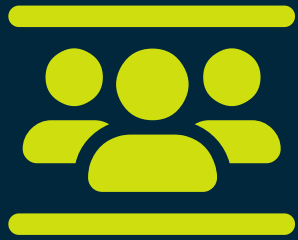


Gain Actionable Insights from *Employee Surveys*



At A Glance

Leaders Should:

- Spend time reviewing high and low scores
- Seek feedback related to their own performance
- Schedule a team meeting to share results
- Set goals and create an action plan

Leaders Should Not:

- Share only positive results from the survey
- Speak in generalities about the entire workplace
- Ignore the importance of sharing results with their teams

Gathering employee feedback is an important step towards making more informed decisions that improve workplace satisfaction and organizational performance. Employee surveys are made to measure employees' morale, commitment, and motivation, and to assess how that fits in with the organization's current practices.

SURVEYS ARE, AT THEIR CORE, DESIGNED WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF STRENGTHENING A TEAM AND ITS LEADERS.

The real power behind employee surveys is unlocked when leadership has a clear vision for the use of employee survey results, gleaned actionable insights from the responses and strategically responding in a way that builds employee trust and empowerment.



Measurement is the first step that leads to control and eventually to improvement. If you can't measure something, you can't understand it. If you can't understand it, you can't control it. If you can't control it, you can't improve it.

H. James Harrington

WHY ARE EMPLOYEE SURVEYS IMPORTANT?

As H. James Harrington, the visionary behind Business Process Improvement, wrote, "Measurement is the first step that leads to control and eventually to improvement. If you can't measure something, you can't understand it. If you can't understand it, you can't control it. If you can't control it, you can't improve it."

Data gathered from employee surveys can be used to make strategic decisions and action plans to positively improve key business metrics like retention, recruitment, profitability and productivity.

Consider a retention survey, for example. According to an article by survey company Officevibe, [more than half of exiting employees said their manager could have done something to prevent them from leaving.](#)

Imagine the same employees had been given a retention survey with responses that provided measurable insight into employee satisfaction concerns. While it's unlikely a survey would have had the power to save every unsatisfied team member, the data could have been used proactively to improve on problem areas and slow turnover.

Surveys can serve as important tools for bridging the divide between management and employees, which, in the end, benefits the whole of a company's culture.

Consider these benefits:

Surveys can increase employee engagement and productivity.

It's no secret that engaged and rewarded employees are more likely to stick around longer and produce higher quality results than their disengaged counterparts. According to a [study from Zenger and Folkman](#), 69% of employees say they would work harder if their efforts were better recognized. Effective leaders understand the connection between taking action on survey feedback and employees' perceptions of leadership.

Surveys gather feedback and initiate discussion between managers and employees.

If an organization conducts a survey to measure a team's level of satisfaction toward management, the results would hopefully uncover employee perceptions about leadership within their department or organization. The way your organization functions hinges on the effectiveness of its managers, and employees often aren't given the opportunity to let managers know how they're performing. Leaders can use this information to their advantage by taking reasonable steps to improve upon their shortcomings. It's also an opportunity to open a dialogue with teams about gaps in understanding between supervisors and team members. Such discussions can shed light on where management is excelling, and where it could stand to improve. Managers that resist employee feedback may perpetuate habits that contribute to increased turnover, damaged employee relationships, and slowed projects.

69%

Employees that say they would work harder if their efforts were better recognized.

Effective leaders review and take action on survey feedback.

Acting on survey results can improve communication and build trust. Listening to employees' feedback and actively taking steps to improve upon your company's weak points will show team members they have a voice. Demonstrating that their opinions matter could encourage employees to express concerns and share ideas even outside of the anonymous space that surveys provide.

Employee surveys can be a catalyst for change. The act of surveying employees not only provides you with valuable input and insights, it has the dual purpose of influencing employees. Psychologists have found that [asking questions can actually change behavior](#). Employee survey results also create a benchmark to track results in your company. Measurement creates accountability toward results.

These changes can positively impact your company's overall well-being. When employee surveys were first being launched throughout American businesses in the 1920s, interviews with top executives proved that most American managers were more concerned with their workers' actions and behaviors than with their attitudes toward their jobs. The same research also found that few of these executives had accurate information regarding morale and attitude toward management, which was causing employees to ["express resentment through sabotage, soldiering in their work, wage demands, and strikes."](#)

While the vocabulary used may seem antiquated and hyperbolic, the idea withstands time: Low morale among employees is almost guaranteed to negatively impact an organization. If you frame your survey practices with an employee-first mindset, you can shape your company's culture in a way that benefits the whole team.

WHAT TO DO WITH SURVEY RESULTS

As a best practice, **a third-party should be engaged** to review the data and look for any red flags. Analysis and recommendations from a third-party increases trust with employees that a neutral party has reviewed the results and provided recommendations.

Even when a third-party is engaged, **the manager should be involved in reviewing the results and looking for patterns.** Seek critical feedback from the survey on your own performance – these are areas that you can make immediate impact.

If the data is available, **measure your results against that of past years**, as well as against metrics from similar organizations or departments. These benchmarks will help your team better understand where you might have a competitive advantage and where you might be falling behind.



As you review the results, ask yourself:

- Am I showing up as a manager the way that I perceive myself to be?
- How does my management style impact my team?

Once results are collected and analyzed, **a team meeting should be called** to share findings with each department or survey group. Team meetings, and even individual check-ins, allow managers to focus on how the data impacts their team's day-to-day routine rather than speaking in generalities centered around the entire workforce. Don't be afraid to **ask follow-up questions** of your team to gain clarity on the feedback.

Sharing the results with your employees and **creating an action plan** are critical steps to reinforce that you take employee feedback seriously. If your team spends time providing thoughtful feedback but has no insight into the impact this feedback will have, employees are likely to feel frustrated and unclear about the changes moving forward. Employees will value transparency and simplicity when you share the results – point out the most favorable and least favorable responses. Representing strengths and weaknesses are a perfect segue into a discussion on opportunities for improvement.

Work with employees to identify possible actions that would address the feedback. Prioritize a couple of attainable goals using employee input by asking questions like,

- Which areas would make the greatest positive impact to their employee experience?
- For challenge areas, what would success look like in this area?

Include a clear outline of steps to reach those goals. Throughout the creation of the action plan, encourage your team's participation and empower them to take part in the process. What are first steps? What does success look like? What steps need to be taken to achieve our goals? Look for any barriers that might impede achieving the goals and outline steps to overcome them.

Smaller, more focused surveys can also be conducted throughout the year to **monitor progress**. These are called pulse surveys and they should include five to 15 follow-up questions. It's important to stick to about three to four surveys a year, as too many might seem unproductive.

Employee surveys can be incredibly powerful tools that can help a business and bring an organization together. When properly planned and executed, employees feel heard, leadership understands their shortcomings, failures and successes of an organization's culture can be identified, and steps can be taken to boost the morale and success of everyone involved.

Since 2020, Evans has helped clients achieve significant and tangible improvements to their FedView Survey (FEVS) ratings. When engaging Evans for FEVS support, the results you can expect are an **increase in employee participation** with the survey and positive **upward trends in satisfaction ratings**.

Want to learn more about how Evans can support you with your FedView survey results? [Email us.](#)