



COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

Mistake #1: Just a Survey

The first big mistake in measuring employee engagement to run a survey and then fail to do any formal action planning based on the feedback. It is better if you don't run the survey at all.

The survey sets an expectation on the team that something will be done with the information. The real power in the process is around developing a formal action planning process that creates concrete steps towards improvement.

Mistake #2: Ignoring the Education Triangle

The second mistake people make is to run the survey, interpret the results, and execute action plans without ever letting anyone know what's going on. Taking full advantage of the templates provided for regular communication is critical.

Mistake #3: Making it Mandatory

Some organizations require that employees take their assessment surveys. While this will certainly increase participation, it can have the negative affect of skewing the results. It can either go negative because people feel controlled or inconvenienced, or it can be too positive because they go quickly and don't reflect on the questions.

If your goal is participation, then two things will drive this.

1. The Education Triangle, regular contact points about why this matters
2. Ensure the feedback and results are truly confidential
3. If you're in a multi-level organization, be sure to have each department or business unit leader personally ask their team to get involved. People most often take their cues on how to spend their time from their direct supervisor.

Mistake #4: Ignoring the Context

It is important to remember that the numbers you are looking at reflect a snap shot. A moment in time, so consider the context of what was going on when the survey was taken. In some cases, the numbers can move dramatically within a single day.

For example, consider what the survey results might be just after a big holiday party? Or just before bonuses? Or just after bonuses? Each of these events could swing the scores. So be sure to find a time in the life of the organization that will allow for the most accurate scores.

Mistake #5: Not Accounting for Statistical Variance

If you use a survey method, it's important that you consider how it is being scored and account for statistical variance. For example, using the Korn Ferry methodology, any group with 10 responses could have a statistical variance (meaning inaccurate data) of + or - 25%.

If you score at 50% engaged on a particular dimension, it could mean 25% or 75%, that is obviously a very big swing. Keep this in mind both as you communicate results to people and as you interpret them. The larger the size of group, the lower the statistical variance. Once you get over about 200, the variance drops to about + or - 10%.