

BUILDING A RESILIENT AND COMMITTED WORKFORCE

Course Handbook



VISION2VOICE

INTERNAL
COMMUNICATIONS

Human motivation and what matters to employees

Employers often look to pay and perks to attract and keep people. Study after study has proven that this is not what employees really want.

What they want and need, goes far deeper.

Understanding **human motivation** is the starting point for creating a great workplace – where employees thrive and contribute to the organization's success.

Communication based on understanding what makes people tick, is how you meet employee needs and succeed as an organization.

Whole view of employees



"We do not fundamentally operate at the levels of thoughts and analysis; we operate at the level of feelings."

Jim Collins, Author (Good to Great, Built to Last, Great by Choice)

Eight Drivers of Human Motivation

1. Meaning and purpose
2. A sense of mastery
3. Ability learn and grow
4. Connection
5. Certainty
6. Belonging
7. Trust and respect
8. Agency and empowerment

Theories & types of motivation

Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs was developed in 1943 and is one of the best and most enduring theories of motivation. Maslow's theory states that our actions are motivated by certain physiological needs. It is often represented by a pyramid of needs, with the most basic needs at the bottom and more complex needs at the top.

Studies have shown that things like love and belonging can be as critical to our physical well-being as food and water. As a result, the idea of a hierarchy has been questioned but we think that the model stand



Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation involves performing a task because it's personally rewarding to you.

Extrinsic motivation involves completing a task or exhibiting a behavior because of outside causes such as avoiding punishment or receiving a reward.

In the workplace, intrinsic motivation can be a powerful way of energizing employees and nurturing their wellbeing.

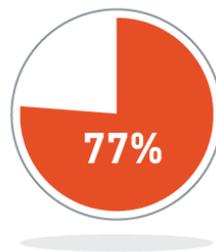
Job Expectations – Edelman's The Values Based Employee

What employees want today is different from what people looked for in a job a generation ago. The latest research on what employees want helps us understand these trends.

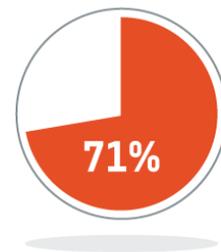
In a global survey, employees were asked what a strong expectation or a deal breaker is when considering an employer. Here's what they said:



- Want career advancement
- Competitive pay
 - Valuable work experience
 - Opportunity to move up



- Want personal empowerment
- Regular, truthful communication
 - Able to give input
 - Have a voice in planning



- Want social impact
- Business reflects my values
 - Has a greater purpose
 - Addresses social problems

Source: [Edelman Trust Report](#)

Communication and the employee experience:

Building connection, confidence and delivering an exceptional customer experience

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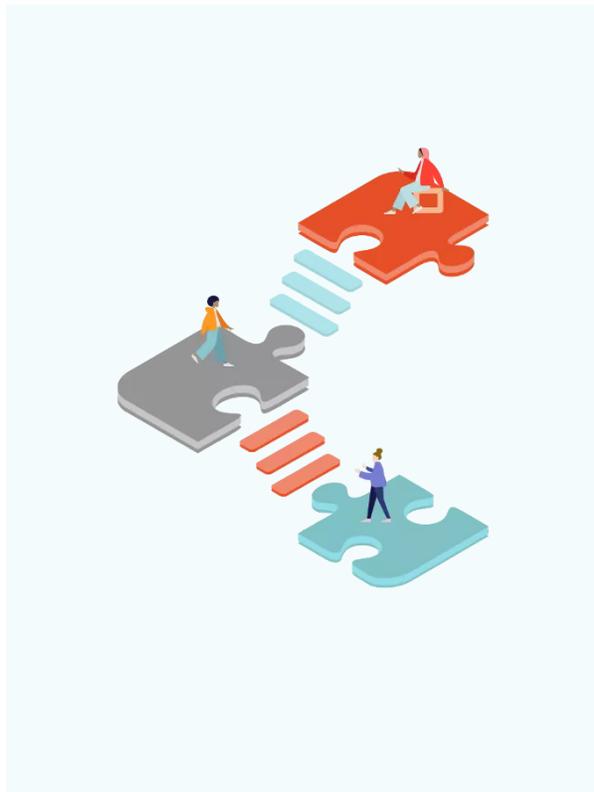
A leader is anyone at any level who takes responsibility for finding the potential in people and processes and has the courage to develop that potential.

Brene Brown

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A simple formula

Vision2Voice has developed a unique framework for building effective internal communications. This framework drives the audit process and provides critical insight for our clients while creating a starting point for improving the employee experience and business outcomes. Our Inform-Involve-Inspire Framework is grounded in our years of experience and research with some of North America's largest companies.



Inform

focusing on the process that builds understanding and gives employees the information they need so they can do their best work.

Involve

turning awareness into engagement by fostering two-way communication, building psychological safety, and giving employees a voice

Inspire

creating motivation and energy by helping employees understand how their work makes a meaningful contribution to the organization's success.

Our Inform-Involve-Inspire Framework recognizes the needs of employees to learn, grow, and feel valued, while closely aligning to the organization's strategy and vision.

Eight Principles of Effective Internal Communication

- 1 Take a strategic approach
- 2 Communicate early and often
- 3 Be authentic and transparent
- 4 Words and tone matter
- 5 Listen
- 6 Tell stories
- 7 Celebrate the wins and the losses
- 8 Build your change muscle

Reflection

What is your organization’s purpose and how can you bring it to life for your staff?

How can you involve employees and increase your listening quotient?



What information is missing for your staff? How can you do a better job harnessing their knowledge?

Which of the principles of effective communication are missing in your organization? What can you do to change this?

Psychological Safety

Leading a Fearless Team

Nobody gets a great idea when a tiger is chasing them.

In 2012, Google launched a study to help understand what made the perfect team. Code named Project Aristotle, the study results came as a surprise: what mattered most was psychological safety.

Psychological safety is the belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns, or mistakes. Recent studies have shown that psychological safety is more important than ever when leading remote or hybrid teams in a dynamic and complex environment.

This section is based on the work of Amy C. Edmondson, author of *The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth*.

FOUR DIMENSIONS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Psychological safety has a direct impact on four dimensions of teamwork.



3 steps to a fearless organization

Leaders have an important role to play in building psychological safety. Making it happen is as simple as following a three-step process:

STEP 1 - SET THE STAGE

Goal: get people on the same page with common goals and a shared appreciation of the challenges ahead

Accomplish this by:

1. Framing the work, which includes setting expectations and emphasizing purpose.
2. Identifying what is at stake, why it matters and for whom.
3. Changing how you present the role of failure so that it becomes safe (failure = learning).

Put this into practice by:

- Celebrating failure
- Telling stories about failures and the lessons you learned from the experience
- Leading a discussion on perfectionism and how it can be a damaging trait
- Demonstrating humility



STEP 2 - INVITE PARTICIPATION

Goal: build confidence that everyone's voice is welcome

Be humble, be curious, ask questions that make it safe for people to speak up, listen intensely and establish forums and processes to encourage participation.

Put this into practice by asking questions that show vulnerability, humility, and interest.

Tip: At Google, leaders are encouraged to create a list of all meeting participants. Leaders can use the list to ensure that everyone participates in the meeting. For example, if someone hasn't spoken up, the leader can invite them to chime in.

Make your list – what can you do differently to enable psychological safety? What can you change that will invite participation?

Questions you should be asking

What am I missing?

How can we make this better?

Does anyone have a different perspective?

How can we challenge this assumption?

10 Questions
to Build
**PSYCHOLOGICAL
SAFETY**

What other ideas can we come up with?

Tell me what makes you think this way?

Help me understand your perspective?

Give me an example of how that can work?

What can I do to help?

What are you up against?

Burnout

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The trouble with a hustle culture is that it promotes a false narrative that our productivity is measurable and working harder or faster has a direct correlation to success.

Mel Wiggins, Assembly

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Burnout

Let's Talk About Burnout:

Burnout is at an all-time high. For most, burnout looks like exhaustion, cynicism, reduced efficacy, and sometimes even a loss of identity. According to Christina Maslach, Susan E. Jackson, and Michael Leiter, six main factors are the root cause of burnout:

1. Unsustainable workload
2. Perceived lack of control
3. Insufficient rewards for effort
4. Lack of a supportive community
5. Lack of fairness
6. Mismatched values and skills

If you suspect an employee is experiencing any of these factors, it's time to address these issues to prevent burnout before it takes over. On the other hand, if they are not experiencing any of these factors, it's still important to be proactive whether you think they are at risk.

Tips for avoiding burnout:

1. **Encourage open communication:** Communication is a two-way street, and listening can help employees feel they have more say in work.
2. **Prioritize self-care:** Encourage employees to replenish their physical and emotional energy and model this behaviour yourself.
3. **Shift their perspective:** Work with employees to identify the things that can be changed. For example, can improvements be made to schedules, or can tasks be reprioritized? Giving employees time to work on projects they are passionate about can also make a difference.
4. **Encourage social connection:** Encourage interpersonal interactions or help your employees find coaches and mentors. Social connection builds a supportive community for your team members.

Gratitude

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Gratitude makes sense of
our past, brings peace for
today, and creates a vision
for tomorrow.

Melody Beattie

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5 ways to nurture gratitude

1. Build understanding

Not everyone likes to be appreciated in the same way. For example, while some people may like gifts or public praise, others may prefer a different way of being acknowledged. Similarly, each individual may like to be appreciated for different things. Understanding these should be an essential first step before introducing gratitude practices that assume everyone wants the same thing.

2. Practice

Gratitude is a regular practice. Individual gratitude practice often involves keeping a gratitude journal that helps people pause and reflect. The workplace equivalent of a gratitude journal can be a thank you card, sharing one thing we are grateful for during a meeting check-in, or creating a gratitude channel on Teams, Yammer or Slack are all ways to encourage a gratitude practice. These activities create a social proof of the importance of gratitude and help cue others to change their mindsets and behaviors.

3. Appreciate differences

Apply a diversity lens to the gratitude practice. Organizations often express gratitude for the same behaviors, actions, and strengths over and over, even when those behaviors can be toxic. A good example is expressing gratitude to someone who has worked all night to get something done. However, this sends the wrong message. Instead, express gratitude to people for doing things like admitting mistakes or having the courage to say they need help.

4. Go beyond the obvious

Once you get started, finding things to be grateful for as an organization can be easy, but it is important to show gratitude for the not-so-obvious. Let's face it, in some organizations, we forget to appreciate those who do the less than glamorous work. Whether it is those who keep the lights on, the floors clean, or the technology working, remembering to express appreciation for the character and contribution of those unsung heroes in our organizations is critical.

5. Weave gratitude into storytelling

Storytelling is a powerful force in organizations. It shapes mindsets and behaviors by helping employees understand what is expected. Including stories that feature or weave in elements of gratitude will build the understanding and the cultural competence required to bring the benefits of gratitude to your organization. From the narratives shared by leadership to the stories in newsletters, vlogs, or podcasts, expressing gratitude and telling stories about gratitude in your workplace will help people understand how to practice it.

Tips for Celebrating with Your Team

Deadlines. Deliverables. Due dates. With so much going on, it's easy to neglect fun, festivities, and feasts. Alliterations aside, taking the time to celebrate with your team is more than just a nice to have; it's essential for fostering connection, maintaining momentum, and nurturing a high-performing team where everyone thrives.

Make Celebrating a Priority

With so many people languishing or struggling with mental health, loneliness and burnout, celebration can breathe new life into your team. Celebrating together can highlight positive behaviors and mindsets, reinforce things like purpose and psychological safety and energize and empower your team. It's an important investment and the right thing to do.

Consider one or more elements in planning your celebration:

Add play

Infuse your celebration with fun and play. Nothing lights up the brain like play, and research has shown that people are wired to play throughout their lifetime. Infusing Pixel Union celebrations with play can empower your team, create richer experiences, and build stronger connections.

Use and infuse purpose

Find a way of incorporating your organization's purpose or take time in the celebration to share your personal purpose and ask team members to reflect and share stories related to their personal purpose. Consider how your celebration can contribute to your organization's social purpose.

Make it inclusive

If you can't all get together in person, make it a remote event. While not impossible, it would be difficult to create a truly inclusive hybrid celebration.

Find new things to celebrate

We often celebrate the obvious such as holidays, the completion of a project, or a milestone work anniversary. Get creative by celebrating something different – a quirky or unfamiliar holiday, a failure or mistake the team has made, or for a completely random reason.

Use visuals

An online platform makes it easy to share photos and videos without effort. Hold vacation slide shows, compile a video highlight reel of team activities over some time, create a team timeline (great for onboarding new team members), or provide virtual tours of hometowns using Google Earth. These can be equally powerful in person.

Play games

Organize a fun game such as a virtual scavenger hunt, virtual escape room, or a simple game of two truths and a lie. Games can inject some play into the day, build stronger connections and help you get to know your teammates on a different level.

Tell stories

Sharing personal or professional experiences through storytelling creates community and culture. Invite your employees to share their experiences throughout conversations. By listening and telling stories, your team can learn, get inspired, and become more educated about one another. RTB is a method you can use to find out more about your team members. R=Rose- share something good that is going on, T=thorn- share something that needs improvement, and B=bud- share something that is in the works or something to look forward to.

Encourage Creativity

You can also use creativity to encourage different types of play in the workplace. For example, make meetings fun by bringing in a bucket of Lego or brain puzzles such as a Rubix's cube or other props to encourage creative play. Don't micromanage the "how," promote experimentation and support failure.

My communications plan

The tools we will use to communicate:

Electronic communications

- Facebook group
- What's App
- Internal comms App
- Emails
- Other _____

Face-to-Face Comms

- Weekly meetings
- Town halls
- Events
- Other _____

Feedback

I'll check in with my team often and use these ways to listen:

- Weekly meetings
- Town halls
- Pulse checks, surveys, or polls
- One-on-one discussions
- Other _____

Explore and learn

Read

[The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation and Growth](#), Amy C. Edmondson, Harvard Business School. Wiley. 2018

[Dare to Lead: Brave Work, Tough Conversations, Whole Hearts](#). Brené Brown. Random House. 2018

[Unleashed: The Unapologetic Leader's Guide to Empowering Everyone Around You](#). Francis Frei & Anne Morriss, Harvard Review Press. 2020

[Andrea's Blog](#)

Watch

[Building a psychologically safe workplace](#), Amy Edmondson, TEDxHGSE

[Why we all need to practice emotional first aid](#). Guy Winch. Ph.D.

[The gift and power of emotional courage](#). Susan David TEDWomen 2017

[Why great leaders take humour seriously](#). Jennifer Aaker and Naomi Bagdonas. TED

Listen

[Coaching for Leaders, How to Build Psychological Safety](#)

[Dare to Lead – Brené Brown on Spotify](#)

The Anxious Overachiever. Rethink mental health and work, with candid stories from leaders who've been there. Found on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts and Spotify.

