Sample Employee Engagement Timeline

Pre-Planning

1-3 MONTHS PRIOR TO START DATE

Determine Project Goals
What are you trying to accomplish with your employee engagement efforts? When done right, an employee engagement survey can help an organization better understand how employees feel about their jobs, manager, team/coworkers, culture, pay, benefits, training opportunities, and other factors. First consider whether your organization has resources to improve in areas of concern. For example, if there is not a budget for investment in training, asking about this area in your survey could be counterproductive. Focus on topics and survey domains that your organization might have the ability to improve.

Determine Data Collection Method
Employee feedback is typically collected via a survey. Most surveys run 25-50 questions in length and will take employees 15-30 minutes to complete. Such efforts might take place every 1-2 years. However, a quick pulse-check survey might include fewer questions (perhaps 3-10) and take place more frequently. Pulse-checks can be conducted online on your organization's intranet, HRIS, or as part of your weekly 1-1 conversation with an employee.

Secure Leadership Buy-In
Before beginning any project that involves the collection of employee data, be sure to seek approval from your senior leadership team. Your leaders will want to ensure that your project aligns with the strategic goals of the organization. They are also best positioned to advise on best practices for data collection, analysis of results, and assurance of confidentiality of employee data.

Plan Your Project & Resource Needs
Improving employee engagement is an important endeavor, but it does take an investment of time. An organization-wide employee survey effort might take 20-60 hours to plan, deliver, analyze, and act on the results. Be sure you have sufficient resources devoted to the effort in order to keep your project on track. Are partnerships needed for internal communication, survey deployment, data analysis, or other areas of support? Take the time to align these resources and secure buy-in for each step before you begin.

Organize Your Data
From whom do you wish to gather input? Do you need input from new hires about their onboarding experience or fully onboarded employees about their longer-term experience at your organization? Make sure your organization's staffing contact information and data is up to date. Consider what additional demographics you might need, such as tenure, age, gender, location, or other factors. Do you need to know whether females have a different experience in

your organization than male employees? Is it possible that employee experience varies from location to location?

Build/Buy Your Survey
Select questions that align with your project goals. Become familiar with each question and what it measures. Consider whether to include open-ended questions in your survey. Once the questions are selected, test-run your survey questions to ensure everything is working as expected to deliver intended results.

Schedule Your Project
Engagement surveys run for two weeks on average. However, your organization may need more or less time depending on your needs. Conversational employee engagement efforts or pulse check surveys will have unique timelines. Schedule your project with enough time before its launch to prepare your organization with communication and readiness emails.

1-2 WEEKS PRIOR TO START DATE

Send Project Communication
Communicate to your managers, employees, or other stakeholders about your project at least 1-2 weeks in advance. Consider spreading the word through all-hands meetings, team meetings, internal newsletters, or your intranet site.

Post-Data Collection

2-3 WEEKS AFTER DATA COLLECTION

Communicate Findings to Managers
With your data analyzed and your leadership team in the loop, it is time to share results with individual managers, if applicable. Teams and managers are important in helping you drive change within your organization. Share the project results with managers. Communicate that it is up to each manager to meet with his or her team and develop his or her own team-based action plans.

3-6 WEEKS AFTER DATA COLLECTION

Communicate to Your Organization
Share the results of the project, as well as the next steps the organization is planning to take, with all other employees. Be available to answer any questions from employees. Gathering feedback from employees and then not acting on it will undermine your efforts–worse than if you had not gathered the data at all. It is important to share findings with employees and involve them in the action planning.

Take Action
Start to implement the action items you decided to improve. Continue to check in, adjust, and align actions as necessary.

3-4 MONTHS AFTER DATA COLLECTION

Reflect and Adjust
Are your actions moving the needle on engagement? Connect any positive changes back to employee feedback and the actions you took as a result of the project. Identify where you need to adjust your approach and decide what to change.