

# Employee Engagement Drivers and Discussion Questions

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## What are the employee engagement drivers?

Employee engagement drivers are specific conditions that create engagement. Improving these conditions will create a higher level of engagement which leads to increased recruitment and retention, increased job performance, and employees going above and beyond for the good of their colleagues and the organization.

### Ten employee engagement drivers

1. **Clear and Promising Direction:** Ensure that staff and faculty understand how their work is connected to the goals of the department, college, campus, and University.
2. **Commitment to Excellence:** Set and encourage high expectations for the quality of work, including demonstrating a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement.
3. **Confidence in Leaders:** Communicate openly and honestly to build trust and confidence in leadership.
4. **Development Opportunities:** Encourage the ongoing learning and development of skills and knowledge and ensure everyone has opportunities to receive coaching and mentoring.
5. **Respect and Recognition:** Interact respectfully and consistently recognize good work and meaningful contributions.
6. **Authority and Empowerment:** Ensure that everyone has the autonomy they need to accomplish their work and the empowerment to make decisions.
7. **Clear Expectations and Feedback:** Define roles, responsibilities, and performance expectations and provide regular feedback.
8. **Collaboration:** Expect and support cooperation and the sharing of ideas within and across the organization.
9. **Support and Resources:** Ensure everyone has the skills, training, information, and resources needed to succeed.
10. **Work, Structure, and Process:** Actively manage workload so that it is distributed equitably, aligns with goals and priorities, and allows for improvements in the way work is done.

## What's Next?

Consider the context of your work, then use the questions in this guide to provide feedback that informs priorities and action planning to increase employee engagement.

# Employee Engagement Drivers and Discussion Questions (Cont.)

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**Driver**

**Clear and Promising Direction:** Ensure that staff and faculty understand how their work is connected to the goals of the department, college, campus, and University.

**1**

## Discussion Questions:

- How are the reasons behind strategy communicated to faculty and staff in your college/unit?
- How is your college/unit a leader among your peers? In what ways are you in the forefront and in what ways are you lagging behind?
- Do faculty and staff understand why your college/unit is focused on these particular strategies and goals? How can you tell?
- How is your work linked directly to the college/unit goals and the goals of the University?
- How do employees in your area hear about what's happening at the leadership level in your college/unit?



**Driver**

**Commitment to Excellence:** Set and encourage high expectations for the quality of work, including demonstrating a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement.

**2**

## Discussion Questions:

- What impact, if any, has increased workload had on quality in your area? How can you meet your workload demands while still maintaining high levels of quality?
- What can be changed to ensure that highest priority items are done in a high quality, timely manner?
- How do you make use of best practices in your area? What do you do when you encounter subpar quality issues?
- How do you share your ideas for improvement with your supervisor?
- What areas of work would benefit from having quality standards implemented?
- Where is quality routinely superior or subpar? How can you promote and overcome these?

# Employee Engagement Drivers and Discussion Questions (Cont.)

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Driver

**Confidence in Leaders:** Communicate openly and honestly to build trust and confidence in leadership.

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## Discussion Questions:

- How do faculty and staff receive information they need to perform well?
- How do leaders demonstrate ethical behaviors?
- How do leaders in your area cultivate trusting relationships with their college/unit?
- What could leaders stop doing, start doing, or continue doing that would aid in building a trusting relationship with the college/unit?



Driver

**Development Opportunities:** Encourage the ongoing learning and development of skills and knowledge and ensure everyone has opportunities to receive coaching and mentoring.

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## Discussion Questions:

- Have you thought about your own career development?
- What steps are you taking to develop your skills and abilities?
- How do you access development opportunities at the University?
- What kinds of development opportunities exist for you and your college/unit to be more effective?
- How do you share your career goals and ambitions with your supervisor?
- Do you have skills and abilities that are not being used that could contribute to the success of your area?



Driver

**Respect and Recognition:** Interact respectfully and consistently recognize good work and meaningful contributions.

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## Discussion Questions:

- Are policies and procedures applied fairly in this college/unit? How?
- Are faculty and staff treated with respect by leaders? Do employees treat each other with respect in the workplace?
- How are faculty and staff held accountable for ensuring a culture of respect in your college/unit?
- How are individual employee accomplishments celebrated? How is positive feedback given?
- How are you acknowledged for a job well done? Is this recognition meaningful to you?

# Employee Engagement Drivers and Discussion Questions (Cont.)

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Driver

**Authority and Empowerment:** Ensure that everyone has the autonomy they need to accomplish their work and the empowerment to make decisions.

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## Discussion Questions:

- Can you think of a recent time when new ideas were shared? How well did it work?
- What suggestions would you make to encourage more idea contributions?
- How can employees in your college/unit be appropriately recognized for sharing or implementing new ways of working?
- How are decisions made in your college/unit? Does it vary by situation? Which decisions can be made independently and which need to go through a process?
- What are some of the obstacles that prevent you or your college/unit from working as efficiently as possible for optimum results?
- What suggestions do you have for enabling innovative suggestions to be considered and implemented?



Driver

**Clear Expectations and Feedback:** Define roles, responsibilities, and performance expectations and provide regular feedback.

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## Discussion Questions:

- How do you know how well you are performing? Do you know what differentiates poor from excellent performance?
- How do you communicate to leaders about the knowledge, skills, and experience you want and need to develop?
- How do you ask for feedback and guidance on job performance, especially when you encounter challenges?
- How frequently do you receive feedback about your performance? What could happen to make the feedback more useful?

# Employee Engagement Drivers and Discussion Questions (Cont.)

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Driver

**Collaboration:** Expect and support cooperation and the sharing of ideas within and across the organization.

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## Discussion Questions:

- How are impacted parties and stakeholders involved in changes and decision making?
- How are you and your colleagues encouraged to collaborate within your team and across teams?
- How are roles assigned and coordinated to encourage collaboration?
- How can your college/unit communicate more effectively with other departments?
- How are team and individual goals communicated when working on a collaborative project?



Driver

**Support and Resources:** Ensure everyone has the skills, training, information, and resources needed to succeed.

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## Discussion Questions:

- What equipment, tools, supplies, and materials are needed to help you do your job more effectively?
- What skills are critical to your success in your work? Do you lack any of these critical skills? If yes, do you know what resources are available to address these needs?
- What training/development would help you better perform your work?
- How adequate is new-hire onboarding and/or training? How long does it take new employees to reach an acceptable level of productivity? What would help new employees the most in increasing productivity?
- What are other avenues of learning (such as mentors, self-directed options, cross-training, stretch projects, skill development, etc.) could be utilized as development resources?

# Employee Engagement Drivers and Discussion Questions (Cont.)



**Driver**

**Work, Structure, and Process:** Actively manage workload so that it is distributed equitably, aligns with goals and priorities, and allows for improvements in the way work is done. **10**

## Discussion Questions:

- Is the work over-assigned to top performers and under-assigned to lower performers?
- How do you provide feedback to leadership on work assignment practices?
- How can the workflow be better organized to get the work done more effectively? How might the way work is currently done be changed to improve performance?
- What do you feel are the greatest barriers to performing the work? To what extent are these factors under leadership's control? How do you communicate this to leaders?
- What do you find most challenging and/or fulfilling about your work? What do you find frustrating or unfulfilling? How do you share this information with your supervisor?

## Discuss and plan ahead:

Engagement drivers that are important for my work (select 1-3):

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Improving on these drivers affect my work in the following ways:

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Questions that I would like to discuss with my supervisor:

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Issues that I choose to prioritize are:

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