.

### 6 Foster an Inclusive Workplace Culture

In addition to offering fair policies, leave, and pay, it is important to promote a diverse and inclusive workplace where all employees feel respected and valued. This increases the feeling of psychological safety and enhances overall employee engagement and satisfaction.



## 7 Offer Personalized, Easy-to-Access Programming

Implement or upgrade your employee wellness program platform. Start by surveying your workforce to see what services they want most and design your program from there. Some ideas for employee wellness initiatives include:

- Gym membership, fitness classes, or on-site workout facilities encourage physical activity.
- Utilizing an all-in-one digital wellness platform that scales the size of your organization and the complexity of your needs.
- Regular health check-ups and screenings can help detect and address health issues early.
- Healthy snacks, nutritionist access, and educational sessions on healthy eating.
- Offer group classes, challenges, and teams to improve accountability and utilize the power of group dynamics on health improvement.

## Next-Gen Wellness Solutions: Inspiring Employee Participation with Incentives

Employee engagement starts with your organizational culture, benefits, and leadership. From that strong foundation, you can add a wellness program to greatly improve your employees' individual wellness, which has significant ROI for employee engagement and business performance.

Effective behavioral incentives, like gamification, drive the results of the most effective wellness programs. If you're not familiar with the incredible benefits that gamification can offer your wellness program, download our latest white paper today.





**CoreHealth's leading wellness platform can help you drive higher engagement and improved health outcomes.**

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