

workhuman*

Why Workplace Culture Matters in the Hybrid Era

5 WAYS TO STRENGTHEN CULTURE AMONG DISPERSED TEAMS





Regardless of return-to-office aims, the hybrid workplace is likely here to stay: [iCIMS reports](#) that “whether they want to get dressed and go into the office or work from home in their slippers, **93% of our survey respondents said flexibility was top of mind when deciding to apply for or accept a job.**”

While a flexible approach offers immense benefits for employers and employees alike, there is one caveat: culture. Hybrid work has the potential to disrupt the human connection, engagement, and sense of belonging that leaders have worked years to achieve.

“We’re hybrid still. Recognition has become an even more important way for colleagues to remain connected, to feel that sense of belonging and gratitude.”

ELIZABETH ROSEMAN

Head of Broad-Based Compensation & Global Programs

Merck

Source: [Workhuman® Live](#), breakout session, 2022

Rooted in 25+ years of research and analysis of more than 100 million unique recognition moments, here are five proven strategies to keep your culture strong – whether your teams are hybrid, fully remote, globally dispersed, or some combination.

ONE

Enable connection and engagement, regardless of location.

Creating opportunities for all employees to feel connected to your organization and their fellow humans is key to creating a strong workplace culture. According to research by [Gallup and Workhuman](#)[®], employees who strongly agree with the statement “I feel connected to my organization’s culture” are **3.7x more likely to be engaged at work.**

Here are a few ideas to strengthen connection and drive that ever-important engagement:

- **Support employee resource groups (ERGs).** These networks of employees with shared experiences, characteristics, or goals can help form authentic relationships up and down the organization. Groups created by and for your people improve company culture while building camaraderie.
- **Fuel bonds with mentorship.** To help everyone get to know each other better, try pairing new employees with a tenured buddy or matching remote employees with those working in the office. Volunteer mentorship pairs should meet at whatever cadence works for them.

- **Try optional activities for all.** Virtual trivia, paint nights, and happy hours over Zoom or Microsoft Teams allow for off-the-clock connections among anyone who chooses to participate.

When recognition is an important part of workplace culture, employees are nearly 2x more likely to rate their team's performance as excellent.

Source: "[From Praise to Profits: The Business Case for Recognition at Work](#)," Gallup and Workhuman, 2023

TWO

Prioritize flexibility in the workplace experience.

"Cultures that put people first will implement personalization in technology, schedules, work settings, and job descriptions so that everyone can be at their most productive," writes Workhuman CEO Eric Mosley in his [2024 trends article for Forbes](#). Companies that offer [flexible work arrangements](#) – remote and hybrid options, flexible hours, the ability to balance work and personal commitments – are attractive to today's job seekers.

The key is to combine flexibility with accountability. Imbuing your culture with respect and empowerment – generally trusting people to do the jobs they were hired to do – gives everyone the agency to collaborate in ways that work for them. For this to be successful, managers and individual contributors alike should be committed to communication and giving and receiving regular feedback and recognition.

Flexible work arrangements not only help employees achieve a better work-life balance, but research shows they also contribute to higher job satisfaction and productivity.

Compared to other companies, Workhuman customers show a \$1,737 average increase in productivity per employee.

Source: "3 Key Data Points: The Immediate and Long-Term ROI of Social Recognition," Workhuman, 2022



THREE

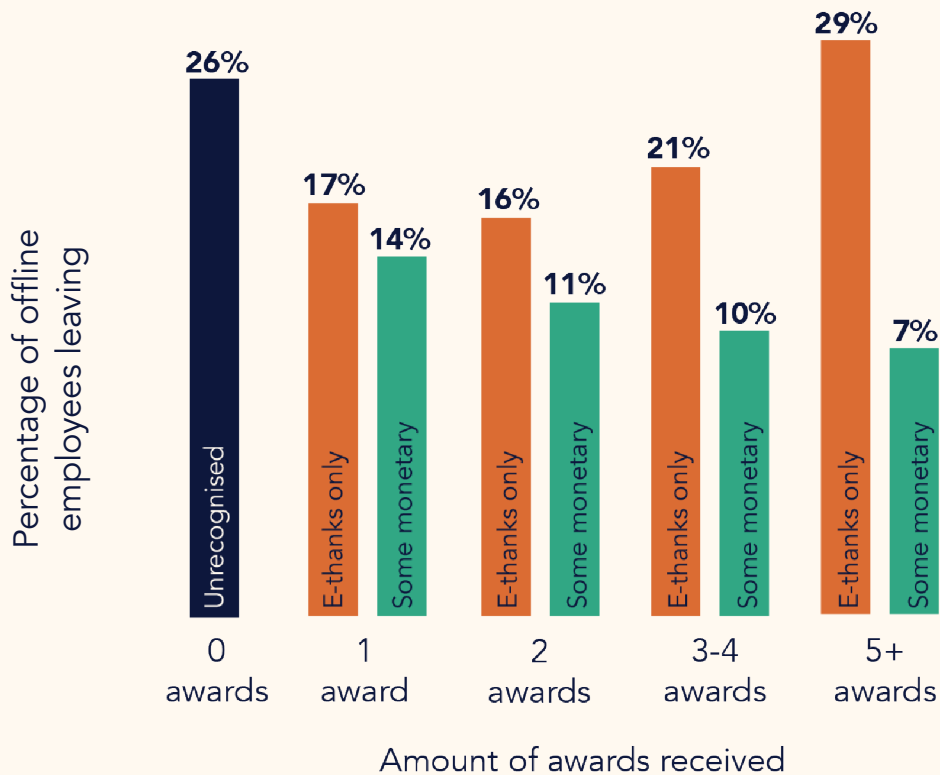
Provide accessible options for recognition.

Employees may work in different places – whether that’s in a hospital, in a manufacturing plant, from a truck, from their home, from an office building, or anywhere else – but they have one thing in common: the desire to be valued for the work they do. And they all deserve to have equal access to your recognition and reward system.

At Workhuman, we serve 2+ million offline employees and more than 60% of our end users are outside of the United States. We will work with you to help determine the best way to reach your entire population using some combination of our mobile app, breakroom kiosks, local ambassadors, high-touch launch events, communication templates, cascaded messaging, and digital and physical signage, among other options.

What’s more, Workhuman research across 34 clients and more than 67k offline workers shows that **frequent recognition – receiving 5+ awards per year – is correlated with 4x lower turnover** if at least one recognition moment has monetary value.

Impact of monetary recognition vs. e-thanks on offline worker retention



Source: Cross-client research study, Workhuman, 2018

“That’s where our turnover is – on the factory floor. So, whenever we put a program in place, the first thing we solve for is how we get traction within that population. ... That includes access to the awards feed and this platform [on tablets in work centers]. Separate from that, we’re pushing the Workhuman app they can use on their personal devices.”

BRADY BAGWAN

VP, Human Resources

Morgan Truck Body, LLC

Source: [Morgan Truck Body, LLC case study](#), Workhuman, 2023

FOUR

Celebrate your culture champions.

A strong company culture is made up of humans with a common goal: to better themselves and the organization. Train leaders to keep an eye out for those employees who take extra steps to promote your culture.

These employees – your “culture champions” – improve morale while creating an example of what could be. If these employees are recognized for their efforts, it’s likely others will follow, leading to a more resilient and united workplace.

Here are a few example scenarios:

- An employee offering to be involved in the interview process for a job candidate in a separate department
- An employee in a different time zone adjusting their schedule to attend a meeting before an important deadline
- An employee devising ways for people to connect, such as creating a Slack group for new parents or an ERG for women in technology



Employee recognition with Workhuman is more than a way to say “thanks.” It’s a data-powered, science-backed tool to revitalize your workplace. With Social Recognition[®], you can build a culture of appreciation while fueling employee performance, building social bonds, and promoting inclusivity – all outcomes that lead to real ROI.



Customer since 2013

Employees who receive monetary recognition are 2x more likely to stay. Adding recognition data to the predictive turnover model increased accuracy by 10 points.



Customer since 2016

New hires that receive recognition are 5x less likely to leave within the first year. **Engagement surveys show an increase of 12 percentage points** related to recognition.



Customer since 2015

96% retention rate for all employees who receive 4+ awards. 54% of employees increase their performance rating after receiving 3+ awards.



Customer since 2021

70% of sites with effective recognition score high on engagement surveys and have seen **YOY improvements in productivity, safety, and quality.**

Sources: Click each customer logo to view the related case study

FIVE

Cheer for wins, in and out of the office.

No matter what your work environment looks like, now and into the future, recognize both big and small wins. A culture that celebrates career milestones, life events, and group achievements creates, promotes, and maintains a vibrant and connected community.

An excellent way to include both remote and in-person folks in these celebrations is through the Celebrations Suite, comprising Service Milestones[®], Life Events[®], and Community Celebrations[®].

These show employees they are valued for their whole selves – not just the return they provide the company.



And it's good for business, too. [Gallup and Workhuman](#) research found that employees recognized for work and life events are 3x as likely to feel connected to company culture, **3x as likely to say their company cares about their wellbeing, and more than 30% more likely to say they plan to remain at the organization.**

In the past, some organizations considered a culture of connection a nice-to-have, rather than a necessity. That is no longer the case. Employees want to go to work feeling a deep sense of belonging, purpose, and appreciation. A human-centered culture makes that possible for hybrid and remote-first workplaces, all over the world.

To learn more about how the Workhuman platform can help build a culture of connection, [contact us today.](#)

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Or read more on our blog: workhuman.com/blog

Join HR's leading innovators and trailblazers at our next [Workhuman Live](#) conference.

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