

Build a culture of experimentation to attract and retain top talent - HR Magazine

Source: gnews-employee-engagement-broad | **Published:** June 24, 2025 | **PMS Relevance:** PMS RELATED | **Type:** Opinion/Commentary | **Geography:** Global

Source URL: <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMisgFBVV95cUxQNUtLOEFWVDN5bVIKQ2RXdE9XZ1p>

Executive Summary

This article addresses the challenge of attracting and retaining younger workers in an evolving workforce landscape. The author, Steve Hunt, Chief People Officer at Tipalti, argues that traditional employee engagement approaches are insufficient and that organisations need to build a 'culture of experimentation' to meet the expectations of younger generations. Key evidence cited includes statistics that nearly half of workers aged 16 to 34 feel like the 'odd one out,' one in four plan to switch jobs within six months if expectations are unmet, and that younger workers are projected to comprise nearly a third of the workforce by 2030, with over a third of businesses already struggling with hiring and retention. The article highlights automation and AI as tools to eliminate repetitive tasks, enabling employees to focus on strategic and creative work. Hunt also addresses hybrid working, noting a communication gap resulting from reduced in-person interaction. The article concludes that organisations embracing flexibility, intentional office design, tailored development plans, and structured innovation programmes will be better positioned for employee engagement and retention.

Key Insights

1. Nearly half of workers aged 16 to 34 feel like the 'odd one out' at work, with one in four planning to leave within six months if workplace expectations are not met.
2. Younger workers are projected to make up nearly a third of the workforce by 2030, making their engagement expectations increasingly material to organisational talent strategy.
3. Hybrid working, while a baseline expectation for younger employees, introduces a communication and mentorship gap that requires intentional office design and structured collaboration to offset.

Practical Takeaways

- Organisations can use automation and AI tools to remove repetitive tasks from employee roles, freeing capacity for strategic and creative work — a factor linked in the article to improved fulfilment and retention.
- Structured pilot programmes and dedicated time for experimentation with new tools are presented as mechanisms to embed innovation into employee experience and signal that employee input is valued.

Critical Analysis

The article presents a practitioner perspective from a senior HR leader at a fintech company, which introduces potential positional bias toward technology adoption as a solution. The statistics cited (e.g., nearly half of 16-34 year-olds feeling like the 'odd one out', one in four planning to switch jobs) are presented without attribution to specific studies or surveys, making independent verification difficult. The causal chain between 'culture of experimentation' and improved retention is asserted rather than evidenced through data or case examples. The argument is logically coherent but relies heavily on generalisation about generational preferences, which the broader literature treats with more nuance. The piece does acknowledge trade-offs in hybrid working — notably the mentorship and organic learning gap — which adds some balance. However, the conclusion that organisations 'have no choice' but to adopt these approaches reflects advocacy language inconsistent with neutral analysis. As a practitioner opinion piece, it offers directional thinking but lacks the methodological rigour needed to treat its conclusions as evidence-based.

Organizational Practice

The article describes organisations using automation and AI to reduce repetitive tasks, implementing hybrid working models with intentional office design for collaboration, and creating structured pilot programmes and dedicated time for employee experimentation with new tools and ideas. It also references tailored individual development and career growth plans as a retention mechanism.

Strategic Implications

The article reflects a broader shift in PMS discourse toward employee experience design as a retention lever, with experimentation and autonomy framed as engagement mechanisms rather than purely productivity drivers. The emphasis on generational expectations signals that PMS frameworks may increasingly need to accommodate flexibility, purpose alignment, and innovation space as measurable dimensions of the employee value proposition. The acknowledged tension between hybrid work and informal knowledge transfer points to an unresolved structural challenge in performance and development systems that depend on in-person observation and mentorship.

Validation Status: passed
