



UK EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY 2022

EXPLORING THE IMPACT
OF COVID-19 ON
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
IN THE UK

Prepared in collaboration with

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

The COVID-19 pandemic had an unprecedented impact on our working lives, resulting in organisations and employees being forced to make dramatic changes overnight.

The following report aims to provide insight into the impact of the pandemic on employee engagement levels, explore how organisations responded, and provide a straightforward method to measure and compare employee engagement levels.

An online survey was conducted in 2022 of a representative sample of the UK population (n=814). Respondents were asked to self-report their levels of engagement across four main areas, namely engagement with their job, their colleagues, their manager, and their organisation.

The following is a brief summary of the key findings from the Engage for Success UK Employee Engagement Survey 2022.

For full details and discussion of the findings, download a copy of the report from the Engage for Success website at: <https://engageforsuccess.org/>





SECTION 2: CURRENT EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT LEVELS IN THE UK

A key focus of the EFS survey was to gain insight into UK levels of employee engagement through the development of an Employee Engagement Index (EEI).

The 2022 UK Employee Engagement Index was 62%.

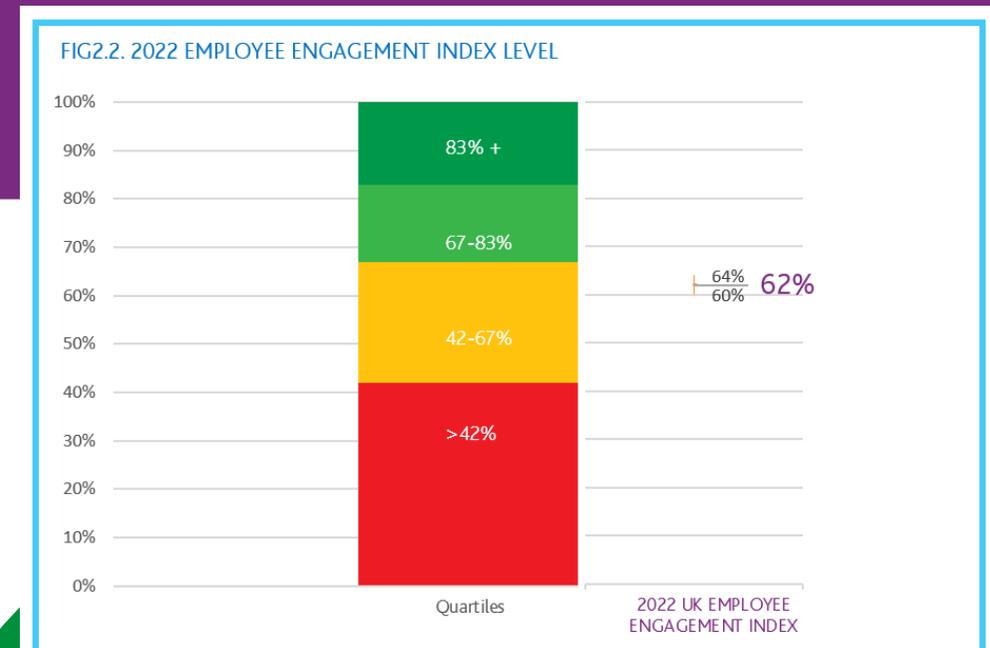
The EEI is a combination of the average score of three key questions:

- ▶ Overall satisfaction
- ▶ Loyalty
- ▶ Advocacy

The aim was to develop a 'good starting point' in measuring the key outcome of engagement.

Using the index as a basis, quartiles were developed, enabling organisations to consider how they are doing compared to the rest of the UK population.

Correlations were found between the EEI and respondents considering their job meaningful, important, and believing in the purpose and vision of the organisation. In addition, correlations were seen between perceptions of engagement as a priority to their managers, senior leaders, and the organisation.



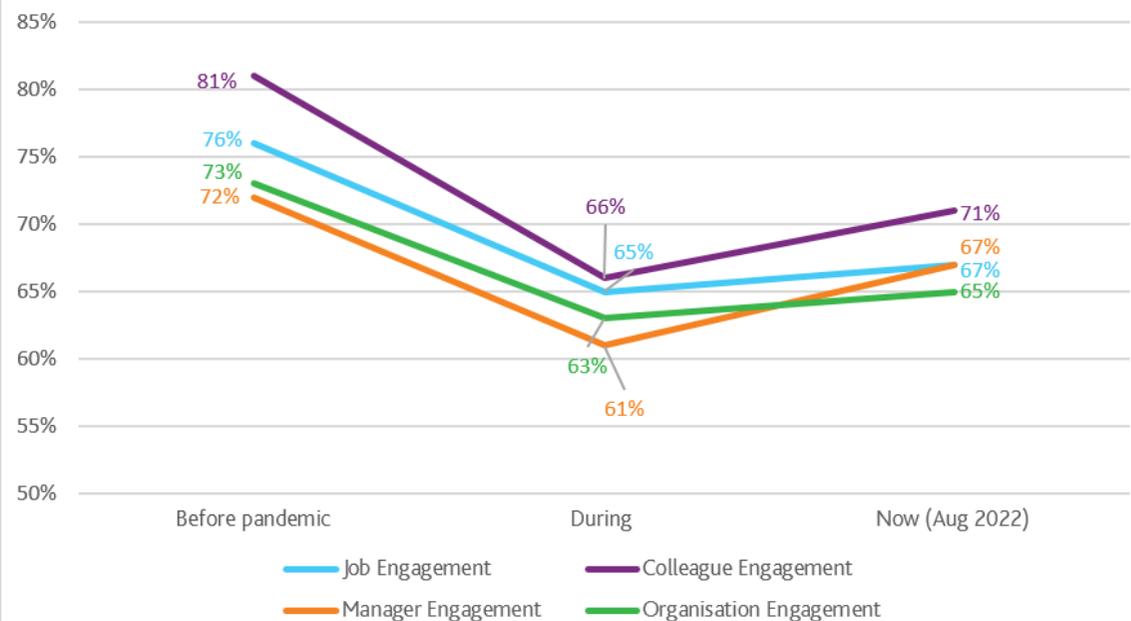
SECTION 3: IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT LEVELS



LARGE DROP IN ENGAGEMENT DURING THE PANDEMIC (-11%)
WITH PARTIAL RECOVERY, REGAINING A THIRD OF THE DROP (+3%)
ENGAGEMENT NOW RATED AS LOWER THAN BEFORE THE PANDEMIC (-8%)

- ▶ Findings highlight variations in the impact on engagement due to employer response.
- ▶ Variations were also seen across different groups, for example, essential/key workers saw smaller drops in job and colleague engagement. Variations were also seen depending on location of work and gender.
- ▶ Most significantly, respondents who had been on furlough saw a drop in engagement across job, colleague, manager, and organisational engagement. Engagement levels remain lower than respondents who were not placed on furlough.
- ▶ Significant variations were visible across bundles of employee involvement methods, learning and development opportunities, communication channels, and online health and wellbeing initiatives.

Fig 3.1. SUMMARY OF SELF-REPORTED LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT OVER THE LIFESPAN OF THE PANDEMIC





SECTION 4: HOW EMPLOYERS RESPONDED DURING THE PANDEMIC

EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT METHODS

- ▶ Examining employee involvement methods, individual meetings with their line manager via a virtual platform or virtual team meeting were the most common methods experienced by respondents.
- ▶ Respondents who experienced no employee involvement methods during the pandemic had a -16% drop in organisational engagement.
- ▶ Respondents who experienced 3 (or more) employee involvement methods had a -8% drop in organisational engagement.
- ▶ A similar impact was seen for engagement with manager.
- ▶ Engagement levels were impacted by the frequency of involvement methods, specifically, the frequency of meeting with their line manager.

FIG 4.2 EMPLOYEE INVOLVMENT METHODS EXPERIENCED BY RESPONDENTS DURING THE PANDEMIC

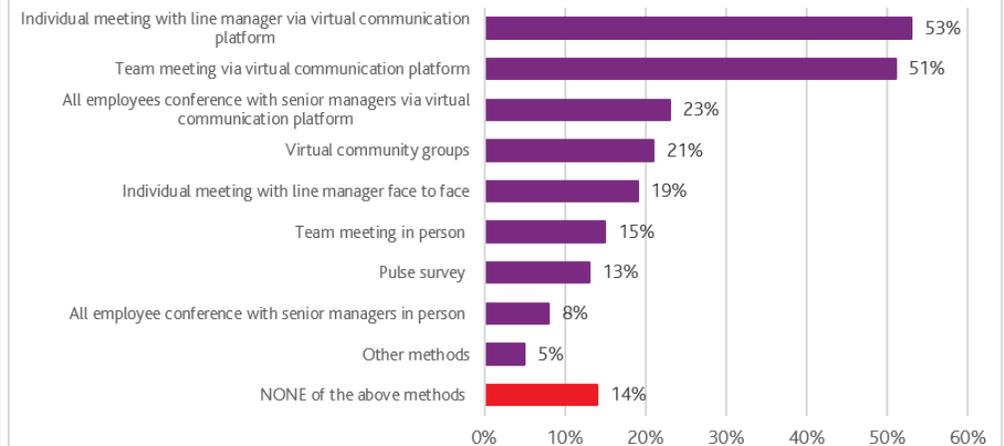
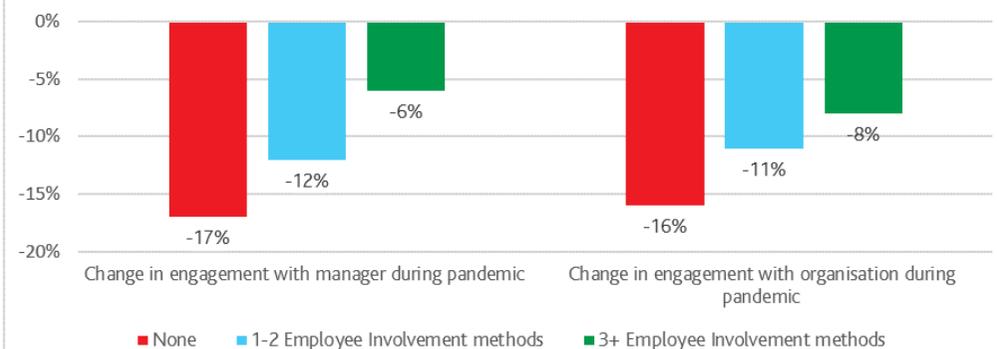


FIG. 4.5 CHANGES IN RATINGS OF ENGAGEMENT DURING PANDEMIC AND NUMBER OF EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT METHODS USED BY EMPLOYER



LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT METHODS

FIG 4.10 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT METHODS OFFERED BY EMPLOYER DURING PANDEMIC

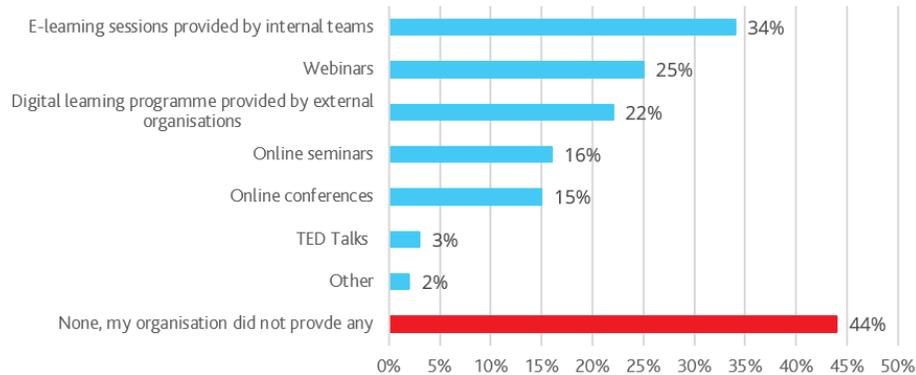
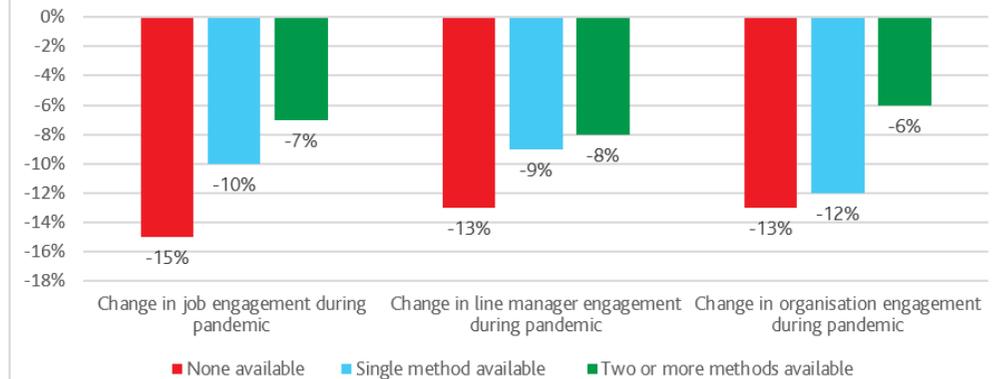


FIG 4.12 CHANGES IN ENGAGEMENT LEVELS AND NUMBER OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT METHODS OFFERED BY EMPLOYER DURING THE PANDEMIC



- ▶ Respondents were asked about the learning and development opportunities offered to them by their employer during the pandemic.
- ▶ 44% stated that their organisation did not provide any learning and development opportunities.
- ▶ Respondents offered opportunities, e-learning sessions by an internal team were the most common, followed by webinars and digital learning by external organisations.
- ▶ Respondents offered no learning and development opportunities had a -13% drop in engagement with the organisation.
- ▶ This contrasts with a -6% drop for respondents who were offered 2 (or more) opportunities.
- ▶ Similar patterns were seen for job engagement and engagement with the manager.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

- ▶ The most common communication channel during the pandemic was email.
- ▶ Respondents who experienced a single method of communication had a -14% drop in job engagement.
- ▶ When 3 (or more) communication channels were experienced, the drop in job engagement was -6%.
- ▶ The drop in organisational engagement was not statistically significant.

FIG 4.13 COMMUNICATION METHODS USED DURING THE PANDEMIC

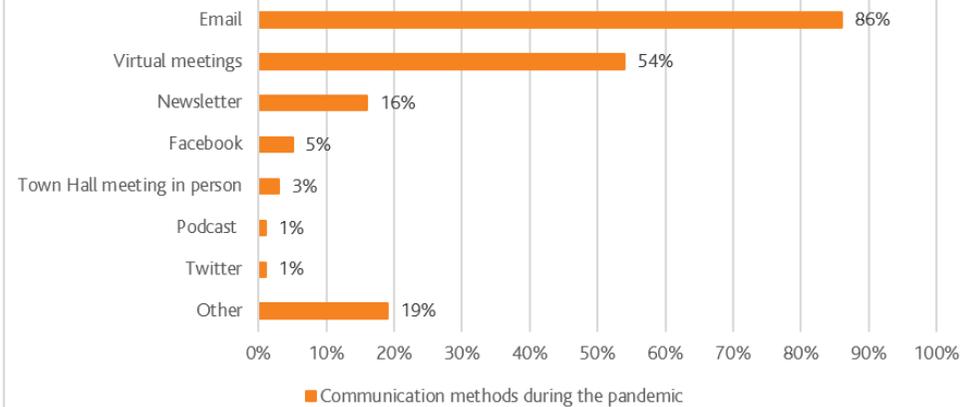
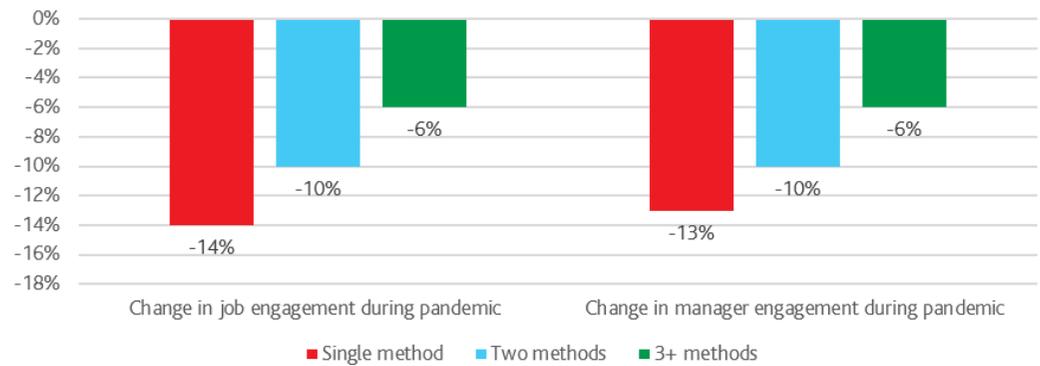
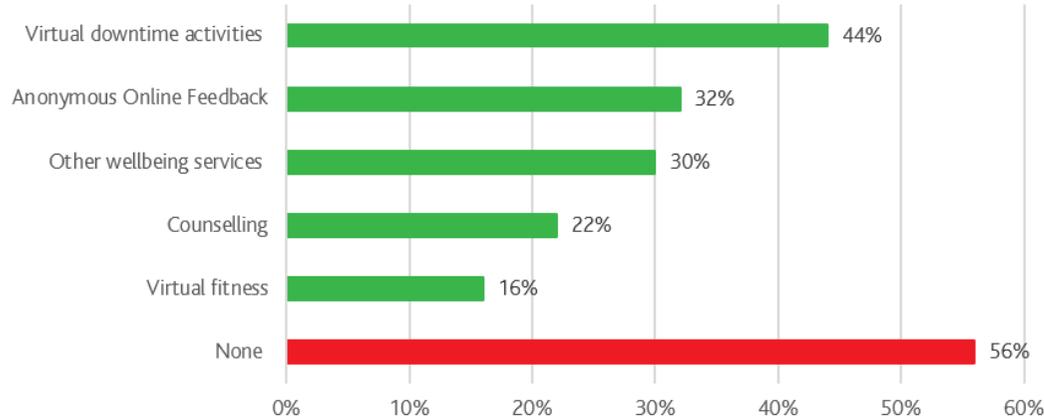


FIG 4.15 DIFFERENCE IN LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT DURING VS BEFORE PANDEMIC WITH THE NUMBER OF COMMUNICATION CHANNELS USED



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

FIG 4.16 ONLINE HEALTH AND WELLBEING INITIATIVES PROVIDED BY EMPLOYER TO RESPONDENTS DURING THE PANDEMIC



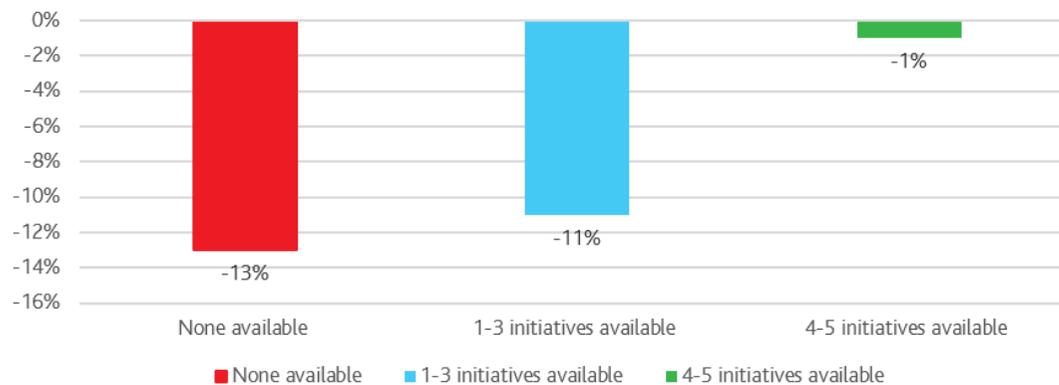
Online Health and Wellbeing initiatives were not provided during the pandemic for over half of respondents (56%).

Virtual downtime was the most common (44%).

Respondents who stated no online health and wellbeing initiatives were offered, had a drop of -13% in organisational engagement.

This dramatically compared to a -1% drop for respondents who were offered 4 (or more) online initiatives by their employer.

FIG 4.19 DROP IN ENGAGEMENT LEVELS WITH ORGANISATION AND NUMBER OF HEALTH AND WELLBENG INITIATIVES OFFERED BY EMPLOYER DURING PANDEMIC



SECTION 5: INFLUENCE EMPLOYER RESPONSE ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT



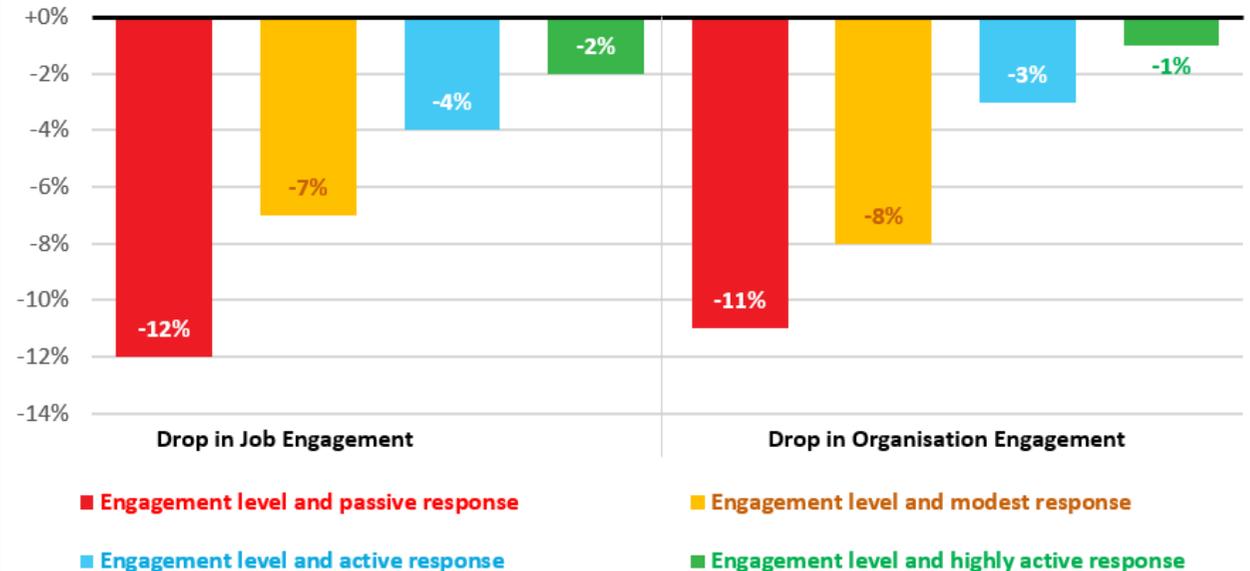
HIGHLY ACTIVE BUNDLES OF PRACTICES SHOWED SIGNIFICANTLY SMALLER DROPS IN ENGAGEMENT.

4 Highly Active Bundles:

- ▶ 3+ employee involvement methods
- ▶ 3+ communication channels
- ▶ 2+ learning and development opportunities
- ▶ 4-5 online health and well-being initiatives

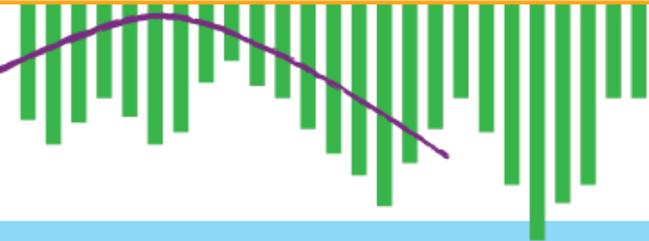
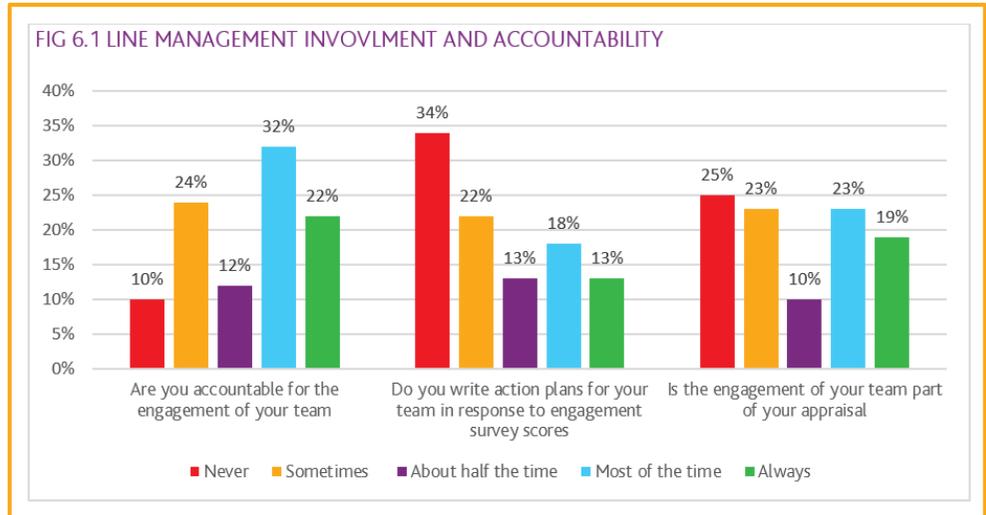
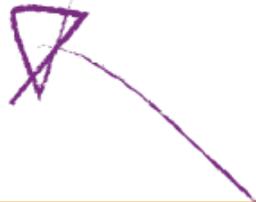
The engagement of respondents who experienced a highly active response from their employer (offering a wide range of methods and initiatives) were largely insulated from the drops during the pandemic.

FIG 5.4 NET CHANGE IN ENGAGEMENT LEVELS FROM BEFORE THE PANDEMIC TO NOW (August 2022) BY LEVEL OF RESPONSE OF THE EMPLOYER



SECTION 6: IMPACT OF THE LINE MANAGER

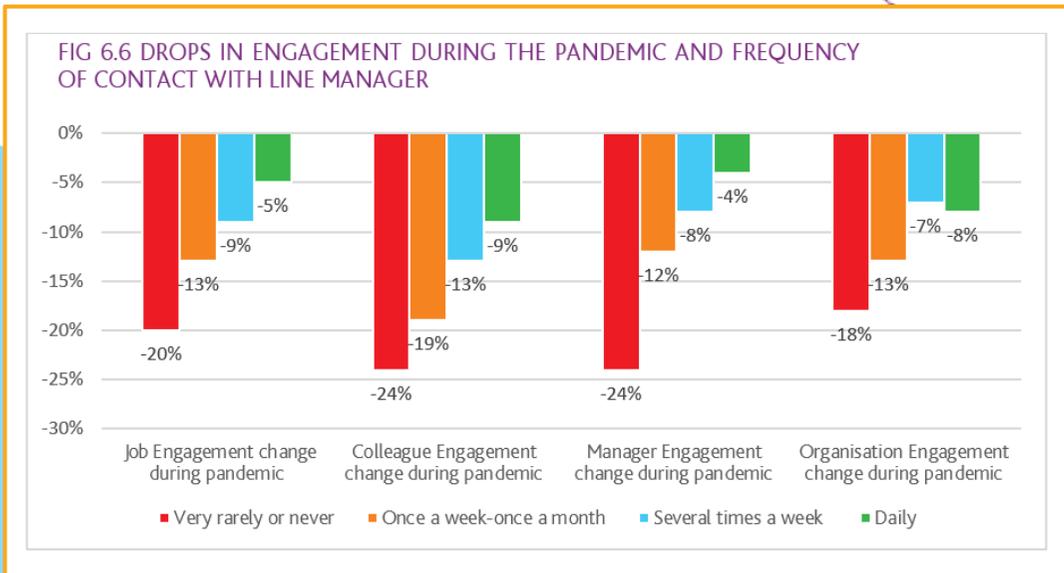
The frequency of contact with Line Managers had a significant impact on levels of engagement.



Involvement and accountability of engagement showed varied responses.

The majority of respondents with line management responsibility, do not write action plans in response to engagement survey scores.

Line Managers who had received training had a higher EEI score than managers who had not received training.



SECTION 7: PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

FIG 7.1. DO YOU THINK ENGAGING THE FULL CAPABILITIES AND POTENTIAL OF PEOPLE AT WORK IS GETTING MORE IMPORTANT?

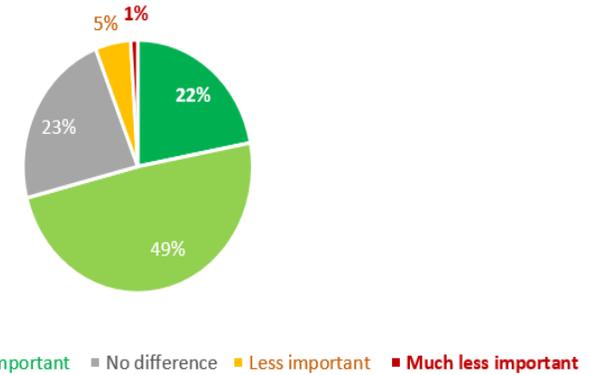
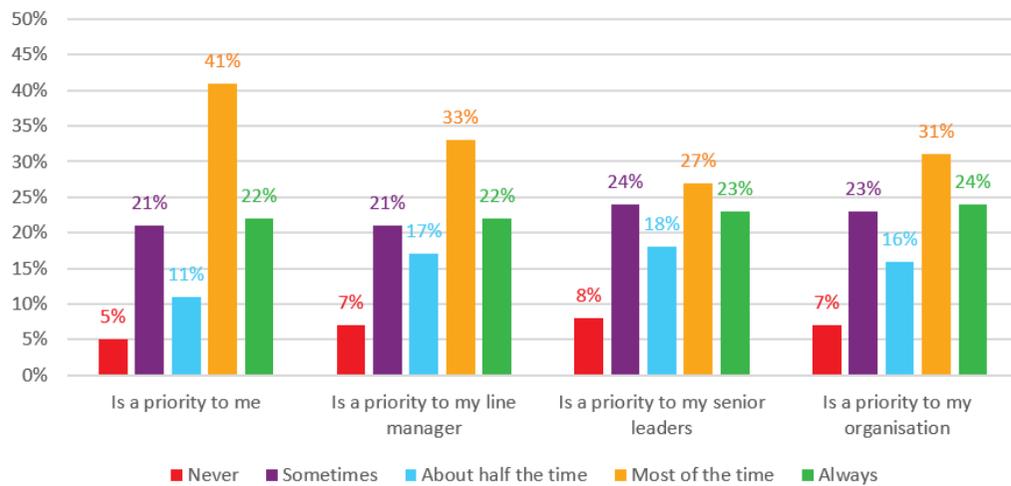


FIG 7.2 RESPONDENT PERCEPTIONS OF ENGAGEMENT AS A PRIORITY



2/3RD RESPONDENTS STATED ENGAGEMENT WAS GETTING MORE IMPORTANT

2/3RD RESPONDENTS STATED ENGAGEMENT WAS A PRIORITY TO THEM

LESS THAN HALF SAID IT WAS A PRIORITY TO THEIR SENIOR LEADERS



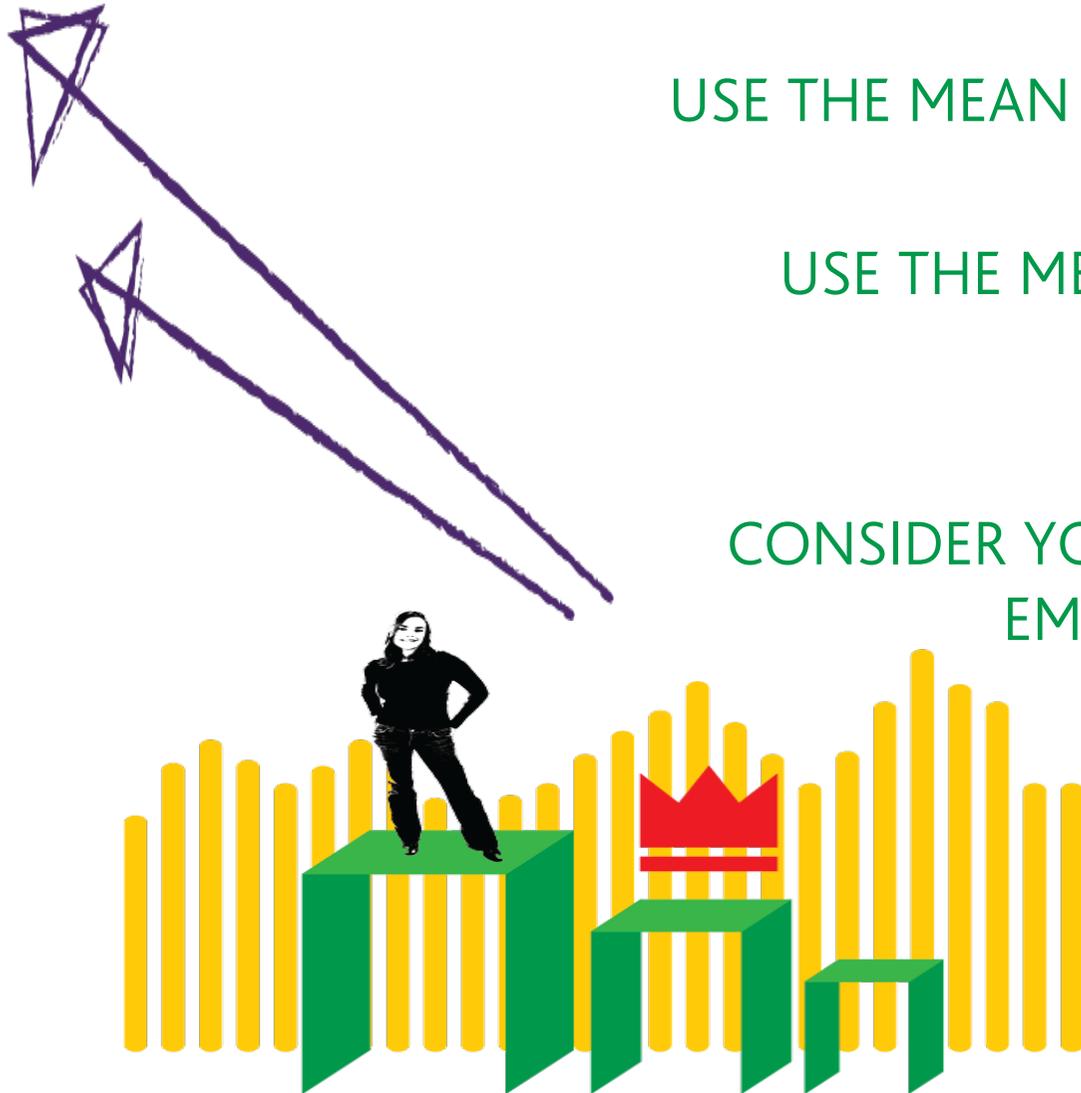
SECTION 8: REPORTING LEVELS

USE THE MEAN SCORE TO REFLECT EMPLOYEE
VOICE FAIRLY

USE THE MEAN AS A % TO MAKE IT MORE
INTUITIVE

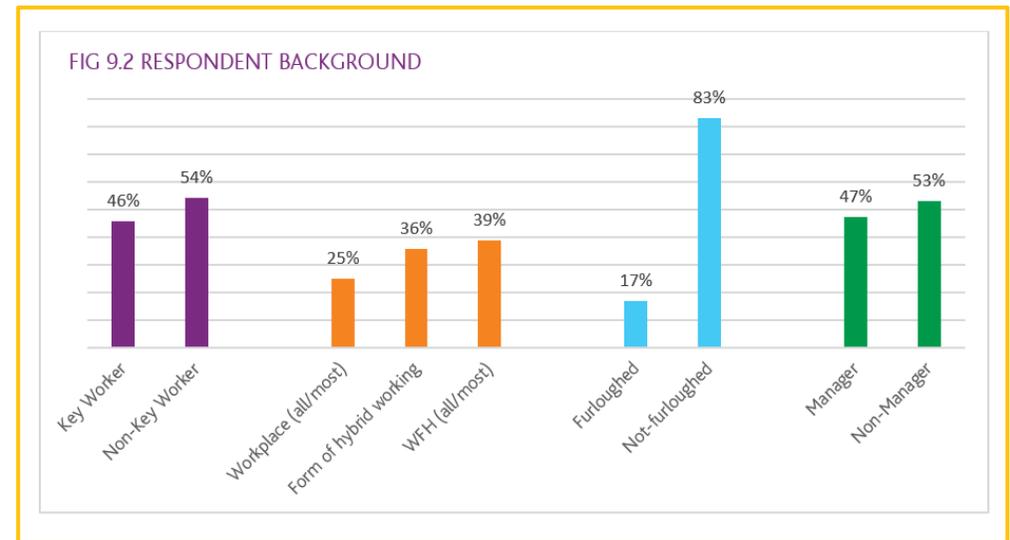
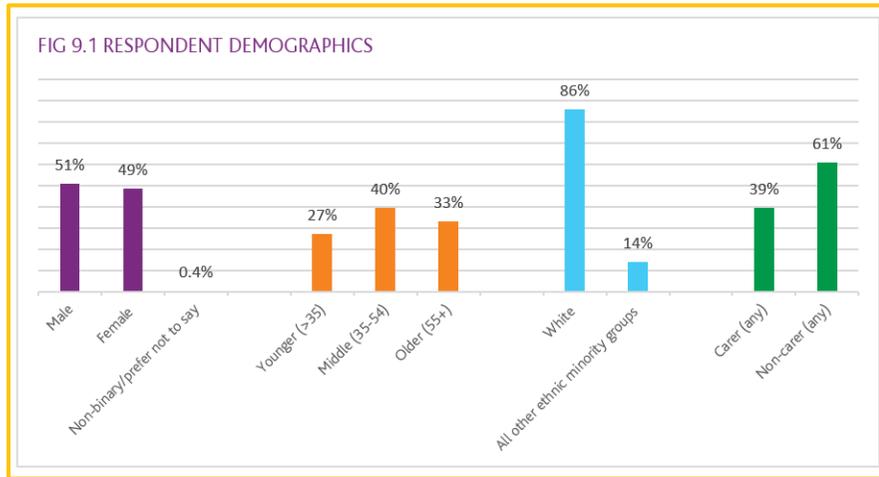
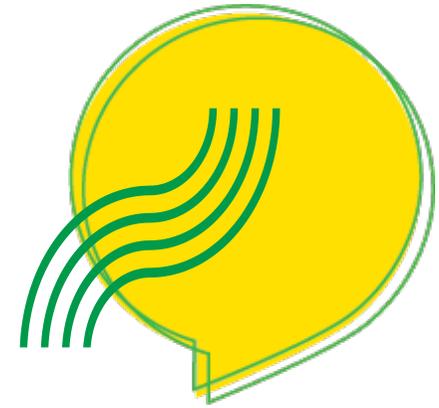
CONSIDER YOUR METHODS OF REPORTING
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SCORE.

NOT ALL METHODS GIVE A
TRUE REPRESENTATION OF
ALL VOICES



SECTION 9: SURVEY DESIGN

ABOUT THE SURVEY



Data was collected in August 2022 (responses = 814) and required respondents to reflect on their experiences.

The project was jointly funded by Nottingham Business School (NTU) and Engage for Success.



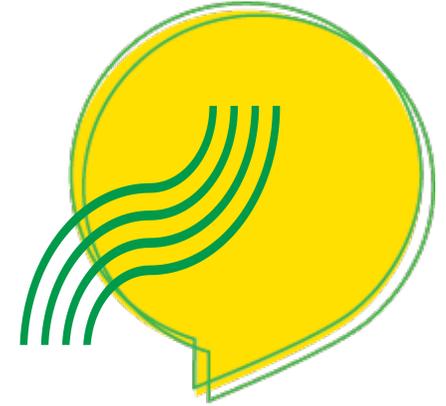
SECTION 10: SUMMARY

- ▶ This report presents findings from a representative sample of the UK population (weighted to working population = 814). The research examined engagement with the organisation, the job, with the line manager, and with colleagues. Respondents were asked to self-reflect on their engagement before, during, and now (August 2022).
- ▶ Findings show a clear picture, a significant decline in engagement levels occurred during the **pandemic with an average drop of -11%**.
- ▶ A major concern is the lack of rebound, with engagement since the pandemic only **creeping up 3%**. As a result, the average level of **employee engagement is 8% lower now** than it was before the pandemic.
- ▶ The data shows how the employer responded during the pandemic contributed to the degree of drop in employee engagement. Significant variations were visible across bundles of employee involvement methods, learning and development opportunities, communication channels, and online health and wellbeing initiatives.
- ▶ It is evident from the findings that employers who communicated, involved, developed, and supported their employees during the pandemic, found engagement levels were largely insulated from its impact.
- ▶ Looking collectively across all four bundles of methods (i.e., employee involvement methods, communication channels, learning and development opportunities, and online health and wellbeing initiatives), a **highly active employer** who provided a range of methods saw a minimal decline in engagement (3-5% drop) between pre and post pandemic figures. This contrasted sharply with **passive employers** who provided minimal or no methods (14-15% drop).
- ▶ The report established an Employee Engagement Index based on 3 questions focusing on organisational satisfaction, advocacy and loyalty.
- ▶ **The Engage for Success 2022 UK Employee Engagement Index was 62%**.
- ▶ A full copy of the report can be downloaded from the Engage for Success website at: <https://engageforsuccess.org/>

RESEARCH TEAM

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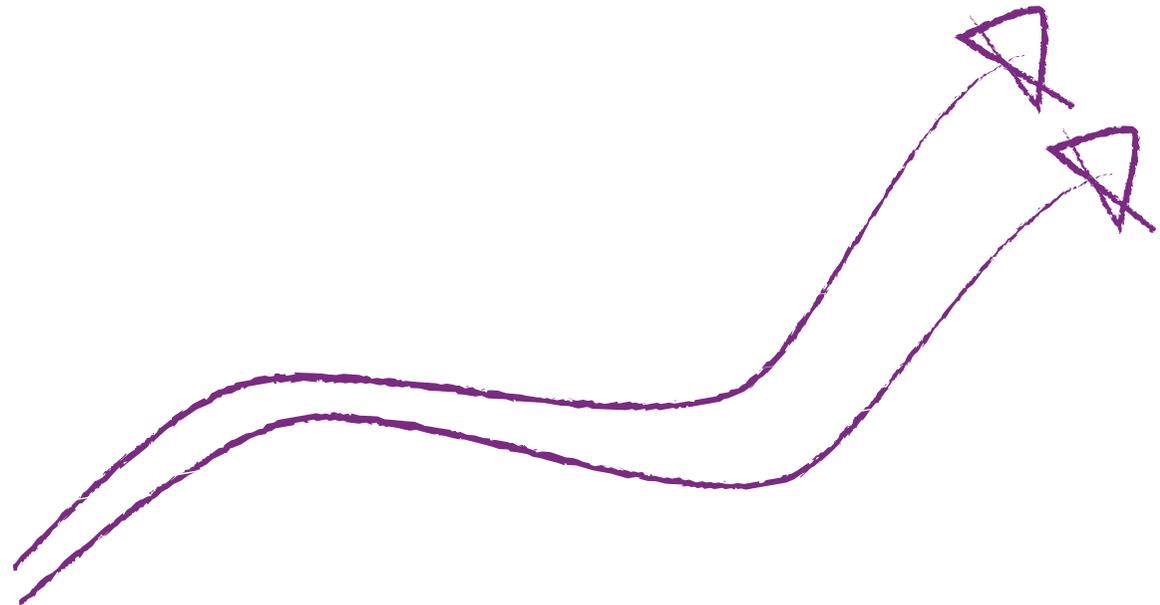
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