The Manager Crunch

Everything. Everywhere. All at Once.

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Organizations are under pressure because of significant workplace challenges such as office attendance changes, investors' demand for growth and productivity, the need to rapidly adopt new technology, and team members' mental health needs. Senior leaders rely on middle managers to execute plans and navigate these challenges, and the rising expectations of the people they manage add to the strain. Overall, they're doing more with less. According to a 2023 Gallup poll, 64% percent of middle managers have taken on additional responsibilities, with more than half saying they now lead restructured teams with less experience and fewer resources.

"Most managers love people and love doing their jobs – but we're finding that the intensity is increasing. The job, in many ways, is getting too big, and we're asking the world of managers right now."

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GALLUP RESEARCHER BEN WIGERT

Managers Struggle More Compared to Senior Leaders

THEY ARE:

12% less engaged

7% less productive

9% less likely to report good wellbeing

8% less likely to feel connected to their company's culture

14% more likely to leave their job

The Privacy Divide: Leaders and Managers Disagree on Priority

Leaders and managers agree privacy is essential, but there is a gap between what middle managers say they need and what leaders prioritize.

66% of managers say privacy is their most important need in the office, yet **leaders rank it fourth** on their list of things to improve after collaboration, wellbeing and focus.

Similar Workload. Less Privacy.

Middle managers have just as many meetings as senior leaders – and more than the individual contributors who report to them. Yet, they're less satisfied with their access to areas that allow them to focus and collaborate effectively.

> **Senior leaders are more likely to have private offices or more access to privacy, while middle managers often work with their teams in an open-plan environment.**
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> **46%** time spent by managers collaborating
> **48%** time spent by directors + above collaborating
>
> **69%** of managers say they don't have access to privacy
> **56%** of senior leaders + above don't have access to privacy
>
> **33%** of managers are dissatisfied with the office
> **23%** of senior leaders + above are dissatisfied with the office.
>
> The result: Senior leaders like the office far more because it supports their needs better than managers'.

Managers' Missing Input

Managers recognize the expectation to perform at a higher level but believe they lack a voice in shaping their office to support their needs.

49% of managers say they are not, or likely wouldn't be, considered in the layout of their office.

Organizations can use the workplace to boost managers' performance and wellbeing. A diverse range of spaces within a team neighborhood creates a sense of community that builds trust and improves wellbeing. Giving people access to different types of privacy to focus and meet throughout the day will help alleviate stress by removing the barriers for managers and their employees to do great work.

"Our research shows that certain things are more difficult to do when we're apart. A work environment that supports connection, collaboration, creativity, and culture is essential to unlocking the potential of managers and their teams."

BEN WIGERT, GALLUP