



10 great ideas for  
reinvigorating your employee  
engagement programme

PeopleInsight



# 10 great ideas for reinvigorating your employee engagement programme

If you've been running employee engagement programmes for a few years, chances are you might be ready to inject some change.

Maybe the process has been resource heavy, improvements slow to achieve, or leaders and employees are becoming jaded.

Have a look at our fresh ideas to help employee engagement professionals improve momentum and drive engagement.

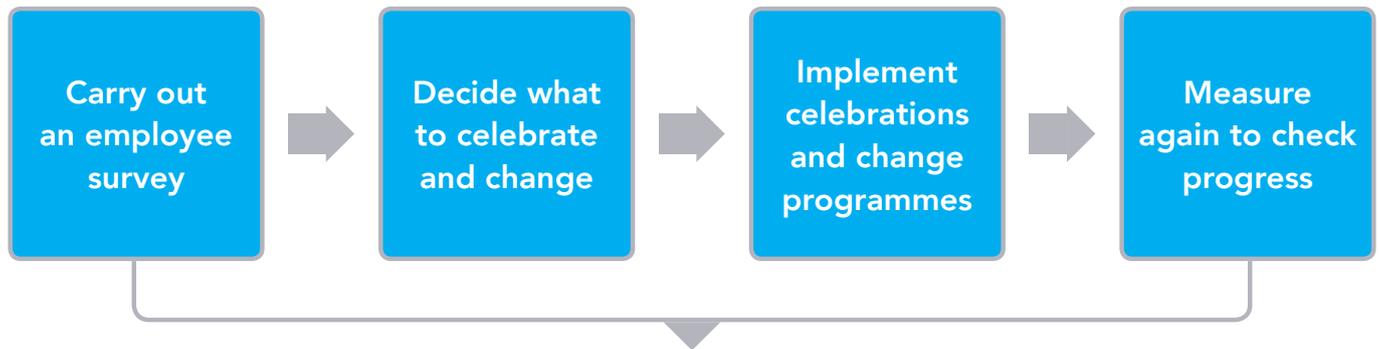
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# 1. Make it dynamic & lean

Your employee engagement programme probably looks something like this simplified chart below. Of course, it's not really this simple, with plenty of important work to do behind the scenes involving HR information, senior stakeholders, communication channels and so on.



**Annually / quarterly / monthly – or whatever frequency suits your organisation**

So how do you lighten the load?

Starting with your survey, you probably spend a lot of time and effort implementing this aspect of the programme, so it's a good idea to:

1. Get a great tool with nimble reporting.
2. Shorten the questionnaire (and get the questions spot on).
3. Pre-load employee demographics.



## 1. Make it dynamic & lean *(continued)*

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### 2. Shorten the questionnaire (and get the questions spot on)

One of the reasons employees don't engage with surveys is that often they are made up of a long list of repetitive questions. We recommend sticking to a maximum of 30-40 concisely written questions for an in depth survey, and 10-15 for a pulse.

But don't just ask any questions. Make sure the questions measure engagement in a meaningful way, and are customised to reflect your culture and values. Using questions that have external benchmarking norms is helpful, but it is more important that the questions are right for you.



Questions in the PEARL™ employee engagement model above are based on extensive research and statistical analysis.

Whilst it's tempting to ask lots of open text questions, be aware of the effort this requires to both fill in, and to actually read and interpret responses. 'What is the best thing / one thing to change about working here' are broad enough to capture anything respondents have a burning need to tell you.

## 1. Make it dynamic & lean *(continued)*

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### 3. Pre-load employee demographics

One of the headaches of surveying is that respondents sometimes incorrectly state their department, location or contract status. Then Martin from Finance receives his departmental report and has 5 more respondents than team members – which is a pain to sort out.

This can all be avoided by pre-loading staff demographics from your HR system into your survey tool. Not only does this make for accurate reports – but it saves respondents having to answer the demographic questions at all so it's easier and quicker for them too.



*Pre-loaded demographics make for accurate reporting and easy survey completion.*

## 2. The elephant in the room

Chances are, you probably know some of the main gripes that your people have.

Has the new appraisal process gone down like a lead balloon? Are people confused about benefits and what they are entitled to? Tackle these issues head on in the survey – whatever you do don't avoid them. Give people the opportunity to vent their frustrations and ask them what they would do to improve them. Don't ignore the elephant in the room.

Before you start your programme, ask your senior stakeholders what they really want to find out. What do they think is going on? What are they concerned about? Again, make sure your questions will capture the answers, and they'll want to hear the results and be more committed to acting on them.



*Surveys should be easy to carry out on any device.*

### 3. Make it irresistible

'Time to fill in the employee survey again' sounds like another job, and if it wasn't engaging last time, employees won't jump at the chance.

Freshen up your internal comms around what you are trying to achieve with your employee engagement programme. Treat it like any other important communications exercise, remembering that people respond to:

- **Humour:** Do you need to talk about the exercise in earnest, grave terms, or is humour more appropriate in your culture? There are some great examples below of campaigns that got a great response from employees
- **Suspense / surprise:** Pique their curiosity with a 'did you know' campaign, or reveal some exciting news on completion of the survey
- **Affection:** Appeal to people's values. Will getting involved with the engagement survey tally with their values? Will it make them feel good?
- **Sincerity & simplicity:** Don't over complicate the message or promise the world.

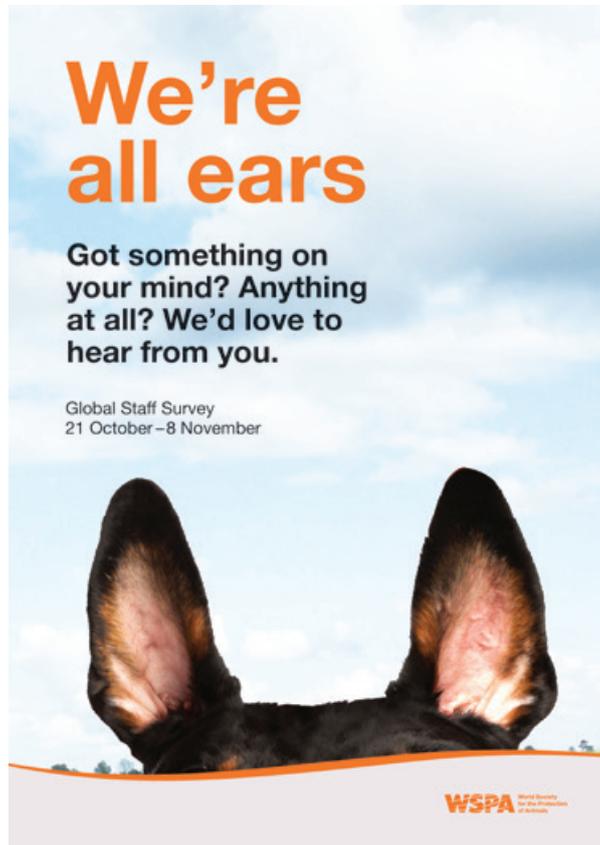
Use video, images, verbal comms – a mix of trusted routes and something a bit different. Have a look at the examples below.



*Corbin and King's communications are slick and clean - but their puns keep them from being too serious.*

### 3. Make it irresistible *(continued)*

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*This animal charity's engagement programme comms feature a variety of animal ears*



*Cancer Research UK's survey branding was clean, impactful and authentic - using real staff on their materials.*



## 4. Make it topical

Your programme is going to get more traction if people can clearly see how it relates to an organisational hot topic.

Cancer Research UK currently prioritise line manager development. They have incorporated line manager evaluation into their employee survey – and it's really got people involved; there was an 88% response rate to the recent survey.

*"Since the last survey, my department have really taken on board some of the issues seen from the last survey ... some really useful things have come out of it."*

*"To see a very senior leader in the organisation stand up in front of everyone, and show their (results) on stage was incredibly impactful. By talking candidly about the good, and the not so good, this has helped heighten the focus on line management."*

[See Cancer Research UK's case study here.](#)

Another client has an organisational focus on wellbeing, having implemented a programme of healthy behaviours and benefits. They have used their survey to measure the impact of these programmes, and timed their survey to capture both a baseline wellbeing measure and a later one to see improvements made to wellbeing and engagement overall.

Staff enthusiasm for the programmes meant they were responsive to the engagement survey comms and were keen to have their say about it in the actual survey, which achieved an incredible 92% response rate.



## 5. Get more 'aha' moments

Usually from your survey results you see the top 10, the bottom 10, how you compare to benchmark and what has improved or declined. You get your results by all your demographics and company layers.

But is that all you get from hundreds of thousands of data points? Today that's just not enough insight.

### Key driver analysis

This is entry level statistics that you should be getting from your survey as a bare minimum. Put simply, this analysis looks at all of the questions in the survey to see which ones have the most impact on engagement scores in your organisation.

So for example, if "I feel valued and recognised for the work that I do" correlates highly with engagement, but your employees rate the organisation poorly on this, it should be a high priority for improvement as this action is most likely to improve your engagement score.

Similarly, if "I am satisfied with my physical work environment" correlates weakly with engagement, and your employees rate the organisation poorly on this, it might not be the highest priority in your survey for improvement as action is less likely to improve your engagement score.

Key driver analysis can be done against a variety of outcomes looking at what has the most impact on e.g. engagement, intention to stay or advocacy. If population size allows, it can also be done at lower levels in the organisation where key drivers may vary.

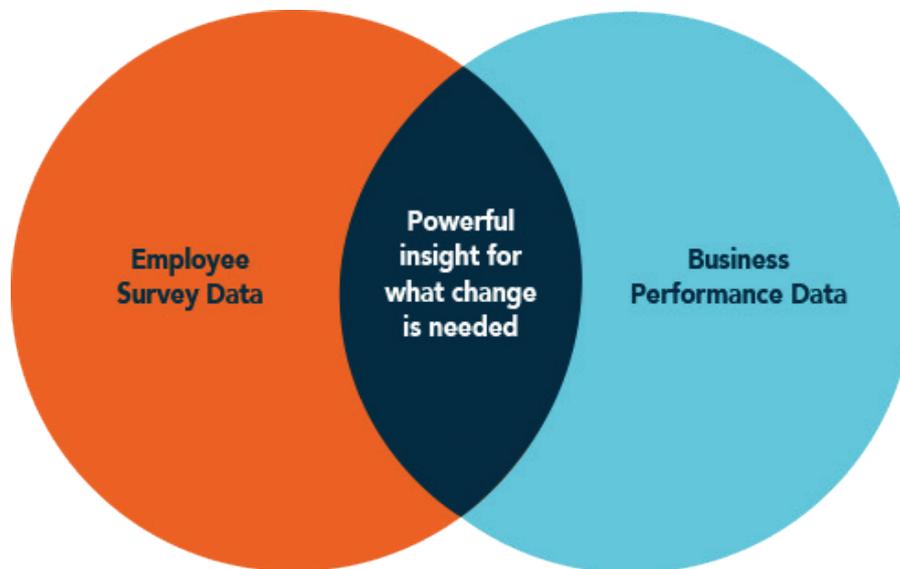
## 5. Get more 'aha' moments *(continued)*

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### Linkage analysis

Going further, your survey results can be analysed alongside your internal business performance data to help you answer key business questions, such as

- What impact is workload having on sickness absence?
- What can team leaders do to increase customer satisfaction?
- Which manager behaviour most strongly drives team sales performance?



*"We went a step further with the data analysis, and linked the survey results to our business performance metrics. We demonstrated the positive impact that 'Service Coaches' have on the staff in the pubs that have them vs. the ones that don't, thereby reinforcing the importance of their role."*

Dawn Browne, former Group Development Manager, Fuller's

## 6. Show people their voice gets heard

The number one reason people get turned off by engagement programmes is that they feel nothing will happen as a result of their feedback.

You might have the best intentions as an organisation and implement a range of improvements, but if people don't know what these are it will be seen as a failure - and they'll tell you as much!

So don't just make change, make those changes visible and link them clearly to the survey feedback.

### Mix your actions

Focus your programme of improvements on a mix of tangible quick wins and the 2-3 'key drivers' most likely to increase your engagement score. This should mean you get some early change, mid stage and longer term changes so it's seen as a programme not a one off.

### Prioritise strength of feeling

What were people most mad about in your survey? Which were the most passionate, lengthy open text responses? Theming analysis (in your online dashboard, or as a bespoke detailed report) should show you the strong voices you need to acknowledge. This can be done most effectively at team / department level where specific themes usually reveal themselves.

### You said – We did

The organisations that score the highest for 'I have seen changes made since the last survey' frequently remind employees what has been or is being done via a variety of communication routes. Linking back changes made to the survey results reinforces the value of the whole exercise.

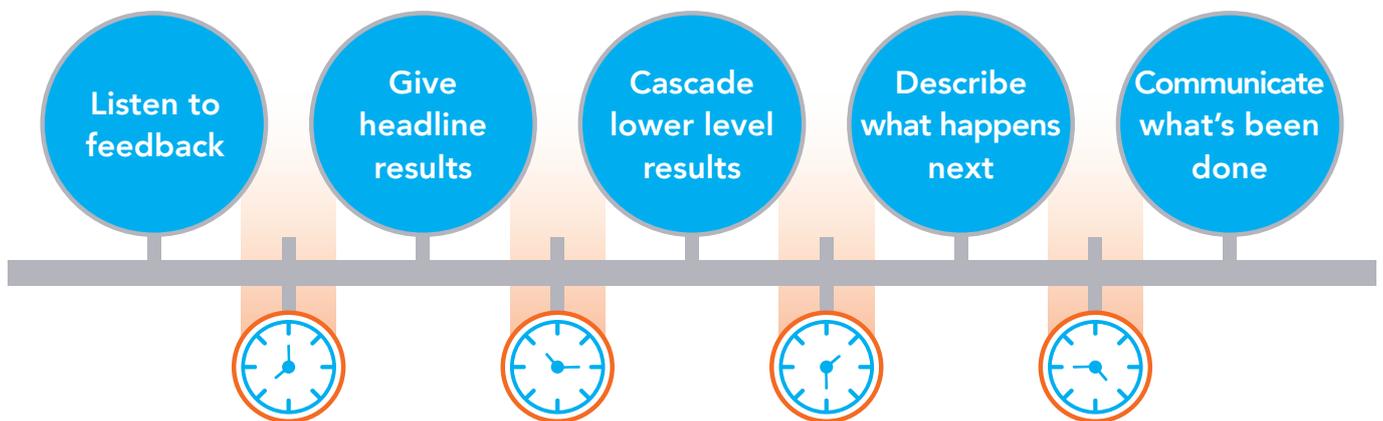


Communicate what's been done in direct response to the survey feedback.



## 7. Get your pace right

How frequently you take your people through the cycle of listening via a survey, acting with change programmes and communicating what's been achieved, will depend on the pace of change in your organisation. Make sure there aren't long gaps between the end of a survey and headline results communications.



**Ensure time between stages is short and momentum is maintained**

However, try to go too fast and survey all the time, and people will get disheartened (if you can't follow up with fast-paced changes.)

It's good practice to consider the following when planning your engagement programme schedule:

- How much internal resource do we have to make changes as results of our surveys?
- How often do things change in our organisation? Are we nimble or slow to change?
- Is there the support, will and culture to make changes happen on an ongoing basis?
- Do we need to make fundamental changes or the occasional tweak?



## 8. Create momentum with line managers

“People join organisations, and leave managers,” said someone, at some point. Whilst board level engagement programmes may have a strategic, long term impact on the employee population, it’s the team level changes, driven by attentive line managers that affect individual employees.

But line managers aren’t always trained, incentivised or asked to prioritise team engagement, and it can slip off the radar when the next thing comes along.

To effectively manage team engagement, a manager needs to:

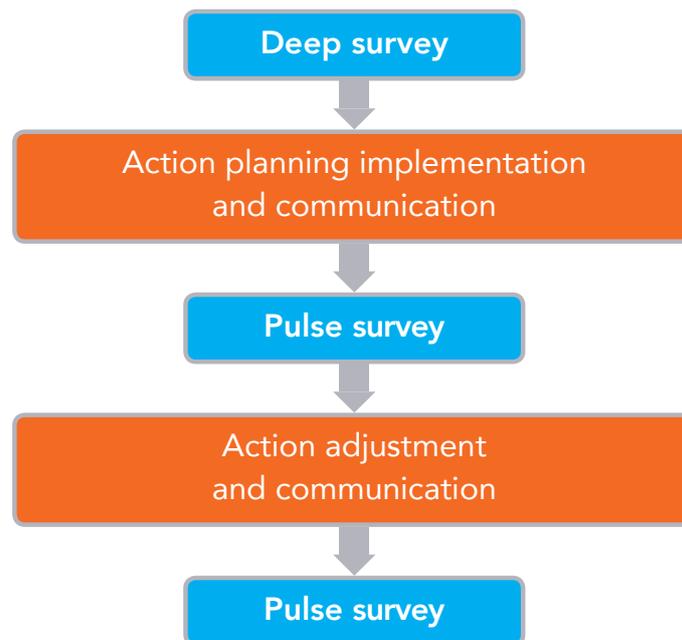
- Understand what engagement is, what factors drive it and which of those they can most influence as a line manager
- Be confident using the survey data for their team
- Have an idea of practical tools and techniques that they can apply to improve engagement
- Be able to lead the team to develop an engagement action plan

It’s also a good idea for managers to have peer support for their own action plans. By prioritising action at the line manager level, and supporting managers to deliver, organisations have a far greater impact on employee engagement.

## 9. Mix it up

If your engagement cycle is a bit predictable, a bit boring, it's probably time to mix it up. Try doing an in depth survey, interspersed with one or two lighter pulse surveys, so it's not the 'same old' every time.

The deep survey will give you feedback for strategic long term plans. The pulses provide evidence of progress against these plans. They also give you the opportunity to focus on specific and current issues.



[To learn more, have a look at our pulse survey guide here.](#)

## 10. Life's short, enjoy work



Finally, you might have a great tool and a programme that staff are happy with, but as the person running the programme it's vital that you get the support you need and enjoy being part of the process!

Choose an engagement provider who enjoys their work and that you'll get along with.

You need a provider that will help keep the stress low, by listening, being reliable, and anticipating any issues – especially if it's your first time. There's bound to be some shifting milestones and wrestling with dates to be done.

An external agency with good support can give you the latest insights in engagement practice, practical advice, and discuss current trends.



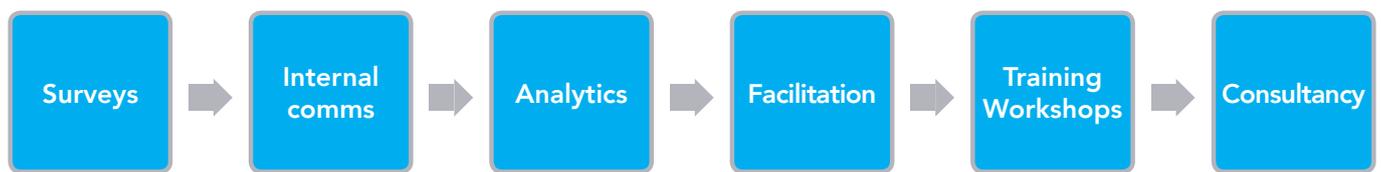
*Choose a provider that you might actually enjoy working with.*

## About People Insight

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At People Insight we work with clients to measure engagement, wellbeing and culture using advanced survey software. What's more, our technology is backed up by cutting edge employee engagement and organisation development research.

Our business psychologists help clients design best in class survey programmes, analyse data to reveal robust insight and understand exactly what to do to improve engagement.



We support clients through their engagement journey with reliable project management, in depth knowledge and a focus on results. On average we find:

- **Clients improve their engagement scores by 7% after working with us**
- **Employees report they have seen action increase by 20% after working with us**

## We'd love to talk

If you are interested in how our employee engagement programmes could help your organisation, contact us at:

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