



HOW TO BE MORE ENGAGED AT WORK

IT'S A GREAT FEELING TO BE ENGAGED AT WORK.

You're energized, focused, and motivated. That can have ripple effects on the people around you: your work colleagues, family, and friends. Feeling disengaged, on the other hand, is disheartening and draining.

It's easy to blame forces outside yourself when you're feeling down about your work. It's true that your employer and manager have roles to play in building employee engagement. However, you have a critical role, too, and there are steps you can take to be more engaged at work.



REMINDE YOURSELF WHY YOU'RE THERE.

Look at the big picture of your work—why you are there and how the work is valuable:

- Think back to your reasons for taking the job in the first place. Was it to learn new skills, help people, contribute to innovation, or maybe simply to provide for your family? Are those reasons still important to you? Might you set new goals for yourself?



SEEK VARIETY AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES.

If your work has grown boring to you over time, look for ways to **add variety and opportunities for growth**:

- Try doing your tasks in different ways, both to find efficiencies and ways to make them more enjoyable and satisfying.
- Ask your manager if you can be trained in a new skill so that you can provide coverage for a co-worker when they are out or so that you can help the team extend its capabilities.



SPEAK UP.

Ask for what you need. Don't wait and expect it to come to you:

- Talk with your manager about ways you could be more efficient or about low-value tasks that are getting in the way of more important (and satisfying) work.
- Think about your strengths and how those might be applied to help your organization succeed. This will require both self-reflection and a big-picture understanding of your organization.



TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.

If you're feeling exhausted and burned out by your work, it might be because you're not taking care of yourself:

- **Take breaks.** Five-minute stretch breaks and short walks are good for your body and can clear your mind. Vacations are important to re-energize you for renewed effort and creative thinking. Even one day off when you're feeling worn down can give you a boost.
- **Attend to your health.** Eat healthy foods, stay hydrated, engage in regular physical activity, and adopt healthy sleep habits. Wellbeing is a critical foundation for engagement.



MANAGE YOUR REACTIONS AND YOUR THINKING.

You can't control how the people around you behave, but **you can control how you react.** You also have more control than you may realize over how you think about events at work:

- When your immediate reaction is defensive or angry, force yourself to pause and come up with a different, more productive response. What can you say or do to resolve the conflict or overcome the obstacle?
- Look for the positive side of any setback or change. Is there an opportunity to be found? Something you can learn and apply in the future? Try to be open and curious rather than negative or resistant. This is known as positive reframing.



COLLABORATE AND BUILD SOCIAL CONNECTIONS.

A key element in engagement at work is your **relationship with coworkers:**

- Pay attention to which individuals make you feel worse and which make you feel positive. Cultivate friendships with energizing and uplifting coworkers and people with whom you can be yourself. Friendships at work can be one of the biggest drivers of employee engagement.
- Consider acting as a mentor to a new or less experienced co-worker. You'll be helping the other person, adding value to the organization, and making your work feel more meaningful.



MAKE TIME FOR A PERSONAL PASSION.

Work is not the only place to seek engagement and satisfaction in life. **Finding passion and energy outside of work** can be just as important, and that can help improve your outlook in the workplace:

- **Make time for a personal interest or passion.** It might be a hobby or creative activity. It might be returning to a sport you love or learning a new way of cooking. Immersing yourself in an activity you enjoy can put you in a mental state called flow that takes your mind off worries and negative thoughts. Building new skills, making things, and reaching personal goals can all help enhance your self-esteem, confidence, and motivation.
- **Volunteer.** Get involved in your community as a volunteer or volunteer your skills for a cause you care about. Applying your talents and time to help others can give your life meaning and make you feel good about yourself—feelings that can help you take a positive approach at work.