



# Exploring Employee Engagement Across Generations

## *From Generation X to Generation Alpha*

Shivani Pandey<sup>1</sup> & Princee Gupta<sup>2</sup>

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### ABSTRACT:

*The study explores the complexities of employee engagement within today's diverse workforce, highlighting the coexistence of multiple generations, including Gen X, Millennials, Gen Z, and the emerging Gen Alpha. It discusses how distinct generational values, expectations, and work approaches influence engagement strategies, necessitating a shift from traditional methods to flexible, technology-driven, and inclusive practices. The paper emphasises that effective employee engagement is crucial for enhancing organisational performance and motivation, positing that tailored approaches based on generational characteristics can bridge engagement gaps and foster a cohesive and high-performing workforce. Through examining the evolving dynamics of multigenerational workplaces, the research identifies the need for adaptive leadership, personalised learning environments, and strategic communication to meet the varying preferences of different generations. The findings indicate that organisations which actively embrace generational diversity are better positioned to foster innovation, enhance employee satisfaction, and achieve long-term success by adopting engagement strategies tailored to the distinct characteristics and expectations of each generational cohort.*

**Keywords:** Multigeneration, Alpha, Artificial Intelligence, Employee Engagement

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### INTRODUCTION

The contemporary workplace is significantly characterized by multigenerational diversity, with varying degrees of Gen X and the nascent Gen Alpha co-existing. Each generation has its distinctively shaped values, expectations, and working approaches, which simultaneously present organisations with opportunities and challenges. Lapoint and Spence (2017). Instead of independence and work-life balance as core values for Gen X, purpose in work and constant feedback are crucial for Millennials and Gen Z, while AI-driven teamwork and digital creativity will likely characterise Gen Alpha Doe et al. (2016). In such a space, traditional techniques for engaging employees are unlikely to work; companies need flexible technology-based, inclusive strategies (2013). With an understanding of generational differences combined with new engagement methods, organisations can create a cohesive and high-performing workforce. Mansor et al. (2017). This research paper discusses

changing dynamics in multigenerational workplaces while suggesting bridging strategies for generational gaps toward an organisation's sustained success.

Nowadays, employee engagement is frequently applied as a remedy in the workplace, particularly about performance and motivation. Many businesses want their members to be self-reliant, proactive, and responsible for their growth and performance (Bakker et al., 2008). In the meantime, corporate organisations need employees to be proactive and initiative-driven to engage with their position in work and commit to producing work with high standards to survive and successfully compete in today's tumultuous business environment (Bakker and Leiter, 2010; Macey and Schneider, 2008).

Employee engagement is the best course of action for organisational improvement from the industry's perspective. It is anticipated that motivated workers would generate superior outcomes on an individual, team, and organisational level (Bakker & Demerouti,

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<sup>1</sup> Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, CMP Degree College, University of Allahabad. E-mail: shivanipandey986@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, CMP Degree College, University of Allahabad.

2017). An engaged worker will be dedicated to the goal, given the task their best effort, maintain their behaviour while working, ensure he has finished the task by the objectives, and be prepared to take corrective or assessment actions if needed (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Employee Engagement

The term employee engagement has gained popularity among academics, consultants, and communication professionals in the human resource development industry (Shuck & Wollard, 2010). Today's firms are looking for ways to improve employee productivity, effectiveness, and wellness, which is why employee engagement has become so popular (Shuck & Wollard, 2010). As employee engagement is -An individual employee's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral state focused on desired organizational outcomes (Shuck & Wollard, 2010) employee engagement can also be viewed as a quality, a condition, or an action displayed by an employee, such as questioning the status quo, being creative, or just acting as a good corporate citizen (Mone & London, 2010). The concept of engagement according to Schaufeli et al. (2002) stands as a positive motivational state showing vigor, dedication, and absorption. The energy-driven work behaviour of vigour pairs with the positive feelings of dedication between commitment and pride, and absorption achieves deep concentration. Saks (2006) describes engagement as employees' sense of involvement with their organisation due to their work.

Workers showing engagement combine strong organisational connections with elevated levels of workplace enthusiasm to create innovative outcomes (Bakker et al., 2011). According to the 3s concept of "Say, Stay, and Strive", an engaged employee endorses their organisation positively, maintains job commitment and devotes additional efforts for success.

Employee engagement demonstrates how workers involve their body and minds and emotional selves while performing their duties at work. Due to their connection to their work, engaged employees improve job performance and boost both organisational advancement and workplace output (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2008).

### Workplace Characteristics of Different Generational Groups

The word generation comes from the Latin word *generāre*, which means to beget. An analogy of the widely used term "generation" describes phases of technological development and progression or general evolution. Organisations need to understand that each generation is influenced by the social, political, and economic trends of its era and that meeting individual requirements requires a unique, targeted approach. Generations need an environment that allows them to be shaped appropriately and operate with their suitability. Generations need an environment that allows them to be shaped appropriately and operate with their suitability. Kupperschmidt (2000) defines a generation as a collection of people who share a common birth year, age, region, and past experiences or events that significantly impacted their developmental stage. While Generation Z is innovative and digitally native, Generation X emphasises independence and family, Generation Y is tech-savvy and goal-oriented. Generation Alpha is predicted to be the most technologically integrated generation to date. Effective communication, education, and workplace inclusion all depend on an understanding of these generational characteristics. Regarding generations X, Y, and Z, there are differences in their work enthusiasm because it depends on several factors, including their various work environments, the leadership of each job, compensation, communication, and other elements that impact morale (Atieq, 2019) diverse life experiences and traits influence how each generation interacts, forming their generational work attributes and viewpoints on employee engagement (Doe et al., 2016).

- **Traditionalists (born before 1945):** During World War II and the Great Depression, traditionalists grew up. They admire authority, work ethic, and loyalty. They are more submissive and choose to work for a single company for the rest of their lives. Wants to make an impression and establish a strong moral code that values authority, reason, rules, discipline, and conformity. They also want to avoid conflict and pay attention to detail.
- **Baby Boomers (1945–1963):** After the mid-20th century, there was a population explosion among baby boomers. They saw important social and

political shifts, including various revolutions and the civil rights struggle. Despite their resistance to change and the difficulties of learning new skills, they are more diligent, highly productive, goal-oriented, perfectionist, less flexible, and great mentors. Seniority is important, and eagerness to adapt. They have embraced technology and rely extensively on networking in both their personal and professional lives. Even though they are perceived as extremely competitive, micromanagers detest idleness and are typically adept at negotiating and forming alliances.

- **Generation X (1965–1980):** Growing up, Generation X experienced both economic and technical transformation. They were the first to use video games, personal computers, and the Internet. They are also enterprising, skeptical, like to work alone, harbour some skepticism, and feel that they are the only ones who can choose their career paths.

If the workplace permits, work on multiple projects at once. Gen Xers is adept at multitasking. Because of the generational differences at work, they can give initiative priority. (Gursoy, 2008) Strong problem-solving skills, flexibility, and teamwork make them exceptional revenue creators.

- **Generation Y (Millennials, 1981–1996):** Millennials are more successful, technologically savvy, smart, and culturally diverse than any preceding generation because they grew up in an environment where technology was constantly changing; they embrace technology. Millennials were up in an era of tremendous technological innovation, which included the widespread use of social media and the internet. They frequently place a high importance on diversity, social issues, and work-life balance. While they desire to enjoy their time away from work, millennials “value their non-work moments and want work to contribute to their lifestyle rather than take over their lives” (Spiro, 2006). Additionally, they seek immediate gratification and the opportunity to succeed, and they want to have a considerable influence on the projects they work on.
- **Generation Z (1997–2012):** They respect honesty, are well-prepared, are tech specialists, are multitaskers, are self-starters and entrepreneurs, are pioneers, are realistic, and are occasionally a little

cynical. Work to enhance their people-management skills. The term “digital natives” is commonly used to describe Generation Z, as they grew up in a society that was constantly connected. They are distinguished by their proficiency with technology, the spirit of entrepreneurship, and attention to social justice and climate change issues.

- **Generation Alpha (2013–2025: emerging workforce):** Generation Alpha is the collective moniker for the first generation of the twenty-first century and the descendants of the millennials. The youngest generation currently being acknowledged is Generation Alpha. They are growing up in a time of high technology, and from an early age, smartphones, tablets, and other smart devices are a common part of their lives.

Having grown up as the tech-savvy child of millennials, Generation Alpha was born during an era of exponential technological advancement and now makes up a global workforce. Because they inherited technology from their predecessors, the Alpha generation is highly dependent on it. Whether teaching, entertainment, gaming, or transmission, Alpha Generic has stayed up to date with technological advancements.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study employee engagement practices among different generations in the workplace
2. To suggest engagement strategies suited to each generation in the workplace.

## METHODOLOGY

This study follows a secondary research approach with a descriptive and analytical design to explore employee engagement across generations, from Generation X to Generation Alpha. Data was collected from various credible sources, including academic journals, scholarly articles, books, and case studies. It involves an analysis of existing literature to identify key generational traits, workplace expectations, and engagement preferences. It examines how these differences influence employee engagement, organisational culture, and performance. The study also aims to develop a conceptual understanding of generation-specific engagement strategies that

support a diverse and inclusive workforce, resulting in organisational efficiency.

## RESULTS

### Generational Differences in the Workplace

Generational differences are an obstacle to the development of workplace dynamics and management. However, from a human resources point of view, differences can be converted to advantages because different generations have different pools of strengths and perspectives to offer the organisation. The main problem to solve is the influence of generational differences in values on the level of employees' engagement. To know this dynamic, organisations can utilise these differences to build a productive, multigenerational workforce. The workplace shows a greater generational gap as organisations accommodate a diverse workforce. Each of the subsequent generations—generations of Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, Generation Z, and the future Generation Alpha—has its values and expectations reflected in their experience within the society and economy. For instance, Baby Boomers will emphasise that job stability is a priority for them, while Millennials will focus on jobs of purpose and that are flexible, and Gen Z will prioritise the range of inclusion and well-being of mental health. Generation Alpha, despite it being too early to tell how the workers will fare, is projected to have higher digital fluency and to require customised, tech-oriented workspaces. Knowing the generational preferences is essential in building the engagement of employees. Becoming aware of and in a position to respond to the unique needs of different generations, organisations can develop inclusive measures that increase productivity and innovation while increasing retention, all in an endeavor to ensure that the workplace can become more harmonious and for the best functioning as subsequent generations join the workforce.

Every generation's values and attitudes are formed from the political, economic, and social environment in its formative years. These atypical experiences at a given moment are valuable psychological phenomena that determine the attitude of people toward work. Consequently, generations have different values and working preferences that they will bring to their

workplace. Nevertheless, we also need to mention that not all members of a generational cohort are in line with its values, and the experiences of each member of the generation in question can also introduce additional diversity in values and attitudes. This continued generational transformation demands that organizations know and adjust to the varying wants and desires of their work force.

### Engaging Employees: A Cross-Generational Perspective

Employee engagement is critical in today's unpredictable business landscape. Contrary to the assumption that younger employees are more engaged due to high energy levels, research suggests that engagement is not dependent on age but rather on emotional connections to the organisation, coworkers, and customers (Cran, 2010). Each generation has distinct expectations and engagement drivers, making it essential for organisations to adopt tailored strategies that cater to the needs of Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z. Adults who spent their childhood in a digital era have acquired technological skills from social media and global trends (Lyons, 2004). The workplace environment of millennials focuses on transparent dialogue, together with group collaboration and adaptable scheduling (Kapoor & Solomon, 2011). These individuals prosper through obstacles and remain dedicated to learning while seeking innovative working arrangements. As employees, they quickly depart from work situations which fail either to match their values or supply them with enough job satisfaction. The new work generation actively pursues career advancement and professional skills growth, together with work that gives meaningful value to them instead of showing organisational commitment.

Millennials are renowned for their deep connection to social media and technology. They are frequently characterized as social media and technology junkies, which has a significant impact on their communication preferences and desired careers. Millennials are known for their drive for success and equity, and they frequently look for ease and comfort in both their personal and professional lives. The first generation to have grown up in a world that is entirely digital and networked is Generation Z, which was born between the late 1990s and the early 2010s. They are



distinguished by their adept use of digital media and technology, which influences their social interactions and communication styles. Compared to earlier generations, this one is frequently regarded as more entrepreneurial and socially concerned, and it places a high emphasis on innovation. Adhanissa and Saragih (2024). As more millennials enter the workforce, high employee engagement is essential to the long-term viability and success of any business. Maintaining employee engagement turns out to be a win-win strategy since motivated workers are happier, and the company is better able to accomplish its objectives (Sahni, J., 2021).

### **Building Employee Engagement Across Generations: Strategic Approaches**

A paradigm shifts from static engagement models to dynamic, data-driven strategies that consider generational diversity is necessary to engage in a multigenerational workforce. Organisations can cultivate a culture of inclusivity, innovation, and long-term employee commitment by incorporating adaptive leadership, technology-enabled personalisation, hybrid work structures, diverse reward systems, and intergenerational collaboration. It takes a strategic, adaptable, and tech-driven approach to engage a multigenerational workforce. By adopting AI-powered engagement tools, optimising hybrid work models, and integrating purpose-driven initiatives, organisations can foster a culture of collaboration, innovation, and long-term commitment. These strategies ensure that all generations feel valued, motivated, and connected, driving organisational success.

1. **Alignment of adaptive leadership and communication models:** Leadership flexibility is one of the most important components of generational engagement. Baby Boomers, who value stability and recognition through tenure-based rewards, are well suited for transactional leadership styles, which are frequently preferred in hierarchical structures. However, transformational leadership that prioritises ongoing feedback, purpose-driven work, and cooperative decision-making is more effective with Millennials and Generation Z (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). Leaders need to foster flexible communication by combining traditional in-person interactions with

digital platforms like chatbots driven by artificial intelligence, asynchronous messaging tools, and immersive virtual meetings that appeal to the tech-savvy younger generations. A multi-channel strategy is crucial since different generations have different preferences for communication methods. While Millennials and Gen Z thrive on video calls, instant messaging, and collaborative platforms like Slack and Microsoft Teams, Baby Boomers and some Gen X employees frequently prefer in-person meetings and formal emails. AI-powered communication tools can determine the best ways to communicate by analysing employee preferences. To reduce the generational misperceptions, organisations should also use centralised dashboards to disseminate announcements. Digital newsletters and hybrid town halls can also help close the gap between generations as regards communication. This flexible approach will be useful because it will ensure that everyone is heard and valued to improve engagement.

2. **Architecting adaptive learning environments through technology:** When the workforce is multigenerational, a universal recognition model does not work. Tenure-based promotions and formal accolades, and structured rewards are appreciated by employees of Gen X and Baby Boomers. On the other hand, Gen Z and Millennials prefer routine, casual recognition through social media shout-outs and digital platforms' immediate outcomes. Organisations should adopt AI-powered performance monitoring systems that provide personalised recognition. Such experiential rewards as professional development possibilities or travelling incentives may motivate employees of all generations. Peer-to-peer recognition can also create a culture of gratefulness, hence making all staff members feel understood. It has become inadequate for different age groups through conventional blanket training models. To respond to this, organisations need to integrate AI-driven personalised learning pathways that respond to each learner's preferences and career objectives. For instance, Generation X would lean on self-directed modules, Baby Boomers could opt for a structured mentorship approach, whereas for Millennials and Gen Z, it is gamified learning,

virtual reality and microlearning. Organisations can therefore personalise adaptive learning experiences relative to the unique engagement styles and developmental needs of each generation by relying on AI Analytics.

3. **Adapting flexibility in engagement with hybrid work models:** Historically, used methods of involvement must be refuted in the era of distant and hybrid work setups. While independence and work-life balance count much for Millennials and Gen Z, Baby Boomers put their value on structured collaboration in the office. Organisations can encourage cross-generational engagement through the use of cloud-based collaboration tools, digital wellness programs to alleviate burnout, and a hybrid work model that combines synchronisation and asynchronous work dynamics. Also, AI-driven workforce analytics can optimise scheduling based on productivity trends with no compromise to effectiveness at the expense of flexibility. By customising experiences based on generational interests, artificial intelligence can completely change engagement. The AI solutions can predict trends of engagement, assess the behaviour of employees, and suggest customised interventions. The Generation Z employees might like interactive dashboards or instant messaging, while the Baby Boomers would prefer structured feedback via email. AI can customise training and give real-time assistance via chatbots, so employees will get data that suits them best. Organisations can use AI analytics to continually alter engagement strategies and make them inclusive of all generations.
4. **Applying behavioural insights to optimise engagement strategies:** Employers can tap into behavioural analytics to get more information about the trends in employee engagement over generations. With the help of AI-powered solutions, leaders can track teamwork patterns, preferred dynamics of communication and productivity trends, and help to implement them by making informed decisions. For example, the age demographic in question can receive a reward when performance coaching systems based on artificial intelligence software indicate that younger people are willing to accept real-time feedback. Similarly, organisations can develop programs that align

with the preferences of older workers who might want structured mentorship. Also, potential risks be identified potential risks of disengagement and preventive actions may be recommended through predictive analytics. Businesses can constantly refine their engagement strategies, scraping relevant data and developing subsequent strategies which support the needs of the workforce.

5. **Adopting digital wellness practices in mental health care:** With the fact that Millennials and Gen Z prioritise mental health, workplace well-being is now becoming an important engagement factor. Businesses should embrace AI-mediated wellness initiatives, such as fitness checks, meditation apps, and personalised solutions to control stress. Paid mental health days, flexible work hours, and virtual well-being check-ins all increase employee engagement. In addition, businesses can track employee morale and identify problems on time using the help of sentiment analysis tools. Organisations that lead digitally can encourage a nurturing environment where the mental health needs of people of all ages are addressed.
6. **Augmenting hybrid work efficiency through strategic practices:** Strategic approaches to the improvement of hybrid work effectiveness: Well-designed hybrid model increases participation through flexibility of working styles without the loss of productivity. An equilibrium hybrid-work approach is needed to involve other generations of employees. Millennials and Gen Z workers who find in-person collaboration efficient, while baby boomers and Gen X workers are acquainted with the traditional office surroundings, may enjoy working in person. Millennials and Gen Z workers feel at home working flexibly from home. Companies must enforce structured hybrid policies whereby employees are flexible to choose their mode of working, too, in the pursuit of increasing productivity. The cloud-based project management tools, asynchronous communication, and virtual brainstorming can ensure the integration of workflow from the smoothest perspective. Also, AI-driven scheduling can optimise the balance of in-person workdays and remote workdays to encourage collaboration without completely enacting individuality.

7. **Associating training strategies with game-based learning models:** Training & developmental programs must evolve to suit all types of learning among the generations. Gamification—the use of game mechanics in learning—improves engagement because Millennials and Gen Z are used to interactive digital experiences. There are several tools that organisations can use to motivate their workforce, including leaderboards, achievement badges, and a real-time view of progress. VR and AR simulations of immersive training experiences are not age-bound. In the meantime, structured and self-paced e-learning modules can serve Baby Boomers and Gen. X workers who prefer traditional learning methods. Gamification makes professional development exciting and accessible and promotes lifelong learning.
8. **Achieving organisational excellence through personalised appreciation:** A variety of reward systems is needed owing to the wide variations in generational preferences for incentives and acknowledgement. Millennials and Generation Z seek immediate social recognition from the digital spaces, and Baby Boomers and Generation Xs do appreciate formal recognition, such as financial incentives and promotions throughout tenure. Blockchain-supported performance tracking, sentiment analysis powered by AI as a way to customise appreciation, and virtual badges that gamify achievement milestones are instances of new strategies. Organisations can ensure that embedding the usage of data-driven insights into the recognition programs touches the intrinsic motivations of each of the generational cohorts in the engagement strategies.
9. **Assembling an efficient organisational culture:** Being the generations interested in the meaning of work, the younger generations, such as Gen Z and Millennials, are interested in companies that prioritise the social impact, sustainability, and moral business behaviour. To attract and retain these workers, the businesses should include purpose-driven projects in their engagement plans. Volunteer opportunities such as employee-directed sustainability initiatives, and corporate social responsibility initiatives all help to improve engagement. An open leadership communication on the mission and contributions to society instils a sense of belonging. The younger generations and all generations alike can gain greater motivation and retention, provided that it aligns with personal values and organisational objectives. Employees and work have stronger emotional bonds when there is a culture driven by purpose.
10. **Analysing technological tools with collaborative workspace design:** The layout of the modern workplace requires digital and physical collaboration to be supported. Younger generations prefer freedom in optional, open spaces and therefore the traditional office layouts with strong seating arrangements will be unpopular with them. Shared workspaces equipped with cloud-based sharing tools for documents and virtual whiteboards, and AI-driven schedule facilitators enhance cross-generational interaction. Regardless of where you are, digital collaboration platforms ensure real-time teamwork. For businesses to support immersive collaboration, particularly in hybrid work settings, they should also put virtual and augmented reality equipment in place. These developments ensure that workers from different generations can work together effectively and feel as though they are from different generations.

## CONCLUSION

Employee engagement metrics are useful measures that enable organisations to measure how involved workers are with the company, its leaders, and colleagues, as engagement may differ from one generation to the next depending on values, communication preferences, and life experience. Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, Generation Z, and the rising Generation Alpha all have distinct views of their own created by the socio-economic context in which they lived. Such a difference of generations shapes how engaged employees are, and this reflects how satisfied the employees are with their work, performance, turnover, and overall success in the business. To be successful in today's dynamic world, organisations need to accept and control generational diversity. Adaptation of the employee engagement strategies to specific needs of each generation will also enable to maintain desired level of engagement and activity of each generation, whether this would mean providing flexible working

schedules for Millennials or collaboration development for Boomers, or priority placement of mental health support to Gen Z. By knowing which different engines propel engagement for each generation, businesses can address this requirement in a natural way as well as be more productive.

As one concludes, organisations that acknowledge and respond to the multiple needs of their multigenerational workforce will be better placed for success. Active employees are more likely to be productive, innovative, and loyal. Thus, creating shared space among generations not only increases the satisfaction level among the workforce, but it also boosts the organisational performance and competitiveness. By modifying engagement strategies to suit the expectations of each generation, businesses stand a chance of creating a workforce which thrives and creates growth in a dynamic working environment.

## IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

### Implications

Generational differences can impact the way organisations plan their strategies and handle their workers. Since different generations work together, organisations have to change their rules, how they communicate, and how they meet the needs of all employees. Because of this diversity, learning and development, performance evaluation, and career planning must be handled flexibly. Culture in organisations needs to change over time to support everyone and keep up with changes. An employee generation affects how they see collaboration, feedback, recognition, and technology used at work. Ignoring these differences among employees can weaken teamwork, lead to more staff leaving or create problems with reaching organisational goals.

Developing leaders is another essential part of the process. Effective leaders should build awareness about each age group and choose methods to encourage trust and teamwork in the workplace. Also, human resource policies must be revised regularly to match emerging changes in the workforce and new generational groups. Proactively addressing these implications can enhance organisational performance, encourage innovation, and

support long-term growth by fostering adaptability, inclusivity, and talent retention.

### Future Research Directions

Future research should focus on understanding the emerging workplace expectations of Generation Alpha. As these are in to begin their careers, ongoing studies are vital to find out how being immersed in technology affects their interest in work, level of motivation and job behaviours. Organisations can gain from learning about the ways future staff members manage their jobs, follow different managers and work with technology.

Another direction to explore is the effect of hybrid and remote work on the way employees get involved in their work environment. How each group of employees interacts with flexible ways of working is different, and organizations must carry out more research to ensure all ages enjoy ongoing engagement and work well.

The way employees of different ages work together should also be explored further. More research is needed to discover the effect of different generations working together on a team's performance and how employees are happy at work. Efforts should focus on how effectively mentorship and support improves knowledge sharing, faith in the organisation and interest among employees. Because technology is quickly improving modern workplaces, investigations should check how tools like AI, gamification and continuous feedback affect each generation's involvement. Realising that these technologies have different effects on different generations may help organisations choose better ways to interact with people.

Moreover, future research needs to examine how employee enthusiasm affects mental well-being in young and older workers alike. Because stress and burnout affect workers differently based on their age and how they manage stress, organisations should use facts and research to help every employee take care of their overall well-being.

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