

What Do People Seek in an Employment Relationship?

Over the last twenty five years the well know Gallup Organization which provides survey research results to organizations has interviewed more than a million employees asking hundreds of different questions on every aspect of their work. Searching for patterns in their research Gallup identified the questions that best measure the strength of a workplace. In other words, what do staff look for in meaningful work and a healthy place in which to do that work?

Survey your employees at least once a year using the questions below. You may use only the first six questions or all twelve. Compile the results. Feed the results back to your employees and act on the top concerns. If you don't, not acting is far worse than never asking your employees in the first place.

The first six questions are:

1. Do I know what is expected of me at work?
2. Do I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right?
3. At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?
4. In the last seven days, have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?
5. Does my supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about me as a person?
6. Is there someone at work who encourages my development?

The second set of six questions:

7. At work, do my opinions seem to count?
8. Does the mission/purpose of my organization make me feel my job is important?
9. Are my co-workers committed to doing quality work?
10. Do I have a best friend at work?
11. In the last six months, has someone at work talked to me about my progress?
12. This last year, have I had opportunities at work to learn and grow?

Source: Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman, First Break All the Rules (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999), 27-28.