Delivering Employee Engagement in A Remote World

A Guide for SMEs'

dulann.com

Efficient Compliant Safer Workplaces

The bottom line here is very simple on both a personal level and on a financial level..., unless Organisations understand the factors that make remote working especially demanding, then you will start to see significant declines in Employee Engagement, which in turn has a negative impact on Job Performance, and a resulting negative impact on Organisation Performance. That seems fairly straight forward right?

Of course the "Secret Sauce" though is not just in understanding the factors that make Remote Working especially demanding, it is in developing effective Engagement Strategies to deal with this unique situation. This of course is not as easy as it sounds but if we listen to our friends in the Huffington Post, we do know that Companies that have fully engaged and motivated Employees, outperform Companies that don't - by as much as 202%!! We thought that would get your attention!

Deloitte's Global Human Capital Trends report states that "learning opportunities are among the largest drivers of Employee Engagement and strong Workplace Culture". More about that later though because it isn't just about learning opportunities. Organisations like Dulann and our partners IMC, know that implementing learning opportunities is an important piece of the puzzle, but it's only just one piece. To implement this element and this element alone, would be guaranteed to result in failure.

This eBook is written in the same style as our other eBooks, so expect a no nonsense approach as always. Yes, it is always preferable to establish and communicate clear Remote-Working Policies in advance, conduct trial runs and even ensure appropriate training on matters such as building resilience in a remote world. As a famous sports person once said "the world ain't all sunshine and rainbows", so when Remote Working is forced upon you, you better get that Engagement piece into 6th gear as a matter of priority.

There are dozens of Legal and HR Consultancy practices out there that will help you with building policies, we aren't one of them. We know what we do best and we stick to the knitting. What we will do though is impart some of our knowledge as Digital Transformation Experts and also channel the experiences of some of our many clients. Dulann can certainly help on many eLearning topics such as "Building Resilience and Managing Stress for Remote Workers", but we aren't selling to you at this point in time. Don't get us wrong, these types of training along with proper Ergonomics Training etc. all help with engagement, it just isn't the focus of this eBook

dulann

Efficient Compliant Safer Workplaces

So let's get to it, the solution here is Engagement, with a capital E. An easy word to say but not an easy thing to achieve, and certainly not an easy thing to monitor or gauge a return on investment.

We have written this eBook with input from our partners IMC, the world leading provider of eLearning Solutions.

1 Be a Leader

It is a well-known fact that Employees look to their Managers for cues in everyday situations, but in times of crises they also seek cues about how to react to sudden changes or crisis situations. If you as a Manager communicate stress and helplessness, then this will impact on your colleagues. Effective Leaders both acknowledge the stress and anxiety that Employees may be feeling in difficult circumstances, but also provide affirmation of their confidence in their Employees. With this support, Employees are more likely to engage and take up any challenge that is thrown at them.

2 What's in it for me?

WIIFM is the glue that binds people to the business and to each other. Some leaders believe that at times of crises that people should pull together as a team, and not be thinking of WIIFM. Some leaders also believe that those who think about WIIFM are selfish and not part of the team. That couldn't be further from the truth. The reality is that different people have different drivers and different motivators. Real Leaders know "what's in it for me," for each of their reports, because by knowing that another dot connects. Knowing "what's in it for me" requires knowing what "you need to do" as a Leader, in order to Motivate and Engage Employees to the max.

3 Communicate the Value to Employees

Did you know that only 40% of the workforce reports knowing their Companies Goals, Strategies, and Tactics? It is even vital in Remote Working situations that constant two-way Communication is maintained or you will see how quickly Employees can become Demotivated and Disengaged. Implementing a Digital Learning System can prepare your Organisation to remain not just informed but also competitive. This is particularly the case as technology changes rapidly and markets are disrupted. The IMC Learning Management System is the best Digital Learning System that we have come across. Contact us today to establish more details.

4 Keep it Real

Everyone knows the benefits of remote working including less commuting, more time with family, more flexibility, lower expenses, increased productivity, better work life balance etc. This is something that you must still communicate with Employees to encourage maximum engagement. It is after all a wonderful opportunity for most people.

dulann

Efficient Compliant Safer Workplaces

Price Match **Promise**

- We will Price Match any like for like product from Ireland or the UK

- You will never pay more for compliance

- You don't have to shop around

Terms and conditions apply.

You must however, also communicate the disadvantages. There is no point in not talking about the elephant in the room, so you need to put it out there as bold and as brazen as you can be. It's important that Employees know that if they experience a wobble that it is not unique or uncommon in remote working. Explain that it's ok to experience feelings like a decreased sense of belonging, it's ok to acknowledge the fact that there will be more distractions, it's ok to struggle to unplug work from home life. Encourage remote workers to talk to you and also make it clear to them as to where they can find help if they need to.

5 Make an Impression

First impressions count. Spend a little time and money on making the Employee Experience positive, because a first experience will encourage them to come back, to listen, and in fact to want more. Plan your interactions in the same way as you would plan for a Board Meeting or a Sales Call. Make use of a Graphic Designer to assist in communications with your Employees if you can. When working remotely, these Internal Customers are now more important than ever. A lot of our clients are using this opportunity to up-skill their Employees as a means to get Employees to engage better. If doing so, personalise their experience by using their name in the welcome message, and a recommendation engine to ensure they're only shown courses relevant to their role and interests. Use this as an opportunity to give them a great first impression which means they are more likely to return for more of your initiatives.

dulann

Efficient Compliant Safer Workplaces

6   Foster Employee Input

Employees will be more eager to engage with any process or system, particularly a new one, if they have input in it. Provide a forum in which Employees give feedback on their experiences, discuss effective strategies from their perspective or even provide suggestions on learning for future up-skilling.
This listening tells learners that their individual contribution is important to the process. Of course you must also manage expectations because not everything will be acted upon. At the same time you do need to take action on the items of priority.

7   Give People a Sense of Belonging

Remote Employees can sometimes feel isolated and disconnected from the rest of the Company even though they may be no more, or no less connected than anyone else. A study by The Wall Street Journal suggests that one of the crucial factors that separates successful Companies from others, are those that give Employees a sense of belonging. Some of the other tactics in this eBook will help with this for sure, but the topic is so important that it does warrant special mention. Particularly when remote working has been forced upon people, Employers have to set clear and measurable goals for their remote Employees. Those Employees then need to take ownership and accountability of these goals to ensure you secure maximum engagement. Communication is more challenging when working with remote teams and it's important to say that things can often get lost in translation. Just redouble your efforts to be crystal clear about Employees duties and responsibilities. There is nothing more frustrating than working hard on something for days, to find out that you were barking up the wrong tree.

8 Provide Opportunities for Remote Social Interaction

One of the most essential steps a Manager can take is to structure ways for Employees to interact socially while working remotely (the water cooler moments if you like). This is true for all remote workers, but particularly so for workers who have been abruptly transitioned out of the office. Some Managers believe in the "no chitchat" type approach in a working environment but to be honest that sort of dictatorial approach left the Western World along with Communism. It is a vital piece in achieving Employee Engagement and should be encouraged. On the flip side you also need to be able to monitor the situation for abuse, but you need to do that in an open and transparent fashion. One neat idea that we hear our clients doing is to encourage people to take virtual coffee breaks, where team members can take a break and chat with one another via video call.

Corona Buster

Setup Your Online
Employee Onboarding Now

No Deposit
No Upfront Payment
We Build Your Inductions
Walk Away at Any Stage
Pay From May 1st

Dont Waste An Opportunity

dulann
Efficient Compliant Safer Workplaces

Terms & Conditions Apply

9 Introduce Fun

Consider introducing some fun in order to keep the Engagement. Make sure that team members can succeed with short-term wins, and use weekly/monthly prizes to reward people who make outstanding progress. Not only does this incentivise everyone to get involved, but the team vs team competition is fun. Some Learning Management Systems, including that from IMC allow Organisations to have some fun with the process by creating games and then publishing a Leader Board for those that have up-skilled the most for example

10 Leaders Should have the Mindset of the Tortoise with the Pace of the Hare

Setting goals and keeping them can be difficult at the best of times but it is more important than ever in times of crises. Firstly, as Leader, you must set your bullseye from a time perspective. Let's assume that an unexpected lock-down is going to last three months. You must now work back your Engagement Plan from that point and ensure that you have consistent and positive Engagement throughout. The worst thing you could do is experience burnout, where you overcompensate on Engagement in the first week or two and then disappear for the balance of the three months. You do need to act fast and take decisive action but you also need to be consistent throughout.

11 Offer Encouragement and Emotional Support

It is important for Managers to acknowledge stress, listen to the anxieties and concerns of Employees, and empathise with their struggles. This is especially the case in the context of an abrupt shift to Remote Working.

Even a simple question such as "How is this remote work situation working out for you so far?" will go a long way to assessing how your colleagues are really feeling. Do not make the mistake of assuming that everyone is okay and certainly don't make the mistake of assuming that just because Employees appear happy, that they actually are. One of the great advantages of a top class Digital Learning Management System is that people can communicate and offer encouragement and support with their peers who are in similar roles or who have similar functions.

12 Use virtual team collaboration tools

The Internet is full of people trying to bestow the virtues of virtual team collaboration tools so we are not going to focus on that in this eBook, other than to say that if you are fortunate enough to have access to such tools then please do utilise them. In Dulann, one of the products we use is a product called Wrike to help us build a collaborative team environment that delivers engagement and results.

12 Demonstrate ROI to Senior Management

The last thing that you want this "Engagement Initiative" to be seen as, is a pure cost to the business. For it to survive you must measure results so you can show ROI. There are a number of ways that you can do this. Let's give you a practical example of a sales department as an online sales course is a good place to start. It's a good place to start as an investment in sales resources is often directly linked to a quantifiable increase in revenue. You can also set a test before and after a course to show actual improvements in learners' skills, and highlight the impact this learning has on individual and business outcomes
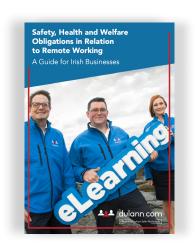
The success of your remote worker project hinges on the Engagement of all the Stakeholders involved – from the top down. Effective Engagement Strategies encourage take-up, foster continuous learning, empower Stakeholders, and contribute to the long-term aim of high performance at the core of your Organisational Culture

We certainly hope that this eBook has helped you in some way. If you would like us to help you facilitate a smooth implementation of a new Digital Learning System to deliver positive business results, then talk to us today. There has never been a better time.

dulann

Efficient Compliant Safer Workplaces

dulann

Efficient Compliant Safer Workplaces

Other eBooks in the series are

Employer Obligations for Remote Working

Link: elearning.dulannelearning.com/remote/

Health and Safety Managers and Their Role in Business Continuity

Link: elearning.dulannelearning.com/ebook/

Safety Management System Product Guide

Link: elearning.dulannelearning.com/sms/

Here to help
Contact the right person

Dulann HQ: Contact Dominic White
dominic.white@dulann.com | +353 87 330 2373

Cork Office: Contact Noel Carton
noel.carton@dulann.com | +353 86 040 0834

Dublin Office 1: Contact Gar Walsh
gar.walsh@dulann.com | +353 87 359 6708

Dublin Office 2: Contact Ryan Parker
ryan.parker@dulann.com | +353 87 358 8606

Galway/Clare Office: Contact Ted Roberts
ted.roberts@dulann.com | +353 87 294 1394

Limerick Office: Contact Alan Connolly
alan.connolly@dulann.com | +353 87 280 3196

Sligo, Leitrim, Longford, Roscommon Office: Contact Declan Bruen
declan.bruen@dulann.com | +353 87 253 7388

Wexford Office: Contact Frances Moran
frances.moran@dulann.com | +353 86 318 5576

Louth/Meath Office: Contact Carmel McCarthy
carmel.mccarthy@dulann.com | + 353 41 98 22 933

All other Areas: Contact Dominic White
dominic.white@dulann.com | +353 87 330 2373

dulann.com

Efficient Compliant Safer Workplaces