

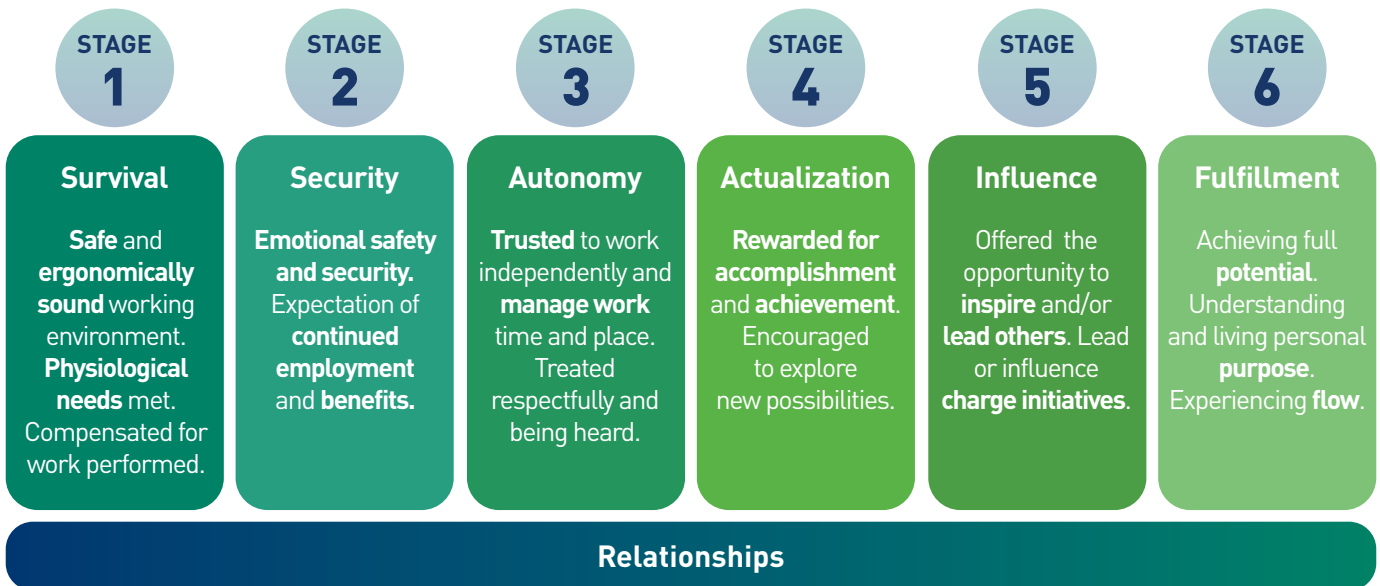


THE CONNECTED workforce

Regardless of the generational differences we have in the workplace today, to operate effectively and successfully manage diverse teams, we must understand people's needs, aspirations and motivations—at all stages of their lifework. Because what happens in our employee's lives affects who they are at work; and what happens at work has an influence on who they are at home.

Throughout our careers, we move through stages that determine how we approach life, perceive and respond to information, make decisions and interact with others. I have developed the Employee Continuum of Needs to help illustrate this point.

The Employee Continuum of Needs:™



Survival

The basic physiological needs must be met before people can consistently function at higher levels. Here, individuals are concerned with making it to tomorrow. Hopes and dreams seem out of reach. No time for energy to invest in their health. They eat what they can afford, may self-medicate to make it through the day, and have little interest in something that might benefit them years down the road.



Security

Individuals move from crisis to contributing. While often still living from paycheck to paycheck, there is more confidence of continued employment at the current company or a future employer at this stage. Stress is reduced at this level through benefits that provide a safety net, and skill development, which provides some marketability.



Autonomy

Here, employees begin to tap more deeply into their potential. They take more risks because they feel respected and supported. These individuals understand what is expected of them and strive to meet expectations. They can effectively lead or direct the work of others.



Actualization

Looking to innovate, progress and solve problems with new outlooks and possibilities to help their careers, professional success is important to employees at this point; and they seek rewards and recognition for their work.



Influence

Having an impact on others drives people at this stage. They enjoy inspiring others to spur ideas and innovation. They are less individualistic in focus, and have a more of an “us” mentality, considering the greater good of the company.



Fulfillment

By this stage, people exude optimism because they live a purposeful life, personally and professionally. Self-awareness is high; unfazed by change, they are adaptive to their surroundings.

Relationships are the key to success. Understanding where each person is on the Employee Continuum of Needs is crucial for organizations looking to develop an inclusive, diverse generational workforce. By considering employees' motivations throughout, we can envision how they can best work with others to contribute to the overall picture.



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