

CONNECTIONS INC.

Employee & Family Solutions | Employee Assistance Programs

Vol. 26 #3

A Message from Matt

How to Build a Superteam That Keeps Getting Better

Human connection is more than a nice-to-have — it's something we're wired for. Research consistently shows that feeling close to others helps lower stress, boosts mood, and even supports physical health. In fact, meaningful relationships can be as important to well-being as sleep, exercise, and nutrition. When we take time to truly listen, share, and show up for each other, we build a sense of belonging that helps us handle life's challenges and feel more grounded, supported, and alive.



MATT VISSER, CEO
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"Knowing what I am to own and take responsibility for- gives me freedom. If I know where my yard begins and ends, I am free to do with it what I like."



ANDY VISSER
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MAIN TOPIC: U.S. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT DECLINES FROM 2020 PEAK

The current 'employee engagement' trends, as revealed by the Gallup organization, warn us of some real threats to productivity and teamwork in the world of work. It is also important to recognize that not all workplace leaders know exactly what is meant by 'employee engagement.' Very briefly, employee engagement includes issues such as...

- Feeling cared about
- Having opportunities to learn
- Optimism about meaningful skill acquisition
- Opportunities to advance to future desirable positions

Generation Z and younger millennial employees were 13 points less likely in 2025 (41%) than in 2020 (54%) to strongly agree with the statement "My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person."

The age groupings noted above are Generation Z – born 1997-2012, and younger is Gen Alpha – born 2013 – 2025. The percentage of U.S. employees, in all age groupings, who are actively engaged at work averaged 31% in 2025, unchanged from 2024, according to Gallup's surveys. This follows several years of decline from a high of 36% in 2020, which came after a decade of steady growth.

Each percentage-point change in active engagement at work represents approximately 1.6 million full- or part-time employees in the U.S. The declines since 2020 equate to about 8 million fewer engaged employees over five years, with 3.2 million fewer engaged workers compared to 2023 alone.

Retaining the best of your team requires leadership staff to be tuned into the skills strategically designed to optimize employee engagement. We at Connections Inc. EAP have shaped EAP services which include leadership training introducing critical engagement training for leadership teams!

U.S. Employee Engagement Declines From 2020 Peak

<https://www.gallup.com/workplace/701486/employee-engagement-declines-2020-peak.aspx>

Connections Inc. Employee Assistance Program's mission is to provide holistic assistance products and services that support optimum productivity, team work and healthy community in the workplace.

Connections Inc. Employee Assistance Program mission statement since 1988

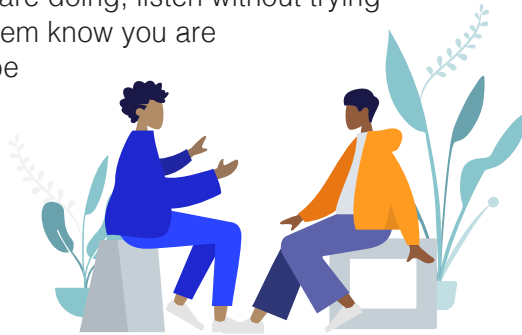
NOTEWORTHY

MENTAL HEALTH CHECK-IN TIME!

Support for positive mental health can take many forms. Sometimes things we regard as small actions can make a meaningful and helpful difference. A brief message, a thoughtful check-in, or simply taking time to listen can help someone feel seen and supported.

No, we are not suggesting that leadership team members or co-workers can become mental health professionals. Personal initiation of positive health practices as well as Dr. visits for professional 'coaching' are both important in promoting both physical and mental health.

Healthy habits, workouts and exercise are important actions for our physical habits. Positive mental habits such as checking in with someone may create space for an opportunity to listen, to convey appreciation and respect. You might ask how they are doing, listen without trying to fix the situation, or simply let them know you are there. Support does not have to be complicated to be meaningful.



Maynard's Corner

Maynard's Corner:

No cost to you! 100% Confidential!
Your dependents are included at no additional cost!

If that was a commercial, would it get your attention? The best part is that it's true!!

Your employer provides this service to you through Connections Inc. Employee Assistance Program.

If you do not have this service available to your employees, we can help you with that. We will provide you with a no-obligation Proposal of Service. Also, at NO CHARGE!

After all, we are here to help. That's what we do.



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CLARIFY EXPECTATIONS TO EXECUTE WITH EXCELLENCE

What can business leaders gain from current-day military leadership practices—specifically from the U.S. Navy—that have been honed for years?

The aircraft carrier, the USS Abraham Lincoln, is like a floating city. Over 5,000 sailors live and work onboard, and the crews perform the most complex flight operations in the most tumultuous conditions—day and night, with absolutely no room for error. Why? Because in this environment, the cost of an error could potentially be tens of millions of dollars in damaged Navy assets or even loss of life!

This type of environment demands nothing less than fully synchronized teamwork, passionate selflessness, relentless effort, and consistent execution - all delivered by sailors with an average age of 20 years old. This peak level of performance is achieved through the work of thousands of young sailors, many of whom did not have a clear direction after graduating high school, never mind an MBA.

It is amusing when we contrast this with clients who are frustrated by their highly educated team's performance! A team that is working in a nicely appointed, air-conditioned, land-based office. At the core of this stellar naval performance are crystal-clear expectations.

<https://thelgroup.com/clarify-expectations-to-execute-with-excellence/>

NEXT ISSUE: BUILDING A SUPERTeam

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