

How- to guide to staff satisfaction surveys

Purpose of this guide



Delivering an effective staff satisfaction survey activity is a common topic brought up in our 1:1 recruitment and retention consultations with Inspired to Care members. Lots of employers have attempted staff surveys but find common issues, such as low levels of participation and poorly designed questions, mean that the results are often of limited value.

This guide will show you how to design and deliver a staff satisfaction survey that will meet your aims and form a valuable part of your staff retention strategy.

The guide covers;

- The benefits of conducting a staff satisfaction survey
- Top tips to boost participation
- A guide to survey question best practice

Remember to visit the [Members' Area](#) of the Inspired to Care website for further resources.

You can also email the team at inspiredtocare@leics.gov.uk for advice and support.

What is a staff satisfaction survey, and why do it?

A staff satisfaction survey is a tool for collecting information from your staff to help you develop as an organisation and better support your workforce. This in turn aids you in reducing your staff turnover.

There are different ways to carry out surveys, so it is important to spend time planning and designing yours to ensure you get the best possible return-on-investment.

A well implemented staff survey is likely to uncover feedback and opinions that will be hard to hear. It is important to remember that this information is going to help you to develop strategies to reduce your turnover, save money on recruitment costs, improve service quality, and retain your best staff.

Before writing your survey questions, remember these top tips:

- Keep survey results anonymous and data stored in a secure way
- Focus on key issues to limit questions and keep the survey a manageable length
- Communicate with staff before, during, and after the survey to keep them informed and encourage engagement
- Provide multiple options for how the survey can be completed (e.g., online or on paper)
- Consider offering an incentive, such as a prize draw, to boost participation

Keep reading for top tips on boosting survey participation and question writing best practice.

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How to boost survey participation

One of the main challenges of staff surveys is getting all your staff to participate. A low participation rate is likely to mean that the information you gather does not accurately reflect the views and experiences of your wider workforce. This inevitably means that you not have the evidence required to put together an effective action plan to make real changes to your turnover.

There are lots of reasons why staff may choose to not engage. See the table below for some of the most common reasons for low participation in surveys, along with some strategies you can use to mitigate these;

Reason for not participating	Strategy to boost participation
Forgetting/ not knowing about the survey	Regularly remind staff about the survey in emails, team meetings, on pay slips, and with posters in staff areas.
Concerns about anonymity and negative repercussions	Reassure staff that the surveys are anonymous, and individuals won't be identifiable in the data.
Apathy ("Why bother?" "Nothing will change")	Reassure staff that the surveys are anonymous, and individuals won't be identifiable in the data.
Lack of accessibility	Ensure that staff have options for how to complete the survey that includes digital and paper-based options (remember to put in place measures to ensure survey submissions are kept anonymous)

Survey question guide



It is important that you invest time designing your survey questions to ensure that they are easy to understand, do not sway the response, cover the key topics you wish to address, and provide data that is easy to interpret.

Keep reading for our top tips for good survey design...

Opening statement

Open your survey with an introductory statement that outlines;

- Why you are doing the survey
- How the results will be gathered and stored
- How submissions will be kept anonymous
- The timelines for:
 - Submission deadline
 - When results will be published
 - When the follow-up actions will be implemented

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Covering your key topics of enquiry

It is a good idea to split your questions into sections to help keep focussed on the key issues that you want to explore. In the example below, we have focused on 'about you', 'about your organisation', 'about your manager', and 'about your job'. You can tailor the sections to suit your main aims. Remember to keep the structure of your questions consistent to avoid staff getting confused. In the examples below we have used a 'rate each statement' structure. You can use a 'Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree' scoring system.

Example questions

Listed below are some example questions to give you ideas for your own survey. Remember to test your questions before finalising the survey. You can do this by sending the draft survey to a small number of staff and then asking them to give feedback on the questions asked and accessibility.

'About you' questions

This section is to find out enough information about the individual to enable you to better understand equalities issues and to identify patterns in staff satisfaction across your organisation. You can ask questions about sex/gender, age, ethnicity, job title, team, job location. You can also use this section to ask about changes to personal circumstances. For example; Have any of your personal circumstances changed over the past year?

- Education
- Health
- Family / Children
- Transport
- Financial

Top tip: Remember that survey results should always be anonymous, and you should avoid asking questions that could identify the individual. For example, do not ask for age category if you only have one member of staff who is in a category.

'About your organisation' questions

This section is to find out staff satisfaction with the company/ organisation. You can ask staff to rate their agreement to the following statements;

- I believe XXX is a good employer
- I feel included in my organisation's decision-making processes
- I think XXX has a strong mission statement, vision and values
- I think HR process are clear and actioned fairly and consistently
- I am paid correctly and on time

You can then also include free text questions. We recommend putting a word limit to ensure data is a manageable quantity. Here are some free text question examples;

- What do we do well?
- What could we do better as your employer?

'About your manager/s' questions

This section is to find out how satisfied your staff are with their managers/ team leaders. You can ask staff to rate their agreement to the following type of statements;

- I feel I am communicated to well

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- I feel I am communicated to enough
- Managers keep me well informed about changes
- My manager supports my wellbeing at work
- I feel like I can share my ideas / concerns easily with my manager
- I feel supported by my line manager

You can then also include free text questions. We recommend putting a word limit to ensure data is a manageable quantity. Here are some free text question examples;

- What does you manager do well?
- What could you manager do better?

'About your job' questions

This section is to find out how satisfied your staff are with their day-to-day role. You can ask staff to rate their agreement to the following type of statements;

- I feel confident in my work
- I feel valued in the work I do
- I believe I have the right skills and knowledge to do my job well
- I am satisfied with the training and development opportunities I have received at XXX
- I think I am well matched to my role
- I think my job role is clearly defined
- I feel as part of a team
- I feel our team work well together

You can then also include free text questions. We recommend putting a word limit to ensure data is a manageable quantity. Here are some free text question examples;

- What motivates you to come to work?

Final feedback question and thank you message

It is a good idea to provide a space at the end of a survey for staff to write any further comments or suggestions.

It is then important to include a thank you message and repeat information on when you will be publishing the results, and how and when you will be implementing changes in response to the results.

Further resources

Visit www.inspiredtocare.co.uk/members-area to explore further recruitment and retention resources

Read the [Inspired to Care Recruitment and Retention Toolkit](#) for guidance on understanding your staff turnover and planning retention strategies.

Email us at inspiredtocare@leics.gov.uk if you would like further support with planning and conducting a staff satisfaction survey.