

workhuman*

Reduce Burnout and Turnover by Addressing Diverse Employees' Unique Needs

FINDINGS FROM A GALLUP-WORKHUMAN STUDY





There is a major difference between equality and equity, especially in the workplace.

Equality is providing all employees with the same level of support and resources, while **equity** is allocating these resources differently based on individuals' needs.

While at face value this may seem unfair, it is actually the most just and sustainable way to run your business. Let's dive into why.

No two employees are the same. Even employees in identical roles may have vastly different educational or training backgrounds, prior professional experiences, personal identities, and especially, responsibilities outside the workplace.

An employee caring for a young child or aging parent simply doesn't have the same mental bandwidth as a recent college graduate who's still living at home. Employees of different gender identities, sexual orientations, or ethnic backgrounds may experience microaggressions or discrimination in the workplace that can leave them feeling hurt and isolated.

Even just the commute to the office may involve multiple, inconvenient bus transfers for one employee and a quick car ride for another, meaning they arrive at the office with wildly different levels of energy.

As will quickly become apparent when you begin to tug at these threads, each employee in your organization needs different tools, flexibility, and levels of support to truly succeed and feel empowered.

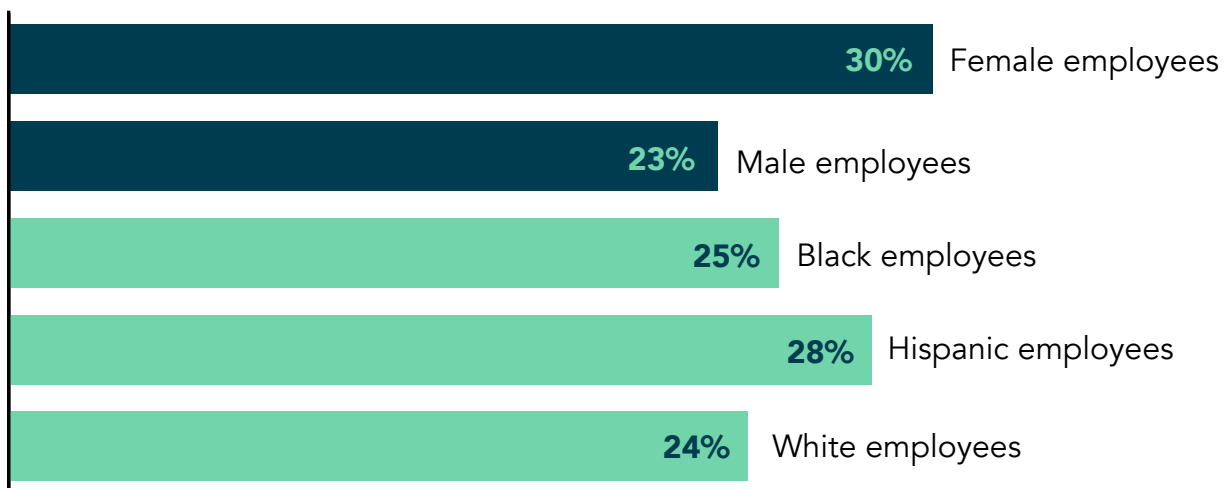
A one-size-fits-all managerial approach isn't inherently equitable, and may lead to faster rates of burnout, turnover, and eventually, a negative effect on your company's morale and profits. It's also a surefire way to send your diverse talent running for the hills.

Maintaining a diverse staff is a strong pathway to innovation and better business outcomes because of the unique perspectives these individuals provide. To protect the immeasurable value your employees bring to your organization, you should begin by observing how burnout affects various groups. That way, you can identify tailored solutions to empower your workforce, increasing retention at your company.

Understanding how burnout disproportionately affects your staff

Because no two employees are coming to work under the same conditions and their lives outside of work affect each of them differently, it makes sense that their level of burnout is also disproportionate. Not only does the way they're treated in the office factor in, their responsibilities at home play a role in these discrepancies. Gender, race, sexual orientation, disability status, and many other pillars of identity may also contribute to how an employee experiences burnout.

Percentage of employees burned out always or very often



According to [The Gallup Center on Black Voices](#), 29% of U.S. employees strongly agree that their organization is fair to all employees. Even more alarmingly, many employees don't feel safe or empowered enough to speak up when things are awry.

[34% of workers strongly agree](#) their employer would do what is right if they raised a concern about ethics or integrity at work.

This can create feelings of powerlessness and distrust between employees and leadership, disrupting or even destroying employees' feelings of belonging. Employees who lack that type of security have a harder time connecting to the organization or visualizing a future for themselves at their current companies. This keeps them feeling "othered" and disconnected from the company's mission, leading to higher rates of burnout and turnover.



How to protect your team from turnover

Reducing rates of burnout and turnover in your team goes far beyond monitoring your employees' workloads and hosting in-office parties. To really build a culture of inclusion and belonging for a diverse workforce, leaders need to look beyond surface-level solutions. Deepening manager-employee relationships, strengthening channels of communications, and making your employees feel seen and heard can all be achieved through a few simple tactics:

Learn from the best

Research what leaders in the employee experience space such as [Google](#), Salesforce, and Apple are doing to support their diverse workforces. Even if some of their solutions may be unrealistic or out of budget for your organization, these trailblazers may help inspire your own creative solutions.

Tune in

Encourage managers to really check in on their employees during weekly one-on-ones. Teach them best practices to keep a pulse on their direct reports' mental and physical health, lives outside the office, workloads, and any interpersonal issues or pain points within the office.

Accept feedback with grace

Despite your best efforts, not all solutions you implement will adequately meet your employees' unique and varied needs. If you receive feedback from your team that a solution is ineffective or counterproductive, it's very important that you listen and pivot your strategies.

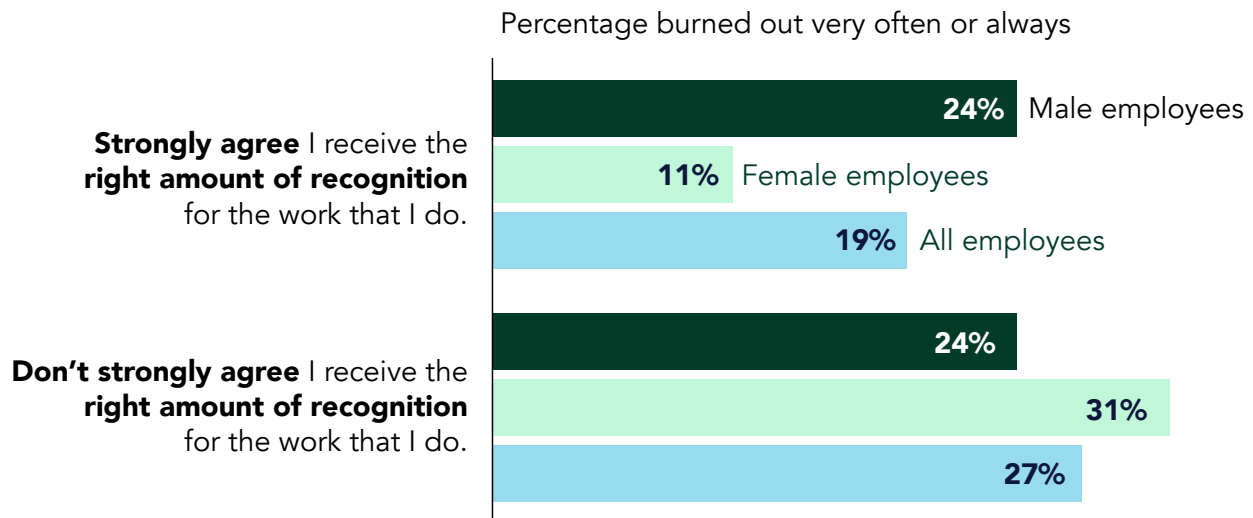
Encourage peer support networks

Employee resource groups (ERGs) and other peer support networks are powerful tools to help employees feel safe, seen, and heard at work. These groups give workers an opportunity to discuss identity-related issues in a safe space and find compassion, advice, and camaraderie.

Say “thank you”

As simple as it may sound, expressing gratitude in the form of frequent, personalized recognition has a myriad of positive psychological effects. In fact, workers who strongly agree that they get the right amount of recognition are 30% less likely to experience burnout than those who do not strongly agree, and the relationship is stronger for some groups.

Burnout levels and the right amount of recognition



Women in the workplace are far less likely to report feeling adequately recognized. Women are also more likely than men to report feelings of burnout due to a lack of appreciation in the workplace.

How to maintain a culture that can withstand change

Building a diverse team is one thing, but having the knowledge and tools to maintain a welcoming, inclusive culture is another. These tips will help your organization stand the test of time by keeping pace with an ever-evolving world:

Don't shy away from difficult conversations

Speaking about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) issues within the workplace may feel dangerous to some people. No one wants to misspeak, step on toes, or say something that might offend another person. However, shying away from these conversations often does more harm than good, as serious issues will continue to be swept under the rug. While some discussions require a lot of vulnerability on all sides, fostering a culture of trust can make communication easier over time.

Address current events head-on

We live in an active, chaotic, constantly changing world. Your employees' mental, emotional, and physical health may be deeply affected by things happening in their families, communities, or the world at large. By addressing current events and encouraging employees to voice their concerns within the workplace, you can help develop a stronger sense of safety.

Encourage your leaders to learn from your employees

The knowledge gained from corporate DEI trainings is not equivalent to employees' lived experiences and emotions. Leaders should be encouraged to set their egos aside when employees come to them with issues involving equity and inclusion in the workplace. There is always more to learn about others' identities, and there is always room for improvement in company policies and practices.



Celebrate employees for who they are, not just what they do

Remember, every employee is a unique human being with a rich inner world and a full life outside of the office. They each bring wildly different backgrounds, perspectives, and life experiences to that table. By recognizing and celebrating them for things outside the scope of their work, you illustrate that their worth is so much more than their output.

The positive correlation between recognition, equity, and inclusion is illustrated in the table below:

Percentage of employees recognized at least a few times a year for work performance or achievements, life events outside of work, personality and physical appearance

	Equitable	Somewhat equitable	Not equitable	Inclusive	Somewhat inclusive	Not inclusive
All U.S. employees	29%	45%	26%	36%	43%	21%
Right amount: strongly agree	73%	25%	2%	81%	18%	1%
Right amount: not strongly agree	9%	54%	37%	16%	54%	30%

Employees who receive the right amount of recognition are much more likely to perceive their workplace as equitable and inclusive. This shows the massive impact of a simple cultural shift toward gratitude.

Creating a buffer against burnout is an iterative process, but flexibility and willingness to learn are the keys to effectively maintaining a diverse workforce. As simplistic as it may seem, treating your employees like full human beings with rich, varied lives is the best way to increase job satisfaction, improve employee-manager relationships, and ultimately, decrease turnover.

Hiring a talented, diverse staff is only the beginning. Genuinely listening to employees' concerns, addressing their pain points, and providing frequent recognition are all integral steps to maintain a culture of inclusion and belonging.

Looking for a seamless, effective way to recognize your employees? Workhuman's [Social Recognition](#)[®] platform will help get your entire team engaged in a culture of appreciation.

For more insights on how to foster equity within your workplace and retain your top talent, check out the [full Gallup report](#).

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