

## Fact Sheet: Employee Opinion Survey

- We base our tools, including our Employee Opinion Survey, on the leading International Baldrige Criteria for performance excellence, an internationally recognised framework that reflects a balanced scorecard approach to organisational effectiveness.
- Our questionnaire is broken in to 4 main areas; an Employee Satisfaction Index, The Key Priorities, The Way Forward and Written Comments.
- Our survey measures satisfaction across key themes including Alignment, Improvement, Customer, Communications, Culture, Development, Motivation, Leadership, Benefits, Accountability, Teamwork, Wellbeing.
- Rather than a simplistic 'gap analysis', our survey defines exactly what the priorities for the organisation are, so you can get the action planning started immediately.
- The final report is user-friendly, provides benchmark scores, identifies key concerns, analyses culture and concludes with specific recommendations.

**This way, you don't waste time on the wrong issues.**

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**One of the impressive features of the survey is the ability to benchmark yourself against other Australian and NZ organisations.**

**At any one time, we hold recent data from more than 200 organisations in our database.**

## Employee Opinion Survey

### How our questionnaire works

The survey is made up of four sections.

#### Section A: The Employee Satisfaction Index

The first part of the survey consists of 50 questions that can be answered on a scale of 1 to 5.

*For example*

16	Good performance is recognized and rewarded:	Rarely	①	②	③	④	⑤	Always
29	I understand Company's key performance indicators	Not really	①	②	③	④	⑤	Yes, totally

Our normal survey instrument has 50 questions which are answered by circling a number on a scale of 1 to 5. A score of 1 or 2 is a negative, 4 or 5 is a positive and a 3 is average. Under our scoring system, the maximum score a company could get would be straight 5's for all questions, giving them a total of 250 points. Our research has shown that the Australian Average is 68%. The Gold Medal standard is 190 out of 250, or 75%.

#### Section B: The Main Priorities

This section is where the action planning for continuous improvement takes place. We normally ask the following 3 questions:

1. *What four things would most change the organisation for the better?*
2. *What are the four worst things about working for the organisation?*
3. *What are the four best things about working for the organisation?*

The respondents have 26 options for each of the three questions. The results are cross-referenced with your Employee Satisfaction Index to give you an action plan.

#### Section C: Suggestions for the way forward

Our experience suggests that most organisations encounter common organisational issues. To help identify actual steps for improvement, this section offers more menu selections for the following 5 questions:

1. *How can we improve communications?*
2. *How can our managers be more effective?*
3. *How can we improve productivity?*
4. *How can we ensure that people here "pull their weight"?*
5. *In my section, the main cause of waste (money, materials, time, human effort) is?*

This section uniquely provides you with the practical suggestions for the way forward on difficult issues.

#### Section D

The final part of the survey is a written comments section so we move away from the "tick and flick" approach and allow people to express opinions in their own words. We recommend asking employees to detail the best and worst behaviours they have experienced in the last twelve months. It's also an opportunity to get feedback about managers. These can be used to check the values and culture of your organisation. By asking additional questions we can also capture feedback about any current issues affecting your workplace.

## Preparing to run an Employee Opinion Survey

### Step 1: Review the survey instrument

- **Agree on the demographics.** If you are a large company, or have departments of more than 20 people, we recommend that you ask your employees to indicate some demographics. You may like to ask their department, work area, length of service, gender, or management level. This will make the data more meaningful for you. Please note, we do not cross reference these demographics, as this may affect anonymity. Nor do we report on areas with less than 5 respondents.
- **Additional Issues?** We have been using our questionnaire for over a decade and we continually refine it to ensure that we are capturing current issues. However, let us know if you require specific information and we will seek to ensure that we gather useful feedback.
- **Paper Based or Online?** We can do both. You will get the highest participation rate if employees are pulled together for a short meeting to complete the survey. Management explains that employee opinions are important and we seek their input to a anonymous survey. Ideally, this meeting is facilitated by an external consultant to ensure anonymity. Alternatively, you may choose to distribute paper based surveys with instructions for their completion and return.
- We can also run fully externally administered online surveys where we email your employees direct and they log on to our user-friendly website to complete the questionnaire. For this process to run smoothly you need to ensure all employees have access to email and the internet.

### Step 2: Communicate with your employees

- **Communicate.** Regardless of whether you are collecting the feedback using online or paper based questionnaires, you need to make all of your employees aware that you are preparing to run a survey. Employees need to understand why you are running the survey, what you hope to get out of the feedback and what you plan to do with the results. They also want to know when they will get to see the feedback. Above all, they want to know that the survey is anonymous.

### Step 3: Go live with data collection

- Externally facilitated survey completion sessions take 50 minutes in total, and can be run back to back at hourly intervals.
- If you are distributing the survey online or paper based for completion in the employees' own time, we recommend that you allow 2 weeks for the surveys to be returned.
- For surveys with less than 1500 employees, we ask that you allow 12 working days maximum for data entry and reporting. Surveys above that size may take slightly longer.

## Employee Opinion Survey

### How our Report works

Our focus has always been on identifying your key issues and coming up with practical solutions for the way forward. We provide two levels of reporting; overall Summary Reports and Data Reports.

#### **Summary Reports**

Normally, organisations choose to have one Summary Report generated for the overall organisation. This report, like the questionnaire, comes in four sections.

- A. Employee Satisfaction Index:** All average scores from the 50 questions are compared against the Australian Average and ranked in order of positivity. We have also themed these questions to give you a snapshot of your employee engagement across a range of issues, including Customer, Continuous Improvement, Teamwork and Motivation.

We analyse the significant issues from the Employee Satisfaction Index, including those that are significantly above or below the Australian Average, and identify your strengths and weaknesses.

- B. The Main Priorities:** This section identifies employee priorities for action planning and continuous improvement. Items are shown ranked highest to lowest according to popularity. We also compare your priorities against the top ranking items from our database.

- C. Suggestions for the way forward:** This section allows employees to prioritise actions they believe will make a difference to key organisational issues. Items are shown ranked highest to lowest according to popularity. We also compare your priorities against the top ranking items from our database.

We then compare information from sections B & C with the Employee Satisfaction Index to come up with our succinct key findings.

- D. Written Feedback:** We analyse and theme all written comments to identify a selection that best represents the majority. This information can be used as a quick check of your values and general culture.

The Summary Report is designed to be used as an Executive Summary and can also be distributed to employees. You may opt to have more Summary Reports generated at additional cost.

#### **Data Reports**

We will also supply Data Reports for each of your chosen demographics. These are designed to be used by departmental / regional managers in order to identify issues and develop action plans for improvement.

### What happens after we've run the survey?

We recommend that you focus on action: there are a number of activities you may like to consider, including:

**Employee Feedback Session:** Present your abridged results to staff in a graphical powerpoint presentation. We have a standard presentation we use and would be happy to share. We would also be happy to assist in the presentation of results back to employees.

**Facilitated Planning Session:** We can workshop the results with your Executive and / or Management team. This workshop would explain what the results really mean and bring the focus around to action planning and future improvement.

**Regular Health Checks:** Having gone through the process of collecting employee feedback and putting together an action plan, we recommend that you commit to regular health checks to ensure you meet your organisational goals. This can take the form of a 6 monthly meeting to review your action plan and repeating the survey.

## How do I deal with the issues identified in the survey report?

Over the last twelve months, the common issues that have been identified through Employee Opinion Surveys have been: Leadership; Pay; Communication; Make people feel valued; Performance Management and Employ the right people.

Here are some examples of how we've helped other companies to deal with these issues:

### Leadership

There are a number of approaches to dealing with Leadership issues. Some companies have rolled out 360 Degree (Multi-rater) Feedback programmes supported by Hogan personality profiling and One on One coaching. Coaching Programs can be delivered over twelve months to give your leaders an excellent, fully tailored, personal development opportunity. Others have chosen to implement Leadership Development Programs or Frontline Supervisor Programs. We've conducted "one off" programs to increase the skills of leaders, and we've also delivered programs over twelve months which expose your managers to a wide variety of business skills, personal skills and personal development opportunities.

### Pay

We've worked with some companies to develop best practice Enterprise Partnership Agreements, where the focus is on win/win outcomes for both parties. We've worked with others to review their remunerations and benefits system; to identify what it rewards and determine whether you are paying enough to attract the right type of employee in a tight labour market. Pay also relates to performance management: most people will compare themselves to others within the organisation and may become de-motivated if there are issues of equity or accountability.

### Communication

Careful analysis of your employee opinion survey results will help you understand your particular communication issues. Some organisations find that employees want to know more about the business' goals, so they develop a simple, One Page Business Plan which they then use as a communications tool to generate engagement and enthusiasm. Other companies have undertaken a full communications audit to check the consistency of their messages and the appropriateness of the communication channels, content, and tone.

### Make people feel valued

Focus groups can help you understand what makes employees feel valued. It is often related to Pay and Performance Management, but it could be about generating a "culture of coaching" from management. Often, we find that employees simply want to be kept informed about business performance and receive regular, informal feedback about their contribution and future succession or development.

### Performance Management

Performance Management is one of the most common issues identified from Employee Opinion Surveys. Good employees resent poor performance going unchallenged – what's worse is that they often drop their own performance to maintain equity! We've help many companies review their performance management systems to make them part of "the way we do things around here" rather than an annual piece of paper. This involves designing relevant and simple processes and tools, as well as training managers and staff in the process.

### Employ the right people

Many Australian/NZ organisations find that they have a problem with poor employee selection, and this leads to problems with job fit, behaviour, performance and culture. We've helped a number of companies develop world class recruitment and selection systems that utilise extensive employment history checking, behavioural interviewing, Hogan personality profiling, effective induction and a 180° Review (Co-Worker Review).