

Why your relationship with your manager matters more than the one with your colleagues

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New research shows that the relationship with the manager can be even more important than the relationship with colleagues in terms of job

satisfaction and engagement. But why is this the case?

Having friends at work can make the workday more enjoyable, but the greatest impact on satisfaction and engagement comes from your [relationship](#) with your manager.

Being happy at work is important for most people. One of the most crucial factors is the relationships we have in the workplace. In a new study [published](#) in the *Psychology of Leaders and Leadership*, researchers from the University of Skövde, University West, and the University of Gothenburg examined how different workplace relationships affect employees' [job satisfaction](#) and engagement.

The study revealed that the relationship with the manager strongly impacts how satisfied and engaged employees feel at work.

"It's about the quality of the relationship between a manager and an employee. If you have a good relationship with your manager, you generally feel more recognized, receive better support, and have more influence over your work. This leads to higher job satisfaction and greater engagement," says Thomas Andersson, professor of business administration at the University of Skövde and one of the researchers behind the study.

The manager has a significant impact on the work environment

A good manager gives instructions and provides support and recognition for your work. It feels good to know that your hard work is appreciated, and this can increase your motivation and well-being. A good relationship with the manager can also open up more opportunities for development and advancement. Managers who know their employees

well are more likely to invest in their development.

"The manager has a significant impact on the work environment. A supportive and fair manager can create a positive [work environment](#) where everyone feels safe and valued," says Andersson.

He points out that relationships with colleagues are also important. Having friends at work can make the workday more enjoyable and create a sense of belonging. However, according to the study, it is the relationship with the manager that has the greatest impact on overall job satisfaction.

"To be happy at work, it's important to build good relationships with both the manager and colleagues. But if we have to prioritize, research shows that the relationship with the manager plays a crucial role in our job satisfaction and [engagement](#)," says Andersson.

So, next time you think about what can improve your work situation, consider how you can improve your relationship with your manager.

More information: Ali Kazemi et al, How you appraise your relationship with your colleagues matters, but not as much as how you appraise your relationship with your manager: Predicting employee job satisfaction and commitment, *Psychology of Leaders and Leadership* (2024). [DOI: 10.1037/mgr0000154](https://doi.org/10.1037/mgr0000154)

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