

How to measure work engagement

Key Finding: Work engagement can be defined as a unique positive, fulfilling, work related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. It can be measured using a valid and reliable self-reporting questionnaire - the UWES (Utrecht Work Engagement Scale).

Executive summary: The UWES utilizes three scales to determine the level of work engagement: *Vigor, dedication, and absorption*. It is a test of how to measure work engagement both on an individual and on group level:

1. **Vigor:** refers to high level of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one's work, and persistence in the face of difficulties.
2. **Dedication** refers to being involved in one's work, finding meaning in one's work, being challenged, and experiencing sense of enthusiasm, inspiration and pride.
3. **Absorption** refers to being fully concentrated and engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties detaching oneself from work.

The UWES Questionnaire

It includes 7 response options whereby 0=never to 6=always

VIGOR

1. At my work I feel like bursting with energy.
2. At my job I feel strong and vigorous.
3. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.
4. I can continue to work for long periods of time.
5. At my job, I am mentally resilient.
6. At my job, I always persevere, even when things do not go well.

DEDICATION

1. I find the work that I do meaningful and purposeful.
2. I am enthusiastic about my job.
3. My job inspires me.
4. I am proud of the work that I do.
5. My job is challenging enough.

ABSORPTION

1. Time flies when I am at work.
2. When I work, I forget everything else around me.
3. I feel happy when I work intensively.
4. I am immersed in my work.
5. I get carried away when I work.
6. It is difficult to detach myself from my job.

Practical Implications:

- Findings of this study contribute towards standardizing UWES scores, thus allowing meaningful comparisons to be made.
- Managers and consultants will be able to make better-informed decisions when using work engagement data.

Summary of Schaufeli B. W. & Bakker, B. A. (2003): *Occupational Health Psychology Unit*. Utrecht University