

# Q02. I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.

## Free Me From Unnecessary Stress

Nothing is more frustrating than feeling as if you want to do a good job at work but don't have the right equipment to do so. When employees lack the means to do their work well, frustration with their inability quickly follows, as does anger with the manager or organization for placing them in such a difficult spot.

On average, only one in three workers strongly agree that they have told their manager the one thing they need most to get their work done and why.

Managers with bottom-quartile performance on this measure average 20% to 40% higher employee attrition than their top-quartile peers. This represents millions of dollars in direct and indirect turnover costs.



One of the most insightful findings from Gallup's research on this element of engagement is the variability of perceptions among workgroups. Even in the most legislated working environments where materials and equipment are essentially the same across business units, ratings on this element fluctuate significantly. The variation in ratings lies in front-line managers' involvement, judgment and action.

About **four in 10** workers globally strongly agree that they have the materials and equipment to do their jobs right.

Despite the functional nature of the statement, this engagement item measures both physical resource needs and the potential barriers that exist between manager and employee.

The most effective managers listen to their employees' needs and are transparent about what can be provided and when. These managers respond to the material and emotional needs that fuel their employees' requests.

As a manager, you should routinely ask yourself:

- ✓ Do my team members have all of the things they need to meet the expectations that I have set for them?
- ✓ Does my team understand how to handle requests for materials and equipment when the business case is strong?
- ✓ Do I provide honest and acceptable explanations when requests cannot be fulfilled?

## Three Material and Emotional Needs

- 1 **Hardware** The tangible tools and equipment necessary to do the work
- 2 **Software** The systems and processes in place (including access to information) that maximize productivity
- 3 **Humanware** Appropriate staffing and the acceptable handling of equipment requests

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## Identifying the Barriers to Performance

The most effective managers know that they can affect engagement by how they focus on and respond to the resource needs of their employees. Great managers involve their employees in the process of identifying resource requirements and solutions to the challenges they face.

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## Engaging Conversations

The best managers know that they can influence engagement on this item by focusing on Hardware, Software and Humanware when responding to their team members' requests for materials and equipment. Employees are typically vocal during discussions about this item. Asking your employees the following questions can help diagnose challenges or barriers you might face regarding this item:

- What do you need to get your job done?
- What are the essentials? What materials and equipment are essential to doing your job well? How happy are you with the availability and functionality of each of these needs?
- Does your work equipment (or lack thereof) lead to any stress? How can we help alleviate this stress?
- Do you have all of the information you need to do your job right?
- Are there things that distract you or keep you from being positive, productive or accurate in the work you do?

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## Best Practices

The most effective managers respond to their employees' workplace needs by incorporating the following behaviors into their management style and approach:

- Continuously look for materials and equipment that will assist employees in performing their jobs efficiently and effectively.
- Follow up regularly with employees to make sure they have the tools and information they need to perform their jobs effectively.
- Teach employees how to access the information they need to do their jobs right.
- Promptly respond to requests for tools and equipment that employees need to do their jobs properly, even if you cannot grant the request.
- Hold open conversations that encourage team members to talk about what they need to perform their jobs.
- Come up with operational alternatives together as a team to navigate barriers that might be getting in the way of the team's performance.