[T I V I A N]

The Employee Experience Playbook:

How to improve employee experience and engagement in 2022

Everything you need to convince your leaders that increasing your focus on employee engagement must be a business priority.

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Introduction

Today, people power successful organizations. If you want to out-perform the competition, you'll need to attract, retain, and engage them, whatever their role. Get it right, and you'll benefit from greater productivity, higher innovation, and better customer service. Get it wrong and fail to give your talent the experience they demand, and they'll simply leave. We're seeing it all around us in the current Great Resignation.

Some companies are becoming bywords for innovation and success, while others face challenges that threaten their very existence. Why? It's all down to the employee experience they provide.

So how do you deliver the right experience to engage every one of your people? Start by listening to their feedback and using these insights to drive improvements.

This playbook provides a full guide to employee experience and engagement, what drives success and how you can accelerate your strategy, tactics, and tools. Your people are your biggest asset – act now to keep it that way.
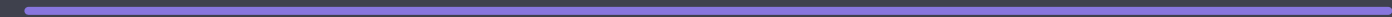
What is employee engagement and why is it vital to success?

Let's start with what makes up engagement and how it powers competitive advantage.
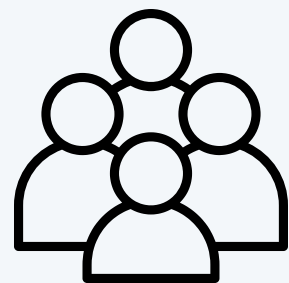
An engaged workforce will **power** your organization

Businesses now operate in a hyper-fast, ever-changing world. Having an engaged workforce has never been more important. Fail to get the best from your people and you'll simply fail to compete.

Understand just how engaged your people are and use this knowledge to take action. It's now time to give the employee experience (EX) the same focus and attention already applied to customer experience (CX).

"When companies continuously engage and respond to employees, they create an empowered workforce. Employees know their voices are being heard, their opinions count, and they are an instrumental part of the business."

Josh Bersin, HR Analyst

Let's start with the basics.

We all want to do good work. If we do work we enjoy, in a positive environment, then we are more likely to be happier and to give 100%. This engagement not only benefits employers, but also individual well-being and mental health. Multiple studies back this up:

2.5x

Organizations in the top quartile of engagement demonstrated revenue growth 2.5x times greater than those in the bottom quartile

(Engage for Success)

11%

Organizations with highly engaged employees see 11% greater profitability and are twice as likely to retain their employees

(Gallup)

40%

Companies with high levels of engagement show a labour turnover rate that is 40% lower than companies with low levels of engagement

(Engage for Success)

12%

Companies with top quartile engagement scores average 12% higher customer advocacy

(Engage for Success)

Business benefits from high levels of employee engagement include:

Greater productivity

Greater retention

Lower absenteeism

Greater innovation

Improved performance (especially in customer-facing roles where it drives greater customer satisfaction)

Higher quality

Yet despite the benefits listed, engagement is failing.

Just **35% of US workers class themselves as engaged** according to <u>Gallup</u>, for example.

How can you change this picture and accelerate engagement?

4 key factors for keeping your workforce engaged

Engaged employees are happy and motivated. They have everything they need to go above and beyond. Focus on these key factors to drive engagement:

01

CULTURE

Is the company culture supportive? What behaviors and values are rewarded – and which are not? Is there a purpose to the company that everyone buys into?

02

INVOLVEMENT

Do employees feel listened to as individuals? Can they share their ideas without fear of being criticized or marked down?

03

APPRECIATION

Do you acknowledge good work and great ideas? Do managers take the time to genuinely share praise?

04

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Do staff have everything they need? Are your technology systems a help or a drag on getting things done? Are your facilities up to the job?

We'll explain more about how these translate into delivering the right employee experience in the next chapter.

Touchpoints in the employee lifecycle

Attraction

How attractive is your company to potential recruits?

Application

How easy and open is the recruitment process?

Onboarding

How are employees supported to get up and running quickly?

Engagement

How engaged are employees with the company and its goals?

Development

How are employees supported when they get promoted or shift role?

Exit

How are employees treated when they leave?

Alumni

Do you keep good relations with leavers so they remain ambassadors?

Everyone goes through a journey during their time with your organization. Just like the customer journey, you need to optimize the experience at each touchpoint of the employee lifecycle.

What is the difference between employee engagement and employee experience?

Employee engagement and employee experience are interrelated but aren't the same. Let's start with some definitions:

Employee Engagement

Engage for Success defines employee engagement as "a workplace approach resulting in the right conditions for all members of an organization to give their best each day, committed to their organization's goals and values, motivated to contribute to organizational success, with an enhanced sense of their own well-being."

At Tivian, we relate engagement to how people think, feel and act at work. Those who show rational and emotional commitment to their employer, and act in the best interests of their employer, expending discretionary effort, are engaged.

Employee Experience

At its simplest level, it is about what it's like to work somewhere – from the first day onwards and across every touchpoint and interaction. But some industry experts go further. For example, Josh Bersin describes it as "a company-wide initiative to help employees stay productive, healthy, engaged and on track."

This makes EX much more than HR's responsibility. All parts of the company have a role in creating a great employee experience, from Finance, IT, and facilities to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and communications.
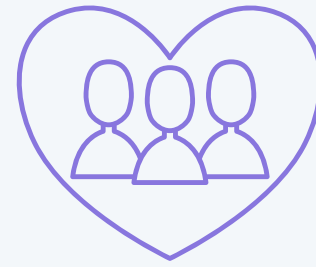
The rise of EX doesn't make measuring engagement obsolete.

A positive employee experience will increase employee engagement resulting in more motivated, happier employees. But looking at how people feel at one point in time through engagement surveys is not enough.

You need to look at the entire employee lifecycle, covering touchpoints from recruitment and onboarding all the way through to exit. This gives an enormous wealth of data freely provided by your people.

It's your job to act on it quickly if you want to get the best from them.

What goes into creating a great employee experience

1 **COMMUNICATION**
Is it regular and delivering a clear, consistent message?
Do employees have the opportunity to speak up?

2 **LINE MANAGEMENT**
According to Gallup, 70% of the variance in engagement scores is down to the manager. Are your line managers getting the support and training they need to engage their teams?

3 **LEADERSHIP**
Is the company vision clear and compelling? Are leaders creating an environment of openness and trust?

4 **MEANINGFUL WORK**
Do employees see the bigger picture and how do their efforts support wider goals?

5 **DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**
Is it clear how people progress in their careers?

6 **WELLBEING**
Do employees feel you look after their mental and physical needs?

7 **ACCESS TO RESOURCES**
Are the right training and tools available to help and support employees to be effective?

8 **CULTURE**
Does the overall company culture reward the right behaviors?

9 **TEAM DYNAMICS**
Do teams have the balance of skills, personality and experience to thrive?

The elements of a great employee experience are similar to those that drive engagement. What's vital is that **they are delivered consistently, across the employee journey**, and that they cover an employee's whole working life.

Your strategy needs to cover all these areas:

Clarity over employee roles
People work best when they know what they have to do, and what you expect of them. Give them security by defining what their role covers, why it is meaningful to the business, and what good performance looks like. Ensure they have the right amount of challenge and the autonomy to achieve using their own initiative.

Providing the right tools, technology, and support
You can't expect employees to be effective or happy if they don't have the right equipment, skills, and environment to do their jobs. Give them the technology and training that allows them to focus on the job, not on fixing technical issues. Back this up with internal support (such as from IT or finance) to make their experience seamless.

Strong leadership
People want their work to have a purpose and be part of something bigger. Leaders must demonstrate and share their vision, explain what the company stands for, and outline everyone's importance in achieving success.

Clear and relevant communication

We're in a time of constant change – and many humans instinctively fear change. Deliver reassurance through clear, relevant, and personalized communications that explain any changes and outline their likely impact. Don't rely on old-school all-hands emails – embrace compelling content and channels such as video, presentations, Zoom calls, and face-to-face meetings.

Good people management

People don't leave companies – they leave bad managers. Particularly in today's team-based world, line managers are vital to delivering the right employee experience. Make sure they have the skills to listen, coach, develop and inspire their teams.

Ongoing listening, feedback, and recognition

We want to feel listened to and helped to develop. Build a strong feedback culture where everyone has the chance to share their opinions – and get constructive feedback on their performance. Take fast action on these insights to drive improvements. Make sure you recognize people's achievements and milestones to show you value them.

Bear in mind that positive cultures share certain traits. They are open, feedback-driven, and provide psychological safety so that people are unafraid to speak up or be innovative.

They are based on being inclusive and diverse, where everyone feels valued, whatever their background or experience.

Commitment to employee wellbeing
Employee wellbeing has always been vital to the work experience – even if it has taken a pandemic to move it up the management agenda. Ensure you are measuring your people's mental, physical, emotional, and financial wellbeing and providing tailored support through access to resources, mentors, and helplines.

A focus on personal growth and development
As humans, we want to learn and grow. Showing you want to support employees to develop is incredibly motivating and increases the chances they'll stay for the longer term.

Creating an inclusive culture
To get the best out of your people you need a culture where everyone feels valued and that they belong. Ensure you reward the right behaviors and demonstrate openness, led from the top. This is especially important in the post-pandemic era of remote and hybrid working where employees may not be in the office for extended periods.

The critical role of employee feedback and insights

There are many ways to measure and improve the employee experience, but they all revolve around listening and taking effective, timely action. Following this process gives your strategy the best chance of success.

FREQUENT LISTENING

Start by understanding how employees feel and what needs to be improved through an effective listening programme, using surveys to gather useful feedback from your people. Different listening methods deliver different types of insight, so blend these approaches:

TRADITIONAL EMPLOYEE SURVEYS

Normally carried out once a year, these are in-depth exercises that survey the whole company. Data can be used to compare engagement scores year on year or between departments, as well as provide the chance to focus on specific areas. Annual surveys do deliver a lot of data but are time-consuming and resource-intensive to carry out. And of course, like Christmas, they only happen once a year.

PULSE SURVEYS
Pulse surveys are shorter, more targeted surveys that cover different groups of people or are focused on particular areas, such as culture or wellbeing. Clearly, they give a narrower picture, but are quicker to run, accelerating the process of making effective changes.

CONTINUOUS LISTENING
Continuous listening exercises contain just a few simple questions. They provide a very regular snapshot of sentiment around employee experiences and highlight areas for immediate action but on the downside are clearly not as comprehensive as annual or pulse surveys.

EMPLOYEE LIFECYCLE SURVEYS
These surveys focus on specific touchpoints in the journey. This helps not only highlight problems that individuals are having but uncovers and lets you fix bigger problems in your processes, improving the wider experience for all.

Reviewing and analysing data.

Once you have your feedback, you need to be able to effectively analyze it to highlight issues, spot trends, and cross-reference against previous results. And you need to be able to do this as quickly as possible so that you can take immediate action.

Using a single technology platform across your EX listening strategy helps here. It brings together different surveys and organizes data so that it matches your corporate structure, allowing you to deep dive into specific offices or departments. Make sure you can analyze unstructured responses as well using technologies such as AI and text analytics to give you greater insights.

Finally, ensure you have the processes in place to share results with stakeholders in ways that are easy for them to understand through a combination of interactive results and dashboards.

Turning insights and learnings into actions

There's only one thing worse for EX than not listening to your people. And that's listening and not taking action. Fail to listen and act and employees will lose faith that you actually care and will become actively disengaged from the business.

However, linking feedback insights to effective change is often the hardest part of the process to get right. Focus on two areas:

- Have a clear plan of how you will communicate results to all as soon as you can after the survey closes

- Share your expectations for action and make them happen, whether that is running ideation workshops with staff to solve problems, assigning actions to managers, or making improvements directly. Then make sure these actions are communicated back to all employees.

Achieving success.

Give your program the best chance of being meaningful and effective by following these best practices:

1

GET MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT AND INVOLVE EVERYONE

Listening to employees can uncover uncomfortable truths, at both an organization and team level. However, to drive real improvements there needs to be a commitment from everyone that they will take action on employee feedback, whatever the results. Don't brush feedback under the carpet. Employees need to believe you'll act to stay motivated and engaged.

Adopt a top-down and bottom-up approach. Senior leaders should address high-level issues affecting the whole organization, with local issues dealt with at a team level. Get everyone involved in improvement.

2

INCLUDE EMPLOYEES
IN NEXT STEPS

Even the most detailed survey results can only point to where change is required. They are unlikely to provide the answers or really show employee priorities. So go deeper and discuss results with employees, highlighting the issues that really matter to them.

Involve employees in coming up with solutions – this not only helps fix issues but gets them to buy into improvements.

3

LIMIT FOCUS TO
THREE AREAS

Your EX surveys will give you a wealth of data and opportunities for improvement. Don't take a scattergun approach and try and do everything.

Instead, get your managers to limit their improvement efforts to three areas, based on what employees see as priorities. That means actions can be progressed and given adequate attention in a timely manner.

4

MAKE SURE YOUR AGREED ACTIONS ARE SMART

Once you have prioritized the areas you need to focus on, create action plans that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound (SMART). Set clear goals and timelines and make sure everyone understands their role in implementing improvements.

S	M	A	R	T
SPECIFIC	**MEASURABLE**	**ACHIEVABLE**	**RELEVANT**	**TIMEBOUND**
State what you'll do	Find a way to evaluate	Within your scope	Make sense with your job function	State when you'll get it done
Use action words	Use metrics or data targets	Possible to accomplish, attainable	Improves the business in some way	Be specific on the date

5

REVIEW PROGRESS REGULARLY AND COMMUNICATE SUCCESSES

Making a plan is the easy part - it is much harder to then successfully execute it. Schedule regular check-ins to measure progress where you can make any necessary course corrections.

Finally, show employees that their voice counts. Communicate and celebrate where successful changes have been made, based on feedback insights. This boosts motivation and makes employees more likely to share their feedback and ideas in the next survey you run.

How to manage employee experience

Delivering the right employee experience is crucial to getting the best from your people.

But it doesn't just happen by accident.

Employee experience has to be managed effectively on a constant basis if you want it to meet staff needs.

What is employee experience management?

Employee experience management (EEM) is how successful companies transform their people's experiences. It is an ongoing, well-resourced program that understands, measures, and improves the experience, based on listening to employees and taking action.

Tools and solutions to support your strategy

Technology underpins employee experience management, at every step of the way:

Listening to employees needs to be fast, seamless and easy – for you and your people. Technology helps by making it simple to collect feedback, whichever type of survey you use.

EEM generates huge volumes of data – too much for a human to quickly analyze on their own. AI-based text analytics shortcuts analysis to find insights you need to act on.
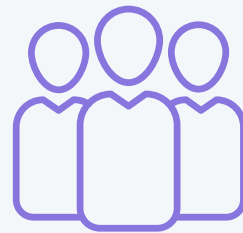
Next, you need to share the results with the right people, in the right format. Your platform should be able to do this at the touch of a button, reaching stakeholders with the information they need, and communicating back to your people

Finally, complete the loop with action planning that sets targets, monitors progress, and checks that improvements are actually delivering.

Do you need an employee engagement partner?

Employee engagement is vital to business performance. You know that. But you may not have the internal resources, skills, and time to run an effective program. That's where an external partner can help.

Working with a specialist provider taps into their expertise and best practice to up the chances of your project succeeding.

Make sure you pick a partner that understands your business is flexible enough to fit your changing needs and is open to sharing their knowledge to upskill your people.

Summary.

If you want to succeed, you need the best people. Engaging your employees unlocks greater productivity, innovation, and performance. Engagement relies on you giving every employee the experience they want, tailored to their needs – that's why you need an effective program to understand and increase engagement. Getting it right may look complex, but following these best practice steps drives success:

LISTEN

Collect feedback on an ongoing basis in ways that engage with your people

ANALYSE

Use technology to deep dive into your data to understand what's happening

TAKE ACTION

Make the right changes and measure their impact

COMMUNICATE

Share the results and actions back with your people to reinforce engagement

About Tivian.

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Tivian has employee engagement mastered with a <u>comprehensive toolkit to help you transform the employee experience</u> and keep your workforce engaged, motivated and inspired. We combine cutting-edge data analytics and AI technology with comprehensive internal communication software for planning and delivering compelling campaigns.

<u>Schedule a product tour</u> to see how Tivian helps companies find the insights and provides the actions to make their workplace irresistible.

Tivian's <u>employee experience solution suite</u> enables employers to gain a holistic view and control over the information and levers that drive staff satisfaction and influence talent retention. We span two main areas, discovery and communication:

- Discovery XI enables you to capture and harness experience data to gain deep insights, improve decision-making and create a happier workplace
- Communication XI lets you apply a marketing methodology to internal communication to offer employees relevant content to consume and engage with regularly.

Combined, our solution delivers a holistic employee engagement experience.

TIVIAN

The intelligent experience management leader.

Through advanced analytics and cutting-edge AI technology, Tivian helps great organizations capture and harness experience data to drive business listening, deeper insights, and better decision making. Tivian's intelligent experience management platform increases corporate effectiveness and enables a smarter business world, empowered by insight. Built on 20 years of experience in enterprise feedback management, Tivian provides over 400 customers in 35 countries with the ability to take action and achieve their objectives.

Boden | RSA | ✚ | AA | Special Olympics

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