



## Employee Pulse Surveys

Increasing employee engagement,  
happiness and the health of your business

[www.smartsurvey.co.uk](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk)



## Happy and engaged employees

Whether you are looking to find out how happy your staff are, how valued they feel in your business, or how likely they are to recommend your firm to their friends; the ability to swiftly measure and respond constructively to their views is invaluable. With the right data you can keep your employees **more engaged, happier and productive, and your company moving forward.**







## Regular feedback is the key to success

While an annual or six-monthly employee survey can help you to gather effective feedback and a deeper insight into how your staff are feeling, it can take time to devise, implement, collect and then analyse your responses, particularly if your company has more limited resources for carrying it out. And with surveys spaced widely apart there is also the possibility that **you could miss out on gathering and responding to key employee feedback**, should a major issue or negative trend develop during the in between times.

However, the alternative of not engaging with your staff risks leaving them dissatisfied, de-motivated, less productive and more likely to leave.

This can lead to an increased employee churn rate and potentially leave you open to bad reviews on sites such as Glassdoor, which can ultimately harm your reputation and future success.

In contrast, by gathering more regular feedback, you can quickly identify and positively respond to any developing trends or workplace issues. This is where the use of a pulse survey is extremely beneficial.

## What is an employee pulse survey?

**An employee pulse survey is a fast and more frequent survey method that can be used to quickly ascertain the levels and drivers of your employees' engagement.** The pulse survey can provide an effective snapshot of your employees' current thoughts and a valuable insight into the health of your company.

## Why use an employee pulse survey?

In contrast to employee surveys, which can easily include up to 50 questions, employee pulse surveys are a lot shorter – usually featuring no more than between **5-15 relatively simple questions**. This makes them more enticing for employees to read and complete, and quicker and simpler for employers to manage.

Typically run more frequently – weekly, monthly or quarterly – pulse surveys are a great way to gauge employee feelings as your company develops. It allows you to regularly elicit their opinions on different issues that might be affecting them, take positive actions as a result of this feedback and help keep your business on track.

“A study of **64** organizations revealed that *organizations with highly engaged employees achieve **twice** the annual net income* of organizations whose employees *lag behind on engagement.*”

FORBES

# Three Scenarios where pulse surveys are invaluable to gather employee insights

Given the many changes a company can go through as it grows and evolves, there can be many scenarios where obtaining more regular feedback from your staff through an employee pulse survey can be highly beneficial to your business.



## Large or fast-growing businesses

Whether you are a large or a fast-growing business, there will be occasions when you experience more **rapid or frequent change**, which could be the result of a sudden surge in staff leavers or structural changes as a result of personnel or departmental changes. With a pulse survey you are able to measure what affect this might be having on your employees' mood and engagement levels, and subsequently tweak your communications strategy to allay any worries they may have to ensure they remain motivated and productive.



## Merger & Acquisition activity

A M&A can be an extremely stressful and uncertain time for everyone involved. While the end goal may be a positive, good communications during the transition process is vital, otherwise damaging rumours or misinformation can spread quickly. With the right pulse survey questions, you can **quickly test your employees understanding** of your M&A to ensure it was correct, measure how well they were coping with changes and see how comfortable they were with your company's future vision and goals. After analysing this feedback, you can then take any required steps you needed to keep your M&A activity on track.



## Employee and line manager accountability

While it's important to ensure your staff are working productively, it's equally important to ensure that the line managers they report to are also accountable and operating effectively. With the right mix of questions, **you can not only gauge your employees' understanding of what is expected of them in their roles, but also measure how effectively they are being managed**. You can then use your findings to make any necessary improvements and create a closer employee and manager dialogue, which will benefit your business going forward.

## Five key benefits of running employee pulse surveys

A well written, designed and frequently implemented employee pulse survey can deliver a series of benefits that include:

**1**

### **Higher response rates**

With fewer questions employees are more likely to read and complete your survey. In fact, employee pulse surveys have on average higher response rates than standard surveys.

**2**

### **Improves employer analysis**

Besides having a larger overall volume of feedback to work with, shorter surveys are easier to absorb, evaluate and make decisions on.

**3**

### **Easier to identify and respond to attitudinal shifts**

With more regular survey feedback it's simpler to track evolving employee sentiment and immediately act on any developing negative trends.

**4**

### **Improve staff relations and retention**

When you have more regular dialogue with your employees, they feel more valued and listened to, which is good for employee relations and retention.

**5**

### **Stronger company culture**

By eliciting more frequent feedback from your employees, you're able to ensure everyone is aligned with your brand values, vision and mission, enabling you to develop happier and more trusting teams and build a stronger company culture.

“Companies with  
*engaged*  
*employees*  
*outperform* those without by  
**202%”**

GALLUP



# What questions should I be including in my employee pulse survey?

To get the most out of your survey, you need to **ask questions that are more likely to deliver responses that you can really do something useful with**. Essentially you will be looking for answers that are measurable and insightful, which tell you what's good and bad about your workplace, how valued and engaged your employees' feel and how they believe things can be made better.

For the best results try to make sure your questions are **short, clear and easy to understand and provide a simple to answer format**. Consider using rating style

questions such as the Likert scale, that typically provide 5 response options ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

Given that employee pulse surveys are **quick to create, simple to manage, frequently distributed and generally yield higher response rates** than other survey types, they are an ideal opportunity to gain some valuable insight. So, you will want to make sure you get them right.

Here are some great pulse survey question examples you might like to use

I understand what is expected of me in doing my job.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

This is a safe and inclusive workplace.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

I would recommend this workplace to my friends.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

Communication from management is clear and effective.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

I feel that my contribution to the business is valued.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

I have access to the right tools, support and facilities to be able to do my job well.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

The business is moving in a positive direction.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

Any dress code requirements are fair and reasonable.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

I understand how my job fits in to the success of the business as a whole.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree



# Three tips for generating effective employee pulse survey questions

## Devise questions everyone will recognise

Ensure your questions are broad enough to apply to all your respondents. If you ask employees to answer questions that are only relevant to some of them, those that don't identify with a question might either skip it or answer it untruthfully.

1

## Mix up your question format

Try including at least one open and closed-ended question. It often works well to pair these questions together, with the open-ended question following the closed one, so you can get a better idea of why a respondent chose to rate their initial answer in the way that they did.

2

## Make your questions simpler to measure

Think about including questions that deliver easily measurable results, which once acted on can produce great business outcomes. Adding an employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS) is a great example, enabling you to measure and quickly gain a snapshot of those employees most likely to be an ambassador for your company and advocate employment in the business.

3

“ Teams classified as in the  
*‘high performance zone  
for engagement’*  
had a

**37%**

net promoter score (**NPS**)

versus **10%** NPS for teams ‘outside of  
*high performance zone*  
for engagement.’”

GAINSIGHT

# Key considerations before running your employee pulse survey



## Anonymity

**If you are to get the best and most honest survey responses, it is essential to provide anonymity.** Your staff need to feel safe to give you open and truthful feedback without the worry of reprisal.

With a SmartSurvey account this is simple to do with the use of the Anonymous Survey feature, which once activated makes the respondent's IP address invisible to the survey user. Similarly, for surveys distributed by email or SMS, although the respondent's contact information (email/mobile number) is stored and tracked with their response, however they are inaccessible to the survey user.



## Survey scheduling

When you frequently run surveys, but are busy with many other things, **it's easy to forget to send them at the right time.** Automation tools can help you and save you time, as you can schedule future surveys to automatically distribute at certain times, as well as automatically time reminders to be sent to respondents who have yet to complete your survey based on your initial invite.



## GDPR compliance for employees

No matter how informal your employee pulse survey process may be, confidentiality and data protection are critical, particularly when collecting personally identifiable information from employees. **It's vital that your data collection software complies with the current GDPR laws governing the safe collection, use and storage of personal data.**

Working with a compliant company like SmartSurvey can ensure you achieve this. As an ISO27001 accredited business we have some of the most robust industry processes and infrastructures in place to secure our customers' data including hosting in a secure, UK based data centre.



# Best Practice advice to maximise the value you gain from your employee pulse survey

If you are to get the most out of your survey there are several steps you need to follow before, during and following your survey.

## Explain survey pulsing

**If you want to maximise your employees' participation in pulsing, give them a heads up.**

Let them know it's coming, why you've decided to implement it and what you plan to do with the information. You'll also need to communicate with your department heads and managers, so they are clear on their role throughout this process. Having that understanding helps get everyone on board.

## Acknowledge and thank all respondents for their feedback

**Politely thanking respondents for their time** and reiterating how their feedback will ultimately help to benefit them and the company going forward, will keep them engaged and more likely to respond again on future surveys.

## Share all feedback

Irrespective of whether it's good or bad news, you must **be prepared to share all your feedback** throughout your company, if you are to demonstrate that you are receptive to hearing everything that your employees have to say.

## Act on that feedback

Listening without action can quickly lead to disengagement. Make sure you have implemented the necessary internal processes, as this will enable you to **take quick, positive action.**

## Organise regular review meetings

To **keep on top of all your feedback** you need to schedule regular review meetings with your staff. If you run pulse surveys every month, put a recurring monthly meeting in every manager's calendar to review this feedback with their employees. It will demonstrate that you are organised, serious and receptive to taking the views of your employees onboard.

## Fast and frequent

**To be effective pulse surveys need to run frequently.**

They are designed to be fast and efficient enabling you to regularly 'check the pulse' of your company by collecting feedback from every employee enabling you to stay informed of what employees want or need to do their job better or improve levels of happiness in their role. Implementing positive change based on feedback will help to improve productivity, moral retention and advocacy.





## Frequently Asked Questions



### **"What is meant by a pulse survey?"**

"Essentially, it is a fast and more frequent survey method that enables you to gain an effective snapshot of your employees' current thoughts and a valuable insight into the health of your company."

### **"What is meant by an confidential pulse survey?"**

"A confidential survey is one where your responses are kept private."

### **"Why use an employee pulse survey?"**

"They are quick and simple for employers to manage and easy for employees to read and complete, typically enabling higher than average response rates."

### **"What makes a great survey?"**

"Generally, to ensure the highest volume and quality of responses, you will want to keep it short, simple and relevant. It's also prudent to test your survey first, as this an effective way to identify and correct any problems before distributing it. "

### **"How many questions are on a pulse survey?"**

"Generally, they are short, featuring no more than between 5-15 relatively simple questions."

### **"How do you conduct a pulse survey?"**

"To conduct a pulse survey you need to incorporate the following steps: determine your survey's purpose and what you want to measure, identify your participants, set a timeline, construct impactful questions, act on your results."

### **"Should pulse surveys be anonymous"**



"It's a good idea to make them anonymous, as you're more likely to get open and honest responses when staff feel safe to do this without the worry of reprisal."

### **"Are confidential employee surveys really confidential"**

"Yes, as the raw data from your responses is automatically tied back to your employee record in the back-end and its demographic information is automatically tagged. This subsequently means that anyone analysing your information will only be able to examine how it applies to a particular demographic rather any personal identifier."

### **"How much does an employee satisfaction survey cost"**

"If you have an online survey account, which enables you to create unlimited surveys they can be extremely cost effective to run. The more costly aspect is likely to be your own internal labour expense of managing the survey through initial planning, delivery, reporting and analysis."







**Start collecting employee feedback today**  
**Create your free account**

[www.smartsurvey.co.uk](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk)



SmartSurvey Ltd. Basepoint Business Centre, Oakfield Close, Tewkesbury, Glos. GL20 8SD, United Kingdom



0800 0937 822



[sales@smartsurvey.co.uk](mailto:sales@smartsurvey.co.uk)



[www.smartsurvey.co.uk](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk)