



Understanding & Managing Employee Engagement

A tool for Frontline Supervisors

Gallup research shows that employees typically fall into three categories: **Engaged**, **Not Engaged**, and **Actively Disengaged**. Each group needs something different from their supervisor. This guide helps you recognize where someone might be—and how to respond.

Engaged Employees

Who they are: They're motivated, show up with energy, and go above and beyond.

Your role: Help them grow and feel valued—don't take them for granted.

Strategies:

- Recognize and celebrate wins (big or small).
- Give them space to lead: onboarding, projects, problem-solving.
- Provide stretch opportunities or leadership pathways.
- Ask for input—make them part of improving the workplace.
- Offer consistent, positive communication and support.

“Keep engaged employees connected to the mission—and to each other.”

Disengaged Employees

Who they are: They're present but checked out—doing the job, but not with enthusiasm.

Your role: Reconnect with them before disengagement deepens.

Strategies:

- Start with empathy: “What’s been on your mind lately?”
- Clarify workload—are they overwhelmed or underutilized?
- Find out what *was* working and how to reconnect them to that.
- Offer coaching and encouragement—help them find purpose again.
- Look for life transitions, burnout, or silent frustrations.



“Confidence often starts to fade here—your job is to build it back up.”

Actively Disengaged Employees

Who they are: They may resist change, display negativity, or impact team morale.

Your role: Address issues quickly and professionally to protect the team.

Strategies:

- Have the hard conversation: Be direct, factual, and empathetic.
- Set clear expectations and boundaries.
- Document patterns and follow write-up/coaching policies.
- Consider reassignments if they may thrive elsewhere.
- If needed, involve leadership or HR—and don’t delay terminations when necessary.

“Ignoring active disengagement sends a message to your whole team. Address it early.”

Tools for You

- **Engaged** → Invest and recognize
- **Disengaged** → Rebuild confidence and connection
- **Actively Disengaged** → Intervene with clarity and consistency

Leadership isn't about avoiding difficult conversations—it's about showing up for them.
