



Peopleinsight



How Southampton Football Club have built an outstanding culture

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Southampton Football Club



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Southampton Football Club were recently crown joint winners of the **2017 Employee Engagement Company of the Year** – fittingly, at a glittering ceremony at Wembley stadium. We look at their innovative approach to implementing a culture called 'The Southampton Way', how they have measured their success and improved performance over the last 3 years.





Southampton Football Club create a unifying culture

Southampton Football Club is a Premier League club competing at the highest level of professional football. They have celebrated an impressive rise from administration in 2009, through back to back promotions in 2011 and 2012, to be a consistent top 8 Premier League club for the last 4 years.

The rise from the depths of administration in League One to the highs of the Premier League was driven from a journey of internal development and progression through people.

In 2014, there was significant changes in leadership and vision. The management team brought all the staff together to create "The Southampton Way", a culture designed to bring to life the already strong relationship between the staff and the organisation. The Southampton Way includes five values: respect, unity, accountability, creativity and aspiration, and it's these values that they believe will help deliver the mission of Potential into Excellence.



The challenge was to successfully implement the values as 'business as usual'

Just developing values is arguably the easy part – it does not change or develop a culture. Southampton FC now had further objectives:

1. Embed the values in every aspect of work by implementing a 5-year strategic vision with the values and beliefs at its foundation
2. To measure how well the values were being embedded, what impact they were having and understand what else they needed to do

In addition, 2 out of 5 KPIs of the 5-year strategy are people related:

1. Maintain employee engagement over 90%
2. Achieve the Platinum award with the Investors in People accreditation.

A wide range of activities helped embed the values

Southampton FC have considered the employee journey through the business and how the values and strategic vision would relate.

Recruitment and induction was a key priority. Values based competency questions would be used at interview and a two day induction programme was developed which included values based activities and videos demonstrating what each of the values mean and how they can be embedded into your everyday working life at the club.

Southampton FC developed behaviours based on the values, and a process for evaluating performance against them, both at the end of employees' probation period, then during ongoing PDRs, which also include clear objectives which had to link to the contribution to the building blocks of the strategic vision.

Senior leaders launched the strategic vision to the entire staff group. Talks, staff meetings and the 'Team Talk' weekly newsletter (now an intranet called 'Team Talk Live') are all organised around the five values and the mission of developing Potential into Excellence to achieve the overall vision of the Club.

In 2017, the Staff Academy was launched – a brand that promotes staff development and progression. A comprehensive skills, knowledge and behavior training calendar includes the 2-day induction, but also people management, recruitment & selection, equality & diversity, communication and mental health workshops for staff and managers – all developed and delivered with the values in mind.

How People Insight supported Southampton FC

People Insight's task in supporting Southampton FC since 2015 has been to:

- ▶ Measure, compare and analyse employee engagement
- ▶ Evaluate how well the values were being embedded
- ▶ Measure how well people understand the strategic vision
- ▶ Assess work life balance and risk of stress and burnout amongst Southampton FCs hard working staff
- ▶ Provide analysis, interpretation and expert insight into what else they need to do

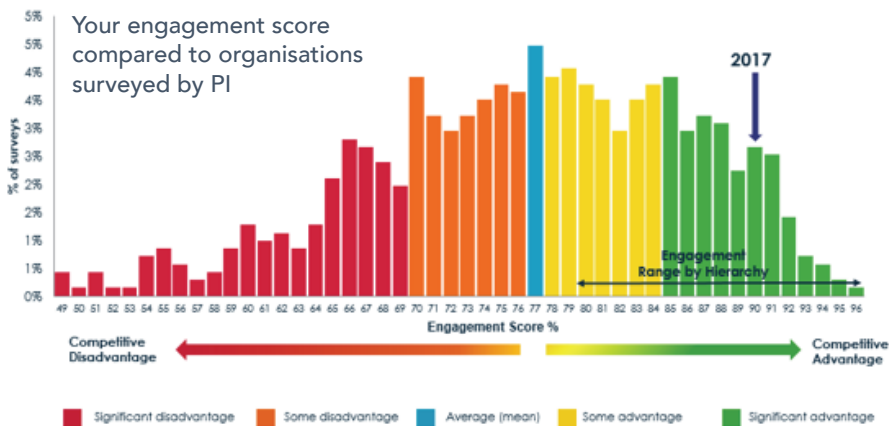
Results of the programme



The 'Our Score' survey results demonstrate the trust and belief that staff have in the employee engagement evaluation process:

- ▶ A 92% survey completion rate (a 7% year on year improvement over 3 years)
- ▶ A score of 10% above benchmark for 'I believe action will be taken as part of this survey'

The overall engagement score stands at **90%** in 2017 – which ranks Southampton FC as one of People Insight's top performing clients.



Key results

QUESTION

I understand the goals and building blocks of Southampton FC

SCORE

90%
(6% above benchmark)

I have a good understanding of our values

97%
(12% above benchmark)

I believe Southampton FC's values are relevant to my job and our success

87%
(7% above benchmark)

The work that the team have done to communicate the vision and incorporate the values into every day life for everyone in the club has been a success. Support for staff development and progression – one of the key programme activities - scored highly.

I believe the training and support is available to help me develop my career at Southampton FC

27%
above benchmark

I feel that I have a career ahead of me at Southampton FC

28%
above benchmark

I would describe Southampton FC as an organisation that cares for its employees and their wellbeing

18%
above benchmark

Southampton FC are able to promote health and wellbeing, based on the detailed survey results to looking at work life balance and risk of stress and burnout.

Broader organisational success has also been achieved:

METRIC

Maintain employee engagement over 90%

PERFORMANCE

Achieved in 2015, 16 and 17

Achieve the Platinum award with the Investors in People accreditation

Ongoing – the first level achieved in 2016

Improve staff turnover

Improved from 16% to 9% in 2017

Reduce sickness absence

35% below the UK average

Anonymous staff quotes from the 'Our Score' survey carried out by People Insight:

“

I really like our core values and the effort senior managers make for employees to understand and represent the values...

”

“

The culture, support and values of SFC make it a wonderful place to work. You feel truly valued and like you are working for a professional yet compassionate organisation. The team meetings make you feel invested in and getting the whole team together is very inspiring.

”

How has it been, working with People Insight?

Reflecting on the programme, Elliott Bryant-Jeffries, HR Manager, said:

"People Insight's surveys have really helped us understand the core people related opportunities. They've provided key analysis to input into the five year strategy about where we are as an employer and where we want to be."

"The service is very good every year and the updates to 2017's survey provided huge value."

Southampton FC's success has earned significant recognition



This programme has won Southampton FC the prestigious 2017 Employee Engagement Company of the Year Award. Michelle Butler, HR Director, Southampton FC, said:

"We are absolutely delighted! Over the last 4 years we have all worked incredibly hard to embed our values into everything we do. We are constantly learning, listening to our people, striving to improve our performance both on and off the pitch. It's great to take this recognition home – everyone in the club has played their part."

Of course, there's a great love of football and a passion for the team amongst the staff at Southampton FC. No doubt staff would go the extra mile, to fulfil the mission on the pitch. By developing a strong, united, progressive culture from the ticket office to the training ground, Southampton FC are giving themselves every chance to fulfil their dreams.

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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