

5 Employee Engagement Campaigns that Delight and Retain Talent



Presented by

STORIES



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Introduction

It's not enough to recruit great people to your company. You need to retain them.

Positive company culture and employee engagement contribute to unwanted attrition. In a recent study by Gallup,¹ low-engaged teams had turnover rates of 18% to 43% higher than high-engaged teams. An engaged workforce also contributes to other business outcomes like higher profitability, productivity, and even customer loyalty.

Despite the high impact of employee engagement, Forrester Research² predicted that employee engagement and culture energy will continue to decline in 2024. In 2023, engagement dropped to just 34% and culture energy hit 55% globally—both down 10% from higher levels in 2021 and 2022. Forrester believes the decline will continue in 2024 and attributes it to things like return-to-office mandates and other equity issues.

So, what can communication leaders do to improve employee engagement?

Enter an employee engagement campaign.



What is an Employee Engagement Campaign?

An employee engagement campaign is a strategic initiative that encourages employee participation in company activities, goals, and culture.

While specific tactics and channels will vary, the ultimate goal of any employee engagement campaign is to create a positive work environment where employees feel valued, empowered, and motivated to contribute their best efforts toward the organization's objectives.

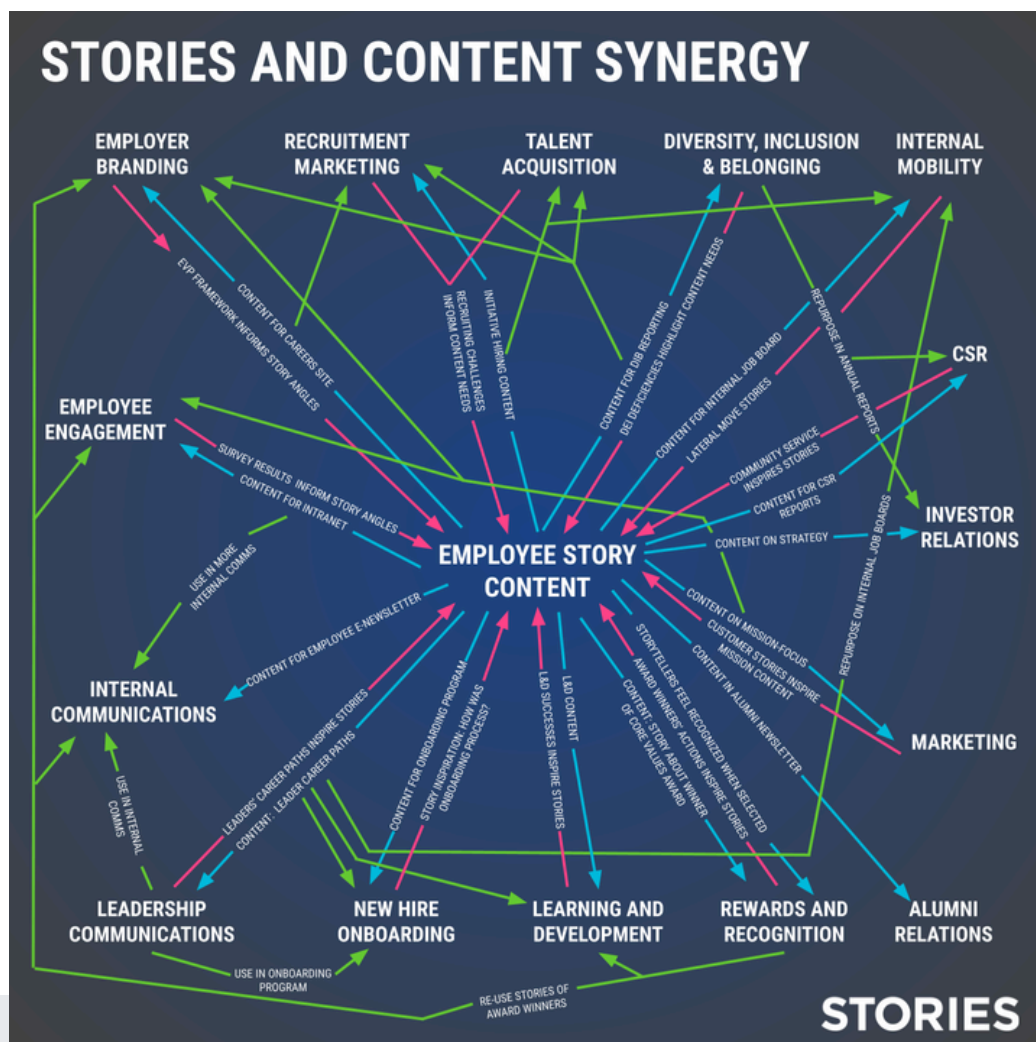
A great employee engagement campaign has a few critical elements.

- 1 It serves a purpose.**
Your campaign needs to be grounded in a company initiative, goal, or culture concept. A campaign without a reason can easily be dismissed and ignored.
- 2 It honors the employee experience.**
A campaign *for* employees needs to *feature* employees. Campaigns that lead with employee stories will build community and connection across your entire workforce.
- 3 It can be measured.**
From impressions to event signups, your campaign's performance should be easily measured (more on this later).

Here are some tips to plan an effective engagement campaign strategy.

Internal Alignment: Don't go at it alone.

Employee story content applies to a myriad of use cases within an organization. When planning an employee engagement campaign, take stock of who else may have access to great stories, and who can benefit from having story content for their channels.





To get other stakeholders involved, take the following steps:

1. **Identify other departments** that could benefit from an employee story campaign. Talent acquisition, employer brand, and internal communications are no-brainers, but don't overlook other stakeholders like DEI and onboarding.
2. **Make internal connections** with those departments to learn their pain points and challenges with employee-led content.
3. **Ask questions** about the channels they use and the content they need to fuel those channels.
4. **Collaborate on a shared vision** for employee engagement content that can be used across the organization.

KPIs: Align your campaign to measurable outcomes.

Your campaigns are more than a way to engage employees. They are strategic initiatives to get employees to take action in some new way. When you position a campaign with the desired behavior in mind, you can craft an effective distribution and measurement strategy to show the campaign's impact.

Employee engagement campaigns often utilize channels where you have direct insight into metrics and measurement.

As you plan your campaign, consider the end goal. What are you hoping employees do after seeing your content? Some of those could include:

- Signing up for an internal program or initiative
- Registering for an event
- Enrolling in a new benefit
- Engaging with your brand on social media



Interns participating in a company-sponsored networking event.




Once you've established the end goal, you can determine the promotional channels you'll use and how to measure success. Some metrics that could point to campaign impact include:

- Video views
- Intranet page visits and time spent on page
- Clicks on calls to action
- New program sign-ups
- Event registrations
- Social shares by team members

Identify your content channels

Employees consume content in many ways and your campaigns should maximize reach across multiple channels – internally and externally. Common channels include:

Internal Channels	External Channels
Intranet pages	Career site / website
Email newsletters	Email nurture campaigns
Town Hall, Events	Social media
Slack / Messaging tools	YouTube
Display monitors in offices / facilities	Employee ambassador programs
Landing pages, info hubs	Third-party recruiting sites



An employee engagement campaign shouldn't be a one-and-done event. The best content lives on through a coordinated approach across teams, channels, and use cases.

5 Campaign Ideas to Improve Employee Engagement

Any role that touches employee communications needs a few campaign ideas in its back pocket. In this section, we'll uncover the best campaigns to increase employee engagement when faced with five common culture-building goals.

1. Fostering better connections between departments
2. Recognizing team members for their accomplishments
3. Celebrating diversity and inclusion moments
4. Highlighting the power of benefit programs
5. Creating excitement around an event

Employee stories are the best way to build campaign content around these goals. Employee stories not only share meaningful experiences that will resonate with your other team members, they also serve as an engagement opportunity for those selected to tell their stories.

It's a win-win-win. You get substantive content to build a campaign, employees hear from their peers on what matters to them, and employee storytellers feel honored to share their experiences.



In the following section, we'll share five employee engagement campaign ideas that support the common culture-building goals listed above. For each campaign, you'll get details on:

- How to identify an employee engagement campaign strategy that addresses your culture challenge
- A real-life example of an employee engagement campaign that addresses this challenge using employee stories
- Tips on how to do it right



Campaign Idea #1: Behind the Scenes

Goal:

Fostering better connections between departments

Communication challenge:

Teams feel disconnected from each other, or unclear about the impact of other teams' work. You need to foster more connections between departments but in an engaging way.

Campaign solution: Behind the Scenes

A behind-the-scenes look at the work, the people, and their impact can help others across the company understand more about different areas of the business and the people who keep them moving forward.



Pro tips for a great campaign

Get clear on the look and feel.

Do you want people to get excited, be reflective, or feel empathy? This will drive the overall tone and approach.

Set yourself up for success.

Pick a team that makes storytelling easy: maybe they are under-appreciated, or working on an exciting initiative.

Diversity matters.

Select storytellers across all levels, teams, and geographies. Go as big as you can to represent as many perspectives as possible.

Don't shy away from personal stuff.

The best behind-the-scenes stories include employees talking about their background, families, and their dreams.

Keep it on repeat.

While this is a great campaign to do one time, make it an always-on campaign to fuel your content calendar all year long.

EXAMPLE CAMPAIGN #1

Meet the Makers



watch one of the campaign videos!

OVERVIEW


Challenge	Manufacturing is the heart of a global automaker's business...yet very few team members knew the people behind the vehicles.
Campaign Summary	Celebrate the stories of manufacturing team members through a "Meet the Maker" series to boost morale and drive employee engagement and retention.
KPIs	Intranet traffic, employee engagement, employee feedback

CONTENT CREATION

Locations visited	Six automotive manufacturing facilities
Employees Interviewed	26 team members representing all job areas & professional backgrounds, hourly workers & leadership.
Content Created	26 employee spotlight videos 2 compilation videos

DISTRIBUTION & IMPACT

Internal Channels	Intranet On-site TVs driving traffic via QR code
External Channels	YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram
Results	- Increase in intranet traffic, especially in featured sites - 15,000+ cumulative video views on YouTube



Campaign Idea #2: Surprise & Delight

Goal:

Recognize team members for their accomplishments

Communication challenge:

Your organization lacks a cohesive way to recognize employees for their hard work and accomplishments. You need to celebrate employees in a bigger and more meaningful way.

Campaign solution: Surprise and Delight

From employee of the month to core value winners, employees who stand out for their contributions should be celebrated in return. With a surprise and delight campaign, you keep their recognition a secret and capture their reaction during the reward reveal to uncover the emotion behind the celebration.



Pro tips for a great campaign

Plan as far in advance as possible.

Coordinating with winners, managers, and a creative team to create content in time for the big reveal takes time.

Prep managers with care.

Make sure managers feel comfortable, know the full picture on why their team member is winning and what they should highlight when they're on camera.

Leave space for vulnerability.

Everyone is going to react differently to hearing (good) news they weren't expecting. After the initial reaction, follow up with questions on how it feels to be recognized for a job well done.

Keep it quiet!

Most of the company shouldn't know the winners until the big reveal. After the filming is complete, make sure managers, winners, and others involved know to keep it under wraps.

EXAMPLE CAMPAIGN #2

The Big Reveal



watch behind-the-scenes footage!

OVERVIEW

Challenge	The recognition of the annual core values winners lacked excitement and was uninspiring to non-award winners.
Campaign Summary	During a filmed conversation, managers surprise team members with a core value award. The reveal moments are edited into short videos and played during a company-wide town hall. 'The Big Reveal' campaign gives managers a chance to award team members face-to-face. And by sharing the surprise in a town hall, all employees engage in the core value celebration.
KPIs	Employee feedback during live town hall; Intranet traffic

CONTENT CREATION

Locations visited	Five locations across U.S. & Canada and one virtual interview.
Employees Interviewed	10 winners and their managers filmed in conversation about general company culture. At the end of the conversation, the manager reveals the award to the unsuspecting winner.
Content Created	10 individual videos and 1 team award video; A global interactive map that includes the stories of all winners.

DISTRIBUTION & IMPACT

Internal Channels	Live, virtual town hall; Intranet
Results	Incredible feedback during the town hall: <i>"I'd write more but I'm crying too much. Everyone is so deserving and incredible here!";</i> and <i>"This was such a neat concept. These reveals are so endearing"; "This is the best award ceremony ever. This is so inspiring and I'm smiling the whole way through."</i>



Campaign Idea #3: Always-On DEI Content

Goal:

Celebrating diversity and inclusion moments

Communication challenge:

Diversity and inclusion moments creep up on your team and you find yourselves scrambling to create content that substantively celebrates your people's uniqueness.

Campaign solution: Always-On DEI Content

From Black History Month to Pride, there is a constant need for celebratory DEI content throughout the year. An always-on approach to DEI content ensures that you're ready for any celebratory DEI event on the calendar.



Pro tips for a great campaign

Create a content calendar.

Decide which DEI moments you're going to create content for and how they may align to stories in your organization.

Plan ahead.

Plan at least a quarter in advance. Selecting storytellers, interviewing them, and creating content will always take more time than you anticipate.

Highlight leaders *and* solo contributors.

While it's great to include the people leading the way in your company, many ERG members also have incredible stories to share. Ask leaders for recommendations.

It's okay to get personal.

Inclusion is very personal. Lean into employees' perspectives, personal struggles, and accomplishments.

Share multiple perspectives. Try to include more than one person in each piece of content to show that your company commitment rings true across them all.

EXAMPLE CAMPAIGN #3

Always-on DEI Content



read the case study

OVERVIEW

Challenge	Internally, low awareness and excitement around ERGs Externally, low awareness of the company's commitment to DEI
Campaign Summary	Creating a content library aligned to every ERG's key DEI moments during the year
KPIs	Social engagement on external social posts

CONTENT CREATION

Locations visited	Team members from seven countries were interviewed virtually.
Employees Interviewed	23 employee storytellers ranging in tenure, locations, roles, and ERG participation.
Content Created	16 videos created to celebrate eight DEI moments.

DISTRIBUTION & IMPACT

External Channels	LinkedIn Career site
Results	Tens of thousands of views and hundreds of engagements on LinkedIn posts celebrating DEI moments like Black History Month, Pride, Veterans Day, and more.



Campaign Idea #4: Benefits Blitz

Goal:

Highlighting the power of benefits programs

Communication challenge:

Your company has rolled out new benefits and programs, but awareness and adoption is low. You need to highlight the impact of these programs so more people take advantage of them.

Campaign solution: Benefits Blitz

Benefits are personal — every employee uses them differently. When showing the impact of benefits, the more stories you tell the better. It's time to cast a wide net to find employees across the business who can champion the power of company benefits.



Pro tips for a great campaign

Feature leaders *and* team members.

A strong narrative around benefits needs top-down approval and bottom-up adoption. Cast a wide storyteller net.

Have a clear call to action.

Once someone engages with the content, make sure they know exactly where to go to learn more and leverage these benefits for themselves.

Get leader buy-in for sensitive topics.

It's important to let those stories be told in the storyteller's own words and not watered down by company jargon. Get leadership buy-in for personal storytelling first to ensure your campaign goes off without a hitch.

Know your company's distribution

nuances. Are you global with a workforce who speaks different languages? Do you have a distributed workforce who are in the field? Choose channels and content mediums wisely.

EXAMPLE CAMPAIGN #4

Mental Health Anti-Stigma Campaign



OVERVIEW

read the case study

Challenge	Low participation rate for mental health benefits, despite the wellbeing challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. A 2021 company-wide well-being survey revealed that stigma around mental health at work was preventing team members from using their benefits.
Campaign Summary	Uncover stories from leaders, globally, to eliminate the stigma around mental health and asking for support.
KPIs	Internal video views; Visits to a Wellbeing Hub

CONTENT CREATION

Locations visited	Global leaders were interviewed virtually.
Employees Interviewed	Nine employee storytellers from different locations and parts of the business.
Content Created	Nine videos created and captioned in nine different languages to reach a global workforce.

DISTRIBUTION & IMPACT

Internal Channels	Wellbeing Hub QR codes and monitor displays in manufacturing facilities
Results	13,500 average views per video; 5,000 visits to the Wellbeing Hub post-campaign. Awarded a company President's Award for being the highest performing internally-facing campaign of the year.



Campaign Idea #5: Energize & Engage

Goal:

Create excitement around a company event

Communication challenge:

Your annual company meeting is coming up and you want it to feel more personal this year. In addition to celebrating business wins, you want to highlight the people behind the work before, during, and after the event.

Campaign solution: Energize & Engage

Your people will feel more energized in meeting content when they're involved. By unveiling their employee stories during the event, you help them become stars.



Pro tips for a great campaign

Build an inclusive storyteller list.

Make sure everyone feels represented. Include perspectives across roles, geographies, and tenures.

Gather your internal partners.

From talent brand to PR and internal communications, everyone has a stake in the success of a project with high visibility internally and externally.

Get the tone right.

If your goal is to energize and excite your employees, you need upbeat music, fast-paced visuals, and substantive stories to bring out emotion in storytellers and your audience.

Don't stop at the event.

Build on the momentum by putting a plan in place for additional promotion — make sure your employee ambassadors have access to share the content with their networks, too.

EXAMPLE CAMPAIGN #5

Engage Event Storytelling



OVERVIEW

watch examples in case study

Challenge	Annual all-company meeting lacked a company culture element, presenting a missed opportunity to engage employees.
Campaign Summary	Amplify employee voices from around the world at the all-company meeting with unscripted employee story videos. Videos were shared at the event and then immediately on social media to build on the excitement of already-engaged employees.
KPIs	Video watch time; Social media post engagement; Feedback at the event; Content shared by team members

CONTENT CREATION

Locations visited	One U.S. location and four virtual, global interviews.
Employees Interviewed	12 employee storytellers from around the world.
Content Created	Three compilation videos focused on culture and professional development.

DISTRIBUTION & IMPACT

Internal Channels	Company event; Internal media kit with promotion prompts
External Channels	LinkedIn; Employee advocacy
Results	50 hours of watch time across the three videos within the first few days of release. 12,000 impressions in a week on LinkedIn & Instagram 4.42% engagement rate on LinkedIn in one week

Conclusion

From celebrating employees to highlighting new initiatives, the best way to engage your team members is by sharing the stories of their colleagues and peers.

You play a critical role in reinforcing cultural concepts in your organization. And it takes time, effort, and a lot of planning to do it well.

Thinking in campaigns rather than just a content calendar can help you expand the scope of the stories you tell and the people you reach. We've included a blank campaign planning template on the next page so you can start brainstorming!

If you have an employee engagement goal and want to use employee stories, [get in touch](#) with the Stories Inc. team for a no-strings-attached brainstorming session!



YOUR CAMPAIGN NAME



the content is going to be great!

OVERVIEW

Challenge	
Campaign Summary	
KPIs	

CONTENT CREATION

Locations visited	
Employees Interviewed	
Content Created	

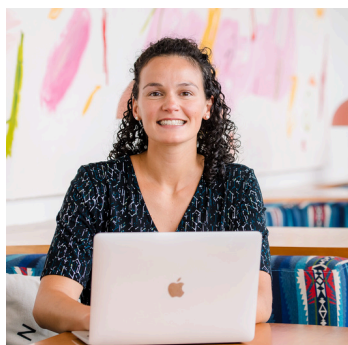
DISTRIBUTION & IMPACT

Internal Channels	
External Channels	
Results	

About Stories Inc.

Stories Inc. is an employer branding and recruitment marketing agency and content studio. Since 2012, Stories Inc. has been uncovering powerful stories of employee experiences, and bringing those stories to life through engaging content.

Stories Inc.'s expert team members capture employee stories that show what is unique about an organization's culture, and connect those stories to brand messaging, corporate values and purpose. Using a variety of digital media, Stories Inc. delivers content libraries full of engaging pieces, optimized for all candidate and employee-facing channels.



Sources

- 1 [Gallup](#), *The Benefits of Employee Engagement*
- 2 [Forrester Research](#), *Predictions 2024: An EX Recession And An AI Revolution Reshape The Future Of Work*