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 a blueprint for
better business

Introduction

At A Blueprint for Better Business we believe that business can help build a better society. Much of our work focuses on helping senior people in business change the way they think about the purpose of business and what motivates people.

There is a lot of evidence that people feel more fulfilled and engaged when they work for a company that has a purpose that inspires them. We have therefore used our '[Five Principles of a Purpose driven business](#)' and a '[Framework to guide decision making](#)' to pull together 10 simple and practical steps that anyone can take to help feel more engaged and motivated at work.

We hope that these steps are genuinely useful to you in finding fulfilment.

1. Realise your impact

We all create impact on the world around us – through our choices, the quality of our relationships and our behaviour. Realising this impact, and making efforts to increase the positive aspects, can help us all to feel more fulfilled.

Four ways to realise your impact at work

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- ### 1 Focus on relationships

Good relationships are the key to being happier and healthier.

Only 1 in 3 think building relationships at work is important.

Action: Set up two face to face conversations each week which are purely about getting to know someone better. Make a record of any changes noticed as a result, at one month intervals.
- ### 2 Discover more choices

Over a quarter are unsure whether their employer makes any effort to test decision making outside of the organisation.

Only 17% of the C-Suite would ask for advice from a colleague.

Action: When making a choice at work, take time to do some research or talk it through with a colleague – try to better understand the impacts that the choice might have.
- ### 3 Question accepted wisdom

Over half of us have been asked to do things at work which make us feel uncomfortable – yet the majority take it on regardless.

Fewer than one in five believe their company understands what motivates them at work.

Action: If you don't know why you're doing something in a particular way – challenge it. Work with colleagues to invent a better way of doing it. Record how you felt and the outcome of your conversations.
- ### 4 Lead by example

Only 23% of people are engaged at work.

Only 25% of professionals believe they are a role model for others.

Action: Work out how your project aligns to your own values and beliefs. Tell the rest of your team why you care about it and open up a conversation for them to do the same. See if there is a difference in performance.

Sources: Blueprint, 2017
Deloitte, 2015
Phillips & Thomas, 2015
Wallpaper, 2015

2. Uncover your purpose at work

Understanding your personal purpose in relation to your work can help you feel more fulfilled. This might be a love of learning new skills, the enjoyment you get from working with your colleagues, a passion for what your company does or something else entirely.

If you are feeling unfulfilled it may be that you need to think about what your personal purpose is and explore how you can realign that with what you are doing at work.

Some questions to ask yourself:

- How can my work develop me as a person?
- Can I do more to strengthen the relationships that I depend on at work?
- Am I worried about my financial security?
- How does what I do contribute to my employers' purpose, and how does this benefit wider society?
- What are my long-term career goals?

For more insight [download this worksheet](#)

3. Seek inspiration from new places



The things that you enjoy in your leisure time can contribute to your capacity to come up with new ideas, perspectives and flashes of inspiration and help to bring more of your personality to work.

For some examples of how you might find inspiration from the things you enjoy listen to [our podcast](#) – hosted by Russell Goldsmith



4. Be less anxious about giving feedback

Giving constructive feedback is not easy. Many of us feel ill-equipped to have these conversations and either duck the discussions we find difficult or feel we have not handled them well.

Vicky Grinnell-Wright, Blueprint's Head of Corporate Engagement, and Sarah Rozenhuler, a chartered psychologist and author of 'Life Changing Conversations', teamed up to offer some top tips about how to improve the process.

Top tips:

- Do your prep – anticipate feelings
- Be specific – use examples
- Keep it balanced – positive reinforcement as well as critical insight
- Acknowledge that people have feelings
- Don't blame or shame – make it a two-way conversation
- Make it actionable – identify practical steps

[Read the full article here](#)

5. Slow down to speed up

People are more fulfilled and businesses are more effective when action is deliberate and conscious.

Charles Wookey, CEO of A Blueprint for Better Business, [wrote a blog for HR Director](#) describing the experience of the Blueprint team in trying to 'Slow Down to Speed Up'.

Want to try the experiment yourself? See our top tips here →

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Slowing down to speed up

Our Top Tips

- Do it as a team**

Doing it together gave everyone the permission to think and act differently. No-one felt guilty about taking time to 'think' rather than 'do'. Helps to move past reservations about it being a waste of time.
- Get in control**

Being reflective at regular intervals is difficult if you're not fully in control of your day. If your job is quite reactive to others, try and find other ways to take control of your diary and time to fit in reflective practice.
- Make it your own**

Not everyone has lots of meetings to go to everyday. If you typically work alone, change this to suit your needs - spend 30 mins at the start of each day thinking and reflecting over a cup of coffee. Building in regular 'quiet time' is just as effective.
- Stretch yourself**

20 minutes to reflect after every meeting seems like far more time than you'd need. It's important to initially push out of your comfort zone: to commit to the experiment and think critically about how long is actually useful - creating a habit which might stick!

6. Make time for others

Giving yourself space and time to help the people you interact with at work - your colleagues, customers, suppliers - will not only help you build stronger trusted relationships, but it can make you feel happier and more fulfilled.

Failing to build strong relationships at work can lead to feelings of isolation and of being disconnected from both the work you are doing and the team in which you operate.

Only **34%** of people consider it important to build relationships at work to support colleagues

35% of us don't bother to build any kind of relationships with suppliers

22% only build relationships to ensure that we are treated well in return

Taken from our survey of 1000 professionals

[Read our article on seven ways to build trust with others](#)

7. Address uncomfortable situations

Our recent poll of 1000 professionals highlights some worrying common traits of business life, showing that we often find it hard to deal with situations which make us feel uncomfortable.

While there are of course huge differences in how employees experience these challenges, we would all benefit from being better supported to talk about difficult topics that may cause us unease, and feel empowered to call out decisions or behaviour that make us uncomfortable.

55% of people have witnessed or been asked to do things at work which make them feel uncomfortable

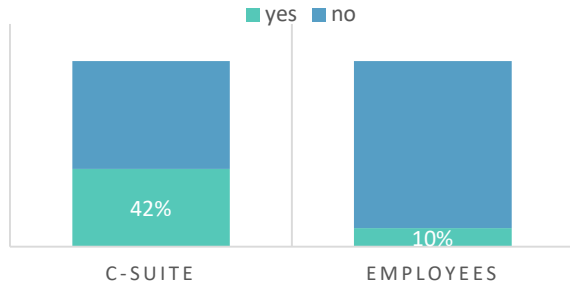
1 in 6 have changed jobs as a result

21% of middle managers have experienced behaviours that tempted them to change jobs but they kept it to themselves and stayed on

Taken from our survey of 1000 professionals

More from our survey of 1000 professionals

Only **42%** of the C-Suite and **10%** of employees believe that company decision making is aligned to purpose



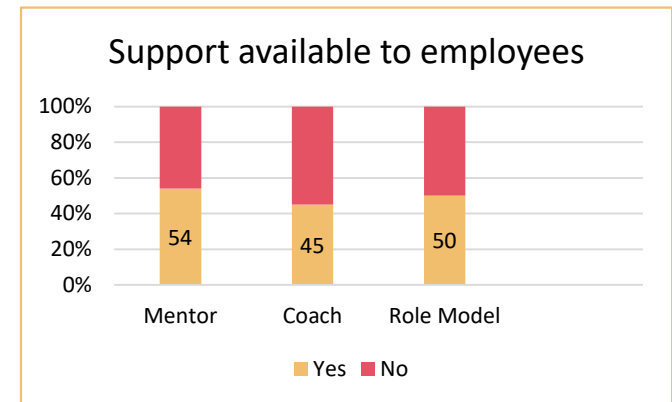
1 in 5 managers have considered **quitting their jobs** because they feel uncomfortable at work

Only **17%** feel their company understands what motivates them at work



Only **20%** believe financial incentives are motivating

Just **1 in 3** people think that building good relationships at work is important



50% do not have a role model at work

8. Stop managing, start supporting

Fulfilling management is about helping those around you to reach their potential.

We need to see people not as a ‘resource’, but as individuals with limitless potential. Giving people the freedom – and support, where necessary – to be involved in the decision-making process, even if they are not the most senior person on the team, and to have a voice in their work, will foster innovation and creativity, as well as a sense of shared responsibility.

But how can this be done in a practical way?

Improved management comes down to two things: listening and respect

Julia Rebholz, a Blueprint senior adviser, wrote an article on the subject called “Management is broken – here’s how we can fix it”

[Read the full article here](#)

9. Look for a new perspective

Informing our worldviews by actively seeking out different perspectives can open our eyes to new ways of doing things. Listening to people outside our 'bubble' can also help to build deeper relationships with colleagues, and cultivate a happier environment to work in.

[Watch our video about how to find a new perspective](#)



10. Bring your whole self to work

A recurring finding in employee surveys of large organisations is the number of disengaged people saying that they live a “divided life”.

A survey by Deloitte in 2015 reported that only 23% of employees felt engaged at work.

Earlier this year the Banking Standards Board stated that 13% of bankers said it was [difficult to progress in their career](#) without “flexing their ethical standards”.

This disconnect between people and their jobs represents a great loss of human and organisational potential.

Charles Wookey wrote a blog for HR Magazine about what it means to bring your whole self to work.

[Read the full article here](#)

If you are interested in understanding more about Blueprint or about how the thinking behind Blueprint can be applied to challenges at an organisational level, please get in touch - we would love to hear from you.

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