

The
**BETTER
CALL
Saul**



Guide to Employee Experience



workvivo

Worried that your employee
experience isn't cutting it?

S'all good, man – this guide
has you **covered**.



Introduction

Who'd have thought that a spin-off about the origins of a corrupt lawyer could capture the hearts of so many? We love Better Call Saul almost as much as we love talking about employee experience. So we've taken the natural next step – bringing them together in our most ambitious handbook yet!

Here's what you can expect to learn:

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AS WELL AS... THE MISTAKES
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WHY THE WIND WENT OUT OF
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WHY WE ARE FOREVER FANS
OF KIM WEXLER.

What is employee experience and why should you care?



Employee experience is exactly what it says on the tin: it's the impression your company leaves on your employees. It starts as early as when they apply for a job and lasts until the day they leave (and beyond).

The experiences your employees have impact every single part of your company – productivity, recruitment, retention, customer satisfaction... the list goes on. For that reason, it also relies on every aspect of your business to succeed – culture, workload, company goals and values, and internal communications, to name a few.

Every company is different, and every approach to employee experience will be too. But there are some things we know:

- Employees want to be happy at work
- They want to be trusted to work flexibly and still get their job done
- They want to feel a sense of belonging
- They want to know that their work is making a difference

Employee experience is what makes all the difference in uncertain times. It's what protects employee turnover during the Great Resignation and stops people from becoming quiet quitters. It's what helps you recruit and retain people as passionate and talented as Better Call Saul's Kim Wexler.

Even Jimmy McGill – the con artist who tries to leave his unsavory past behind – just wants the respect, trust, and compassion his hard work for the bar exam has earned him. When he doesn't get that, it sends him down the slippery slope toward Saul Goodman, and we all know how that ends.

Not with Texas Blue Bell chocolate chip ice cream, sadly.



Gene, Cinnabon, and the power of purpose at work

Today's employees want a sense of purpose, and the residents of Albuquerque are no different. We've seen what happens when Jimmy, AKA Saul Goodman, AKA Gene Takavic, dons an apron and clocks into his job at Cinnabon. His spark is gone, and so is his signature look; without the colorful, clashing suits, Gene's heart simply isn't in his work.

With Gene lacking a sense of purpose, it's clear that this new role is not going to end well. But what makes us feel purposeful is subjective, right? Right. However, people don't have to feel like they're inspiring world peace to enjoy their jobs. Sometimes giving an employee a sense of purpose is as simple as empowering them to use their unique talents or help those around them.

It's about your ikigai – your reason to wake up in the morning. Flashback to Omaha and it's clear Gene can't see any ikigai or sense of purpose on Cinnabon's menu. Unable to suppress his need for a darker purpose, it's not long before he begins to revert to old behaviors.

SOMETIMES GIVING AN
EMPLOYEE A SENSE OF
PURPOSE IS AS SIMPLE
AS EMPOWERING THEM.



On a good day, Gene leads a soulless life of anonymity, only clocking into work to keep up his new identity. On a bad day, he's seconds from being uncovered as the colorful corrupt lawyer from Albuquerque who took pleasure in orchestrating his own brother's terrible downfall and went on to join Walter White's inner circle.

As time passes, Gene eventually gets recognized – the beginning of an inevitable downfall in his unfulfilled Cinnabon career. He begins to slip back into his older way of life, concocting a master plan to keep his past hidden, all on company time. With no purpose and external pressure rising, he becomes another addition to the list of disengaged employees throughout the world. Gene feels no responsibility to Cinnabon, nor is he aligned with the organization's mission and goals. Of course, Gene's true calling never involved supplying the people of Omaha with tasty glazed cinnamon rolls. But it's also a failing on Cinnabon for not recognizing the lack of purpose he was feeling in his work and taking action.

Maybe an employee recognition and engagement platform (like Workvivo) could even have helped Gene Takavic become the best-darned employee Cinnabon Omaha ever saw.

With the right tools, Cinnabon could have given Gene easy, immediate access to connect with his colleagues across the US, but also to the 'why' of his work. What difference was he making by showing up every day? How successful was the new flavor his branch came up with, and what impact was it having? What positive reviews were coming in from the customers he served?

Without an employee experience app, Gene and his coworkers will never know the answers, let alone get the chance to celebrate them. And for that, Cinnabon lovers throughout Omaha are the ones who have to suffer.

The learning we take from this chaotic tale is that no matter how talented an employee may be, allowing a misalignment in purpose and goals to fester will almost certainly end in tears. Or in Gene Takavic/Saul Goodman's case – an 86-year prison sentence.

WITHOUT AN EMPLOYEE
EXPERIENCE APP, GENE
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NEVER KNOW THE ANSWERS.

Creating a better (call) culture 

Culture Crosshairs

Want to give your employees the best experience you possibly can? Prioritize culture. Build the working environment you provide to your people on company goals and values, a sense of belonging, compassion, open communication, and what they actually need and want.

It's not about free lunches, free bars, and free ping pong tables; none of these can make up for a workplace culture that fails to make its people feel welcome, safe, and valued. Let's take a look at some of Albuquerque's most familiar establishments as an example.

Culture at Hamlin, Hamlin & McGill

First up, HHM. A classic case of what-not-to-do in company culture. A healthy culture is one that lifts employees up and supports their learning and development. A toxic culture is one that focuses solely on their failures and punishes them when they make mistakes.

When Kim Wexler (did we mention that we're Kim fans?) slips up and recommends Jimmy to Davis & Main, her boss Howard doesn't sit down with her and talk through what happened.

Instead, he sends her back to document review – a huge step back for a relatively senior associate, and one that's visible to Kim's colleagues across the company.

The competitive culture at HHM then drove Kim to try and bag a big client for the firm to prove herself and get back to her actual job. She puts in countless hours and manages to land a bank called Mesa Verde. But Howard barely thanks her and keeps her in doc review so she can't work on the case she alone got for the company.



Culture at Mesa Verde

Culture is about day-to-day life at your company, but it's also about building inspiring goals and values and championing them in everything you do. Let's put Mesa Verde in the hot seat for this one.

After successfully launching a number of new branches, the bank wants to build a call center in what was previously a neighborhood. There's just one occupant left in the area, Everett Acker, who doesn't want to sell his home.

This is where Mesa Verde shows its true colors; it has no time for Everett's attachment to the house he has spent most of his life in and continues its quest to evict an elderly man from his home.

Kim initially goes along with Mesa Verde's strategy and tries to convince Everett to take the bank's deal. But when she's had more time to think about it, the behavior of her client – effectively her employer – doesn't sit right. She drives back to Everett's house at dusk and offers to help him move into a new house with her own money.

It's clear that Kim is doing this because she believes it's right, not because she's trying to push Everett to make a decision that will benefit Mesa Verde.

We learn more here about where her loyalties lie and how her own moral compass is pointing in a different direction to Mesa Verde's, which causes her to detach herself from the company's overall goal and go her own way without their knowledge.

If HHM and Mesa Verde had prioritized building a positive culture instead of sending Kween Kim to doc review and trying to kick Everett out of his house, things might have turned out differently. Kim might still be using her powers for good at a law firm instead of working in advertising at a sprinkler company in Florida, and Mesa Verde's Kevin Wachtell could have dodged the subsequent blackmailing Jimmy used to strike a deal for Everett.

Culture at Los Pollos Hermanos

Ironically, the employees at Los Pollos Hermanos look happier than those working at HHM. One of Los Pollos' top employees, Lyle, goes above and beyond for his boss on multiple occasions. He sings the company's jingle while he works and proudly delivers a spotless deep fat fryer under Gustavo's watchful eye.



Imprintable Moments and the Employee Experience



It could be that Los Pollos did a better job with its imprintable moments than HHM. Imprintable moments are the points at which a company has the opportunity to make a lasting impression on an employee.

The job interview, onboarding, performance reviews, resigning – these are all examples of imprintable moments. They're crucial to an employee's experience, especially because they're often during times when a person feels particularly vulnerable in their career.

Hamlin, Hamlin & McGill: A cautionary tale

Companies that get these imprintable moments right reap the benefits. They have higher staff retention rates, greater productivity, and a healthier culture.

But the organizations that get them wrong risk it all: losing their top talent, leaving their staff unmotivated, and creating an uninspiring work environment. HHM is the perfect example. I mean, the firm lost Kim Wexler, right? You never want to lose Kim Wexler. Ever.

For Jimmy, the response he received from HHM when he asked about a role that would bring him out of the mail room and into the law practice had dire consequences. Jimmy, who had gotten his law degree, passed the bar exam, and was vocal about his passion for the field, was turned down.

This was an important moment for Jimmy, and HHM handled it poorly. Instead of being genuine and honest, senior partner Chuck hid behind his colleague Howard to block Jimmy's career progression.

Rather than communicating professionally with Jimmy about why he wasn't being considered for a role, Howard interrupts the celebration he's having with coworkers to give him the bad news there and then.

Kim, having seen how her employer treated her colleague and friend, ultimately ends up leaving the company too. Clearly, how you treat one employee has a ripple effect; if someone sees their coworker go through a negative experience, they don't want to be next in line.

What might have been different if Chuck and Howard had embraced an employee experience app like Workvivo? A workplace with a traditional hierarchical structure like HHM can be a breeding ground for big egos and closed-off comms, both of which can be a death knell for the employee experience.

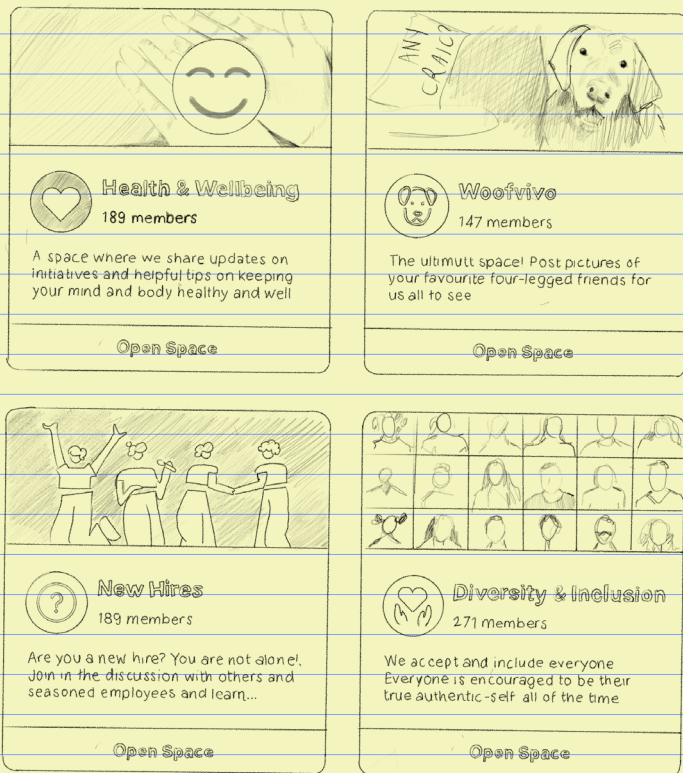
If HHM had rolled out its very own Workvivo platform, it would have been able to shift towards an open comms environment – one where every employee had a voice and felt like they could use it.

Without it, members of senior management were much less likely to forge meaningful connections with their employees, celebrate individual achievements, and create a sense of belonging.



Kim could have used the Spaces feature to share tips on quitting smoking with her colleagues. Jimmy could have been celebrated for passing the bar exam by his peers and higher-ups alike via Hoorays. Chuck could have gotten support from his coworkers who shared similar experiences with their mental health.

Alas, HHM was doomed to deliver a negative employee experience. Without Workvivo, it didn't show its people that it cared, it didn't try to understand what they wanted, and it failed to embrace open comms. As a result, one of New Mexico's most promising lawyers left to find something better.



Employee Benefits

...A Company Car and Cocobolo Desk Won't Cut It

Employee experience is a marathon, not a sprint. It's about the journey, not the destination. And it requires constant attention; getting new hires in the door with the promise of flashy perks isn't enough to keep them in place if that's all you have to offer.

Benefits can be brilliant. Rewarding your employees for their hard work and achievements with celebrations, personal time, and swag has its place. But without the right working environment, these perks are powerless.

What employees actually want is to be treated with trust, respect, and compassion. They want to work flexible hours, to be heard when they speak up, to get on with their colleagues, and to feel the value of their work.

Even for Jimmy, a man driven by money and material belongings, the company car he gets from Davis & Main simply doesn't cut it. During his brief stint at the Santa Fe law firm, he can finally say goodbye to his 1998 Suzuki Esteem – **a red and yellow car that clashes almost as much as Saul's suits.**


Its replacement is the 2004 Mercedes-Benz he receives from Davis & Main. He also gets his very own assistant, Omar, and a cocobolo desk – the type he had once told Kim he'd put in his office one day.



Side note: the early episodes of season two are great for cars, with Daniel Pryce's H2 Hummer stealing the show.

While Jimmy is understandably excited about these perks as he settles into his new role, the novelty quickly wears off. He feels so unheard and misunderstood at the firm that he runs a commercial without his employer's approval, leading to friction.

In true Jimmy fashion, he sets out to get himself fired so that he doesn't have to resign and repay his bonus. And as hilarious as it is to watch him refuse to flush the toilet after himself and play the bagpipes with his office door open, it's also glaringly obvious that the Mercedes-Benz, the personal assistant, and the cocobolo desk aren't enough to keep Jimmy at the company.



WHAT EMPLOYEES
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RESPECT AND COMPASSION.



Employee Experience Is Your Most Powerful Tool for Motivating Employees

Jimmy doesn't feel motivated by the company culture at Davis & Main. He's not aligned with its goals, and he doesn't feel valued for the work he's putting in (in the form of unsolicited TV advertisements - not the best choice, Jimmy, but still ...)

In fact, Jimmy is so disillusioned with life at Davis & Main that he doesn't just leave the company; it spurs him to turn his working life on its head and officially adopt his new colorfully clothed alias, Saul Goodman.

Clearly, getting a new recruit in the door with the promise of an extortionately priced desk (*yes, we looked it up*) isn't a sustainable approach. To keep them on side, your employee experience needs to deliver. It needs to give employees the tools to forge meaningful connections with each other, regular reminders of the company's goals and values and how their work impacts them, appreciation and recognition for the work they do, and an open comms model that allows for two-way conversations.

With an employee app like Workvivo giving Davis & Main support with all of these and more, the company may not have had to spend so much money on employee turnover and material offerings.

Employees are telling their bosses loud and clear what they don't want: ping-pong tables, free beer, or snazzy workplaces (yes, even if they have cardboard columns and wallpaper boasting the US Constitution). An app like Workvivo gives people the platform to voice those needs, and helps employers to take them on board.

The bottom line?

Employers shouldn't underestimate the power a healthy culture holds over flashy perks. They need to give their people bigger reasons to stay – such as a great culture, flexibility, and compassion – and don't forget the Texas Blue Bell chocolate chip ice cream.

A Poor Employee Experience Can Lead To Quiet Quitting

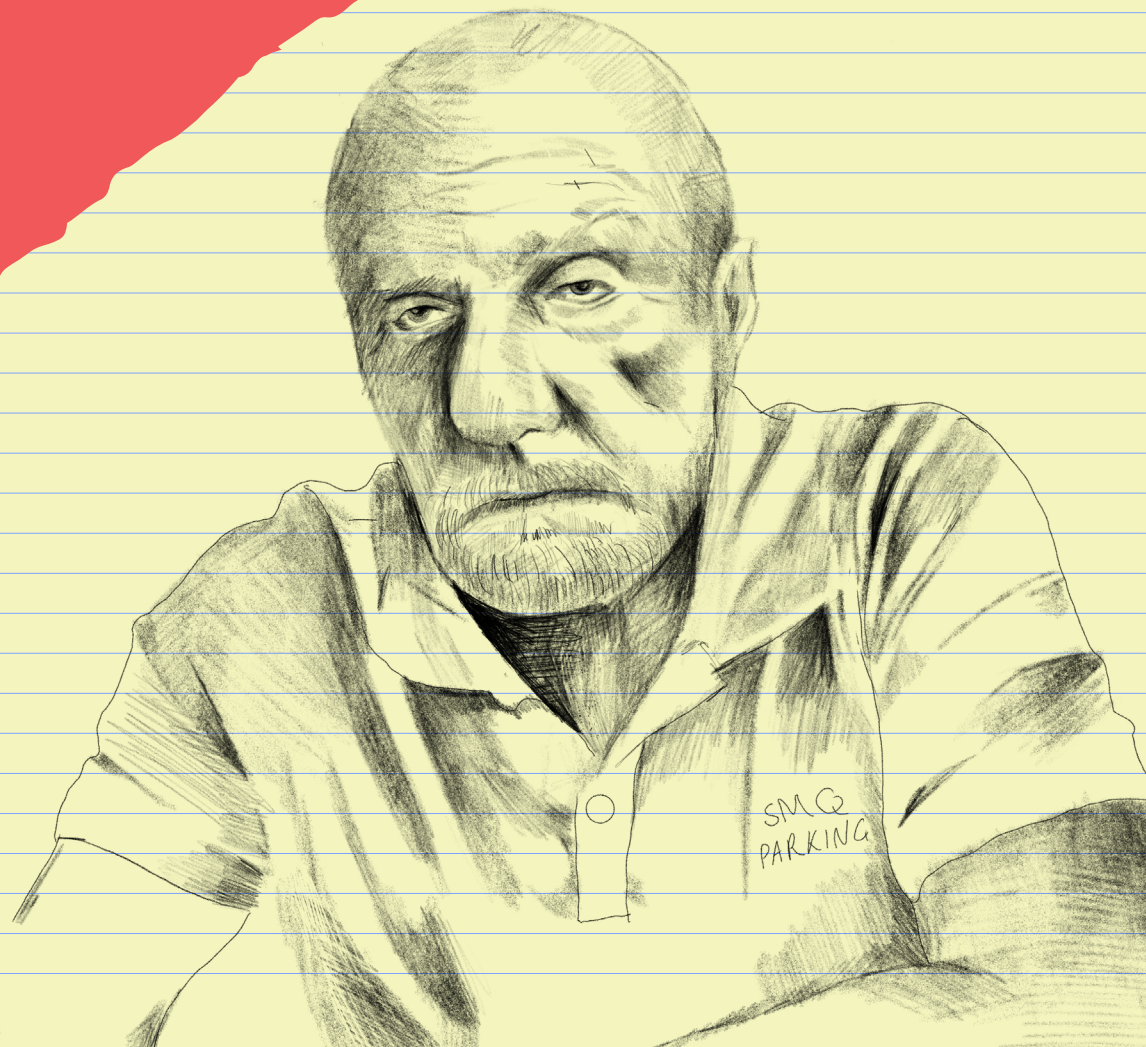
If you've gotten through the Great Resignation with most of your workforce intact, you might be telling yourself it's time to pop the champagne (or the Zafiro Añejo). But don't pat yourself on the back just yet. Just because your employees have stuck around doesn't mean they're still working for you.

Disenfranchised workers might still be on your payroll, but it's likely that their hearts are somewhere else. They might be waiting out the economic turbulence affecting the job market at the moment or staying put for personal reasons, but behind it they're quietly quitting.

Employees stop putting effort in when they no longer care about the work they're doing. They've stopped seeing the bigger picture their work is contributing to, they don't feel involved or included at work, and they don't feel like their work is noticed or appreciated.

Mike Ehrmantraut and Quiet Quitting

When Mike Ehrmantraut (you better believe we quadruple-checked that spelling) was working as a police officer, his loyalty to the job waned as he became frustrated with the amount of corruption in his environment. Because the culture at his workplace was one of taking bribes and facilitating crime, Mike lost his motivation to work towards its overarching goal of protecting citizens.



He stuck around but he wasn't invested in his job, and eventually started taking the bribes himself. By the end of his time in the Philadelphia police, he had quietly retired from the work he had originally been passionate about and was hired to do.

Keeping company goals front and center and paying attention to the experiences its employees were having might have made the police station in Philly a better place to work. Having everyone connected to the same central hub – even the frontline officers out in the field – could have kept employees' passion for police work alive. Instead, Mike went on to live the life of a 'fixer' and ultimately became caught up with the New Mexico Cartel.

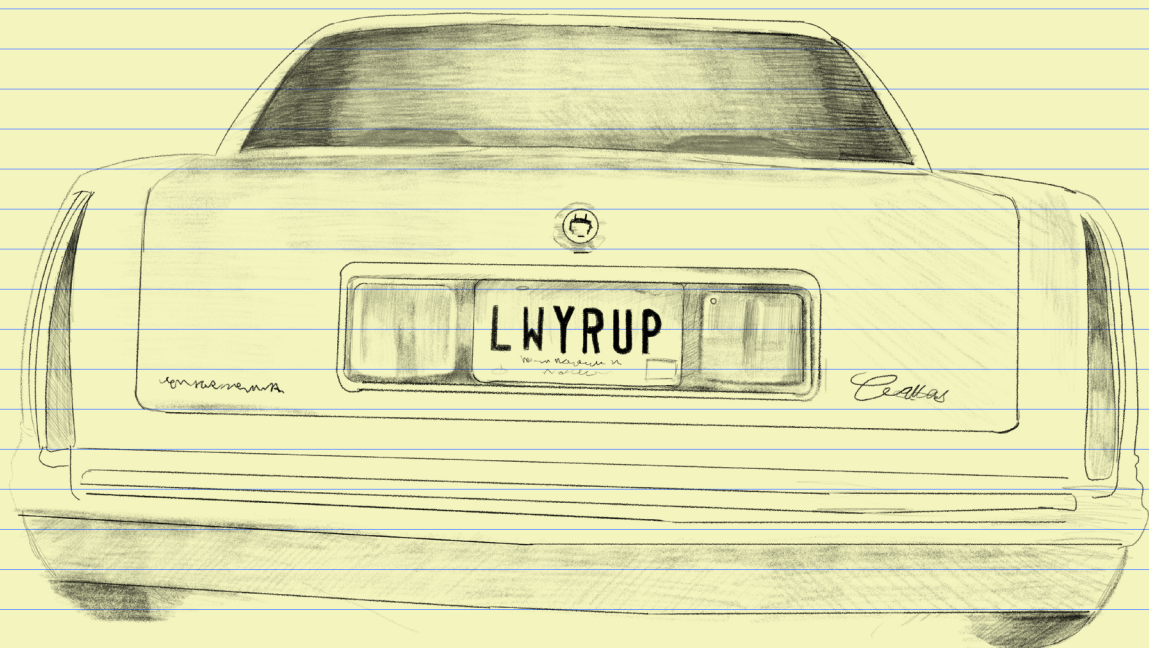
While Mike ends up turning to the Cartel after his bout of quiet quitting, Nacho Varga quietly quits the cartel itself. The deeper Nacho gets with both the Cartel and Gustavo's operation, the more it puts his father's life in danger. This clearly doesn't align with his values, and he starts to look out for himself more and more.

We never thought we'd be writing about the employee experience in a fictional drug Cartel, but here we are.

But quiet quitting isn't limited to members of the cartel or its facilitators. It can also take place at a good old-fashioned Floridian sprinkler company – just ask Kim.

While Gene is putting in the hours at Cinnabon, Kim is working at Palm Coast Sprinklers. But she still finds her way back to doing what she loves – or a piece of it, at least, as she starts volunteering as a secretary at a local pro bono legal firm.

Kim's lack of interest in Palm Coast drives her to funnel her passion and productivity into a different company altogether. And yet, she still shows up to the sprinkler company every day. A classic case of quiet quitting that Palm Coast could potentially have avoided by investing in its culture and championing its employee experience.



Workvivo: Transforming the Employee Experience

With all of these Better Call Saul-fueled learnings in tow, what's your best next step towards delivering a stellar employee experience? A modern internal comms and employee engagement platform like Workvivo can make all the difference.

Having a central hub that invites all of your employees to engage with each other, share their achievements, and voice their feedback is critical for companies that want to live up to the expectations of modern employees. These are some of the core ingredients of a great company culture; they foster a sense of belonging, help people feel part of something bigger than themselves, and allow them to forge meaningful connections.

We can't help but wonder how differently things might have turned out for HHM with the help of Workvivo. At the very least, it might have helped Chuck and Howard hold on to their best people, just like Clunetech, where [retention rates jumped by 30%](#) after implementing the app.

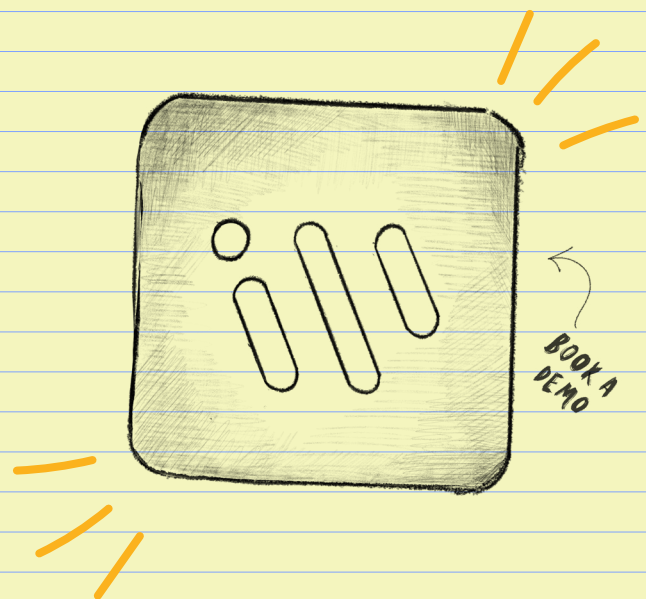
And what if Gene had been encouraged to champion Cinnabon's goals and values? With Workvivo, he would have been able to share content with his colleagues and link it back to the company's overall mission, helping him see the impact of clocking in every day and giving him a more enjoyable work experience. A better employee experience is a key driver in employee engagement, which Workvivo helped Woodie's [grow by 54%](#).

For Kim, her time at HHM might have been much better if she'd been able to log in to Workvivo and see the shout-outs and kudos her coworkers were sharing with her. Receiving recognition is a crucial part of a positive employee experience. And whether she was

out of the office to attend a trial or sitting at her desk, it wouldn't have made a difference; as a smartphone app, Workvivo is inclusive and accessible for all types of workers.

Looking back on all the companies that cropped up throughout Better Call Saul, we can see how Workvivo could have helped transform employee experience at every single one.

Wondering if we can do the same for you? Get in touch today.



Better Call

