

How effective is your employee engagement programme?



Employee Engagement and Internal Communications specialists

If you're running an Employee Engagement programme you need to know whether it's delivering results. But traditional employee surveys have their limitations. So how do you measure the effectiveness of your programme and what do you need to do with the results? OPC's Bob Hayward explains.

Employee engagement can be measured in several ways:

- Annual surveys and/or questionnaires;
- Tracking changes in the staff attrition rate;
- Increase in the number of employee referrals for recruitment and commercial purposes;
- Growth in productivity.

Traditional employee surveys have their limitations

Employee Satisfaction Surveys (ESS) used to be considered the most popular method for measuring how happy an employee was in the organisation. But a happy employee is not necessarily a productive employee. Even an employee who is doing his or her best might not be fully productive or aligned with the organisational goals or values.

ESS is slowly being replaced by surveys that can more effectively measure employee engagement.

Opinion surveys are becoming more common

Employee Opinion Surveys overcome some of the limitations of more traditional employee surveys. These measures employee engagement from a number of dimensions:

- How employees feel (their emotions toward the company, the leadership, the work environment, etc.)
- How they intend to act in the future (will they stay, give extra effort, etc.)
- How committed they are to work with the organisation to improve things

How do you conduct an Employee Opinion Survey?

Your Employee Opinion Survey should be:

- Conducted across the whole organisation
- Designed and analysed by an independent body
- Backed up by an Action Planning Group formed from within the organisation that comprises a cross-section of people from across the company.

How often should you measure the effectiveness of your programme?

Employee engagement needs to be measured at regular intervals, twice a year to once every two years, in order to track its contribution to the success of the organisation. Enterprise wide surveys can be supplemented by conducting dipsticks surveys on specific issues concerning employee engagement and morale. Weekly or monthly questions can be hosted on the organisation's Web site to create an ongoing flow of data.

What must you do about the results?

Three things are vital to the success of your survey:

- You have to make the results of your surveys or questionnaires freely available, ideally without too much delay;
- You have to address any points raised as quickly as possible.
- You have to plan how to handle the results of your research; failure to do so can mean not taking action and can make your employees disengage.