

32 VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES TO CREATE MORE ENGAGEMENT, CONNECTION, AND JOY AT WORK

As a result of the disruption of work patterns in 2020, many people find themselves immersed in remote working from home and digitally, which has had both positives and negatives. One of the things that is missed most widely is the regular connection with co-workers. What's also been proven to be challenging is to have high engagement when people are spending so much time in front of their computers, often suffering from screen fatigue. Here are 32 simple engagement activities that can help you increase connection, boost morale and help you have more joy at work!

32 Tips for Engaging Online, Creating a Deeper Connection and More Joy in the Digital World

01 SET AN INTENTION

How do you want people to feel during and after your meetings and virtual interactions e.g., Excited, Inspired, Motivated, Engaged, Connected or Joyful.

02 KNOW YOUR TEAM/AUDIENCE

Check in with your colleagues regularly to know where everyone is at. Take the pulse of how people are feeling. If someone is exhausted or overwhelmed, work as a team to help each other out.

- Before starting a meeting, check in to see how people are. Show that you genuinely care about them, on a human-to-human level.
- Create an online group (WhatsApp, Slack etc) for your team, use this as a way for everyone to check-in first thing in the morning, let everyone know if they are off for the day, unavailable or to share the inspiration for the day.

03 CREATE RITUALS

Start every meeting for example with gratitude or end with appreciation.

04 CREATE AN AGENDA

Have clear terms for your meetings. Define the outcome you are expecting to achieve with the meeting and inform the participants in advance. Make plans visual and create roadmaps. People like to know what is going to happen, where they are going and this gives structure to keep the meeting moving forward. Design the terms of your meetings, for example, listen to connect, double-click, avoid talking over each other, no mobile use during meeting, using the chat for questions, mute yourself when not speaking, turn video on/off, turn off your video when not presenting, and join the meeting 10 minutes early to ensure there are no technical issues.

05 USE VIDEO WHENEVER APPROPRIATE

It helps to see the faces and have that non-verbal communication come through. Our non-verbal communication is 55% while tone of voice is 38% and spoken word is only 7% of our communication.

06 USE BREAKOUT ROOMS

Use breakout rooms (or create separate meetings if you don't have breakout rooms in your online meeting platform) in order to create smaller groups for better discussions as it's just easier to work in smaller groups. Breakout rooms help also make online meetings more engaging, give more personal connection, and can be even more fun. Rooms should have no more than 4-5 people to create real connection and give all possibility to participate.

07 KEEP MEETINGS SHORT

Keep meetings short if possible. And try to end a few minutes early to give people a little break between meetings as well. Having shorter regular meetings such as a 15 min morning and end of day check in will help to increase connection, efficacy, and structure.

08 TAKE BREAKS DURING LONGER MEETINGS

Book those in your presentation so that you don't forget. Put some upbeat music while breaks are on.

09 USE CREATIVE TOOLS DURING MEETINGS

There is a plethora of tools you can use to increase engagement. Your brain likes to experience novelty so make sure to use images, metaphors, whiteboards, word clouds, polls, questions, surveys, quizzes... Some online tools to use are Miro, Mentimeter, Slack, Kahoot, SurveyMonkey etc

10 LEARN YOUR MEETING PLATFORM OR EXTERNAL TOOLS

There are plenty of features in each platform that can make your life easier. Get yourself up to speed on the platform to be efficient and creative. Train your team in new tools to avoid adding stress by adding new tools.

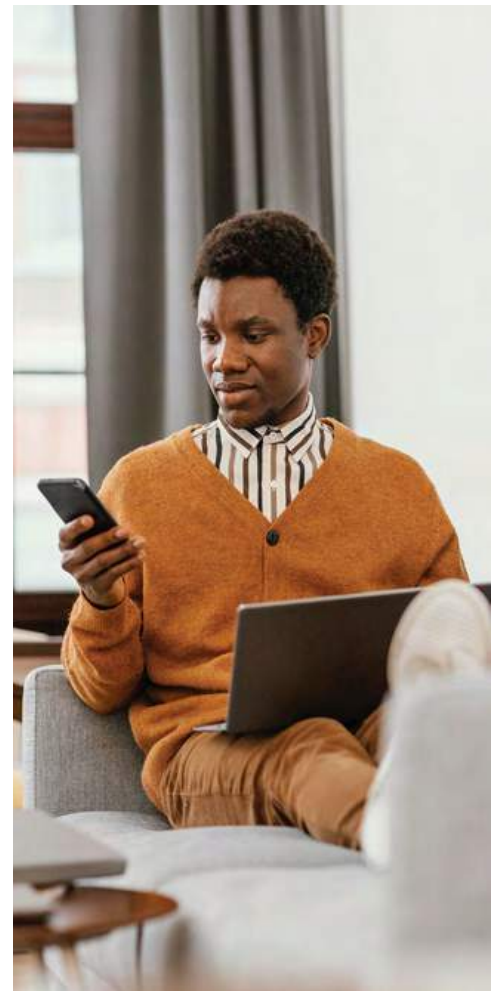
11 ASK QUESTIONS AND GATHER INFORMATION ON THE CHAT

Ask high quality questions of data that will be useful for your work, culture, business, etc. Copy the answers and then make sure to use the information afterwards. You can also give a discussion question for the breakout rooms and have participants take notes that they can copy and paste when they return to the main meeting room. This is a great way to know how the discussions went!

12 START YOUR MEETING WITH A CHECK-IN QUESTION

Having everyone answer the same questions gets people aligned while improving focus, and group commitment. Here are some example questions:

- What's the one word that can best describe your feeling at this moment?
- What has gone well in the last 24 hours?
- How are you doing in this moment?
- What is one thing you hope to accomplish in this meeting today?
- What questions do you think need to be addressed in this meeting?



- What did you find helpful from our last meeting that you would like to continue doing today?
- What are you grateful for today?
- What do you want to be acknowledged for today?
- What do you need to be present today/leave outside the room in order to be focused
- What would be a good outcome of this meeting?
- What would make this meeting meaningful for you/the team/us?
- What do we want to walk away with from this meeting/today's workshop?

13 RECORD MEETING IF APPROPRIATE

Do not forget to inform participants about the meeting being recorded and get their approval. This can be used if someone missed the meeting and needs to catch up. You can also capture great information or use it as a resource afterwards.

14 CREATE PANEL DISCUSSIONS

During a meeting where you know you will have different topics to discuss, present topics in advance so that participants can be prepared. When in the meeting, choose 3-4 people and ask them to start discussing the topic and spotlight their videos. The other participants will only listen. Every several minutes, ask one of the participants in the spotlight group to mute himself/herself and exchange that person for a new person. Keep the conversation going exchanging participants to get new insights. Make sure to take notes or record the meeting.

15 BRING MUSIC TO CONNECT PEOPLE

Ask your team to share their favorite song and singer. During breaks in meetings or lunch/coffee breaks, plays those songs. Or create a team Spotify list that everyone can put their favorite energizing music on.

16 PLAN EXTRA TIME FOR QUESTIONS

During more important or formal calls, include some minutes for debriefing and answering questions from participants.

17 HAVE EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION CEREMONIES ONLINE

Identify role models or bring up successful examples and celebrate them online. Public recognition is great to boost morale and reinforce the behaviors you would like to see in your organization. Send flowers to those you are acknowledging or chocolates!

18 VIRTUAL COFFEE BREAKS

Take a coffee break online with a colleague in a different department of your company. This is a great way to connect people who might not otherwise have a chance to chat. You can learn a lot about each other in 15 or 20 minutes and it's a good break from non-stop meetings.

19 HAVE A VIRTUAL DINNER TOGETHER

Everyone can have the same ingredients and cook the same meal at the same time. Make it a little competition and determine who wins based on the presentation of the meal. Then sit down and enjoy the meal together. You can also send the ingredients to the team or sign up for a cooking class online where your team participates.



20 FRIENDS AT WORK

Take initiative and continue to build and nurture friendships at work. Check in with friends to see how they are doing and be intentional to get friends from work together every now and again (virtually or in person), this connection is essential for your wellbeing.

21 CREATE A BOOK CLUB

This works great both online and offline. Choose books that can benefit the team each month and then have a discussion on that book.

22 HAVE A WALK AND TALK

Take your meeting on the go if you don't have an active part in the meeting, this is a great opportunity to get away from the screen and get out into nature or at least out of the home/office. Did you know that being in motion and contact with nature immediately starts to relax the brain?

23 ONLINE TEAM MEDITATION

Teams that take a few minutes to meditate or practice heart breathing together (focus on your heart as you take 3 to 4 deep breaths), can have a higher level of coherence and feel calmer and less stress.

24 THE LEADERSHIP AWARD

Team members nominate their colleagues for being outstanding examples of the company culture. Recipients are decided by the quality of what is written in the nominations. Make sure to share all nominations with all employees.

25 LUNCH AND LEARN

Bring in inspiring or education speakers to give a talk during lunchtime. Great way to get some personal development or inspiration while enjoying their lunch.

26 COLLECTIVE LEARNING

Identify employee skills that can be taught to coworkers and plan sessions to learn those skills. (Computer programs used by the team, handcrafts, cooking, languages etc.)

27 SEND AN APPRECIATION EMAIL EACH MORNING

One of our first daily activities is often checking emails. Before you dive into them, write a short 2-3 sentence email showing your gratitude and appreciation for someone—for no reason other than to show how you feel. If you create a habit of this, you may be surprised at how much you get out of this activity yourself! Be prepared to receive wonderful emails back!

28 CELEBRATE MILESTONES!

Share positive news about you and your colleagues and celebrate together! Start a channel (Slack, Teams, WhatsApp etc) for milestones in employees' lives, like birthdays, engagements, weddings, babies and other accomplishments.

29 MEET & GREET YOUR LOVED ONES

Have an online event where coworkers can present their spouses, children, roommates and/or pets to the team.



30 SET UP A “VIRTUAL WATER COOLER”

Create a discussion board or chat room where people can spend a few minutes engaged with their colleagues in casual conversation.

31 MAKE A PHONE CALL

Sometimes, a telephone call can create deeper connection and focus. Have a work conversation on the phone instead of online. Or just call someone just to see how they are doing and show you care.

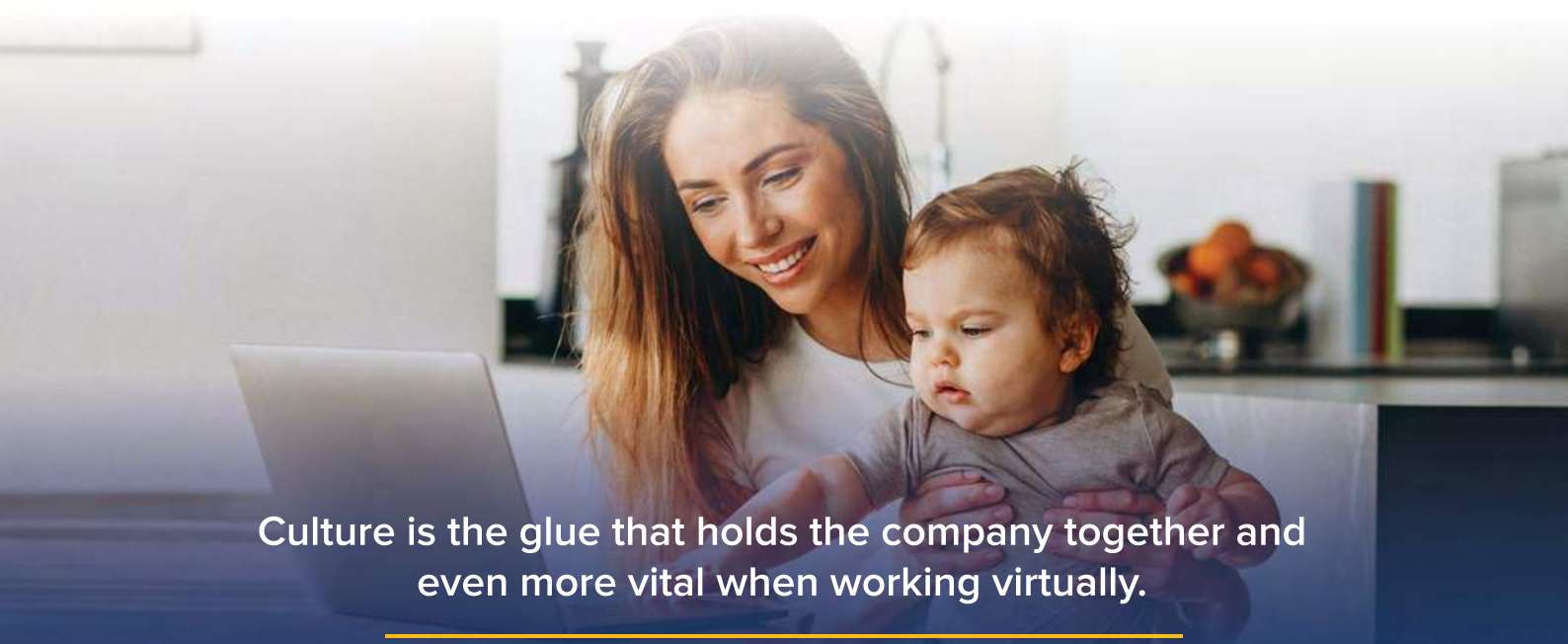
32 BE KIND TO YOURSELF

During times of crisis, it is normal to feel stressed and unmotivated. Try to engage in activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Daily routines including exercise, regular sleep, healthy eating, mindfulness are some alternatives you can try. Do not hesitate to seek professional advice if nothing else is working.

There are of course hundreds of ideas you can implement online. Hopefully these 32 activities will have triggered your creativity and get you started. Test some of them out. Keep the ones you like. Come up with your own. The most important thing is to create that deeper connection where people feel valued and that they do what matters most. When you build a strong team that feels connected, your engagement increases, your results will thrive, and everyone will experience more #JoyAtWork!

We can help you to evaluate some of the best ways to build an amazing culture by increasing engagement, trust, productivity and profitability.

If you are ready to strategically boost your company culture, reach out to us at Support@Evoloshen.com for a **complimentary cultural assessment**. We look forward to hearing from you!



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