



## Stay HR Savvy with HR Elements®

Welcome to the UBA Partner Firm exclusive monthly newsletter, delivering insights into timely human resources and employee benefits topics.

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### Dear HR Manager,

Employee engagement challenges our organization and affects overall morale. How can I effectively address this issue on my team?

*– Concerned About Engagement*

Dear Concerned About Engagement,

Low employee engagement can have serious implications for your team's productivity and overall success, but there are actionable steps you can take to improve the situation. Consider these three strategies.

#### 1. Address Digital Overload

Technology is critical in today's workplace but can also contribute to stress. A recent survey found that [59% of employees feel overwhelmed by digital tools](#). Simplifying your tech stack and ensuring that tools are integrated can reduce distractions and allow employees to focus on what truly matters.

#### 2. Empower Managers to Lead Effectively

According to Gallup, [70% of the variance in employee engagement is directly influenced by managers](#). To improve engagement, encourage managers to focus on coaching and developing their team members' strengths, rather than micromanaging tasks. This shift will help foster a more supportive and motivating work environment.

### 3. Prioritize Human Connections in a Tech-Driven World

As workplaces become more reliant on digital tools, the need for genuine human connections is even more important. While technology facilitates communication, leaders must ensure it doesn't replace meaningful interactions. Providing in-person collaboration, mentorship, and team-building opportunities can help maintain employees' sense of belonging and engagement, especially in hybrid or remote environments.

To create more meaningful interactions for remote employees, consider hosting “virtual deep-dive sessions” where teams come together online for problem-solving marathons focused on specific challenges. These sessions encourage employees to collaborate intensively to create actionable solutions. Additionally, “remote pop-up collaboration zones” can be scheduled, where employees from different departments or locations can spontaneously join virtual rooms for short-term cross-functional projects. These pop-up zones create organic opportunities for collaboration and creativity, mimicking the informal interactions of physical offices and ensuring that remote workers feel integrated and valued across the organization.

Focusing on these strategies can improve engagement and create a more connected and productive workforce.

*– HR Manager*

## Workplace Culture | Offering Adaptable Schedules

Today, adaptable work schedules are no longer a luxury—they're a necessity. Flexible work arrangements, whether hybrid or fully remote, are reshaping the way businesses operate, and employees engage with their jobs. As companies adapt to these changes, the benefits of offering flexibility are becoming increasingly clear, for employee satisfaction and organizational success.

### Balancing Flexibility with Business Objectives

Offering adaptable schedules is about more than just meeting employee preferences—it's also about aligning with business goals. Employees have grown accustomed to working from home, and many now expect this flexibility to remain part of their work-life balance. The challenge for leaders is ensuring that productivity, engagement, and company culture remain strong in a flexible work environment.

Businesses need to shift from traditional views of productivity based on hours spent at a desk to focus on outcomes. Measuring the right metrics and setting clear expectations can help ensure that employees remain motivated and productive, whether working from the office or home.

### Boosting Productivity and Employee Well-Being

Flexibility is not only something employees want—it's something that can improve their performance. With less time spent commuting and fewer distractions, employees often report increased focus and efficiency when working remotely. [Employees with a hybrid and flexible work schedule were 12% less likely to experience burnout.](#) Flexible work schedules allow employees to maintain a better balance between their personal and professional lives, which can lead to greater job satisfaction.

For businesses, this means that offering adaptable schedules can result in a more engaged, healthier workforce, which ultimately translates to better business outcomes. Employees who feel supported and trusted to manage their own time are more likely to stay with the company and perform at their best.

### Fostering Growth and Connection in a Hybrid Model

One of the main concerns about remote work is that it might limit career development and mentorship opportunities. Without regular face-to-face interactions, employees may miss out on the spontaneous learning that occurs in traditional office settings. However, this can be mitigated with intentional strategies like formal mentorship programs, regular check-ins, and the use of technology to facilitate ongoing feedback and development.

Similarly, maintaining team cohesion and connection in a dispersed workforce requires a thoughtful approach. Virtual team-building activities, regular communication, and strategic in-person meetings can ensure that employees feel connected to their teams and the broader organization, even when they're not in the same physical space. According to McKinsey's [American Opportunity Survey](#), 58% of U.S. workers can work remotely at least one day per week; 35% have the option to work from home five days a week; and 87% of those offered flexible work arrangements take advantage of them.

### Embracing the Future of Work

Offering adaptable schedules is essential for companies that want to attract and retain top talent. Employees value the flexibility to work from home or choose their hours, and businesses that embrace this shift will benefit from higher productivity, improved well-being, and stronger retention. Organizations can create a work environment where flexibility drives success by focusing on outcomes, fostering growth, and maintaining connections.

## Employee Benefits | Personalizing Employee Benefits

As the landscape of employee benefits continues to evolve, companies find that offering personalized benefits is an effective way to differentiate themselves and improve retention and employee satisfaction. Gone are the days when standard benefits packages were enough to attract and retain top talent. Today's workforce expects more—customizable benefits that cater to individual needs and preferences, creating a stronger connection between employees and their workplace.

### The Power of Personalization

Personalized benefits allow employees to choose the perks that fit their unique lifestyles: family support, professional development, or financial wellness. In one survey, [65% of employees said they are more likely to stay with their current employer because of specific benefit offerings](#). This flexibility enables organizations to meet the diverse expectations of a multigenerational workforce, boosting engagement and overall satisfaction.

One of the most significant advantages of personalized benefits is the use of stipends. Instead of providing traditional, one-size-fits-all benefits, companies allocate a set budget for employees to spend on the perks that matter most to them. This approach empowers employees to tailor their benefits package, which increases engagement and makes them feel valued.

## Embracing Health Benefit Flexibility

Health benefits have also undergone a transformation in response to the evolving workforce. Employers are increasingly adopting individual coverage health reimbursement arrangements (ICHRAs), which give employees more control over their health insurance options. The U.S. Department of Labor projects that [ICHRAs will grow by 255% by 2025](#) reflecting the rising demand for flexibility and customization in healthcare plans. With ICHRAs, employees can select health coverage that best suits their individual needs, providing a more personalized experience than traditional employer-sponsored health plans.

This shift helps employers reduce costs and allows employees to make choices that are right for them and their families. The flexibility of ICHRAs aligns with the modern workforce's desire for autonomy, contributing to a positive employee experience.

## The Future of Employee Benefits

Organizations must consider how personalized benefits can give them an edge as the competition for talent continues to heat up. Companies can build a supportive and inclusive work environment by offering customizable options and empowering employees with the flexibility to choose what works best for their unique circumstances. Personalized benefits improve employee retention and enhance overall engagement, helping businesses thrive in a constantly changing landscape. As technology and employee expectations evolve, companies prioritizing personalized benefits will be better positioned to attract and maintain top talent in the coming years.

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