MISSION ENGAGEMENT: A Nonprofit Employee Survey
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PURPOSE & SUMMARY

• Employee turnover and burnout can keep purpose-driven organizations from maximizing their social impact.
• Nonprofits could reduce burnout with a practical employee engagement survey that is tailored to their purpose-driven work.
• Presented is an 18-item survey, adapted from existing academic literature and expert interviews, to help nonprofits assess and react to the health of their workforce. A pilot deployment of the survey demonstrates internal validity.

METHODS

1. Review literature on employee engagement, discover validated survey questions.
2. Through expert interviews discover how surveys can be adapted for purpose-driven organizations.
3. Design and deploy a pilot survey. Test survey for internal validity and examine practical takeaways.

RESEARCH

Employee engagement is a measure of an employee’s physical, emotional, and cognitive capacity thrive at work. Surveys using this definition, based on the work of Kahn (1990) and Saks (2006), have been empirically validated. For nonprofits, the concept of value congruence (Caldwell, Chatman, & O’Reilly, 1990) was adapted and integrated. These subcategories of employee engagement emerged:

Job Engagement
- Employee’s affinity for the functional aspects of their job.

Org Engagement
- Employee’s affinity for the organization as a member in its group.

Mission Engagement
- Employee’s affinity with organization’s purpose.

REFERENCES


SPECIAL THERAPY

Must have

SURVEY

JOB ENGAGEMENT

My job fits how I see myself.
I can handle the physical demands of my role.
I feel overwhelmed by the things going on at my organization.
I feel emotionally used up at the end of the workday.
My job is essential to the organization.
I like the identity my job gives me.

ORGANIZATION ENGAGEMENT

My interactions with my co-workers are rewarding.
I worry about how others perceive me at work.
I trust my supervisor.
Rules within the organization are applied consistently.

MISSION ENGAGEMENT

What this organization stands for is important to me.
I am proud to tell others that I am a part of this organization.
If the values of this organization were different, I would not be as attached to this organization.
I feel a sense of “ownership” for this organization rather than being just an employee.

DATA ANALYSIS

• Factor analysis indicates internal validity.
• Anticipated correlations are statistically significant:

Survey Item | Pearson’s r-value | Correlating Item
--- | --- | ---
My job is essential to the organization. | 0.618 < 0.001* | My work is a part of the outcomes my organization seeks to create.
I trust my supervisor. | 0.683 < 0.001* | Rules within the organization are applied consistently.
I feel overwhelmed by the things going on at my organization. | 0.503 0.010* | I worry about how others perceive me at work.

SURVEY INTERPRETATION

1. Survey questions can be interpreted by response frequencies.
2. Survey responses can be scored and averaged.
3. Individual scores, and the aggregate survey, can be averaged by engagement category.

Anticipated correlations are statistically significant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Strong Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Moderate Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Low Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Moderate Disengagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Strong Disengagement</td>
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</tbody>
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