

Driving employee engagement

The Top 5 drivers of employee engagement and why they matter



 OpenBlend





What drives employee engagement?

Engagement is a two-way street. One of the biggest mistakes that an organisation can make when trying to boost engagement is failing to listen. Engagement initiatives are so often centred on the business – the perks they have to offer, the story they have to tell, the importance of what they want to achieve – that they lose sight of the individuals they are trying to engage with.

If you want your employees to be engaged at work, you need to take steps to engage with your employees. That means instigating open, honest dialogue to understand them as individuals, get to the heart of what motivates them and take action to allow them to prioritise what's important to them.

No amount of reward schemes, pay rises, pool tables or perks will engage your workforce if they don't align with their individual needs. A working parent probably won't become more engaged if you introduce after work get-togethers on a Wednesday night. A star player suffering from burnout probably isn't going to become more engaged because they've been promoted. If anything, these examples of "engagement initiatives" can end up doing the exact opposite of what they were supposed to achieve: alienating and disengaging the employee even further.

Do employee engagement surveys work?



The answer is not, as many believe, periodic engagement surveys. These surveys may succeed in giving a general sense of how engaged or disengaged your employees are, but they won't provide any actionable insight into how you can improve it. For one, they are anonymous and generalised, taking a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to employee engagement that risks creating engagement initiatives that aren't right for everyone. Secondly, by time they are collated, processed and reviewed, they fall out of date. They fail to provide real-time insight into the connection between engagement and productivity and what's driving engagement in the here and now.

Engagement surveys provide a baseline measurement of how your workforce is feeling but do not offer an actionable plan for employees to impact this KPI. Through regular and effective one-to-ones, managers and employees can work together to unlock individual motivators and enable an action plan that actually has an impact on engagement.

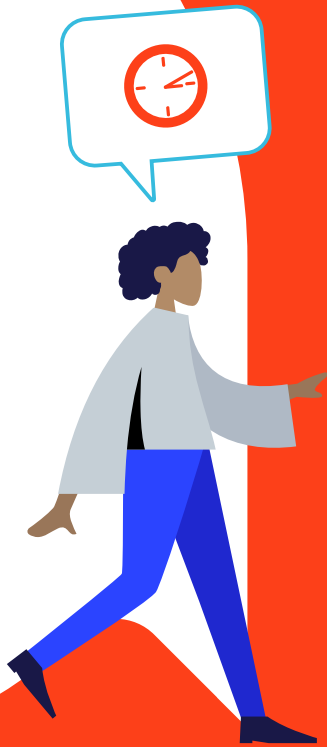
Better engagement requires increased motivation. With increased motivation comes higher productivity. Understand what drives engagement and motivation, and you can unlock your workforce's – and your business' – potential.

How can you discover what motivates your employee?

Conversation is key – but a friendly chat at the coffee machine isn't going to cut it. To identify, understand and action employee drivers, you need constructive dialogue that sets reasonable objectives, assigns accountability and ascertains purpose. For instance, if an employee identifies 'progression at work' as a key driver, what does 'progression' look like to them? What action is needed to enable it? Who is responsible for driving it? What impact is it going to have on the employee's productivity, wellbeing and engagement?




Using the Blend tool to improve employee engagement



Our unique Blend tool enables employees to capture their key drivers in one framework. With a list of 28 core Blend drivers to choose from, employees can create their own individual work/life Blend: a mix of personal and professional drivers that enable them to achieve, motivate them to succeed and increase their engagement.

OpenBlend is an easy-to-use platform that ensures one-to-one conversations occur regularly. When employees include their Blend drivers as part of their performance discussions with their managers, it enables constant review and progression to maintain engagement as the employee – and the business – evolves. Unlike engagement surveys, this approach gives real-time insight into what motivates each individual employee, allowing for timely, impactful change.

With coaching prompts, discussion points and coaching frameworks built into the platform, managers are guided to ask the right questions, at the right time; set appropriate actions and objectives; support employees to prioritise their Blend drivers; and boost engagement through open and honest conversation.



What are the top 5 employee drivers?

At OpenBlend, we are constantly analysing the key drivers that are engaging the modern hybrid workforce.

Here are the Top 5 Blend drivers – and why they are vital to a motivated, productive and engaged workforce.



1.

Health and exercise

People are increasingly prioritising their physical and mental wellbeing, with employees and workplaces alike recognising the impact that our health has on both our personal and professional lives. As a result, access to health and exercise has become the number one driver for OpenBlend users.

However, it's important to listen to what individuals actually need to address health and exercise, rather than introducing measures that pay lip-service to the idea. Introducing in-office yoga because 'exercise' appeared on an engagement survey, for instance, won't necessarily increase engagement. Enabling individuals to access and independently act on their own health and exercise priorities will always be much more effective than taking a blanket one-size-fits-all approach.



Health and exercise
is the #1 driver for
OpenBlend users



2.

Time with family & friends

According to our data 'time with family and friends' is included as a key driver by half of all OpenBlend users. Similarly, 'My children' and 'My dependents', when chosen by individuals, are among the Blend drivers to have some of the highest target scores.

People are actively seeking for a better blend between their work and home life, particularly as hybrid and WFH culture continues to blur the boundaries between our personal and professional lives. For employees with this driver, quality time with family and friends translates to more productive, focussed time at work – increasing engagement through better balance.



50%

**of all OpenBlend users
choose 'time with family
and friends' within their
work/life Blend**



3.

Making a difference at work


Purpose has become something of a buzzword in recent years, but that shouldn't detract from the fact that it is crucial driver of engagement. According to Deloitte's Core Beliefs and Culture Survey, "focusing on purpose rather than profits builds business confidence and drives investment".

When it comes to engagement, employees today want to feel that they are an important part of the business they work for: it improves diligence, productivity and a sense of job security, all of which are fundamental to feeling engaged with their employer. Managers can use one-to-ones, facilitated by the OpenBlend platform, to communicate purpose to your teams, as well as measuring their impact on the business to illustrate the difference they are making at work.



**Over the past 2 years
'making a difference
at work' has seen
increased significance.**

*Overtaking 'money' as one of the most popular Blend drivers chosen by our users.





4.

Money

Surprised that this isn't further up the list? We're not. Recent world events have influenced people to re-evaluate what's really important to them, and many have realised that money isn't the sole priority they once thought it was.

It is, however, still important. Money is necessary to support our lifestyles. It's also still seen as reflection of our value in the workplace: employees understandably expect to be fairly recompensed for the work they put in, and financially rewarded when they go above and beyond. However, the days of a weighty pay check being enough to counter other issues – such as stress, low fulfilment, lack of purpose – are over. To fully engage your workforce, you need to be able to have open and constructive conversations about money: what it means to them, how it reflects the work they achieve and how it relates with their wider goals and priorities.



Money is the **4th**
most popular Blend driver



5.

Progression at work

This is one blend driver where it's particularly crucial to engage in open, honest conversation before taking action, as 'progression at work' can mean very different things to different people. Progression at work doesn't always mean promotion (for instance, from employee to manager). When it comes to engagement, employees today want to feel that they are an important part of the business they work for, and that the business itself is socially responsible.

Getting this Blend driver right means understanding what 'progression at work' represents to the individual and how it relates to their other key blend drivers. Managers need to ask employees: "what is your ideal next step?" It could be promotion, or it could be a change in job title that better reflects the work they are putting in. It could be a pay rise, or it could be assigning them an important, exciting new project.



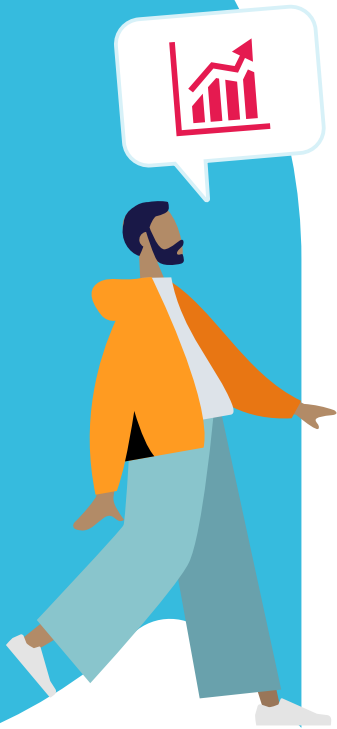
88%

'Progression at work' has one of the highest target scores



Developing bespoke drivers for better engagement

OpenBlend customers can add bespoke Blend drivers to their platform. One such addition, My Pets, represented such a significant priority to a particular company's team that it had the highest target score on their fulfilment index: **a score of 93%**. Yet it also achieved the smallest gap between current and target score amongst the employees that chose this as one of their Blend drivers. Unexpected, but perhaps not unsurprising, considering that 3.2million new pets were brought home during lockdown. **The lesson: engagement drivers are unique to the individual. Find out what's important in your business before taking action to drive engagement.**



Engaging your workforce one driver at a time.

Authentic engagement relies on a people-centric approach to management: one that prioritises the needs of the individual over broad-sweeping, but ultimately empty, gestures.

To find out how OpenBlend can help your managers to increase engagement by enabling your employees' Blend drivers, book a demo or speak to one of our team.

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