



**Pulse Check Survey: Organizational Culture**  
(Adapted from Survey Guide Developed by [OrgVitals](#) and [Unitonomy](#))

Data gathered through a culture assessment are meant to create conversations between the culture manager or culture consultant and the people participating at the organization being assessed (the employees).

The intent of organizational culture assessment questions is to signal where individuals need support, where collaboration is happening and thriving, and how the workplace is performing across key areas of organizational culture.

When you run your employee survey questions about culture, include the questions below in your assessment. These corporate culture survey question templates, in truth aren't positioned as questions, but rather statements to agree or disagree.

The best work culture survey assessments use these types of Likert Scale statements because they are really fast for survey respondents to complete. Likert surveys point scales allow for deep analysis and correlation across metrics. We recommend using the scale "Strongly Disagree" "Disagree" "Neutral" "Agree" and "Strongly Agree."

These thirty culture survey question examples are in no particular order. Use this as an initial employee survey template for your culture questions or employee feedback form. NOTE: Remove the **section titles (in bold)** when putting the questions into the final survey document, as these titles are here to give you context and background.

Be sure that when you administer the survey, it's totally anonymous and that you PROMPTLY report results and engage staff in meaningful discussions of them.



### **Employee Engagement Survey Questions<sup>1</sup>**

1. I am really focused when I am working.
2. I really push myself to work beyond what is expected of me.

### **Employee Connectedness<sup>2</sup>**

3. I feel a connection to my colleagues.
4. My colleagues seek out and value my input.

### **Employee Wellbeing<sup>3</sup>**

5. I look forward to beginning work each day.
6. I am not aware of work stressing me out.

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<sup>1</sup> What is employee engagement? [OrgVitals](#) co-founder and one of the world's most knowledgeable experts on employee engagement, [Dr. Brad Shuck](#) defines employee engagement as the degree of intensity, maintenance, and direction of effort and energy that an employee gives toward their overall working experience. Employee engagement is an outcome of how an organization empowers its people in their shared commitment to the work.

Employee engagement surveys enable companies to assess employee sentiment at scale to track the collective voice across staff over time.

High scores for these work engagement questions suggest that employees are fully engaged in their work. Mid-range scores could indicate diminishing levels of emotional commitment and energy toward work. Knowing how to measure employee engagement and developing your own employee engagement benchmarks are essential to understanding your culture.

<sup>2</sup> Connectedness is defined as the degree to which an employee feels emotionally and cognitively attached to their overall place of work and to their colleagues. In light of the pandemic and the surge of remote work, connectedness is one of the most critical elements to track.

High scores suggest that employees are attached and feel a sense of belonging to their work community.

<sup>3</sup> Well-being isn't simply asking about work-life balance. These survey questions need to dig into work stress. Stress is defined as a state of emotional strain resulting from adverse or very demanding contextual circumstances. High scores suggest that employees are experiencing high levels of cognitive and emotional tension that could impact their work performance. Short bursts of stress can actually be motivating and are normal. Long periods of chronic stress are an early warning sign of employee distress. A for-purpose survey system like OrgVitals is filled with hundreds of assessments across people and culture. Inside OrgVitals look for deeper wellness surveys.



### **Employee Capacity<sup>4</sup>**

- 7. I rarely feel overwhelmed with my workload.
- 8. Workload never prevents me from doing my best.

### **Employee Retention<sup>5</sup>**

- 9. I have worked at this organization for what I consider to be a long time.
- 10. I believe I can keep growing inside this organization.

### **Employee Safety<sup>6</sup>**

- 11. I trust my colleagues to respect my ideas.
- 12. I never worry about losing my job.

### **Mission and Vision Culture<sup>7</sup>**

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<sup>4</sup> Capacity is defined as the shared amount of cognitive and emotional resources a workgroup has related to their direct working situation. Collectively, capacity is a lag measure for issues related to workload, market strain, and uncertainty.

Higher scores of the aggregated data suggest that the collective organization has reached the upper limits of being able to manage change, navigate difficult infrastructure, and/or additional responsibility.

<sup>5</sup> Employee engagement directly impacts the overall likelihood an employee will voluntarily stay with a company based upon how they are experiencing organizational culture. Retention survey questions attempt to ascertain the general sentiment around the commitment of employees.

Research has been clear that morale has a direct connection for retaining employees. Use these questions to ask employees to improve morale. High scores across employee engagement and retention surveys suggest that the organization is doing a great job of maximizing the benefits of morale while maintaining low levels of voluntary turnover.

Many organizations can reduce excess cost related to turnover by increasing scores on morale, which are likely connected to other individual measures of employee sentiment within OrgVitals such as purpose, belonging, and connectedness.

<sup>6</sup> Safety pertains to an individual's sense of respect to extend ideas and feel accepted in their role. Employees feel safe to extend their ideas and take risks. A poor, dysfunctional, or toxic culture would score low on safety scores. From a DEI (diversity equity and inclusion) perspective, make sure to segment these scores to ensure there's not a certain employee population feeling unsafe compared to their colleagues. These safety questions to ask about company culture will help facilitate a wider inclusion conversation. Using a pulse survey app like OrgVitals will ensure that DEI initiatives are tracking.

<sup>7</sup> Mission and vision encompass a metric at OrgVitals called Organizational Identity. Organizational identity is defined as the combined sentiment for how people understand and connect to the organization's vision and mission.



- 13. I understand how my team's work connects to the organization's mission.
- 14. Leadership stays consistent when repeating the mission.

#### **Purpose and Belonging Culture<sup>8</sup>**

- 15. I feel a sense of purpose in performing my role.
- 16. I often speak to friends and family about our mission.

#### **Recognition and Guidance Culture<sup>9</sup>**

- 17. I often feel recognized for my performance.
- 18. My colleagues are good at letting me know they appreciate my effort.

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High scores across these two assessments suggest an organization that is doing a good job of reinforcing the vision and mission to its employees, while making sure people understand how their efforts make an impact. Many organizations are successful despite average organizational identity. If turnover is an issue, improving these areas are an evidenced-based path to keeping people tenured longer.

<sup>8</sup> Belonging is defined as the shared sentiment of fitting and affinity a work group has for their overall place of work. Purpose is defined as the collective line of sight an employee work group has to the meaning and value in their work.

Higher scores of the aggregated data suggest a shared sense of relationship to the overall place of work and that employees understand how their work connects to the overall vision, mission, and values of the organization on a day-to-date basis. Belonging tends to be an emotionally driven variable, marked by a strong sense of community. For a strong sense of purpose, employees need line of sight to goals and understand alignment of their work to overall organizational objectives.

<sup>9</sup> Recognition and guidance are the two main components of a company providing feedback to employees. Feedback is defined as the level of communication an employee receives about their overall performance. Not only does an employee receive recognition, which has been shown to be related to everything from innovation and creative to high levels of engagement, but they also receive guidance about how to get better, drive mission support, and sharpen their skills.

Feedback is an early indicator of how valuable an employee is to the organization. Overall levels of employee engagement can drop upwards of 60% in the first 6-months. Leaders looking to impact long term performance should focus heavily on feedback within the first three months of onboarding a new employee.

Employees who feel recognized are also more likely to recognize others. Creating a culture of recognition can improve overall culture and impact metrics on belonging, connectedness, and engagement. A workplace survey needs to assess workplace engagement in the context of recognition and guidance.



### **Operational Effectiveness and Efficiency Culture<sup>10</sup>**

- 19. I know how my work impacts other areas at this organization.
- 20. We eliminate unnecessary/non-value added work where possible.

### **Employee Unity and Autonomy Culture<sup>11</sup>**

- 21. Our leadership team is visible, approachable and engaged.
- 22. I have input on how work gets done.

### **Internal Communication Culture<sup>12</sup>**

- 23. I am kept up to date about organizational changes.
- 24. I have access to my manager when I need it.

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<sup>10</sup> Operational is defined as how seamless and worthwhile work is completed within the overall organization. Degrees of speed, meaningful work tasks, and adequate resources impact how employees respond to whether work is both effective and efficient.

When the operational matrix is low, work is bottlenecked and/or backed up and may be perceived as meaningless. No one likes feeling like the work they do is meaningless, and when that work is both ineffective and slow, it creates feelings of frustration. Feelings of frustration have the potential to raise overall levels of capacity and stress, especially if outputs from the operational matrix are tied to appraisals of work.

The operational matrix is all about workflow and function. Low scores here could be mitigated by conducting job analysis and principles of project management.

<sup>11</sup> Unitonomy is a branded term unique to OrgVitals. Unitonomy is defined as the blend between a group of people working together toward a shared purpose and each person's independent control of how they operate and make decisions.

High performing workplaces that desire their culture to scale as their organization grows while retaining their employees will aim for a high score across unity and autonomy. Unity correlates to team effectiveness. Companies with great culture (heck, even companies with good culture) find they have cohesion across their people while empowering them to make decisions.

<sup>12</sup> Culture management planning requires understanding how employees connect to each other. Communication is defined as the formal and informal channels of information, ideas, and news within an organization. When communication is low, employees feel misguided and/or directionless.

Informal communication channels are defined as conversations that happen outside of meetings or formal gatherings in the workplace. These can happen via text, emails, or informal conversations that happen in hallways, at water coolers, and outside of offices. Formal channels are defined as channels of communication that are driven by the organization such as meetings, town halls, newsletters, and web-based communications.

Communication is the lifeblood of any organization. If employees feel like communication is not authentic, at the right pace, or is missing information, they tend to fill gaps on their own with the information they have. This can artificially inflate levels of stress and lower levels of connectedness.



### **Inclusion Culture<sup>13</sup>**

- 25. I have equitable access to the resources my coworkers have.
- 26. I feel I am treated with dignity in this culture.

### **Opportunity Culture<sup>14</sup>**

- 27. I often have the ability to participate and speak in work collaborations.
- 28. I feel like I have opportunities to showcase my abilities in this culture.

### **Work Trust Culture<sup>15</sup>**

- 29. I trust my direct supervisor.
- 30. There is a culture of shared responsibility at this organization.

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<sup>13</sup> Inclusion is defined as equitable access for opportunity for all employees, at all levels of an organization. The inclusion is about developing a level playing field across the organizational when it comes to varying types of diverse identifiers.

Inclusion survey data may look average in number, which is a problem. When only certain groups feel included, or some employees feel like they have access to opportunity, others are actively left out. Low to average score indicates potential problems with engagement, belonging, and connectedness and will likely affect overall organizational culture.

Organizations often have perks in an effort to drive performance and engagement. Things like free coffee in the break room, ongoing professional development, and recognition programs designed to reward hard work. But no one these things matter if part of the organization feels left out, excluded, or not a part of the process. Many organizations focus efforts on diversity, which is a great start. Diversity is not enough. Diversity is having all of the voices in the same room. Inclusion is inviting them to speak.

<sup>14</sup> Every organization should want to hold onto its top talent. The best way to retain talent is by promoting these employees and — this part is critical — making sure there is awareness of the potential in the company for promotion, growth and professional development. Analyzing employee sentiment around professional opportunity gauges this awareness. Opportunity survey questions also analyze inclusion from the perspective if the opportunity is equitable to everyone in the organization.

<sup>15</sup> Strong company culture is defined by a basis of trust. Trust encompasses the shared company values and goals, while also running between every collaboration and colleague interaction. Work trust is like a magic circle that employees step inside on a daily basis where the shared values and professional etiquette exist. When work trust is average or lacking altogether, it's impossible to cultivate a high performing culture.