



PART OF OUR HR CONNECTED SERIES

The Emotionally Connected Business

Building the digital foundations for employee engagement in medium-large organisations

IRIS. Look forward



SECTION ONE

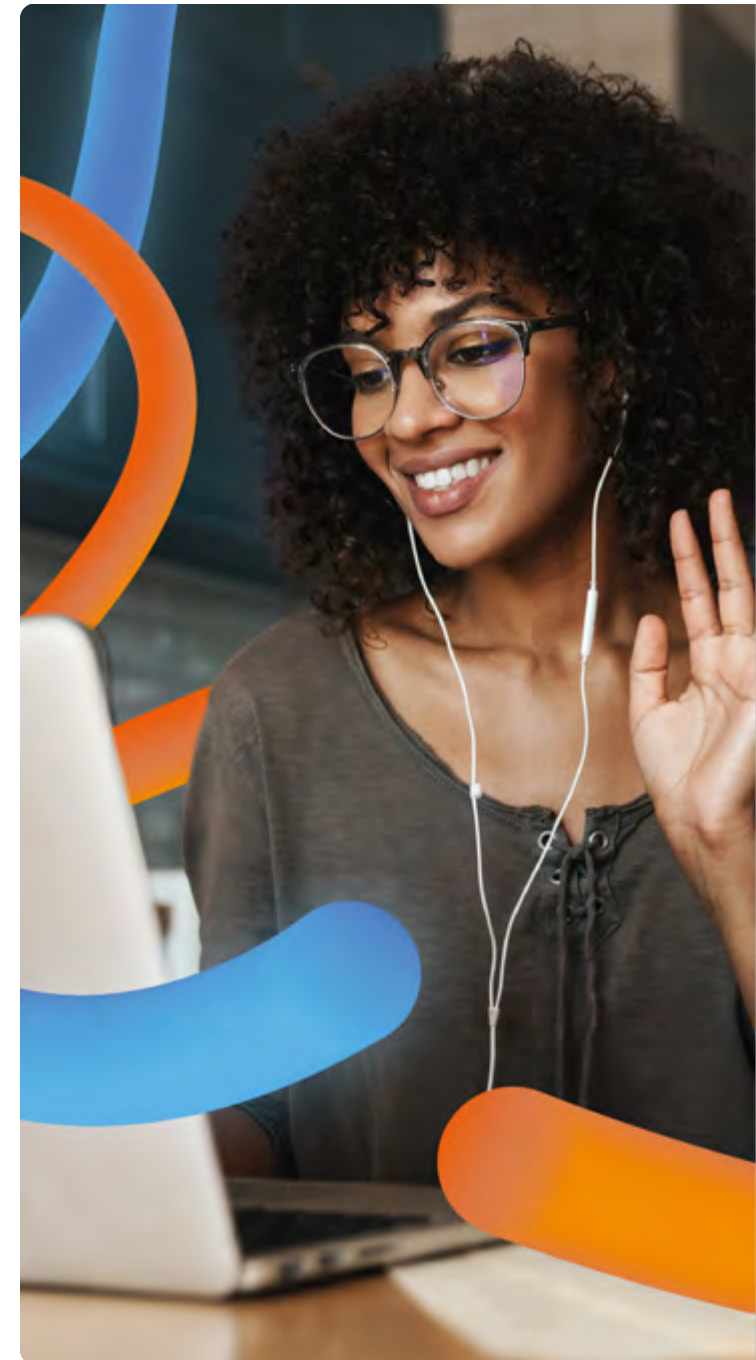
What is an emotionally connected business?

Every business wants an engaged workforce, right? We prize high scores on staff satisfaction surveys and great reviews on Glassdoor.

The problem is that for the past few decades, most organisations have settled for *transactional* engagement, using financial progression, such as pay rises or bonuses, to motivate employees to contribute to growth. A business deal that benefits both parties. And it used to work.

What works today, is *emotional* connection. Emotional connection encourages employees to align their growth with the company's growth, their goals with their company's goals. Emotionally connected employees go out of their way to drive your business, in good times or bad. And emotional connection brings with it all those other desirable things: loyalty, motivation, satisfaction, wellbeing, and work-life balance.

Achieving emotional connection in a large organisation is a high bar. You'll need your HR department to be at the top of their game – and tech-enabled. But once they are, they're perfectly positioned to take the lead and make yours an emotionally connected business.



How do you measure emotional connection?

It might sound woolly, but it's not.

Investment in emotional connection goes towards delivering on all the hard-nosed KPIs your CFO is looking for. Metrics like growth, productivity, efficiency, cost-savings, and staff retention all ladder directly back to emotional connection. And, importantly, the right digital solutions will also automatically bring guaranteed governance and data empowerment across the business. As a driver of emotional connection, HR can – finally – squarely position themselves as a contributor to revenue.

This eBook looks at why emotional connection is particularly urgent for businesses today, and how forward-looking HR leaders are driving and delivering it on behalf of stakeholders. We outline five 'disconnection danger zones' and look at how informed digital choices for HR and payroll can steer you towards emotional connection and rock-solid engagement.

How is your emotional connection today?

After the 18 months we've just been through, emotional connection might be difficult to gauge. Many employees have been working from home or on furlough. Without the right tools and processes, physical distance and new working patterns can create disconnection. Even businesses that have had a good year financially and are raising headcount can struggle to establish emotional connection with remote new hires. There's an opportunity for HR to make a real difference right now.



So read on if...

- You're an HR Manager or Director that wants to take the lead on staff engagement
- You're a CFO looking to drive value, reduce costs and streamline people processes
- You're a Payroll Manager or Administrator reviewing whether to invest in new payroll solutions

SECTION TWO

Emotional DIS-connection: 5 danger zones

Disconnection danger zone 1:

Remote onboarding & orientation

A good onboarding process helps new recruits feel valued and get to grips with their role as soon as possible. Not only is it essential to get them quickly set up with all the right equipment, apps and passwords, it's just as important to make them feel part of a human network. This means kickstarting connections with managers, colleagues or buddies – but crucially with HR and payroll too.

For new joiners, getting your personal and bank details put onto the HR system, for payroll, pension and benefits, is a reassuring touchpoint. It brings with it a sense of relief and belonging. For HR, it's an early opportunity to show competence and establish trust. When this part of the onboarding process is delayed, clunky or prone to errors, it can be worrying, distracting and time-consuming for everyone. Integrating HR & payroll software can automate data entry, speed up payroll and make errors a thing of the past.



Disconnection danger zone 2: Managing performance & development

Once new recruits are up and running, they're keen to impress. It's important at this point for line managers and department heads to have visibility of how people are performing, particularly with distributed/remote teams. Absence patterns, for example, can be an indicator of emotional disconnection, and the sooner they're spotted, the better the chance of preventing a productivity slide. An HR system that serves up simple dashboards to business stakeholders to readily highlight this kind of information enables timely, data-driven decisions.

It's equally important to recognise and reward employees' efforts, more regularly than scheduled appraisals. Giving public kudos (on your workplace social channels for example) is a powerful way to create emotional bonds, showcase good performance, and motivate people in other teams, no matter where they are. Good HR tools can show you exactly what's happening in your business and make it easy for you to celebrate good work.

Disconnection danger zone 3: Communicating change

One thing that can make or break emotional connection inside a business, is how you handle change. Both 'big picture' change – such as introducing a new hybrid working policy – as well as day-to-day changes, like requesting a holiday or giving HR your new address when you moved house. Businesses that handle change smoothly and transparently – giving staff some sense of control – will see engagement stay steady, or even grow.

Some HR software offers the option for employees to manage their own data with self-service portals. They can make holiday requests and update their personal details without you needing to step in at all. Giving people autonomy over their information makes them feel valued, trusted and gives them a sense of shared ownership. It also reduces the burden of admin that comes with small frequent change requests, freeing managers up to focus on what matters most – your people.



Disconnection danger zone 4: Handling employee data

You store a lot of personal information about your employees, some of it highly sensitive and protected by law, such as salary, racial/ethnic origin, religious beliefs, trade-union membership, health, mental health and so on. Keeping that data safe, secure and private is a huge responsibility. The financial and legal consequences of a data breach could be enormous, but it would certainly be game over for employee trust and emotional connection.

Staying compliant with workplace regulations such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) causes some businesses to rethink their approach; for example, adopting highly secure cloud-based systems. They enable you to store, maintain and update employee records easily and securely, and allow staff to see and update their own personal details while leaving you in control over who sees what.

Disconnection danger zone 5: Responding to questions

In HR, you're the one people come to with all the queries about their working life. Copies of payslips, tax codes, holiday requests, appraisals, benefits, policies, pensions, maternity cover, sickness, training, expenses and more. The busier you are handling these small but time-consuming admin tasks, the less time you have for your higher value HR mission. Use software to streamline basic HR processes and automate repetitive admin tasks. Optimising both your candidate and employee experience can deliver big competitive advantage.

If many of the queries that come to you relate to payroll, it might be time to consider integrating payroll with HR. A more seamless flow of data between the two processes can eliminate costly errors, reduce time-consuming troubleshooting queries and build the department's reputation for reliability, accuracy and efficiency. To harness the emotional connection in your business, get the tech to align the core processes, while you take care of your people.



SECTION THREE

Emotional connection builds business resilience

Technology isn't always the answer to business challenges of course. It's people that drive success, right? But increasingly, cloud-based HR software is giving businesses the flexible, customisable, forward-thinking solutions they need.

This is particularly true today, when you need to give employees secure and reliable access to workplace tools from remote locations, as well as keep them motivated and focused as you navigate uncharted waters and make sure your HR team is ready to meet evolving business needs.

From onboarding to offboarding, and everything in between, an effective HR & payroll solution can help you keep people anchored while moving ahead with technological transformation. Building their resilience, fuels yours.



SECTION FOUR

What next?

If you're trying to build a business case for investment in connected HR or payroll solutions, there are three pillars to consider: Emotional, Operational and Commercial. To complete the picture, download the other eBooks in this series:



The Operationally Connected Business – how cloud-based HR & payroll software boosts efficiency and productivity without disruption



The Commercially Connected Business – how investing in affordable HR & payroll software saves time and builds value



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