Survey Says...

So, you've decided to conduct a company-wide employee survey. An admirable goal–one shared by many progressive organizations. What now?

Conducting an effective employee survey can be complicated. And if done incorrectly, can potentially damage internal relationships.

How then, can you avoid the pitfalls and conclude with meaningful results?

Many companies start out by saying they want an "engagement" survey, but is that really all they're measuring? Some of the best employee surveys measure multiple types of things: job satisfaction, engagement, relationships at work, benefits, and knowledge of the company goals and initiatives, to name a few.

Why?
The question is WHY do you want to do the survey? Many organizations conduct a survey before they go into their strategic planning process. They want to assess the company culture or how aligned the company is with the mission and goals. They use the results to determine some of the goals for the future. Simply conducting a survey to find out people's thoughts isn't really a good reason unless you're going to do something with the results.

Active Participation
If you're going to invest resources, whether it be time, money, or people, you need to make sure people are going to participate. According to multiple research reports, on average, the typical survey only receives a 30% response from

employees despite all the effort put forth by the company and/or consultant. So why won't employees take this seriously? It's because these companies forgot about three important things.

1. **Trust:** There needs to be trust inside your organization. Employees have to feel safe to respond to the survey without worrying about what will happen if they give a poor rating. They need to know the results are completely anonymous. Employees typically demonstrate appreciation of a third-party moderated process by being more candid. Make sure the entire process, from administration to results, is confidential. Whether online or paper, once privacy is lost, so is trust.

2. **Communication:** How you communicate the survey is especially important. Employees and managers alike need to know the "why" behind the survey. What are you looking to measure? And what will be done with the results? People can respond by just checking the boxes because that's what they're told to do, or they can actively participate because you've communicated the importance and reason behind the process. Put together a communication plan, starting before the survey is even administered and follow it through to the end after the results are presented. Be sure you include whether or not you plan to share the results and how answering the survey will benefit employees. This will show that you've given thought to the entire process.

3. **Time:** What a precious resource. And many people have so little of it. If your survey is too long, employees typically end up abandoning the questions, leaving you with incomplete results. It should be able to be completed within 20 minutes. Once you go longer than that, the survey may reveal nothing more than the frustration of the user.

Effective Results

So, you've figured out what you're going to measure and how you'll get your team to participate. But let's talk RESULTS. One of the biggest frustrations employees have is when they take the time to fill out the survey, but never see anything happen as a result.

When you get your results back, typically the findings will first go to the leadership team. But it can't stop there. There needs to be a plan in place to roll out results to your employees. Whether you're sharing the entire report, or just some of the findings, employees need to know that they were heard. Many employees are probably already skeptical about why they had to complete it in the first place, so it's your responsibility to make sure you're addressing their concerns.

Act on the results. You'll want to take time to pick one or two items where you can improve as a company. If your survey demographics included locations or departments, you can give each department a small initiative. Be sure to include your employees in the process. They want to know that their responses made a difference, and they'll want to be a part of the solution.

Surveys are powerful tools. Know why you want the information and what you're going to do with it. Have a plan on how you will communicate why you're doing the survey, as well as the results and next actions. Keep people updated on progress as your company and teams take action. After all, if you want people to be engaged, you have to give them something in which to engage.

Visit RevelaGroup.com/Services

Revela®
Your leaders. Our passion.