



HR Strategy Series: “Zoom Gloom” and Employee Engagement

Headline:

How is “Zoom Culture” impacting levels of Employee Engagement & Retention?

The Highlights:

- “According to Gallup, disengaged employees have 37% higher absenteeism, 18% lower productivity and 15% lower profitability. When that translates into dollars, you’re looking at the cost of 34% of a disengaged employee’s annual salary.”
 - “How much are disengaged employees costing you?...” Forbes, May 2019
- “It’s becoming clear that the future of work will be embracing an increase in work-from-anywhere and remote work scenarios, which presents a whole new set of challenges for teams & companies. We’re already seeing people suffering from “Zoom Gloom” and emotional fatigue from being physically and socially disconnected from their teammates.”
 - Brian Mohr, CEO, Anthym
- “Humans communicate even when they’re quiet. During conversation, your brain focuses partly on the words being spoken while deriving meaning from dozens of nonverbal cues, like whether someone is facing you or slightly turned away, if they’re fidgeting while you talk, or if they inhale quickly as they prepare to interrupt. These cues help paint a picture of what’s being conveyed and what’s expected in response...”

Since we’re social creatures, perceiving these cues comes naturally to most of us. They take little conscious effort to perceive and can lay the groundwork for emotional intimacy. However, a typical video call can impair your ability to recognize these cues and requires an intense attention to words instead. If you can view a person only from the shoulders up, the ability to see and interpret hand gestures or other body language is gone. If the video quality is poor, the hope of glean something from facial expressions is dashed. In short, it can be a brain drain for someone who’s dependent on nonverbal cues.”

- “Zoom Fatigue is Taxing the Brain. Here’s Why That Happens”, National Geographic, April 2020

The Takeaway:

- Work-from-Home and “Zoom Culture” is having a greater impact on employee engagement than we can understand and anticipate.
- How is your HR strategy accounting for this and what steps are you taking to help keep employees engaged and inspired? How are you retaining “connection” with customers and suppliers?

For further questions or assistance, please contact Clint Parry, MBA, SHRM-SCP at Focus HR – (520) 301-4327 or clint@focushr.net.