How Poor Employee Experience is Driving the Great Resignation

Improving the employee experience enhances employee onboarding, increases retention, and drives productivity. Here's a guide to getting started.

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Why Are Americans Leaving Jobs?

The *Great Resignation* is here

More than 19 million US workers have left their jobs since April 2021. In August 2021*, 4+ million workers (the highest in 2 decades) voluntarily left their jobs. Companies are simply not doing enough to keep employees engaged and happy, and now they're paying for it.

Why is the *Great Resignation* happening?

The leading theory is that the COVID-19 pandemic was a catalyst for re-evaluating employment prospects. People are assessing their current working conditions, career, and lifestyle choices. Work as we've understood it for the last century is changing. Hybrid and remote-only work was essentially imposed upon large swathes of the global economy, and it's clear that what "normal work" looks like is changing.

Number of People Who Left Their Jobs Voluntarily by Month
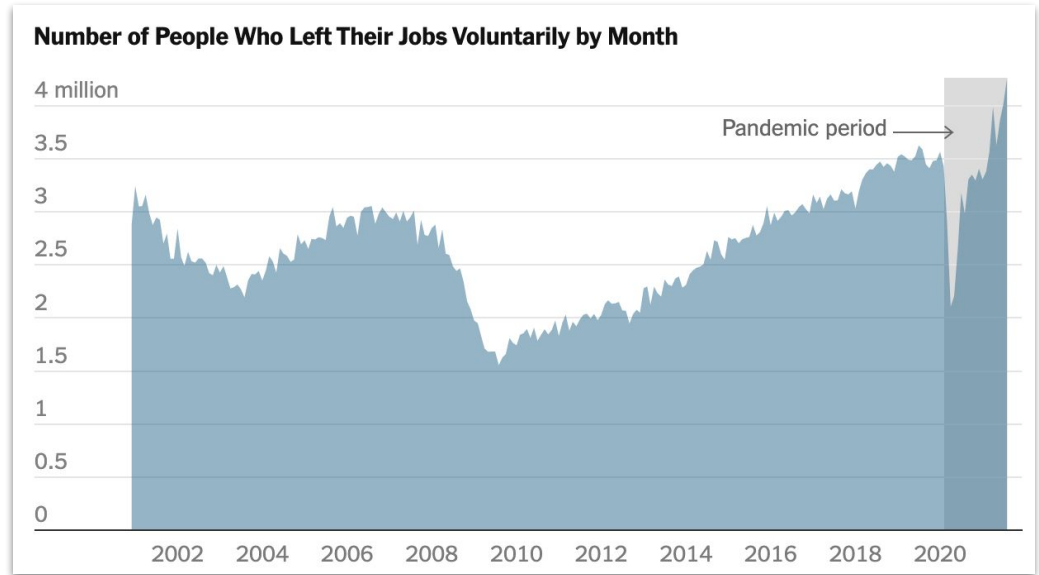
Image Source: *Nytimes, Ben Casselman. "Workers quitting their jobs hit a record in the U.S. in August."*

McKinsey: 19 Million US Workers left their jobs since April 2021

What Harms The Employee Experience

63%
Onboarded Effectively

Only 63% of employees are onboarded effectively.

20%
Of Meetings Lack Agendas

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*20% of internal meetings don't have an agenda. Emails sent during meetings **is up 12%.***

716
Emails Received Monthly

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*The average employee receives 716 emails per month and **sends 135.***

200+
Slack Messages Sent Weekly

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*Employees send 200+ Slack messages per week. Average response time is **just 16.3 minutes.***

The only thing more expensive than keeping talented people is finding and hiring new ones. Compensation and benefits certainly play a major role in this trend, but it's **about more than money**, and there are a number of things organizations can do to keep talented people happy and engaged.

It starts with time. Meetings, email, and other collaboration tools are drowning employees and managers in work that they often do not have a stake in. This leads to after-hours work, insufficient focus time, and ultimately lower productivity and engagement.

16x
Engagement Level

8x
Likelier to Stay

Research shows that people who report having a positive employee experience have 16x the engagement level of employees with a negative experience, and that they are 8x more likely to want to stay at a company.

[McKinsey & Company](), September 2021

Employee Retention

There is a definitely a link between how engaged an employee is and how likely they are to remain at a company. But that's not the only factor to analyze when it comes to minimizing unwanted attrition.

By looking at metrics that correlate with potential burnout, micromanagement, communication overload, and ineffective collaboration, team leaders are empowered to eliminate elements that are hurting the employee experience.

Not only will employees thank you for creating a better work environment, they'll also be more likely to ignore that email with the subject line "Interested in changing your career path?".

Navigating The Great Resignation

It's all related

This report looks at workforce elements that eat up your employees' time and harm the employee experience. As you read through the report, try to contextualize each section within the global shift that's occurring due to digital transformation.

Digital transformation initiatives undoubtedly empower companies to improve its products and services, internal productivity, and ultimately, profitability. However, rapid change to the status quo has second-order effects that disrupt even the most well-managed business.

For decades, businesses have piled bad practice on top of bad practice — over-attended meetings with no agenda or follow-up, email overload, and now overactive Slack channels.

When the world was forced to head home and companies had to adapt their internal operations, the years of bad practice compounded while the negative effects of unresolved problems surfaced.

What comes next

We leverage our own internal data, and build on the great work of organizations including McKinsey, Gallup and more, to explain how employee onboarding, internal meetings, email, and Slack have impacted the employee experience.

The business world needs to adapt, and fast. We hope this report helps organizations of all sizes think holistically about the employee experience and the topics that truly matter when discussing "work culture".

The State of Employee Onboarding

Invest In Your Most Valuable Assets From The Beginning

Onboarding is an intensive, costly, and critical process for setting up your employees for success. Unfortunately, many businesses fail to do it effectively.

A poor employee onboarding process will result in an employee feeling ill-prepared to take on their role. And most importantly, if they don't have the right interactions that form personal relationships, then they're more likely to quit when a new opportunity comes along*.

Let's dive into some of the most important metrics to measure when evaluating your onboarding processes.

*New York Times: If You Never Met Your Co-Workers In Person, Did You Even Work There?

Increase Your Employees Internal Network

Every employee needs to establish meaningful relationships with their colleagues. Without this, employees may never grasp internal processes, understand internal power structures, or even understand fundamental expectations.
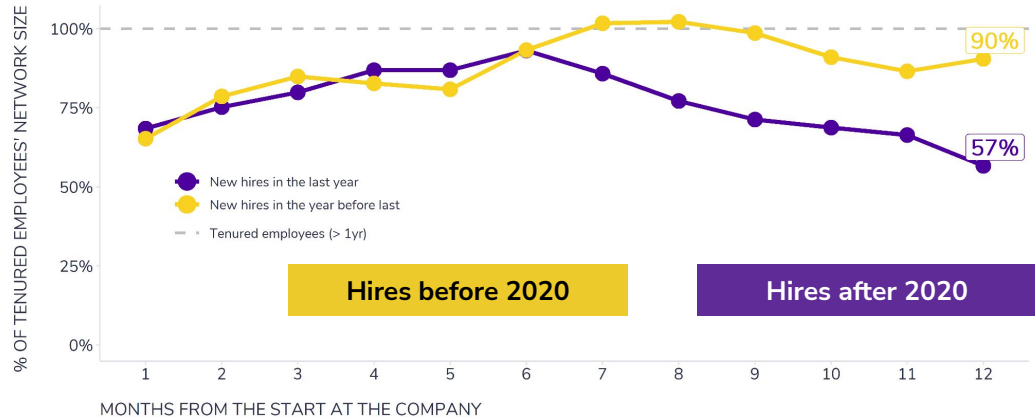
When meaningful relationships aren't established, employees are more likely to view their employment as purely transactional and are more likely to leave if a new job opportunity surfaces. Establishing a solid network provides an emotional component to work, and an environment conducive to both productivity and engagement.

The right "network size" varies by company and role. However, with every new hire you should establish an ideal network size goal.

Network size of new hires during their first yeat at the company

✕ Time is Ltd.

Onboarding of new hires has become less effective with transition to hybrid and remote working

% OF TENURED EMPLOYEES' NETWORK SIZE

- ● New hires in the last year
- ● New hires in the year before last
- --- Tenured employees (> 1yr)

90%

57%

| Hires before 2020 | Hires after 2020 |

MONTHS FROM THE START AT THE COMPANY

Since the pandemic started, it's clear that onboarding new hires has been ineffective, as they have only acquired 57% of the optimal network size.

Create The Right 1:1 Cadence

MANAGERIAL 1:1 MEETINGS OF NEW HIRES

How much time do new hires spend with their superior in 1:1 meetings on average? ⓘ

Company average

51 min

↓ 39 min

[Line chart showing Company average vs Goal from Dec 20 to Oct 21. Y-axis: 0, 30, 60, 90. Goal line constant at 60.]

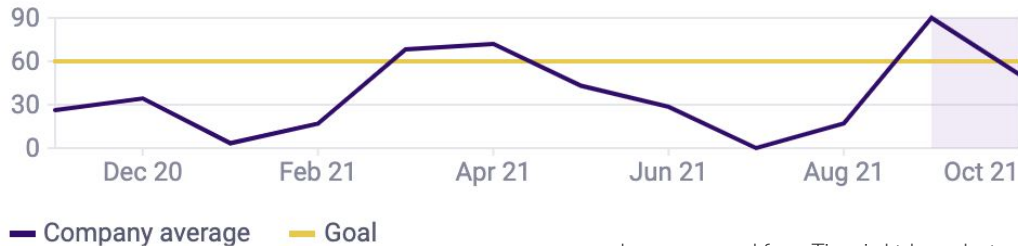— Company average   — Goal

Image sourced from Time is Ltd. product

Meetings between managers and their reports are important for discussing short-term goals, long-term aims, learning and development opportunities, career objectives, and aligning on projects. A lack of 1:1s signals the growing unlikelihood of employee success.

For new employees, this is even more important. These critical meetings help manager and employee coordinate on tasks, set goals, build rapport, and exchange feedback.

💡 *When creating an onboarding plan, make sure to set up ample 1:1 time. The frequency of 1:1 meetings should initially be higher to ensure alignment, facilitate learning, and establish personal connections.*

Always-On Measurement of Onboarding Effectiveness

Effective onboarding clarifies the expectations and responsibilities of the role, builds confidence in job-related knowledge and company culture, and establishes connection through information networks and interpersonal relationships. Ineffective onboarding leads to employee ill-preparedness and a higher likelihood of attrition.

Time Is Ltd. measures effective onboarding by looking at the internal network size of new hires and comparing it to the average internal network size of more-tenured employees. This metric helps evaluate whether organizations are creating empowering, engaging environments for new employees.

ONBOARDING EFFECTIVENESS

How effective is our onboarding? ⓘ

Company average

91%

↑ 8.1%

100%

50%

0%

Dec 20   Feb 21   Apr 21   Jun 21   Aug 21   Oct 21

— Company average   — Goal

Image sourced from Time is Ltd. product

*According to Time Is Ltd. data, **only 63% of all companies** effectively facilitate that their new hires build out successful collaboration networks.*

Getting Onboarding Right

Correctly onboarding your employees is critical for ensuring they're engaged and productive. Insufficient onboarding will result in higher unwanted attrition.
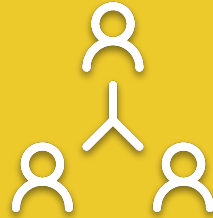
Get employee onboarding right by increasing new employee's network size, holding regular 1:1 meetings, and constantly measure onboarding effectiveness.

Receive weekly insights to evaluate your employee onboarding experience by department and team via Time Is Ltd. Analytics.

Looking to improve onboarding and drive the employee experience? Contact **solutions@timeisltd.com** to get started today.

Build a Better Meeting Culture

How Meetings Directly Correlate with the Employee Experience

Internal meetings are necessary, but to be productive they need the right people in attendance, should have an agenda, and clear-follow-ups. Unfortunately, a lot of meetings don't meet these standards.

Poor meeting culture can include a lot of things: presenteeism and over-attendance, disengagement, lack of goals, poor preparation, and more. All of these pieces bleed into the other topics discussed in this report. An over-attended meeting with no agenda is likely to have a higher volume of email or Slack messages (or both) sent as it's happening.
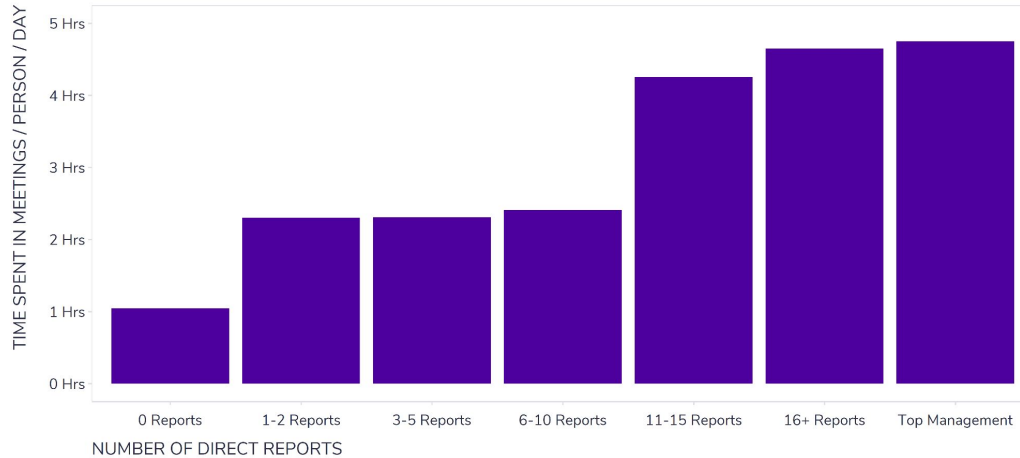
At the macro level, meetings take time, can be incredibly expensive, and often include far too many people.

Meetings & Managers

Time spent by supervisors in meetings vs. the number of their direct reports

⏳ Time is Ltd.

With more direct reports, supervisors tend to spend more time in meetings

TIME SPENT IN MEETINGS / PERSON / DAY

5 Hrs	
4 Hrs	
3 Hrs	
2 Hrs	
1 Hrs	
0 Hrs	

0 Reports   1-2 Reports   3-5 Reports   6-10 Reports   11-15 Reports   16+ Reports   Top Management

NUMBER OF DIRECT REPORTS

💡 *Managers with **11+ reports spend 4+ hours** (over half their working day) in meetings*

According to Time Is Ltd. data, there is a direct correlation between number of direct reports and time spent in meetings. This should give every employer pause.

Your managers are a business-critical cohort. They set business priorities, lead teams that execute, and are difficult and expensive to replace. If they are happy, engaged, and doing well, this is reflected in the productivity and efficiency of their respective teams. This employee group also manages external relationships — both client and vendor — adding another crucial layer of internal knowledge.
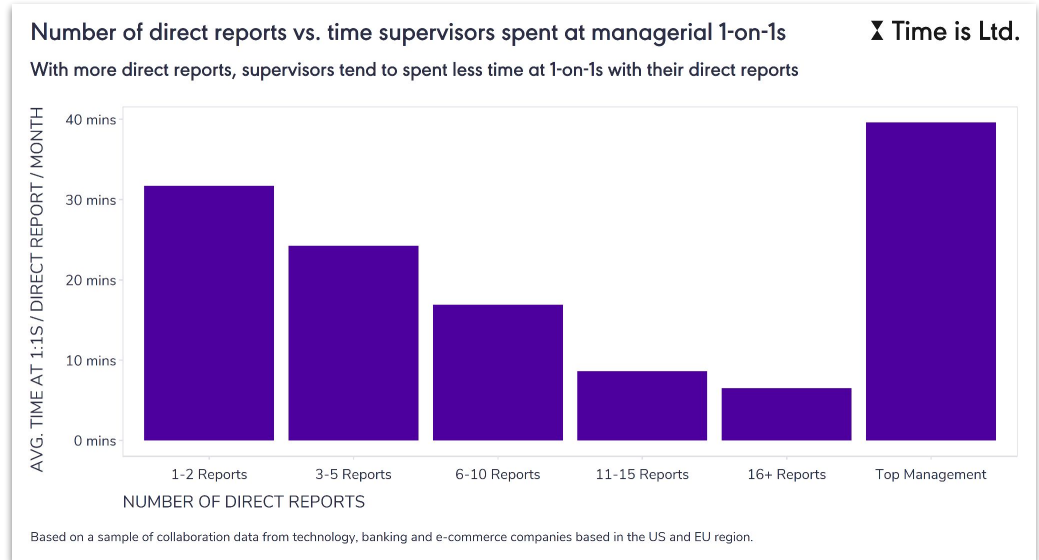
For many managers, before their day even begins, 50% or more is set aside for meetings.

The Importance of 1:1s

1:1 meetings between managers and reports are important for coordination and development. Although 1:1 meetings have a tremendous potential value, they often fall victim to last-minute cancelations to make way for other meetings or tasks.

An increase in meeting cancellations throughout the pandemic indicates that employees increasingly feel "meeting overload." 1:1 meetings should not fall by the wayside.

Looking at Time Is Ltd. data, we clearly see that the amount of 1:1s a manager has directly correlates with the number of direct reports they have. Managing the frequency and cadence of 1:1 meetings allows you to ensure they both occur and are productive.
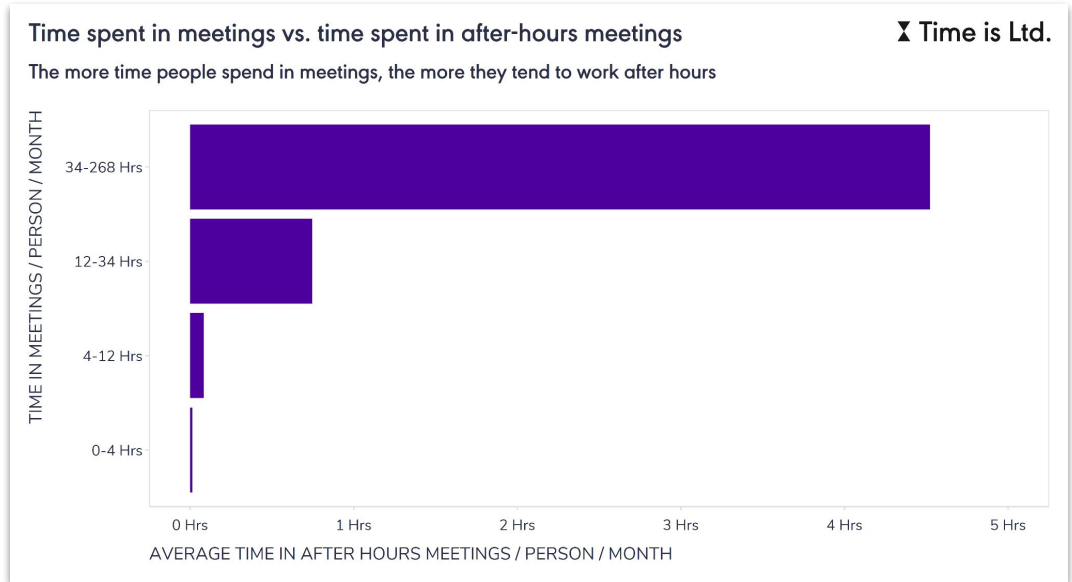

Number of direct reports vs. time supervisors spent at managerial 1-on-1s   ✕ Time is Ltd.

With more direct reports, supervisors tend to spent less time at 1-on-1s with their direct reports

AVG. TIME AT 1:1S / DIRECT REPORT / MONTH

NUMBER OF DIRECT REPORTS

Based on a sample of collaboration data from technology, banking and e-commerce companies based in the US and EU region.

💡 *1:1 cancellations increased from **3.8% in October 2020 to 16.3%** in September 2021*

# A Guaranteed Detractor To The Employee Experience: After Hours Meetings

No matter whether it's an Individual Contributor or a Vice President, no one loves a 6:00 AM or 9:00 PM meeting. One key indicator that an employee might be at risk of burnout is after hours meetings.

The more time one spends in meetings, the more they spend in after-hours meetings. This may seem obvious, but the effects can be far-reaching — after-hours meetings mean after-hour emails, and more.

Time spent in meetings vs. time spent in after-hours meetings

The more time people spend in meetings, the more they tend to work after hours

⌛ Time is Ltd.

TIME IN MEETINGS / PERSON / MONTH

Category	
34-268 Hrs	
12-34 Hrs	
4-12 Hrs	
0-4 Hrs	

0 Hrs   1 Hrs   2 Hrs   3 Hrs   4 Hrs   5 Hrs

AVERAGE TIME IN AFTER HOURS MEETINGS / PERSON / MONTH

*According to Time Is Ltd. data, **5.5% of all meetings** occur outside of core working hours.*

Getting Meetings Right
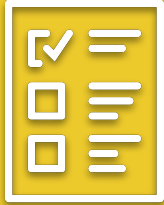
With an agenda, fewer attendees, and a detailed follow-up, meetings can become instantly more manageable for everyone.
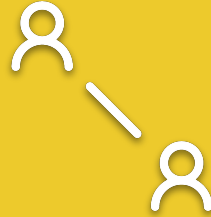
Managers are especially tied up in meetings; 1-on-1 meetings are critical to the employee experience; and after-hours meetings should be avoided at all costs.

Time Is Ltd. clients utilize Analytics to understand every department's meeting culture. They then drive bottom-up change with Til 4 Teams.

Looking to improve your organization's meeting culture?
Contact **solutions@timeisltd.com** to get started today.

Creating An Effective Email Culture & Avoiding Overload

The Email Barrage & Outcomes in the Digital Workspace

The sheer volume of email creates a series of second-order effects. Emails are increasingly sent during meetings, emailing after hours is a regular occurrence (and deemed necessary, whether as a directive, work culture effect, or both), and it contributes to stress and burnout.

On their own, the issues with email are bad enough. Compounded with the other topics discussed in this report, it's not hard to see how something as seemingly passe as an inbox could be a key reason that a talented employee would chose to leave.

Combine two hours of evening calls with another two hours of email — rinse and repeat nearly every day — and it's a recipe for burnout.

How Much Time Per Day Is Spent On Email

*Time Is Ltd. data shows that on average, **134 emails are sent**, and **715 emails are received**, monthly.*

The reality is that email communication isn't going anywhere.

Although definitely the preferred mode of communication in certain situations (e.g. documenting important threads, external communication), too much email can be a source of distraction and stress.

The most important metric to measure is amount of time spent on email. Additionally, two other key metrics are:

1) Number of emails received
2) Number of emails sent

Avoiding Email Overload and Micromanagement

When to include others on cc or bcc varies drastically by company, team, and manager/team preference. Although there isn't a one-size-fits-all recommendation, it is encouraged to establish email guidelines for your company, and engage with team leaders and employees about right-sizing email. To help guide the creation of an email policy, check out the Business Writing Guide below.

Another important metric is how often direct reports are including their supervisor on cc. Although necessary in many instances, being forced to include your supervisor on every email is a clear indicator of micromanagement, which leaves an employee feeling unempowered and detracts from the employee experience.

Business Writing Blog: Business Writing Guide

According to Time Is Ltd. data, ***28% of all emails*** *are sent out of core working hours, a clear indicator of email overload.*
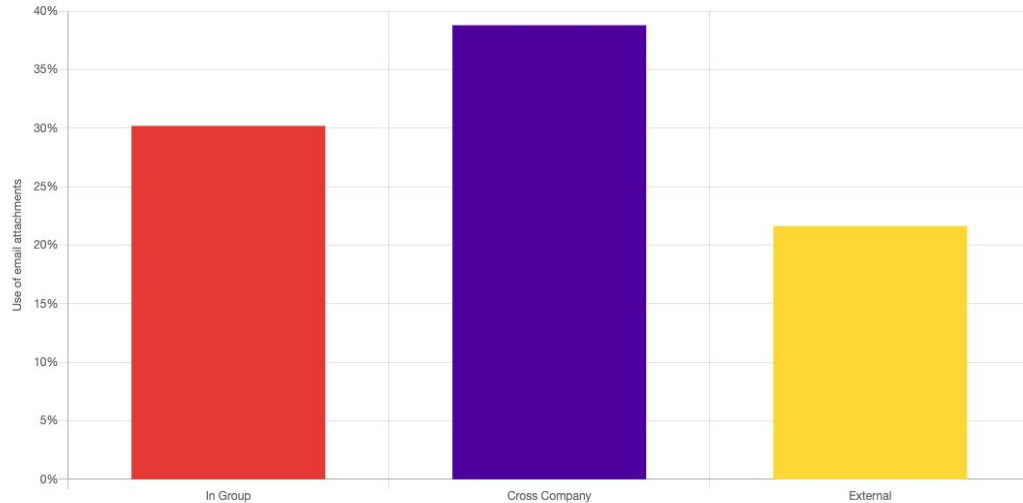
Who do we send emails with attachments to?

Image sourced from Time is Ltd. product

Email Attachment Usage

Sending documents over email is in many cases warranted (for example, in external communication). But if people collaborate using too many attachments, it can lead to issues with conflicting document versions.

Make sure that teams that should be collaborating in real-time do not overuse attachments.

*According to Time Is Ltd. data, **19.8% of emails** include an attachment. Although email attachments are warranted with external communication, for internal communication, overuse hurts version control.*

Getting Emails Right
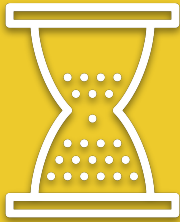
Nearly 1/3rd of all emails are sent after core working hours. Analyzing time spent sending and receiving emails — and who is included on those emails — is crucial to getting email culture right.

Time Is Ltd. Analytics empowers leaders with insights into how email is affecting the employee experience. The most powerful insights are derived with how email is intertwined with meetings and other communication tools (e.g. Slack).

Email volume is an issue unto itself, but it becomes especially acute when combined with meetings — different versions of working documents, and after hours replies.

Are your employees drowning in email? We can help! Contact **solutions@timeisltd.com** to get started today.

Focus on the Employee Experience ASAP

> *The most valuable assets of a 20th-century company were its production equipment. The most valuable asset of a 21st-century institution, whether business or non-business, will be its knowledge workers and their productivity.*
>
> *Peter Drucker, CEO of Hip Investor Inc.*

Elevating the Employee Experience

The employee experience is at the core of what will drive the businesses of tomorrow. In a world where the pace of change is accelerating, one thing remains true: your most valuable assets are your employees.

What has fundamentally shifted is that employees are, and will increasingly be, looking at employment as more than just a means to make ends meet. Employees now demand work that's fulfilling, builds meaningful relationships, and challenges them to work to the best of their ability. And creating the right workforce environment is critical to driving an experience worth talking about.

Not only will your employees be more engaged, but they'll also be more productive. Leading to a win-win for the employer and employee relationship.

Employee Satisfaction & Employee Engagement

The most common method of understanding employee satisfaction is via employee surveys. Without a doubt, company surveys serve a purpose — they allow employees to provide feedback in a structured way that is actionable for organizational leadership. In no way is Time Is Ltd. suggesting they be eliminated.
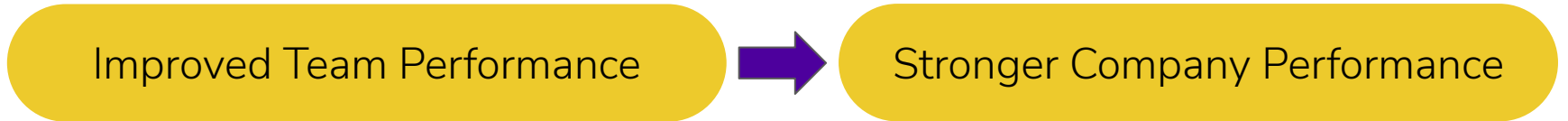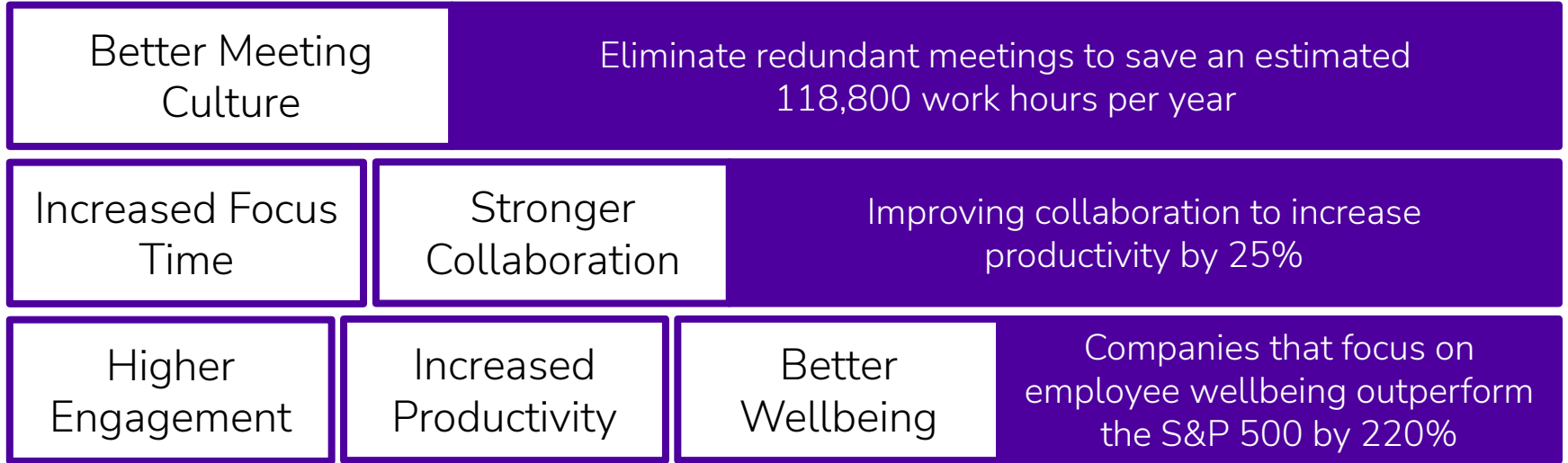
However, they represent a quick snapshot in time. The employee experience shifts from day-to-day, and having a finger on the pulse of your workplace dynamic is essential for addressing employee challenges in real-time.

By using a Sociomap, like the image on the right, you can understand how your team members interact with each other. A quick snapshot like this helps you understand team dynamics. But if you track this over time and you see an employee becoming siloed, you can act and address this disengagement before it's too late.
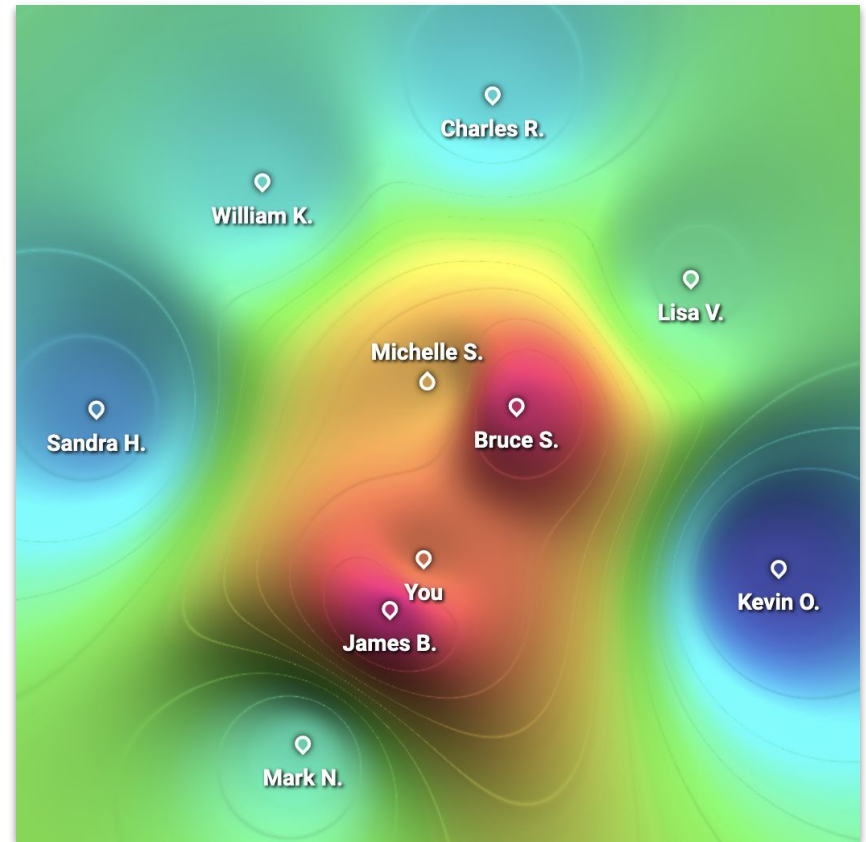

Image Source: Time is Ltd. Sociomapping. Visualize your team dynamics by seeing exactly how "close" sales is to marketing, individual contributors are to their department leader, and much more. Our proprietary sociomapping visualizations provide an intuitive and insightful view of your organization's dynamic.

How Time Is Ltd. Can Work With You

| Better Meeting Culture | Eliminate redundant meetings to save an estimated 118,800 work hours per year |

| Increased Focus Time | Stronger Collaboration | Improving collaboration to increase productivity by 25% |

| Higher Engagement | Increased Productivity | Better Wellbeing | Companies that focus on employee wellbeing outperform the S&P 500 by 220% |

Improved Team Performance → **Stronger Company Performance**

Time is Ltd.

Time is Ltd. enables companies to visualize their digital communication and collaboration ecosystems and drive bottom-up change with an intuitive team-leader coaching solution.
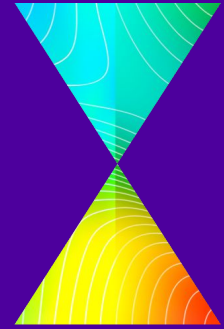
Ready to become a leader in employee experience?

Contact <u>solutions@timeisltd.com</u>