Tips to Encourage Employee Input

These are ways for a steering committee or managers to encourage employee input on potential solutions.

Encouraging employee input

- Give notice of upcoming opportunities for employees to share ideas
- One-on-one/small group meetings may increase the likelihood that people will participate by speaking with them individually or in small groups
- Committee involve an existing committee or form a new committee to focus on solutions to identified challenges
- Suggestion box provide opportunities for employees to confidentially contribute ideas



How to move toward solutions

- Explain why you want input
- Lead with questions and use 'we' not 'l': "How do you think we can alleviate some of the stress during busy days?"
- Show employees you are listening
 - Find a time to meet when you are somewhat free from distractions
 - Be open to new ideas
 - Reflect back what you have heard



How to manage expectations without shutting the discussion down

- Explain that all ideas are welcome, but budget and time constraints may determine what is possible
- Acknowledge ideas even if they are not possible: "Yes, it would be helpful to hire more staff, but we don't have the budget. Let's talk about other ways to address your concern."
- Making things better for one will make things better for the team – recognize that some solutions may benefit or impact some employees more than others
- Ask employees to think of 2 benefits + 2 challenges for solutions they suggest so they can envision the result of a change



Action Planning

- Determine what solutions are possible and pick
 1-2 that can be started quickly and more easily
- To prioritize solutions, list feasible solutions on a poster board and ask employees to put a mark next to their preferred solution
- Ask for accountability: encourage employees to help carry out the selected solution(s) and add their names to the action plan steps



Forbes Coaches Council: 14 ways to be more mindful of how you speak to employees https://www.forbes.com/sites/ forbescoachescouncil/2017/05/01/14-ways-to-be-more-mindful-of-how-you-speak-to-employees/#4406bd752fe9 Adam Bryant, NY Times: How to be a better listener https://www.nytimes.com/guides/smarterliving/be-a-better-listener This work was supported by a grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (U19 OH 008861) and created by the DFCI Research Team. HARVARD T.H. CHAN

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