



Court Employee Viewpoint Survey Tool Kit

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National Center for State Courts

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Court Consulting Services

300 Newport Avenue
Williamsburg, Virginia 23185
Phone: (800) 616-6164

ncsc.org

NCSC Project Team:

Mandy Allen

Lori Shemka (lead author)

Nora Sydow

Kristen Trebil-Halbersma

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The authors' expressed viewpoints do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the State Justice Institute.





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Section 1:

Background and acknowledgments

Take demo survey

Review demo results

1.1 Why survey the court workplace?

Court employers gain three immediate benefits from surveying employee viewpoints and having post-survey listening sessions:

- ① **Proactively identify and address areas needing improvement** before they have the chance to become more troublesome. We all have areas needing improvement and employee engagement grows when the employee experience is optimized.
- ② Employee perspectives can meaningfully be **included in strategic operation planning**. Survey responses can become part of your roadmap.
- ③ **Identify and share workplace positives and strengths** as part of growing public confidence, recruitment, retention, and other public messaging.
- ④ And court employers later gain the added benefit of **measuring progress** when employee viewpoints are regularly surveyed.

1.2 Rethinking *what to measure in the court workplace*

State courts have been among the COVID-19 pandemic's most disrupted workplaces as judges and employees rapidly shifted and re-adjusted their procedures and work habits.

Challenging workplace disruptions kept surfacing as courts returned to in-person activities. Dedicated court employees were expected to adapt to the related workplace changes and case backlogs. Although much of the world has recovered from the worst of the pandemic, employee stress has remained at a record level. Worldwide, employee stress rose in 2020, likely because of the pandemic; but employee stress has



Our Chief cares for us day-to-day. She emails and reminds us to take work stretches, take our breaks, and take care of ourselves.

— Anonymous employee one-on-one interview feedback

been rising for over a decade.¹ Not one to mince words, research professor Brené Brown recently described the landscape this way:

The world of work has changed dramatically over the past five years—from remote/hybrid work and digital transformation, to increasing accountability around inclusivity and navigating intergenerational workplaces—it’s been equal parts important learning and total chaos.²

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and the [Rapid Response Team](#), in collaboration with the Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators, have been working to help courts experiencing these changes. One way is through surveying and gauging employee viewpoints, particularly as the courts’ personnel change with retirements, voluntary separations, new hires, and unfilled vacancies.³



¹ *State of the Global Workplace 2023 Report: The Voice of the World’s Employees*, Gallup, [<https://perma.cc/S4N6-E6WK>], and *U.S. Employees’ Daily Negative Emotions*, Gallup (2023), [<https://perma.cc/EE5C-5ZZR>].

² Brown, Brené, *Hard Seasons and Wild Hearts* (January 24, 2024), [<https://perma.cc/5T6S-EBVN>].

³ 1 in 2 U.S. employees are open to leaving their organization according to Gallup’s 2023 *State of the Global Workplace* report. Moser, Matt, *Half of Your Employees are Looking to Leave*, Gallup Workplace (July 27, 2023), [<https://perma.cc/TA6X-YKQ5>].



People learn and perform at different levels, so there needs to be balance, patience, and understanding as well as acknowledgment from others and management . . .

— Anonymous employee (piloted) survey response

1.3 How employee *engagement* differs from employee *satisfaction*

Employee viewpoint surveys are a chance for court leaders to gain a real-time measure of their workforce’s engagement, satisfaction, and other important conditions like wellbeing. The terms employee “engagement” and “satisfaction” are not interchangeable, however.

When explaining how “engaged” employees are more than just “satisfied” with their jobs, the federal Government Accountability Office emphasizes how engaged employees:

- take pride in their work,
- are passionate about and energized by what they do,
- are committed to the organization, the mission, and their job, and
- are more likely to put forth extra effort to get the job done.⁴

The next table shows how the NCSC court employee viewpoint survey measures *both* employee engagement and employee satisfaction variables.



⁴ United States Government Accountability Office, Report to Congressional Requesters. Federal Workforce: Additional Analysis and Sharing of Promising Practices Could Improve Employee Engagement and Performance (July 2015), p. 4, [<https://perma.cc/U635-LM5F>].



I feel that the court tries to be supportive when it can.
 We have been super short-staffed so getting the support is hard at the moment.
 Safe physically is good but mentally draining.

— Anonymous employee (piloted) survey response

Piloted Engagement- and Satisfaction-Related Questions		
Primary Engagement Index measures ⁵	Engagement Index “Driver” measures ⁶	Employee-Satisfaction viewpoints
In my court, senior leaders generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.	I am given a real chance to improve my skills in my court.	How satisfied are you with the recognition you receive for doing a good job?
My court’s senior leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.	My workload is manageable.	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job?
Managers communicate the court’s goals.	I have the resources (materials, equipment, supplies) necessary to do my job well.	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your pay?
I have a high level of respect for my court’s senior leaders.	I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule, or regulation without fear of reprisal or retaliation.	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your benefits?

⁵ The NCSC-piloted survey sought viewpoints on 13 (of the 15) questions from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey the federal Office of Personnel Management relies on in calculating its Employee Engagement Index (EEI). The EEI does not directly measure employee engagement. Instead, across three components, the EEI considers organizational conditions that lead to employee engagement (leaders lead, supervisors, and intrinsic work experience). See, United States Government Accountability Office, *Report to Congressional Requesters. Federal Workforce: Additional Analysis and Sharing of Promising Practices Could Improve Employee Engagement and Performance* (July 2015), pp. 4–5, [<https://perma.cc/U635-LM5F>].

⁶ Piloted survey responses included companion viewpoints on 12 separate questions the federal Office of Personnel Management considers “drivers” for its Employee Engagement Index. Office of Personnel Management, *Building an Engaging Workplace: Understanding and Using Engagement Drivers* (2016), [<https://perma.cc/2FQW-P2Y5>].



Provide equal training to everybody.

There's patchy training being done so not everyone's on the same page.

— Anonymous employee (piloted) survey response

Primary Engagement Index measures	Engagement Index “Driver” measures	Employee-Satisfaction viewpoints
Supervisors in my work unit support employee development.	In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with how your time-off requests are handled?
My supervisor listens without distraction to what I have to say.	I think my job performance is evaluated fairly.	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with how any personally advanced, work-related expenses are reimbursed?
My supervisor treats me with respect.	My supervisor supports my need to balance work and other life issues.	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your court?
I have trust and confidence in my supervisor.	In the last six months, a supervisor has talked with me about my performance/career development.	
I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.	My supervisor gives me feedback that helps me improve my performance.	
My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.	Managers promote communication among different work units (for example, about projects, goals, and needed resources).	
I know what is expected of me on the job.	How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work?	How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work?
My talents and time are used well in the workplace.	How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management about what's going on in your court?	How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management about what's going on in your court?
I know how my work relates to the court's goals.		



The intent for making employee mental health wellness a priority is there. But the follow-through is not.

— Anonymous employee one-on-one interview feedback

1.4 The benefits from surveying employee viewpoints

Research favorably continues to show that organizations that focus on culture and employee well-being enjoy high employee engagement: “Getting the basics of employee engagement right is a critical first step in building a resilient culture and an employment brand that attracts stars.”⁷

Using the NCSC’s employee viewpoint survey responses as a baseline, courts can understand their current employment environment and then thoughtfully develop internal action plans that maintain what seems to be working well and look to where adjustments are needed for a more welcoming work environment and better court operations.

This tool kit is both a retrospective review of the piloting process and offers forward-looking suggestions for how today’s and tomorrow’s courts can use the survey tool.

1.5 Acknowledgments

We owe great thanks and appreciation to the employees, administration, bench, and other administrative leaders who piloted versions of the NCSC employee viewpoint survey as it was being developed:

- 54A District Court (Lansing, Michigan)
- Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts Office of Statewide Programs
- Third Judicial Circuit Court (Wayne County, Michigan)
- Cass County Court and Clerk File Room (Cass County, Michigan)
- Lancaster County Court of Common Pleas and Magisterial District Court (Lancaster, Pennsylvania)
- Columbia County Circuit Court (Saint Helens, Oregon)
- Lancaster County Court and the Nebraska Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation (Lincoln, Nebraska)

This report was developed under grant number SJI-22P015 from the State Justice Institute. The expressed viewpoints are those of the NCSC project-team members and do not necessarily represent the State Justice Institute’s official position or policies.

⁷ Harter, Jim, *U.S. Employee Engagement Slump Continues*, Gallup (April 25, 2022), [<https://perma.cc/SBN3-AJYR>].



Section 2:

Surveying employee engagement and viewpoints

2.1 What questions were surveyed (a retrospective review)

Over 125 questions were asked at most pilot courts, as detailed in [Appendix A](#). Qualtrics online survey software was used to administer the survey. A public demo version of the online survey is available at <https://bit.ly/3Oq5zac>.

NCSC's survey tool was inspired by longer national survey models and includes court-specific questions appropriate for the judicial workplace. Questions to learn the employees' views about how their court managed COVID-19-related conditions were also added.⁸

Survey responses were designed to be optional, anonymous, and give local court leaders workplace context covering 12 categories:

- Employment demographics (unless a small workforce size could not ensure response anonymity)
- Personal demographics (unless a small workforce size risks response anonymity)
- Employee work experience
- Viewpoints specific to the court
- Viewpoints specific to the supervisor
- Viewpoints specific to court leadership
- Employee satisfaction
- In-person, remote/telework, and hybrid work experience
- Viewpoints about inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility

⁸ Court leaders should not feel limited to these questions. Other questions, like the question changes noted in the 2022 Federal OPM Technical Report, Appendix A: Item Change Summary [<https://perma.cc/ZM57-56PJ>], may be of survey-planning interest.



DEI-awareness efforts and trainings are often appreciated (but not always).

— Anonymous employee (piloted) survey response

- General health and safety workplace viewpoints⁹
- Viewpoints about the workplace climate
- Reporting awareness, training, and communication suggestions

A five-point response scale was used for most questions.¹⁰ The higher the response’s score shows the more positive the employee’s view of how the court is doing in that area.

Court-specific viewpoints					
This question section asks for your perspective on your court’s work.					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Employees are recognized for providing high-quality services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employees are protected from health and safety hazards on the job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My court accomplishes its mission.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am proud that I work in the court.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I recommend my court as a good place to work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 1: Sample survey questions with five-point Likert-scale responses.

⁹ Organizations and leaders who care about employee well-being are more likely to attract top talent, retain workers, realize higher productivity and performance, and improve the lives of the people, families, and served communities. Gallup, *State of the Global Workplace 2022* (June 14, 2022), [<https://youtu.be/ZZ48f9OQIZ8> and <https://perma.cc/CEL6-UYP9>].

¹⁰ Also called the “Likert scale.”



My direct supervisor is very understanding of my medical condition. The supervisor is supportive and “goes above and beyond” in accommodating my wellness needs.

— Anonymous employee one-on-one interview feedback

2.2 Thinking about *when* to survey and *when not*

The seven pilot experiences confirmed that the employee viewpoint survey can be administered at any time and can be of particular interest when a court is expecting an administrative or judicial leadership change.

An employee viewpoint survey should *not* be administered, however, when:

- Management does not have the time or capacity to address the identified needed improvements and changes.
- You know that there will not be follow-up action by court leadership. Follow-up is essential. A quick way to build cynicism is to ask people for their input, collect data about employee disengagement and frustration, and then do nothing visible to address these problems—except ask about it again the following year.¹¹
- There’s an unwillingness to re-survey. Re-surveying regularly to measure progress is recommended.



¹¹ Berwick, Isabel, *Why diversity strategies fail—and how to fix them*, Working It podcast episode (August 15, 2023), [<https://perma.cc/X7RP-3URW>].



I believe most times workers hold back their concerns and/or ideas because they are not considered or valued.

— Anonymous employee (piloted) survey response

2.3 Steps during the pilot online surveys (a retrospective review)

The NCSC survey process was designed to not burden participating courts. This means that NCSC created and shared email templates, NCSC managed the online survey tool and collected data, and NCSC shared the survey results in an easy-to-understand format. Court leaders remained responsible for showing collective support for the effort. The process often followed this pattern:¹²

Step 1. Court leadership emailed court employees in advance to let them know that an online survey would take place, how the information would be used, and that participation was voluntary ([Appendix B](#) sample). To accommodate holidays and employee leave but to discourage procrastination, NCSC recommended that the online survey be open for no longer than 8 to 10 business days.

Step 2. For these pilots, NCSC anonymously and independently collected survey response data.¹³ Employees were never asked for their name or email address. (This is why employees *never* received a targeted follow-up email nudging “You haven’t completed your survey.”)

Step 3. At some pilots, court leadership sent a thank you email to all employees after the survey closed to inform them that the survey closed and the expected next steps.

Step 4. NCSC later shared survey results with court leaders in bespoke tables like what appears in the next section.

The survey responses were part of written reports that included relevant information about the court environment at the time (like community demographics, judicial and administrative leadership, organizational chart, caseload trends, and any other factors that could be of interest when making future survey results comparisons), and extensive [resources](#) like those appended at the end of this tool kit.

¹² [Section 6.1](#) is a two-page, detailed checklist to help courts plan for a future survey at their site.

¹³ The Qualtrics online survey platform includes “anonymous link” and “anonymize response” features that removes the respondents’ IP address and location data from the results [<https://perma.cc/BN62-LLRE>].



Make sure that information is freely shared with everyone; sometimes information is withheld in ways that simply don't make sense.

— Anonymous employee one-on-one interview feedback

2.4 [Sample survey report excerpt] Table 16: Employee work-experience perspectives

	Median score [Mean score] ⁺⁺	Count (n)	Strongly disagree [1]	Disagree [2]	Neutral [3]	Agree [4]	Strongly agree [5]
I am given a real chance to improve my skills in my court.	4.00 [3.50]	20	1	3	3	11	2
I believe I have the opportunity for growth in my current job.	3.00 [3.05]	20	1	6	5	7	1
I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.	3.00 [3.15]	20	2	5	4	6	3
I receive credit for my ideas.	3.00 [3.32]	19	2	2	7	4	4
My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.	3.50 [3.35]	20	2	2	6	7	3
I know what is expected of me on the job.	4.00 [4.20]	20	0	0	4	8	8
My workload is manageable.	3.50 [3.30]	20	2	3	5	7	3
My talents and time are used well in the workplace.	3.50 [3.25]	20	2	3	5	8	2
I have the resources (materials, equipment, supplies) necessary to do my job well.	4.00 [3.85]	20	0	2	3	11	4



One of the reasons there is such high turnover is that employees are being reassigned to do things that they were not hired to, trained to, and do not want to do.

— Anonymous employee one-on-one interview feedback

	Median score [Mean score]**	Count (n)	Strongly disagree [1]	Disagree [2]	Neutral [3]	Agree [4]	Strongly agree [5]
I receive the training to do my job well.	3.50 [3.30]	20	4	1	5	5	5
I know how my work relates to the court's goals.	4.00 [3.95]	19	0	1	4	9	5
I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule, or regulation without fear of reprisal or retaliation.	2.00 [2.89]	19	2	8	2	4	3
The people I work with cooperate to get the job done.	4.00 [3.90]	20	0	0	8	6	6
In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.	3.00 [2.70]	20	4	5	6	3	2
I think my job performance is evaluated fairly.	3.00 [3.40]	20	1	0	10	8	1
	Subtotal	297	23	41	77	104	52
	Percentages		21.55%		25.92%	52.53%	

** The **median** score is a dataset's middle point—half of the data points are smaller than the median and half of the data points are larger. The **mean** score (average) is the typical arithmetic average: the sum of all response values ÷ number of responses.



Section 3:

Optional, one-on-one interviews

3.1 Voluntary, post-survey one-on-one interviews

During the pilots and near the online survey's closing, court leadership emailed court employees an invitation for one-on-one video or telephone meetings for an anonymous conversation about the court's environment ([Appendix C](#)).

Most employee-viewpoint surveys do not include an interview component, but NCSC realized the interviews' value with the court pilots. Understandably, many of the survey results won't explain *why* employees responded to questions as they did. And the reasons will not always be clear as the results are studied.

With intentional questions that were framed before the interview, summary responses to NCSC's one-on-one anonymous conversations helped court leaders to better understand: What's really true? What's really happening? And where things are really going (or not).





I feel that when I have tried to step up or bring new ideas to the table, they are always shut down and receive negative feedback.

— Anonymous employee (piloted) survey response

3.2 Collection of one-on-one interview questions used at different pilots

The conversations typically centered on a handful of these questions, though employees were not limited to what they could discuss or how long the conversations lasted. A sampling of different questions sometimes used by the pilots were:

1. How would you describe the characteristics of the person who is likely to succeed here?
2. How does our culture set people up to succeed in their roles?
3. For you, what's your ideal work environment to help you stay motivated and thrive (and how does your current work environment measure to that)?
4. Have you noticed any changes because of increased telework (either by you or your colleagues)?
5. Do you feel that the court supports the wellness—including the mental health wellness—needs of the employees?
6. If you were promised one wish to make part of your work better, what would you ask for?
7. If you were in charge, what change(s) would you make to improve the court?
8. Is there anything else you would like to share?

3.3 Post-survey, court-led listening sessions are another way to learn the context surrounding the survey responses and trends

If a court does not include a one-on-one (independently conducted) interview component as part of its employee viewpoint process, court leaders can still seek the added employee context through the employee-listening session process as later outlined in this tool kit's [section 5.1](#).



Section 4:

Lessons from pilots and recommendations

NCSC learned several lessons from the court employee viewpoint piloting journey, including:

4.1 Assure employees that responses will be anonymous

Employees are less likely to complete the survey or answer candidly if they believe that the court will be directly receiving the raw response data.¹⁴

The NCSC-administered online surveys did not record or collect employee contact information. Free-text responses that might reveal an employee's identity were not shared by NCSC. Instead, responses were anonymized and combined with other responses when shared with the pilot court.

Surveys of smaller courts—to ensure employee anonymity—should *not* ask respondents to identify their workplace division. Surveys of very small courts should not ask for demographic information since that also would likely risk employee anonymity.

4.2 Resist any temptation to invite free-text comments on most questions

Some court leaders and survey participants expressed a wish to add free-text comment boxes at the end of many questions in case employees had other experience details that they wanted to share about a topic.

This approach was tested at a pilot location. The volume of free-text responses, including NCSC's commitment to keeping commentators' identities anonymous, made the response data very difficult to manage and did *not* add value to the survey experience.¹⁵

¹⁴ “Some employees may question the confidentiality of online surveys, given the ability to track IP addresses, e-mail addresses and other information. Having a third-party ... conduct the survey usually helps assuage employees' fears of being identified” Society for Human Resource Management, *Managing Employee Surveys*, [<https://perma.cc/KYC6-7EAT>].

¹⁵ Many times, NCSC sanitized free-text comments before any report was shared with the pilot court with: ****redacted response**** This response has been redacted because the content would reveal the respondent's identity. NCSC believes that it would be more constructive if the survey responder directly shared this viewpoint through a trusted conversation with senior court leadership or during a post-survey listening session. Senior leadership will benefit from the chance to learn and understand any surrounding context before deciding on any next step. ****redacted response****.



I feel that I can be fully productive with my work, but this leads to more work and a fuller plate. My efficiency and productivity are not rewarded with compensation but with further work.

— Anonymous employee (piloted) survey response

4.3 “Pretest” the online survey and review “test” responses before launching

Each court pilot site survey required some customization.

Actual “pretesting” of the online survey and reviewing the “test” responses allows you to catch most potential problems like typos, incomplete response options, or possible technical glitches before the survey is launched.

4.4 Allow employees to skip questions

Employees are more likely to complete the survey if they know that they can skip questions that they do not feel comfortable answering.¹⁶

NCSC accomplished this in the survey design and by mentioning it in the emailed survey invitation. ([Appendix B](#): “All survey questions are *optional* (except for the first one). You can skip any question that you do not feel comfortable with or cannot answer.”)

4.5 Ensure all employees have internet access before launching the online survey

Before the survey is emailed to court employees, court leadership must confirm that all invited survey participants have external internet access at their location (and not simply internal email and intranet access).

4.6 Ensure that online survey links are not blocked by local IT settings

Some court IT environments have tight restrictions on what external websites court employees can access.

As part of the “pretesting” process, court leadership will want to verify that employees can access the online survey from their work computers, tablets, or mobile phones.

¹⁶ During a pilot one-on-one interview, an employee participant positively shared how they liked this survey specifically because they could skip any question they didn’t want to answer.



Quick approval for time-off requests is appreciated.

– Anonymous employee one-on-one interview feedback

4.7 Share the survey questions in advance

Giving employees the chance to review the survey questions before they begin the online survey invites more thoughtful responses and helps employees to better budget time when they choose to complete the survey.

NCSC accomplished this by separately preparing a .pdf file of the surveyed questions and linking it within the emailed survey invitation. ([Appendix B](#): “Can I preview the questions before starting the survey? Yes. The survey questions can be previewed as a .pdf file at XXXXXXXXXXXX.”)



4.8 Plan a short calendar window for the survey to be completed and plan to email multiple reminders to participate in the survey

To accommodate any holidays and employee leave but to discourage procrastination, NCSC recommends that the online survey be open for no longer than 8 to 10 business days.

Some pilots thought that longer calendar windows would increase survey participation rates, but that never proved to be true.

Most survey participation occurred during the first day or two of an emailed invitation. The rest of the employees either mentally decided that they would do the survey “later” or not at all.

A few reminder “nudge” emails are more effective in increasing survey participation (just like they are in improving court appearance and jury participation rates) than longer survey windows.



Supervisors should do more “how are you doing” check-ins with employees.

— Anonymous employee one-on-one interview feedback

4.9 There is no correct survey “response rate” target

Courts or independent third parties who administer the online survey should document how many were invited to complete the survey and how many completed the survey (hard numbers only, not by tracking names, email, or IP addresses for reasons explained in earlier [section 4.1](#)).

NCSC agrees with others that a workplace’s response rate is not relevant so long as the response number provides a statistically representative and reliable sample.¹⁷

Indeed, because smaller courts should *not* ask survey respondents to identify their workplace division or possibly some demographic information (to ensure employee anonymity), a companion report will probably make a good-faith assumption that actual survey participation was a representative sample for the court workplace. Even so, the first survey’s voluntary participation rate should be a variable to include when gauging employee engagement.



¹⁷ U.S. Office of Personnel Management, *Annual Employee Survey Guidance* (November 2008), [<https://perma.cc/7BSJ-HHAV>].

By way of separate analogy, 35% of invited government workers participated in the 2022 federal employee viewpoint survey. Participation increased to 39% in the 2023 survey. Heilweill, Rebecca, *OPM releases federal employee viewpoint survey data for 2023*. Fedcoop (November 6, 2023), [<https://perma.cc/T2RB-8JPJ>].



Section 5:

Survey and follow-up practices to ensure success

Court leadership can use the survey results for current and future workforce planning through:

5.1 Employee listening session(s) with (and action planning by) judicial and administration leadership

Improvement requires an effective employee follow-up action plan. Ohio's Supreme Court warns of employee disengagement when there is no post-survey follow-up:

1 in 3 employees are likely to become disengaged if nothing is done once the survey findings are in. Employees expect action. Meaningful engagement with employees with the goal of improving the work place can lead to positive change.¹⁸

Officials in King County, Washington agree: “It is not the survey that matters. It is what we do after.”¹⁹

Gallup warns that employee engagement will probably decrease, *and* turnover will increase if you just do a survey and nothing more.²⁰

Lily Zheng, a DEI strategist, organizational consultant, and author warns:

[I]magine the trust it takes for an employee who may be getting discriminated against or maybe getting mistreated in the workplace to share those experiences with a survey. They pour their experience of discrimination or mistreatment into the survey, and then they wait, and nothing gets better. Imagine what's going to happen the next time they get a survey. They're not gonna fill it out.²¹

¹⁸ Ohio Supreme Court, [<https://perma.cc/M7SX-CCF9>].

¹⁹ King County, Washington, *2022 Employee Engagement Survey Action Planning Discussion Guide and Tool Kit* (undated), [<https://perma.cc/2QLU-A8L3>].

²⁰ Efron, Louis, *So you administered an employee engagement survey. Now what?* Gallup (January 4, 2023), [<https://perma.cc/SN7E-C8YF>].

²¹ Berwick, Isabel, *Why diversity strategies fail—and how to fix them*, Working It podcast episode (August 15, 2023), [<https://perma.cc/X7RP-3URW>]. See also, Zheng, Lily, *DEI deconstructed: Your No-Nonsense Guide to Doing the Work and Doing It Right*. Oakland, California: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2023.



Current workloads prohibit ALL staff's ability to develop a deeper knowledge base and be fully engaged in their duties.

— Anonymous employee (piloted) survey response

That follow-up should include at least one, one-hour listening session by court leadership with the employees. The session should be intended as another means to foster employee engagement at the grassroots level where every person takes accountability for making their workplace great. Here, employees can discuss and share their true thoughts and opinions about what will make their workplace better, more productive, and successful.²² The private sector shares some effective practices:

- PwC “shares results from its annual full-census People Survey with partners and staff—no matter the outcome. Then, leaders talk with their teams about their specific results to create more context around the findings and generate ideas through two-way dialogue.”
- Marriott International requires managers to “share results and gather suggestions during regularly scheduled department meetings or stand-up sessions, conduct feedback sessions with associates, and then create action plans. The action plans are submitted to an internal Engagement Survey Center.”
- OhioHealth has a similar approach: “Once the survey results are received, each manager meets with department staff to review the responses. They discuss both the positive results and what improvements could be made to enhance the work environment. Then, they develop an action plan for improvement.”²³

A helpful sample email invitation, discussion agenda, facilitator-related suggestions, and action-planning suggestions are part of the King County, Washington *2022 Employee Engagement Survey Action Planning Discussion Guide and Tool Kit*.²⁴

Listening session planning logistics should consider: (1) Who will facilitate this conversation? (2) What is our ultimate goal with this listening session? (3) Who is our intended audience? (4) What steps will be taken afterward? ²⁵

²² Efron, Louis, *So you administered an employee engagement survey. Now what?* Gallup (January 4, 2023), [<https://perma.cc/SN7E-C8YF>].

²³ *How PwC, Kimpton and OhioHealth Share and Act on Employee Survey Results*, Great Place to Work (February 11, 2021), [<https://perma.cc/U28H-8GB7>].

²⁴ King County, Washington, *2022 Employee Engagement Survey Action Planning Discussion Guide and Tool Kit* (undated), [<https://perma.cc/2QLU-A8L3>].

²⁵ 4 Questions to Ask Before Conducting an Employee Listening Session, Forbes (May 19, 2022), [<https://perma.cc/2L29-L9KQ>].



I think there is always room for improvement. I hope this survey does help with some suggestions for improvements.

— Anonymous employee (piloted) survey response

The survey results and post-survey interviews will often suggest goal-setting topics for leadership to explore.

Workplace management experts Frances Frei and Anne Morriss suggest other possible questions:²⁶

- What do people like most and least about working here?
- Describe the characteristics of the person who is most likely to succeed here.
- What are the emotions you observe most often in your colleagues?
- When good people leave us, what are some common reasons? Are there patterns?
- What kinds of problems are we good at solving as an organization? Which are we *not* good at solving?
- How does our culture set people up to succeed in their roles?
- Does our culture ever get in the way of our people's success? If so, in what ways?
- Are team members leading from a place of fear or a place of limited ambition about what's possible?
- Which attitudes or behaviors should be adopted more widely?
- How would you describe our culture to someone outside the organization?

The session should conclude with agreement on at least one key SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timely) action to take and who will be responsible for ensuring that it is completed as expected and when promised. If more than one action is identified, a separate person should be assigned for each goal.²⁷

²⁶ Frei, Frances X. and Morriss, Anne, *Move Fast and Fix Things: The Trusted Leader's Guide to Solving Hard Problems*. Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business Review Press, 2023 (p. 23) and Frei, Frances X. and Morriss, Anne, *Leading Change Without Collateral Damage*, Lead from the Heart podcast hosted by Mark C. Crowley (October 6, 2023), [<https://markccrowley.com/frances-frei-anne-morriss-leading-change-without-collateral-damage/>].

²⁷ Efron, Louis, *So you administered an employee engagement survey. Now what?* Gallup (January 4, 2023), [<https://perma.cc/SN7E-C8YF>].



It's important for supervisors to “mean” thank you when they “say” thank you. Tell the staff that they have good ideas when they share good ideas. Thank the staff for coming in every day and working hard when things are difficult.

— Anonymous employee one-on-one interview feedback

If scheduling a listening session for all employees to attend proves challenging, court leadership can consider closing early as other courts have done for training.²⁸

5.2 Collaborative development and adoption of a strategic agenda

If a court has not already adopted a strategic agenda, the substantive feedback from an employee viewpoint survey presents a special opportunity window for the court, its leadership team, and employees to collaboratively develop and adopt a strategic agenda for moving forward.

Strategic Focus Area 2 of the 2023–2027 Strategic Plan by Michigan’s Third Judicial Circuit Court can be an example starting point (“Improve the employee experience: Prepare for a Workforce of the Future”).²⁹ The Maricopa County judicial branch’s 2023–2026 Strategic Plan, Focus Area 3 (“Workforce of the Future”), and its 2023–2024 Operational Plan about the Workforce of the Future are other idea-inspiring resources.³⁰

5.3 Regular employee meetings and collaborative conversations

Workplace disconnects can be timely identified and addressed when they are surfaced in a safe environment and when communication is regular throughout the organization.

NCSC encourages courts to hold regular staff meetings/gatherings that are unrushed, share positive news and constructive updates, and give employees the chance to ask questions and contribute to the conversation.

²⁸ Jackson courthouse closing Friday for internal training. @MISupremeCourt social media post (February 13, 2024), [<https://perma.cc/8P6L-EC9H>].

Grand Blanc District Court closing Wednesday afternoon for staff training. @MISupremeCourt social media post (August 31, 2022), [<https://perma.cc/28YL-SQFE>].

²⁹ Third Judicial Circuit of Michigan, 2023–2027 Strategic Plan. [<https://perma.cc/S2SQ-ZNVA>].

³⁰ Judicial Branch of Arizona, County of Maricopa, 2023–2026 Strategic Plan. [<https://perma.cc/GHG4-2P6U>] and Judicial Branch of Maricopa County, 2023–2026 Operational Plan: Strategic Initiatives (April 17, 2023). [<https://perma.cc/6DSR-PK84>].



It should be safe for an employee to respectfully tell their supervisor that they may be wrong about something. Let's discuss it. An employee shouldn't be written up for being insubordinate. If I'm in the wrong in the end, that's fine, but we should be able to talk about it.

— Anonymous employee one-on-one interview feedback

5.4 Consider the value of future training or coaching

The percentage of front-line employees and managers who strongly agree that their organization makes engagement a top priority remains low, even though the business cases for focusing on employee engagement to improve engagement, well-being, and retention have grown stronger over the years.³¹

Courts that want to improve the likelihood that their leaders (at each level) are thinking about, planning for, and acting on employee engagement should revisit how they approach upskilling managers (from subject-matter expertise to delegation skills to giving meaningful feedback).

When reviewing overall court employee viewpoint survey response feedback or specific responses to the survey's training-suggestions question, court leadership may want to explore the benefit of individual, group/team, or executive coaching, some form of leadership summit, or a custom workshop. More can be learned about NCSC's coaching, training, and workshop services (including customized offerings) at <https://www.ncsc.org/consulting-and-research/areas-of-expertise/court-leadership/thought-leadership-and-strategic-planning/executive-coaching/custom-workshops-and-training>.

5.5 Annually survey employees to measure progress

The first employee viewpoint survey responses (and participation rate) should be treated as a baseline measure—not a progress measure.

Progress should be measured next year (and each year after) through a follow-up survey and compared to earlier years. Court leadership will then be able to determine progress or decline in identified categories.³²

³¹ Dale Carnegie Research Institute, *Employee Engagement: It's Time to Go 'All-In'; Making engagement a daily priority for leaders* (2018). [<https://perma.cc/28JU-8SWN>].

³² The pilot reports never recommended 360-degree reviews for court leaders or judicial officers even though they may be common in other industries. In their book *Unleashed*, leadership experts Frances Frei and Anne Morriss share their common experience that people respond differently to men and women during 360-degree reviews. And this comes at the professional cost of women: "In reviews of male and female managers of equal caliber, women were regularly, well, skewered, while their male peers were often left unscathed and even celebrated, sometimes for the very same behaviors."



Section 6: Conclusion

Employee viewpoint survey findings give the court leadership team important insights into their workplace landscape from the employees' perspective.

Those survey results—combined with a later leadership-attended listening feedback session(s)—will empower the leadership team with actionable information to (1) create a forward-looking action plan that maintains what is working well and targets where adjustments are needed, (2) inform future workplace planning decisions, and (3) create a baseline to assess improvement over time.

An extensive list of related [resources](#) that leadership may find insightful is at this tool kit's end.

It is important to track these survey measures and future trends because, like continuous-improvement expert James Clear reminds: “You do not rise to the level of your *goals*. You fall to the level of your *systems*.”

No one promises that the continuous-improvement work will be easy or quick as courts adjust for the future workplace and workforce. Even so, courts will realize the full talents and potential of their workforce—and the public will be well-served—when these practices are embraced with intention and long-term commitment.





The trauma informed courts initiative is a great move and hopefully it becomes mandatory for all court employees and Judges moving forward.

— Anonymous employee (piloted) survey response

6.1 Employee viewpoint survey planning checklist

Pre-survey

- Confirm judicial and administrative leadership support for an employee-viewpoint survey.
- Confirm the surveyed questions. See [Appendix A](#) listing.
 - Customize the response categories about [item 2](#) (supervision status), or omit the item if the court's small size would risk response anonymity.
 - Customize the response categories about [item 3](#) (court division), or omit the item if the court's small size would risk response anonymity.
 - Confirm that [item 32](#) will be surveyed. ("If you make a mistake it won't be held against you.")
 - Confirm that [item 38](#) will be surveyed, or omit if the court has not adopted some form of mission statement.
 - Confirm whether [item 47](#) will be changed to ask, "I have received meaningful feedback in the last week."
 - Confirm whether [items 67](#) and [68](#) (about remote/telework and hybrid work experience) are relevant for your site or should be changed.
 - Confirm whether [item 73](#) (gauging level of inclusion) will be used instead of [item 83](#) ("I feel safe to be my authentic self in the workplace").
 - Confirm whether other questions should be added.³³
- Confirm that the online survey tool will not collect employee names, email addresses, or IP address information.
- Confirm that all surveyed questions, except for the first one about survey participation, will be optional for the employees to respond to.
 - Identify the employees who will be surveyed.

³³ Other questions, like the question changes noted in the 2022 Federal OPM Technical Report, Appendix A: Item Change Summary [<https://perma.cc/ZM57-56PJ>], may be of survey-planning interest.



Invite “low-level” employees who actually do the work to meetings and/or planning sessions.

– Anonymous employee (piloted) survey response

- Draft the survey invitation to be emailed. See [Appendix B](#). Include a separate .pdf of the questions so employees can review them in advance.
- Confirm that employees who will be surveyed have internet access to complete the survey.
- Confirm that the online survey links are not blocked by local IT settings.
- “Pretest” the online survey and review “test” responses to catch any typos, incomplete response options, or possible technical glitches.
- Delete the pretest “mock data” before the survey launch.
- Select the dates and time windows that the online survey will be open.
 - Survey launch: _____
 - Survey close: _____

Survey launch

- The survey administrator should monitor how many surveys are being completed and keep judicial leadership updated about whether and when “nudge” reminder emails will be sent.
- Thank employees for completing the survey at the survey’s close and share what the expected next steps will be.

Optional, post-survey and anonymous one-on-one interviews

- If the online survey is independently administered, judicial and administrative leadership should consider the value of having the third-party also conduct post-survey, anonymous one-on-one interviews as explained in [section 3.0](#) and [Appendix C](#).
 - Interview questions: _____

Post-survey review and next-steps

- Judicial and administrative leadership should promptly review the survey responses and any one-on-one interview feedback and plan for a listening session and follow-up action, as encouraged in [section 5.0](#).
- Judicial and administrative leadership should identify when the next survey will be conducted and note any future adjustments that should be incorporated. Next survey: _____



Appendix A
Survey questions (annotated)

Survey questions (annotated)

Survey opening message:

Thank you for taking part in the 202X court employee viewpoint survey!

We are so glad that you are here.

This voluntary survey will take around 30 minutes or less.

All survey questions are *optional*, except for the first one.

Individual responses are anonymous. This survey does *not* record your contact info.

Please reach out to [name] at [email] or [phone] with any questions.

Category group	Survey participation	Response type (or options)
Item		
1	Would you like to participate in this survey?	Yes/No (with free-text "please explain"). Multiple choice, response required. If "no" response, go forward to the end of the survey to the closing message.

Category group	Workforce demographics. (The responses will make it possible to later group other question responses and learn if people answer questions differently based on a demographic characteristic or job aspect.)	
Item		
2	What is your supervision status ?	Custom, court-specific categories, if question is used. Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.
3	In which division do you work?	Custom, court-specific categories, if question is used. Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.
4	<p>What is your U.S. military service status?</p> <p>No prior military service Currently in the National Guard or Reserves Retired Separated or Discharged</p>	Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.

5	<p>Judiciary length of service. How long have you been with the judiciary?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less than 1 year 1 to 3 years 4 to 5 years 6 to 10 years 11 to 14 years 15 to 20 years More than 20 years 	<p>Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.</p>
6	<p>Current court length of service. How long have you been with your current court?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less than 1 year 1 to 3 years 4 to 5 years 6 to 10 years 11 to 14 years 15 to 20 years More than 20 years 	<p>Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.</p>

7	<p>12-month employment plans. Are you considering leaving the court within the next year and, if so, why?</p> <p>No Yes, to retire Yes, to take another job within the judiciary Yes, to take another job outside the judiciary Other (free-text explanation)</p>	<p>Select one, with free-text explanation for “other”. Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.</p>
8	<p>Retirement plans. I am planning to retire in:</p> <p>Less than 1 year 1 year 2 years 3 years 4 years 5 years More than 5 years</p>	<p>Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.</p>

9	<p>Race-ethnicity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous or Alaska Native Asian Black or African American Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin³⁴ Middle Eastern or North African (MENA)³⁵ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander White Two or more races Other (free-text explanation) 	Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.
10	<p>What is your age group?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 years and under 26-29 years old 30-39 years old 40-49 years old 50-59 years old 60 years or older 	Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.

³⁴ Earlier-piloted surveys had separate tables that each asked about (a) Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, and (b) Race. A free-text response during a pilot listed for the “Race” question “Other” and noted “Hispanic.”

NCSC re-framed this item as a race-ethnicity blend in later pilots after more research. The Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute’s *Workplace Climate Assessment* already used a race-ethnicity blended question approach. And it was learned that the federal government is proposing to have Latinos identify their race just as easily as they declare their ethnicity during the 2030 census. See Navarro, Mireya, *The benefits of combining ethnic identity with race in the census*, Brennan Center for Justice (February 9, 2023), [<https://perma.cc/76RC-ZFM3>].

³⁵ The pilots did not include a MENA classification, but it is encouraged in future surveys especially because of the Office of Management and Budget new rule, published on March 29, 2024, that will include the category in future census forms. [<https://perma.cc/5BRQ-B4MY>].

11	<p>What is your generation group?</p> <p>Traditionalist (born 1945 or earlier) Baby Boomer (born 1946 to 1964) Generation X (born 1965 to 1980) Generation Y (born 1981 to 1996) Generation Z (born 1997 or later)</p>	<p>Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.</p>
12	<p>Education. What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?</p> <p>Less than high school High school diploma, GED, or equivalent Trade or technical certificate Some college (no degree) Associate's degree (e.g., AA, AS) Bachelor's degree (e.g., BA, BS) Master's degree (e.g., MA, MS, MBA) Doctoral/professional degree (e.g., Ph.D., JD)</p>	<p>Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.</p>

13	<p>Gender. Are you:</p> <p>Female Male Non-binary / third gender</p>	Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.
14	<p>Transgender. Are you transgender?</p>	Yes/No Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.
15	<p>Sexual orientation. Which of the following do you consider yourself to be?</p> <p>Straight, that is not gay, lesbian, or queer Gay, lesbian, or queer Bisexual Other (free-text explanation)</p>	Select one, with free-text explanation for "other". Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.

16	<p>Disability or chronic illness. Do you have a disability or chronic illness that affects how you work?</p> <p>Yes, visible disability. Yes, invisible disability. Yes, chronic illness(es). No.</p>	<p>Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.</p>
17	<p>Workplace accommodations. Have you ever required accommodations while at court?</p> <p>“Accommodations” refer to alterations or adjustments in a job or work environment to make it possible for someone with a proven need for such modifications to perform the job functions.</p> <p>Examples may include a sign language interpreter, access to a lactation room, or special safety equipment.</p> <p>No accommodations required. Yes, and was appropriately accommodated. Yes, but was not appropriately accommodated. Yes, but never requested one. Not sure.</p>	<p>Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.</p>

Category group	Employee work-experience perspectives	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Strongly agree (5) Agree (4) Neutral (3) Disagree (2) Strongly disagree (1)
Item		
18	I am given a real chance to improve my skills in my court.	
19	I believe I have the opportunity for growth in my current job.	
20	I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.	
21	I receive credit for my ideas.	
22	My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.	
23	I know what is expected of me on the job.	
24	My workload is manageable.	
25	My talents and time are used well in the workplace.	
26	I have the resources (materials, equipment, supplies) necessary to do my job well.	
27	I receive the training to do my job well.	
28	I know how my work relates to the court's goals.	
29	I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule, or regulation without fear of reprisal or retaliation.	
30	The people I work with cooperate to get the job done.	
31	In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.	

32	If you make a mistake, it won't be held against you. (<i>**not used in pilots, but recommended in future surveys to measure psychological safety</i>) ³⁶	
33	I think my job performance is evaluated fairly.	

³⁶ This question “correlated with the detected error rates; the more people believed that making a mistake would not be held against them, the higher the detected errors in their unit. * * * When people believe that mistakes will be held against them, they are loath to report them.” When people feel unable to reveal errors, many errors remain hidden. Edmondson, Amy, *Right Kind of Wrong: The Science of Failing Well*. New York, New York: Atria Books, 2023 (pp. 13–14).

Category group	Productivity	
Item		
34	<p>I am often prevented from being fully productive at work because: (more than one response can be selected)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Not enough staff to help get work done b. Unnecessary paperwork c. Outdated technology or lack of technology d. Too many procedures and policies e. Too many emails f. Inadequate training g. No issues are preventing me from being fully productive at work h. Teammates whose skill levels are not suited for the job i. Doing work beyond the scope of my job j. Responding to unanticipated issues, beyond my job requirements 	Multiple choice, allow multiple answers, voluntary response.
35	<p>Work unit performance. In my work unit, poor performers usually:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remain in the work unit and improve their performance over time. Remain in the work unit and continue to underperform. Leave the work unit—removed or transferred. Leave the work unit—quit. There are no poor performers in my work unit. 	Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.

Category group	Court-specific viewpoints This question section asks for your perspective on your court’s work.	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response Strongly agree (5) Agree (4) Neutral (3) Disagree (2) Strongly disagree (1)
Item		
36	Employees are recognized for providing high-quality services.	
37	Employees are protected from health and safety hazards on the job.	
38	My court accomplishes its mission. ³⁷	
39	I am proud that I work in the court.	
40	I recommend my court as a good place to work.	
41	Both on the bench and off, the judges in my court get along and are civil with each other. (Skip this question if you work in a one-judge court.)	
42	I believe the survey results will be used to make my court a better place to work.	

³⁷ A court may want omit this question if no mission has been adopted at the time of the first survey. “Mission” examples include:

It is the Mission of the Lancaster County Court of Common Pleas [Pennsylvania] to be as effective and efficient as possible in: Providing equal access to justice for all, Building and retaining public trust and confidence, and Developing the accountability of Court employees. [<https://perma.cc/5WR3-VQQ7>].

The Cass County Court System [Michigan] provides fair, just and timely case processing while ensuring due process of law for the citizens we serve. [<https://perma.cc/L45Y-PP7R>].

It is the mission of the Salt Lake City Justice Court [Utah] “to operate at the highest standards of justice, professionalism, responsiveness and respect to the community it serves.” Salt Lake City Ordinance 058 of 2023. [<https://perma.cc/BDP2-GGLB>].

Category group	Supervisor-specific viewpoints This question section asks for your perspective on your supervisor.	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Strongly agree (5) Agree (4) Neutral (3) Disagree (2) Strongly disagree (1)
Item		
43	My supervisor supports my need to balance work and other life issues.	
44	My supervisor is committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society.	
45	Supervisors in my work unit support employee development.	
46	In the last six months, a supervisor has talked with me about my performance/career development.	
47	My supervisor gives me feedback that helps me improve my performance. ³⁸	
48	My supervisor is available when I have questions or need help.	
49	My supervisor listens without distraction to what I have to say.	
50	My supervisor’s actions track with what they say.	
51	My supervisor treats me with respect.	
52	I have trust and confidence in my supervisor.	

³⁸ Future surveys may want to additionally—or instead—consider asking “I have received meaningful feedback in the last week.” like modeled by Gallup. [<https://perma.cc/JAR7-2SMH>].

An astonishing 80% of employees who say they’ve received meaningful feedback in the past week are fully engaged according to Gallup data. McLain, Denise and Nelson, Bailey, *How Effective Feedback Fuels Performance*, Gallup (updated January 19, 2024), [<https://perma.cc/37JZ-GQK9>].

Category group	Court leadership-specific viewpoints This question section asks for your perspective on the court's leadership team.	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Strongly agree (5) Agree (4) Neutral (3) Disagree (2) Strongly disagree (1)
Item		
53	In my court, senior leaders generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.	
54	My court's senior leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.	
55	Managers communicate the court's goals.	
56	Managers promote communication among different work units (for example, about projects, goals, and needed resources).	
57	I have a high level of respect for my court's senior leaders.	

Category group	Employee-satisfaction viewpoints	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Very satisfied (5) Somewhat satisfied (4) Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3) Somewhat dissatisfied (2) Very dissatisfied (1)
Item		
58	How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work?	
59	How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management about what's going on in your court?	

60	How satisfied are you with the recognition you receive for doing a good job?	
61	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job?	
62	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your pay?	
63	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your benefits?	
64	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with how your time-off requests are handled?	
65	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with how any personally advanced, work-related expenses are reimbursed?	
66	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your court?	

Category group	In-person, remote/telework, and hybrid work experience	
Item		
67	<p>Since the last 12 months, on average, what percentage of your work time have you been physically present at your court worksite (including multi-building sites)?</p> <p>100% of my work time. At least 75% but less than 100%. At least 50% but less than 75%. At least 25% but less than 50%. Less than 25%. I have not been physically present at my court worksite.</p>	Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.

68

Please select the response that BEST describes your current remote/teleworking schedule.

- I work remotely/telework every workday.
- I work remotely/telework 3 or 4 days per week.
- I work remotely/telework 1 or 2 days per week.
- I work remotely/telework, but only about 1 or 2 days per month.
- I work remotely/telework very infrequently, on an unscheduled or short-term basis.
- I do not work remotely/telework because I must be physically present on the job.
- I do not work remotely/telework because of technical issues (e.g., connectivity, inadequate equipment) that prevent me from working remotely/teleworking.
- I do not work remotely/telework because I did not receive approval to do so, even though I have the kind of job where I can do remote work/telework.
- I do not work remotely/telework because I choose not to.

Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.

Category group	<p>Inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility viewpoints</p> <p>The terms mean:</p> <p>Inclusion—The intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that all individuals fully take part in all aspects of organizational work, including decision-making processes.</p> <p>Diversity—Variations among individuals and groups based on identities and life experiences. It includes (but is not limited to) differences in race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, age, and religion.</p> <p>Equity—The fair and just treatment of all community members.</p> <p>Accessibility—An environment that accommodates individuals of different abilities and needs.</p>	
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Item		
69	I value inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility at the court.	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Strongly agree (5) Agree (4) Neutral (3) Disagree (2) Strongly disagree (1)
70	Inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility are valued at the court.	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Strongly agree (5) Agree (4) Neutral (3) Disagree (2) Strongly disagree (1)
71	People from all backgrounds and with a range of identities have fair opportunities at the court.	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Strongly agree (5) Agree (4) Neutral (3) Disagree (2) Strongly disagree (1)
72	My unique background and identity are valued at the court.	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Strongly agree (5) Agree (4) Neutral (3) Disagree (2) Strongly disagree (1)

73	<p>Which word best describes your experience of inclusion at work? <i>(**not used in pilots, but recommended in future surveys in place of item 83 “I feel safe to be my authentic self in the workplace.”)</i>³⁹</p> <p>None of the below. (Not yet safe.)</p> <p>Safe. (You feel physically, emotionally, and psychologically safe in the workplace.)</p> <p>Welcome. (You feel welcome in the workplace throughout the HR lifecycle. You can bring an authentic version of yourself to shared workspaces without penalty.)</p> <p>Celebrated. (You feel celebrated in the workplace <i>because of</i> who you are. You are rewarded for contributing your unique information, ideas, and perspectives to advance the court’s goals.)</p> <p>Championed. (An inclusion culture permeates the court. Inclusion is seen as an ethical and competitive imperative. There is minimal variability in the experience of belonging across individuals, teams, and functions.)</p>	Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.
74	What is the court doing well to build a supportive, inclusive, and safe work environment?	Text entry, multiple lines, voluntary response.
75	What can the court do to provide a more supportive, inclusive, and safe work environment?	Text entry, multiple lines, voluntary response.

³⁹ The responses to this question will likely show that you are not yet realizing the full potential of an inclusive and engaged workplace. Roughly 40% of people feel welcome at work. Roughly 30% either feel celebrated or championed. A material percentage often tops out at safe. Do not be surprised if some of your colleagues don’t even feel safe when they come to work. Frei, Frances X. and Morriss, Anne, *Move Fast and Fix Things: The Trusted Leader’s Guide to Solving Hard Problems*. Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business Review Press, 2023 (pp. 93–96).

Category group	General workplace health and safety viewpoints	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Strongly agree (5) Agree (4) Neutral (3) Disagree (2) Strongly disagree (1)
Item		
76	My court's senior leaders show a commitment to employee health and safety.	
77	My court's senior leaders support policies and procedures to protect employee health and safety.	
78	My supervisor shows concern for my health and safety.	
79	My supervisor supports my efforts to stay healthy and safe while working.	
80	My supervisor creates an environment where I can voice my concerns about staying healthy and safe.	
81	I believe my court will respond effectively to health and safety emergencies.	
82	My court supports the employees' wellness needs (including mental health wellness needs). ⁴⁰	

⁴⁰ Across the country, many people just like you work, perform, create, compete, laugh, love and inspire every day. 1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness. National Alliance on Mental Illness, *Mental Health By the Numbers* (2023) [<https://www.nami.org/mhstats> and <https://perma.cc/QQ3R-KGWW>].

Category group	Workplace climate viewpoints	
Item		
83	I feel safe to be my authentic self in the workplace. <i>(** Do not use this question in future surveys if item 73 is used instead.)</i>	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Strongly agree (5) Agree (4) Neutral (3) Disagree (2) Strongly disagree (1)
84	I have not felt compelled to contribute to, attend a political campaign event, volunteer for, or publicly support a judicial candidate in the court where I work.	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Strongly agree (5) Agree (4) Neutral (3) Disagree (2) Strongly disagree (1)

85	I have not felt compelled to perform personal errands (during court time) or use court resources for my supervisor or a judge’s personal benefit. ⁴¹	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Strongly agree (5) Agree (4) Neutral (3) Disagree (2) Strongly disagree (1)
86	Within the last two years, do you believe unfair treatment, harassment, or other unacceptable behaviors have been a problem at the court? Not a problem Minor problem Moderate problem Major problem Not sure	Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.

⁴¹ Separate from any judicial code of conduct concerns, “[e]ven judges are not immune to theft, embezzlement and fraud perpetrated against them by those they trust the most. Truly anyone can fall victim to financial exploitation crimes” the Michigan Attorney General recently warned. Michigan Department of Attorney General press release, *Former Wayne County Circuit Court Assistant Arraigned on Charges Alleging Embezzlement from Judge* (January 23, 2024), [<https://perma.cc/542X-YCBZ>].

87	<p>Within the last two years, have you experienced unfair treatment, harassment, or other unacceptable behaviors at the court?</p> <p>Yes No Not sure</p>	Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.
88	<p>Within the last two years, have you witnessed individuals experience unfair treatment, harassment, or other unacceptable behaviors at the court? <i>(more than one response can be selected)</i></p> <p>a. Yes, from court users (including the public, press, visitors, litigants, or attorneys) b. Yes, from non-supervisory court employees c. Yes, from supervisory court employees d. Yes, from judicial officers e. No. I have not witnessed anyone experience unfair treatment, harassment, or any other unacceptable behavior at the court.</p>	Multiple choice, allow multiple answers, voluntary response.

89	<p>While at the court or handling work related to the court, have you ever felt unwelcome, uncomfortable, unsafe, or treated unfairly based on any of these factors? <i>(more than one response can be selected)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Yes, because of gender (includes gender expression) b. Yes, because of position type c. Yes, because of academic credentials/education level d. Yes, because of proficiency in understanding or speaking English e. Yes, because of race or ethnicity f. Yes, because of physical or appearance-related factors g. Yes, because of age h. Yes, because of social/economic class i. Yes, because of sexual orientation j. Yes, because of religious beliefs k. Yes, because of physical disability l. Yes, because of cognitive or mental disability m. Yes, because of pregnancy status n. Yes, because of other factors not listed o. None. I feel welcome, comfortable, and safe at the court. 	<p>Multiple choice, allow multiple answers, voluntary response. Skip the next question and go to the one after if the answer is “o. I feel welcome, comfortable, and safe at the court.”.</p>
90	<p>Where did any experience(s) of being unwelcome, uncomfortable, or unsafe happen? <i>(more than one response can be selected)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. At the court. b. By email, telephone, or virtual meetings. c. At overnight accommodations or living quarters. d. Offsite for work (e.g., conferences, training, or the like). e. Other. 	<p>Multiple choice, allow multiple answers, voluntary response.</p>

Category group	Supervisor-conduct perceptions While at the court or in a work-related situation, how often have you experienced or witnessed the following by a supervisor or someone in a supervisory-like position?	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Never (5) Once (4) A few times (3) Many times (2) Difficult to quantify (1)
Item		
91	Unfair treatment	
92	Abuse of power	
93	Micro-aggressions, implicit bias, or other behaviors that may not rise to the level of harassment	
94	Gender bias	
95	Intimidating behavior	
96	Sexist jokes, stories, or comments	
97	Demeaning comments or actions related to identity (like gender, race, national origin, disability, age)	
98	Bullying	
99	Unwanted remarks about a person’s body (negative or positive)	
100	Pressure to socialize outside the normal “workday” (with or without alcohol)	
101	Other inappropriate behaviors not listed here	
102	Unwanted invitations or pressure for dates or to engage in sexual activities	
103	Pressure to socialize outside the normal “workday” (with or without alcohol)	
104	Other inappropriate behaviors not listed here	

105	Unwanted invitations or pressure for dates or to engage in sexual activities	
106	Threats	
107	Unwelcome physical contact (touching without consent, by coercion or force; could be sexual)	
108	Workplace violence	

Category group	Non-supervisor-conduct perceptions While at the court or in a work-related situation, how often have you experienced or witnessed the following by someone who is (or was) NOT a supervisor or someone in a supervisory-like position?	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Never (5) Once (4) A few times (3) Many times (2) Difficult to quantify (1)
Item		
109	Unfair treatment	
110	Abuse of power	
111	Micro-aggressions, implicit bias, or other behaviors that may not rise to the level of harassment	
112	Gender bias	
113	Intimidating behavior	
114	Sexist jokes, stories, or comments	

115	Demeaning comments or actions related to identity (like gender, race, national origin, disability, age)	
116	Bullying	
117	Unwanted remarks about a person's body (negative or positive)	
118	Pressure to socialize outside the normal "workday" (with or without alcohol)	
119	Other inappropriate behaviors not listed here	
120	Unwanted invitations or pressure for dates or to engage in sexual activities	
121	Pressure to socialize outside the normal "workday" (with or without alcohol)	
122	Other inappropriate behaviors not listed here	
123	Unwanted invitations or pressure for dates or to engage in sexual activities	
124	Threats	
125	Unwelcome physical contact (touching without consent, by coercion or force; could be sexual)	
126	Workplace violence	

Category group	Response to inappropriate behavior	
Item		
127	<p>If you experienced or witnessed unfair, harassing, or otherwise inappropriate behavior at the court, what action(s)—if any—did you take? <i>(more than one response can be selected)</i>⁴²</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. I communicated the behavior to a peer. b. I avoided communicating or interacting with the person responsible for the behavior. c. I communicated the behavior to my supervisor. d. I spoke directly with the person responsible for the behavior. e. I took no action. f. I communicated the behavior to court administration. g. I made a personal change hoping the offensive behavior would go away. h. I am considering leaving or plan to leave the court. i. I took other action(s). j. I reported the behavior to law enforcement or another external authority. 	Multiple choice, allow multiple answers, voluntary response.

⁴² Experience and comfort with the complaint reporting and investigation process is included in the employee workplace assessment the New York Governor’s Executive Chamber will give to all full-time employees as part of its consent agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice, *Agreement Between the United States and the State of New York Executive Chamber Regarding Workplace Reform* (January 26, 2024), [<https://perma.cc/CA2P-89TY>] (p 6, ¶ 25).

Category group	Reason(s) for inaction	
Item		
128	<p>If you chose not to act, please share the reason(s): <i>(more than one response can be selected)</i>⁴³</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. I did not know what actions to take. b. I did not have any confidence that reporting the behavior would make a difference (“I knew it wouldn’t do any good.”). c. I was afraid of retaliation. d. I was afraid of possible career (or academic) consequences. e. Other reason. f. I am not comfortable talking about my sociocultural experiences in the workplace. g. I was afraid of being labeled a “troublemaker”. h. I was embarrassed or ashamed. i. It wasn’t that serious. 	Multiple choice, allow multiple answers, voluntary response.

⁴³ Experience and comfort with the complaint reporting and investigation process is included in the employee workplace assessment the New York Governor’s Executive Chamber will give to all full-time employees as part of its consent agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice, *Agreement Between the United States and the State of New York Executive Chamber Regarding Workplace Reform* (January 26, 2024), [<https://perma.cc/CA2P-89TY>] (p. 6, ¶ 25).

Category group	Response to action	
Item		
129	<p>If you took action, did the person(s) or office(s) take your concerns seriously?</p> <p>Yes In some cases No Unsure</p>	Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.
Category group	Outcome satisfaction	
Item		
130	<p>If you did take action, afterward, were you generally satisfied with the outcome?⁴⁴</p> <p>Yes In some cases No Unsure</p>	Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.

⁴⁴ Experience and comfort with the complaint reporting and investigation process is included in the employee workplace assessment the New York Governor’s Executive Chamber will give to all full-time employees as part of its consent agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice, *Agreement Between the United States and the State of New York Executive Chamber Regarding Workplace Reform* (January 26, 2024), [<https://perma.cc/CA2P-89TY>] (p. 6, ¶ 25).

Category group	Reporting awareness	
Item		
131	<p>If you needed to report an incident of harassment or other inappropriate behavior at the court, which best describes you? I would . . .⁴⁵</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . . . be able to find out where to go to report. . . . know exactly where to go to report. . . . have difficulties finding out where to go to report. Not applicable. I did not know that reporting an incident of harassment or concerning behavior was an option. . . . not report an incident even if I knew the process. 	Multiple choice, allow one answer, voluntary response.

⁴⁵ Knowledge of how to report allegations is included in the employee workplace assessment the New York Governor’s Executive Chamber will give to all full-time employees as part of its consent agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice, *Agreement Between the United States and the State of New York Executive Chamber Regarding Workplace Reform* (January 26, 2024), [<https://perma.cc/CA2P-89TY>] (p. 6, ¶ 25).

Category group	Training suggestions	
Item		
132	<p>Which of the following training topics would you like to see provided? <i>(more than one response can be selected)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Respect in the workplace b. Job-related technology and equipment c. Implicit bias d. Anti-harassment policies e. Bystander awareness and intervention f. Relationship boundaries g. Secondary or vicarious trauma h. Management training for employees and judicial officers i. Additional training is unnecessary j. Other (free-text explanation) 	Multiple choice, with free-text explanation for “other”, allow multiple answers, voluntary response.

Category group	Communication suggestions	
Item		
133	<p>How can the court better communicate harassment-reporting processes, policies, and other resources? (more than one response can be selected)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Posters and signs b. Workforce onboarding materials c. Trainings and webinars d. Regular emails with the information e. Staff-meeting presentations f. Court website and intranet g. Other 	Multiple choice, with free-text explanation for “other”, allow multiple answers, voluntary response.

Survey ending message:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey and share your perspective.

Our success as a court depends on each employee’s success.

Your feedback is appreciated and valued. Your responses have been recorded.

Reader note:

Survey pilots earlier in the COVID-19 pandemic included these (later discontinued) questions:

Category group	If you worked at the [court name] before the start of COVID-19 (March 2020), please answer the following:	5-point, standard Likert matrix; voluntary response. Decreased significantly (1) Decreased somewhat (2) Stayed the same (3) Increased somewhat (4) Increased significantly (5)
Item		
	The level of respect I felt from [court name] users during the pandemic.	
	The level of respect I felt from other [court name] employees.	
	The level of safety I felt in my workplace.	
	The level of communication from leadership.	
	The amount of work I needed to do.	
	The level of camaraderie in the workplace.	

Category group	How has the [court name] supported your well-being needs during the COVID-19 pandemic?	unscored Likert matrix; voluntary response. Needed and available to me Needed but not available to me Not needed by me now
Item		
	Expanded telework.	
	Expanded work schedule flexibilities.	
	Expanded leave policies.	
	Clear guidance on COVID-19 vaccination protocols.	
	Appropriate physical health resources (e.g., access to COVID-19 testing) at my worksite.	
	Timely communication about possible COVID-19 exposure at my worksite.	
	Social distancing in my worksite.	
	Encouraged use of personal protective equipment (PPE) or other safety equipment in my worksite.	
	Cleaning and sanitizing are performed regularly at my worksite to reduce the risk of illness.	
	A well-ventilated worksite.	
	Clear guidance on quarantine requirements.	



Appendix B
**Online voluntary survey
emailed invitation**

Subject: The 2024 Court Employee Viewpoint Survey is Open, and You're Invited!

Dear Court Colleagues:

A workplace where each person is set up for success, feels safe and valued, and knows that they belong are some of our shared commitments.

And because we understand that each person may have a different experience, we have teamed with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) for NCSC to independently conduct an employee viewpoint survey.

With your participation, we hope the survey responses will help us better understand what is working well in our workplace and where greater attention is needed.

Here are some helpful background details about the survey:

When is the online survey open? Today, [day of the week], [Month XX, 2024]. It will close on [day of the week], [Month XX, 2024] at 5:00 p.m.

How long will the survey take? The survey will take less than 30 minutes and is expected to be completed during work hours. The survey should be done in one sitting. Employees are never asked for their name or email address. This ensures anonymity but it also means that someone cannot later return to a survey that they started and paused.

Can I preview the questions before starting the survey? Yes. The survey questions can be previewed as a .pdf file at XXXXXXXXXXXX.

The online survey is *voluntary*. We hope you will complete the survey because your perspective will guide future court decisions, policies, and practices in our shared workplace. But if you decide to not complete the survey, we kindly ask that you note why in the space following the survey's first question. That, too, can be helpful information in better understanding our environment.

All survey questions are *optional* (except for the first one). You can skip any question that you do not feel comfortable with or cannot answer.

Individual survey responses are *anonymous*. NCSC is independently administering the online survey. The NCSC-administered survey does *not* ask for or record one's contact information. Your court leaders and coworkers will never see your name with your answers. Free-text responses that could perhaps reveal your identity will not be shared by NCSC. Instead, your responses will be anonymized and combined with other responses when shared with the court. Data summaries may be made available to others for related studies to evaluate court programs, assess policies, improve protocols, or provide background for future court administration research.

Why are there so many questions? Great eye! This survey is longer than NCSC's employee satisfaction survey. Longer national survey models which interested your court leaders inspired this survey tool. Thus, this tool includes court-specific questions appropriate for the judicial workplace. The detailed questions have been framed to invite responses that will give court leadership more comprehensive and actionable information to work with.

Can I report workplace misconduct in the survey? No. You should contact your immediate supervisor or follow the court's reporting policies to report misconduct.

What happens after the survey? NCSC will collect the survey responses and share them with the court in a way that identifies no one who completed the survey. Employee listening session(s) will be held later. The survey responses will guide the listening session direction. Both the survey responses and listening session dialogue will shape the direction of the court's future workplace action plans.

Will the survey be repeated in the future? Yes, hopefully. It is a recommended best practice to later re-survey employees so that the court and its leadership team can see where there has been improvement and learn where other adjustments are needed.

Who do I reach out to for more information? [Contact name] will be happy to answer your survey questions at [email address and phone number].

Our success as a court depends on each employee's success. Advance thanks for sharing your honest responses about your work experiences in this survey.

Click this link to begin the survey: XXXXXXXXXXXX

*High-level court official
Signature block*



Appendix C
**One-on-one interview
emailed invitation**

Subject: RE: The 2024 Court Employee Viewpoint Survey is Still Open, and You're Invited!

Hello everyone,

I want to thank those who have participated in the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) employee viewpoint survey. There is still time to complete it if you haven't already. **The survey will close on [day of the week], [Month XX, 2024] at 5:00 p.m.**

Click this link to begin the survey: XXXXXXXXXXXX.

Participation in the survey is VOLUNTARY. We do hope that you will complete the survey because your perspective will guide future court decisions, policies, and practices in our shared workplace. But if you decide to not complete the survey, we kindly ask that you note why in the space following the survey's first question. That, too, can be helpful information in better understanding our environment.

Along with the survey, the NCSC has provided us with a representative who would love to hear your feedback regarding some related questions.

If you are interested in providing some other feedback, feel free to sign up for a one-on-one Zoom or phone appointment using this Calendly link: XXXXXXXXXXXX The appointments will be between [day of the week], [Month XX, 2024] and [day of the week], [Month XX, 2024]. The schedule is now open!

A one-on-one meeting will last no more than 20 minutes.

As before, participation is voluntary and completely anonymous. *If you did not participate in the survey, you are still welcome to schedule an appointment.*

Here are the questions that NCSC consultant [contact name and email address] is looking for *your* feedback:

1. [Insert question]
2. [Insert question]
3. [Insert question]
4. [Insert question]
5. [Insert question]

Thank you again for your interest and for sharing your perspective about your work experience.

High-level court official
Signature block



Section 7: Resources

Amabile, Teresa M. and Kramer, Steven J., *Inner Work Life: Understanding the Subtext of Business Performance*, Harvard Business Review (May 2007), [<https://perma.cc/3TNX-525H>].

“People in our study were more creative when they interpreted the goings-on in their organizations in a positive light—that is, when they saw their organizations and leaders as collaborative, cooperative, open to new ideas, able to evaluate and develop new ideas fairly, clearly focused on an innovative vision, and willing to reward creative work. They were less creative when they perceived political infighting and internal competition or an aversion to new ideas or to risk taking.”

Amabile, Teresa M. and Kramer, Steven J., *The Power of Small Wins*, Harvard Business Review (May 2011), [<https://perma.cc/3LEF-DCCB>].

“[A] central driver of creative, productive performance was the quality of a person’s inner work life—the mix of emotions, motivations, and perceptions over the course of a workday. How happy workers feel; how motivated they are by an intrinsic interest in the work; how positively they view their organization, their management, their team, their work, and themselves—all these combine either to push them to higher levels of achievement or to drag them down.”

“In a dramatic rebuttal to the commonplace claim that high pressure and fear spur achievement, we found that, at least in the realm of knowledge work, people are more creative and productive when their inner work lives are positive—when they feel happy, are intrinsically motivated by the work itself, and have positive perceptions of their colleagues and the organization. Moreover, in those positive states, people are more committed to the work and more collegial toward those around them.”

“When we think about progress, we often imagine how good it feels to achieve a long-term goal or experience a major breakthrough. These big wins are great—but they are relatively rare. The good news is that even small wins can boost inner work life tremendously. Many of the progress events our research participants reported represented only minor steps forward. Yet they often evoked outsize positive reactions.”

“In principle, managers shouldn’t have to go to extraordinary lengths to infuse jobs with meaning. Most jobs in modern organizations are potentially meaningful for the people doing them. However, managers can make sure that employees know just how their work is contributing. And, most important, they can avoid actions that negate its value.”

American College of Cardiology, *Building Respect, Civility, and Inclusion in the Cardiovascular Workplace*, Online resource tool kit, [<https://bit.ly/3BbzipJ5>].

From its 2022 policy statement: “A positive work environment is characterized by a cohesive, supportive, collaborative, and inclusive culture, often including such concepts as a Culture of Safety and a Just Culture. More broadly, a positive work environment embodies the civility climate of an organization in which there is a shared perception of the extent to which individuals and the organization reward, support, and expect respect

and acceptance; foster cooperation and supportive relationships between coworkers; and provide fair conflict resolution.” [<https://perma.cc/PG3C-LCK6>].

Asare, Janice Gassam, *3 Considerations To Make When Conducting Employee Listening Sessions*, Forbes (January 7, 2021), [<https://perma.cc/X4RC-YU9J>].

Discusses (1) enlisting the help of a professional, (2) don't make it mandatory, and (3) don't soften your language.

Asare, Janice Gassam, *4 Questions To Ask Before Conducting An Employee Listening Session*, Forbes (May 19, 2022), [<https://perma.cc/2L29-L9KQ>].

Outlines (1) Who will facilitate this conversation? (2) What is our ultimate goal with this listening session? (3) Who is our intended audience? (4) What steps will be taken after this session?

Bach, Katie, Praslova, Ludmila N., and Pollack, Beth, *Long Covid at Work: A Manager's Guide*, Harvard Business Review (May 7, 2024), [<https://perma.cc/B9U2-3TE4>].

“Summary. Nearly 18 million U.S. adults have long Covid, a multisystem illness that sometimes appears after a bout of Covid-19. Its wide range of symptoms vary from person to person, veer from mild to severe, and can wax and wane over time. There are no official treatments for long Covid; while some people see their symptoms resolve, others remain chronically ill. For those employees, the right workplace support can be transformative. Employers must not only help these individual employees but also build disability inclusion into their cultures and talent practices. A menu of accommodations along with individual job redesign efforts will help companies retain employees with long Covid and other chronic illnesses and enable them to contribute more than they could otherwise.”

And see companion podcast: *The Hidden Burden of Long Covid and What Companies Can Do*, HBR IdeaCast (May 14, 2024), [<https://hbr.org/podcast/2024/05/the-hidden-burden-of-long-covid-and-what-companies-can-do>]

Bailey, Catherine and Madden, Adrian, *What Makes Work Meaningful—Or Meaningless*, MITSloan Management (June 1, 2016), [<https://perma.cc/BRQ6-8B55>].

“[W]e discovered that if employers want to destroy that sense of meaningfulness, that was far more easily achieved. The feeling of ‘Why am I bothering to do this?’ strikes people the instant a meaningless moment arises, and it strikes people hard. If meaningfulness is a delicate flower that requires careful nurturing, think of someone trampling over that flower in a pair of steel-toed boots. Avoiding the destruction of meaning while nurturing an ecosystem generative of feelings of meaningfulness emerged as the key leadership challenge.”

Berwick, Isabel, *Why diversity strategies fail—and how to fix them*, Working It podcast episode (August 15, 2023), [<https://perma.cc/X7RP-3URW>].

“[I]magine the trust it takes for an employee who may be getting discriminated against or maybe getting mistreated in the workplace to share those experiences with a survey. They pour their experience of discrimination or mistreatment into the survey, and then

they wait, and nothing gets better. Imagine what's going to happen the next time they get a survey. They're not gonna fill it out."

Brooks, David, *How to know a person: The art of seeing others deeply and being deeply seen*. New York, New York: Random House, 2023.

Brown, Brené, *Dare to Lead: Brave Work, Tough Conversations, Whole Hearts*. New York, New York: Random House, 2018.

"I define a leader as anyone who takes responsibility for finding the potential in people and processes, and who has the courage to develop that potential."

"If the culture in our school, organization, place of worship, or even family requires armor because of issues like racism, classism, sexism, or any manifestation of fear-based leadership, we can't expect wholehearted engagement. Likewise, when our organization rewards armoring behaviors like blaming, shaming, cynicism, perfectionism, and emotional stoicism, we can't expect innovative work. You can't fully grow and contribute behind armor. It takes a massive amount of energy just to carry it around—sometimes it takes *all* of our energy."

"[T]rust is in fact earned in the smallest of moments. It is not earned through heroic deeds, or even highly visible actions, but through paying attention, listening, and gestures of genuine care and connection."

"The rumble starts with this universal truth: **In the absence of data, we will always make up stories.** *** Our organizations are littered with stories that people make up because they don't have access to information. If you've ever led a team through change, you know how much time, money, energy, and engagement bad stories cost."

"In work cultures where there's a lot of change and confusion afoot, teams go crazy with [the first stories we make up]. However, if you are operating in a culture of courage, you give people as many facts as you can, and when you can't tell them everything, you acknowledge that you're telling them as much as you can and that you will continue to keep them in the loop with information as you have access to it and have permission to share. Clear is kind. And clarity absolutely reduces story making and conspiracy theories."

The Accountability and Success Checklist is an internal-control tool to make sure team members have the chance to succeed:

T—Who owns the task?

A—Do they have the authority to be held accountable?

S—Do we agree that they are set up for success (time, resources, clarity)?

C—Do we have a checklist of what needs to happen to accomplish the task?

Clear, James, *Atomic Habits: Tiny Changes, Remarkable Results: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones*. New York, New York: Avery, an imprint of Penguin Random House, 2018.

"You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems."

Clifton, Jim and Harter, Jim, *Culture Shock: An unstoppable force is changing how we work and live. Gallup's solution to the biggest leadership issue of our time*. Washington, D.C., Gallup Press, 2023.

Creary, Stephanie and Rothbard, Nancy, *Want to stop the Great Resignation? Start building inclusive workplaces*, The Philadelphia Tribune (November 21, 2021), [<https://perma.cc/V29C-Y9ET>].

“In our most recent report, ‘Improving Workplace Culture Through Evidence-based Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Practices,’ we offer guidance on how firms can discover their shortcomings and fill in the gaps between what they say and actually do with DEI. Many of our recommendations focus on middle managers, but that doesn’t mean we’re giving senior leaders a pass; without absolute support and strategy from executives, middle managers cannot drive change processes in their organizations. But middle managers ultimately shape the daily experiences of their employees, so they are important architects of workplace culture.

Here are a few of our recommendations that managers can take to effect change:

- Highlight the accomplishments of all team members. Ensure that employees from underrepresented groups are allowed to participate in team activities and share their work.
- Assign meaningful work. Meaningful work helps employees feel their skills and expertise are respected.
- Build strong partnerships. Help employees build their skills and networks by pairing them with peers, then make sure they have access to the resources they need.
- Be transparent about hiring policies. Make sure team members understand how equity and fairness are factored into the process and outcome.
- Encourage team members to speak up, even if they have dissenting opinions. Organizations with healthy dissent are more innovative.
- Reinforce a no-tolerance policy for disrespectful behavior. This policy should go beyond behavior that’s legally actionable, such as sexual harassment and discrimination, to include bullying, spreading rumors and microaggressions.
- Take ownership for communicating DEI initiatives. Explain how the initiatives are linked to business outcomes and the actions the team can take to support them.

Creating an inclusive culture is no longer a ‘nice to have.’ It is a business imperative, especially in the era of the Great Resignation. We’ve seen that good management simply isn’t enough to build equitable workplaces because it doesn’t always address the specific needs of people of color, women and others who come from historically disadvantaged groups and haven’t always had a seat at the table.”


Dhingra, Naina; Samo, Andrew; Schaninger, Bill; and Schrimper, Matt, *Help your employees find purpose—or watch them leave. Employees expect their jobs to bring a significant sense of purpose to their lives. Employers need to help meet this need, or be prepared to lose talent to companies that will*, McKinsey & Company (April 2021), [<https://perma.cc/QUM9-B298>].

Edmondson, Amy, *Right Kind of Wrong: The Science of Failing Well*. New York, New York: Atria Books, 2023.

Efron, Louis, *So you administered an employee engagement survey. Now what?* Gallup (January 4, 2023), [<https://perma.cc/SN7E-C8YF>].

Fastco works, *Why all leaders must pay attention to the wellness of their workers*, Fast Company (December 7, 2020), [<https://perma.cc/J5CX-W2AT>].

“The relationships between managers and their direct reports can play a huge role in employees’ mental well-being. ‘Mental health erodes when people are treated rudely or disrespected or don’t feel valued,’ she says. ‘If you can help middle- and upper-level managers know that caring for people is really important, that really helps.’”

 Frei, Frances, *How to build (and rebuild) trust*, Ted2018 (April 2018), [<https://bit.ly/3cNBsda>].

“Now, trust, if we’re going to rebuild it, we have to understand its component parts. The component parts of trust are super well understood. There’s three things about trust. If you sense that I am being authentic, you are much more likely to trust me. If you sense that I have real rigor in my logic, you are far more likely to trust me. And if you believe that my empathy is directed towards you, you are far more likely to trust me. When all three of these things are working, we have great trust. But if any one of these three gets shaky, if any one of these three wobbles, trust is threatened.”

“So the most common wobble is empathy. The most common wobble is that people just don’t believe that we’re mostly in it for them, and they believe that we’re too self-distracted. And it’s no wonder. We are all so busy with so many demands on our time, it’s easy to crowd out the time and space that empathy requires. For Dylan to be Dylan, that takes real time. And for us, if we have too much to do, we may not have that time. But that puts us into a vicious cycle, because without revealing empathy, it makes everything harder. Without the benefit of the doubt of trust, it makes everything harder, and then we have less and less time for empathy, and so it goes.”

“The third wobble is authenticity, and I find it to be the most vexing. We as a human species can sniff out in a moment, literally in a moment, whether or not someone is being their authentic true self. So in many ways, the prescription is clear. You don’t want to have an authenticity wobble? Be you. Great. And that is super easy to do when you’re around people who are like you. But if you represent any sort of difference, the prescription to ‘be you’ can be super challenging.”

“And to the leaders in the room, it is your obligation to set the conditions that not only make it safe for us to be authentic but make it welcome, make it celebrated, cherish it for exactly what it is, which is the key for us achieving greater excellence than we have ever known is possible.”

Frei, Frances, X (formerly Twitter) post (October 5, 2023), [<https://perma.cc/3NSD-K8GK>].

“Sincere and specific praise is super helpful in accelerating performance. Not a vague thank you or good job, but rather as detailed as possible about what was so beneficial. The goal is that they, and everyone else who hears it, knows what to do more of tomorrow.”

Frei, Frances X. and Morriss, Anne, *Move Fast and Fix Things: The Trusted Leader’s Guide to Solving Hard Problems*. Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business Review Press, 2023.

Frei, Frances and Morriss, Anne, *Uber, and how to fix things when trust is broken*. Fixable podcast (August 28, 2023), [<https://www.iheart.com/podcast/269-fixable-111254055/episode/uber-and-how-to-fix-things-121975551/>]

“How do you rebuild that trust? It’s not about trust falls or company retreats. It’s about real thoughtful, step by step work that anyone can learn.”

Trust is the foundation for everything that we do.

In the absence of trust, we relitigate again, and again, again. We make almost no progress.

In the presence of trust, Holy Toledo, things can move really fast and things can go much higher.

Trust is driven by (or missing because of) three things:

1. **Authenticity** (the real me)
2. **Empathy** (in it for you)
3. **Logic** (with a rigorous plan that is worthy of your trust)

A “wobble” is when authenticity, empathy, or logic gets in the way and is shaky. For example, if employees do not believe that the organization is really in it for them. When one of the three trust-drivers are missing, you risk quicksand instead of a solid foundation.

We all have wobbles. There is no shame in it. We also have anchors.

The empathy wobble is the most common (for example, impatience).

An authenticity wobble example is when your actions do not mirror your words.

Logic-wobble fix: Communicate your logic with others. If you don’t share your logic (the “because), folks are less likely to trust. And, stylistically, deliver your point first and then give the supporting evidence. Do not begin with storytelling. Beautiful storytelling only works on top of logic. If others are doubting your logic, they will be frustrated if you begin with storytelling. Communicate your point first, share your evidence, and your audience will be less likely to question your logic.

A related logic wobble is a “**substance**” wobble. You’ll never have a substance wobble if you just speak confidently about what you know. Substance wobbles develop when you speak *just as confidently* about things you *don’t* know. Substance wobbles undermine trust because when your responses prove to be wrong, others will begin to doubt everything (they do not know when to trust your confidence).

Substance-wobble fix: Either delay giving a response or lower the confidence you have with your answer. Ways to lower the confidence but still communicate what you want to say include: Here is my initial thought . . . , or This is my hypothesis . . . You can also volunteer “I don’t know but this is the process I am going to follow to get the answer.”

Empathy-wobble fix: Empathy wobblers tend to be the smartest, most analytical, fastest processors in the room. Their engagement in meetings peaks as soon as they grasp the discussion point (and they probably “get it” before the others in the room), and then their meeting engagement plummets and flatlines until the meeting ends. Empathy wobblers use every non-verbal cue to show that they are “done” with the meeting (like multi-tasking, fidgeting, arms crossed). The empathy-wobble fix is to stay deeply

engaged in the meeting until everyone gets the point. Be present in the presence of other people. If you cannot be “present” during a remote meeting, then go video off.

Authenticity-wobble fix. Set the conditions for unique contributions to come forward. You cannot fix an authenticity wobble alone and it’s the hardest wobble to fix. The comfort of being able to show up as yourself is not equally distributed. Everyone else in the room can make it easier or harder for you to show up as your authentic self. And this can change as individuals change from the minority to the majority, or the majority to the minority in a group. Three factors contribute to whether a person feels they can be their authentic self:

1. Do I feel reasonably safe?

2. Do I feel welcomed?

3. Are my unique contributions sought after? When I can answer a question that uniquely comes from my lived experience, you are celebrating my unique experience and my authenticity is going to flourish.

When you have a skeptic (lack of trust) and you think it was your fault, think about what they may have doubted about you:

Did they doubt that it was the real you (authenticity wobble)?

Did they doubt that your intentions included them (empathy wobble)?

Did they doubt that you had a good idea (logic wobble)?

Most of us are building trust most of the time. When trust is lost, this is where you can begin to consider how to approach rebuilding it.

It is a myth that trust cannot be rebuilt.

Frei, Frances and Morriss, Anne, *Unleashed: The Unapologetic Leader’s Guide to Empowering Everyone Around You*. Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business Review Press, 2020.

“Leadership is about empowering other people as a result of your presence—and making sure that impact continues into your absence.”

“You empower communities—organizations and beyond—when you change the way people think and act.”

Gallup, Employee engagement videos playlist (November 17, 2020)



How a culture of quality work boosts employee engagement: Why it’s important and how to improve it

(1-minute video) [<https://youtu.be/DTVcgWddaBo>]




How caring for employees improves employee engagement: Why it’s important and how to improve it


(1½-minute video) [<https://youtu.be/wiRbcuJoAPc>]





How continuous learning for employees boosts engagement: Why it’s important and how to improve it


(1½-minute video) [<https://youtu.be/uX0zyaj5kKk>]


- 


How listening to employees' opinions can grow engagement: Why it's important and how to improve it
(2-minute video) [<https://youtu.be/6DAX9tMn5Xw>]
- 


How progress reviews with employees can improve engagement: Why it's important and how to improve it
(1½-minute video) [<https://youtu.be/06IIMDVSvhQ>]
- 


How to connect your employee's role to the company mission: Why it's important and how to improve it
(2½-minute video) [<https://youtu.be/O7Cx49nr5v8>]
- 


How to give your employees the opportunity to use their strengths: Why it's important and how to improve it
(2-minute video) [<https://youtu.be/FmqnYmbW68s>]
- 

How work equipment and materials impacts employee engagement: Why it's important and how to improve it
(1½-minute video) [<https://youtu.be/XMwR3sqlph4>]
- 

Why encouraging employee development boosts engagement: Why it's important and how to improve it
(2-minute video) [<https://youtu.be/GzcBO7svAkY>]
- 

Why having a best friend at work improves engagement: Why it's important and how to improve it
(2½-minute video) [<https://youtu.be/asFTR-ueP9I>]
- 

Why is employee engagement important?
(1½-minute video) [<https://youtu.be/KZjKY9I6UYE>]
- 

Why recognition improves employee engagement: Why it's important and how to improve it
(2½-minute video) [https://youtu.be/oUnSQZKLn_E]
- 

Why work expectations are integral to employee engagement: Why it's important and how to improve it
(2½-minute video) [https://youtu.be/6_t6JPGkqZY]

Gallup Thriving Podcast, *Getting your work culture right* (August 24, 2023)
[<https://www.spreaker.com/user/gallupstrengthscenter/getting-your-work-culture-right>]

“Gallup has found that employees who strongly agree that they feel connected to their culture are more likely to be engaged and recommend their organization as a place to work and less likely to feel burned out or look for a new job.”

An organization has a distinct culture, whether they've spent time trying to craft it or not.

Culture starts at the top.

Culture is how people interact and work with each other to get things done.

Among U.S. employees, four in 10 strongly agree with the statement, “The mission or purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important.” By moving that ratio to eight in 10 employees, organizations could realize a 41% reduction in absenteeism, a 50% drop in patient safety incidents, and a 33% improvement in quality. Culture also has the power to improve your organization’s compliance, safety, innovation, strengths and DEI goals.

A toxic work culture is most often a confused culture.

When you don’t have your culture, right, and you’re either unclear on what those values are, misaligned on how to live them out, uncommitted to actually enabling them through good times and in tough times, then all of a sudden, what happens is those things that sound good on a piece of paper or look good up on the wall, don’t actually live out every day. And that’s when the culture is toxic. So it’s not just that you don’t have strong values, it’s that you’re not behaving or living them out in a way that’s appropriate.

Culture becomes confusing when different aspects of your organization communicate conflicting messages.

Misalignment is also why changing work culture fails. In most organizations, new initiatives often change only one aspect of the culture while leaving the rest of the system intact, or they remain superficial and do not change the hard rules of their toxic workplace culture, such as organizational structure, performance incentives, or management expectations.

Think about misalignment this way: Many organizations have their core values proudly displayed on their walls, on their website and in company marketing materials. But if employees themselves can’t tell you a personal experience that supports those stated values, it’s likely those values are not being lived by the business.

When people are in an environment where it feels like they’re working against one another, more than working for each other, that’s when they start to look around and say, “What am I doing here?”

The consequences of an inconsistent unclear workplace culture can be dire because frontline managers and employees ultimately create the local culture on their teams. If employees don’t understand leaders’ vision for the culture, their actions won’t support—or worse will inhibit—that ideal culture. This can result in a work environment that is chaotic and disengaging, where employees feel creatively stifled, and leaders struggle to realize their strategic aims. It matters because perception is reality. No matter what a company tells the world, employees’ behavior will speak louder.

Five drivers that enable organization culture:

- 1. Leaders.** Leaders aligning and defining and driving adoption of the culture, also through their communication styles.
- 2. Values and rituals.** How do you celebrate success? How do you communicate?
- 3. Human capital.** How do you promote, distribute work, bring teams together?
- 4. Work teams and structure.** You can get something done once because people will form as a team. But how that team comes together and collaborates will dictate whether you can continuously form teams to take on more and more audacious projects and get them done with the same excellence.
- 5. How performance is tracked, monitored, and measured.**

Good company culture doesn't happen by accident. It's often designed and nurtured by leaders who learn how to improve company culture, and work consistently to drive change.

That becomes more of the responsibilities of the manager, that manager supervisor and team lead. They're the ones who need to be living it out every day, coaching for it, believing in it, and recognizing and celebrating it when it's happening. And then also knowing how to correct for it when it's not happening. So if the organization can see these things being lived out every single day—that's the magic of culture—it must start with your leaders, it must start with a bold vision and a purpose. But it then must cascade all the way down.

Gallup Thriving Podcast, *Well-being: The other stock price for organizations* (August 8, 2023) [<https://www.spreaker.com/user/gallupstrengthscenter/wellbeing-the-other-stock-price-for-orga>]

"Well-being is not the same as wellness *** Ultimately, it represents how someone's life is going."

Well-being has five essential elements that should be viewed holistically:

- 1. Career** (previously known as "purpose". The career element is liking what you do and having the right career and life for you. Do you like what you do? Do you get to use your strengths doing it? Are you learning and growing? Are you setting and reaching goals?
- 2. Community.** The emotional attachment that you have to the area where you live. Are you proud of it? Is it irreplaceable to you? Do you feel safe in it? Do you give back to it?
- 3. Social.** The energy that you get from family and friends. Having someone in your life who cares about your well-being.
- 4. Physical, mental, and emotional health.**
- 5. Financial.** Financial well-being is about how you live within your means and manage your affairs to build financial security.

When Gallup surveys employee well-being, people are categorized into three groups: people who are thriving, struggling, or suffering.

Around 50-55% of American adults are in the **thriving** category. This means that they have significantly fewer health problems, fewer sick days, less worry and stress, and more happiness in their life.

Those who are **struggling** have an inconsistent well-being. They have moderate views of their current life or more negative views of their future life, they report more stress, they take more sick days, are more likely to smoke and probably eat less healthy.

Around 3-4% of U.S. adults are in the **suffering** category. They experience food insecurity, shelter insecurity, are more likely to have physical pain, less likely to have health insurance.

Employee well-being is connected to employee engagement. Thriving employees fuel a thriving workplace. And when employees are struggling, experiencing negative emotions or feeling burned out, an organization can suffer. Well-being also makes employees more resilient—an important characteristic for organizations amid sudden and major disruptions.

Well-being's impact extends far beyond how people feel. It affects the number of sick days employees take, their job performance, burnout, and the likelihood of their leaving your organization.

Improving employee well-being has serious outcomes. For example, teams that believe their organization cares about their well-being have better customer engagement, profitability, productivity, and lower turnover and safety incidents. Leaders who wish to attract and retain star talent, especially during a tight labor market, should prioritize well-being and take steps to create a thriving culture. When looking for a job, many employees seek employment that contributes to their well-being and helps them create work-life balance. And when well-being in the workplace is high, turnover drops; but when employees struggle or suffer, they're about twice as likely to change jobs.

In an employee survey, when people strongly agree that their employer cares about their overall well-being, those responding employees are much less likely to search for a new job, they're about 70% less likely to experience a lot of burnout, they're vastly more likely to advocate for their organization, externally. So they're good external ambassadors for the organization. And they're much more likely to thrive.

Facilitating a culture of well-being isn't just the right thing to do. It makes good business sense. *** It's in an employer's best interest for workers to have a thriving life and bring the effect of that thriving life to work.

It's not up to the employees to make sure their organization cares about their well-being it's up to the leaders to do that.

Gallup Workplace, *What Is Organizational Culture? And Why Does It Matter?* (undated), [<https://perma.cc/32KW-4TZM>]

This resource-rich post explores:

01 What Is Organizational Culture?

02 Why Is Company Culture So Important?

- Culture attracts world-class talent to your organization
- Culture creates alignment
- Culture focuses engaged employees
- Culture affects performance (strengths, diversity and inclusion, safety, innovation, compliance, and high performance)

03 How Does Leadership Influence Organizational Culture?

04 What Does It Mean for a Workplace to Have a “Toxic Culture”?

05 Should Your Company Culture Match Your Brand?

- Culture begins with your company purpose: *Why do we exist?*
- Culture determines your brand: *How do we want to be known to the world?*
- Culture brings your company purpose and brand to life: *How does work get done around here?*

06 What Are the Key Drivers of a Company's Culture?

- Leadership and communication
- Values and rituals

- Human capital
- Work teams and structures
- Performance

07 Can Organizational Culture Change?

- Understand the current state of your culture.
- Define the gap between your ideal and actual culture.
- Align activities, initiatives and systems.
- Establish accountability and ongoing evaluation.

08 Your Best Company Culture Will Be Unique

Harter, Jim, *A Great Manager's Most Important Habit*, Gallup Workplace (May 30, 2023), [<https://perma.cc/U8U4-D2WD>].

“80% of employees who say they have received *meaningful feedback* in the past week are fully engaged—regardless of how many days they worked in the office.

In fact, the boost from meaningful feedback gives four times the lift in engagement than having the ‘right number’ of days in the office. The problem is, Gallup found in a recent study that among nearly 15,000 employees, only 16% said the last conversation with their manager was extremely meaningful.

What counts as meaningful?

Gallup researchers studied the most common characteristics of extremely meaningful and less meaningful conversations. These are the top five characteristics of meaningful conversations, in order of importance:

Recognition or appreciation for recent work. Gallup and Workhuman found that only 10% of employees are asked *how* they like to be recognized and appreciated. And only 23% of employees strongly agree that they get the right amount of recognition for the work they do. Those who do are four times more likely to be engaged.

Collaboration and relationships. In the hybrid workplace, collaboration and relationships are at risk. Gallup found that the correlations between coworker relationships and intention to stay as well as likelihood to recommend the company were stronger in 2022 than before the pandemic. Managers play a key role in connecting the right team partners.

Current goals and priorities at work. Clarity of work expectations has been slipping, especially for younger workers. More remote work means weekly check-ins are essential as customer and business needs change.

The length of the conversation. Between 15 and 30 minutes is enough time for a meaningful conversation, but only if it happens frequently. In fact, 15- to 30-minute conversations have a greater impact than 30- to 60-minute conversations if they occur regularly. But if managers don’t give employees feedback every week, they will need longer conversations to catch up.

Employee strengths or the things they do well. Managers can have much more meaningful discussions about how each person gets their work done if those conversations are based on what they do best.”

Harter, Jim, *Leaders: Ignore Employee Wellbeing At Your Own Risk*, Gallup Workplace (July 6, 2023), [<https://perma.cc/P72N-G9FX>].

“Employees who strongly agree that their employer cares about their overall wellbeing, compared with those who don’t, are:

3x more likely to be engaged at work

69% less likely to actively search for a new job

71% less likely to report experiencing a lot of burnout

5x more likely to strongly advocate for their company as a place to work

5x more likely to strongly agree that they trust the leadership of their organization

36% more likely to be thriving in their overall lives

Gallup has also found that teams most likely to feel like their organization cares about their wellbeing have higher customer engagement, profitability and productivity; lower turnover; and fewer safety incidents.”

Jee, Vibhas Ratan and O’Boyle, Ed, *Diagnosing a broken culture—and what to do about it*, Gallup Workplace (August 4, 2023), [<https://perma.cc/49XA-4UUW>].

A recent Gallup survey found that only two in 10 employees feel strongly connected to their organization’s culture.

Developing a sound strategy to revitalize an organization’s culture requires more than an off-site leadership retreat. Leaders must clearly define what culture means and identify its fundamental components, and then create a compelling vision of what the aspirational culture will offer to employees.

Leaders can execute effective culture transformation by following four steps:

1. Define (or redefine) your culture. Culture is “how we do things around here.”

2. Align your workforce. While only 43% of leaders strongly agree that they feel connected to their organization’s culture, far fewer individual contributors, 20%, feel the same. Only one in four U.S. employees strongly agree that they can apply their organization’s values to their daily work, and only about one in three strongly agree that they believe in their organization’s values. If values are intended to clarify culture, leaders must first define what those values mean.

3. Drive adoption. Driving employee adoption of culture requires more than plastering office walls with posters displaying your organization’s purpose or values, throwing pizza parties, giving away swag, or allocating a culture budget. Rather, it requires actions that link culture to your organization’s mission and brand, and that bring culture to life in the hearts and minds of your employees through behavioral change, processes and systems, and even policies.

4. Sustain your ecosystem. Culture is a living, breathing ecosystem that must be continually nurtured and evolved. Organizations must build systems, structures and rituals to maintain a consistent focus on positive cultural behaviors. The absence of a supportive ecosystem will only frustrate the efforts of leaders and managers: Structural and systems support is essential to ensure that culture will continually thrive. An organization’s decision-making process must consider the impact of decisions on its culture and core values. Policies and procedures must enable culture rather than become barriers and obstacles to culture adoption at scale. Organizational culture is a

very local phenomenon, and the manager is the conduit through which employees experience their employer's culture.

The only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture. If you do not manage culture, it manages you, and you may not even be aware of the extent to which this is happening.

Gallup finds that employees who feel strongly connected to their organization's culture are 3.7 times as likely to be engaged and 5.2 times as likely to recommend their organization as a great workplace. Reinforcing the employee connection to culture also delivers genuine business impact: The research shows that just a 10% improvement in employees' connection with the mission or purpose of their organization leads to an 8.1% decrease in employee turnover.

King County, Washington, *2022 Employee Engagement Survey Action Planning Discussion Guide and Tool Kit* (undated), [<https://perma.cc/2QLU-A8L3>].

LaGratta Consulting LLC, *Court Voices Project: Using court user feedback to guide courts' pandemic responses* (August 2022), [<https://perma.cc/64HJ-UPHM>].

Possible user-feedback questions for in-person or virtual court users might include:

Preferences and satisfaction with virtual and/or in-person court experiences.

- Would you have preferred to handle your court business differently today? [multiple choice]
- Why would you have preferred that option instead? [multiple choice]
- What did you value most about today's court experience? [multiple choice]
- Would you have preferred to receive self-help services differently today? [multiple choice]
- Did you have a choice in how you handled your court business today? [multiple choice]

Perceptions of fairness (such as respect, voice, understanding, neutrality).

- Did the court treat you fairly today? [thumbs up/thumbs down]
- Did you understand what happened in court today? [thumbs up/thumbs down]
- Do you know who to contact if you have questions? [yes/no]
- Did our advocates treat you with respect today? [thumbs up/thumbs down]
- Did the court respect your health and safety today? [thumbs up/thumbs down]

Wait times and perceptions of the court's respect for court users' time.

- Did the court show respect for your time today? [thumbs up/thumbs down]
- How long did you wait for your case to be called today? [multiple choice]
- How long did you wait to be helped today? [multiple choice]
- Did you feel your time in the Probation Department was respected today? [thumbs up/thumbs down]

Other.

- How could the court improve its service for you? [open-ended]
- How could the court serve you better? [open-ended]
- What else could we do to assist you? [open-ended]

- Can you tell us more about your experience? [open-ended]
- Is this your first time in the [court name]? [yes/no]

Liu, Alex, *Making Joy a Priority at Work*, Harvard Business Review (July 17, 2019), [<https://perma.cc/LXS3-7J9Z>].

Lorenz, Emily, *How to Bridge the Generational Gap in Recognition*, Gallup Workplace (August 29, 2022), [<https://perma.cc/HGU9-VX4C>].

McCord, Patty, *8 lessons on building a company people enjoy working for*, Ted, The Way We Work (February 2019), [<https://bit.ly/3RhFDg4>].

1. Your employees are adults.
2. The job of management isn't to control people, it's to build great teams.
3. People want to do work that means something. After they do it, they should be free to move on.
4. Everyone in your company should understand the business.
5. Everyone in your company should be able to handle the truth.
6. Your company needs to live out its values.
7. All start-up ideas are stupid.
8. Every company needs to be excited for change.

Maynard, Micheline, *Satisfaction Guaranteed: How Zingerman's® Built a Corner Deli into a Global Community*. New York, New York: Scribner, 2022.

"A key component of a vision is for Zingerman's to share it with employees, so they can understand the company's priorities and know why decisions get made."

"We are well aware that we can only give as good service to guests as we receive from each other. Internal service is foundational to our success. Servant leadership is lived and taught at all levels of the organization."

Milkman, Katy, *How to Change: The Science of Getting from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be*. New York, New York: Portfolio/Penguin, 2021.

"When policymakers, organizations, or scientists applied a one-size-fits-all strategy to change behavior, the results were mixed. But when they began by asking what stood in the way of progress—say, why their employees weren't saving enough money or getting flu shots—and *then* developed targeted strategies to change behavior, the results were far better."

Musilek, Julie, *How PwC, Kimpton and OhioHealth Share and Act on Employee Survey Results*, Great Place to Work (February 11, 2021) [<https://perma.cc/U28H-8GB7>].

National Alliance on Mental Illness, *Mental Health By the Numbers* (2023) [<https://www.nami.org/mhstats> and <https://perma.cc/QQ3R-KGWW>].

"You are NOT ALONE. Millions of people are affected by mental illness each year. Across the country, many people just like you work, perform, create, compete, laugh, love and inspire every day. 1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness."

National Center for State Courts, *Addressing the Mental Health and Well-Being of Judges and Court Employees: A Pandemic Resource* (January 16, 2021), [<https://perma.cc/R96X-DEUF>].

“Focusing on the well-being of our workforce is as important as maximizing the use of technology, reconfiguring courtrooms and courthouses to provide social distancing, identifying strategies to hold virtual jury trials, and determining how to return to ‘business as usual.’ Court leaders set the tone by actively listening to employee concerns and by helping the court workforce be comfortable in voicing those concerns. The diversity of our court workforce should also always be kept in mind. Individual needs, experiences, and perceptions are varied and so can be very different from one judge or employee to the next.”

Netflix Culture—Seeking Excellence, [<https://jobs.netflix.com/culture>]


Perry, Bruce, D., *Insights for Educators: Supporting Mental Wellness*, ThinkTVPBS (August 29, 2023), [<https://youtu.be/dXyO0Q6-TL4?>].

“One of the things that we’ve seen over the last couple of years during the pandemic is increasing awareness by organizations about self-care about the needs of the people in the organization. And many organizations have, you know, again, with good intentions, supported the development of individual self-care plans. And they brought in resources and supports to help people learn how to meditate and think about putting together a self-care plan, which is all well and good.

However, one of the things that we know is that you can have the best self-care plan in the world. But if you go back day after day after day to an organization that is grinding you down, the self-care program can’t overcome the destructive impact of being in an environment like that.

And so we’ve continued to urge the development of organizational care models, where the organization itself really looks at its own practices, program elements, and policies to ensure that they’re in synchrony with basically a belief system, that we’re going to take care of the people who are doing all of this hard work.”

Perry, Bruce, D. and Winfrey, Oprah, *What Happened to You? Conversations on Trauma, Resilience, and Healing*. New York, New York: Flatiron Books, 2021.

 Porath, Christine, *Why being respectful to your coworkers is good for business*, TedxUniversityofNevada (January 2018), [<https://bit.ly/3qrSZed>].

“[H]ow you show up and treat people means everything. Either you lift people up by respecting them, making them feel valued, appreciated and heard, or you hold people down by making them feel small, insulted, disregarded or excluded. And who you choose to be means everything. I study the effects of incivility on people. What is incivility? It’s disrespect or rudeness. It includes a lot of different behaviors, from mocking or belittling someone to teasing people in ways that sting to telling offensive jokes to texting in meetings. And what’s uncivil to one person may be absolutely fine to another. Take texting while someone’s speaking to you. Some of us may find it rude, others may think it’s absolutely civil. So it really depends. It’s all in the eyes of the beholder and whether that person felt disrespected. We may not mean to make someone feel that way, but when we do, it has consequences.”

“We sent a survey to business school alumni working in all different organizations. We asked them to write a few sentences about one experience where they were treated rudely, disrespectfully or insensitively, and to answer questions about how they reacted.

One person told us about a boss that made insulting statements like, ‘That’s kindergartner’s work,’ and another tore up someone’s work in front of the entire team. And what we found is that incivility made people less motivated: 66 percent cut back work efforts, 80 percent lost time worrying about what happened, and 12 percent left their job.”

“Steve, a physician, told me about a doctor that he worked with who was never very respectful, especially to junior staff and nurses. But Steve told me about this one particular interaction where this doctor shouted at a medical team. Right after the interaction, the team gave the wrong dosage of medication to their patient. Steve said the information was right there on the chart, but somehow everyone on the team missed it. He said they lacked the attention or awareness to take it into account. Simple mistake, right? Well, that patient died.”

“Researchers in Israel have actually shown that medical teams exposed to rudeness perform worse not only in all their diagnostics, but in all the procedures they did. This was mainly because the teams exposed to rudeness didn’t share information as readily, and they stopped seeking help from their teammates. And I see this not only in medicine but in all industries.”

“So where do you start? How can you lift people up and make people feel respected? Well, the nice thing is, it doesn’t require a huge shift. Small things can make a big difference. I found that thanking people, sharing credit, listening attentively, humbly asking questions, acknowledging others and smiling has an impact.”

Scott, Kim, *Radical Respect*. New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 2024.

Sull, Donald; Sull, Charles; Cipolli, William; and Brighenti, Caio, *Why Every Leader Needs to Worry About Toxic Culture*. MIT Sloan Management Review (March 16, 2022), [<https://perma.cc/5VFD-KQG8>]. (In terms of organizational culture, the “toxic five” attributes of there being those who are (1) disrespectful, (2) noninclusive, (3) unethical, (4) cutthroat, or (5) abusive “have by far the largest negative impact on how employees rate their [organizational] culture and have contributed most to employee attrition throughout the Great Resignation.”)

Sull, Donald; Sull, Charles; and Zweig, Ben, *Toxic Culture Is Driving The Great Resignation*. MIT Sloan Management Review (January 11, 2022), [<https://perma.cc/97XD-AW3P>].

“Much of the media discussion about the Great Resignation has focused on employee dissatisfaction with wages. How frequently and positively employees mentioned compensation, however, ranks 16th among all topics in terms of predicting employee turnover. This result is consistent with a large body of evidence that pay has only a moderate impact on employee turnover. (Compensation can, however, be an important predictor of attrition in certain settings, such as nurses in large health care systems).”

“In general, corporate culture is a much more reliable predictor of industry-adjusted attrition than how employees assess their compensation. * * * A toxic corporate culture, for example, is 10.4 times more powerful than compensation in predicting a company’s attrition rate compared with its industry.”

“Our analysis found that the leading elements contributing to toxic cultures include failure to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion; workers feeling disrespected; and unethical behavior.”

“Failure to recognize performance. Employees are more likely to leave companies that fail to distinguish between high performers and laggards when it comes to recognition and rewards. Companies that fail to recognize and reward strong performers have higher rates of attrition, and the same is true for employers that tolerate underperformance. The issue is not compensation below market rates, but rather recognition—both informal and financial—that is not linked to effort and results. High-performing employees are the most likely to resent a lack of recognition for their results, which means that companies may be losing some of their most productive workers during the Great Resignation.”

Sutton, Robert, I. and Rao, Huggy, *The Friction Project: How smart leaders make the right things easier and the wrong things harder*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2024.

Tyner, Dr. Artika R., *The Inclusive Leader: Taking Intentional Action for Justice and Equity*. American Bar Association, 2021.

United States Surgeon General, *Framework for Workplace Mental Health & Well-Being* (2022), [<https://perma.cc/255F-ZHWW>]

University of Michigan’s Center for Positive Organizations online resources [<https://positiveorgs.bus.umich.edu/>].

Warzel, Charlie and Peterson, Anne Helen, *Out of Office: The Big Problem and Bigger Promise of Working from Home*. New York, New York: Alfred A. Knof, 2021.

When fostering a culture of trust, “managers trust the people they manage, and those people in turn trust that their managers have their best interests at heart. Each party has to have faith in the other, which means all parties have to feel comfortable with a baseline of vulnerability.”

Wetzler, Jeff, *How to Get the Honest Input You Need from Your Employees*, Harvard Business Review (December 18, 2023) [<https://perma.cc/DM4W-VDNZ>].

Zheng, Lily, *DEI deconstructed: Your No-Nonsense Guide to Doing the Work and Doing It Right*. Oakland, California: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2023.



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