

A Business Research Lab Tip

Distributing and Collecting Employee Satisfaction Questionnaires

One key to a successful employee satisfaction survey process is the manner in which the questionnaires are distributed and collected. Employees must be certain that their anonymity will be maintained. Therefore, the survey must be anonymous. It is advisable to have questionnaires returned to an impartial third party to reduce fears that employees may have about their bosses trying to find out what they said.

A cover letter, from an official high in the organization, should accompany the questionnaire. The letter should stress the need for employees to express their honest opinions. The package should include a pre-addressed reply envelope. A good total response rate for an employee satisfaction survey is in the 65% to 80% range. If the response rate lags, about two weeks after the initial distribution of the questionnaires you should send a reminder card to all employees.

To gain maximum benefit from the survey, you will want to consider reporting results at the individual work unit level. However, you should take care to not report results for individual work units with such a small amount of employees that the anonymity of the participants would be put at risk. In cases of small sample sizes, you can aggregate results for work units within a hierarchy.

What you choose to do with the results can have a great impact on your success in future surveys. If management cherry-picks the results and "toots its own horn," the study will lose credibility and employees will lose interest in participating in the future. It is better to acknowledge areas needing improvement, and involve employees in the improvement process itself.

**The Business Research Lab conducts surveys of all types. Telephone orders encouraged.
Call us at 1-866-897-0924.**

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