



When looking at your overall employee experience sometimes it's difficult to know where to start. Well its simple really, ask the right questions and really listen to the answers. It sounds obvious but it's very often overlooked, especially when you are under pressure and trying to keep your head above water. These are my top tips to make sure you do it right

## WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

Its important that you really think about what you are trying to achieve in order to work out the right questions to ask -

- ◆ Are you looking to change your operating model?
- ◆ Is this a short term plan or are you thinking about a longer term solution?
- ◆ Are you open to doing things differently?
- ◆ Is this a no holds barred discussion or are you asking something specific?

Be honest with yourself about how far you are willing to go when making changes and then plan accordingly

## GATHERING INFORMATION

Depending on what you are going to ask will affect how you gather your information.

*Questionnaires* are useful for larger groups and good if confidentiality is a factor. Some people worry about expressing how they really feel and need a level of anonymity to be completely honest.

*Focus groups* will facilitate discussion and are good for dealing with a specific subject where there might be lots of opinions and solutions.

*One to one interviews* are a more personal approach and can give people an opportunity to really open up about their feelings – especially if done with someone external that doesn't have any pre-conceived ideas or loyalties to any individual within the business.

## ASK THEN LISTEN

There is no point asking someone what they think if you do not want to listen to their response. Your team are not stupid and will know if you are just paying them lip service!

If you've chosen a face to face option you should practice **Active Listening**. Whilst this might sound easy it does take some practice to really hear what people are saying to you.

If you are using a questionnaire or other non-verbal tool then take the time to read what they have said, without judgement and with an open mind.

## TAKE ACTION

Do not fall into the trap of putting lots of effort into working out your questions and asking your team for their views and opinions and then not acting on it.

**This is more damaging than not asking them at all!**

You don't have to action everything they ask for but pick one thing that will impact the majority and implement it, quickly. If you drag your feet for weeks after they provided feedback you will lose credibility and the whole process will be wasted.

## COMMUNICATE

It's vital that you communicate your plans with your team. Be clear about what you are trying to achieve and by when. Let them know when they can expect to hear back from you and then share your plans for acting on their feedback.

Hopefully you found these tips useful.

If you would like to know more or would like help in implementing a listening exercise, please get in touch

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