

Employee Experience: An untapped source of competitive advantage.

Introduction



Cost of living around the world is **reaching new heights.**

Employers are facing the challenge of controlling rising costs in an unpredictable economy while investing in the wellbeing of employees who are increasingly worried about personal finances and considering a change in employment.

**Against this backdrop,
there is a need
for organisations
to explore wider
sources of long-term
competitive advantage.**

The intense competitive environment has highlighted the importance of 'marginal gains' – where small incremental improvements across lots of areas, can add up to significant overall improvement.

With this in mind, we have explored fundamental, connected levers such as purpose, culture and values that are vital to Employee Experience and demonstrate that by focusing on these areas, employers can attract the right talent, secure buy-in, boost morale, and ultimately achieve a happier, more productive workforce.

From Insight to Action.

We are a Creative Brand Agency who help employers find and articulate their unique value.

We help organisations attract and retain the right employees by understanding the “why” behind their employer brand, bringing greater alignment through a shared purpose and values. We then bring it all to life in engaging and meaningful ways across multiple touchpoints, shaping the behaviours that build successful brands from the inside out.

Our services include:

- Research & Stakeholder Engagement
- Internal Communications Strategy
- Company & Brand Values Creation
- Leadership & Staff Focus Groups
- Employer Value Proposition
- Internal Communications Campaigns

Building Better Insights.

Our Building Better Insights series is designed to help organisations navigate the changing landscape of human behaviour – from consumer habits to employee experience in the workplace, our insights stem from primary research and market trends.

Find out more at www.wearethefoundation.co.uk/insights



Food and drink / Insights

How consumers view local brands & how they are responding to COVID-19



Cost of living / Insights

Increased cost of living and the impact on local food & drink brands across the island of Ireland.

Research background.

Over **1,500** employees across **Ireland, UK and USA** participated in our research project between October and November 2022.



What's clear is that
**purpose, culture
and values**
are important and valued.

However, the research indicates that there is a sizeable proportion of employees who are not connecting with their organisation as fully as possible and so our headline questions to senior leaders are:

Q Are you allowing your people to disconnect from your shared purpose and are these potential gains that you're leaving on the table?

Q How do you create long-term competitive advantage for employees through a clear purpose, strong culture and meaningful values?

Key takeaways



01

When the going gets tough, make culture your competitive advantage.

When you're facing a fight on all business fronts, your culture can be the difference between you and your competitors. 1 in 4 employees feel their organisational culture is not strong and 1 in 3 feel their culture has no impact or worse still, a negative impact on how they work.



Take control of your purpose, culture and values narrative and ensure they are informed by all parts of your organisation.

A third of employees say they are not living their purpose at work, especially among the more junior level of employees. It's vital to look critically at your purpose, culture and values to assess if they are working for your people. To do this, involve everyone from junior to senior levels and identify the elements that make your Employee Experience clear, informative and shareable across your organisation.



Not taking action on your Employee Experience will see more employees move into the flight risk category over time.

“Flight Risk” employees – those who are highly likely to leave their organisation in the next year are less engaged with their organisation’s purpose and say they do not feel valued by their organisation.

While they are already resigned to leaving, the longer term question here is, could the absence of a defined purpose, well articulated to your employees see more people – potentially some of your best people – slip into the “Flight Risk” category?



Are you sitting on a potential “brain-drain time-bomb”?

Across a number of the areas explored, a group of employees identifying as “mid-level” (beyond entry level but not at management level and predominantly aged 25-44), are just not engaging with their organisation in the same way as others.

They are much less likely to understand their organisation’s purpose, are less likely to be live it out at work, feel less valued and say their culture is ‘weak.

All of this points to a “Purpose Gap” for this valuable group of employees.

It also prompts deeper focus for organisations on how they onboard those between entry level and management and a question of how well they manage the full Employee Experience for those who fall between the two stools of being new into the workplace and operating in a management role.

05

Your employees are worried – are you doing enough and communicating enough?

Two thirds of employees feel “worried” about the current economic situation yet only 45% feel their organisation has prepared them for it.

While many organisations are facing down critical challenges on rising costs and supply chain disruption, the questions are twofold:

Q Is there any more you could do to support your employees?

Q How transparent can you be around how much you can feasibly do to support them, given the wider challenges?



Working from home isn't working for everyone – more is needed from organisations.

Junior-level employees are least favourable to the support they've received for working from home by their organisation – almost one in four feel their organisation has not prepared them well.

It's important that organisations listen to these employees to understand their needs and expectations, ensuring that any support is responsive to their needs and not just the needs of the mid-senior levels of management.



For Employee Experience inspiration, look west.

It's clear from the responses across the geographies surveyed that employees in the USA are showing the highest level of connection with purpose, culture and values and this is resulting in USA employees being most likely to stay with their organisation.

For organisations in Ireland and the UK starting on the journey to define their purpose, culture and values, an analysis of how leading USA organisations are embracing these key elements of Employee Experience would be a good starting point.

Want to find out more?
Get in touch.



Erin Nixon
Commercial Director
—
+44 (0)28 9037 2515
erin@wearethefoundation.co.uk



Brendan Gallen
Strategy Director
—
+44 (0)28 9037 2522
brendan@wearethefoundation.co.uk