

Research foundations

A source-checked brief from Phillip Edge

Reviewed 13 October 2026

What this brief supports

These sources inform the ideas behind Rehumanizing Leadership™. They study broader theories and workplace patterns, not Phillip Edge's proprietary system. They do not establish that this system causes specific retention or performance gains.

Five foundations, one practical direction

1. Human-centered management

Peter Drucker

Drucker's management writing treats people and their development as central to an organization's work. This is a management perspective, not experimental evidence for this system. Sources: [1].

2. Self-determination theory

Deci & Ryan

Autonomy, competence, and relatedness are three psychological needs that support motivation and well-being. The theory does not establish relatedness as the strongest predictor in every workplace. Sources: [2].

3. Mattering

Nancy K. Schlossberg

Mattering concerns feeling noticed, important, and needed by others. Schlossberg's work explores its role in community and student experience; workplace applications require attention to context. Sources: [3].

4. Psychological safety

Amy Edmondson · Google re:Work

Teams need room to ask questions, admit mistakes, and raise concerns. Edmondson found an association between psychological safety and team learning; Google also identified it as important in its own teams. Sources: [4], [5].

5. Employee engagement

Harter, Schmidt & Hayes · Gallup

Business-unit research links employee engagement with outcomes such as productivity and turnover. These associations do not prove that one leadership practice causes an improvement. Sources: [6], [7], [8].

Statistics in context

20% engaged worldwide

Gallup's State of the Global Workplace 2026 summary reports that 20% of employees worldwide were engaged in 2025. The packet's 21% corresponds to 2024. These figures describe global survey findings, not outcomes from Rehumanizing Leadership™. [7]

The conditional 27% estimate

In 2017, Gallup reported that three in ten U.S. workers strongly agreed that their opinions counted at work. It stated that moving this ratio to six in ten could correspond to a 27% reduction in turnover. This is a conditional research estimate, not a guaranteed effect of listening and not an evaluation of this framework. [8]

What the research does not establish

Association is not causation. Student-services research, management writing, a study of 51 teams, research within Google, and business-unit engagement studies have different designs and contexts. None directly evaluates Phillip Edge's proprietary system. Outcomes also depend on workload, resources, pay, management practices, and local conditions.

How the sources were selected

This is a selected foundations brief, not a systematic review. It follows the five streams in the supplied packet. Original research, author-hosted articles, primary research guides, publisher bibliographies, and DOI metadata were checked. Unverified source titles and strong claims were not carried over. No promotional material or testimonials are included.

Full references

[1] Drucker, P. F. (1954). The practice of management. Harper & Brothers.

<https://www.druckerforum.org/retrospective/archive/2016/druckersociety.at/index.php/peterdruckerhome/bibliography/32-prima-ry-literature/20-books.html>

Drucker Society bibliography confirms the book and original publication year. Management writing, not a controlled evaluation.

[2] Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The 'what' and 'why' of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

https://selfdeterminationtheory.org/SDT/documents/2000_DeciRyan_PIWWhatWhy.pdf

Original article hosted by the Self-Determination Theory organization; citation checked against DOI metadata.

[3] Schlossberg, N. K. (1989). Marginality and mattering: Key issues in building community. *New Directions for Student Services*, 1989(48), 5–15. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.37119894803>

<https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.37119894803>

Bibliographic details verified through DOI metadata. Original context is student services, not a workplace retention trial.

[4] Edmondson, A. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(2), 350–383. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2666999>

<https://dash.harvard.edu/entities/publication/13a7b031-0fdd-45ec-a7e0-2b80e2bc679f>

Harvard's research repository supplies the original study and abstract. Study of 51 work teams; association with learning behavior, not a universal performance guarantee.

[5] Google re:Work. (2015). Understand team effectiveness. Project Aristotle research guide.

<https://rework.withgoogle.com/intl/en/guides/understand-team-effectiveness>

Original guide reports research within Google. Organizational findings do not automatically generalize to every workplace.

[6] Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Hayes, T. L. (2002). Business-unit-level relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and business outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(2), 268–279.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.2.268>

<https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.2.268>

Peer-reviewed meta-analysis of business units. Associations should not be presented as proof of causation.

[7] Gallup. (2026). Global data summary: State of the global workplace 2026.

<https://www.gallup.com/workplace/697904/state-of-the-global-workplace-global-data.aspx>

Reports 20% of employees worldwide engaged in 2025; 21% in 2024. Survey context, not a result from Rehumanizing Leadership™.

[8] Gallup. (2017). How to create a culture of psychological safety.

<https://www.gallup.com/workplace/236198/create-culture-psychological-safety.aspx>

Gallup says that moving from three to six in ten U.S. workers strongly agreeing their opinions count could correspond to a 27% reduction in turnover. A conditional estimate, not an observed result of this system.

Claim review

The following records how claims from the supplied packet were handled. Omitted claims are listed for transparency, not presented as evidence.

21% of employees are engaged

Updated and dated

Gallup's 2026 global summary reports 20% engaged in 2025. The packet's 21% matches 2024 data, not the latest reporting period. Reference 7.

Turnover drops 27% when opinions matter

Qualified; not used as a headline statistic

Gallup gives a conditional estimate for a shift from three to six in ten U.S. workers strongly agreeing that their opinions count. It is not a guaranteed reduction or evidence of this system's effectiveness. Reference 8.

96% of leaders think they listen; only 8% of employees agree

Omitted

The paired figures could not be verified against a common original source with comparable samples, questions, and methods. Separate listening and communication measures must not be treated as the same question.

Relatedness is the strongest predictor of engagement and persistence

Omitted

The foundational self-determination article supports three needs, not a universal ranking of relatedness above the others. Reference 2.

Belonging and being heard predict performance better than compensation

Omitted

The cited foundations do not substantiate this broad head-to-head comparison across workplaces.

Organizations using this system see measurable gains

Reframed as aims

No independent evaluation of the proprietary Rehumanizing Leadership™ system was supplied. General research cannot establish system-specific effects or promised results.