WOW MANAGER PROGRAM

Building great first line managers for India!

WOW
MANAGER
PROGRAM
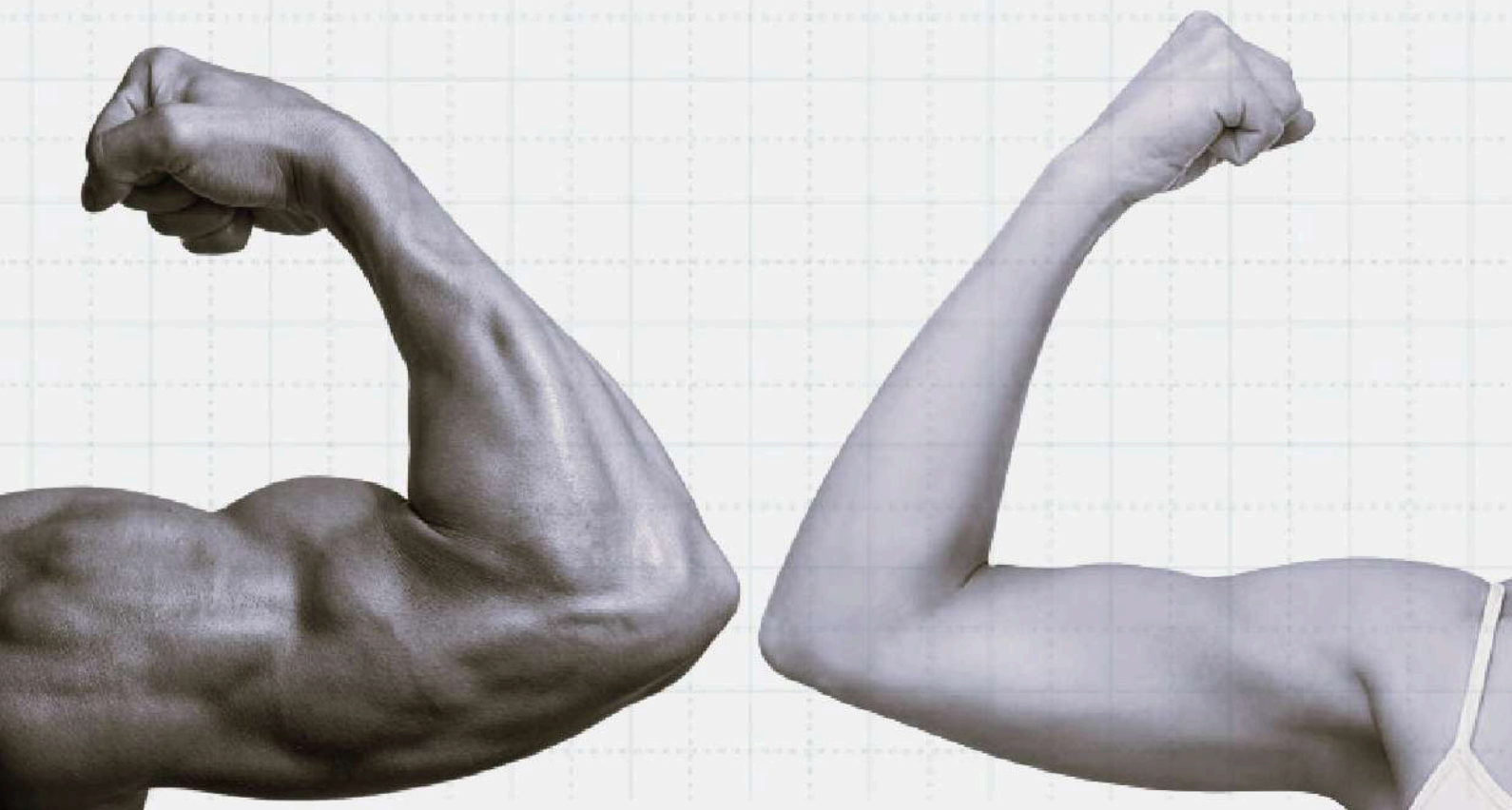
CONTENTS

Chapter 1.

Understanding what makes a Workplace of Winners

UNDERSTANDING WHAT MAKES A WORKPLACE OF WINNERS

WHAT IS A WORKPLACE OF WINNERS (WOW)?

A "Workplace of Winners (WoW)" is one where employees feel secure and motivated to drive a culture of high performance, as well as feel a sense of pride and belongingness towards the organization.

At a Workplace of Winners, employees are empowered and nurtured to bring their authentic selves into work and sustain their Day 1 enthusiasm throughout *(creating the winning worker through a sense of belongingness)*. WoW creates a holistic and transparent bridge between the winning worker and their responsibilities towards the organization *(winning work by enabling sustained high performance and meaningful performance outcomes)*.

Figure 1. Creating winning work by enabling the conditions for sustained performance and nurturing a winning worker through a sense of belongingness is the recipe for a Workplace of Winners

Simply put, a Workplace of Winners is a product of the two components - **winning work** and **winning workers**. The workplace environment that creates the conditions for these winning components are marked by two crucial enablers, namely a culture of high **Performance** and a sense of **Belongingness**.
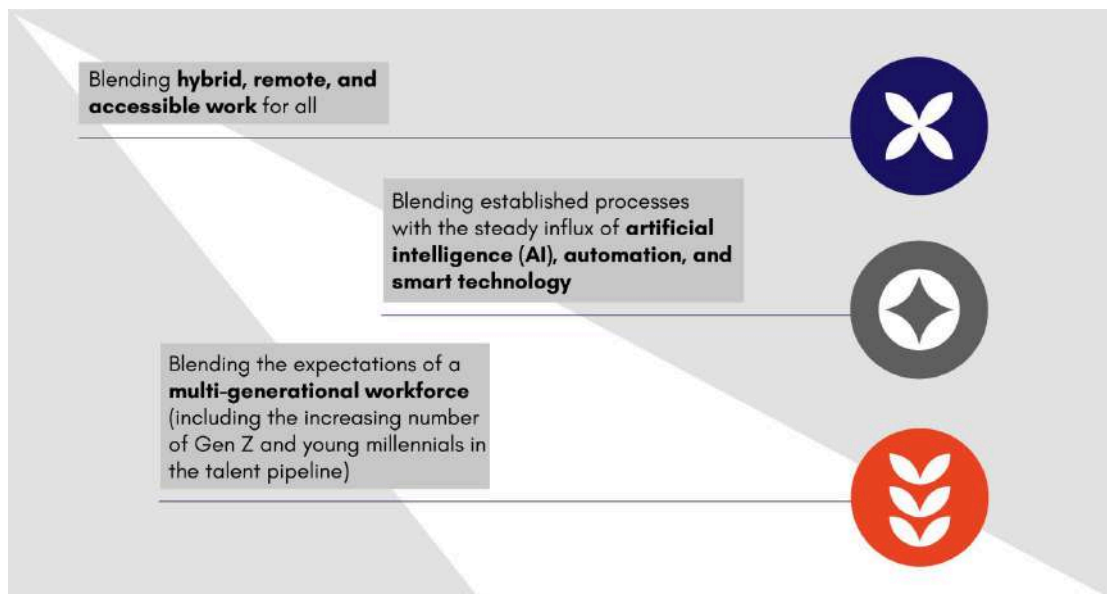
With a culmination of these two enablers, their underlying factors, and drivers, the WoW philosophy will steadily become the holy grail for organizations who are looking to stand strong against the hyper-competitive, volatile, and disruptive world of modern work.

WHY WoW, WHY NOW? INDIA'S WoW STORY

The modern world of work is evolving rapidly, and so are the expectations of a modern workplace. Organizations must now accommodate a wide array of factors to sustain themselves as an engaging workplace for the talent pool. These include but are not limited to:

Blending **hybrid, remote, and accessible work** for all

Blending established processes with the steady influx of **artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and smart technology**

Blending the expectations of a **multi-generational workforce** (including the increasing number of Gen Z and young millennials in the talent pipeline)

These expectations have become a dipstick for organizations to create an engaged and committed workforce. Hence, the WoW philosophy ensures that workplaces are not just restricted to mere metrics of productivity and job satisfaction, but also forms the foundation for sustained high performance at work and a sense of unwavering belongingness towards the organization.

With over 600 million people under 25, India is the world's youngest major nation poised for a massive workplace revolution. This transformation is fueled by rapid technology adoption and a new generation of workers whose aspirations stem from the country's rich cultural heritage.

Central to this shift is the "Workplace of Winners" (WoW) philosophy, which harnesses technological disruption while addressing timeless human needs for sustained performance and a sense of belonging.

For India's aspirational youth, just financial advancement is no longer enough - there is an innate urge to look for work that is challenging and fast-tracks their career growth. From a psychological perspective, employees seek challenging work as it aligns with the principles of self-determination theory (SDT), which posits that humans have inherent growth tendencies and psychological needs, such as need for autonomy in their job role, learning opportunities for skill development, collaborative relationships with team members, and so on.

Challenging work satisfies the need for competence by allowing individuals to develop and demonstrate their skills and abilities, leading to greater intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Furthermore, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's concept of flow describes a state of optimal experience where individuals are fully immersed and engaged in tasks that are suitably challenging. When the difficulty of a task matches the individual's skill level, it results in a deep sense of enjoyment and fulfillment, promoting high levels of engagement and productivity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Empirical evidence supports that employees experiencing flow at work report higher job satisfaction and performance (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). Therefore, offering challenging work not only enhances employees' psychological well-being but also boosts organizational outcomes.

In the Indian social context, employees' desire for challenging work is deeply rooted in cultural and economic dynamics that prioritize growth and achievement. The competitive educational system in India, where students are encouraged to excel academically and participate in rigorous entrance examinations for prestigious institutions, fosters a mindset that values overcoming challenges and achieving peak success through sustained performance (Kumar, 2013).

This cultural emphasis on hard work and perseverance translates into the workplace, where employees seek challenging roles that provide opportunities for personal and professional development. Moreover, in a rapidly growing economy, Indian employees recognize that engaging in challenging work can lead to career advancement and financial stability, which are highly valued in a society where social mobility is often tied to educational and professional success (Saxena, 2021).

Our research shows that Indian employees are motivated by tasks that are intellectually stimulating and offer opportunities for skill enhancement, which in turn leads to higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This desire for challenging work aligns with the broader socio-economic goals of personal development and upward mobility prevalent in Indian society.

Gen Z and millennial Indians want inclusive workplaces that build community, identity, and support social causes. Social media has amplified their demand for equity, fairness, and transparency pushing organizations to adopt an authentic and values-driven culture. In a nutshell, Gen Z and millennials thrive in workplaces that foster a strong sense of belonging, where they feel valued and connected.

This feeling of belongingness underpins the need for renewed perspectives on engagement across India's multi-generational, diverse, and geographically dispersed corporate ecosystem. It is becoming imperative for organizations to incorporate these principles and Jombay's WoW philosophy does justice to it. Trailblazers across the Indian corporate landscape are steadily showcasing the WoW philosophy. On the AI frontier too, Indian IT titans are prioritizing upskilling their global workforce through AI academies delivering personalized future-skills curricula. Such efforts nurture trust and belongingness among employees witnessing investments in their holistic development.

India's increasing focus on mentorship and service leadership creates fertile ground for nurturing authentic, empathetic, and purpose-driven management transcending conventional metrics of success. From Azim Premji's lifetime commitment to philanthropy to Nandan Nilekani's societal platform approach, India has a legacy of business leaders going beyond profits.

A new generation of Indian business leaders has the opportunity to reimagine their organizations as bastions of talent. Driven by sustained performance and nurtured through the sense of belongingness, diverse talent unified by inspiring visions can propel world-class innovation and economic progress.

The WoW philosophy carries immense significance as India emerges as a global talent powerhouse equipping the world's workforce for the AI age. By combining the cultivation of ethical technological skills within a culture focused on performance and belongingness, India's talent pipeline can position itself as a custodian of growth and progress. Initiatives like Microsoft's AI start-up engagement programs foster inclusive peer communities. These exemplify imbibing the WoW philosophy into India's technology talent engine.

As India progresses towards its goal of a $5 trillion economy and unlocking its vast technological potential, the WoW philosophy offers a potent approach that blends technological dynamism with fundamental human truths. This powerful synergy enables Indian industry, talent, and society to emerge as a driving force providing solutions to humanity's greatest challenges.

> There was a clear need for a new approach to create a Workplace of Winners, which is defined by an engaged workforce marked by sustained high performance and a strong sense of belongingness. Jombay has reimagined this landscape by developing a Workplace of Winners (WoW) model. This model caters to the multi-generational, purpose-driven workforce and equips managers ("WoW Managers") to cultivate this winning workplace culture.

Chapter 2.

Why WoW Managers are the makers of a Workplace of Winners

CHAPTER 2

WHY WoW MANAGERS ARE THE MAKERS OF A WORKPLACE OF WINNERS

Managers are like the captains of a ship. Just as a ship may be well-built and equipped, it requires a skilled captain to navigate it through rough waters, steer it towards its destination, and ensure smooth sailing for the crew. Similarly, managers oversee the direction and operations of a team or organization, guiding their members towards goals, resolving challenges, and maintaining the overall efficiency and morale of the team.

Likewise, in every organization, managers play a pivotal role in shaping and driving two crucial factors for driving employee engagement: a culture of High Performance and a Sense of Belongingness.

Research from India supports the significant impact that effective management can have on these factors. In the Indian context, the implementation of High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) has been shown to positively impact organizational performance by enhancing employee engagement. A study highlighted that HPWS, which includes practices like selective hiring, extensive training, and performance-based rewards, leads to improved employee attitudes and behaviors, thereby boosting overall performance (Singh, 2019). A culture of high Performance is fostered when managers set clear goals, provide regular feedback, empower their team members and demonstrate genuine care for their team members' well-being. This creates a culture of excellence and motivates employees to excel in their roles.

A sense of Belongingness among employees is critical for their engagement. Research indicates that employees who feel a strong sense of belonging are less likely to take sick days and are more productive (Qualtrics, 2023). Furthermore, employees who feel a strong sense of belonging are more likely to exhibit higher levels of commitment to their organization. This commitment is characterized by an emotional attachment to the organization, a sense of loyalty, and a willingness to go above and beyond in their roles (Joseph, 2023). A sense of Belongingness is cultivated when managers create a sense of pride and connect with their team members.

When managers foster a strong sense of pride in their team members, employees feel valued and develop a deep emotional attachment to their work and the organization. This pride stems from the recognition of their contributions and the belief that their work has a meaningful impact. Furthermore, managers who actively cultivate a sense of connection among team members create an environment where employees feel supported, trusted, and part of a cohesive unit.

Thus, we can see at the heart of cultivating a **"Workplace of Winners"** lies the role of the **WoW Manager**. WoW Managers are those who foster a high performance culture and the sense of belongingness in the fabric of the workplace and their teams. Through their words and actions, WoW Managers inspire teams to bring their full selves to work while channeling collective energy towards outcomes transcending conventional success metrics.

A WoW Manager is first and foremost a key ambassador of the organization's purpose - the higher reason for its existence beyond profits. They form the bridge between the organization's vision and how departmental objectives carry out this overarching vision. However, cascading the big picture in order to propel performance is just one facet of the WoW Manager's responsibility. They challenge the rigid status quo in the organization, and instead cultivate a psychologically safe environment of mutual trust and respect - which allows a sense of belongingness to blossom. WoW Managers solicit ideas from all levels, embrace failures as growth opportunities, and lead by making themselves vulnerable first.

Laxman Narasimhan, the CEO of Starbucks, walks the talk by openly discussing his failures, self-doubts and life lessons from humble beginnings. Under his leadership, Reckitt has created crowdsourcing platforms for employees to co-create strategy and voice previously unheard perspectives. This human-centric mindset nurtures belongingness, enabling the workforce to tackle existential challenges like improving global health.

At their core, WoW Managers practice "whole employee" engagement, designing personalized development journeys accounting for each team member's unique motivations, strengths and circumstances. Ultimately, the WoW Manager inspires discretionary effort - that intangible energy humans contribute beyond transactional work when they feel genuinely invested.

They unlock this by recognizing a fundamental truth - people don't just join organizations, they join inspiring visions embodied by authentic and empathetic leaders committed to growth.

As Lynn Root, former VP of Operations at Netflix, says: "If you focus on leading people rather than managing tasks, you'll be amazed by their dedication and drive to succeed in service of a larger purpose." In an era of relentless change, the WoW Manager's cultivation of a high performance culture with a sense of belongingness equips organizations to consistently unleash human potential.

In summary, WoW Managers are the primary builders of the workplace culture and the key custodians of employee engagement. They form the backbone of the bridge between the leadership and the frontline workers, channeling down objectives, and channeling up concerns.

Jombay's WoW philosophy hinges on building WoW Managers, who can be empowered to build winning workers, winning work, and ultimately, the Winning Workplace.

Based on these observations, Jombay's WoW philosophy aims to build WoW Managers - India's strongest first line and tenured managers who will propel into action all the drivers of a Workplace of Winners. Jombay's WoW Model is aimed at developing today's modern managers who are essential in building an engaged, committed, and purposeful workforce by enabling the culture of a Winning Workplace.
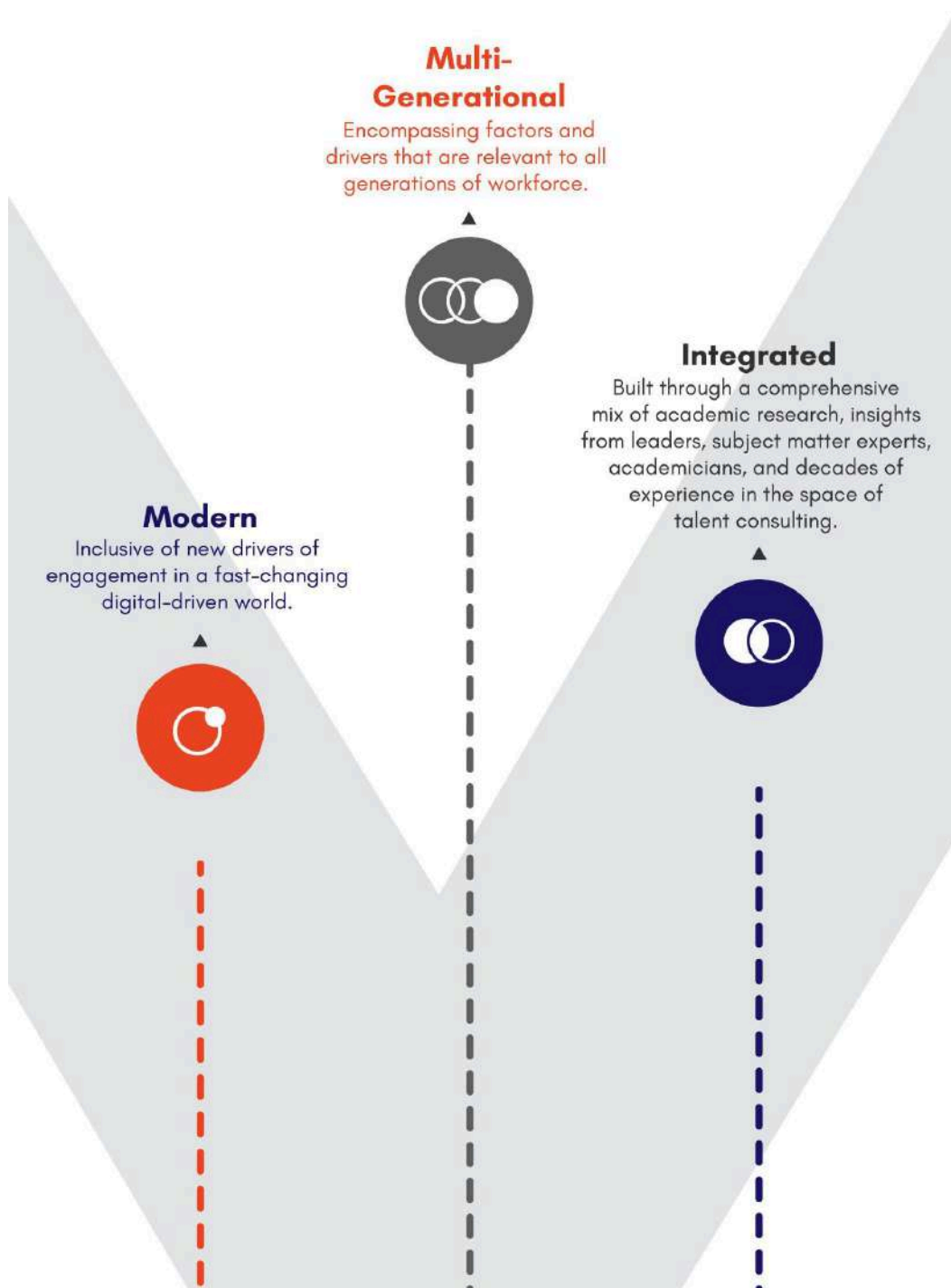
Chapter 3.

The WoW Model

CHAPTER 3
THE WoW MODEL

The WoW Model offers a structured approach for managers to elevate the workplace by focusing on three salient features that distinguish it from traditional models. Jombay's WoW Model is:

Multi-Generational
Encompassing factors and drivers that are relevant to all generations of workforce.

Integrated
Built through a comprehensive mix of academic research, insights from leaders, subject matter experts, academicians, and decades of experience in the space of talent consulting.

Modern
Inclusive of new drivers of engagement in a fast-changing digital-driven world.

A 3-tier Model

The WoW Model is a three-tier model which presents a structured approach for managers to cultivate a Workplace of Winners. It consists of Enablers, Factors, and their Drivers that contribute to making every organization a Workplace of Winners.

▶ Tier 1: WoW Enablers

At the first tier, the enablers encompass key thematic areas and specific workplace conditions that enable WoW managers to build a Workplace of Winners.

Performance
Encapsulates empowerment, efficacy, and well-being rather than mere productivity metrics.

Belongingness
Moves beyond simple job satisfaction to incorporate a sense of pride and connection within the organization.

A high
PERFORMANCE
culture

A sense of
BELONGINGNESS

▶ Tier 2: WoW Factors

The second tier breaks down the key factors that contribute to each of the main enablers. This allows us to understand the different elements that are essential to each of the enablers. The 'factors' under each enabler are specific areas that require managers to focus on, to foster a winning workplace culture. There are 5 main factors in this model, divided across the enablers. The five factors are:

EMPOWERMENT

PRIDE

EFFICACY

PERFORMANCE

WOW MODEL

BELONGINGNESS

CONNECTION

WELL-BEING
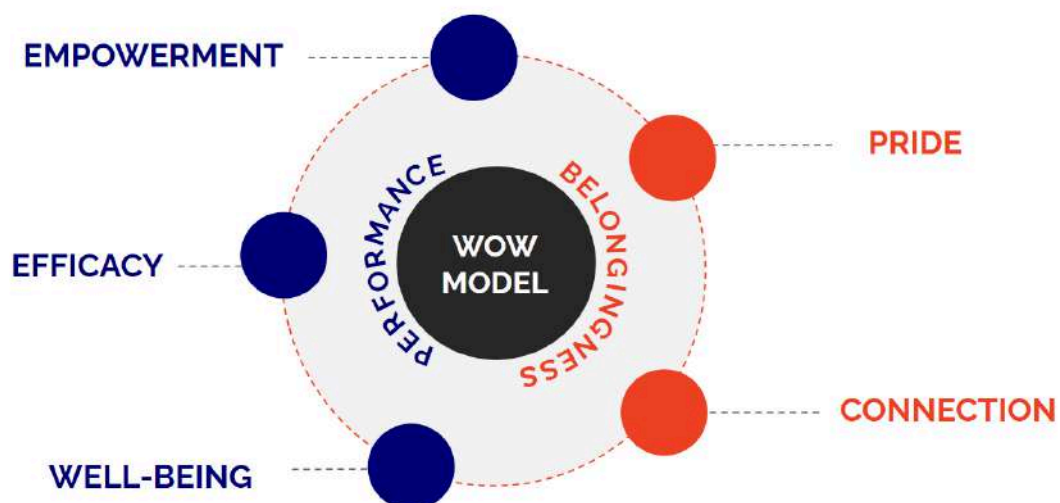
Empowerment

Empowerment refers to how well the organization equips individuals with the authority, resources, and acknowledgement to excel and grow at work.

Empowerment means giving employees the authority and freedom to make decisions. It is when employees feel trusted to shape their work and use their creativity to solve problems. An empowered employee is a proactive one, someone who takes initiative and drives results. This results in a sense of ownership over their work, which is a powerful motivator; because when people feel in control, and feel intrinsically tied to the outcome of their endeavors, productivity thrives.

Efficacy

Efficacy refers to how well an organization can reach its goals by meeting strategic objectives, guiding employees effectively, and using technology smartly to improve operations and customer satisfaction.

Efficacy measures an organization's ability to achieve its intended results or outcomes effectively, often achieved through the realization of strategic objectives, the management's success in guiding its workforce, and the intelligent use of technological resources to enhance operational performance and customer experience.

Well-being

Well-being refers to how well the organization fosters a sense of comfort and security within the organizational culture, enabling individuals to balance the work and personal life, express their needs, challenge the status quo and innovate, and work without hesitation or fear of prejudice.

Well-being is critical in a workplace ecosystem. A company that prioritizes the health and happiness of its employees is one that understands the importance of balance.

When employees are emotionally, mentally, and physically cared for, they're more engaged and prepared to give their best. In valuing well-being, companies invest not only in the productivity of their workers but in their happiness and contentment, creating a culture where teams can operate at their optimal, and feel like winners, not just at work, but in life.

Pride

Pride refers to how well the organization instills a sense of alignment with its vision and mission, ways of working, and their social values, nurturing within individuals a feeling of commitment, self-worth, and loyalty derived from their work and association with the organization.

Pride represents the collective sense of identity and accomplishment within an organization. When every individual comprehends the significance of their role, knows how it contributes to creating a positive impact, and is aligned with the strategies of the organization, a sense of pride becomes ingrained in the workplace culture. This pride instills a profound sense of belongingness, driving employees to exceed expectations and strive for excellence in their endeavors. It fosters a sense of unity and camaraderie, propelling the entire workforce towards collective triumphs.
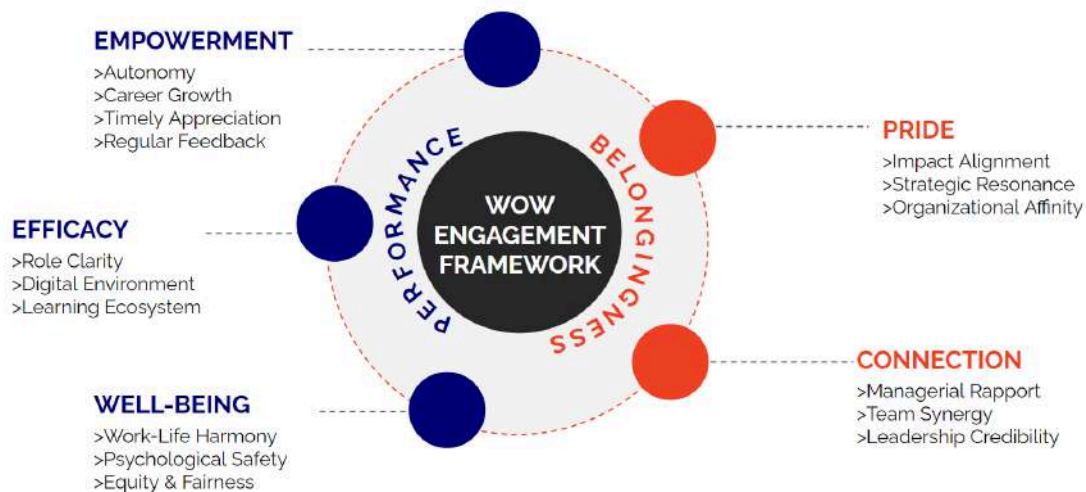
Connection

Connection refers to how well the organization enables a culture that strengthens the feeling of connectedness to peers, team members, managers, and the leadership team, by facilitating ways to enhance interpersonal rapport, authenticity, transparency, open communication, and collaboration.

Connection is the intricate web of relationships that binds the workforce. A workplace that fosters strong connections among team members is a workplace where support systems thrive. It spans beyond mere camaraderie to genuine, supportive alliances where colleagues prop each other up and managers act as mentors. When everyone feels like part of a team, the workplace becomes stronger, and everyone enjoys victories together.

▶ *Tier 3: WoW Drivers*

Every factor in the WoW model is powered by key drivers that make them work. These drivers are specific actions and behaviors that managers can drive to help each factor grow and improve. In the WoW Model, there are a total of 16 drivers that play a crucial role in enhancing each factor.

EMPOWERMENT
>Autonomy
>Career Growth
>Timely Appreciation
>Regular Feedback

EFFICACY
>Role Clarity
>Digital Environment
>Learning Ecosystem

WELL-BEING
>Work-Life Harmony
>Psychological Safety
>Equity & Fairness

WOW ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK
PERFORMANCE
BELONGINGNESS

PRIDE
>Impact Alignment
>Strategic Resonance
>Organizational Affinity

CONNECTION
>Managerial Rapport
>Team Synergy
>Leadership Credibility

WoW Drivers are the practical means by which desired outcomes in the workplace can be achieved by WoW Managers, acting as the building blocks for the factors that ultimately support the enabler.

Each driver is defined by a series of tailored statements that offer measurable and observable indicators of a winning workplace. These statements act as specific touchpoints for diagnostics and intervention, ensuring that every level of the model works together to create a workplace where a winning culture is not just a goal but a reality. This is achieved through a structured framework of enablers, factors, and drivers, which together foster an environment of active and sustained performance and belongingness.

For instance, the statement "I am satisfied with the amount of autonomy (independence) I have at work" is designed to ascertain an employee's level of control and freedom in their position. When employees agree with this statement, it suggests they feel a sense of **autonomy**. Autonomy is a key component that feeds into the larger concept of Empowerment.

A high number of affirmative answers indicate that Empowerment is being successfully promoted within the organization. Essentially, if employees confirm that they have satisfactory independence at work, this reinforces that the organization fosters empowerment that leads to a high-performance work environment, characteristic of a winning workplace.
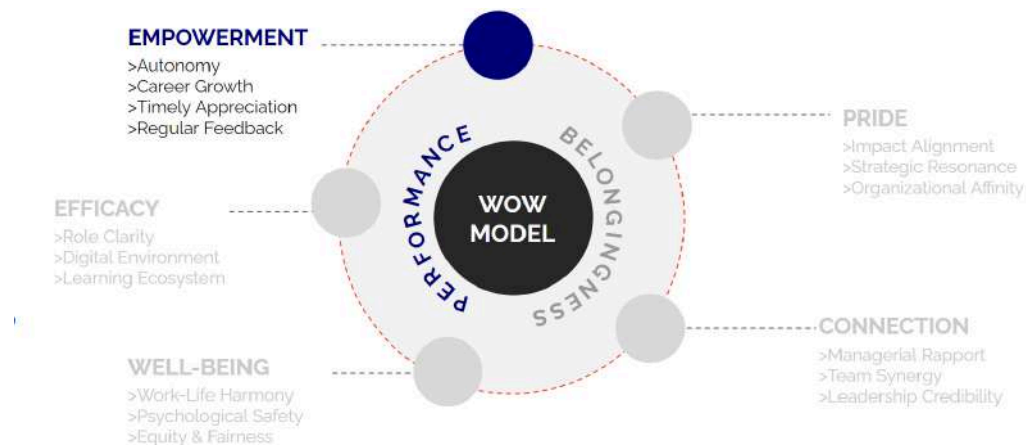
Empowerment

▶ **Autonomy**

The degree of control and independence that employees feel they have over their responsibilities and decision-making processes.

A winning workplace fosters a sense of ownership, responsibility, and trust in individuals to control their work, leverage their skills, and make decisions independently. A WoW Manager fosters an environment of freedom and accountability to help others reach their highest potential by:
- *Exploring enablers and detractors in providing autonomy at work.*
- *Defining the rules and boundaries of ownership and accountability.*
- *Equipping team members with the required support and resources.*

▶ **Career Growth**

The extent to which the employees feel there are career growth paths that align with their aspirations available to them in the organization.

A winning workplace invests in the long-term success of employees and creates opportunities for individuals to advance, develop new skills, and progress in their professional journey. A WoW Manager creates growth opportunities by understanding individuals' aspirations, strengths, and areas for development, via:
- *Co-creating a career map for the team members considering their aspirations and strengths.*
- *Mentoring each team member based on their areas of development.*
- *Creating opportunities for growth and incremental responsibilities for the team members.*

► **Timely Appreciation**

The consistency with which employees feel they are acknowledged and appreciated for their contributions at work, valued for their responsibilities, and rewarded for excellence.

A winning workplace consistently upholds the practice of acknowledging and appreciating individual contributions, reinforcing positive actions, boosting morale, and cultivating a culture of gratitude and drive. A WoW Manager promotes an environment of continuous recognition by acknowledging small and big wins, via:
- *Using positive reinforcement to amplify engagement and performance.*
- *Promoting regular recognition mechanisms in formal and informal settings.*
- *Enabling a culture of mutual appreciation and gratitude.*

► **Regular Feedback**

The consistency with which employees feel they receive constructive feedback on performance and get effective guidance on increasing their impact at work.

A winning workplace enables consistent and ongoing exchange of constructive feedback between individuals and their managers, fostering learning and progress, promoting healthy communication, and fortifying personal growth. A WoW Manager gives constructive, regular, and timely feedback for continuous improvement by:
- *Balancing assertiveness and empathy in the feedback.*
- *Learning the art of giving. evidence-based, specific, objective, and action-oriented feedback.*
- *Enabling a culture of exchanging timely, candid, and constructive feedback.*
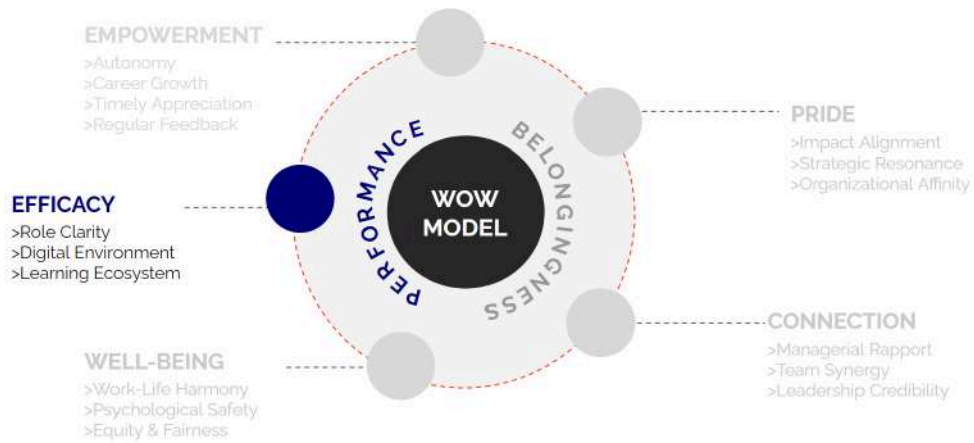
Efficacy

▶ Role Clarity
The extent to which employees are aligned to their job expectations, understand their work's relation to organizational objectives, and possess a clear perception of their responsibilities.

A winning workplace enables a clear perception of each individual's job responsibilities, and aligns expectations from their role in contributing to the organizational objectives. A WoW Manager provides a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities and ensures effective delegation by:
- *Outlining clear responsibilities and success metrics to drive optimal performance and job satisfaction.*
- *Delegating mindfully as per team member's skill and will.*
- *Setting up mechanisms to uphold accountability in the team.*

▶ Digital Environment
The extent to which employees feel they have access to an ecosystem of technological tools and platforms that they can use to work and collaborate with others effectively.

A winning workplace focuses on investing in a user-friendly and efficient digital environment by reducing roadblocks, streamlining workflows, and enabling employees to focus on value-added tasks. A WoW Manager leverages technology to improve efficiency and stakeholders' experience via:
- *Developing a habit of digital-first thinking.*
- *Leveraging technology to refine practices and processes.*
- *Delivering incremental value to stakeholders using creative application of digital solutions.*

▶ Learning Ecosystem
The extent to which employees feel they have access to relevant learning and skill development resources and exposure to appropriate professional forums.

A winning workplace establishes a comprehensive and integrated approach to learning and development by enabling personal and professional growth, promoting a culture of continuous improvement, and demonstrating the organization's investment in employee development. A WoW Manager fosters an environment of continuous learning and experimentation by:
- *Encouraging curiosity to enable self-motivated learning.*
- *Providing opportunities for upskilling and reskilling.*
- *Extending support for new experimentation.*
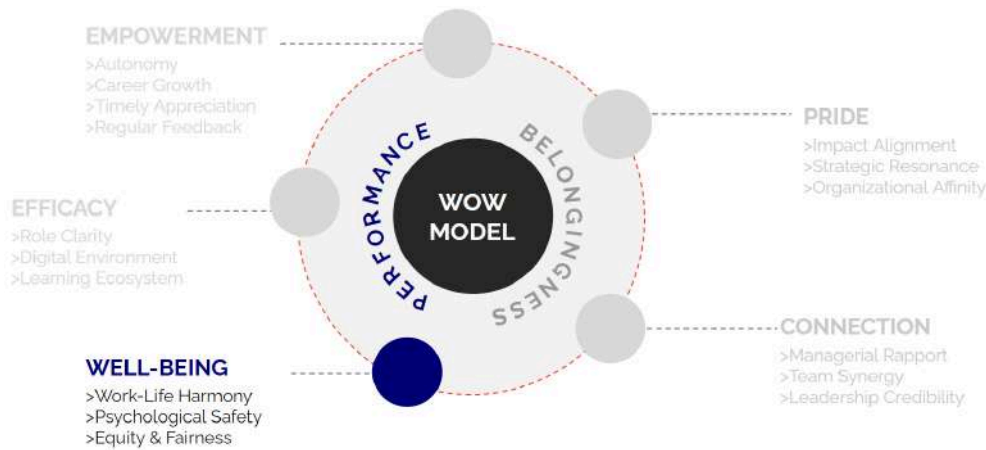
Well- Being

▶ Work-Life Harmony

The extent to which employees experience a culture that prioritizes balanced lifestyle choices and actively promotes well-being through supportive policies.

A winning workplace actively promotes a culture of well-being by reducing stress, preventing burnout, and enabling employees to be fully present and focused while at work. A WoW Manager prioritizes well-being in the team by promoting work-life balance, via:

- *Helping the team members with responsibility management and prioritization.*
- *Providing flexibility with discretion.*
- *Encouraging taking breaks to recharge and rejuvenate (for self and the team).*

▶ Psychological Safety

The extent to which employees are encouraged to openly admit errors, freely express ideas, take risks without fear of failure or negative judgment.

A winning workplace encourages individuals to bring their whole and authentic selves to work, by enabling them to fully express themselves and innovate freely. A WoW Manager creates a safe environment where team members belong, speak up, learn, and contribute, via:
- *Building a welcoming culture for expression of upward feedback, dissent or a different point of view.*
- *Fostering a non-judgmental environment that accommodates mistakes and failures.*
- *Practicing the right ways to present, challenge, or reject opinions and suggestions.*

▶ Equity & Fairness

The extent to which employees feel they receive equitable treatment via merit-based work opportunities/promotions and effective redressal of any forms of workplace microaggressions, discrimination, or bias.

A winning workplace emphasizes promoting equity and fairness by creating a sense of trust, respect, and inclusion within the workforce, enabling employees to feel valued and appreciated for their contributions. A WoW Manager cultivates an environment that fosters diversity, equity and inclusion, by:
- *Cultivating a team culture that embraces diversity (of people, worldviews, ways of working).*
- *Practicing fair and inclusive communication.*
- *Ensuring bias-free, objective, data-driven decision-making.*
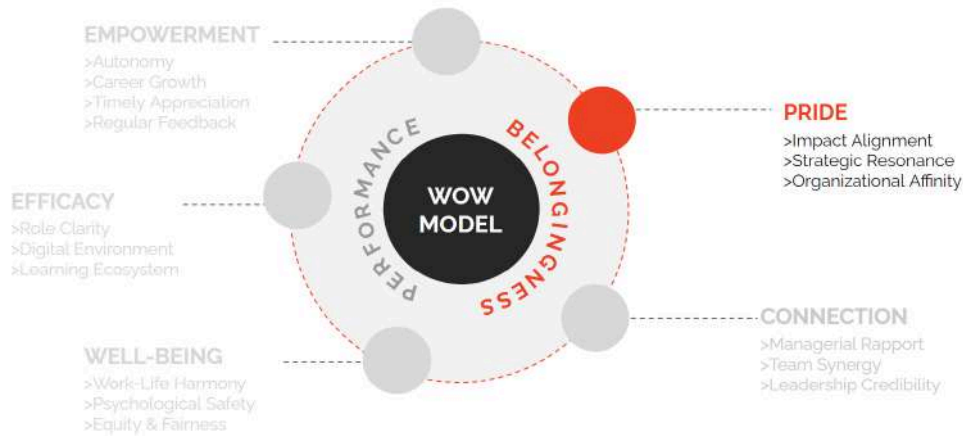
Pride

▶ **Impact Alignment**

The extent to which employees feel enabled to see the impact their work makes to the strategic direction of the organization and the connection of their work to the overall goals, fostering a shared commitment towards these goals.

A winning workplace provides employees with a clear sense of purpose, enabling them to see how their work contributes to the bigger picture, and fostering a shared commitment to the organization's success. A WoW Manager drives a sense of clarity towards the organization's vision and strategic roadmap, by:
- *Communicating the organization's vision and focus areas.*
- *Cultivating commitment by guiding the team towards the long-term direction.*
- *Helping team members connect with the organization's strategic roadmap.*

▶ **Strategic Resonance**

The degree to which employees feel committed to the organization's ethos and long-term vision, even through a changing industry landscape and market conditions.

A winning workplace to which the employee feels a strong sense of loyalty towards the organization and organization's vision in order to enhance employee satisfaction and overall organizational effectiveness. A WoW Manager aligns individual's work to the broader organizational objectives, by:
- *Breaking organizational objectives down to individual goals.*
- *Monitoring progress regularly to realign resources and processes.*
- *Identifying and avoiding common misalignment pitfalls.*

▶ **Organizational Affinity**

The degree to which employees feel proud of the organization's initiatives, reputation, and contributions to the society.

A winning workplace instills a sense of pride towards the organization's initiatives, reputation, and contributions to the society, creating brand ambassadors for the organization's future objectives and promoting a deeper emotional investment in the organization's success. A WoW Manager creates belongingness towards the brand identity and values by:
- *Building a holistic brand image amongst team members.*
- *Creating a sense of pride within the team towards the organization's purpose.*
- *Driving adoption of organizational values in the team's day-to-day practices.*
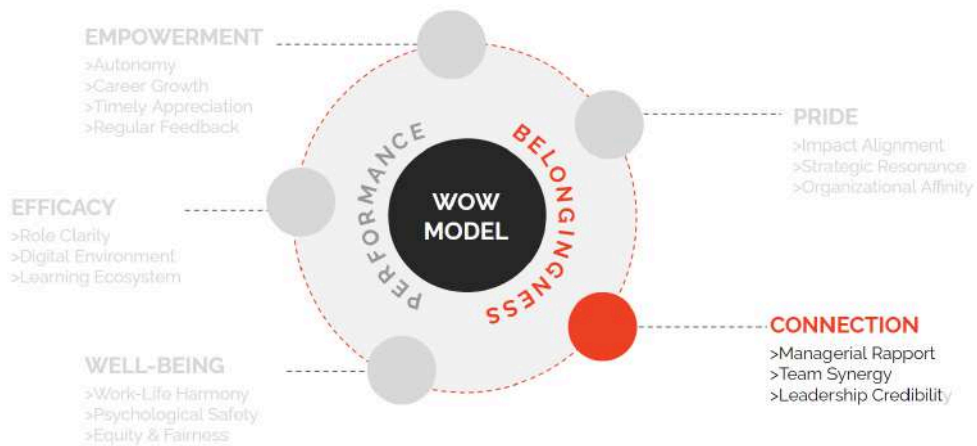
Connection

▶ Managerial Rapport
The extent to which the employees perceive to have a positive relationship with their managers in a way that enhances trust and motivation.

A winning workplace enables individuals to excel by facilitating strong authentic relationships between them and their direct managers, by creating a supportive and trusting environment, facilitating open communication, and providing guidance and feedback for employee development. A WoW Manager nurtures relationships with team members to facilitate open communication and mutual understanding, by:
- *Knowing one's own managerial style.*
- *Understanding team members, their needs, and preferences.*
- *Being an ally and a trusted confidante for team members.*

▶ Team Synergy
The extent to which employees perceive a healthy team environment that encourages collaborating and supporting each other to enhance collective unity.

A winning workplace kindles a collaborative spirit and a supportive ecosystem between individuals and teams, nurturing organizational harmony, positive culture, and a sense of collective synergy. A WoW Manager creates an ecosystem for teams to work cohesively and collaboratively, by:
- *Creating avenues to nurture intra-team and inter-team cohesion and collaboration.*
- *Managing conflict constructively and using it as a means to drive collaboration.*
- *Building a culture of mutual support and resilience within the team.*

▶ Leadership Credibility
The extent to which employees feel a sense of trust and belief in their leadership's integrity, foresight, and commitment to the welfare of both the organization and its workforce.

A winning workplace emphasizes on building leadership credibility by setting an example of integrity, transparency, and accountability, fostering a sense of trust and confidence in the organization's direction. A WoW Manager develops the capability to become a trustworthy and credible manager by:
- *Shifting the mindset from "Me" to "We".*
- *Demonstrating consistency through words, behaviors, and actions.*
- *Applying the instruments of trust and credibility.*

The primary dipstick of a Workplace of Winners is the engagement level of the individuals in the workplace. An engaged workforce is a committed and purpose-driven workforce, which is sustained through a culture of high Performance and a sense of Belongingness.

Hence, to enable WoW Managers to explore and assess their workplace engagement, we have used this three-tier WoW Model as a foundation for a WoW Engagement Survey.

Chapter 4.

Using the WoW Model to increase workplace engagement

CHAPTER 4

USING THE WoW MODEL TO INCREASE WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT

WHY DID JOMBAY ENVISION YET ANOTHER NEW ENGAGEMENT SURVEY?

Simply put in one sentence, **_"Traditional engagement surveys have just become a tick-box activity now."_** This is a sentiment that we have heard not only from a handful of organizational leaders, but from numerous organizations - our client partners, countless stakeholders, business leaders, CHROs, and industry experts for more than a decade. Yet the sad reality is, in nearly 15 years of working in the space of talent advisory, assessments, and development, no engagement model has been sufficient to capture the "vibe" that people want.

Younger millennials, Gen Zs and beyond, are steadily wary of the fact that most engagement surveys are not going to matter in the long run. Experienced generations in the workforce tend to agree as well. This is because traditional engagement surveys are not designed to showcase results that are meaningful to this evolving multi-generational talent pool.

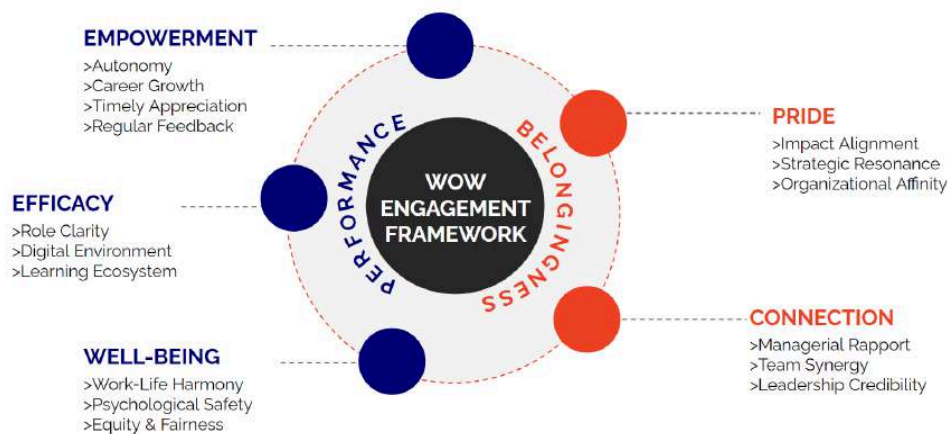**Our research has brought out reasons for why engagement and culture surveys fall flat:**

▸ _Even if the survey has valuable results, organizations may not do anything meaningful with them._
▸ _Even if organizations are truly willing, employees may not take it seriously enough._
▸ _Even if both organizations and employees are willing, the survey may not yield results worth leveraging._
▸ _If neither are willing, the survey may look like yet another hollow initiative which further alienates the employees._

What we need now is a framework that explores engagement across older and younger generations in the workforce. The need of the hour is to be cognizant of the diverse possibilities in workplace culture that result from multiple generations intertwining like never before.

Despite the saturation in the market with different engagement models and surveys, the problem is clear: Employees no longer trust most engagement surveys or strategies, fearing inaction despite their genuine efforts to voice their needs. We aim to change this by fostering the belief that the organization truly wants to listen and can take practical action. This has inspired us to re-examine the traditional metrics of engagement that have been held dear for so long by corporate leaders and academicians alike.

As described in Chapter 3, Jombay's Workplace of Winners model is more than just an engagement framework with yet another list of questions that employees may or may not respond to authentically.

EMPOWERMENT
>Autonomy
>Career Growth
>Timely Appreciation
>Regular Feedback

EFFICACY
>Role Clarity
>Digital Environment
>Learning Ecosystem

WELL-BEING
>Work-Life Harmony
>Psychological Safety
>Equity & Fairness

PERFORMANCE
BELONGINGNESS

WOW ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

PRIDE
>Impact Alignment
>Strategic Resonance
>Organizational Affinity

CONNECTION
>Managerial Rapport
>Team Synergy
>Leadership Credibility

Our framework moves beyond the traditional frontiers of employee engagement and experience. This model taps into the managerial potential to build a culture of high Performance and a sense of Belongingness within the workplace. Jombay's WoW model is made with the belief that it is managers who need to be empowered to use these actionable insights on workplace engagement and turn them into a rewarding workplace culture.

Chapter 5.

Helping WoW Managers advance with AI Powered Action Planning

CHAPTER 5

HELPING WoW MANAGERS ADVANCE WITH AI POWERED ACTION PLANNING

The AI revolution is fundamentally reshaping how work gets done across industries. As Gen Z, the first true digital native workforce, enters the fray, their unique relationship with technology combined with changing workplace expectations demands a radically new approach for engaging the workforce. According to a Microsoft study, an astounding 73% of Gen Z workers list exploring and building tech as one of their core workplace interests. Having grown up immersed in the digital realm, emerging technologies like AI, automation, and mixed reality feel innate rather than disruptive forces to this cohort.

However, Gen Z doesn't just seek to consume technology - they aspire to create and shape it. Unlike previous generations viewing tech as a separate sphere, Gen Z perceives it as deeply intertwined with daily life experiences. Catering to Gen Z's digital proclivity is critical for attracting and retaining top talent. A Korn Ferry analysis projects the global tech talent shortage could reach 4.3 million workers by 2030, intensifying competition. However, the key for companies lies in combining technological integration with cultivating a holistic "Workplace of Winners" underpinned by meaningful performance and belongingness - the cultural enablers Gen Z values deeply.

Similarly, Gen Z's demand for an environment allowing their authentic selves to thrive necessitates developing a deep sense of belongingness. Inclusive AI tools like voice recognition that accommodates diverse accents and gender neutral language options foster the culture of inclusivity Gen Z seeks. Leading firms are embracing AI for nurturing belongingness at scale through personalized employee experiences.

The opportunity lies in seamlessly integrating AI as an empowering force across the employee lifecycle - from hyper-personalized skill-building curricula fueled by machine learning to AI-powered coaching for real-time feedback and growth, fulfilling Gen Z's appetite for autonomy and continuous learning. In this era of rapid technological evolution, the organizations who thoughtfully blend cutting-edge innovation with time-honored human truths of performance and belongingness will earn Gen Z's passion and loyalty.

So how does Jombay leverage this opportunity to build a Workplace of Winners?
Jombay has researched extensively on the use-cases and applications of AI towards building engagement metrics of organizations and their workforce.

Jombay's Action Planning Dashboard provides managers with the requisite information to make advanced decisions in the interest of building capable WoW Managers and a thriving WoW workplace.

▸ **Jombay uses AI to infer engagement levels from employees' stories.** This enables us to move beyond traditional data analysis to a full fledged experience analysis across a broad spectrum of employees in the workforce.

▸ **Jombay leverages AI for faster on-the-go action planning.** This helps managers to focus on issues and development areas that are important for their teams. Our AI-enabled action planning goes a step further by diving into specific underlying issues within each WoW driver. Specific data on different drivers and factors of the WoW model along with integrated AI capabilities to seek developmental guidance makes our solution revolutionary in the field of developmental action planning for the modern manager.

▸ **Jombay leverages AI to provide a platform to display positive/winning stories to enhance the employer brand.** While many companies are considered to be the best places to work for, we don't have employee stories to support those claims! Open forums where employees post stories are largely from disgruntled employees. Jombay's AI-integrated solution performs positive sentiment analysis from employee responses to create a library of winning stories for organizations to display and enhance their brand engagement.

HOW JOMBAY HELPS ORGANIZATIONS AND WoW MANAGERS LEVERAGE AI TO BUILD WORKPLACES OF WINNERS

In the dynamic landscape of today's corporate world, where change is constant and swift, the traditional approach to engagement surveys and action planning has become a bottleneck for organizational growth. The conventional method of conducting surveys, relaying results to top leadership, formulating action plans at the highest echelons, and then disseminating solutions down the hierarchy is no longer feasible. By the time these plans reach the grassroots, the organizational landscape has shifted, and employee sentiments have evolved.

Recognizing this need for agility and responsiveness, Jombay proposes a paradigm shift in engagement action planning - one that empowers managers at all levels to identify critical areas within their teams, create swift action plans, and execute them promptly. The key enabler in this transformation is our action planning dashboard, a tool designed to streamline the process, providing real-time insights and accelerating the implementation of solutions.

Jombay advocates for a decentralized approach to engagement action planning. Instead of waiting for results to cascade from the top, managers are empowered to proactively identify areas of concern within their teams. The action planning dashboard serves as a dynamic tool that facilitates rapid assessment and strategy formulation, **reducing the turnaround time from identification to implementation.**

In the contemporary business environment, agility is paramount. Traditional engagement action planning is like navigating a ship with a delayed compass - by the time you adjust your course, the currents have already changed. Employees' needs and concerns evolve swiftly, and addressing them in real-time is crucial to maintaining a motivated and engaged workforce.

By decentralizing the action planning process, Jombay ensures that solutions are relevant and timely. Jombay's intent is to acknowledge the fluidity of employee sentiments, allowing organizations to respond promptly to evolving needs, ultimately fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Jombay's action planning dashboard equips managers with a powerful tool to explore and address critical areas of concern within their teams. The dashboard provides a real-time snapshot of engagement metrics, enabling managers to identify development focus areas swiftly. Additionally, it facilitates a deep dive into the root causes behind these scores by devising tailored action plans to empower managers.

With this tool, the entire process, from identifying issues to implementing solutions, can be accomplished swiftly. Managers become proactive agents of change, empowered to foster a positive work environment and address concerns before they escalate. The need for action planning in engagement is not just a response to the fast-paced nature of the corporate world; it is an essential strategy for organizational success. By empowering managers with the right tools, we can ensure that engagement action planning is a dynamic, responsive, and continuous process, fostering a workplace where employees thrive and contribute their best to the organization's success. Here is how our Action Planning Dashboard works:

*Step 1 > A Manager selects Drivers that he/she wants to work upon*

Step 2 > A Manager selects Issues within each Driver that he/she wants to focus on

To further enhance the relevance and effectiveness of the action plans, we've incorporated Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the dashboard. Recognizing that the challenges and nuances of each industry and function vary significantly, we leverage AI to customize action plans specifically to the context of the manager's industry and function.

By employing AI algorithms, Jombay's action planning dashboard analyzes the unique dynamics of the industry and function in question. It takes into account the distinct challenges, trends, and benchmarks relevant to that specific context. This ensures that the action plans generated are not generic solutions but tailored interventions that address the specific needs and pain points of the team. Therefore, the AI-driven customization process is not a one-size-fits-all approach but rather a dynamic and evolving system.
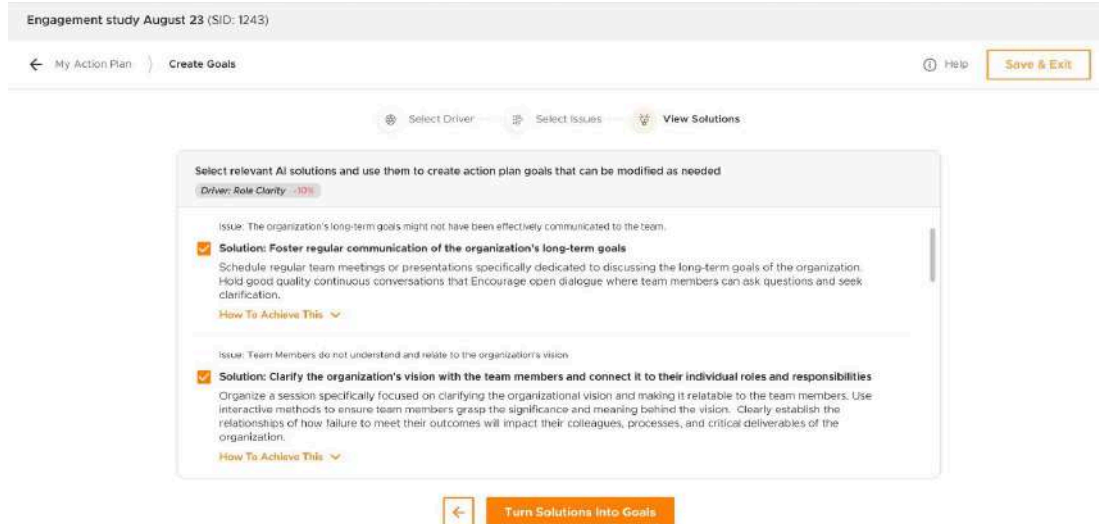
Step 3 > A Manager views the AI-driven solutions which are custom to each issue and their own context.
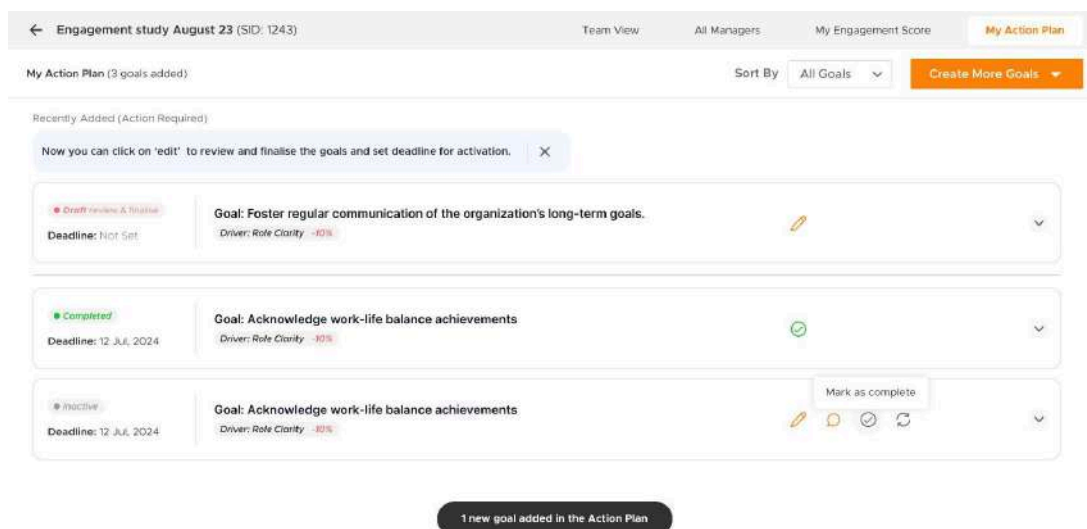
Step 4 > A Manager is able to track his/her action plan on the dashboard.

In the ever-evolving business ecosystem, slow execution can render survey results obsolete before they even reach the intended recipients. The pace of change and delayed responses, risks creating a gap between employee sentiments and organizational actions. Failing to respond swiftly jeopardizes the relevance of the proposed solutions & fosters the perception that leadership is indifferent to the concerns of its workforce. **The accelerated action planning facilitated by Jombay's action planning dashboard addresses this potential disconnect & demonstrates a commitment to responsiveness.** By closing the gap between survey results and action implementation, Jombay preserves the integrity of the feedback loop & fosters a culture where employees feel heard and valued, enhancing overall organizational trust and engagement.

Chapter 6.

Five myths the WoW philosophy is breaking

CHAPTER 6

FIVE MYTHS THE WoW PHILOSOPHY IS BREAKING

1. Money is the only motivator for high performance

The notion that top professionals prioritize lucrative pay and status above all else has pervaded organizational thinking for decades. However, a mounting body of research reveals modern high performers, especially millennials and Gen Z, crave roles imbued with deeper purpose and the opportunity to create positive societal impact over just chasing financial rewards.

In a study spanning 192 organizations across multiple sectors, MIT Sloan found that employees who derived meaning and significance from their work were 3.2 times more likely to stay with their employers compared to those who didn't - regardless of compensation level. Furthermore, companies that genuinely prioritize employee well-being in all aspects, including fostering a sense of purpose, experienced 16.1% higher levels of innovation, as evidenced by an increase in patents and product launches.Furthermore, companies truly prioritizing employee thriving through all avenues saw 16.1% higher innovation levels in terms of patents and product launches.

The WoW philosophy breaks this pervasive myth by fundamentally restructuring how organizations think about what truly drives the talent. Rather than unidimensionally pursuing compensation as the ultimate motivator, WoW centers on holistically fulfilling the innate human yearning for meaningful work creating positive impact.

2. Only young employees demand meaningful measures of performance and belongingness

A common assumption plaguing conventional workplace design is the notion that only the entry workforce values meaningful performance metrics and a sense of belongingness at work, attributing such needs to youthful naivete and transition from academic environments.

The belief that only young employees seek meaning in their work and a sense of belonging is a misconception that overlooks the universal human need for these elements across all age groups.

Regardless of age, every employee values recognition for their contributions and desires to be part of a supportive and inclusive work environment. Older employees, with their wealth of experience, are just as driven by performance goals, aiming to leverage their expertise to achieve professional success and personal fulfillment.

Moreover, a sense of belonging is critical for all employees as it fosters engagement, loyalty, and job satisfaction. Inclusive workplaces that recognize and nurture the aspirations of all employees, irrespective of age, ultimately benefit from a more motivated, cohesive, and productive workforce.

An extensive body of research confirms the hunger for meaning, community and self-actualization resonates across all tenures, ages and life stages. Research highlights that diverse workforces, inclusive of various age groups, prefers a work environment that recognizes and values performance and inclusiveness (Kundu & Mor, 2017). Both young and older employees place high importance on performance recognition and a sense of belonging to stay engaged in an organization (Bhatnagar, 2007; Ghosh et al, 2013,).

In their exhaustive study of global workforce drivers, PwC found a resounding 88% of employees regardless of generation ranked appreciation for their organization's positive values and enterprise behavior over pure compensation as their key priority. As the antiquated concept of a "job for life" rapidly disappears, professionals across all experience levels and ages are actively seeking enriching environments to continuously grow and derive meaning throughout their working lives.

Furthermore, the Center for Talent Innovation found that employees across generations who perceive their organization as purpose-driven, exhibit better work-life integration than those who do not perceive their organizations as purpose-driven. WoW organizations shatter the ageist myth by intentionally fostering belonging, growth and meaning for all employees at every stage of life and career.

3. A connected workforce stems solely from physical workspaces

A flawed perception about cultivating belongingness and connection is the belief that it arises purely from physical proximity enabled through thoughtful office design and lavish recreational facilities. While such spatial considerations and engaging workspaces can certainly serve as catalysts, true belongingness transcends the four walls and the cubicles.

At its core, belongingness encompasses fostering an inclusive organizational culture where diverse employees authentically feel welcomed, represented and celebrated for their true selves without judgment.

Companies are steadily exemplifying ways of bridging this myth by cultivating global communities centered around the authentic identities their employees bring - be it gender, ethnicity, neurodiversity or shared interests across societal causes. These circles thrive both virtually through dedicated digital platforms and physically through local chapters, special events and celebrations honoring each identity.

Through this holistic approach, leading organizations understand that belongingness is a pervasive lived experience extending far beyond the workplace's physical construct. It is about nurturing an environment of unmitigated self-expression where individual stories and experiences seamlessly coalesce to forge a cohesive community fabric empowered to deliver its best.

4. Trust, connection, and belongingness are HR imperatives, not strategic imperatives

Historically, elements like building trust, nurturing meaningful workplace connections, and fostering belongingness were framed as well-meaning practices confined to the Human Resources function. This myth positioned connection and belongingness as "soft" activities disconnected from driving tangible business outcomes like growth, innovation, productivity and shareholder value.

The WoW philosophy demolishes this assumption. Extensive research from esteemed institutions like Harvard, Bain conclusively proves that **both performance and belongingness** are pivotal drivers of key commercial metrics ranging from product/service leadership to customer approval - factors directly impacting organizational profitability and competitive advantage.

A Harvard study found that employees deriving meaning and significance from their work were 64% more satisfied with their organizations, 59% more engaged and 30% more likely to demonstrate entrepreneurial behavior generating innovative ideas and positive "issue-selling." Similarly, those feeling a robust sense of belongingness bring 57% higher discretionary effort to their roles above the baseline (Glint Employee Study, 2020).

5. Creative and innovative talent doesn't require structure

A common misconception in creative, innovation-driven fields is that brilliant minds thrive best in completely unstructured, free-range workplaces without oversight or clear direction. This belief assumes that creative freedom and organizational structure are inherently incompatible.

While it is true that empowerment, psychological safety, and autonomy can boost creativity, too much deregulation can lead to chaos, misaligned priorities, and unproductive conflict. Even the most creative individuals need clear goals and guidelines to focus their efforts effectively. Successful organizations avoid this pitfall by aligning creative efforts with a robust drive for performance and fostering a sense of belonging through inclusive collaboration. This balance allows creativity to flourish within a structured framework, driving constant innovation and market leadership.

For example, Pixar Animation Studios uses the "Braintrust" feedback process to provide animators with creative freedom while ensuring their ideas align with Pixar's goal of telling compelling, universally appealing stories. This structured feedback fosters a sense of belonging and mutual accountability. By combining creative empowerment with authentic connection, successful organizations create environments where innovative talent can thrive and contribute to meaningful goals beyond just output.
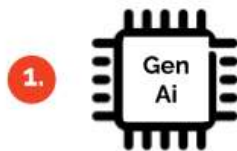
Chapter 7.

Helping your organization become a Workplace of Winners

HELPING YOUR ORGANIZATION BECOME A WORKPLACE OF WINNERS

Jombay's Workplace of Winners allows organizations to level up through three different components - each designed to help managers build a culture of High Performance and High Belongingness at the workplace.

1. Gen Ai

GenAI-Powered Engagement Solution based on employee stories

2. WOW WORKPLACE OF WINNERS 2024

Workplace of Winners **Annual List**

3. WOW MANAGER PROGRAM
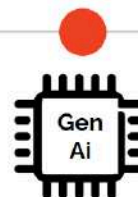
WOW **Manager Program**

1. Our new-age multi-generational WoW model provides an engagement solution that integrates the capabilities of AI for engagement, action planning, and organizational development metrics.

Leverages the **POWER of Stories**

Is built on a new-age **multi-generational framework**

Gen Ai

Utilises **Gen-Ai in creating real-time action plans**

2. Jombay's annual "Workplace of Winners" list, offers participating organizations a chance to be featured and enhance their brand's recognition as a Workplace of Winners.

3. Jombay's WoW Manager Program to build the strongest First-Line and Tenured Managers who will seek to build Workplaces of Winners. Jombay's WoW Manager program is an immersive and holistic development journey that builds the capabilities of managers through a science-backed, learning-focused, and integrated approach.
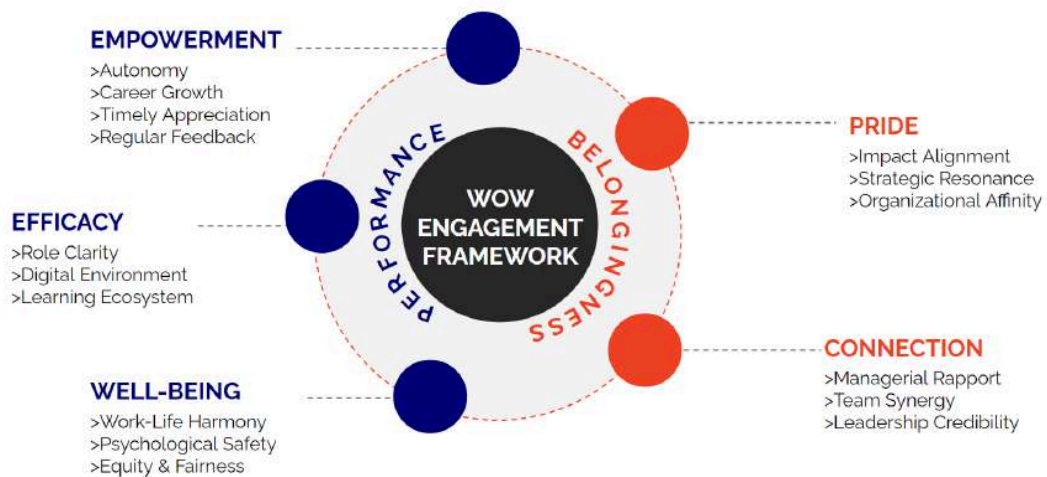
Chapter 8.

The WoW Research

CHAPTER 8
THE WoW RESEARCH

In the modern workforce, what matters most to individual employees has shifted dramatically from previous generations.

Gone are the days when a paycheck was the sole motivator. According to a 2022 McKinsey study, 70% of employees defined a "good job" as one that allows them to pursue their passion, prioritizing well-being over paycheck. The rise of younger millennials and Gen Z in the workplace has catalyzed this shift, as they actively seek roles that align with their values and desire to make a positive impact. "For this generation, the opportunity to grow and be part of something bigger is non-negotiable," remarks Brian Kropp, VP at Gartner. This younger demographic prizes autonomy, a healthy work-life balance, and a supportive environment for holistic well-being.

The evolving dynamics of employee engagement in a multi-generational workforce have garnered significant attention in recent research. A study by IJCRT (2021) examined employee engagement activities at different organizations, highlighting the importance of practical interventions in enhancing employee engagement. Another study by NHRD Network Journal (2011) delved into understanding the multi-generational Indian workforce, emphasizing the need for HR professionals to critically evaluate and harness multigenerational differences effectively. These studies provide insights into the complexities of managing a multi-generational workforce in the Indian context.

Additionally, research by Smith et al. (2023) underscored the urgent need for human resource development professionals to actively engage Generation Y, who will soon dominate the global workforce. A study by Johnson et al. (2023) explored generational diversity and lifelong learning constructs across Generation X, Y, and Z, shedding light on the differences and similarities in learning preferences and engagement levels among different generational cohorts. These studies collectively highlight the significance of understanding and managing multigenerational workforces effectively to enhance employee engagement, productivity, and overall organizational performance.

Empowerment through autonomy over how one works is essential. It involves providing employees with the freedom to choose how they complete their tasks, make decisions, and solve problems independently. It is a critical component of empowerment and has been linked to increased engagement and motivation. A survey in the IT sector showed that 73% of developers value working independently (Stack Overflow Developer Survey 2022).

Our Research shows that autonomy is strongly correlated with higher levels of workplace engagement and intrinsic motivation. When employees feel they have control over their work, they are more engaged and committed to their roles.

Empowered employees often exhibit higher performance levels due to their increased commitment and the ability to innovate and solve problems more effectively.

While empowerment through autonomy has been spoken about a lot, its translation into action has been slower than expected. Successful implementation of this factor requires careful consideration of organizational culture, leadership styles, and employee capabilities. For organizations seeking to enhance empowerment, it is essential to foster an environment that supports autonomy while providing the necessary resources and support for employees to thrive.
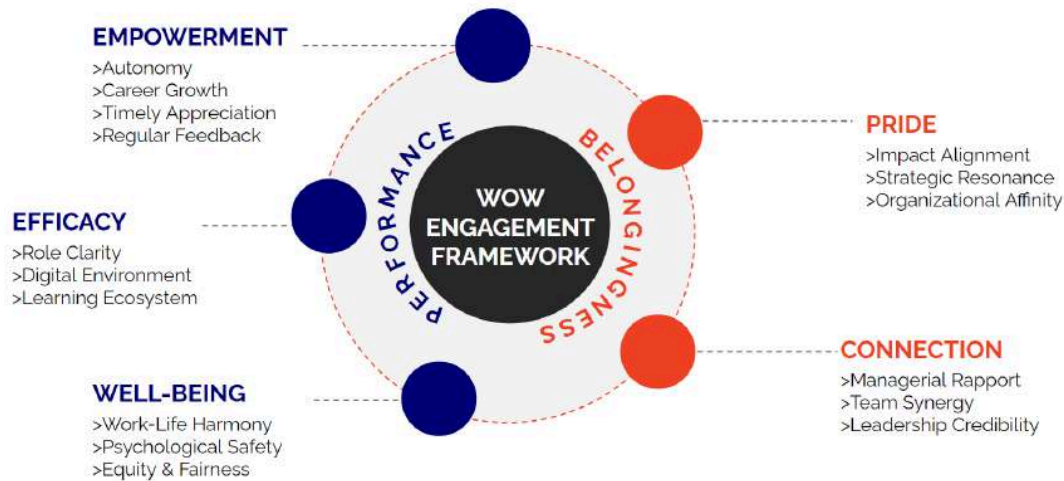

Figure 3. Jombay's WoW Model based on our research into the prime drivers of an engaged and committed multigenerational workforce.

Efficacy, the factor that determines whether one's work is meaningful and creates positive change, has become paramount. In the context of workplace engagement, efficacy plays a crucial role in determining the meaningfulness of one's work and its ability to create positive change within the organization.

Efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their capability to perform tasks successfully and achieve desired outcomes. When employees perceive their work as efficacious, they are more likely to feel a sense of purpose, accomplishment, and impact, leading to higher levels of engagement and motivation in the workplace. Research evidence supports the significance of efficacy in driving workplace engagement. For instance, a study by Smith et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of employee experience as a lens to unpack Generation Y's engagement, highlighting how perceptions of efficacy can influence employee dedication and commitment.

Well-being - mental, physical and psychological - has taken center stage too. The pandemic heightened awareness around mental health challenges, with 76% of workers suffering burnout during COVID-19 (Microsoft Work Trend Index 2022). This shift has pushed organizations to prioritize comprehensive wellness programs and support systems to ensure a healthier, more balanced workforce. Companies are now implementing flexible work arrangements, promoting work-life balance, and providing mental health resources to address these critical needs. By fostering a supportive environment, organizations aim to enhance employee satisfaction, commitment, and productivity.

Belongingness, encompassing organizational pride and interpersonal connections, plays a crucial role in driving engagement within the workplace. This phenomenon is particularly significant in the Indian context, where cultural and social factors often influence employees' attitudes and behaviors. Organizations with high levels of employee belonging experience 56% higher customer loyalty (Harvard Business Review). Companies that prioritize belongingness see a 21% increase in profitability (McKinsey & Co.).

Research studies from India have consistently highlighted the importance of belongingness in fostering employee engagement. For instance, a study by IJCRT (2021) on employee engagement activities at different organizations emphasized the significance of creating a sense of belonging and pride within the organization to enhance employee engagement and motivation.

It has been observed that employees who feel a strong sense of belonging are more likely to be committed to their organization, exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction, and stay with the company longer. This underscores the need for companies to build inclusive cultures that celebrate diversity, encourage collaboration, and provide opportunities for employees to connect and feel valued.
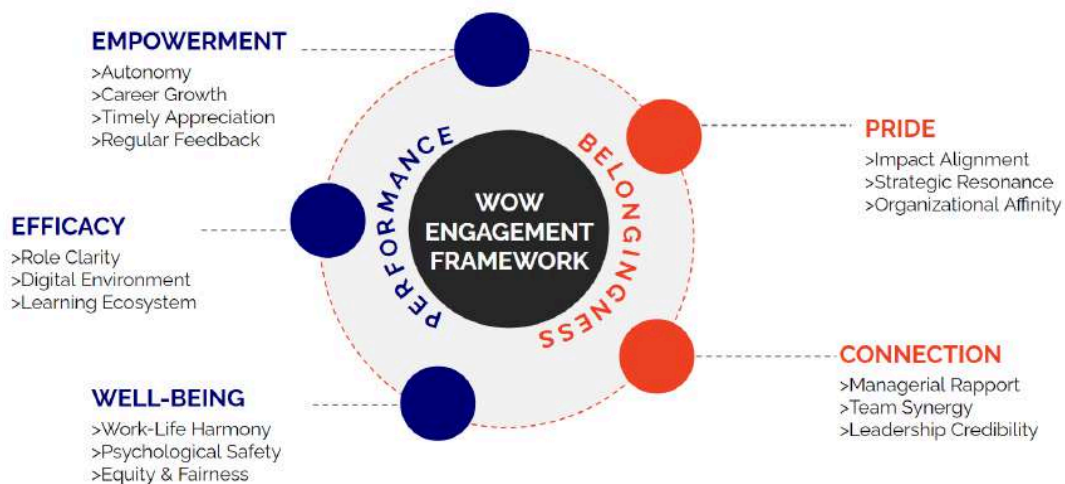
Organizational Pride is closely linked to employee engagement. In Jombay's detailed conversations with leading Business and HR leaders, it was pointed out that organizational pride can be achieved via the alignment of the organization's vision and objectives with that of the employees, an alignment of the organization's social commitment and impact on the world at large, and this sense of belongingness can be fostered through various means, including employee ownership programs, team-building activities, and recognition and reward systems. Interpersonal connections also play a vital role in driving engagement. A study by the National Institute of Industrial Engineering (2022) found that employees who had strong social connections with their colleagues were more likely to be engaged and retained.

This highlights the importance of fostering a positive work environment that encourages collaboration, communication, and teamwork. In conclusion, the concept of belongingness, comprising organizational pride and interpersonal connections, is a critical factor for an engaged workforce.

As Arianna Huffington (author, co-founder of Huffington Post) aptly stated, "Employees who believe their work is meaningful are more productive, engaged, and resilient." With turnover costs as high as 2x an employee's salary, catering to holistic individual needs has become table stakes for thriving organizations.

At the team and community level, both performance and belongingness are pivotal in fostering purpose-driven, collaborative environments. When teams perform with a shared sense of commitment towards their growth and the organizational vision, they transcend individual efforts and drive breakthrough results. This has been supported by psychological theories as well.

For instance, the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) suggests that employees who identify strongly with their organization exhibit higher levels of commitment and loyalty. This is supported by various studies showing that employees who feel they belong are more likely to stay with their employer.

Connection is a key driver of team effectiveness and helps to nurture a potent sense of commitment. According to Google's multi-year research, in connected, nurturing, psychologically safe environments, members feel empowered to take risks, voice contrarian concerns, embrace failures as learning opportunities, and bring their full authentic selves to work. This openness sparks elevated creativity, innovation and productive conflict resolution. Psychological safety is "literally mission critical in today's work environment," says author and researcher Amy Edmondson, who coined the term "team psychological safety. "You no longer have the option of leading through fear or managing through fear. In an uncertain, interdependent world, it doesn't work—either as a motivator or as an enabler of high performance." It's hard to be effective without knowledge-sharing, teamwork, and shared decision-making. These require an element of interpersonal ease. People who feel psychologically safer work better in teams because they can share information and be transparent. And the very act of being productive—just doing the work together—becomes a feedback loop that can bond a team and help create the conditions for a connected, high-performing workplace (Edmondson, 2023).

As described in Chapter 3, Jombay's Workplace of Winners (WoW model) captures organizational engagement levels that are essential to this multi-generational workforce.

As discussed in the earlier chapters, winning workplaces are a culmination of winning work and winning workers.

The two enablers essential to creating this successful recipe into a winning workplace are a culture of high **Performance** and a sense of **Belongingness**. Jombay has further deep-dived into these two broad enablers to identify 5 pillars that govern engagement, commitment, and passion towards one's workplace. These 5 pillars determine which practices managers must drive, in order to foster a winning workplace - by acting as a medium between the leadership, the employees, and the work that they do.

▸ **Our Methodology**

Our primary objective, when we embarked on the journey to define the formula of a Workplace of Winners, was to distill a multifaceted understanding of which factors were crucial for fostering a winning workplace, as perceived by today's working professionals across various industries and functions. We adopted a multi-dimensional approach to explore the evolving concept of engagement within the contemporary workforce. The research involved a mixed-method strategy, incorporating qualitative insights through open-ended questionnaires and quantitative data through structured survey instruments.

▸ **Data Collection**

The primary research population (n = 1277) consisted of two discrete participant groups. The first group included working professionals employed across a diverse spectrum of industries and job functions. Effort was taken to ensure that this group represented a wide range of ages, experience levels, organizational roles, and industry sectors, to capture a broad picture of the workforce. The second group encompassed Chief Human Resources Officers (CHROs), Business Leaders, and HR Leaders who have a vested interest in the development and implementation of engagement initiatives.

In conjunction with the primary research, a comprehensive literature review was conducted. This aspect of the methodology included the examination of peer-reviewed research papers, industry reports from leading publishers, and whitepapers that focused on employee engagement and its measurement. The literature review aimed to establish a theoretical framework and historical context for the concept of engagement, providing a benchmark against which to compare the study's findings.

Finally, we undertook a comparative analysis of several established workplace engagement surveys to discern commonalities and differences among them. By examining these instruments side-by-side, our research sought to understand the evolution of workplace metrics over time and showcase innovations or methodological shifts that may better capture the nuances of a modern winning workplace. **Based on the collected data, these 5 emerged as the 5 pillars that form the foundation of a Workplace of Winners (WoW).**
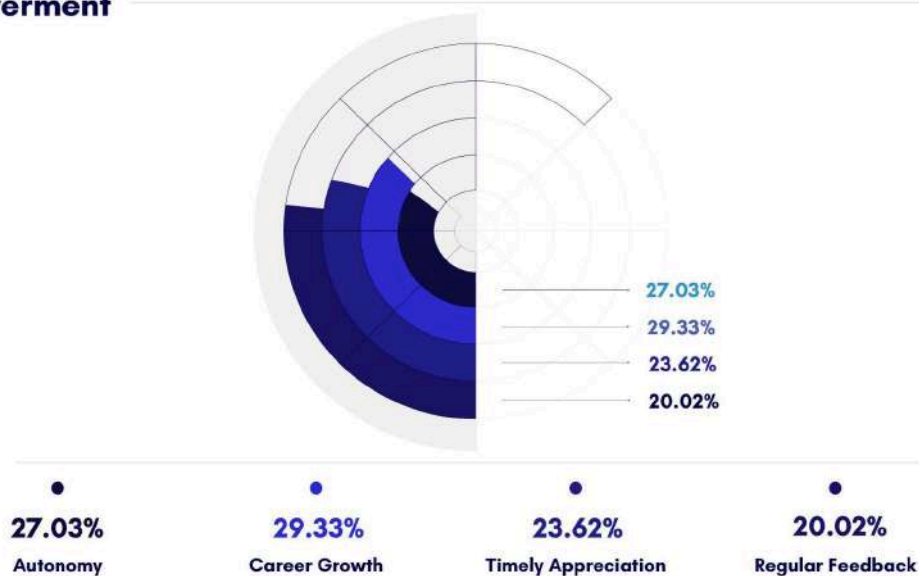
▶ **Empowerment**

Based on our survey results from our research population **(n = 1277)**, the following findings have been observed.

87% of the population selected Empowerment as a crucial factor for a winning workplace.

The following chart shows the percentage of our survey respondents that mentioned aspects related to the four drivers of empowerment and uncovered several key themes that influence feelings of empowerment, including desires for autonomy, timely recognition and appreciation, regular and constructive feedback, and career growth opportunities. Respondents highlighted the importance of continuous learning, career advancement, flexibility, and having the freedom to perform their roles with minimal micromanagement. Out of those who selected Empowerment, **27.03%** of participants cited autonomy as most critical for empowerment, referring to elements like self-direction, flexibility, and being afforded the independence to bring their best selves to work. Next, **29.33%** felt empowerment depends most on access to career growth opportunities, through upskilling, new challenges to master, and clearly mapped career progression. Then, **23.62%** emphasized the role of making them feel valued and empowered to contribute above and beyond expectations. Finally, **20.02%** felt regular and constructive feedback on tangible aspects of their performance boosted their capabilities and their commitment to their role by ensuring a sense of investment in their personal performance and unique aspirations or working styles.

By doubling down on these key ingredients of empowerment—autonomy, timely appreciation, regular feedback, and career growth—organizations can engage employees as passionate, motivated contributors while unlocking higher levels of ingenuity, performance, and prosperity.

Empowerment

27.03%
29.33%
23.62%
20.02%

| 27.03% | 29.33% | 23.62% | 20.02% |
| Autonomy | Career Growth | Timely Appreciation | Regular Feedback |

▶ **Efficacy**

Based on our survey results, the following findings have been observed.

83.2% of the population selected Efficacy as a crucial factor for a winning workplace.

The following chart shows the percentage of our survey respondents that mentioned aspects related to the three drivers of efficacy among employees are role clarity, strategic alignment, and digital prudence. Out of those who selected Efficacy, **67%** of respondents identified clear role expectations, objectives, and responsibilities as most essential for succeeding in their jobs and feeling confident in their contributions. They emphasized desires for meaningful work, intellectual engagement, and appropriate challenges that match their skills. **16%** of participants cited a robust culture of learning, knowledge-sharing, and access to resources for skill development as pivotal for efficacy. Finally, **17%** pointed to sufficient technology resources and automated processes as key enablers, by simplifying tasks and allowing more time for value-add activities.

With role clarity standing out as the predominant ingredient for bolstering efficacy, managers should prioritize setting clear goals, matching talent to assignments, and articulating how each role fuels the mission. Paired with enabling technologies and a culture that propels learning and upskilling, employees are set up to make highly effective and fulfilling contributions.

Efficacy

67.00%
17.00%
16.00%

67.00%
Role Clarity

17.00%
Learning Ecosystem

16.00%
Digital Environment

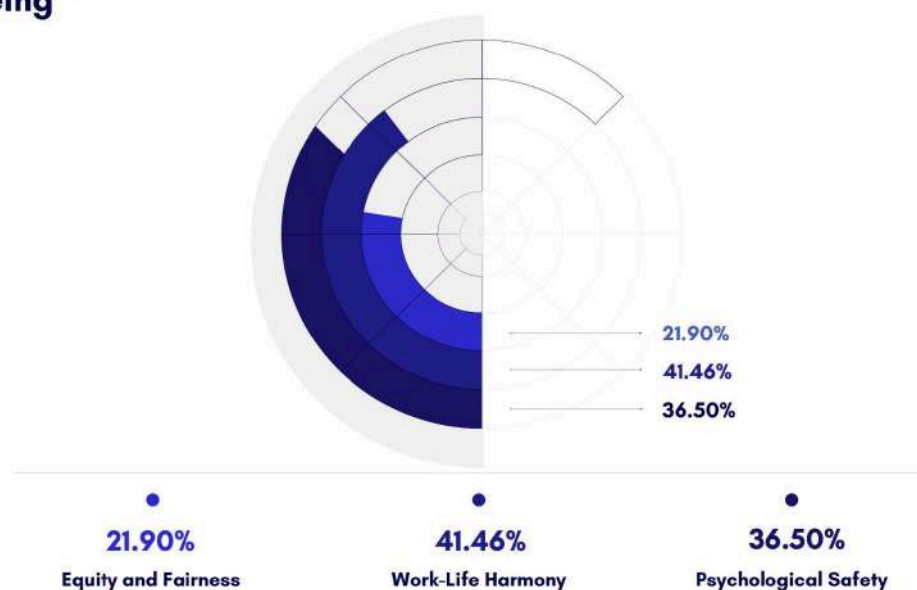Based on our survey results, the following findings have been observed.

89.73% of the population selected Well-being as a crucial factor for a winning workplace.

The following chart shows the percentage of our survey respondents that mentioned aspects related to the three drivers of well-being. Out of those who selected Well-Being, **21.9%** of respondents felt that fair policies, ethical conduct, pay equity, and lack of politics were most essential for wellness at work. Next, **41.46%** emphasized that a caring, trustful environment provides a crucial ecosystem supporting their holistic needs across work and life.

Finally, **36.5%** highlighted psychological safety factors like belonging, empathy, and respect as enabling them to show up as their authentic selves without fear at work.

With work-life harmony standing out as a top driver, leadership should foster compassionate connection through all levels, conveying genuine care for the ups and downs employees face personally and professionally. Combined with equitable, ethical treatment and promoting inclusive spaces for diverse perspectives, employees gain assurance that their multidimensional wellbeing matters. This holistic foundation empowers them to thrive at work and in life.

Well-Being

21.90%	41.46%	36.50%
Equity and Fairness	**Work-Life Harmony**	**Psychological Safety**

21.90%
41.46%
36.50%

▶ **Organizational Pride**

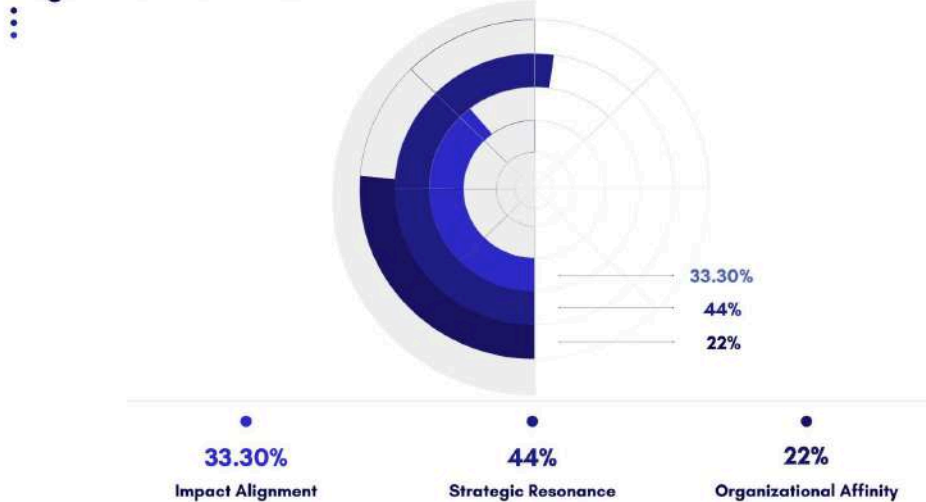Based on our survey results, the following findings have been observed.

79% of the population selected Organizational Pride as a crucial factor for a winning workplace.

The following chart shows the percentage of our survey respondents that mentioned aspects related to the three drivers of purpose. Out of those who selected Pride, **33.30%** of respondents emphasized the importance of aligning with the larger vision of their organizations, feeling a sense of being able to meaningfully contribute towards the organizational goals, and creating a tangible impact through their work.

An overwhelming **44%** felt that propelling Strategic Resonance was key for fostering a sense of pride, pointing to shared mission and values, celebrating a positive ethos, and committing to ethical integrity. Finally, **22%** highlighted organizational affinity as a result of socially responsible and value-oriented initiatives such as volunteering, sustainability, DEI, and community involvement as providing opportunities to support meaningful societal causes through their workplace.

With strategic resonance and impact alignment standing out as the top drivers, business leaders should double down on ethics, transparency, and clarify the "why" behind organizational goals. By fostering pride internally while enabling work-life fit and participation in outreach externally, employers reinforce purpose as employees comprehend their larger contributions to the organization and society overall.

Organizational Pride

33.30%	44%	22%

33.30%	44%	22%
Impact Alignment	Strategic Resonance	Organizational Affinity

▶ **Connection**

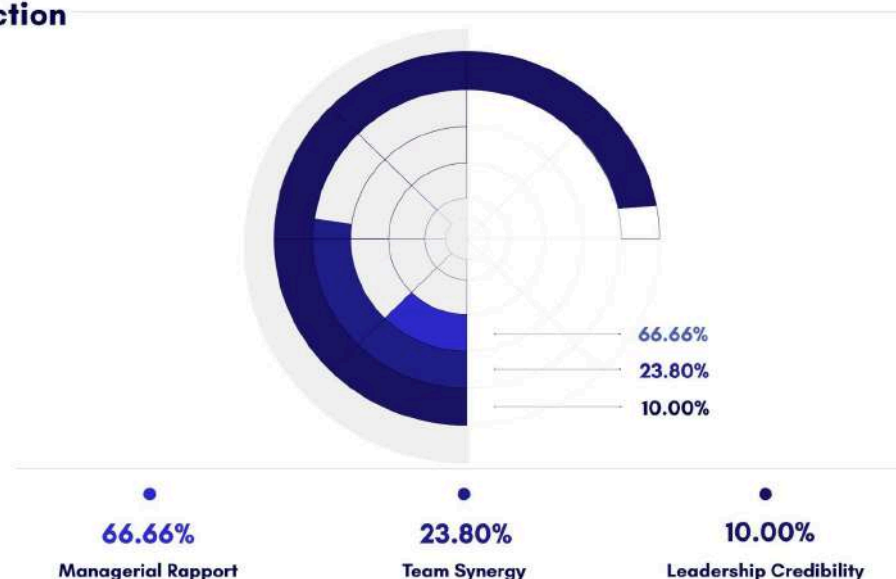Based on our survey results, the following findings have been observed.

89.1% of the population selected Connection as a crucial factor for a winning workplace.

The following chart shows the percentage of our survey respondents that mentioned aspects related to the three drivers of connection. Out of those who selected Connection, **66.66%** of respondents felt having an open, supportive relationship with their direct manager was most vital for feeling connected at work. They emphasized transparent communication, approachability, and honest feedback from managers as paramount. Next, **23.80%** highlighted positive team dynamics and bonding among coworkers as essential for connectivity, pointing to trusting relationships and smooth collaboration with peers. Finally, **10%** indicated that credible, courageous leadership sets the tone for connection across the organization. When senior leaders model transparency, integrity and concern for employee wellbeing, it cascades through the culture.

With manager rapport emerging as central to fostering workplace connections, leadership should empower frontline managers through training and resources to nurture trust, communicate openly, and sustain a compassionate team environment for employees. This foundation of trust and support is central to the glue that binds employees to their work, peers and the organization as a whole.

As seen in Chapter 3, Jombay integrated these results into a 3-tier model - the WoW model, which aims to serve as a blueprint for managers and organizations alike to build a Workplace of Winners.

Connection

| 66.66% | 23.80% | 10.00% |

| 66.66% | 23.80% | 10.00% |
| Managerial Rapport | Team Synergy | Leadership Credibility |

REFERENCES

Amabile, T. M. (1996). Creativity in context: Update to the social psychology of creativity. Westview Press.

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1994). Improving organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership. SAGE Publications.

Bhatnagar, J. (2007). Talent management strategy of employee engagement in Indian ITES employees: Key to retention. Employee Relations, 29(6), 640-663. https://doi.org/10.1108/01425450710826122

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). Flow: The psychology of optimal experience. Journal of Leisure Research, 24(1), 93-94. https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.1992.11969876

DeHaan, C. R., & Ryan, R. M. (2014). Symptoms of wellness: Happiness and eudaimonia from a self-determination perspective. In Stability of happiness (pp. 37-55). Academic Press.

Dixit (2021). Talent management: A strategy for employee engagement, retention and performance within public sector banks. IJCRT. https://ijcrt.org

Dixon-Fyle, S., Dolan, K., Hunt, V., & Prince, S. (2020). How inclusion matters. McKinsey & Company. https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion

Evan W. Carr, Reece, A., Kellerman, G. R., & Robichaux, A. (2019). The value of belonging at work. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2019/12/the-value-of-belonging-at-work

Ghosh, P., Satyawadi, R., Joshi, J. P., & Shadman, M. (2013). Who stays with you? Factors predicting employees' intention to stay. International Journal of Organizational Analysis, 21(3), 288-312.

Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1976). Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory. Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 16(2), 250-279. https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(76)90016-7

Hofstede, G. (1980). Culture and organizations. International Studies of Management & Organization, 10(4), 15-41. https://doi.org/10.1080/00208825.1980.11656300

Korn Ferry (2018). The global talent crunch. https://www.kornferry.com/challenges/talent-acquisition/talent-crunch-2018

Kundu, S. C., & Mor, A. (2017). Workforce diversity and organizational performance: A study of IT industry in India. Employee Relations, 39(2), 160-183. https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-06-2015-0114

Linkedin & Glint (2020). The state of human experience in the workplace. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/state-human-experience-workplace-linkedin-workforce-insights/

Locke, E. A., & Schweiger, D. M. (1979). Participation in decision-making: One more look. In B. M. Staw (Ed.), Research in organizational behavior (Vol. 1, pp. 265-339). JAI Press.

Manz, C. C., & Sims, H. P., Jr. (1987). Leading workers to lead themselves: The external leadership of self-managing work teams. Administrative Science Quarterly, 32(1), 106-129.

Microsoft (2024). Work trend index annual report. https://www.microsoft.com

Qualtrics (2023). Belonging at work: The top driver of employee engagement. https://www.qualtrics.com/

Singh, M. (2019). High-performance work system in India: Examining the role of employee engagement as a mediator. https://www.academia.edu

Sull, D., Sull, C., & Zweig, B. (2022). Toxic culture is driving the great resignation. MIT Sloan Management Review, 63(4), 1-5. https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/toxic-culture-is-driving-the-great-resignation/

Thompson, C., & Gregory, J. B. (2012). Managing millennials: A framework for improving attraction, motivation, and retention. The Psychologist-Manager Journal, 15(4), 237-246.

Tilford, C. (2018, June 8). The millennial moment — in charts. Financial Times. https://www.ft.com/content/f81ac17a-68ae-11e8-b6eb-4acfcfb08c11

Torraco, R. J. (2005). Writing integrative literature reviews: Guidelines and examples. Human Resource Development Review, 4(3), 356-367. https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484305278283

Torraco, R. J. (2016). Writing integrative literature reviews: Using the past and present to explore the future. Human Resource Development Review, 15(4), 404-428. https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484316671606

JOMBAY

WOW

WOW
MANAGER
PROGRAM

Get in touch :)

Rex Fernandes
rex@jombay.com
+91 97671 95781

Mansi Mehta
mansi@jombay.com
+91 96733 10011