

ENGAGE BY STAGE

Research Report

Understanding how career stage
affects employee engagement



BEYOND AGES:

Engaging Employees at All Career Stages

While companies tend to default to age as the driver in engaging employees, there's a key element missing. Two similarly aged employees may be at completely different stages in their careers. Perhaps they share generationally driven workplace needs, but a new hire has different preferences and motivators than someone who's been at the company for many years.

Padilla's independent market research firm, SMS Research Advisors, surveyed 1,500 people in the workforce of varying ages, position/level and general mix of industry. This report offers insights into the various stages that employees pass through during their career, the engagement preferences and motivators at each stage and how best to drive engagement across the organization. Understanding how career stage affects employee engagement is a key component in retaining and inspiring talent in all ages and career stages.

Engagement affects your business success

BUSINESS IMPACT CURRENT STATE OF THE WORKFORCE

Engaged employees are key to success

Highly engaged
workforces outperform
less-engaged companies



90%
better growth
trend¹

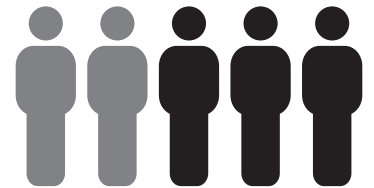
147%
higher earnings/
share²

Disengaged
employees cost
the U.S. economy

\$370B
lost annually³



2 in 5 employees
are completely
disengaged from
their current
employer⁴



Disengaged employees can spread
negativity and toxicity to colleagues

Key driver to engagement:
**Alignment between
personal and company
values⁵**

Regardless of an employee's
age or career stage, they
want to understand the
organization's values



ALL CAREER STAGES

Common Ground:

Employees in different career stages share similarities in what was ranked as the top drivers of employee engagement.



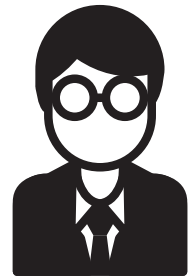
NEWBIE



SOPHOMORE

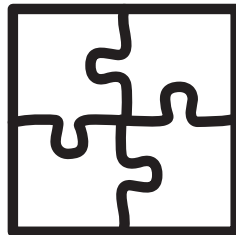


TENURED



SAGE

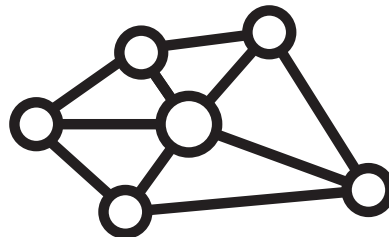
COMPANY VALUES



Top Three

- Treats all employees fairly and with respect, regardless of position or level
- Genuinely cares about employees' health and well-being
- Promotes a positive workplace culture

ENGAGEMENT METHODS

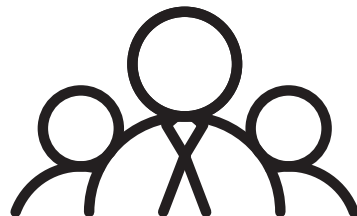


Largest Gap In Employee Demand vs. Employer Offering

- Employee rewards program

WORK PREFERENCES

MANAGEMENT STYLES



Most Preferred

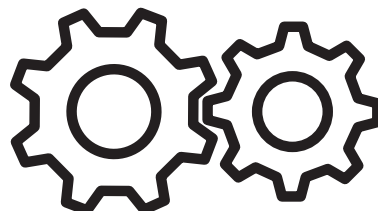
- Collaborator – Let's do this together

Least Preferred

- Delegator – Do this

WORK PREFERENCES

TEAM STYLES



Top Two

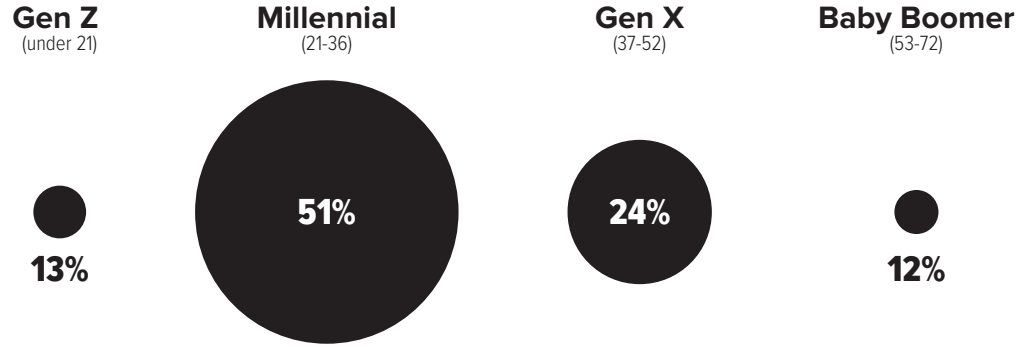
- Small teams, but with individual tasks
- Work alone, but with frequent feedback from peers

NEWBIE

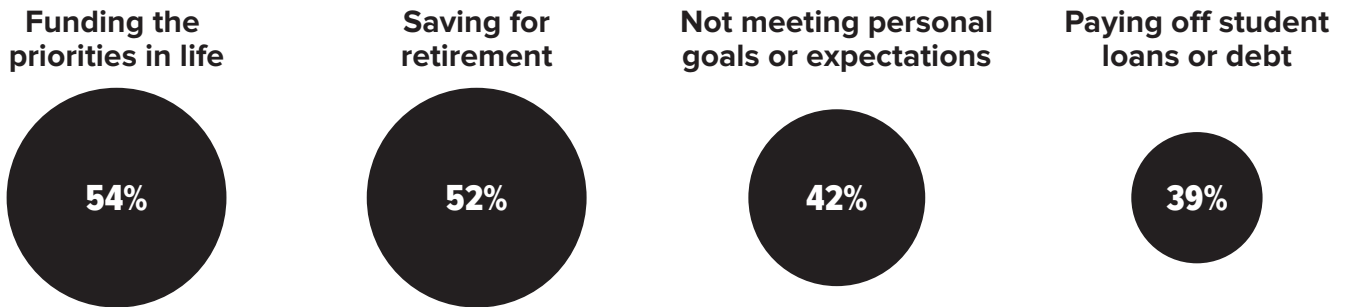
(3 years or less at the company)

DEMOGRAPHICS

Average Age: 34



GREATEST CHALLENGES



COMMUNICATIONS

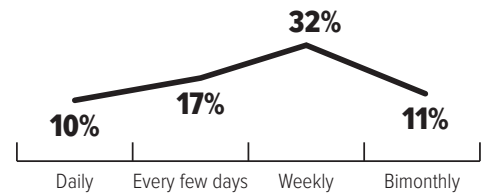
Who should it come from?

59%
Direct Supervisor

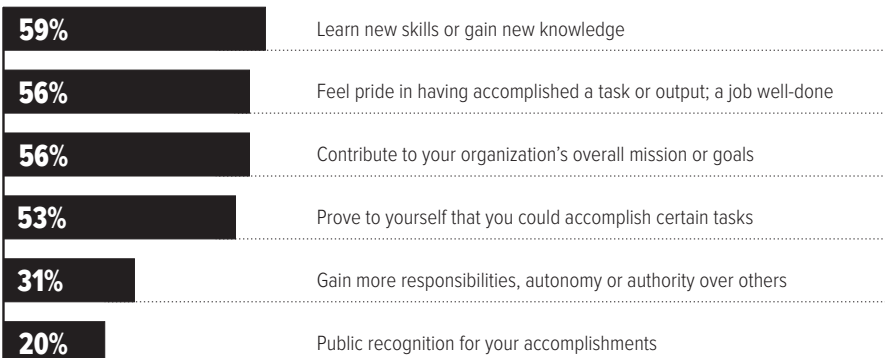
How should it be communicated?

73%
Email

When should information be delivered?



TOP MOTIVATIONS



ENGAGEMENT METHODS

Largest Gap in Employee Demand vs. Employer Offering

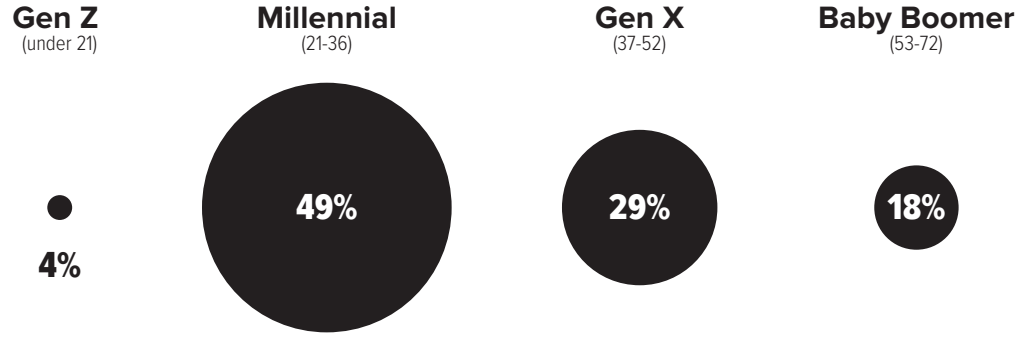
- 1ST** Employee rewards program
- 2ND** Tuition loan repayment assistance
- 3RD** Tuition reimbursement

SOPHOMORE

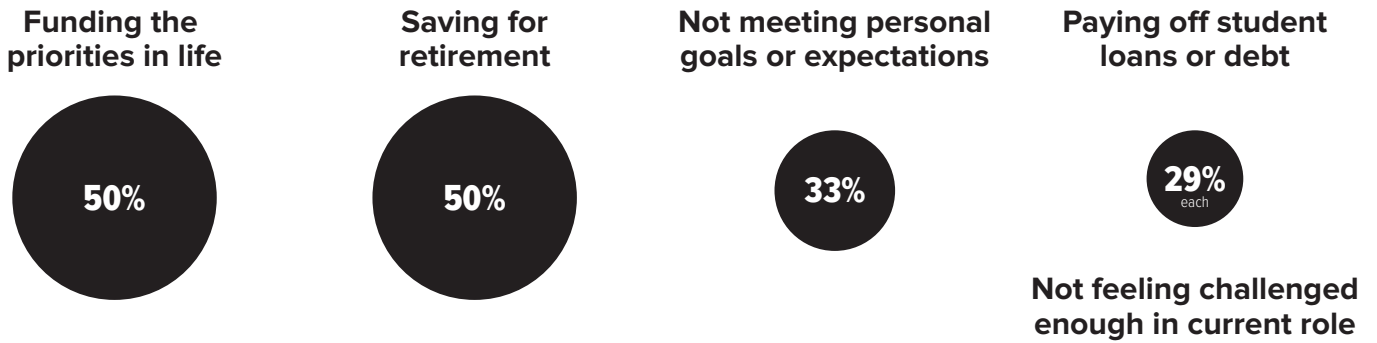
(4-7 years at the company)



DEMOGRAPHICS Average Age: 38



GREATEST CHALLENGES



COMMUNICATIONS

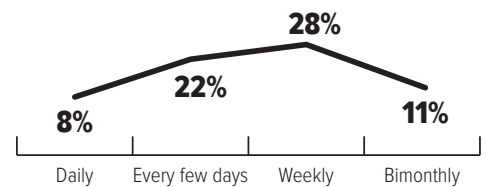
Who should it come from?

52%
Direct Supervisor

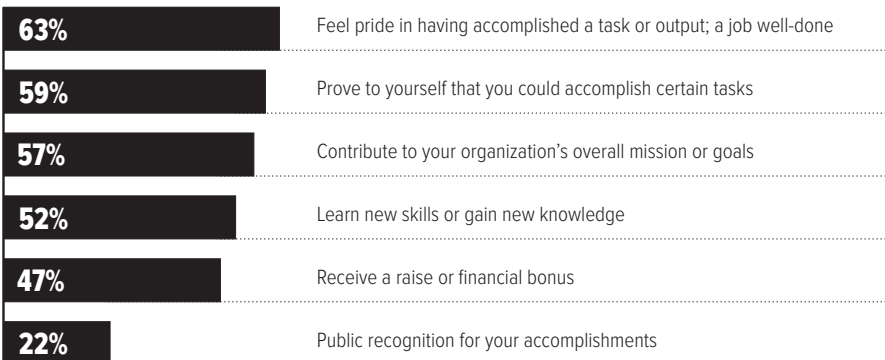
How should it be communicated?

69%
Email

When should information be delivered?



TOP MOTIVATIONS




ENGAGEMENT METHODS

Largest Gap in Employee Demand vs. Employer Offering

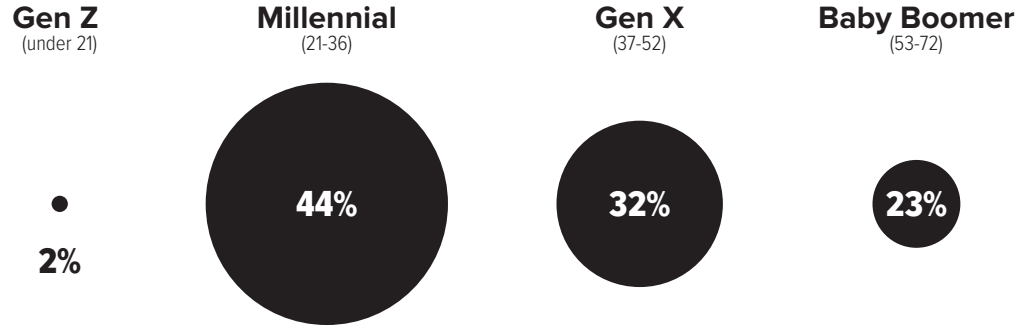
- 1ST** Employee rewards program
- 2ND** Health and wellness program
- 3RD** Tuition loan repayment assistance

TENURED

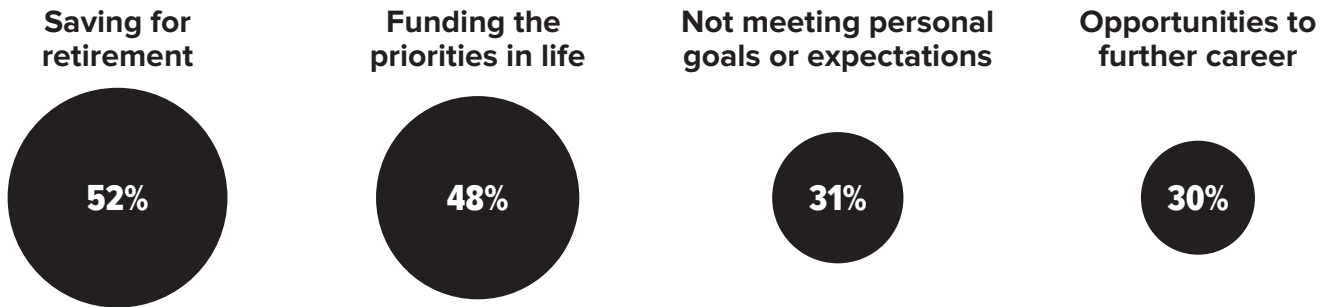
(8-10 years at the company)



DEMOGRAPHICS Average Age: 42



GREATEST CHALLENGES



COMMUNICATIONS

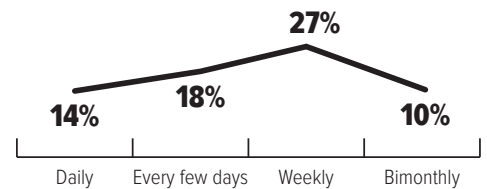
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Direct Supervisor

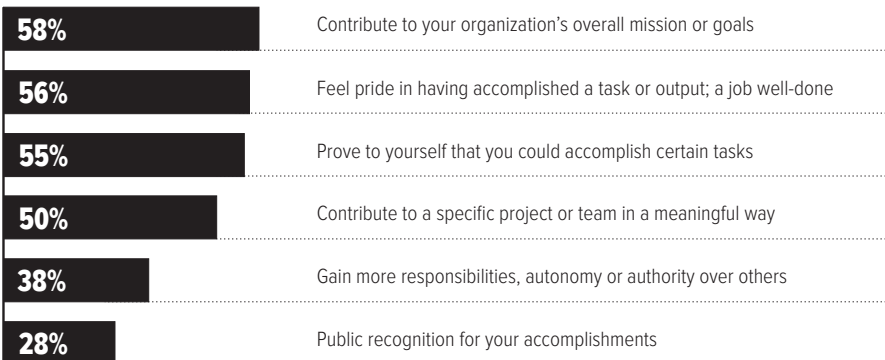
How should it be communicated?

69%
Email

When should information be delivered?



TOP MOTIVATIONS



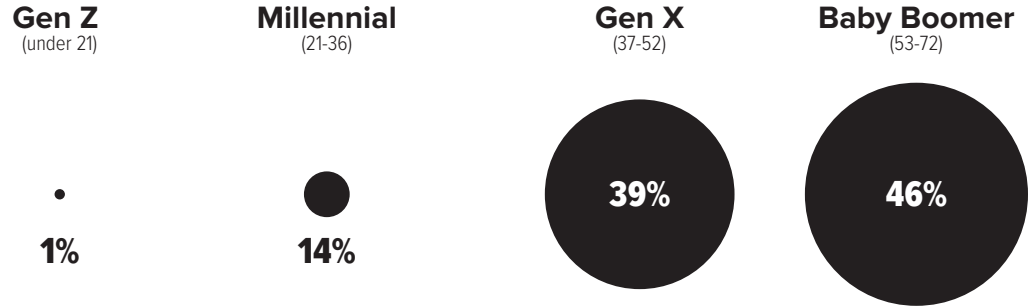
ENGAGEMENT METHODS

Largest Gap in Employee Demand vs. Employer Offering

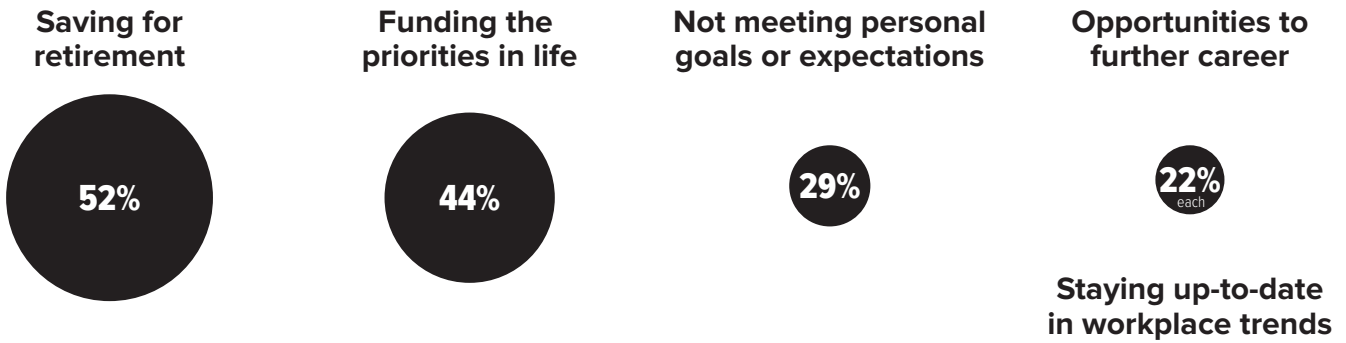
- 1ST** Employee rewards program
- 2ND** Health and wellness program
- 3RD** Companywide social events



DEMOGRAPHICS Average Age: 50

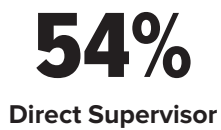


GREATEST CHALLENGES

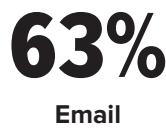


COMMUNICATIONS

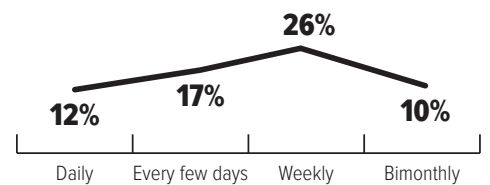
Who should it come from?



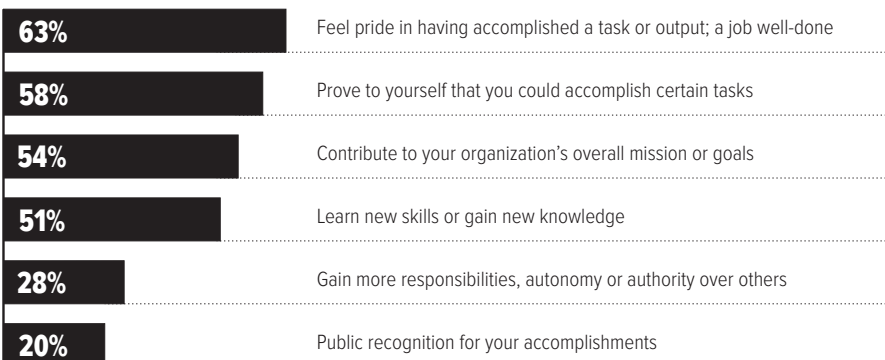
How should it be communicated?



When should information be delivered?



TOP MOTIVATIONS



ENGAGEMENT METHODS

Largest Gap in Employee Demand vs. Employer Offering

- 1ST** Employee rewards program
- 2ND** Health and wellness program
- 3RD** Tuition loan repayment assistance

CONCLUSIONS AND TAKEAWAYS

Employee engagement is critical to sustaining and growing a healthy business. Once seen as a “nice to have,” research now proves that employee engagement impacts everything from recruitment and retention to earnings per share. Despite its importance, however, engagement measured among working adults is low, with two in five employees reporting that they are completely disengaged from their employers.⁴

This statistic demonstrates an overwhelming need to understand what drives and motivates employees, and to take action. In thinking about an employee engagement strategy for your company, consider:

When it comes to employee engagement, one size does not fit all. Today’s workforce is comprised of employees spanning multiple generations. These employees are at different life stages, and have different priorities and needs outside the office, which can impact their work lives, too. Understanding and adapting to those different needs and life stages is critical to keeping employees engaged.

There’s a need to look beyond age as the key engagement driver. While we can infer a lot about an employee’s preferences and behaviors by their generation, there’s another key factor that contributes to their engagement levels – career stage. Two similarly aged employees may be at very different stages in their careers with the company and therefore have different preferences, challenges and motivators. Successful companies consider both age and career stage.

When addressing multiple ages and career stages consider a two-fold approach that acknowledges similarities as well as differences. People are more alike than different, but it’s human nature to overemphasize differences. When creating an employee engagement program, choose to focus on universal truths or foundational concepts across your employee population, and then customize to meet the needs of specific employee groups.

Understanding a company’s mission and values is critical. Employees need to understand the company’s mission, and the role they play in helping the company get there. Clearly articulate not just your mission, but your values. People want to work for a company whose values align with their own personal values. But, don’t just talk the talk. Those values should drive your behaviors, which ultimately build the company culture.

Employee engagement is a long-term commitment, and an important business strategy. Engagement doesn’t happen overnight, or through one-off feel-good events or activities. Leaders need to commit and allocate resources to building and maintaining an engaged workforce.

Companies that understand what drives employees of all career stages will reap the benefits of a highly engaged workforce. Creating a long-term, effective engagement strategy is vital to a business’ overall success.

For help inspiring and engaging your company’s most valuable asset, contact Padilla today.

Sources:

1. 28 Years of Stock Market Data Shows a Link Between Employee Satisfaction and Long-Term Value, Harvard Business Review, 2016.
2. State of the American Workplace, Gallup, 2013.
3. Majority of U.S. Employees Not Engaged Despite Gains in 2014, Gallup, 2015.
4. 5. SMS Research Advisors survey, commissioned by Padilla, 2017.

CONTACT:

PadillaCo.com

Natalie Smith
Senior Vice President
Padilla

804.675.8134
Natalie.Smith@PadillaCo.com

Julie McCracken
Senior Director
Padilla

804.675.8167
Julie.McCracken@PadillaCo.com