



U.S. EMPLOYEES:
DETACHED, DISENGAGED,
AND **DISENCHANTED**

▶ A SNAPSHOT OF REAL FEEDBACK ON THE AMERICAN WORKPLACE



ONLY
32%
 OF U.S. EMPLOYEES
 ARE ENGAGED¹



Letter from the CEO

U.S. employers have known for quite some time that what they're doing to reach and motivate employees isn't working. For more than 10 years, Gallup and other reputable sources have reported dismal engagement figures. Business leaders may be aware of the problem, but the time has come to do more than listen – **we must use employee feedback as a springboard for innovation and lasting change.**

Rapt Media works directly with HR and communications leaders to enhance the company-employee connection through interactive video. Given this focus, we were curious to learn more about what U.S. employees really want from their employers, leadership, training, and internal communications.

We discovered a workforce that feels detached, disengaged, and disenchanting. They report feeling underappreciated by their bosses and disconnected from their leaders. They're disregarding internal communications and forgetting their trainings. They no longer feel a sense of loyalty.

While this data is sobering, I am excited about the change it could bring about. My hope is that our findings will energize some of you to throw out the old playbook and begin contemplating new and creative solutions. To employ an oft-used quote from Thomas Jefferson, **"If you want something you've never had, you must be willing to do something you've never done."**

If you're unable or unwilling to change, it's not a question of whether your employees will leave – but when. And even when they stay, they won't be as effective as they could be. After all, disengagement is more than trendy terminology – it's a virus that spreads across organizations, severely eroding productivity and profitability.

The time for action is now.

Erika Trautman,
 CEO and Founder of Rapt Media



¹ Gallup, "Employee Engagement in U.S. Stagnant in 2015"

HARD TO CATCH, HARDER TO KEEP

There's no question that top talent is extraordinarily challenging to find, attract, and recruit. But in today's workplace, that's only the start of the struggle. Employee loyalty can no longer be taken for granted - it must be actively earned and maintained.



24%

Does your employee engagement survey show positive feedback? Don't blindly trust your data. One in four employees are fibbing or outright lying.

35%

One in three employees feel their companies don't care about them - as a team member or a person.



Most employees aren't totally loyal to their employers.

69%

are open to other opportunities or already seeking their next job.



WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

- ✓ Demonstrate care and concern for employees by investing in the company-employee connection. **Create new opportunities for creative and genuine employee appreciation** and recognition.
- ✓ Instead of solely relying on the standard employee engagement survey - which may not be entirely truthful or accurate - **gather real-world feedback and suggestions from your workforce through numerous qualitative channels**, then act on it.
- ✓ **Show employees their voices matter.** Publicly acknowledge their feedback and use it as a springboard for tangible and lasting change.

FAILURE TO CONNECT

Employees want more from their managers and senior leaders. Today, employees expect their leaders to be open to emotional connection and understanding of their day-to-day challenges.

57%

More than half of employees feel their leaders are detached from the workforce.



27%

Nearly a third of employees either feel their bosses don't appreciate them, or they're not sure either way.



WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

- ✓ **Remind your leaders to show their human sides.** By opening up about their fallibility or personal lives, they can earn employees' respect and goodwill.
- ✓ Encourage leaders to learn about and **experience the day-to-day jobs of lower-level employees** (then share those learnings with your entire employee population).
- ✓ Train and equip supervisors and managers to **demonstrate their appreciation for team members** — in ways big and small.

WHY ARE YOUR EMPLOYEES IGNORING YOU?

Internal communicators are locked in a daily battle for employee mindshare. Communications must compete with not only the employee's workload, but also an ocean of mesmerizing web and social content. To be noticed and absorbed, internal content must be re-imagined.

73%
of employees have suggestions for their internal communicators.



24%
One in four want more use of humor and entertainment (i.e. games).



24%
One in four want more personalization in the content.

60%
More than half of employees are bored by their company's internal communications.

Zzzz



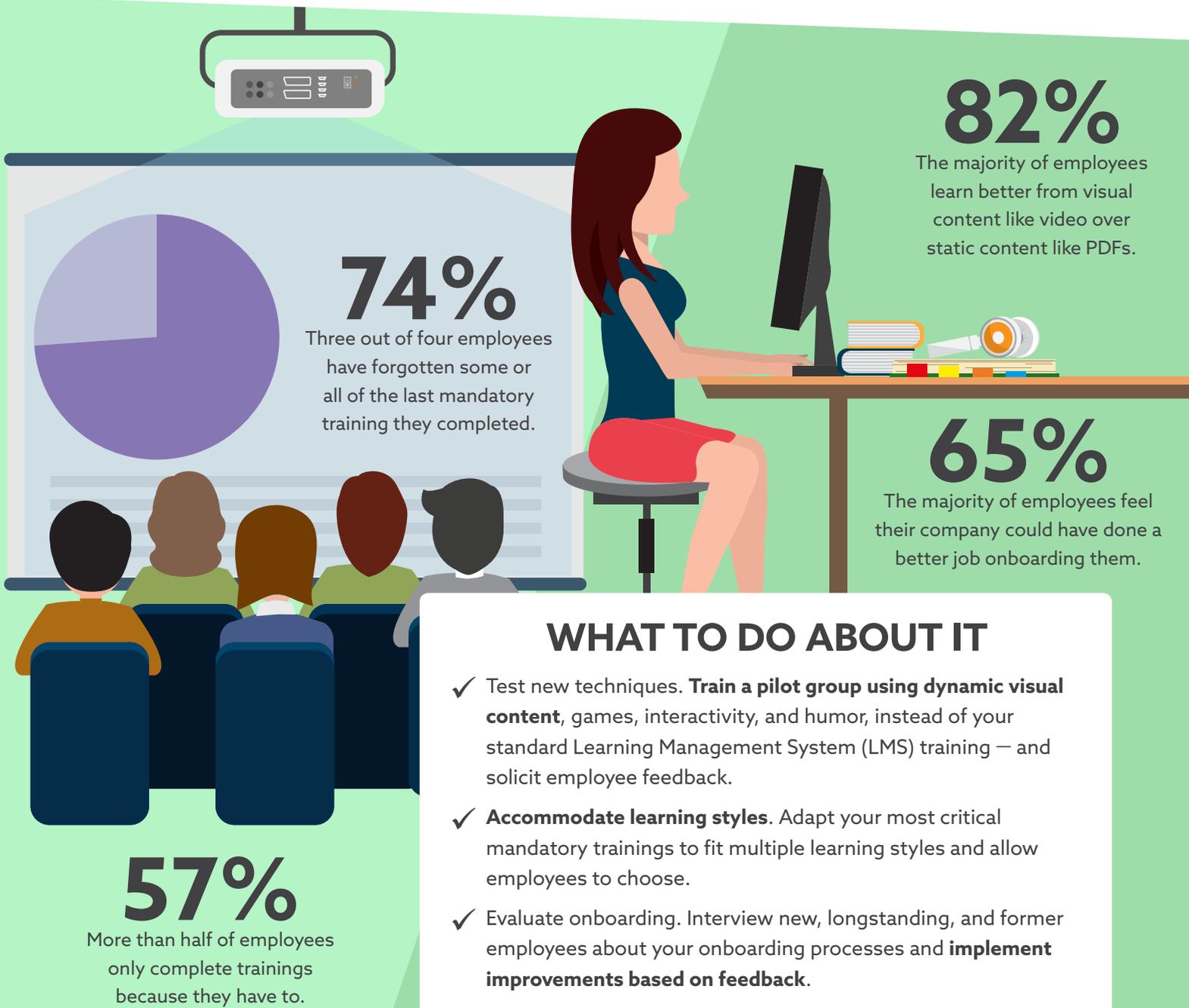
44%
Nearly half of employees report that internal communications are stagnant — Nothing has changed in the last five years.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

- ✓ Model your content off of what's working in the world of news media, social media, and consumer marketing: **dynamic visuals, personalized content, and interactivity.**
- ✓ **Invest in innovation.** Fresh and creative technological solutions can breathe new life into your internal channels and messages.
- ✓ **Listen just as much as you speak.** Feedback channels should be built into your communications, and assessing that feedback should be standard operating procedure.

ARE YOUR EMPLOYEES REALLY LEARNING?

Job training and professional development are not only prerequisites for long-term advancement, they're also highly valuable for an employee's sense of personal fulfillment. The trouble is, most organizations rely on stale and outdated training tactics and then wonder why employees aren't as effective as they could be.



FINAL THOUGHTS

Internal brand loyalty can be earned through better content, innovation and real connection.

Like it or not, the expectations of the U.S. workforce have significantly and permanently changed. A steady paycheck and a reasonably pleasant work environment are no longer enough to attract, recruit, motivate, or retain a talented employee. Instead, **U.S. businesses must cultivate a genuine and lasting sense of internal brand loyalty** among employees. This requires decisive action on three fronts:

THE RE-IMAGINATION OF INTERNAL CONTENT - To reach and engage employees through internal communications and training, **content must be re-evaluated and re-imagined**. Impersonal email updates, old-fashioned newsletters, and compulsory LMS exercises are not cutting it. Remember, any piece of content must be compelling enough to win employee mindshare in an increasingly noisy and distracting landscape. This landscape includes not only the plethora of messages from your organization, and solicitations from your competitors, but also the world of external digital and social content constantly accessible to your employees.

PERSONAL CONNECTION THROUGH AUTHENTICITY - To fortify and sustain employee engagement, interpersonal connectivity must be a key priority. While this connectivity is beneficial at all levels of an organization, the greatest and most immediate need exists in the leader-employee relationship. **Closing the detachment gap means creating new opportunities for supervisors and senior leaders** to show authenticity, appreciation, and a better understanding of employees' day-to-day challenges. Impersonal leaders will never win employees' hearts and minds.

INVESTMENT IN INNOVATION - To truly address the issues highlighted by this survey, human resources and communications **leaders must invest in new technological tools and platforms**. In addition to supporting content re-imagination and personal connectivity efforts, the latest technology can also help personalize your messages, enable more two-way interactions, and provide meaningful behavioral insights. Without this innovation, businesses can't hope to address the challenges of the modern workplace.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Today's employees are our internal brand consumers and must be engaged with the same amount of time, attention, and resources that we devote to our marketing efforts and customer engagement strategies. Gone are the days when we could rely on decades of service from devoted employees. That devotion is now up for grabs. If you want to keep it, you must court it.



METHODOLOGY

Rapt Media surveyed 400 full-time employees of U.S. organizations with more than 2,000 employees, for their thoughts on their workplace cultures, leaders, internal communications, and trainings. The survey was completed online and responses were random, voluntary, and completely anonymous.

ABOUT RAPT MEDIA

Rapt Media marries the power of storytelling with learning in a unique solution that combines video and interactivity for marketing leaders, human resources professionals, and product innovators. We successfully engage diverse audiences with complex messaging in a way that keeps target audience's attention while driving behavior that can be measured. Our enterprise interactive video platform solves the communication challenges resulting from an overflowing world of content where getting and keeping your audience's attention is almost impossible.