

# BEST EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

**WINNER**

## ODEON CINEMAS UK AND IRELAND

Odeon Cinema Group's ground-up approach to employee engagement earned it the top spot as judges' favourite. With a staff base spanning across generations, in both cinemas and support offices around the country, and in hourly-paid and salaried roles, the cinema brand wanted to rebuild a sense of unity in a workforce transformed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Leaders of Odeon committed to not just restore engagement but reimagine it, in a way that judges said proved "authentic and sustainable". The group's UK and Ireland people team introduced a dynamic, multilayered engagement strategy, aiming to co-create an inclusive and empowering workplace culture that was relevant regardless of a colleague's role, location or schedule. They also sought to unify colleagues through a common purpose and values statement: Making Movies Better, together. This hard work resulted in a holistic and interactive programme of participation and change.

To provide staff with greater visibility and clarity about their future with Odeon, leaders set up a development framework called Build Your Future, to outline career pathways and growth opportunities. Training was rolled out for managers in how to have inclusive career conversations, to further embed the framework,



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and resources were made accessible to keep learning front of mind.

In 2024, the HR team launched an employee-driven recognition platform, You

digital space, like a virtual town square, ensuring that teams on the ground in cinemas can engage. Key cultural moments, such as the group's Pride Day 2025, were live-streamed through Spotlight, highlighting colleague stories, leadership panels and inclusive messaging.

Though Odeon's leaders actively contribute to the digital platform – adding content, taking part in community challenges and facilitating team communications – analytics show that content engagement has increasingly been generated by more junior colleagues, suggesting a sense of ground-up empowerment. Judges commended the strategy for increasing peer-led engagement, and for the way in which the strategy was embedded.

And the impact has spread beyond engagement: leaders at Odeon achieved an impressive 26% reduction in turnover rates over two years, from 55.9% in Q1 of 2023, to 29.5% in Q1 of 2025, across both hourly-paid cinema teams and salaried workers in support functions. This impactful strategy has truly raised the excellence bar.

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