



THE **BAILEY**
GROUP

Leaders must grapple with new interpersonal priorities in the 21st-century

EBOOK

Table of Contents

1. Changing workplace priorities
2. The importance of engagement
3. The growing need for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)
4. Essential skills in the new workplace
6. How TBG is uniquely positioned to help leaders

Changing workplace priorities

The COVID-19 pandemic caused many people to change their priorities, putting issues like health, work-life balance, and family time higher up the list. However, while the public health crisis accelerated this change, the following trends were already in motion before the virus took hold:

- The increasing **sophistication of digital technologies** has given people the tools to do more work at a much faster rate and at all hours of the day (and night).
- The shift to a **knowledge-based, services economy** has increased the reliance on digital technologies, which, in turn, facilitate faster-paced work.
- As people experience more work-related stress due to overwork, they've begun to demand a greater emphasis on **psychological safety and wellbeing** in the office.

Ongoing generational shifts have only served to reinforce these trends. Members of Gen Z in particular have less tolerance for workplaces that don't prioritize their health and wellbeing — and they aren't afraid to leave companies that don't meet their expectations.



The importance of engagement

Contrary to popular opinion, levels of employee engagement haven't actually changed much over the past few decades, despite major workplace disruptions like the pandemic.

However, the transition to remote/hybrid work models has made employees less visible at work, making it harder for management to become aware of any engagement issues.

When those issues are left unaddressed, it can easily lead employees (especially younger ones) to feel disengaged and seek new opportunities elsewhere, causing retention to take a big hit.

This shift is changing the role of management teams. Leaders used to be put into positions of authority because they were masters of the technical aspects of their jobs. Now, the best leaders are the ones who are most effective at motivating employees, creating a shared community, and building a strong sense of trust.



The growing need for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)

The United States is becoming more diverse, and in a few short decades, white Americans will be one of many minorities. Unfortunately, organizations, workforces, and workplace cultures continue to reflect a white-centric ethos and viewpoint, and many white leaders continue to hold biases (many unconsciously).

As the social fabric of the country changes, leaders and organizations will also have to change to create meaningful opportunities for women, people of color, and other historically marginalized groups. Central to this will be making workplaces warm and welcoming to those who look different, have unique perspectives, and come from diverse backgrounds.

Making DEI a top priority is no longer optional — it's essential to business success in the 21st century. Research consistently demonstrates that organizations with diverse workforces and leadership teams are more productive and successful. Moreover, consumers (especially younger ones) are increasingly making purchasing decisions based on a brand's commitment to social issues they care about, including diversity, equity, and inclusion.



Essential skills in the new workplace

Success in the new world of work requires leaders to develop and cultivate a more robust skill set that helps them create happier, healthier, and more inclusive workplaces. These include:

1. EMPATHY

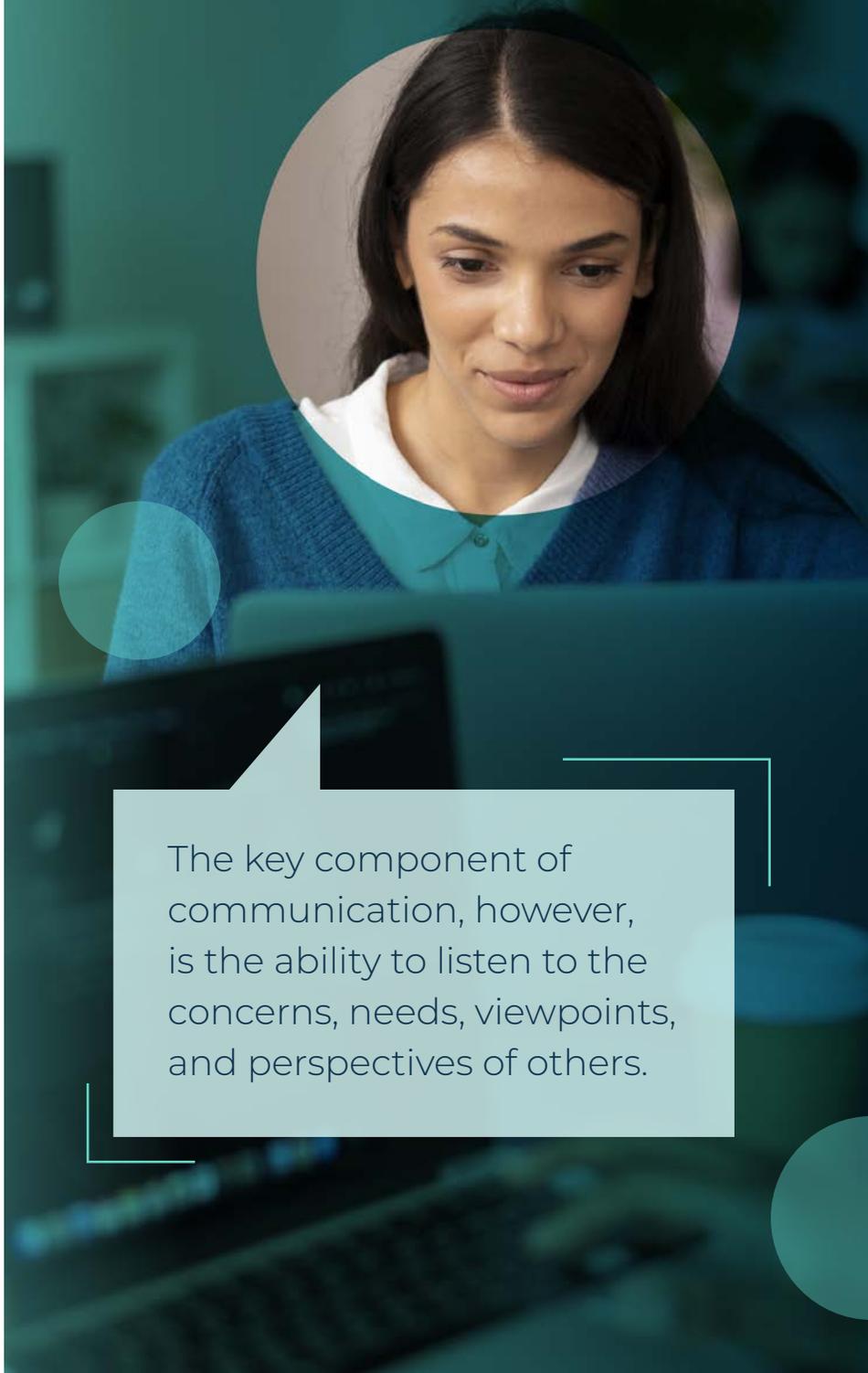
A leader's ability to understand the worldview of others and demonstrate a sincere concern for their emotional wellbeing is critical to responding to their needs in a constructive and proactive way.

2. OPEN-MINDED CURIOSITY

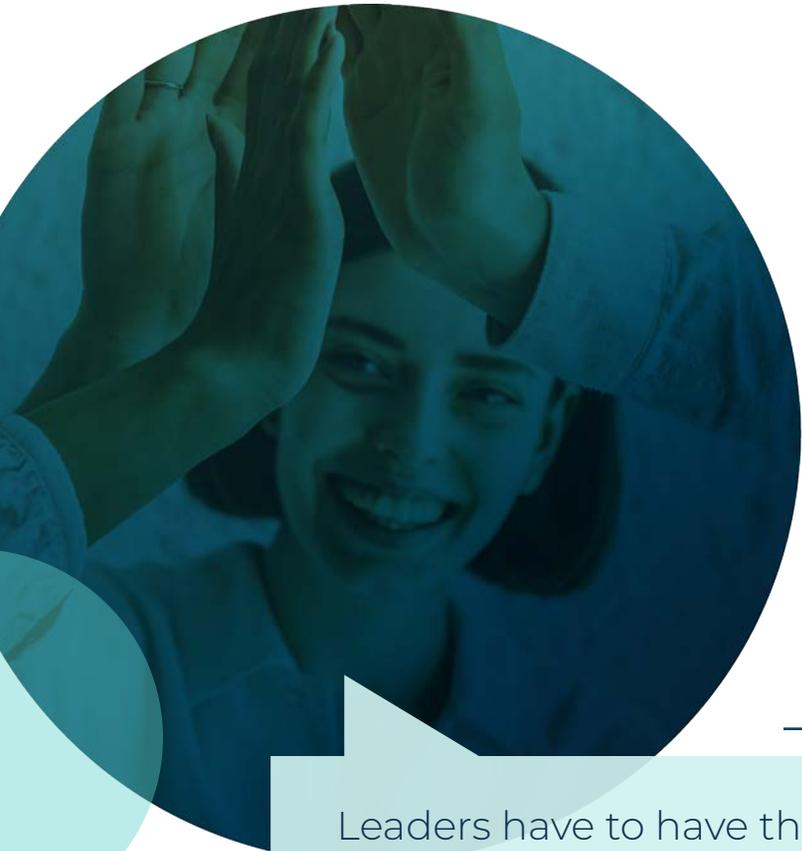
Diverse workplaces require leaders that are open-minded and genuinely curious about learning and understanding the perspectives and viewpoints of others.

3. COMMUNICATION

Everything a leader does is tied together by effectively communicating goals, plans, and strategies to the wider organization. The key component of communication, however, is the ability to listen to the concerns, needs, viewpoints, and perspectives of others.



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4. AGILITY

Change is the only constant in the business world, and leaders have to have a change-oriented mindset to achieve success. They need to be able to adapt with confidence when market trends evolve and crises emerge. They also must have a willingness and confidence in their own ability to change their mindset and opinions as they gather new information.

5. COURAGE

Unfortunately, the more diverse and open the workplace, the less likely it is that decisions will make everybody happy. Leaders have to have the courage to make hard decisions that they know will disappoint some people some of the time.

6. STRATEGIC THINKING

Leaders can't get bogged down in their immediate challenges — they have to be able to think long term, crafting strategic visions capable of winning sufficient buy-in and ensuring the future success of the organization.

CONCLUSION

How TBG is uniquely positioned to help leaders

Our coaching philosophy at The Bailey Group is driven by the idea that effective leadership development requires input from business leaders and psychologists. Our coaching bench consists of both, ensuring clients are receiving insights about their own behavior and how they can change and grow, while also getting input from leaders who have sat in the same seat and worked through similar challenges.

All of the information, strategies, and approaches we share with clients have already been tested within The Bailey Group — we're constantly applying our coaching techniques to our own leadership approach to determine what works and what doesn't.

We've made DEI a top priority, and we're investing and putting in the work to change ourselves from the inside and make our organization more welcoming to people of different backgrounds and perspectives. We've committed ourselves to not just talking the talk, but walking the walk by becoming allies and hiring trained DEI consultants to help us realize meaningful change in the workplace.



Contact The Bailey Group today to transform your leadership impact.

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