

# ACTION PLANNING GUIDE



Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.  
BUSINESS WITHOUT BARRIERS™

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# ACTION PLANNING OVERVIEW & MODEL



## ACTION PLANNING OVERVIEW

This document helps outline some of the general leading practice strategies for establishing an action response to your engagement survey program. These suggestions are general frameworks that will need to be enhanced by the way your organization best communicates, makes decisions, and takes actions. Although your action response should be somewhat “organic” to other business processes in your organization, survey programs do offer the opportunity to also introduce new strategies and approaches for companies to consider in listening, discussing, and taking action based on employee feedback.

## OUR ACTION PLANNING MODEL

The **purpose** of Action Planning is to address the feedback from the survey and construct a timeline to convert actionable information into positive change. The **importance** of action planning is that employees will judge the value of the survey based on the actions taken from the survey.

The **reason** why Action Planning is critical? Our research indicates that employees who witness positive change from the survey results are twice as likely to be highly engaged versus those who do not. Moreover, leaders at best-practice organizations focus on engagement year-round by role modeling their language and behavior on a daily basis.

Additionally, Arthur J. Gallagher’s research highlights that high performing leaders positively impact employee engagement. Increasing overall leader performance is directly linked to higher and more sustained employee engagement levels, which in turn drives better business outcomes (please see Figure 1).

Gallagher’s training and action planning activities focus on enabling leaders to be more effective operational leaders and people.

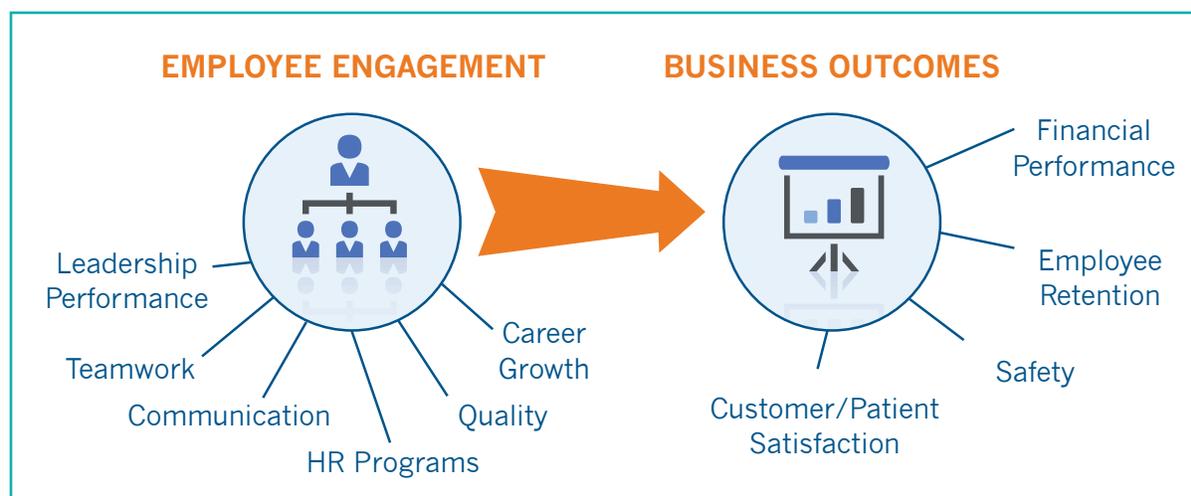


Figure 1

Gallagher's action planning model is a simple, yet effective approach. This action planning approach allows organizations to convert actionable information into positive change (please see Figure 2).

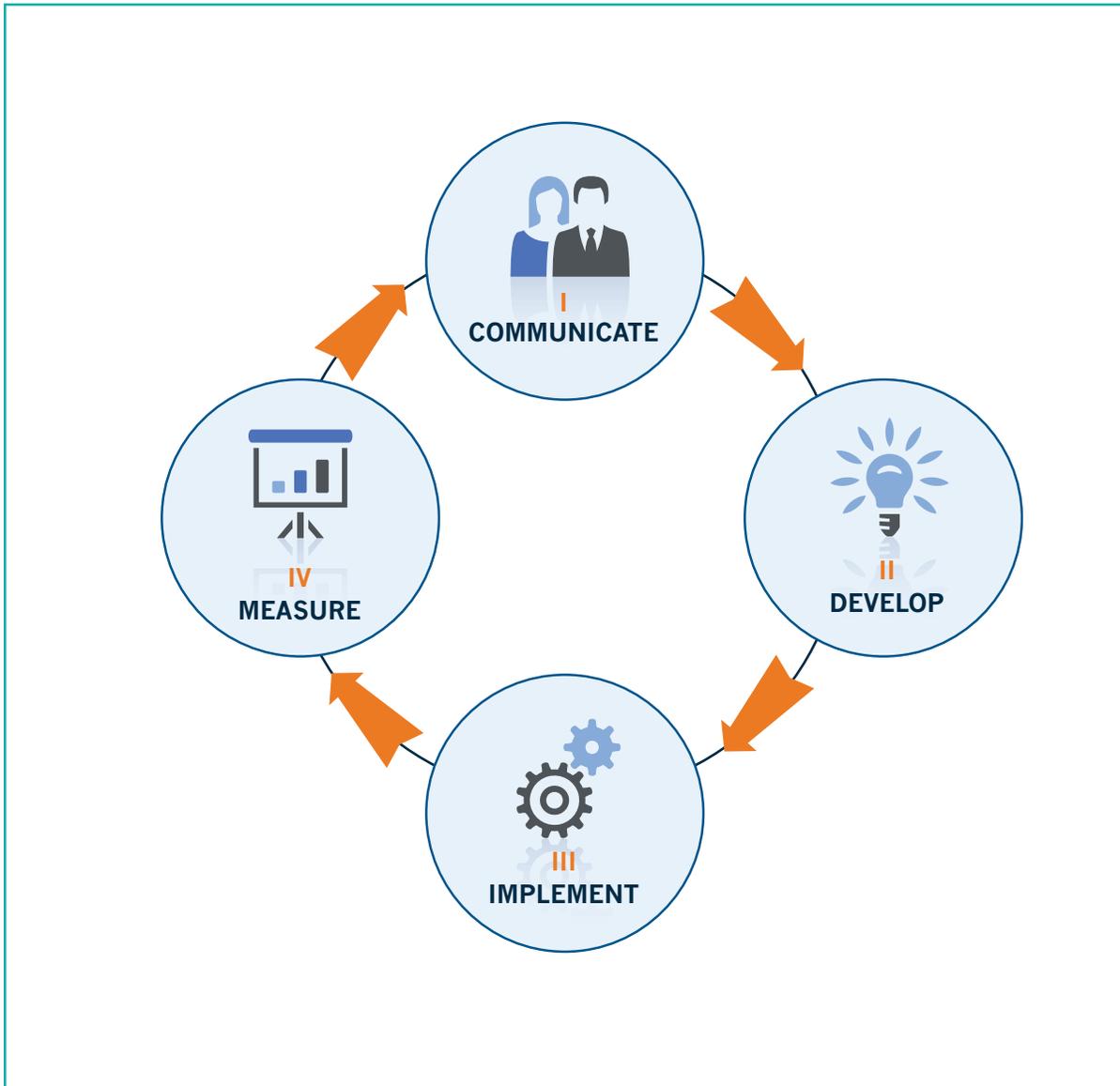


Figure 2

# TIMING OF THE ACTION RESPONSE

## 30/60/90 DAY STRATEGY

A leading practice to responding to survey results is to follow the 30/60/90 day strategy. This suggests that, in general, managers should receive access to survey results about 30 days after the close of the survey; have taken time to review and discuss results, and developed action plans within 60 days of the survey close; and begin implementing action within 90 days.

30  
DAYS

This strategy is used to help set expectations and accountability with managers and senior leaders in terms of pace and direction of the action response. Giving 30 days post-survey to distribute reports keeps senior leaders from prolonging the cascade of reports to managers. It also helps keep the survey actions close to the time people completed the survey, thus helping strengthen the connection between feedback and action.

60  
DAYS

The 60 days for review and discussion sets the expectation that managers not only look at their results, but they take the time to have a discussion of those results with their teams to develop the actual action plan. At the higher levels of the organization, the 60-day mark also reflects the point of any cascade of action that needs to be considered throughout the organization.

90  
DAYS

Finally, the 90-day mark helps to prevent belaboring and over-analyzing results. By design, the survey reflects things the organization always wants to do and should be doing on a regular basis. At higher levels of the organization, some topics and issues might require more in depth planning and analysis (e.g., division change in a performance management program); however, for most managers, actions should be fairly straightforward and readily implemented.

Keep in mind the 30/60/90 rule is a general guideline and is adjusted to suit the organization's needs. Some organizations with well-established programs promote a 15/30/45 day window. Your own window could be 20/40/60—the focus is not the timing itself, but setting expectations for the follow-up with a clear time frame.

Note that the time frame represents the latest that the action should take place. In reality, many managers can receive, discuss, and begin action in as little as a week. However, the 30/60/90 day time frame allows time for other organization communications (e.g., top level messaging, cascading of actions) to be interspersed with the local action response.

The core of our approach to taking effective action and impacting leader performance is further detailed in our four-step process, as shown in the table below.

**Senior Leadership Role:** Establish accountability and expectations

**Department/Manager Role:** Follow established action planning expectations

Timing	Step	Senior Leadership	Department/Manager
15–30 Days (Post Survey)	<b>COMMUNICATE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate survey results to employees</li> <li>Verify next steps in the action planning process</li> <li>Set expectations, accountability, and timeline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thank team for participation</li> <li>Create awareness that the action planning process will begin soon</li> <li>Set expectations, accountability, and timeline</li> </ul>
30–60 Days (Post Survey)	<b>DEVELOP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet as a senior leadership team, review organizational results, and develop global action plan</li> <li>Focus on identified strengths and key drivers for improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the organizational and team specific survey results</li> <li>Meet with your team to review the results</li> <li>Select key priorities for improvement</li> <li>Develop action plans</li> <li>Share action plan with your manager/leader</li> </ul>
60–90 Days (Post Survey)	<b>IMPLEMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish ownership and timeline</li> <li>Track and monitor progress</li> <li>Communicate updates regularly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish ownership and timeline for each action item</li> <li>Track and monitor progress</li> <li>Communicate updates regularly</li> </ul>
~ 12 Months (Post-Survey)	<b>MEASURE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct the next survey (i.e. pulse survey and/or full-census employee engagement survey)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand and communicate the time frame of the next survey</li> </ul>

# TAKING ACTION: TOP-DOWN VS. FOUNDATIONAL

## TOP-DOWN

Top-down action planning suggests that higher levels of the organization review results and then cascade down key elements for action. By having the majority of the organization working on the same issues, the expectation is that it will help create stronger change on that specific issue and benefit all employees and the organization as a whole.

Top-down cascades can work a number of ways, but one effective method is the “check in/check out” approach. In this situation, the organization decides on 1–2 key areas that all managers need to “check in.” These are typically tied to specific items from the survey so it is easy for managers to compare to their own results. Managers are asked to check how they are performing on the given item. For those who are at or below the organization average for the item, they are then requested (or required) to come up with a local action plan to address that issue. For those performing above the organization average, they are asked to consider why they are performing well on that item and share best practices with HR, which can then be shared more broadly. Managers who “check out” on cascaded initiatives can then focus on other areas of action of their own choosing.

Top-down actions also work best for larger-scale processes or senior leadership led initiatives (e.g., performance management, benefits, and strategy communications). It is important in a top-down cascade that leaders be sensitive to choosing items and topics that can be managed locally (i.e. pay fairness). However, if there is a perceived disconnect between pay and performance, they can ask managers to help strengthen that connection (through communication, through education, and/or through enhanced performance management).

## FOUNDATIONAL

The other end of the spectrum in action planning is “foundational” action—which means that the majority of the action planning in the organization is driven at the manager and team level, without any cascade or direction from the top of the organization. This method allows managers to focus on what would best suit their teams. This approach, however, does require that managers be prepared to take such action (e.g., education, accountability, and follow up), as well as using a mechanism to help track those actions and share successful action and stories.

Foundational actions are believed to serve the whole of the organization because they can help raise the engagement level in general by addressing the unique needs required to do so for each team in the organization. The process is enhanced when analyses such as engagement drivers are introduced, as that helps managers set the right priorities for action (in discussion with their teams), but also creates a more narrow scope of items from which actions are chosen, which in turn can aggregate to a meaningful change at the overall organization level on these items as well.

In reality, most organizations do a combination of both top-down and foundational actions. The approach (or combination of approaches) for your organization depends on the maturity of your engagement program (most start with a heavier top-down approach and then mature into a more manager level focused approach) as well as how decisions and actions are typically structured (some organizations are natural cascaders, others much more autonomous). Regardless, defining the expectations is most critical. The action response needs to determine who is taking action, provide guidance and support on how they can use results to determine these actions, and then create good tracking and follow up to these actions.

## ACTION PLANNING APPROACHES

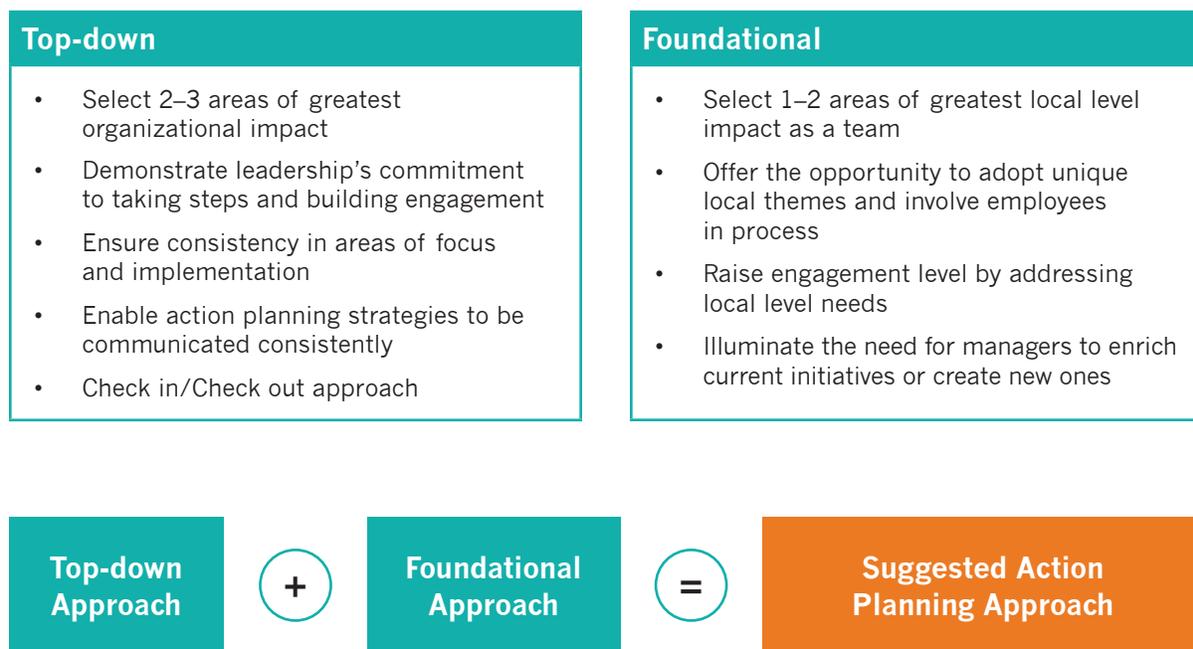


Figure 3

## INITIATIVES VS. ENRICHMENT

As mentioned, most surveys are designed with content that reflects what the organization should already be doing on a day-to-day basis (or aspires to do on a day-to-day basis). It is also not unusual that the major reason action responses for surveys fail is that managers already feel over-burdened with other plans and initiatives, and see survey actions as tacked on rather than something integrated to what they are already doing.

One approach to help counter this thinking in managers is to shift the action response away from creating initiatives to using the survey results to enrich what they are doing already. For example, if a manager is looking to address an item around open and honest two way communication, instead of having a plan of how he/she is going to be more open and honest, he/she evaluates what he/she is doing day-to-day and seeks out opportunities where he/she can be more open with his team and encourage more discussion. The end result is similar to a “formal” action plan—the work environment improves—but managers may be more comfortable adopting enrichment because it is integrated with what they are doing, rather than feeling like having something else added to their long list of work tasks.

To make enrichment work, managers need to stay mindful of those few areas they are trying to enrich. Thus, it is still useful to establish some kind of statement that reflects it is their ambition to incorporate X, Y, and Z into their work, and focus on increasing the frequency in which those elements occur. Therefore, the plan may include checking in quarterly with their teams to see if they feel frequency of X, Y, and Z has changed; assess the positive impact the greater frequency is having on business processes and outcomes, and determine obstacles if they find they are not able to make the enrichment take hold.

There are different strategies to choosing the items for enrichment. Some organizations work with the priority drivers of engagement, and ask managers to find ways to keep these top of mind. Others allow managers to select their 1–3 elements to enrich over the coming year. Regardless of the approach, managers should create reminders and check points to assess their enrichment efforts.

# ACTION PLANNING DEVELOPMENT



## GETTING STARTED

- Set up a meeting with your team—your attitude will set the tone for the entire process.
- Create a climate of open dialogue about the survey results—express a desire to improve the work culture/environment and ask your team for their help.
- Involve your team in selecting the 2–3 (organizational and local) issues to work on—choose items that your team agrees on as a group and keep the action plans simple and actionable.

## GETTING THE MOST FROM THE PROCESS

- Survey results are about feelings; action planning is about behaviors.
- Changes can only occur when you identify the behaviors that lead to feeling—the goal is to identify behaviors that have led to negative feelings *and* behaviors that will lead to positive feelings.
- Solutions should come from your team; an action plan can only be successful if your team believes in it—let them offer the best approaches to improvement.
- Action planning can be difficult—it can feel easy because your team is helping decide on the issues to address and providing you with the ways to address them, but it can be difficult because you may hear harsh feedback.
- Don't get defensive—mentally prepare yourself to stay completely open and receptive of both negative and positive feedback.
- Employees might avoid giving you honest, useful feedback. An action plan can only be successful if your team believes in it—let them work together to determine the best approach to improvement.
- If the issues in need of attention include survey items about you (supervision) it is not recommended that you try and facilitate action planning—it is far less likely to work.
- Give your team a safe environment—let the team nominate someone within the group to document suggestions for how you can improve your behaviors and/or the work environment. In some cases, you may ask a non-biased third party, such as HR, to help by facilitating these discussions.
- If the issues in need of attention are not about you (supervision), you might consider being involved, but know when to leave the process. *Facilitate the discussion mostly listen and guide the group back on course if they get far off-topic, don't ever judge (get it all on the table) and encourage silent observers to make suggestions without putting them on the spot (i.e., "Jill, before we move on, is there anything you'd like to add that we have not covered...any suggestions you have would really be helpful.")*

## ACTION PLANNING: SCRIPTS

# STEP 1

## SHARING OVERALL ORGANIZATION RESULTS

### GETTING STARTED

PROVIDE YOUR GROUP AN OVERVIEW OF THE SURVEY PROCESS

- The survey was administered from mid-month through mid-month (Year).
- The survey was made up of XX survey items, plus some demographic questions.
- The survey also asked employees to provide written comments.
- Overall, roughly XX% of employees across the organization responded to the survey.
- The firm that conducted the survey compiled the responses in January.
- Their consultants visited <ORGANIZATION NAME> to meet with leaders (Month XX & XX) and discuss the results.

### ABOUT THE OVERALL SURVEY RESULTS

PROVIDE YOUR GROUP AN OVERVIEW OF HOW <ORGANIZATION NAME> PERFORMED

- The survey results are compared to a national database of organizations.
- Overall, the organization has significant room for improvement.
- Although our employees are often favorable about issues, they are not as strongly favorable as they should be.
- The survey measured engagement—the enthusiasm, passion, and pride employees have for their work and the organization.
- Our organization has a real opportunity to increase engagement; we score significantly lower than other organizations.
- The survey measured numerous factors that can influence engagement.
- The items that most influence engagement are called “key drivers of engagement.”
- The top three most powerful drivers of engagement include the perceptions that (1)<TBD>; (2)<TBD>; and (3)<TBD>—these three items are considerably lower than in other organizations.
- Overall, the items that score best are related to <TBD>, <TBD>, and <TBD>.
- Overall, the items that scored lowest are related to <TBD>, <TBD>, and <TBD>.

# STEP 2

## SHARING YOUR TEAM RESULTS

**An important note:** When exploring your team results, we recommend that you use a difference of +/- .25 as a general rule to identify item scores that are noteworthy in comparison to benchmarks.

### ABOUT HOW YOU COMPARE

(USE YOUR SUMMARY REPORT, THEN DETAIL REPORT)  
PROVIDES YOUR GROUP AN OVERVIEW OF THE SURVEY PROCESS

- We are going to talk about some scores. Higher scores are always better; 6.00 is the highest possible score.
- This is our summary report...our overall survey score (an average of all survey items) is:\_\_\_\_\_.
- Compared to work groups across the nation that do the same things we do, our score is [higher/the same/lower]: \_\_\_\_\_.
- Compared to our facility average, our score is [higher/the same/lower]: \_\_\_\_\_.
- Compared to the system, our score is [higher/the same/lower]: \_\_\_\_\_.
- Our top five strengths are:\_\_\_\_\_.
- Our top areas in need of attention are:\_\_\_\_\_.
- The list of items that need attention will be what we use to pick a couple of items we'd like to work on as a team.
- If we look at all the topics the survey covered, our team was [above/equal to/lower than] the national average in the following areas:\_\_\_\_\_.
- If we look at all the topics the survey covered, our team was [above/equal to/lower than] the facility average in the following areas:\_\_\_\_\_.
- If we look at all the topics the survey covered, our team was [above/equal to/lower than] the system average in the following areas:\_\_\_\_\_.
- This is our detail report...we can use this to dig deeper into how each item rated.



### ACTION PLANNING COMES NEXT:

*Be sure to involve your team in choosing the items that will be action planning priorities. Refer to this action planning guide for guidance and best-practices when it comes to leading successful action planning in your work units.*

- As you choose priorities, stick to your list of items that need attention.
- Don't bite off more than you can chew—realize that the most successful action plans address only 2-3 items at most.
- Be strategic! Pick items that, once improved, will also improve other items.
- Complete and submit your action plan in the KnowledgeNow online reporting and action planning tool by <DATE>.

## ACTION PLANNING EXERCISE: CONTINUE, STOP, START

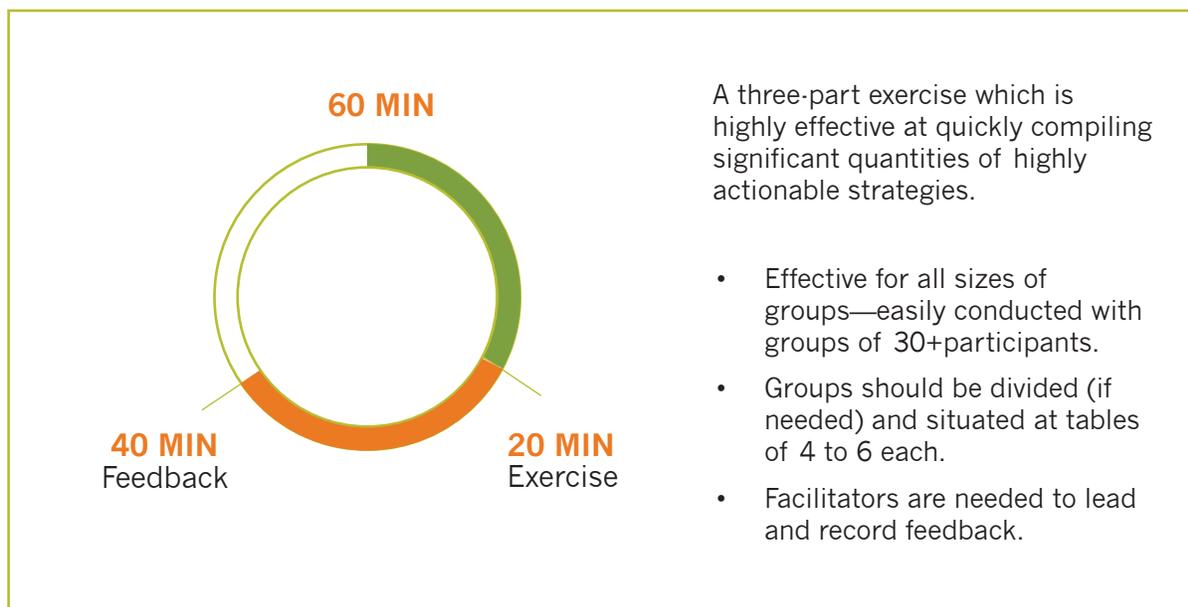


Figure 4

- Determine the specific issue of interest (i.e., communication).
- On three different pages, write the words “Continue,” “Stop,” and “Start.”
- Ask your team to discuss and write specific behaviors that need to be continued, stopped, and started to improve the issue.
- After giving them 20 minutes (or so) to discuss the issue, have each table nominate a “speaker” to provide their feedback openly so all other tables can hear.

Once the team has worked through this exercise, begin to develop the action plan, following these four simple steps:

- 1** Clearly define the opportunity for improvement.
- 2** Determine any potential causes for the opportunities for improvement and focus on the most probable cause.
- 3** Outline a desired outcome and discuss solutions.
- 4** Develop the action plan with action steps, ownership, and timelines. Importantly, remember to develop SMART action plans. Action plans need to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-based:
  - **S**pecific: Can you define the steps to reach the goal?
  - **M**easurable: How will you show improvement?
  - **A**chievable: Is this something you have control over?
  - **R**elevant: Does it relate to the issue at hand?
  - **T**ime-based: What is your time limit?

If your action plan does not address each of these criteria, then it is less likely to deliver your intended results. Also, regularly review your action plans to determine progress and necessary changes.

Once priorities have been established, preliminary written action plans should be developed using KnowledgeNow, which is outlined in the next section.

# ACTION PLANNING

# KnowledgeNow<sup>SM</sup>



Not only does KnowledgeNow allow your leaders to review their survey data (i.e. summary report, detailed report, interactive report, and key driver report) and understand what items to prioritize, it also hosts action planning activities. Users can select items to work on, set goals and targeted timelines for achieving these goals, draft, refine and finalize detailed action plans, and denote who is accountable for specific action planning activities outlined within the plan. To help your managers succeed, our system offers a library of suggested action planning ideas for the topics that leaders choose to work on with their team. The action planning ideas offered within our system are proven solutions being used by successful leaders at numerous organizations. Also, KnowledgeNow has been designed to allow leaders to monitor action planning activities, and review and comment on the action plans submitted by those they manage.

# STEP 1

## LOGGING IN TO KNOWLEDGENOW

The login site for KnowledgeNow is: [www.ihsKnowledgeNow.com](http://www.ihsKnowledgeNow.com)

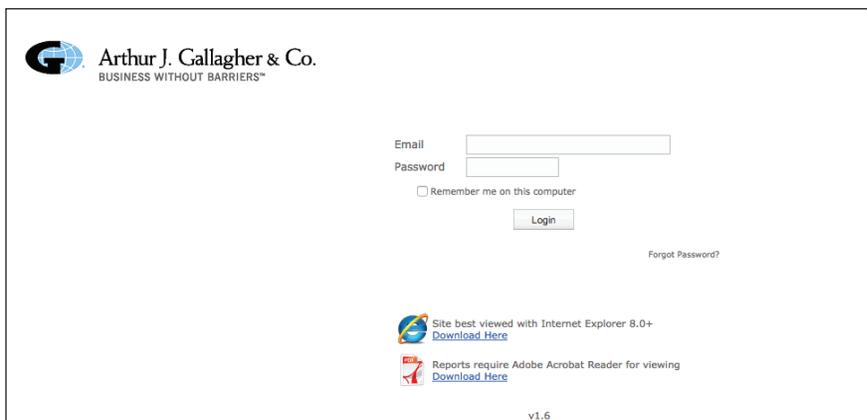


Figure 5



Your login information was provided in an email sent to you from **GallagherKnowledgeNowKC@AJG.com**.

If you would like the computer to remember your password each time you log in to KnowledgeNow, please check the box for “Remember me on this computer.” (This is only recommended for private computers.) If you would prefer to type in your password each time you log in to KnowledgeNow, please un-check the box (Leaving the box un-checked is recommended for public or shared computers.) Next, click on the login button to the right to proceed to the site.

# STEP 2

## CREATING AN ACTION PLAN

An action plan is a documented approach for tracking improvement with your survey scores. Every action plan contains action steps. Action steps are detailed tasks and activities you will complete on your path to improvement. To create an action plan, first navigate to the “Action Planning” section of KnowledgeNow.

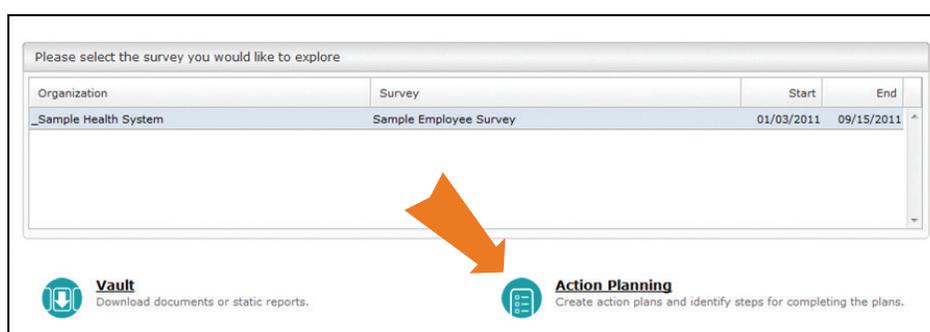


Figure 6

Once you get to the Action Planning screen, click on the “New” button to create a new action plan.

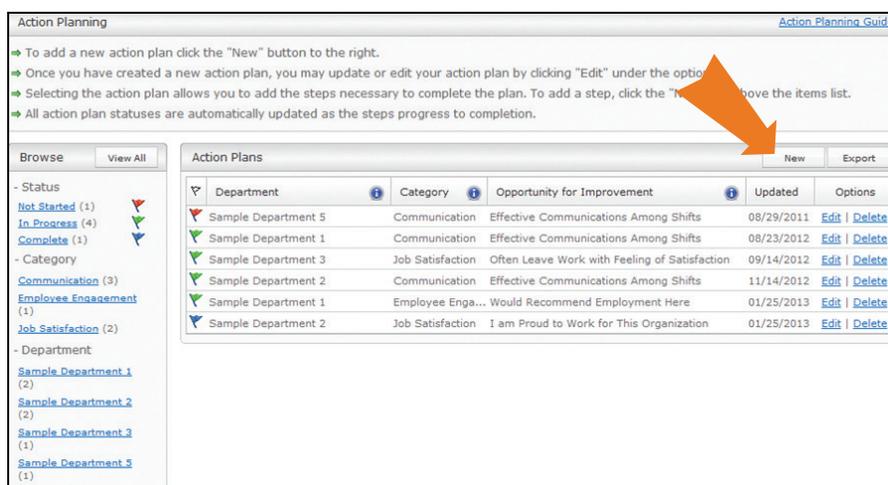


Figure 7

Once you click the “New” button, an information box appears.

## THERE ARE 4 STEPS TO ADD AN ACTION PLAN

- 1 Department:** Choose the department you wish to create an Action Plan for from the list provided. This list includes all the departments you have been assigned access. You will want to create a separate action plan for each department.
- 2 Category:** Type the name of the category needing improvement. This category can be found on your standard survey report and is listed as an “Attitude Area.” For example, “Immediate Supervision” is an attitude area.
- 3 Opportunity for Improvement:** Select the description of the survey item you will be working to improve. Each survey item you are working on should have a separate action plan. For example, “My Supervisor Has Effective Communications” is a survey statement.
- 4 Save:** Click the “Save” button to save your changes.



Figure 8

If you have any questions about what you should be entering in each blank, clicking on the  icon will bring up a detailed description of this item.

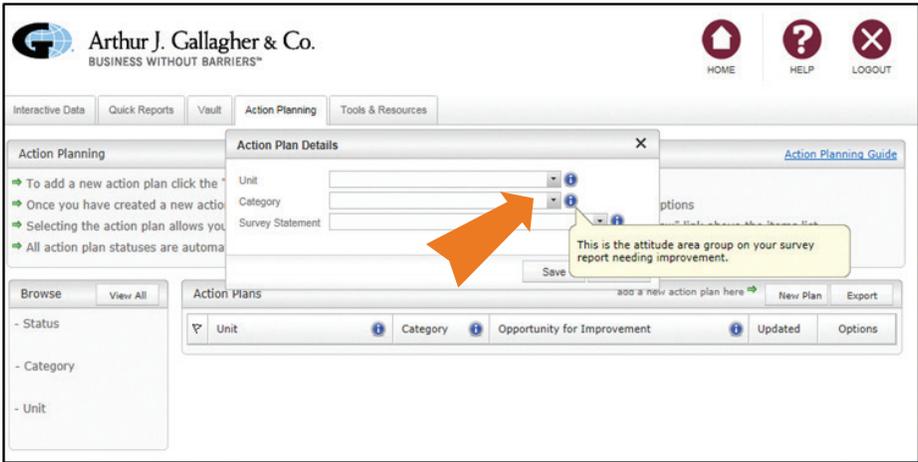


Figure 9

# STEP 3

## ADDING ACTION STEPS/UPDATING AN ACTION PLAN

### ADDING ACTION STEPS

Once an action plan is created, you can add specific steps to the plan. Begin by highlighting the action plan you would like to update. When your chosen action plan is highlighted, add an action step by clicking the “New Step” button.

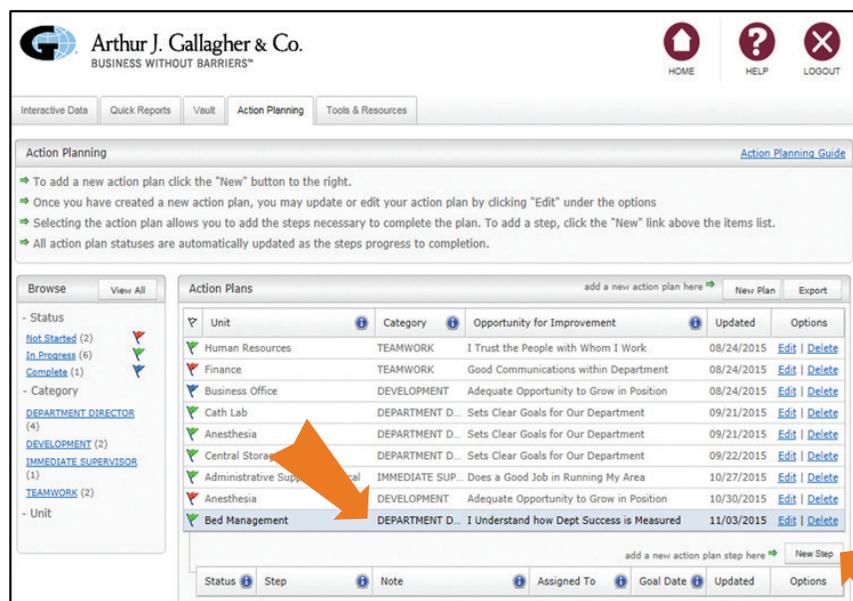


Figure 10

Once you click the “Add Action Step” tab, an information box appears.

The 'Action Step Detail' window is a modal form with the following fields and controls:

- Status: A dropdown menu with an information icon.
- Step: A text input field with an information icon.
- Note: A text input field with an information icon.
- Responsible Party: A text input field with an information icon.
- Goal Date: A date input field showing '11/12/2015' with a calendar icon and an information icon.
- Buttons: 'Save' and 'Close' buttons at the bottom right.

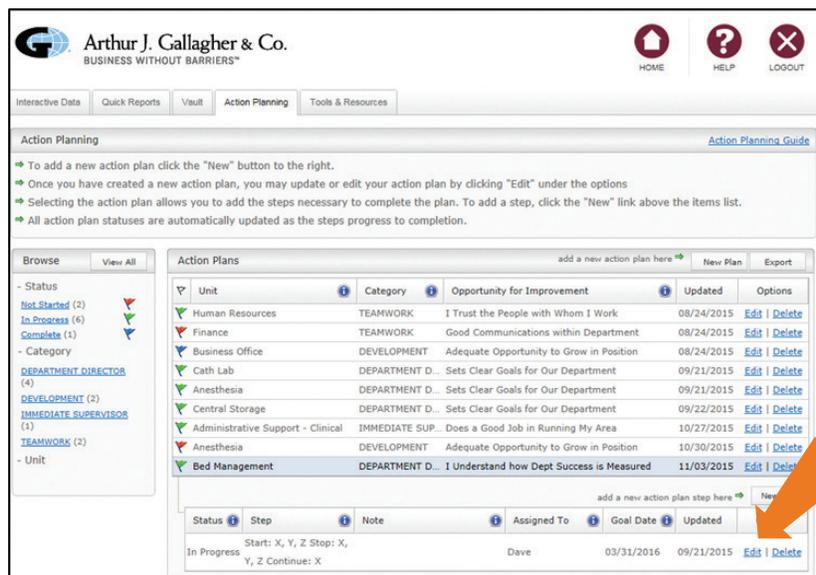
Figure 11

## ADDING AN ACTION STEP

- 1 Status:** Choose the status of your current action item from the list provided. The options include “Not Started,” “In Progress,” “Completed,” and “Cancelled.”
- 2 Step:** Type a description of the specific task you are going to complete to improve your survey score. For example, “weekly meetings with staff team” would be one of the steps to improve communication within a department.
- 3 Note:** Type any notes regarding your step. This may include accomplishments or challenges you encounter while completing your action step.
- 4 Responsible Party:** Type the name of the person in charge of completing the action step.
- 5 Goal Date:** Click on the  icon to choose your deadline for completing this action step.
- 6 Save:** Click the “Save” button to save your changes.

## UPDATING AN ACTION PLAN

Most action plans will require multiple action steps. In order to add more steps to an existing action plan, repeat the steps outlined above. The option to update existing action steps is available by selecting the “edit” feature on a particular step as shown in Figures 12 and 13.



The screenshot displays the 'Action Planning' section of the Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. system. It features a navigation bar with 'HOME', 'HELP', and 'LOGOUT' buttons. Below the navigation bar, there are tabs for 'Interactive Data', 'Quick Reports', 'Vault', 'Action Planning', and 'Tools & Resources'. The main content area is titled 'Action Planning' and includes an 'Action Planning Guide' link. A list of action plans is shown with columns for Unit, Category, Opportunity for Improvement, Updated, and Options. An orange arrow points to the 'Edit' link for the 'Bed Management' action plan. Below the list, a detailed view of an action step is shown with fields for Status, Step, Note, Assigned To, Goal Date, and Updated.

Status	Step	Note	Assigned To	Goal Date	Updated	Options
In Progress	Start: X, Y, Z Stop: X, Y, Z Continue: X		Dave	03/31/2016	09/21/2015	Edit   Delete

Figure 12

**Action Step Detail**

Status: In Progress

Step: Start: X, Y, Z  
Stop: X, Y, Z  
Continue: X

Note:

Responsible Party: Dave

Goal Date: 03/31/2016

Buttons: Save, Close

Figure 13

# STEP 4

## VIEWING AN ACTION PLAN

Once action plans have been entered into the system, you may view a list of action plans by Status, Category, or Department listed in the “Browse” box on the left hand side of the screen.

**Action Planning**

- To add a new action plan click the “New” button to the right.
- Once you have created a new action plan, you may update or edit your action plan by clicking “Edit” under the options
- Selecting the action plan allows you to add the steps necessary to complete the plan. To add a step, click the “New” link above the items list.
- All action plan statuses are automatically updated as the steps progress to completion.

**Browse** View All

- Status
  - Not Started (1)
  - In Progress (4)
  - Complete (1)
- Category
  - Communication (3)
  - Employee Engagement (1)
  - Job Satisfaction (2)
- Department
  - Sample Department 1 (2)
  - Sample Department 2 (2)
  - Sample Department 3 (1)
  - Sample Department 5 (1)

**Action Plans** New Export

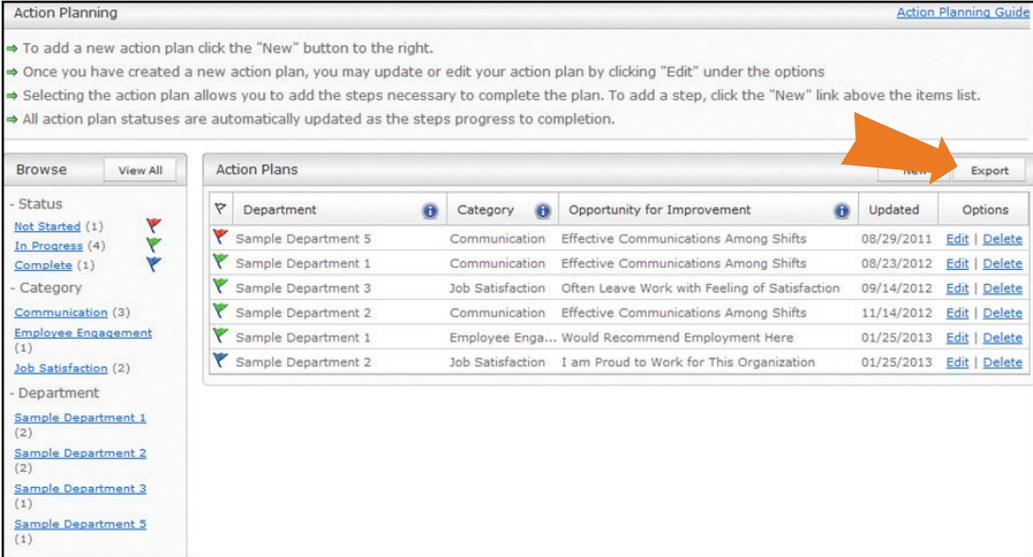
Department	Category	Opportunity for Improvement	Updated	Options
Sample Department 5	Communication	Effective Communications Among Shifts	08/29/2011	Edit   Delete
Sample Department 1	Communication	Effective Communications Among Shifts	08/23/2012	Edit   Delete
Sample Department 3	Job Satisfaction	Often Leave Work with Feeling of Satisfaction	09/14/2012	Edit   Delete
Sample Department 2	Communication	Effective Communications Among Shifts	11/14/2012	Edit   Delete
Sample Department 1	Employee Enga...	Would Recommend Employment Here	01/25/2013	Edit   Delete
Sample Department 2	Job Satisfaction	I am Proud to Work for This Organization	01/25/2013	Edit   Delete

Figure 14

# STEP 5

## EXPORTING AN ACTION PLAN

To export an action plan, you must highlight the action plan and select the “Export” option.

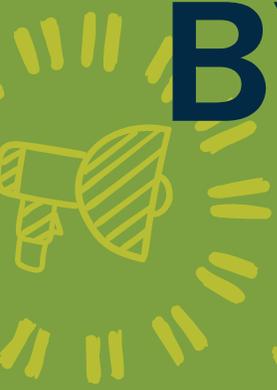


The screenshot displays the 'Action Planning' interface. At the top, there are instructions: 'To add a new action plan click the "New" button to the right.', 'Once you have created a new action plan, you may update or edit your action plan by clicking "Edit" under the options', 'Selecting the action plan allows you to add the steps necessary to complete the plan. To add a step, click the "New" link above the items list.', and 'All action plan statuses are automatically updated as the steps progress to completion.' Below the instructions is a 'Browse' sidebar with filters for Status (Not Started (1), In Progress (4), Complete (1)), Category (Communication (3), Employee Engagement (1), Job Satisfaction (2)), and Department (Sample Department 1 (2), Sample Department 2 (2), Sample Department 3 (1), Sample Department 5 (1)). The main area shows a table of 'Action Plans' with columns: Department, Category, Opportunity for Improvement, Updated, and Options. An orange arrow points to the 'Export' button in the top right corner of the table.

Department	Category	Opportunity for Improvement	Updated	Options
Sample Department 5	Communication	Effective Communications Among Shifts	08/29/2011	<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Delete</a>
Sample Department 1	Communication	Effective Communications Among Shifts	08/23/2012	<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Delete</a>
Sample Department 3	Job Satisfaction	Often Leave Work with Feeling of Satisfaction	09/14/2012	<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Delete</a>
Sample Department 2	Communication	Effective Communications Among Shifts	11/14/2012	<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Delete</a>
Sample Department 1	Employee Enga...	Would Recommend Employment Here	01/25/2013	<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Delete</a>
Sample Department 2	Job Satisfaction	I am Proud to Work for This Organization	01/25/2013	<a href="#">Edit</a>   <a href="#">Delete</a>

Figure 15

# ACTION PLANNING **BEST PRACTICES BY SURVEY ITEM**



## SURVEY ITEM

**During the past six months, I have not seriously considered leaving this organization for another job.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Meet with the team to review the specific reasons why they have thought of resigning (i.e. better job, career change, relocation, frustration with organizational systems, policies/procedures, commute, family obligations, etc.). Based on that information, develop a plan to address how to curb turnover and increase employee engagement.
- Gather Exit Survey data from Human Resources on the department specific turnover and compare that data with the employee survey.
- Add to the regular correspondence (e.g. departmental newsletter) a benefit or reward that the organization offers its staff. For example, “Did you know that you can receive X amount of money for referring a candidate to the organization?”
- Discuss future work plans with staff. If resigning is a possibility, work with the staff to determine their personal needs and develop a personalized plan for the employee.
- Identify ways of creating more flexibility and a better work life balance for staff.
- Have a staff appreciation day each month. High performers and specific achievements can be recognized and food or snacks can be provided for staff.
- Make an extra effort to praise staff and recognize successes in an effort to increase morale in the department.
- Implement an Onboarding survey to staff employee opinions after 30 and 180 days of employment to prevent early turnover.
- Plan fun and rewarding events/activities on a regular basis to make staff feel appreciated. Put a committee in place to ensure that this is an on-going process. Plan regular fun activities for staff to participate in with co-workers outside of their job.
- Set up a regular “coffee hour” with interested line-level staff to discuss obstacles that they have encountered and to share strategies for reducing job-related stress.
- Create a quarterly “fun” newsletter that is focused on staff. Highlight staff members for accomplishments outside of work (i.e., first grandchild, ran a marathon, volunteer work, etc.), include recipes, announce events in the community, etc.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I would recommend employment at this organization to my friends.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Identify the top reasons why this organization is better than other organizations and share that information with the staff so they can better promote the brand.
- Work with Human Resources to develop a specific list of your particular work group that is either encouraging employee to recommend the organization or holding staff back that can be communicated within your team. Determine initial action plan to address the areas of concern.
- Continually reiterate the positives of the organization during staff meetings and informal conversations with staff. Also, post positive outcomes through internal media and informal communications with staff.
- Advertise any achievements or recognitions as employer of choice.
- Brand positive aspects or the reasons for working at the organization: “Staff Count,” “You Make a Difference,” “Grow the Business and Yourself,” etc.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I am proud to work for this organization.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Conduct a focus group with your team to determine the overall factors as to why staff are or are not proud to work at the organization. Utilize this list and work with HR and/or leadership to determine how to address those factors to ensure pride.
- Continually reiterate the positives of the organization during staff meetings and informal conversations with staff. Also, post outcomes through internal media and through informal communications with staff.
- Emphasize respect for coworkers and positive interpersonal skills in all daily operations. Include these behaviors in organization mission, vision, and values statements.
- Set up individualized meetings with staff to discuss their concerns. Empathize with their concerns, encourage staff to stay positive in difficult times, and emphasize the importance of employee job performance. If necessary, schedule a meeting with HR to discuss remediation steps during difficult times.
- Brand positive aspects or the reasons for working at the organization: “Staff Count,” “You Make a Difference,” “Grow the Business and Yourself,” etc.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I often leave work with a feeling of satisfaction about my job.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Ensure staff fully understand their job duties and functions and what the overall outcomes of the job entail. Continually communicate with the staff to understand what gives them personal accomplishment and tailor that to individual staff members.
- Identify each staff member's strengths and ensure job functions utilize to their strengths, contribute to their career goals, and link to the organization's strategy and mission.
- Foster a team oriented environment through increased communication and teambuilding exercises. Generate outcomes that staff can tie back to their career goals.
- Allow staff to work on special projects to break up monotony and give them a sense of pride, ownership, and accomplishment.
- Empower staff to make decisions and be involved with their job functions and outcomes.
- Establish responsibilities at all levels for effectively communicating ideas and direction of the organization.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I feel I am a part of this organization's mission.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Connect the employee's job with the organization's strategy and mission and how it impacts the success of the organization.
- Develop day-to-day management practices which include requesting and utilizing input from staff.
- Have staff develop a list of what they think is expected of them in their jobs, how they will accomplish those expectations, and how they connect to the success of the organization. If there are discrepancies between the employee's list and the expectations the supervisor has for staff, schedule a meeting to discuss the differences.
- Set clear guidelines for every project including instructions, expectations, and deadlines.
- Ensure channels of communication remain open and ensure corrective action is taken when standards of behavior are not followed in order to prevent future problems with communication and team morale.

## SURVEY ITEM

**My effort directly affects the success of this organization.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Connect the employee's job with the organization's strategy and mission and how it impacts the success of the organization.
- Developing day-to-day management practices which include requesting and utilizing input from staff.
- Have staff develop a list of what they think is expected of them in their jobs, how they will accomplish those expectations, and how they connect to the success of the organization. If there are discrepancies between the employee's list and the expectations the supervisor has for staff, schedule a meeting to discuss the differences.
- Set clear guidelines for every project including instructions, expectations, and deadlines.
- Ensure channels of communication remain open and ensure corrective action is taken when standards of behavior are not followed in order to prevent future problems with communication and team morale.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I am willing to put in effort beyond what is expected to help this organization be successful.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Confront poor performance early on, but only in private. Separate the quality of the performance from the person. Identify, in behavioral terms, how the performance is not acceptable. Develop an improvement plan with detailed expectations and dates for when improved performance must be achieved and the consequences if the improvement effort is not successful.
- Staff should understand how each department's and employee's actions impact the work completed in other departments and how it links to the success of the organization.
- Ensure you have a formal and ongoing system in place to measure effort and success (e.g., survey, polling). The system should consolidate positive and negative feedback from your clients (internal and external) on an ongoing basis. Report to your staff examples of feedback from happy clients and from those who were disappointed with a product or service encounter. Encourage your staff to take personal responsibility for clients' satisfaction and the success of the organization.
- Develop or continue to utilize key measures of customer service and reliable means to assess the care and concern received from individuals at the organization or, at least the customers' opinion of that care and concern. Examples include specific criteria for answering calls, wait times, responding to questions and requests, and handling challenging individuals.
- Share customer satisfaction data and information with staff and how it relates to the success of the organization. Clearly communicate the expectations and goals of customer satisfaction and hold staff accountable for meeting these expectations.
- Make sure leaders serve as the models for the customer service behaviors and exceeding (internal and external) customer expectations. Establish a leadership guide on customer service behaviors and expectations from the leaders. Train the leaders on the expectations, hold them accountable, and ensure the leaders are communicating and showing these expectations to their team and customers.
- Recognize and reward the individuals that exceed customer expectations and that innovate at the organization. Encourage staff to develop unique solutions for their customers.

## SURVEY ITEM

This organization's senior leadership does a good job leading this organization.

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Assign ownership to senior management to improve communication to and from all staff around the organization's success.
- Ask the senior management team to write and publish a formal communication policy for the organization around the organization's future.
- Create a Communication Task Force to regularly assess communication needs throughout the organization, and subsequently address limitations when identified.
- Host monthly or quarterly open forums for staff (i.e., breakfasts, luncheons, Town Hall Meetings) at the organization and department levels. Prepare and communicate a summary of the topics discussed during the forums for all staff.
- Allow staff to meet with senior management to ask questions around the future of the organization.
- In conversation with the staff, ensure that leaders are offering them the same level of respect leaders expect from them. Do not interrupt the staff or cut them off when they are talking, and choose the language carefully so that leaders are not disparaging the staff' ideas or belittling them personally.
- Lead by example. Make leadership behavior a model for the type of respectful behavior and attitude that leaders would like the staff and coworkers to demonstrate. The manager can also promote respect among the team by encouraging the staff to do the same.
- Make every effort to support any staff who may be dealing with tough situations, and demonstrate flexibility to assist staff who are having personal problems. While it is important that a leader uphold organizational policies and maintain productivity within the workgroup, it is equally important in the long-term for staff to feel as though the leader will be understanding of any emergencies or temporary setbacks that arise in their personal lives.
- Make sure that all staff on the team have an equal opportunity to participate in any special projects or sub-committees that are formed, and pay particular attention to any individual staff who seem to be frequently "left out" of group projects or workplace social activities.
- Ensure that the enforcement of organizational policies is consistent, both within the team and compared to other departments, as inconsistent policy administration erodes coworker trust and respect. Think about the way leadership handles issues such as schedule requests, punctuality, etc. If there is an opportunity for staff to perceive favoritism in the management behavior, they may very well lose respect and trust for those individuals receiving preferential treatment.
- Recognize senior leadership's credibility and perception is established and driven by middle management and immediate supervision.
- Senior leadership should focus efforts on creating a higher level of alignment with middle management so they will lend their credibility to senior leadership.

## SURVEY ITEM

**This organization's senior leadership does a good job communicating information about organizational objectives.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Assign ownership to senior management to improve communication to and from all employees. Set a concrete goal (i.e., improve the survey item “Senior management communicates the information that I need to know about the organization” result by five percentage points on the next Employee Engagement Survey).
- Ask the senior management team to write and publish a formal communication policy for the organization.
- Develop day-to-day management practices that include requesting and utilizing input from employees.
- Create a Communication Task Force to regularly assess communication needs throughout the organization, and subsequently address limitations when identified.
- Solicit information from employees prior to making decisions that impact their work.
- Host monthly or quarterly open forums for employees (i.e., breakfasts, luncheons, Town Hall Meetings) at the organization and department levels. Prepare and communicate a summary of the topics discussed during the forums for all employees.
- Allow employees to meet with senior management to ask questions.
- Ask each senior manager to write a “Leadership Credo.” Evaluate this credo not for content, but for clarity. Use the results of this evaluation to help the senior managers improve their communication efforts.
- Management by Walking Around: managers are encouraged to enhance their visibility at the organization either through the use of technology (regular communication via video, web, and intranet) and or informal visits whenever possible to exchange information, obtain suggestions, and learn about the challenges encountered by employees. Our normative data shows a strong positive correlation between management visibility and management concern.
- Encourage the senior management team to communicate small decisions on a frequent basis.
- Require senior management to periodically attend departmental staff meetings.
- Establish a formal communication process through effective communication tools (i.e., e-mail, newsletter, manager meetings, etc.). This process should include the assignment of ownership and accountability for communicating information to employees and the establishment of concrete timelines for communicating information.
- Create distribution lists for specific types of communication. Define which levels of the organization should receive what type of information. Include an “intended audience” line on all distributions.

## SURVEY ITEM

**The actions of senior leadership reflect their commitment to this organization's vision and values.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Lead by example. Make leadership behavior a model for the type of respectful behavior and attitude that leaders would like the staff and coworkers to demonstrate. The manager can also promote respect among the team by encouraging the staff to do the same.
- Ensure that the enforcement of organizational policies is consistent, both within the team and compared to other departments, as inconsistent policy administration erodes coworker trust and respect. Think about the way leadership handles issues such as schedule requests, punctuality, etc. If there is an opportunity for staff to perceive favoritism in the management behavior, they may very well lose respect and trust for those individuals receiving preferential treatment.
- Management by Walking Around: managers are encouraged to enhance their visibility at the organization either through the use of technology (regular communication via video, web, and intranet) and or informal visits whenever possible to exchange information, obtain suggestions, and learn about the challenges encountered by employees. Our normative data shows a strong positive correlation between management visibility and management concern.
- Ask each senior manager to write a "Leadership Credo." Evaluate this credo not for content, but for clarity. Use the results of this evaluation to help the senior managers improve their communication efforts.
- Encourage an environment of change. Ensure staff understand the change management program and understand the importance of change/agility.
- Create a program where individual staff can earn incentives for coming up with innovative ideas to improve work processes and efficiencies. Staff receive rewards for measurable success (i.e. saving the organization money, decreasing time to handle a process, etc.). These innovative ideas are posted in a public space so the high performers are recognized by all staff.
- An innovative approach to meetings and rounding by instituting leading rounding with key messages, standard agenda for meetings that focus and integrating the tools provided to employees. This includes prioritizing and shaping how meetings are conducted which will allow more visibility in departments. Each leader will determine how they will conduct meetings in a more effective and efficient manner which allows more time to reach employees to answer questions and solicit feedback which will improve communication throughout the organization. This will ensure that employees understand the why and how they are contributing to the success of the organization.

## SURVEY ITEM

Senior leadership's actions give this organization a competitive edge in the marketplace.

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Assign ownership to senior management to improve communication to and from all staff around the organization's success.
- Ask the senior management team to write and publish a formal communication policy for the organization around the organization's future.
- Create a Communication Task Force to regularly assess communication needs throughout the organization, and subsequently address limitations when identified.
- Host monthly or quarterly open forums for staff (i.e., breakfasts, luncheons, Town Hall Meetings) at the organization and department levels. Prepare and communicate a summary of the topics discussed during the forums for all staff.
- Allow staff to meet with senior management to ask questions around the future of the organization.
- In conversation with the staff, ensure that leaders are offering them the same level of respect leaders expect from them. Do not interrupt the staff or cut them off when they are talking, and choose the language carefully so that leaders are not disparaging the staff' ideas or belittling them personally.
- Lead by example. Make leadership behavior a model for the type of respectful behavior and attitude that leaders would like the staff and coworkers to demonstrate. The manager can also promote respect among the team by encouraging the staff to do the same.
- Make every effort to support any staff who may be dealing with tough situations, and demonstrate flexibility to assist staff who are having personal problems. While it is important that a leader uphold organizational policies and maintain productivity within the workgroup, it is equally important in the long-term for staff to feel as though the leader will be understanding of any emergencies or temporary setbacks that arise in their personal lives.
- Make sure that all staff on the team have an equal opportunity to participate in any special projects or sub-committees that are formed, and pay particular attention to any individual staff who seem to be frequently "left out" of group projects or workplace social activities.
- Ensure that the enforcement of organizational policies is consistent, both within the team and compared to other departments, as inconsistent policy administration erodes coworker trust and respect. Think about the way leadership handles issues such as schedule requests, punctuality, etc. If there is an opportunity for staff to perceive favoritism in the management behavior, they may very well lose respect and trust for those individuals receiving preferential treatment.

## SURVEY ITEM

**Feedback from the last employee engagement survey led to positive changes at this organization.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Communicate changes that have occurred from the last survey during organizational meetings, newsletters, staff meetings, and on the organization's Intranet.
- Share successes and the progress on improvements so that employees are aware of steps that have been taken due to the Employee Engagement Survey results.
- Review the action plans and identify any areas where the recommendations or expectations cannot be implemented and document the reasons why (these reasons should be clearly communicated to employees).
- Identify what actions have taken place and determine whether they are in the best interest of the work group. If the action plans do not address the employees' priorities, employee engagement results and feedback should be re-visited and action plans revised.
- Reconvene with the employees to modify the action plans to ensure they truly address the concerns of the employees.
- For changes that are done organizationally, the leaders should research the history for the change by utilizing leadership, the organizational intranet, and other sources as appropriate to understand the change so it can then be conveyed to the staff.

## SURVEY ITEM

I am given reasons for major changes that occur in my department.

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- An innovative approach to meetings and rounding by instituting leading rounding with key messages, standard agenda for meetings that focus and integrating the tools provided to employees. This includes prioritizing and shaping how meetings are conducted which will allow more visibility in departments. Each leader will determine how they will conduct meetings in a more effective and efficient manner which allows more time to reach employees to answer questions and solicit feedback which will improve communication throughout the organization. This will ensure that employees understand the why and how they are contributing to the success of the organization.
- Changes are often communicated in email format before the department leader has time to properly explain the changes to all staff. To help staff better understand organizational changes, managers should extract information from the email and other sources and take 10 to 15 minutes at each staff meeting to discuss recent/upcoming changes and the reason for the changes.
- For changes that are done corporately, the leaders should research the history for the change by utilizing leadership, the organizational intranet, & other sources as appropriate to understand the change so it can then be conveyed to the staff.
- Educate the management team on the importance of interacting with the employees.
- Management by Walking Around: managers are encouraged to enhance their visibility at the organization either through the use of technology (regular communication via video, web, and intranet) and or informal visits whenever possible to exchange information, obtain suggestions, and learn about the challenges encountered by employees. Our normative data shows a strong positive correlation between management visibility and management concern.

## SURVEY ITEM

I understand how the success of my department is measured.

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Define and communicate to employees the role and responsibility definitions of the different levels of management, since the greatest confusion lies around what responsibilities of the role are.
- Involve employees in establishing department's goals and objectives and ensure their effective communication to staff.
- Work with employees to establish priorities of where to expend limited resources which include, time, effort, and money.
- Have the department management team to write and publish a formal document on the objectives and goals are measured and what constitutes success for the department.
- Host monthly or quarterly open forums for employees (i.e., breakfasts, luncheons, Town Hall Meetings) at the organization and department levels. Prepare and communicate a summary of the topics discussed during the forums for all employees.
- Encourage the divisional management team to communicate small decisions on a frequent basis.
- Establish a formal communication process through effective communication tools (i.e., e-mail, newsletter, manager meetings, etc.). This process should include the assignment of ownership and accountability for communicating information to employees and the establishment of concrete timelines for communicating information.

## SURVEY ITEM

**My department director sets clear goals for our department.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Ensure that each employee is aware that effective customer service is a value and expectation of the organization. Develop reliable means to assess effective customer service and measure/track the organization's performance against its customer service objectives. Share this information with employees.
- Communicate the measures taken to employees and reward employees for adhering to the organization's policies, practices, and contributing to the desired outcomes.
- Develop a clear definition of quality service for clients and strategies to achieve and improve these objectives. Ensure that each employee is aware that quality service for clients is a value and expectation of every employee.
- Develop specific, measurable, and reliable means to assess quality service and measure/track the organization's performance against its quality service objectives. Include time frames for each objective. Share this information with employees.
- Define quality service and develop strategies to accomplish and improve the quality objectives. The definition should include the organization's position on both internal and external customer service and become a part of the organization's ideology. Ensure that each employee is aware that quality service for customers is a value and expectation of every employee.
- Hold staff accountable for meeting expectations for quality service for clients. Quantifying the cost of substandard quality is actually harmful to the relationship and the team.
- Communicate to the staff that they should raise quality issues with others on the team immediately. Reinforce that these conversations would not be perceived as threatening their personal relationships.

## SURVEY ITEM

I have opportunities to participate in decisions that affect my work.

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Allow employees to freely discuss individual opinions in a closed or open manner.
- Develop day-to-day management practices that include requesting and utilizing input from employees, using the supervisors as a conduit.
- Create distribution lists for specific types of communication. Define which levels of the organization should receive what type of information. Include an “intended audience” line on all distributions.
- Establish a formal communication process through effective communication tools (i.e., e-mail, newsletter, manager meetings, etc.). This process should include the assignment of ownership and accountability for communicating information to employees and the establishment of concrete timelines for communicating information.
- Supervisors can reduce employee resistance to change by clearly communicating the change process, defining the reason for change, involving employees in developing the implementation plan, adopting the flexibility to change plans, tracking and sharing all progress, and reminding the employees the benefits of change.
- Establish a work group suggestion program so you and other team members can openly share ideas with management.
- Allow employees to “test” an alternative work method and ensure flexibility in decision making (with parameters). Document and evaluate the pros and cons. Implement if necessary.
- Create an open door policy with employees or create a regular open forum to discuss work group changes or decisions. Listen to suggestions and act on these suggestions when feasible.

## SURVEY ITEM

**My ideas and suggestions are seriously considered.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Hold monthly regular meetings to discuss improving any departmental problems. Establish an agenda, especially if it is a brainstorming meeting. Consider inviting key leaders to the forum. This reinforces transparency and that the culture believes in seeking and acting upon opinions.
- Allow staff to suggest ideas and solutions to current departmental problems. Take meeting minutes and communicate that information to the staff along with the next steps.
- If staff suggest an idea that corrects an existing problem, reward that individual.
- Develop a suggestion box or forum that staff can utilize to confidentially contribute ideas.
- If a staff suggestions cannot be implemented, thank them for the effort, and explain the reasons why it cannot be implemented.

## SURVEY ITEM

**My supervisor recognizes my accomplishments.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Encourage managers to be alert to difficult assignments and recognize staff when assignments are completed satisfactorily.
- Encourage rounding from senior management to express gratitude and talk about what is going on within the organization.
- Send thank-you cards/emails to employees when they have displayed exceptional performance.
- Celebrate key milestones and achievements by providing lunch and treats for the staff.
- Send handwritten “thank you” notes to staff who are recognized by customers/patients or other staff.
- Develop staff recognition board where positive comments from customers and coworkers can be displayed.
- Establish an “Employee of the Quarter” award where employees are nominated by employees and voted on by fellow employees based on performance criteria.
- Provide standard rewards for high performance (e.g. performance based bonuses, free dinner when employees work late, etc.).
- Create a program where individual employees can earn points towards department wide rewards. Employees receive points for outstanding performance. These points are pooled throughout the department and can be put towards group outings, work space improvements, etc. Individual point contributions can be posted in a public space so the high performers are recognized by all employees.
- Ensure individual and team accomplishments are communicated to leadership team to improve recognition and awareness of team’s contributions to the organization’s strategic goals.
- Reward staff by utilizing emails and verbal acknowledgment of a job well done.
- Recognize service award milestones at staff meetings.
- During regular staff meetings, encourage each employee to point out the action of a fellow colleague that went above and beyond their expectations.
- Host monthly or quarterly breakfasts (or other events such as lunches, happy hours, etc.) in which staff members are randomly selected to a breakfast with upper management.
- Have supervisors individually meet with employees to understand how each would like to be recognized. Recognition is a very personal thing and thus must be tailored to each individual. Provide recognition to employees based on their individual preferences.

## SURVEY ITEM

I can tell my supervisor what I think.

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- In conversation with the staff, ensure that leaders are offering them the same level of respect leaders expect from them. Do not interrupt the staff or cut them off when they are talking, and choose the language carefully so that leaders are not disparaging the staff' ideas or belittling them personally.
- Lead by example. Make leadership behavior a model for the type of respectful behavior and attitude that leaders would like the staff and coworkers to demonstrate. The manager can also promote respect among the team by encouraging the staff to do the same.
- Make every effort to support any staff who may be dealing with tough situations, and demonstrate flexibility to assist staff who are having personal problems. While it is important that a leader uphold organizational policies and maintain productivity within the workgroup, it is equally important in the long-term for staff to feel as though the leader will be understanding of any emergencies or temporary setbacks that arise in their personal lives.
- Evaluate the integrity you project to others by identifying a trusted colleague who has first-hand knowledge of your actions at work. Ask the colleague to give you feedback on the following questions:
  - 1) Are my actions consistent with what I say?
  - 2) Do I ever say anything about a person that I would not say to him/her directly?
  - 3) Are my actions consistent with the organization's values?
  - 4) Do I keep my promises?
  - 5) Do I give honest, direct answers to questions and challenges?
  - 6) Do I accept responsibility and openly admit it when I make a mistake?
- Ask your team members to identify the challenges to operating with professional integrity in your department (e.g., "What are the situations that make acting with integrity difficult?"). Create (or review) policies designed to protect team members in such situations and enable them to avoid situations where a reasonable person might be inclined to compromise his/her commitment to professional integrity.
- Encourage supervisors to have open and professional communication with staff and to ensure they are comfortable and do not fear retaliation if there is an ethical concern.

## SURVEY ITEM

**My supervisor communicates well.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Practice effective interpersonal skills: Say “hello” to staff, ask how staff are doing, make eye contact with staff, use non-threatening tones, gestures, and words, and focus on the positives rather than the negatives. Ensuring that staff feels comfortable with the leader will assist when the leader is communicating information that affects the staff.
- For all meetings, prepare meeting agenda, include “pending” issues on agenda, send agenda to meeting participants prior to meeting, and adhere to agenda during meeting. Start and end the meeting on time, take meeting minutes, and assign tasks and accountability to staff.
- Hold quarterly, monthly, or weekly one-on-one meetings with staff to discuss work performance progress and status of current goals/objectives.
- Management by Walking Around: managers are encouraged to enhance their visibility at the organization either through the use of technology (regular communication via video, web, and intranet) and or informal visits whenever possible to exchange information, obtain suggestions, and learn about the challenges encountered by employees. Our normative data shows a strong positive correlation between management visibility and management concern.
- Enhance visibility either through the use of technology (regular communication via video, web, and intranet) and or informal visits whenever possible to exchange information, obtain suggestions, and learn about the challenges encountered by staff.
- Create an open door policy with staff. Listen to suggestions and act on these suggestions when feasible.
- An innovative approach to meetings and rounding by instituting leading rounding with key messages, standard agenda for meetings that focus and integrating the tools provided to employees. This includes prioritizing and shaping how meetings are conducted which will allow more visibility in departments. Each leader will determine how they will conduct meetings in a more effective and efficient manner which allows more time to reach employees to answer questions and solicit feedback which will improve communication throughout the organization. This will ensure that employees understand the why and how they are contributing to the success of the organization.

## SURVEY ITEM

**My last performance review was helpful.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Schedule formal one-on-one meetings to discuss performance, either monthly or quarterly. Set the dates on the calendar. Discuss performance, training, and work related issues. Develop action plan for maintaining/improving performance. Utilize S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely) methodology.
- Provide personalized career guidance. Tell staff about your own success stories and what has worked for you.
- Confirm the employee's job description is updated to include all current work responsibilities.
- Develop a career development plan for each employee. This plan should have specific milestones and set timeframes. Ask the staff to "own" their personal growth and development.
- Hold meetings with staff where each employee states their commitments and knows what everyone else has to do for their growth and development. This process removes the tentativeness in giving feedback and puts pressure on each employee to perform better because there is a public commitment.
- Providing performance feedback is one of the most difficult aspects of the leadership role. Seek development from a peer or mentor to enhance skills in this area.
- Hold yearly "Staff Development Day" to provide training and work on performance improvement objectives.
- Ensure performance reviews are timely and include conversations about job expectations.
- At the time of performance evaluation, goals (short-term and long-term) should be set. These goals should be brought up at regular supervision meetings, to discuss staff' progress.
- Review performance expectations, goals, and objectives with each employee. Give employees the opportunity to share whether expectations, goals, and objectives are realistic given current staffing levels. Manager and employees should use the information gathered to jointly develop performance objectives.
- Include a section in staff performance evaluations on how they will acquire the skills necessary to attain professional and personal goals.
- Obtain specific career and personal goals for staff in their performance evaluations. Develop action plans in performance evaluations on how they will acquire skills necessary to attain professional and personal goals.

## SURVEY ITEM

I value the relationship I have with my supervisor.

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Evaluate current management style to ensure staff feel the manager has their interest and their well-being in mind. Understand what staff expect from the manager (i.e., communication style, communication frequency, etc.).
- Encourage staff to share what is going on in their personal lives. Try to use this information to assign jobs/manage workloads because it affects their performance.
- Increase respect for all staff. Treat all staff fairly and consistently through proper communication channels.
- Maintain notes for each employee about requests, questions, and clarifications they have asked for. Keeping track of such requests will communicate interest and respect.
- Maintain a calendar of important dates for each individual - birthdays of family members, work anniversaries, wedding anniversaries, etc. Communicate in person or in written form.
- Administer policies in the exact same manner to all staff, use Human Resources Department to answer policy questions.
- Communicate departmental goals and objectives on a regular basis through staff meetings, written communication, etc. Make sure the team understands the implications of organizational changes or initiatives. Hold individual meetings with staff to help them understand the impact and address any concerns.

## SURVEY ITEM

Employees at this organization treat each other with respect.

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Emphasize respect for coworkers and positive interpersonal skills in all daily operations. Include these behaviors in organization mission, vision, and values statements.
- In conversation with the staff, ensure that leaders are offering them the same level of respect leaders expect from them. Do not interrupt the staff or cut them off when they are talking, and choose the language carefully so that leaders are not disparaging the staff' ideas or belittling them personally.
- Strategically pair up team members to allow them to see the other's strengths and value their expertise.
- Intentionally design activities or projects that will give staff the opportunity to work together. Smaller groups are better because the incidence of interaction will be greater and they will be more likely to form stronger relationships.
- Provide staff members with the opportunity to attend a conflict resolution class and provide a means of settling disagreements between staff.
- Develop an essential work duties list for each function within the department to improve coverage during absences as well as the ability to support co-workers.
- Implement a teambuilding exercise through an internal or external resource.
- Create or review back to a Standards of Behavior document that outlines the expected behavior of staff and have each new hire sign it during orientation.
- At each department meeting, focus on examples of actions that are in accordance with the Standards of Behavior.
- Do not ignore situations where you sense an issue between two individuals. Talk to the individuals concerned and explain how their interaction is affecting their performance and the team.
- Hold appropriate number of employee group meetings to address the benefits and challenges of teamwork for the organization and your department.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I have opportunities to develop friendships at work.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Take the lead in sharing personal or non-work-related information. This encourages team members to open up and gives a forum to make those “connections.”
- Intentionally design activities or projects that will give team members the opportunity to work together.
- Make connections to other teams and departments.
- Use an outside facilitator to provide a “team-building” experience that emphasizes communication and group problem-solving activities. Based on the experience, you may want to incorporate pieces of this into your regular staff meetings. For example, beginning each meeting with an activity that allows people to get to know each other better can have a positive effect.
- Pair people in new ways for training and projects. Allow people who have not gotten to know each other yet a chance to work on something together.
- Have the manager interview all of their employees individually. Ask them to give examples of why they think employees do not work well together. Also, encourage them to give specific input on what can be done to improve the relationships within the department. Summarize the feedback from all employees (removing identifying information), share this information in the staff meeting, and develop actionable goals to improve collaboration.

## SURVEY ITEM

**People in my department communicate well with each other.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Employees should understand how each department’s and employee’s actions impact the work completed in other departments.
- Coach employees to always think how their actions will affect others.
- Consider implementing a teambuilding exercise through an internal or external resource.
- Encourage employees to work together as a team, if this is not happening, then one-on-one discussions with each team member should be implemented to uncover any issues that would hinder cooperation and support. After the information is gathered, a group meeting is suggested to breakdown any barriers.

- Agree on common and accepted behaviors (code of behavior) towards each other. Post the list in the department.
- Improve communications in your work group. Poor communications are often the cause of conflict and disruption. Work with leadership or HR representative to see what communication skills courses are available for your work group.
- Set measurable performance goals for your group, and clearly point out the connection between the goals and your facility's overall mission and goals. Overarching purpose and goals help to lift the focus to a collective effort, rather than concerns with day-to-day disagreements. Have employees work together on developing lists of actions to accomplish group goals. Hold employees accountable and provide individual as well as group feedback. Celebrate successes together and discuss ways to improve.
- Use electronic communication appropriately. Manager should not over-rely on electronic communication. Face-to-face communication is still the most effective method for connecting with the staff. Avoid communicating emotions or expressing different opinions electronically as those discussions should be done either face-to-face or phone (depending on location).

## SURVEY ITEM

**I trust the people with whom I work.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Give employees an opportunity to learn more about each other. Employees need to understand what motivates coworkers; otherwise, they may become suspicious about why they act as they do.
- Trust others. Trust builds trust, so be a role model and encourage others to trust and be trustworthy.
- Make sure your actions are consistent with your words. Inconsistencies cause distrust. Encourage employees to behave similarly.
- Consider a team-building session for your employees that includes a discussion on trust. Talk to your manager and/or HR representative about possibly using an external facilitator.
- Protect confidentiality where appropriate. Do not engage in “off the record” conversations except for rare circumstances. You do not want to encourage employees to run to you with “secret” information about others that could create distrust.
- Admit mistakes and encourage others to do the same. No one trusts a person who tries to hide his/her errors.

## SURVEY ITEM

**My department works well with other departments in this organization.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Employees should understand how each department's and employee's actions impact the work completed in other departments.
- Coach employees to always think how their actions will affect others. Also, clarify for your employees the roles and responsibilities related to the interactions between departments.
- Arrange for employees to spend time in departments that they typically work with. The exposure will improve their understanding of challenges faced by those in other departments. Ask employees to describe their experiences in another department to their coworkers and encourage employees to provide ideas on how to improve collaboration between departments.
- Encourage employees to work together as a team, if this is not happening, then one-on-one discussions with each team member should be implemented to uncover any issues that would hinder cooperation and support. After the information is gathered, a group meeting is suggested to breakdown any barriers.
- Schedule periodic meetings with your employees to evaluate the relationships between departments. Invite each department to send a representative(s) from their group to participate in the decisions. Encourage employees to develop specific solutions to existing issues.
- If there is concern with getting information from another department, invite the department head and a couple of other members of that department to a team meeting focused on gathering the required information.
- Engage other departments in identifying solutions. Ask them to provide feedback on ways your work unit can improve its quality and customer care.
- Look for ways to level the playing field across disciplines by holding open-floor meetings that permit and encourage respectful, unfiltered communication and feedback between functions.
- Make a list of common responsibilities, tasks, and goals shared between departments. Present the list to your employees and encourage them to discuss what is working well and also areas that need improvement. Encourage your employees to suggest possible solutions to improve interactions. Involve HR or other parts of your organization to help mediate the relationships between departments and to suggest implementing the new solutions.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I am challenged to do my best at this organization.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Hold one-on-one meeting with staff to discuss their roles/jobs and ensure expectations are being met from both the employee and manager. Modify the job description and expectations as needed.
- Help staff identify skills and knowledge that would be necessary to help the use their talents better. Encourage them to discuss with each other.
- Ensure performance reviews are timely and include conversations about job expectations.
- Establish a set schedule to review expectations and job content with staff.
- Develop a career development plan for each employee. This plan should have specific milestones and set timeframes. Ask the staff to “own” their personal growth and development.
- Align project assignments with staff strengths. Provide opportunities for staff to get involved in specific projects that interest them, as opportunities arise.
- Align career plan with staff strengths and what they enjoy doing most on their jobs.
- Obtain specific career and personal goals for staff in their performance evaluations. Develop action plans in performance evaluations on how they will acquire skills necessary to attain professional and personal goals.
- Provide cross-training opportunities for employees within the department.

## SURVEY ITEM

**This organization has a work environment that allows me to grow and develop.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Communicate the organization’s merit-based Succession Planning System, if it is available, which should allow the organization to have a talent succession plan based on competencies, experience, career interests, education, etc.
- Ensure that individual staff members have discussed and developed a career development plan with their managers. This should include for both the short-term and long term goals.
- Align career plan with staff strengths and what they enjoy doing most on their jobs.
- Provide personalized career guidance. Tell staff about your own success stories and what has worked for you.

- Supervisors should take the time to look into and suggest opportunities that may of interest to staff, such as cross-training opportunities within the organization, specialty projects that will help staff gain experience in areas of interest, or training/learning opportunities outside of the workplace.
- Create an Information Session for Human Resources or a member of Senior Management to conduct highlighting the career development options that exist; this can be a great way to showcase any new measures you intend to put into place, in addition to making sure all staff are aware of preexisting opportunities, including training and applying for jobs in different departments.
- Obtain specific career and personal goals for staff in their performance evaluations. Develop action plans in performance evaluations on how they will acquire skills necessary to attain professional and personal goals.

## SURVEY ITEM

**My job is secure at this organization.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Keep employees informed about organizational change. For changes that are done organizationally, the leaders should research the history for the change by utilizing leadership, the organizational intranet, and other sources as appropriate to understand the change so it can then be conveyed to the staff.
- Be open and truthful without disclosing any confidential information. Leaders should be as transparent as possible; however, leaders are not obligated to answer all questions employees ask due to confidentiality. Letting people live in some uncertainty is far better than saying something that appeases their fears but later haunts your reputation as a person of truth. Often, you truly don't know the answer to the question, and you can say so. When in doubt about what you should or should not say, talk it over with your manager.
- Forthrightness is a far better strategy than sugar-coating sensitive issues pertaining to job security. Acknowledging that "times are tough and challenging right now" is fine. The key to managing job security is having the employees know that you will let them know when to be concerned.
- Address rumors up front and set the record straight. If employees' fear for their job security is more about rumors than fact, then emphasize the facts and provide good communication. Invite relevant people to speak to your group about the issues that may be the cause of such fears.
- Conduct change management sessions with all leaders to assure they know how to appropriately assist in communicating significant changes in the organization and department.

- Set up individualized meetings with employees to discuss their concerns. Empathize with their concerns, encourage employees to stay positive in difficult times, and emphasize the importance of employee job performance.
- Encourage employees to continue to work hard, even in uncertain times. Remind and share with employees the vision for the future as it develops. People need information and they want to know if leadership has a plan for a better future.
- Management by Walking Around: managers are encouraged to enhance their visibility at the organization either through the use of technology (regular communication via video, web, and intranet) and or informal visits whenever possible to exchange information, obtain suggestions, and learn about the challenges encountered by employees. Our normative data shows a strong positive correlation between management visibility and management concern.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I understand what I need to do to be successful in my job.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Have staff develop a list of what they think is expected of them in their jobs, how they will accomplish those expectations, and how they connect to the success of the organization. If there are discrepancies between the employee's list and the expectations the supervisor has for staff, schedule a meeting to discuss the differences.
- Set clear guidelines for every project including instructions, expectations, and deadlines.
- Ensure channels of communication remain open and ensure corrective action is taken when standards of behavior are not followed in order to prevent future problems with communication and team morale.
- Compile a list of responsibilities for each of your employees or review their job description. Talk to your employees about their skills, talents, and educational/work backgrounds. Explore possible ways to use more of the employees' skills and talents at work—including areas outside their current job.
- Make sure each job position has clear, documented job responsibilities. Review them annually and when technology and/or process changes are introduced, to be sure they stay current. Leave room for flexibility as some responsibilities cannot be anticipated.
- Give feedback regularly, formally (performance reviews) and informally (rounding). If you provide ongoing feedback, your employees should have no surprises during the annual performance review.
- Ask employees how you can make the job responsibilities clearer. Sometimes employees can get confused because of an uninformative new hire orientation, promotions to new positions with new tasks without the proper training, or poorly written job descriptions. Ask for help from the employee in determining the source of the confusion.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I have the tools and resources necessary to do my job well.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Determine whether the budget for the resources and supplies is adequate to meet the needs of the organization. Ask departments to provide concrete utilization data and supply wish lists.
- Design a template to evaluate requests. Ask: What is needed? Why is it needed? Are there any other costs associated with it? How will it affect productivity? Cost savings? Quality? Speed of Delivery?
- Update the team about the status of requests. Make it an agenda item in the staff meetings or make a particular staff member on the team responsible for raising the issue in staff meetings or on an adhoc basis.
- Develop a purchasing plan for replacing obsolete equipment and communicate this plan to the appropriate staff.
- Survey staff regarding staffing and equipment needs (both replacement and new) and communicate a subsequent plan for addressing these needs.
- Educate staff to ensure that everyone understands how to use assigned equipment properly.

## SURVEY ITEM

**This organization is committed to excellent customer service in every department.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Conduct or continue to conduct customer satisfaction surveys to evaluate customers' perception of the quality of service(s) they received. Utilize the data from those surveys to establish action plans to improve opportunities for improvement and celebrate the positives.
- Establish quality customer service objectives and track performance over time and compared to objectives. Set performance improvement objectives, measure, and communicate on a regular basis.
- Define quality service and develop strategies to accomplish and improve the quality objectives. The definition should include the organization's position on both internal and external customer service and become a part of the organization's ideology. Ensure that each employee is aware that quality service for customers is a value and expectation of every employee.

- Ascertain competencies needed for each position to fulfill all job responsibilities. Compile skills/competency check list. Have incumbents, applicants, and new hires complete a self-evaluation. Alternatively have the supervisor evaluate, or test and rate each person's skills/competencies. Organization should ideally check each person for all competencies annually, but may elect to check current staff on a rotating portion of competencies at least annually. Once that is done, conduct a gap analysis of existing and needed skills/competencies. Develop training programs to fill the gap specific to customer service.
- Evaluate possible factors which could influence quality customer service (positively or negatively). Enhance positive factors and reduce negative factors.
- Establish an organization-wide, comprehensive internal and external customer service training program. Address the importance communicating accurate information timely to other departments.
- Hold staff accountable for meeting expectations for quality service for clients. Quantifying the cost of substandard quality is actually harmful to the relationship and the team.

## SURVEY ITEM

**We practice the mission of this organization in our daily work.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Connect the employee's job with the organization's strategy and mission and how it impacts the success of the organization.
- Developing day-to-day management practices which include requesting and utilizing input from staff.
- Have staff develop a list of what they think is expected of them in their jobs, how they will accomplish those expectations, and how they connect to the success of the organization. If there are discrepancies between the employee's list and the expectations the supervisor has for staff, schedule a meeting to discuss the differences.
- Set clear guidelines for every project including instructions, expectations, and deadlines.
- Ensure channels of communication remain open and ensure corrective action is taken when standards of behavior are not followed in order to prevent future problems with communication and team morale.
- Assign ownership to senior management to improve communication to and from all staff around the organization's success.

- Ask the senior management team to write and publish a formal communication policy for the organization around the organization's future.
- Create a Communication Task Force to regularly assess communication needs throughout the organization, and subsequently address limitations when identified.
- Host monthly or quarterly open forums for staff (i.e., breakfasts, luncheons, Town Hall Meetings) at the organization and department levels. Prepare and communicate a summary of the topics discussed during the forums for all staff.
- Allow staff to meet with senior management to ask questions around the future of the organization.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I understand the mission of this organization.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Connect the employee's job with the organization's strategy and mission and how it impacts the success of the organization.
- Developing day-to-day management practices which include requesting and utilizing input from staff.
- Have staff develop a list of what they think is expected of them in their jobs, how they will accomplish those expectations, and how they connect to the success of the organization. If there are discrepancies between the employee's list and the expectations the supervisor has for staff, schedule a meeting to discuss the differences.
- Set clear guidelines for every project including instructions, expectations, and deadlines.
- Ensure channels of communication remain open and ensure corrective action is taken when standards of behavior are not followed in order to prevent future problems with communication and team morale.

## SURVEY ITEM

**This organization's senior leadership is focused on high quality customer service.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Define quality work and develop strategies to accomplish and improve the quality objectives. The definition should include the organization's position on both internal and external customer service and become a part of the organization's ideology. Ensure that each employee is aware that quality service for customers is a value and expectation of every employee.

- Develop specific, measurable, and reliable means to assess quality work and measure/ track the organization's performance against its quality objectives. Include time frames for each objective. Share this information with staff.
- Conduct or continue to conduct customer satisfaction surveys to evaluate customers' perception of the quality of service(s) they received. Utilize the data from those surveys to establish action plans to improve opportunities for improvement and celebrate the positives.
- Hold staff accountable for meeting expectations for quality service for clients. Quantifying the cost of substandard quality is actually harmful to the relationship and the team.
- Communicate to the staff that they should raise quality issues with others on the team immediately. Reinforce that these conversations would not be perceived as threatening their personal relationships.
- Lead a group discussion to envision the achievement of a customer service or service goal the employees deeply desire. Establish a shared vision of what error-free care looks like to galvanize commitment from all employees on the team. Describe the vision in writing and talk through barriers and challenges to achieving the goal.
- Consider forming a standing team within your work group that focuses on quality improvement and customer care. Ask them to meet monthly or quarterly to review the status of new processes being implemented and to make recommendations for needed changes. Keep the entire work group informed on the team's activities.

## SURVEY ITEM

**Employees at this organization work well together to provide high quality customer service.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Confront poor performance early on, but only in private. Separate the quality of the performance from the person. Identify, in behavioral terms, how the performance is not acceptable. Develop an improvement plan with detailed expectations and dates for when improved performance must be achieved and the consequences if the improvement effort is not successful.
- Staff should understand how each department's and employee's actions impact the work completed in other departments and how it links to the success of the organization.
- Ensure you have a formal and ongoing system in place to measure effort and success (e.g., survey, polling). The system should consolidate positive and negative feedback from your clients (internal and external) on an ongoing basis. Report to your staff examples of feedback from happy clients and from those who were disappointed with a product or service encounter. Encourage your staff to take personal responsibility for client satisfaction and the success of the organization.

- Develop or continue to utilize key measures of customer service and reliable means to assess the care and concern received from individuals at the organization or, at least the customers' opinion of that care and concern. Examples include specific criteria for answering calls, wait times, responding to questions and requests, and handling challenging individuals.
- Share customer satisfaction data and information with staff and how it relates to the success of the organization. Clearly communicate the expectations and goals of customer satisfaction and hold staff accountable for meeting these expectations.
- Make sure leaders serve as the models for the customer service behaviors and exceeding (internal and external) customer expectations. Establish a leadership guide on customer service behaviors and expectations from the leaders. Train the leaders on the expectations, hold them accountable, and ensure the leaders are communicating and showing these expectations to their team and customers.
- Recognize and reward the individuals that exceed customer expectations and that innovate at the organization. Encourage staff to develop unique solutions for their customers.

## SURVEY ITEM

**My workload is reasonable.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Evaluate work load to determine if in fact the current responsibilities are efficient, accurate, and feasible. In addition, the scope and responsibilities for all positions should be clearly defined and adhered to by the employees.
- Lead a discussion on work/life balance with your staff members. Consider using the following questions to initiate the discussion:
  - 1) Does the amount of time you spend at work interfere with your non-work commitments?
  - 2) What difficulties do you face in balancing the demands of work and home?
  - 3) What actions can the organization take to help resolve these difficulties?
- Staff should be given the tools, technology, practices, departmental and/or job restructuring, and training necessary to meet current responsibilities. Determine if tools, technology, practices, departmental and/or job restructuring, and training would provide more efficiencies, thus reducing stress and the feeling of not enough staff.
- Current staffing models should be reviewed to determine if the model criteria and variances allow for optimal staffing levels. After reevaluating the staffing model, communicate it to employees so that they understand how staffing is determined and the plan going forward if any adjustments are to be made to the staffing model.
- Evaluate criteria on how staffing reassignments are made due to census fluctuations, if applicable. Change guidelines if necessary.
- Ensure that vacant positions are filled with qualified individuals, and that each department can maintain full staffing. Determine what assistance can be provided to and from Human Resources to reduce vacancies.
- Evaluate the possibility to hire additional or part-time employees to work in hard-to-fill shifts/hours.
- Review performance expectations, goals, and objectives with each subordinate. Give employees the opportunity to share whether expectations, goals, and objectives are realistic given current staffing levels. Manager and employees should use the information gathered to jointly develop performance objectives.

## SURVEY ITEM

**This organization is a safe place to work.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Educate all employees on the importance of safety and security, and what they can do to help improve and support the organization's present safety and security system.
- Monitor all work place injuries, investigate cause of injury, and implement corrective action to eliminate unsafe working condition(s).
- Evaluate compliance with hazardous materials communication. Provide proper storage containers and location/environment as appropriate. Provide personnel protection devices as required. Post proper emergency procedures where applicable.
- Make "safety first" a formal part of mission/goals of the organization and in higher risk departments, manufacturing, labs, etc.
- In order to obtain accurate reporting of incidents, ensure employees are not punished (through performance evaluations or productivity measurements) for reporting accidents/injuries.
- Ensure organization maintains OSHA compliance.
- Conduct annual safety training for all employees.
- Monitor Safety Committee meetings, ensure the meetings are held on a regular basis, and ensure the committee monitors facility to ensure unsafe working conditions do not exist. Share Safety Committee meeting notes with employees.

## SURVEY ITEM

**We have adequate staff in my department to do our jobs well.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Determine if the reported "low" staffing levels are a result of position vacancies or an inadequate number of approved staff to meet needs.
- Evaluate work load to determine if in fact the current responsibilities are efficient, accurate, and feasible. In addition, the scope and responsibilities for all positions should be clearly defined and adhered to by the employees.
- Staff should be given the tools, technology, practices, departmental and/or job restructuring, and training necessary to meet current responsibilities. Determine if tools, technology, practices, departmental and/or job restructuring, and training would provide more efficiencies, thus reducing stress and the feeling of not enough staff.

- Current staffing models should be reviewed to determine if the model criteria and variances allow for optimal staffing levels. After reevaluating the staffing model, communicate it to employees so that they understand how staffing is determined and the plan going forward if any adjustments are to be made to the staffing model.
- Evaluate criteria on how staffing reassignments are made due to census fluctuations, if applicable. Change guidelines if necessary.
- Ensure that vacant positions are filled with qualified individuals, and that each department can maintain full staffing. Determine what assistance can be provided to and from Human Resources to reduce vacancies.
- Evaluate the possibility to hire additional or part-time employees to work in hard-to-fill shifts/hours.
- Review performance expectations, goals, and objectives with each subordinate. Give employees the opportunity to share whether expectations, goals, and objectives are realistic given current staffing levels. Manager and employees should use the information gathered to jointly develop performance objectives.
- Evaluate time and attendance records hours. Ensure time and attendance policy is administered fairly. Investigate number of overtime hours worked.

## SURVEY ITEM

**This organization is actively working to improve safety.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Educate all employees on the importance of safety and security, and what they can do to help improve and support the organization's present safety and security system.
- Monitor all work place injuries, investigate cause of injury, and implement corrective action to eliminate unsafe working condition(s).
- Evaluate compliance with hazardous materials communication. Provide proper storage containers and location/environment as appropriate. Provide personnel protection devices as required. Post proper emergency procedures where applicable.
- Make "safety first" a formal part of mission/goals of the organization and in higher risk departments, manufacturing, labs, etc.
- In order to obtain accurate reporting of incidents, ensure employees are not punished (through performance evaluations or productivity measurements) for reporting accidents/injuries.
- Ensure organization maintains OSHA compliance.
- Conduct annual safety training for all employees.

- Monitor Safety Committee meetings, ensure the meetings are held on a regular basis, and ensure the committee monitors facility to ensure unsafe working conditions do not exist. Share Safety Committee meeting notes with employees.
- Evaluate fire safety. Post proper emergency procedures where applicable.
- Evaluate compliance with hazardous materials communication. Provide proper storage containers and location/environment as appropriate. Provide personnel protection devices as required. Post proper emergency procedures where applicable.
- Regularly review maintenance schedule on operating systems, machinery, equipment, etc. Regularly evaluate equipment, etc. for safe and proper operation.

## SURVEY ITEM

**The actions taken by this organization shows that employee safety is a top priority.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Educate all employees on the importance of safety and security, and what they can do to help improve and support the organization's present safety and security system.
- Monitor all work place injuries, investigate cause of injury, and implement corrective action to eliminate unsafe working condition(s).
- Evaluate compliance with hazardous materials communication. Provide proper storage containers and location/environment as appropriate. Provide personnel protection devices as required. Post proper emergency procedures where applicable.
- Make "safety first" a formal part of mission/goals of the organization and in higher risk departments, manufacturing, labs, etc.
- In order to obtain accurate reporting of incidents, ensure employees are not punished (through performance evaluations or productivity measurements) for reporting accidents/injuries.
- Ensure organization maintains OSHA compliance.
- Conduct annual safety training for all employees.
- Monitor Safety Committee meetings, ensure the meetings are held on a regular basis, and ensure the committee monitors facility to ensure unsafe working conditions do not exist. Share Safety Committee meeting notes with employees.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I feel comfortable reporting safety issues.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- In order to obtain accurate reporting of incidents, ensure employees are not punished (through performance evaluations or productivity measurements) for reporting accidents/injuries.
- Make “safety first” a formal part of mission/goals of the organization and in higher risk departments, manufacturing, labs, etc.
- Incorporate a safety “hotline” into compliance training and educate employees on how and when to use this resource.
- Educate staff on ways to raise concerns respectfully and appropriately, with the least amount of critical judgment, to create an effective environment for dialogue.
- Examine your own and others’ reactions to safety reporting concerns. Be sure you are not explicitly, or implicitly, discouraging open communication. Sometimes personal biases (filtering based on who is reporting) and defensiveness can send signals that you would rather not know.
- Convene representatives of the safety team (or empower an existing practice council) to develop and implement an “Ethics Consultation Policy.” It should include the expectation that all employees may initiate a consult when a concern arises around safety issues, use of equipment, or hazardous materials.
- Make safety discussions a topic on every staff meeting agenda. Work through solutions and recommendations as soon as possible after a concern is raised.
- Educate all employees on the importance of safety and security, and what they can do to help improve and support the organization’s present safety and security system.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I understand what I need to do to remain safe at work.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Make “safety first” a formal part of mission/goals of the organization and in higher risk departments, manufacturing, labs, etc.
- Educate all employees on the importance of safety and security, and what they can do to help improve and support the organization’s present safety and security system.
- Encourage an environment of change. Ensure staff understand the change management program and understand the importance of change/agility.

- Create an open door policy with staff. Listen to suggestions and act on these suggestions when feasible.
- In order to obtain accurate reporting of incidents, ensure employees are not punished (through performance evaluations or productivity measurements) for reporting accidents/injuries.

## SURVEY ITEM

**My coworkers understand the rules that keep us safe.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- In order to obtain accurate reporting of incidents, ensure employees are not punished (through performance evaluations or productivity measurements) for reporting accidents/injuries.
- Make “safety first” a formal part of mission/goals of the organization and in higher risk departments, manufacturing, labs, etc.
- Educate all employees on the importance of safety and security, and what they can do to help improve and support the organization’s present safety and security system.
- Lead a discussion on the intent, value and outcomes of providing consistent service. What does following proper procedures do for the customer? For the team as a whole? Explain how procedures were determined and what is/is not negotiable, and why.
- Ensure that procedural changes are communicated in a timely and readily accessible manner to all employees. In multi-shift settings, assign the role of policy “communicator” to at least one employee on each shift.
- Define the role of a team member in following proper procedures and how adherence to standards and practices is considered part of expected performance. Be sure to prioritize what is most important.
- Seek out areas of confusion and work to clarify expectations and outcomes. Be clear about if/when it is appropriate to question or deviate from a standard or procedure.
- Coach and counsel employees promptly when an unauthorized deviation from standards is observed. Catching an error soon after it has been made will support better understanding and behavioral change.
- Create and communicate metrics for specific procedures. Share with all employees the results of surveys and reports that identify performance levels.
- In order to obtain accurate reporting of incidents, ensure employees are not punished (through performance evaluations or productivity measurements) for reporting accidents/injuries.

## SURVEY ITEM

Compared with similar jobs in this community, I feel I am paid fairly.

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Review overall pay philosophy with HR to determine if the current philosophy complements or contradicts the current Strategy/Mission and communicated back to senior management.
- Ensure that the staff understands their roles. All job descriptions should be accurate and updated to include major areas of responsibilities as well as education, certification, and experience needed to perform the job.
- Determine how the organization wants to evaluate jobs for relative worth (e.g., point-factor analysis, market-based approach). Construct a staff task force to help determine which jobs within the organization are relevant to the benchmark positions in the salary survey. Then the task force should match up the remaining jobs to the most comparable benchmarked jobs. (Ensure internal equity)
- Understand from HR the guidelines for determining starting rates of pay for new hires, transferred/promoted staff, and staff on leaves of absence.
- Communicate frequency/timing of pay reviews and factors influencing pay adjustments (e.g., cost-of-living, length of service, place in pay range, individual merit/performance, achievement of organization or work team objectives, etc.). Establish guidelines for determining pay adjustments for transferred/promoted/demoted staff and staff on leaves of absence.
- Communicate pay philosophy and procedures to staff upon hire, periodically thereafter, and any time there is a change. Tell staff members their pay ranges and how the individual's pay rate was determined, consistent with the organization's pay philosophy and procedures.
- Confirm that pay increases serve as a true incentive to reward staff effort and desired performance results and behaviors. Ensure current evaluation system is in-line with strategic objectives. Identify the criteria on which a bonus or pay increase will be based. Ensure achievement of key objectives/critical success factors are recognized and then rewarded in accordance with the organization's pay philosophy and procedures.

## SURVEY ITEM

**Compared with other organizations in this community, I feel my benefits are competitive.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Conduct benefit surveys with organizations (of similar size, industry, and/or location) to evaluate competitiveness of benefits package. Evaluate cost of premium share, out-of-pocket cost, coverage, flexibility/limitations, size, and location of network providers, eligibility requirements, and waiting/elimination periods.
- Evaluate benefits package on health and dental insurance, paid time off policies, retirement benefits, employee assistance programs, disability insurance, life insurance, stock option purchase plans, tuition assistance, vision care, etc.
- Share results from survey with all employees.
- Appropriate corrective action should be taken if benefits package is found not to be competitive. Be specific on what areas are not competitive.
- If benefits package is competitive, the organization should remind employees of this positive outcome and also use it as an effective recruiting tool.
- Hold an annual benefit fair (with vendor representatives) for employees to learn about their benefits.
- Ensure managers are well informed and educated on the benefits package so they can help answer employees' questions.
- Provide publications or updates to the benefit market surveys highlighting the positive aspects of the organization's benefits.
- Publish a "total rewards" summary showing the dollar value of benefits provided to employees so that each employee appreciates the cost savings and overall value of their benefits package.
- Ensure all employees are educated on how to utilize their healthcare, vision, and/or dental benefits. Use the employee newsletter to highlight special perks, updates, and/or value of available benefits.

## SURVEY ITEM

**Employees of this organization are treated with dignity and respect.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Strategically pair up team members to allow them to see the other's strengths and value their expertise.

- Intentionally design activities or projects that will give staff the opportunity to work together. Smaller groups are better because the incidence of interaction will be greater and they will be more likely to form stronger relationships.
- Provide staff members with the opportunity to attend a conflict resolution class and provide a means of settling disagreements between staff.
- Develop an essential work duties list for each function within the department to improve coverage during absences as well as the ability to support co-workers.
- Implement a teambuilding exercise through an internal or external resource.
- Create a Standards of Behavior document that outlines the expected behavior of staff and have each new hire sign it during orientation.
- At each department meeting, focus on examples of actions that are in accordance with the Standards of Behavior.
- Do not ignore situations where you sense an issue between two individuals. Talk to the individuals concerned and explain how their interaction is affecting their performance and the team.
- Hold appropriate number of employee group meetings to address the benefits and challenges of teamwork for the organization and your department.

## SURVEY ITEM

**Human resources policies are administered consistently across this organization.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Conduct a mandatory training session on the policies/guidelines for all supervisors and managers.
- Include a section on how to apply all policies/guidelines appropriately as all levels of management are responsible for effective administration of HR policies.
- Ensure that the enforcement of organizational policies is consistent, both within the team and compared to other departments. Think about the way leaders handle issues such as dress code, schedule requests, and punctuality, and make sure there are no opportunities for employees to perceive a bias in the approach to these situations.
- Communicate when and why policies have changed, and confirm employees understand the policy changes.
- Include a training session on managerial techniques to enforce all policies/guidelines.
- Apply the policy appropriately for the situation, the employees, and the organization.
- Administer policies in the exact same manner to all staff, use Human Resources Department to answer policy questions.
- Make every effort to support any staff who may be dealing with tough situations,

and demonstrate flexibility to assist staff who are having personal problems. While it is important that a leader uphold organizational policies and maintain productivity within the workgroup, it is equally important in the long-term for staff to feel as though the leader will be understanding of any emergencies or temporary setbacks that arise in their personal lives.

- Make sure the organization's scheduling and time-off policies are flexible enough to accommodate the religious obligations of all employees.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I trust this organization to keep my personal information secure.**

## ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Ensure that the organization has a specific personal information security system and rules in place and communicate that information to all employees.
- Provide training for all employees on IT security protocols and how to protect their personal information.
- Establish help desk to answer general employee questions on personal information security and what steps the organization uses to protect their information.
- Immediately support employees should a breach of personal information occurred and address the overall steps for correction.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I love working for this organization.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Conduct a focus group with your team to determine the overall factors as to why staff are or are not “loving” to work at the organization. Utilize this list and work with HR and/or leadership to determine how to address those factors to ensure affinity.
- Continually reiterate the positives of the organization during staff meetings and informal conversations with staff. Also, post outcomes through internal media and through informal communications with staff.
- Emphasize respect for coworkers and positive interpersonal skills in all daily operations. Include these behaviors in organization mission, vision, and values statements.
- Set up individualized meetings with staff to discuss their concerns. Empathize with their concerns, encourage staff to stay positive in difficult times, and emphasize the importance of employee job performance. If necessary, schedule a meeting with HR to discuss remediation steps during difficult times.
- Brand positive aspects or the reasons for working at the organization: “Staff Count,” “You Make a Difference,” “Grow the Business and Yourself,” etc.

## SURVEY ITEM

**I could not imagine working for another organization.**

### ACTION PLAN SUGGESTIONS

- Identify the top reasons why this organization is better than other organizations and share that information with the staff so they can better promote the brand.
- Work with Human Resources to develop a specific list of your particular work group that is either encouraging employee to recommend the organization or holding staff back that can be communicated within your team. Determine initial action plan to address the areas of concern.
- Continually reiterate the positives of the organization during staff meetings and informal conversations with staff. Also, post positive outcomes through internal media and informal communications with staff.
- Advertise any achievements or recognitions as employer of choice.
- Brand positive aspects or the reasons for working at the organization: “Staff Count,” “You Make a Difference,” “Grow the Business and Yourself,” etc.



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