

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Newsletter Article

MAY 2026

The contemporary American professional landscape is at a turning point. While people are sticking with their employers, they feel more disconnected than ever. Gallup calls this the 'Great Detachment'.

When employees aren't engaged, businesses pay a high price. Globally, businesses lose \$8.8 trillion every year because employees are disengaged. To put that in perspective, that is about 9 percent of the entire world's gross domestic product going down the drain due to poor productivity.

These numbers make one thing clear: disengagement is not just a people problem, it's a leadership problem. At the heart of this challenge lies an opportunity. Leadership has the power to reconnect people to their work, rebuild trust, and create environments where employees feel motivated to contribute.

This article will walk you through how leadership can drive positive changes in workplaces.

Leadership Can Drive Positive Changes In Workplaces

Adapted from Freddie Steele, Insight Online

[*Click to view the original article*](#)

Building Trust Through Open Communication

Trust is the central nervous system of a healthy organization. It facilitates the flow of ideas, mitigates the friction of change, and serves as a buffer against the stresses of a volatile market.

In the current workplace, trust is no longer an abstract ideal but a measurable asset that directly impacts the bottom line. Research from the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology in South Africa shows that high organizational trust accelerates both staff engagement and business performance.

One of the most effective ways leaders can earn that trust is through open, honest communication. This means more than just sharing updates or sending company-wide emails. It involves listening as much as talking.

When leaders invite feedback, encourage questions, and genuinely consider employee perspectives, it reinforces a culture of respect where employees feel truly heard and valued. This kind of openness helps employees feel respected and included rather than left in the dark.

Transparency is also key. When leaders explain decisions, employees are more likely to understand and support them even if the outcome isn't ideal. Being upfront about challenges, goals, and changes builds credibility and reduces uncertainty, which is often a major source of workplace stress.

Empowering Employees to Grow and Succeed

Empowerment in the modern workplace is not merely about assigning tasks. It is about transferring authority and providing the resources necessary for employees to act autonomously.

Modern U.S. companies are trading strict rules for employee freedom to boost performance and well-being. Zappos, for instance, uses a self-managed system where workers spot problems and create their own solutions instead of waiting for a boss's permission.

Mentorship programs are among the most effective tools for accelerating employee development and fostering a sense of belonging. T-Mobile's mentorship initiative, launched during its merger with Sprint, resulted in a 37% increase in retention compared to non-participants.

Leaders who pursue advanced training with credentials such as a Doctor of Education (EdD) in Organizational Leadership are often better equipped to design these empowerment strategies. Grounded in research and practical leadership frameworks, they can create environments where employees feel trusted, capable, and motivated to succeed.

Many universities now offer an online EdD in organizational leadership degree. That way, aspiring leaders can advance their education without stepping away from their professional responsibilities.

American International College notes that this program is seven semesters and can be completed in two years and three months.

Supporting Well-Being and Work-Life Balance

Workplace well-being is evolving from a peripheral benefit into a core strategy. Leading organizations are no longer offering a scattered menu of programs. They are instead embedding well-being into governance and daily workflows. Employee health is now recognized as a prerequisite for long-term productivity. This shift treats workforce well-being as a strategic business priority.

Leading organizations are now addressing the whole person, recognizing that an employee's financial, emotional, and physical health are deeply interconnected. Leaders are taking proactive steps to normalize conversations about mental health, thereby reducing the stigma that often prevents employees from seeking help.

Leadership actions in this domain include modeling healthy behaviors. Leaders who protect their own boundaries, take mental health days, and share their struggles with burnout give their teams permission to do the same. They also provide specialized resources, such as offering access to digital therapy platforms, resilience training, and financial wellness coaching. These initiatives center on psychological safety: a culture where vulnerability isn't seen as a weakness. This allows employees to be open about their challenges without fearing for their status or credibility. When leaders prioritize well-being in this way, work-life balance becomes sustainable rather than aspirational.

Leadership as a Catalyst for Positive Change

Leadership has a ripple effect. When leaders prioritize communication, empowerment, and well-being, the effects spread throughout the entire organization. Teams become more cohesive and engaged, productivity improves, and turnover drops. When people feel supported, heard, and empowered, they don't just work harder, but they work happier. They bring more creativity, resilience, and commitment to their roles. And that is where real, lasting workplace success begins.

Need Assistance?

Call FCH EAP at 800-777-4114.

Your Clinical Account Executive is your front-line support when dealing with tough HR situations. Consult with us about referring employees to the EAP. When in doubt, encourage employees to call the EAP directly. Our team can discuss their needs and review the EAP services available to them.

If you or someone you know needs the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, call or text 988 or use the chat function online at [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org).