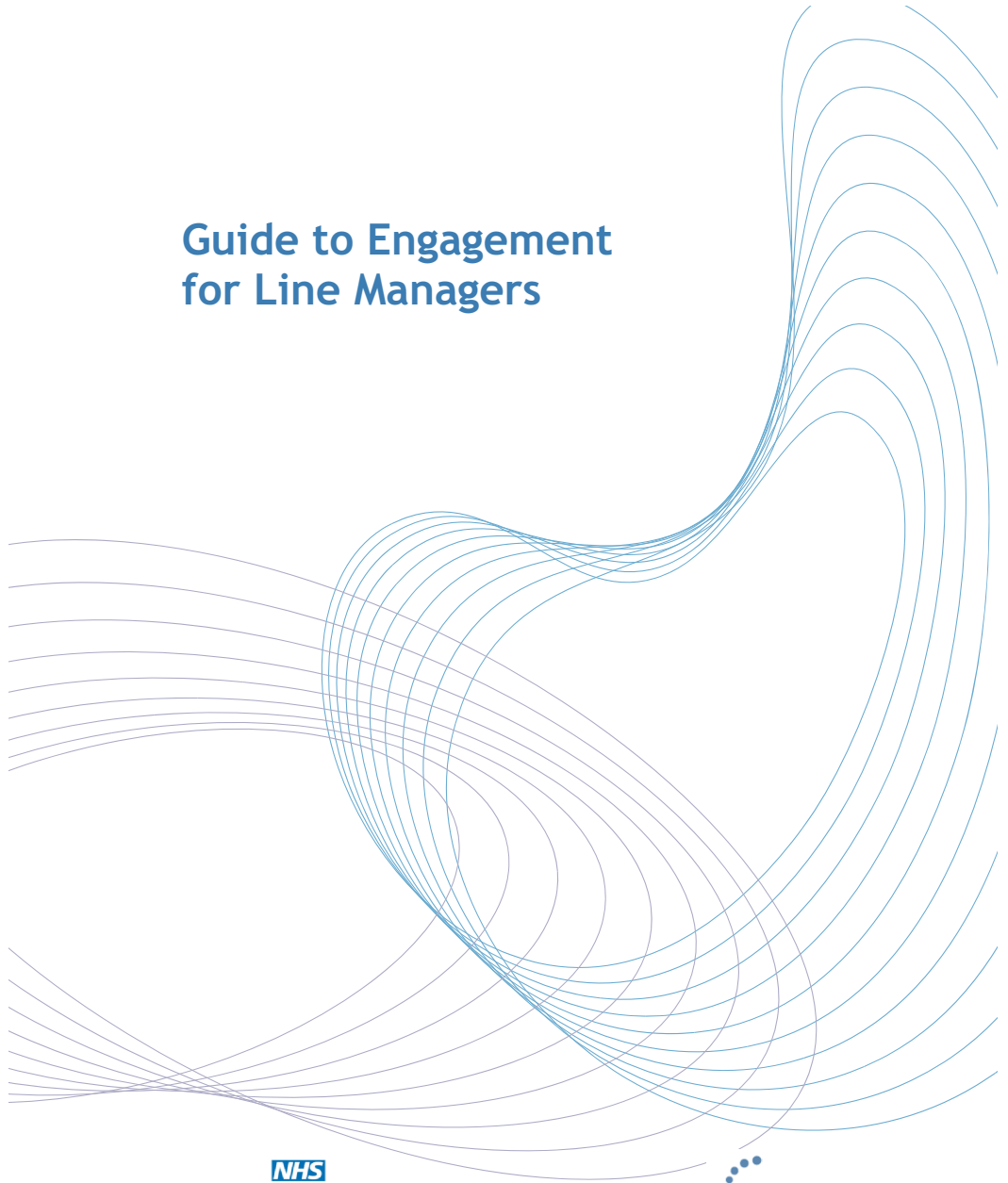


Guide to Engagement for Line Managers



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1 Introduction

Welcome to this guide on staff engagement in the NHS. The aim of the guide is to inform you about engagement: what it is, why it matters, what makes it happen, and above all what this means for you, in your line management role. It focuses on the actions you can take to foster and sustain engagement levels in your team.

The NHS is a complicated organisation, employing people in many different roles, staff types, and professional groups. It is under intense scrutiny – perhaps more so now than at any time in its history. Managers are expected to get the most out of their team, while at the same time managing their staff in an engaging, values-driven way. The role is demanding and difficult (although also very rewarding), and many managers feel under constant pressure.

There are many reports and ‘how to’ guides about staff engagement, so how does this one differ? Firstly, the evidence review on which this guide is based¹, together with an associated review of practitioner research², was commissioned with the NHS in mind, so the outputs from the review have a strong focus on what will work best in an NHS context. Secondly, the evidence review followed a systematic methodology, so you can be confident that the advice in this guide is based on robust, reliable, good-quality evidence.

There are four sections to the guide:

1. **What is Engagement?** This section describes engagement definitions, different perspectives on engagement, and how engagement is measured in the NHS.
2. **Why Does Engagement Matter?** This section presents the evidence showing that it is worthwhile investing in increasing staff engagement, because engagement makes a difference to morale and performance.

¹ Truss, C., Madden, A., Alfes, K., Fletcher, L., Robinson, D., Holmes, J., Buzzeo, J. and Currie, G. (2014). *Employee Engagement: An Evidence Synthesis*. National Institute for Health Research (NIHR).

² Holmes, J., Fletcher, L., Buzzeo, J., Robinson, D., Truss, C., Madden, A., Alfes, K. and Currie, G. (2014). *NIHR Staff Engagement in the NHS: Review of Practitioner Studies of Engagement*. NIHR.

3. **What Drives Engagement?** To raise engagement levels, it is important to understand what causes engagement to happen (or not happen). This section presents the evidence about engagement drivers.
4. **What Can Line Managers Do?** This final section gives you some practical advice about actions you can take to engage your staff.

2 What is Engagement?

This section describes engagement definitions, different perspectives on engagement, and how engagement is measured in the NHS.

The question 'What is engagement' sounds straightforward, but in fact there are many different views about engagement and what it is, and there is no single, widely-accepted definition. A common factor, however, is that engagement is seen as a *positive psychological state*. This stems from Kahn (1990)³, the first academic to use the term 'engagement'. He viewed it as *'the individual's emotional and physical expression of the authentic and preferred self at work'*.

2.1.1 Engagement perspectives

There are two broad perspectives on engagement:

- The focus of **academic researchers** in the field of engagement tends to be the individual and the job, as the following two examples illustrate:
 - Schaufeli et al (2002)⁴, defined engagement as *'a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind'*.
 - Saks (2006)⁵, viewed engagement as being multi-dimensional: *'a distinct and unique construct consisting of cognitive, emotional and behavioural components that are associated with individual role performance'*.

³ Kahn, W. (1990). Psychological Conditions of Personal Engagement and Disengagement at Work. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 33(4).

⁴ Schaufeli, W.B., Salanova, M., Gonzalez-Roma, V. and Bakker, A.B. (2002). The measurement of engagement and burnout: A two sample confirmatory factor analytic approach. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 3(1).

⁵ Saks, A.M. (2006). Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 21(7).

- Most **practitioners** (ie managers and HR practitioners) have a broader perspective, in that they would like individual employees to be engaged not only narrowly with their current job, but more widely with their team, their line manager, their business or functional area, and their organisation. Examples of these definitions illustrate this different focus:
 - The Institute for Employment Studies (IES - 2004)⁶ defines engagement as ‘*a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organisation and its values*’. IES goes on to describe how the engaged employee behaves, and stresses the two-way nature of engagement: ‘*An engaged employee is aware of business context and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organisation. The organisation must work to develop and nurture engagement which requires a two-way relationship between employer and employee.*’
- Kenexa’s definition (2012)⁷ is that engagement is ‘*the extent to which employees are motivated to contribute towards organizational success, and are willing to apply discretionary effort to accomplishing tasks important to the achievement of organizational goals*’.
- NHS Employers, in its online staff engagement resource⁸, focuses on the positive outcomes of engagement: ‘*Engaged staff think and act in a positive way about the work they do, the people they work with and the organisation that they work in.*’

Research bite: How practitioners see engagement

Practitioner definitions of engagement typically encompass a range of positive attitudes towards the organisation, and sometimes also include engagement drivers (such as communication and involvement) and engagement outcomes (such as performance and desired behaviours).

Because of the different agendas and perspectives, academics and practitioners may not feel they share much common ground. Academics might feel that practitioners are insufficiently rigorous, while practitioners think that the narrower definitions and measures used by academics are not very useful, because they who want people to be engaged outside the boundaries of their jobs. Fortunately, some rigorous studies that use wider definitions and conceptual models of engagement have been published by reputable consultancies, survey houses and research institutes, and the broad findings are included in this guide.

⁶ Robinson, D., Perryman, S. and Hayday, S. (2004). *The Drivers of Employee Engagement*. Institute for Employment Studies (IES).

⁷ Kenexa (2012). *The Many Contexts of Employee Engagement – A 2012/2013 Kenexa WorkTrends Report*. Kenexa.

⁸ <http://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/retain-and-improve/staff-experience/staff-engagement>

2.1.2 How does the NHS measure engagement?

Engagement levels in the NHS are measured via the annual staff survey⁹. The **headline engagement indicator** is derived from nine questionnaire statements, to which respondents allocate a rating on a scale of 1 to 5: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. This headline indicator is broken down into three sub-dimensions called 'key findings' (KFs), each of which is made up of three statements.

- KF22 is 'staff ability to contribute towards improvement at work', often given the shorter label of '**involvement**':

'I am able to make suggestions to improve the work of my team/department.'

'There are frequent opportunities for me to show initiative in my role.'

'I am able to make improvements happen in my area of work.'

- KF24 is described as 'staff recommendation of the trust as a place to work or receive treatment' or more simply '**advocacy**':

'Care of patients/service users is my trust's top priority.'

'I would recommend my trust as a place to work.'

'If a friend or relative needed treatment I would be happy with the standard of care provided by this organisation.'

- Finally, KF25 is labelled 'staff motivation at work', usually abbreviated to '**motivation**':

'I look forward to going to work.'

'I am enthusiastic when I am working.'

'Time passes quickly when I am working.'

All three of these sub-dimensions are clearly very important, and the line manager is influential in all of them. You can involve your team in decision-making within your area; speak positively about the organisation and remind your team about how their role contributes to caring for patients; and create a good working environment and atmosphere, so that staff feel positive about their work.

⁹ www.nhsstaffsurveys.com

Research bite: different staff groups, different engagement

Work carried out by Jeremy Dawson and his colleagues¹⁰ at the University of Sheffield, using the NHS staff survey engagement measure, shows that the headline staff engagement indicators can mask differences between staff groups in the way that they respond to the statements in the three sub-dimensions. The 2011 staff survey results, for example, showed that medical and dental staff had the highest motivation scores, general managers the highest involvement scores, and maintenance and ancillary staff the highest advocacy scores.

2.1.3 What does this mean for line managers?

As a line manager, you will mainly want employees to be absorbed in their day-to-day work and motivated by their jobs. In some ways, engaging your team with the wider organisation may seem unnecessary; however, although you do not have direct influence over organisational strategy, you will be expected to understand the 'big picture' and explain the decisions of senior leaders to your team. In this sense, it helps if members of your team take an interest in the organisation, get involved in activities outside their immediate area of work, and speak positively about the organisation to outsiders. Having a team that is engaged with the organisation, as well as being engaged with you and with their work, will also be helpful when you want to introduce change.

¹⁰ Presentation by Jeremy Dawson at 'Staff Engagement in the NHS' conference, University of Sussex, 25 February 2014

3 Why Does Engagement Matter?

This section presents the evidence showing that it is worthwhile investing in increasing staff engagement, because engagement makes a difference to morale and performance.

The reason why so much attention is paid to employee engagement is that it makes a difference. When interest first started to gather momentum in the world of management and HR in the early 2000s, the links between engagement and positive outcomes were not proven, yet it seemed to make intuitive sense that people who were engaged with their jobs and the organisations would have higher morale, and perform better, than those who were disengaged or unengaged. As time has gone on, a body of evidence has built up to support this hypothesis. These studies have been included in the NIHR evidence review¹¹.

3.1.1 Morale

‘Morale’ being defined here as positive perceptions of health and well-being, and positive work-related attitudes.

- Broadly, employees who are engaged:
 - report higher levels of life satisfaction and lower levels of ill health, depression and mental health problems
 - are less likely to experience symptoms of stress or burnout, such as emotional exhaustion and cynicism
 - are more satisfied with their jobs
 - report higher levels of self-efficacy (the extent or strength of one's belief in one's own ability to complete tasks and reach goals)

¹¹ Truss et al (2014) *Employee Engagement: An Evidence Synthesis*. NIHR.

- have higher levels of commitment to the organisation
 - are less likely to say they intend to leave.
- However, a word of caution: although engagement can be seen as generally good for morale, there is evidence that, if employees perceive that their organisation is pursuing engagement purely for *instrumental* purposes (eg to increase performance without any benefits for employees), their morale may be dented.

3.1.2 Performance

There is clear evidence of a link between engagement and performance:

- There is a consistent association between engagement and *individual* performance outcomes.
- The link between engagement and *organisational* performance is less clear, partly because the majority of academic research articles focus on the individual. This is because the engagement-performance link is easier to demonstrate at the level of the individual; it is notoriously difficult to identify conclusive links between people inputs and organisational outcomes. Some research studies, however, show a link between engagement and performance at a higher level than the individual, ie the team, unit or organisation.
- There is also a link between engagement and *extra-role performance*. This means that employees who are engaged are more likely to be prepared to give discretionary effort, for example by working extra hard when the pressure is on, and volunteering for things outside their normal role.

‘Going beyond the job description’

Individual employees, and trades unions, are sometimes suspicious of the concept of discretionary effort, because they understandably worry that the goodwill of employees might be exploited, and that ‘going beyond the job description’ might become the expected norm rather than the occasional exception. Managers, too, are sometimes wary of asking staff to carry out tasks that extend their normal role boundaries. In a highly unionised environment, a more collective approach to engagement (for example using recognised staff forums) is suggested.

- There is also a negative link between engagement and *counter-productive behaviour*. Put simply, engaged employees are less likely to indulge in behaviour that damages the team or the organisation; this could be anything from criticising organisational decisions, gossiping and resisting change (at the mild end) to outright acts of sabotage such as theft.

4 What Drives Engagement?

To raise engagement levels, it is important to understand what causes engagement to happen (or not happen). This section presents the evidence about engagement drivers.

If engagement is accepted as important, what can line managers do to engage their staff?

4.1 The evidence from the review of academic literature

A very large number of research studies examined for this review (113 altogether) examined the factors associated with engagement. In some studies, these factors were identified as *drivers* or *antecedents* – meaning that they cause engagement to happen.

4.1.1 Positive psychological states

- There is an association between *positive psychological states* and engagement. The term ‘positive psychological state’ encompasses a variety of things, which broadly relate to how employees feel about their jobs and how well they are able to cope with what the job demands of them:
 - Personal resources (strengths) such as resilience and self-efficacy
 - Wider aspects of the work, often facilitated by the line manager, such as empowerment
- Some evidence is taken from studies that were set in the healthcare context. These identified the following factors to be important in bringing about and sustaining engagement:
 - Self-care and self-tuning (often referred to as *mindfulness*, which is attracting considerable interest within the HR community and the NHS generally)
 - *Psychological detachment*, which is particularly important for clinical staff who often deal with very emotionally-demanding situations; it is very important to

empathise with patients and relatives, but the individual employee must also be able to detach from situations to prevent excessive personal involvement leading to possible burn-out

- *Personal resources* that help to equip employees with strengths necessary to manage difficult and demanding jobs: resilience and coping mechanisms

4.1.2 Management

- There is a lot of evidence to demonstrate a link between *positive and supportive management* and engagement. A variety of factors were considered in these studies, notably *supervisory support* and *management style*.
- In most of these studies, the term 'leadership' is used to refer to line managers rather than senior leaders, and the day-to-day relationship between the individual and his/her line manager is identified as very important. **There is clear evidence that the relationship between the individual employee and the manager is crucially important for engagement.**

Research bite: Management styles associated with engagement

Which of these management styles comes closest to yours?

- **Authentic leadership:** "Authentic leaders are aware of their core end values and resist compromising them...(They) have optimal self-esteem and they objectively accept their strengths and weaknesses. They present their true selves to others in a trusting and open manner and encourage them to do the same"¹².
- **Empowering leadership:** Empowering leaders are able to delegate authority and share information well; lead by example and set themselves as accountable for their actions; and encourage the personal development, decision-making and innovation of employees.¹³
- **Ethical leadership:** Ethical leaders demonstrate and encourage values, attitudes and behaviours that are socially acceptable and morally justifiable. They communicate and reinforce these clearly and consistently, and they show responsibility and accountability for their own behaviours and decision-making.¹⁴

¹² Alok, K. and Israel, D. (2012). Authentic Leadership and Work Engagement. *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, 47(3).

¹³ Eg Mendes, F. and Stander, M.W. (2011). Positive organisation: The role of leader behaviour in work engagement and retention. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 37(1).

¹⁴ Eg Hartog, D.N. and Belschak, F.D. (2012). Work engagement and Machiavellianism in the ethical leadership process. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 107(1).

- **Transformational leadership:** Leadership behaviour that encourages and inspires employees to perform beyond their own expectations to meet the goals and values of the organisation (i.e. transform their own desires for the greater good of the organisation)¹⁵

Research bite: Authentic leadership

A study of 280 nurses in acute care hospitals in Ontario in 2010¹⁶ demonstrated that authentic leadership was associated with both trust in the manager and engagement - and these, in turn, predicted voice behaviour (willingness to express opinions, make suggestions etc) and perceptions of the quality of care in the unit to which the nurses belonged.

- A further link has been identified between *job design* and engagement. 'Job design' is widely defined here, in that it encompasses job resources, job demands and autonomy as well as the way in which the job is crafted and specified. The line manager is very important here, as he/she has considerable influence over the way jobs are defined and specified within the team.
- Some research studies, including those conducted in the healthcare context, showed positive links between *communication* and *co-worker support* and *team-level engagement*. This is encouraging, in that good quality (and often inter-disciplinary) teamwork is essential in the NHS. Again, the influence of the line manager – building the team and helping to ensure harmonious and effective relationships – is highly important.

4.2 The evidence from the review of practitioner literature

In addition to the academic review, several reputable studies by non-academic consultancies and research institutes (such as IES, CIPD and Kenexa) have identified engagement drivers.

In broad terms, the drivers of engagement found in the practitioner literature can be grouped into seven themes. Some of these themes will be areas where the line manager has considerable impact, some are less easy to influence. However, none are completely outside the scope of the line manager.

¹⁵ Eg Tims, M., Bakker, A.B. and Xanthopoulou, D. (2011). Do transformational leaders enhance their followers' daily work engagement? *Leadership Quarterly*, **22**(1).

¹⁶ Wong, C.A., Laschinger, H.K.S. and Cummings, G.C. (2010). Authentic Leadership and nurses' voice behaviour and perceptions of care quality. *Journal of Nursing Management*, **18**(8).

4.2.1 Senior leadership

Studies consistently find that positive perceptions of senior leaders are linked with high levels of engagement. *Trust in senior leaders* is particularly important, as is a belief in their vision and a positive view of their communication style.

Research bite: Trust and effectiveness

Several studies have shown that employees who *trust* their senior leaders, and believe in their vision, are much more engaged than those who do not. Alfes et al (2010)¹⁷, for example, showed that positive perceptions of the communication style and vision of senior leaders were associated with high engagement. Kenexa (2012)¹⁸ found that the engagement levels for employees who trusted their leader stood at 81 per cent, compared with just 29 per cent for employees who distrusted their leader.

4.2.2 Role of the line manager

The line manager's role in engaging employees is extremely important. Particularly influential behaviours are:

- Reviewing and guiding
- Giving feedback, praise and recognition
- Encouraging autonomy and empowerment
- Communicating and making clear what is expected
- Listening
- Valuing and involving the team
- Being supportive.

Research bite: An effective intervention

¹⁷ Alfes, K., Truss, C., Soane, E.C., Rees, C. and Gatenby, M. (2010). *Creating an engaged workforce – Findings from the Kingston Employee Engagement Consortium Project*. CIPD.

¹⁸ Kenexa (2012). *Engagement and Leadership in the Public Sector – A 2011/2012 Kenexa High Performance Institute Work Trends Report*.

One study, in the Chesterfield office of the government department HMRC¹⁹, demonstrated that engagement levels (measured via the national civil service 'People Survey') rose after line managers had been on a programme of leadership development. This was linked to the introduction of a programme of behavioural change called the 'Chesterfield Way'.

4.2.3 Appraisals, performance management and training

Having a manager who manages performance well is associated with higher levels of engagement. The aspects of managing performance well are:

- Good quality appraisals
- Regular supervisory meetings that focus on good performance management principles
- Giving constructive feedback
- Building performance, via coaching, analysis of training needs, and providing training and development opportunities.

Research bite: Importance of good quality appraisals

An analysis of 2009 and 2010 NHS staff survey data²⁰ showed that having an appraisal on its own was not associated with higher engagement; the key factor was whether the appraisal was of good quality or not. 'Good quality' was defined as being considered well structured (useful, clear and valuable) by the employee. The survey data showed that 71% of respondents had received an appraisal, but only 32% said it had been well structured. The research showed that a good quality appraisal was associated with high levels of engagement, whereas the engagement levels of those who had received a poor quality appraisal were even lower than those who had received no appraisal at all.

4.2.4 Meaningfulness

Meaningfulness – a belief that the work 'makes a difference' and is worthwhile and personally significant – is found to be an important driver in several research studies. Indeed, in two studies it was found to be the most important driver. In one of these studies, Alfes et al (2010)²¹ describe meaningfulness as '*the extent to which employees find*

¹⁹ Government Social Research (2013). *Embedding Employee Engagement, Engagement Best Practice: Case Studies, How HMRC Chesterfield office improved engagement; 2013*. www.civilservice.gov.uk

²⁰ West, M.A. and Dawson, J. (2012). *Employee Engagement and NHS Performance*. The King's Fund.

²¹ Alfes, K., Truss, C., Soane, E.C., Rees, C. and Gatenby, M. (2010). *Creating an engaged workforce – Findings from the Kingston Employee Engagement Consortium Project*. CIPD.

meaning in their work...where people can see the impact of their work on other people or society in general'. Line managers, by giving employees a clear light of sight between what they do day to day, and the core purpose of the organisation, can help team members see and value the contribution they make.

4.2.5 Employee voice

Employee voice refers to the opportunities employees have to input into decisions affecting their work, and to be properly consulted about workplace issues. Key factors here are:

- Having opportunities to feed views upwards
- Managers who welcome comments, ideas and suggestions for improvement
- Managers who actively involve the team in decision-making.

Research studies consistently find that having a voice is associated with higher levels of engagement.

4.2.6 Team working

Being part of an effective team is associated with higher levels of engagement in several studies. In Kenexa's 2012²² research, it emerged (described as 'co-worker quality', which includes feeling part of a team) as one of the four key drivers of engagement. Important aspects of team working are listed below. It is very apparent that the line manager plays a key role here.

- Believing that the team is well structured
- Having opportunities to contribute to organisational decisions via team discussions or team events
- Feeling a sense of belonging to the team
- Having good quality, mutually supportive relationships with colleagues.

²² Kenexa (2012). *The Many Contexts of Employee Engagement – A 2012/2013 Kenexa WorkTrends Report*. Kenexa.

Research bite: the importance of well-structured teams

Research conducted in the NHS, using NHS staff survey data²³, shows that feeling part of a well-structured team is associated with higher levels of engagement, yet being part of a poorly-constructed 'pseudo-team' is linked to lower engagement levels.

4.2.7 Support for work-life balance

Several studies demonstrate that employees who are satisfied with their work-life balance, and have some flexibility in their work, are more engaged than other employees. In Kenexa's 2012 research²⁴, having support for work-life balance emerged as one of the top three drivers of engagement; it is perceived as an important aspect of showing genuine concern for employees. The line manager plays an important part here. However, it is important to be fair; employees without caring responsibilities, for example, may still want access to flexible working opportunities.

4.2.8 Other themes

In addition to the above, several themes emerged as important drivers in at least two research studies:

- Job variety
- Job autonomy
- Equal opportunities
- Health and safety.

In the latter two, the important aspect was not just the existence of policies and statements; it was rather the belief that the line manager and the wider organisation were genuinely committed to equality of opportunity and health and safety in the workforce.

²³ West, M.A. and Dawson, J. (2012). *Employee Engagement and NHS Performance*. The King's Fund.

²⁴ Kenexa (2012). *The Many Contexts of Employee Engagement – A 2012/2013 Kenexa WorkTrends Report*. Kenexa.

4.3 Engagement drivers in the NHS

Research carried out by IES, published in 2004²⁵, identified that the key driver of employee engagement in the NHS is a sense of *feeling valued by, and involved in, the organisation*. Feeling valued and involved is a particularly strong driver in the healthcare context; it is important in other sectors and settings, but less so than in the NHS. A variety of things were found to influence feeling valued and involved, as the diagram below shows. The 'immediate manager' is one of the key drivers of feeling valued and involved, but it is also apparent that he/she will exert an influence via almost all the other drivers, too. Think about how you, as a line manager, can improve some of these aspects of working life for your team.

Engagement diagnostic tool: NHS



²⁵ Robinson, D., Perryman, S. and Hayday, S. (2004). *The Drivers of Employee Engagement*. Institute for Employment Studies (IES).

5 What Can Line Managers Do?

This final section gives you some practical advice about actions you can take to engage your staff.

The preceding sections demonstrate that engagement is important for morale, well-being and performance, and is associated with higher levels of advocacy. They also show that there is considerable agreement about the drivers of engagement. The key question for any line manager is, what can I do to raise engagement levels in my team?

With such a wide-ranging list of things that can influence engagement levels, it can be difficult to know where to start, and what will have the most impact. It might help to think about what you can do firstly to help your team, and secondly to understand and improve your own management style:

- To help **individuals and the team** become more engaged, resilient and effective
- To **behave** in an engaging way.

5.1 Individuals and teams

- **Bring the right people in.** The literature on job design and engagement indicates that a good job-person fit is essential. This suggests that job descriptions should be accurate and that person specifications should be really clear about the type of person who is being sought – not just skills and experience, but attitudes. Candidates should have a chance to ‘preview’ the job, via online tools such as virtual tours and recordings of existing staff describing the role, and/or discussions with team members on the interview day. Psychometric testing and aptitude tests might be appropriate for some roles. The line manager’s role in recruitment and selection – from specifying the vacancy right through to choosing the best candidate – is crucial.
- **Give good quality inductions.** Research indicates that the first few weeks in the role are crucial. New joiners who are welcomed, are given a good induction, meet their line manager and new team members straight away, and are equipped with the right resources from day one, are far more likely to feel engaged and positive

about their role. Although the line manager does not design the Trust's induction programme, he/she *can* ensure that the team gives newcomers a good and friendly welcome.

- **Be clear about expected behaviours in the team.** Most Trusts have a set of values, and at an organisational level these are likely to be linked to expected behaviours. However, as a manager you will have a very good idea of the behaviours and standards you expect within your team, and how individual team members can demonstrate these. It is very important that you make these clear to the team, to avoid any misunderstanding and to ensure that the team is working towards the same ends.
- **Give your team a voice.** The annual NHS staff survey is an excellent way of finding out staff opinions and experiences over a wide range of issues, across the whole organisation. However, the survey is held only once a year. It is really important that individual team members feel they have an opportunity to voice their views, offer opinions and suggestions, and input to decisions that affect them. The line manager plays a key role here, not just at team meetings but throughout the working day; the team should feel that you are accessible and visible.
- **Encourage your team to participate in resilience and mindfulness training, and take part yourself.** Some relatively simple techniques, based on the principle of 'positive psychology', can help to boost employees' resilience, coping mechanisms, and awareness of self and others. This is very important in the NHS, where jobs and situations can be extremely stressful and resources are constrained.

Example: Mindfulness in Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust²⁶

Derbyshire Healthcare uses the concept of 'mindfulness' to promote caring and positive behaviours, including self-care - 'compassion for self'. Mindfulness is a central plank in the Trust's efforts to engage better with staff, and is used together with values that have been organically-grown, and listening events involving hundreds of staff. The chief executive is a passionate advocate of the benefits of mindfulness.

5.2 Your own behaviour

To the team, the line manager is the single person who will impact most on morale and motivation, so your people management skills are extremely important. New

²⁶ Presentation by Steve Trenchard at 'Staff Engagement in the NHS' conference, University of Sussex, 25 February 2014

supervisors and line managers – who have usually been promoted due to high performance in the job – can find the people management aspects of their new role daunting, and will need some help. Even more experienced line managers encounter difficult situations and may need some help.

- **Ask for training in people management, especially if you are a first-time manager or have never had any training before.** If you are new to the role, find a more experienced manager who you know to be good at people management, and ask if you can 'buddy' with them. If you are experienced, remember how alarming it was for you when you took your first line management role - look out for new managers and offer to support them.
- **Be clear about people management behaviours your organisation expects of you.** There might be a guide, or blueprint, or list of behavioural competencies with descriptors. If not, ask HR which behaviours you should adopt, and which you should avoid.
- **Ask for training in coaching.** Engaging managers typically adopt a coaching style with their teams, including coaching poor performers to improve. This style comes naturally to some people, while others will need to learn the techniques. Managers who are known to be good coaches can act as mentors to others who are relatively new to coaching principles.
- **Self-assess and gather feedback about your performance as a people manager.** Some Trusts use 360 or 180 degree feedback, enabling managers to gain a rounded picture of their performance. An alternative is to use a self-assessment tool – either for your own self-reflection, or if you are feeling brave, for sharing with your own manager and/or your team. Would your team agree with your self-assessment? IES's research-based²⁷ self-assessment questionnaire for line managers is included as an appendix for you to use.
- **Ensure you know what to do when tackling poor performance and poor behaviour.** This is always a difficult thing to do, particularly if the situation does not improve after the coaching stage and there is a need to invoke formal procedures. However, tackling poor performance and behaviour within the team is appreciated by the rest of the team, so is likely to raise engagement levels overall. Many managers will only have to take people through formal disciplinary processes and few times in their lives, so it is very important to ask for support from HR about the policies and procedures to use.

²⁷ Robinson, D. and Hayday, S. (2009). *The Engaging Manager*. IES

- **Be generous with praise and recognition.** Most people work very hard, and want to do a good job. Giving praise and recognition for a job well done takes very little effort, but is hugely appreciated.

**GOOD LUCK IN YOUR ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS
WE HOPE THAT THIS GUIDE WILL HELP YOU TO ENGAGE YOUR TEAMS!**

6 Appendix: The Engaging Manager Self-assessment Tool

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Self-assessment questionnaire: behaviours

Please look at the following descriptions of behaviours that our research participants have identified as 'engaging'. Rate yourself according to how frequently you demonstrate these behaviours, on the following scale:

- 0 Never
- 1 Rarely
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Quite often
- 4 Usually
- 5 Always

Be honest! Try to envisage how your team might experience you

Put your rating in the box

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Welcome suggestions and act on them | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Delegate work on the basis of the strengths of my team | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Trust individuals to get on with their work | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Manage my time effectively | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Try to lead by example | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Listen, even when it's not what I want to hear | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Know when to stretch people and when to hold back | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Try to protect my team from organisational pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Talk up my team to the rest of the organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10. Stay positive, even when things get tough
11. Encourage my team to give their best
12. Share information about the organisation and the wider world
13. Give team members my undivided attention during one-to-ones
14. Own up to my mistakes
15. Praise and say thank you for a job well done
16. Ensure I am accessible to my team
17. Give clear instructions and direction
18. Understand what motivates the different members of my team
19. Say no and challenge organisational decisions on behalf of my team
20. Keep my door genuinely open
21. Strike a good balance between being friendly and professional
22. Stay calm when the heat is on
23. Try to be honest, truthful and open in all my dealings
24. Am pleased to see members of my team
25. Treat all my team members with consistency and fairness
26. Organise my work well
27. Ensure people know when I'm in
28. Am responsive when my team come to me with problems
29. Respect my colleagues in the team
30. Tackle problems, even if it makes me uncomfortable
31. Stand up for my team when they are under attack
32. Encourage team members to tell me about their lives outside work
33. Do what I say I'm going to do

- 34. Roll up my sleeves and pitch in if necessary
- 35. Ensure my team knows how we contribute to the organisation
- 36. Give my team public recognition for their achievements

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Scoring sheet for behaviours

Enter the scores you have given to the individual behaviours in the boxes for each 'behaviour group' below, and then add them up to arrive at an overall score for each behaviour group.

Behaviour group A

Scores for individual behaviours 1, 12 and 17

Overall score

Behaviour group B

Scores for individual behaviours 16, 20 and 27

Overall score

Behaviour group C

Scores for individual behaviours 2, 18 and 21

Overall score

Behaviour group D

Scores for individual behaviours 7, 10 and 11

Overall score

Behaviour group E

Scores for individual behaviours 3, 13 and 29

Overall score

Behaviour group F

Scores for individual behaviours 8, 19 and 31

Overall score

Behaviour group G

Scores for individual behaviours 23, 25 and 33

Overall score

Behaviour group H

Scores for individual behaviours 9, 15 and 36

Overall score

Behaviour group I

Scores for individual behaviours 5, 22 and 34

Overall score

Behaviour group J

Scores for individual behaviours 6, 14 and 30

Overall score

Behaviour group K

Scores for individual behaviours 4, 26 and 35

Overall score

Behaviour group L

Scores for individual behaviours 24, 28 and 32

Overall score

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Analysis sheet for behaviours

Now take your totals for each behaviour and shade in the appropriate number of squares on the bar graph below:

- A Two-way communication
- B Visibility and accessibility
- C Understanding the team
- D Motivating colleagues
- E Giving respect and trust
- F Protecting the team
- G Being trustworthy
- H Giving recognition
- I Being a role model
- J Tackling problems
- K Personal effectiveness
- L Empathy and approachability

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| F | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| G | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| H | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| I | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| J | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| K | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| L | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

In which areas do you score highly?.....

Where might you need to improve?.....

Would your team agree with your assessment?

Would your own manager agree with your assessment?.....

Think about managers in different parts of your organisation, how would they score?

Would this tool work effectively using a 360^o approach: self-assessment, team assessment, manager assessment?

Self-assessment questionnaire: manager types

Now read the following descriptions of manager ‘types’. Against each one, rate yourself according to how often you behave like this. Some of these descriptions are very positive, others may be uncomfortable to read, but all have been derived from our research. Sometimes, in the descriptions, the manager is described as ‘he’, while other times ‘she’ is used. There is nothing significant about this, in that these gender labels have been randomly allocated.

For this part of the assessment, please use the following scale:

- 0 This is **never** me
- 1 This is **hardly ever** me
- 2 This is **sometimes** me
- 3 This is **quite often** me
- 4 This is **usually** me
- 5 This is **always** me

The High Performer

The High Performer is very focused on business outcomes, goals and targets. He monitors and reviews results on a regular basis with his team, and has frequent discussions about the best way to tackle any performance slippage. He wants to improve and looks for opportunities for his team to do even better. He is knowledgeable, well organised and methodical.

My score:

The Communicator

The Communicator is particularly good at getting across messages across to her team. She is clear in her explanations and her team know exactly what is expected of them, whether this is related to standards of behaviour, objectives, or tasks. She is also a good listener and likes to involve her team in decision-making. She is adept at communicating bad news as well as good.

My score:

The Micro Manager

The Micro Manager finds it difficult to delegate. He has lengthy task lists and fusses about minutiae. When he gives a task to a member of his team, he cannot let go, but bothers the team member at frequent intervals for progress reports. He interferes, is reluctant to allow the team to make any decisions, and stifles initiative.

My score:

The Muddler

The Muddler is personally disorganised and inflicts this on her team. She gives confusing and sometimes contradictory instructions, and changes her mind frequently. She finds it difficult to communicate the organisation's vision and purpose, which means her team do not understand what their objectives are. Because she cannot allocate work and monitor progress effectively, her team often appears inefficient and fails to deliver.

My score:

The Visionary

The Visionary is particularly good at communicating the big picture to his team, and selling new ways of working. He is an innovator who is not afraid to introduce change if it is in the wider interests of the organisation. The Visionary understands exactly where he and his team fit into the organisation, and what contribution they need to make. He is good at getting to the crux of the issue and seeing things with fresh eyes, untrammelled by convention.

My score:

The Empathiser

The Empathiser can identify with her team, and individuals within it, and understand how they feel. Because of this, the Empathiser can break bad news, or tackle difficult conversations, with particular sensitivity and tact. She understands what motivates individuals within the team, and appreciates the contribution that different people make. She knows who needs help, whose confidence requires a boost, and who can be left to get on with it.

My score:

The Blamer

The Blamer does not accept responsibility when things go wrong, instead pointing the finger at one or more members of his team. People in the team will be reluctant to make suggestions, even if they see that things are going wrong, because they know they will be held responsible. The Blamer does not defend his team's reputation to the rest of the organisation.

My score:

The Bully

The Bully is aggressive, relying on heavy-handed tactics to get work done. She frequently shouts and belittles people in front of colleagues. She sometimes loses her temper and is intolerant of mistakes and weaknesses. Her team members are often afraid of her.

My score:

The Developer

The Developer looks out for members of his team who have potential, and gives them opportunities and challenges to show what they can do. He coaches individuals who are experiencing difficulties, to help them improve. He looks at the work of his team to ensure that jobs are as interesting and rewarding as they can possibly be. He will facilitate access to opportunities such as secondments, special projects and entry onto development or talent programmes.

My score:

The Enthusiast

The Enthusiast is able to galvanise and carry individuals, teams and even large groups of people due to her passion and powers of persuasion. She is energetic and encouraging, and has a strong sense of belief and identification with what the organisation stands for. She recognises and celebrates success.

My score:

The Protector

The Protector looks out for his team, and shelters them from being buffeted by organisational politics and conflicts, or scorched by the heat from on high. He nurtures the team and encourages people to put forward their ideas and suggestions for improvement. He defends his team from attack by outsiders, but will readily tackle and resolve any disputes within the team that threaten to undermine the well-being and performance of the team as a whole.

My score:

The Networker

The Networker is adept at identifying people within the organisation – and sometimes outside – whom she needs to cultivate. She has a wide circle of contacts and

understands the work of other departments, functions and locations. This in-depth knowledge of the organisation enables her to position the work of her team to benefit both the organisation and the individual.

My score:

The Egotist

The Egotist believes that he, personally, is entirely responsible for his team's successes – but that failures are the fault of the team. He has an air of superiority, and is often aloof from his team, with whom he does not interact on a day-to-day basis. He uses inaccessible language and likes to score points. The Egotist rarely gives praise or recognition unless it reflects well on himself.

My score:

The Pessimist

The Pessimist is draining of energy. She finds fault with everything and rarely smiles. She sees problems with any suggestion for improvement, which means that any ideas her team put forward are stifled in the early stages. She does not display enthusiasm and fails to motivate or encourage her team.

My score:

The Rock

The Rock is steady, calm, dependable and reliable. He tackles problems in a straightforward way and never panics. His team and organisation can rely on him in a crisis. He is loyal to his team and is always considerate of their interests. He will roll up his sleeves to help and would not ask his team to do things he would not be prepared to do himself.

My score:

The Brave

The Brave is not necessarily outgoing or people-focused, but knows how important it is to understand her team, herself and her organisation. She will overcome her natural reluctance and reserve to tackle difficult situations, stand up for the team in public, and act in accordance with her principles. She has integrity and courage, even when quaking inside.

My score:

The Juggler

The Juggler is particularly good at managing resources and allocating work appropriately within the team. He is able to manage many different strands of activity, and keep all the balls in the air. He is a good delegator and has an excellent grasp of timescales, workload and project progress. Usually, he is a fast learner and a fast worker, but curbs any impatience he may feel with others, and accepts the value of different ways of working.

My score:

The Maverick

The Maverick does not always toe the company line, and will sometimes bend the rules. However, she always has the best interests of her team and her organisation at heart. She will work with her team to devise new and innovatory ways of doing things, and she encourages imaginative solutions. She helps her team to achieve breakthroughs.

My score:

Thank you for completing this questionnaire