Significo

Human-Centered Care in the Digital Age:

Empowering Employee Engagement Through Personalized Software Solutions

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The digital age offers countless opportunities for innovation and connection, but it also presents unique challenges that can prevent connection and engagement in the workplace. To overcome these challenges, leaders must find new ways to engage, empower, and connect with their employees as humans and individuals.

According to Rick McCartney, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner, Adjunct Instructor at MGH Institute of Health Professions, and CEO and Co-Founder of Significo, the rise of remote work has left many people feeling isolated and lacking social connection. So it's important to intentionally prioritize engagement and human interaction.

Personalized software solutions promote employee engagement by helping employees feel heard, understood, and motivated to take ownership of their work and personal health. This leads to improved work performance and satisfaction for not only individual employees but also the entire organization.

Read on to learn more about the role of personalization in employee engagement and how to implement personalized software solutions for individual and organizational success.

Personalization & Employee Engagement

Personalization plays an integral role in human-centered care by highlighting the importance of each individual's unique experience, knowledge, skills, and interests. This promotes employee engagement, leading to greater individual satisfaction and health outcomes that, in turn, help drive organizational success as well.

Introduction to Personalization in Employee Engagement

In terms of fostering employee engagement through technology solutions, personalization isn't just about encouraging individuals to use a particular app or make purchases based on their interests. Rather, personalization in this context means prioritizing people's quality of life outside of the app itself.

As explained by Mara Özütok, Psychologist and Health Concept Designer at Significo, this also means being very intentional with the tone you use when addressing users.

"What we try to do is meet the user where they are," she explains, "and try to talk to them as if we were sitting with them in the same room. Just seeing them as humans, even though it's not in person."

Empathy is especially important for health and wellness technology solutions. People want to feel heard and understood by other humans, and they need to have their feelings validated, not dismissed or treated generically.

Instead of relying on toxic positivity or obvious AI-generated content, effective personalization guides people in developing awareness of their own emotions and experiences and gently invites them to pursue positive change without judgment.

Personalized software solutions allow employees to engage with their work and colleagues in ways that make sense for them and that enable them to be their most productive.

"More than ever, mental health is becoming much more prominent, and it's not as taboo to talk about," says Joaquin Avellan, Director of DevOps at Significo. "It's becoming more important to be flexible enough to cater to all the neurodiverse people."

Every employee has unique mental and physical health needs, and one of the best ways to keep everyone engaged is to ensure that the technology and processes they use are able to cater to those individual needs.

Impact of Personalization on Employee Engagement

Personalized experiences enhance employee engagement not just by catering to their unique needs and empowering them to engage with their health, but also by improving their satisfaction and overall well-being. When people feel valued and appreciated for their individual contributions, they are more motivated to produce quality work.

Numerous studies have examined the relationship between employee engagement and ROI in terms of increased productivity and lower turnover, with recent findings indicating as much as a 23% increase in productivity for businesses with highly engaged employees.

McCartney asserts that employee engagement is all about investing in the culture of the workplace and ensuring everyone is being taken care of. Companies that do this well are not only great places to work but also great businesses to run — and the opposite is true, as well.

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"If you're not investing in your people, increasing the cultural dynamic and the competency of your people, and creating a great place to work, then you're stuck with a company that hasn't invested in those areas," he says. "CEOs of companies with miserable cultures have miserable counts."

That's why McCartney believes no piece of technology can replace the need for leaders to know their people. Rather, the right technology solutions demonstrate that you care about your employees and understand what they, as individual humans, need to help them perform at their best.

Personalized Software Strategies & Implementation

When adopting a personalized software solution for your organization, there are a few key points to consider, some of which have little to do with the software itself. Often, how you introduce and implement the solution is just as important as — if not more important than — the exact piece of technology you use.

Have a Measurement Plan

McCartney advises starting with a quarterly survey that asks employees to give a numerical rating, with the option to explain their scores, for questions like:

How likely are you to recommend to a friend that they come work for this company?

How appreciated do you feel at work?

How well do you understand the company's mission?

How well do you understand how your specific job fits into the company's mission?

As you track the answers to these questions over time, you can then design and implement solutions to address the feedback your employees give.

For example, if multiple employees say they're receiving plenty of verbal appreciation, but it's not reflected in their pay, you may need to reassess your compensation plan instead of focusing solely on introducing new technology and tools.

Communicate Clearly

As you gather feedback and incorporate it into solutions, it's important to communicate with employees about those solutions. Point out exactly how the new solutions address problems they brought to your attention and the specific benefits they can expect to get by adopting new technologies.

Listening to and acting on your employees' concerns demonstrates that you care about providing solutions that actually work for them. When employees see that their input makes a difference, they're more likely to continue providing constructive feedback — and to be more engaged overall.

"Something else I'm working on is anchoring the vision," McCartney says. "Which means that each time you address the company, you make sure to reiterate: Who are we and what are we here for? Anchoring to that, and then building your key objectives off of it, is a nice way to help people remember why they signed up to work with this company."

The "how" and "what" of the technology you use is important, but communicating the "who" and "why" behind what you do as an organization must come first.

Know Your Population

No matter what software solution you use to engage your employees, keep in mind that not all employees respond in the same way. That's why Avellan says it's essential to know what your population likes and to implement engagement strategies that target different subgroups within your organization.

Some people, for example, are very competitive and benefit greatly from gamified programs. Others, however, won't share their enthusiasm for contests and will need other types of incentives to motivate them.

"One strategy doesn't fit all," Avellan says. "You need to really look at the diversity of your employees and do what you can to engage the specific people you have." If you aren't sure what incentives will work best for your employees, you may just need to ask them.

Encourage Positive Action

Finally, when choosing personalized software solutions, be very intentional about what the technology will prompt your employees to do and how taking that action will benefit them. For example, in creating prompts for Significo's SDK, Özütok and her team make a point of offering pressure-free recommendations for a variety of circumstances.

"An important aspect in making these suggestions is that we always invite them to do something," she says. "So I'd say, 'Do this and that, and you will get this and that from it.' Like, 'If you're feeling overwhelmed at times, maybe you can try this, but don't put any pressure on yourself.'"

Flexibility and being able to customize the solution according to each employee is important. But within that flexibility, there needs to be some structure tailored to their unique needs that encourages them to take specific, beneficial actions.

Personalized Software Solutions in Action

McCartney identifies employee engagement and satisfaction as the earliest outcomes of implementing personalized software solutions. In other words, are the employees using the tool, and do they notice a difference in their lives from having used it?

For example, one Significo customer recently reported employees were enthusiastically talking about the tool in the break room. "They were sharing with each other what their recommendations and health score had been," McCartney explains. "It was creating a dialogue about having a culture of health and well-being."

Much like having your own personalized profile on a video streaming service, these kinds of personalized health and wellness apps give users perspective on their own needs and interests. As they compare and contrast their results with their colleagues,

it helps them realize just how unique their own health journey is.

Pulse surveys, like McCartney's quarterly survey, are another example of engaging employees through personalized software solutions. In this case, the personalization comes from the employees themselves — while everyone is asked the same question or set of questions, their individual answers give personalized feedback to the management.

In addition to providing dedicated, customizable software solutions, some companies allow employees to personalize their own benefits plans and schedules. This both gives employees greater control over their health and encourages them to design a work-life balance that suits their specific needs and goals.

Ethical Considerations

Personalizing software solutions for employee health and well-being involves a lot of data, personal information, and the sharing of health care resources. As such, there are certain ethical considerations — especially in the areas of informed consent, responsibility and legal protection, and data privacy — that must be taken into account.

Consent

People need to understand exactly what they're consenting to when using the technology. If the tool uses generative AI to curate health recommendations, for example, users should be informed of that and, ideally, be given the option to choose between AI-generated responses and responses directly curated by health experts.

For further transparency, Özütok recommends incorporating consent throughout the software experience, not just when the person begins using it. So, for example, in the Significo SDK, which offers health and wellness recommendations, users receive regular reminders to consult a physician for diagnoses and more specific treatment advice.

Responsibility

Offering responsible, human-centered technology solutions is about much more than just fulfilling legal requirements for consent and privacy. It's also about going the extra mile to communicate to users what they should and shouldn't expect to get from using the tool.

"It's really important to maintain the distinction between health recommendations and health care prevention or therapy," Özütok says. Claiming to offer more than you are qualified to provide — as many self-proclaimed "DIY therapy" apps unfortunately do — is a dangerous false promise, both medically and legally.
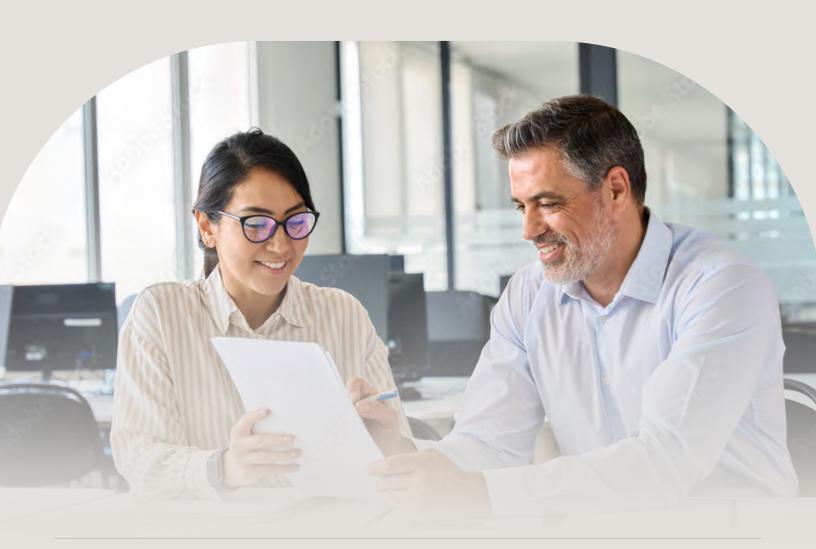
Privacy

When implementing personalized software solutions, protecting employees' privacy is not just a legal issue — it's also essential for maintaining their trust. If the software uses machine learning, for example, people need to know how their data is being used and that they can't have it deleted later.

"It doesn't necessarily open up that individual to any risk, and that data is not going to somehow trace back to them," McCartney explains. "But people need to be aware that if their data is used to train a model, then once it's been used, it's been used. You can't unravel that sweater by pulling the thread."

It all ties back to consent. People need to be informed not only of the benefits of using the product but also of any potential negative effects, along with the specific privacy policies you're expected to adhere to.

For companies with remote workforces, it's especially important to consider privacy regulations worldwide. If you have workers stationed in different countries, complying with the strictest regulations ensures you're compliant everywhere, including those countries with less stringent policies.

The Future of Personalized Software Solutions

Moving forward, technology has great potential to help increase engagement within human interactions. "I think technology is actually going to take an increasing role in human-centeredness," McCartney says. "The best way to make interactions more human is to leverage technology to make them more personalized and individualized."

If you don't already have an employee engagement or well-being platform in place for your employees, now is the time to take advantage of the many options available like Significo's SDK.

Personalized software solutions are shaping the future of employee engagement by making health information more accessible to everyone — not just medical professionals.

"My hope is that technology will help people have more agency over their own health, because people can gather information and educate themselves more easily," Özütok says. "Products in the health technology realm can help people receive the information they need, derive the necessary behavior from it, and become more self-sufficient."

It takes time for humans to get to know each other and learn to see each other as whole, three-dimensional people. But with the assistance of technology, it can be much easier and faster to synthesize the core aspects of a person's experiences, personality, and preferences.

Technology for Human-Centered Care

Personalized software solutions place individual users at the center of their own care, empowering them to make informed decisions, actively engage with their health, and contribute to their organization's overall success.

By understanding your employees' individual needs and offering software solutions that fulfill those needs, you can encourage active engagement, improve employee performance and personal health, and drive individual and organizational growth.

At Significo, we're committed to empowering individuals to take control of their health data for better health outcomes and work performance. Schedule a demo today to see what Significo can do for your organization.