Engagement survey

Scientific underpinning



Achievers

AWI

Achievers' mission is to Change the Way the World Works

To do that, we know that we need to provide our customers with technological solutions that help create environments where employees can be fully engaged in doing the best work of their lives.

Achievers' Workforce Institute is dedicated to curating and conducting research on engagement and the employee experience to understand what hasn't been working with prevailing engagement strategies – and the path to effective engagement management.

Our research team then uses this academic and business research to inform the technology solutions and thought leadership Achievers provides to the business arena to measurably drive engagement.



The Achievers science approach

To ensure that our technology effectively empowers engagement, Achievers has continued with our long-standing history of using science to inform our solutions. The science that stands beneath the engagement questions that make up the Listen™ Engagement survey.

In addition to conducting our own primary research, we have done all the heavy lifting of assimilating a number of landmark academic studies, findings from organizational development business research, and insights from psychology thought leaders to develop the Achievers Engagement Science Model – which sits at the foundation of all Listen™ products, making it possible to powerfully enhance engagement for both individuals and teams, within every company.

The engagement research outlined has illuminated the reality that, as a business arena, we have been addressing engagement with a set of outdated assumptions: that engagement is (1) static (can be measured every year or every other year), (2) generic (responsive to one size fits all solutions), and (3) automatic (improved via data collection and action planning alone).

Academic research tells us that we, instead, need to be treating engagement as highly fluid, exceptionally personal and requiring real-time micro-action in order for leaders to be able to understand and address engagement issues before they result in a negative impact on organizational performance.

Achievers' Engagement Science Model

The Achievers Engagement Science Model is underpinned by these three engagement pillars:

Engagement is Fluid

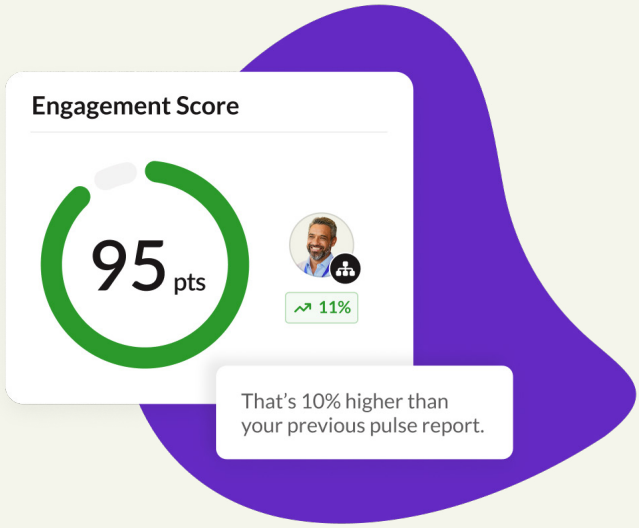
It changes day to day and moment to moment.

Engagement is Personal

It is determined at the local level, so must be personal.

Engagement requires Action

Real-time microactions drive engagement.



The Achievers Engagement Science Model is used to guide the development of all of our technological solutions, including Listen™.

The Listen™ Survey questions have been selected based on a rigorous research process relating the measurement of employee engagement to peer reviewed academic research on the employee engagement construct. This process culminated in the identification of both the Listen™ Driver questions and the Listen™ Indicator questions.

Why do we need both? Simply adding up all of the Driver scores and averaging to determine overall engagement is not a best practice because that averaging can mask issues within specific elements that need to be addressed in order to positively impact engagement.

Our research shows that there are three key components of engagement: Advocacy, Commitment, and Enthusiasm (ACE) – and these make up our Indicator questions. Averaging across these three Indicator questions gives us a reliable measure of whether an individual or team is engaged. We then refer to the Driver questions to understand which levers need to be addressed, and how.

Drivers are the levers of engagement that scientific research has shown to most strongly impact how employees function at work every day. Think of them as the ingredients of engagement.

Indicators

Provide an overall measure of the extent to which employees are, indeed, engaged. Think of them as the overall measure of actual engagement.

Driver question scientific background

Expectations

Statement	Rationale
The expectations of me at work are reasonable.	Being appropriately challenged at work with reasonable expectations – typically thought of in terms of workload, job scope, and level of responsibility, is positively correlated with engagement. When individuals feel that the expectations of them are sufficiently high, they show increases in effort, persistence, and performance. Conversely, when individuals are overwhelmed by overly oppressive expectations – whether in terms of quantity or quality, they report decreased engagement.

Role

Statement	Rationale
My role is a good fit based on my skills and interests.	Being in a role that is a good fit for both skills and interest – often referred to as person–job fit – is positively correlated with job performance, job satisfaction, and overall engagement. When individuals feel they are competent and interested in their role, they are more likely to put in discretionary effort. If they feel unable to complete their tasks, or uninterested in the role, this will drive dissatisfaction and disengagement.

Support

Statement	Rationale
I have the resources, tools and support I need to succeed at my job.	Having the right resources to complete assigned tasks is a foundational requirement for employee engagement. When proactively provided with all the necessary tools and support, employees are likely to work efficiently and effectively. They will feel supported by the organization, increasing organizational trust. Lack of appropriate resources is likely to lead to dissatisfaction, frustration, and distrust.

Team

Statement	Rationale
There is good cooperation and collaboration across my team or group.	Teamwork is crucial for effective workflow. Measuring team cooperation and collaboration can be an early indicator for any trouble spots. Understanding how well individuals see their teams working together is a good measure of overall effectiveness. Effective teamwork is indicative of coordination, communication, adaptability and more.

Development

Statement	Rationale
My role is a good fit based on my skills and interests.	Being in a role that is a good fit for both skills and interest – often referred to as person-job fit – is positively correlated with job performance, job satisfaction, and overall engagement. When individuals feel they are competent and interested in their role, they are more likely to put in discretionary effort. If they feel unable to complete their tasks, or uninterested in the role, this will drive dissatisfaction and disengagement.

Feedback

Statement	Rationale
I have the resources, tools and support I need to succeed at my job.	Having the right resources to complete assigned tasks is a foundational requirement for employee engagement. When proactively provided with all the necessary tools and support, employees are likely to work efficiently and effectively. They will feel supported by the organization, increasing organizational trust. Lack of appropriate resources is likely to lead to dissatisfaction, frustration, and distrust.

Recognition

Statement	Rationale
The recognition I receive makes me feel valued.	Recognition is a key pillar of engagement and performance. Given the right kinds of recognition, employees will feel inspired and will be more willing to put in discretionary effort because they know it will be seen and recognized. Effective recognition is timely, frequent, specific, and values-based.

Purpose

Statement	Rationale
I find meaning and purpose in my work.	Finding deeper meaning and purpose in work allows individuals to see their role as more than just a job. It is positively correlated with high job satisfaction, which is linked to better engagement and lower turnover.

Manager support

Statement	Rationale
I am getting what I need from my manager.	The manager–employee relationship is one of the most important. A dysfunctional relationship drives dissatisfaction and high turnover, whereas a positive relationship is linked to retention and perceived career success.

Leadership and strategy

Statement	Rationale
I have confidence in our leadership.	Trust and confidence in one's leaders is an important part of organizational engagement. Believing that organizational leaders make good decisions helps drive discretionary effort and overall engagement levels.

Culture

Statement	Rationale
I am a good fit with the culture and the way we do things here.	Culture fit drives retention, commitment, and engagement. When an employee feels they are a strong culture fit, they are more likely to be engaged and remain with their organization. Conversely, when an individual feels that they are a poor fit, then they are more likely to be less engaged and productive in their role – and more open to leaving to find a better fit.

Work–life balance

Statement	Rationale
I am able to balance work and personal life in a way that works for me.	Work–life balance is maintaining healthy attention to both work and life beyond work. Strong balance is correlated with productivity and retention. Poor work–life balance can lead to employee burnout, increased turnover, and lower long–term productivity.

Indicator question scientific background

Advocate

Statement	Rationale
I would recommend this as a great place to work.	Comparable to a Net Promotor Score, measuring employee advocacy is an effective way to measure overall satisfaction and commitment to an organization. Individuals who would recommend their organization to others are more likely to be satisfied in their job and committed to the organization.

Committed

Statement	Rationale
I rarely think about looking for a job elsewhere.	Employees who are satisfied and engaged in their role are less likely to be active job seekers. This question is a predictor of turnover and commitment, which correlate with many positive behaviors including job performance and organizational citizenship behavior.

Enthusiastic

Statement	Rationale
I am enthusiastic about my job.	Employee enthusiasm is a strong indicator of engagement. Individuals who do not feel enthusiastic about their jobs are less likely to offer discretionary effort and more likely to be active job seekers. Measuring employee enthusiasm across the organization gives a good picture of how likely employees are to truly care about their roles, and to go above and beyond to drive company success.

Using survey results to drive action

Though most organizations gather engagement data, that data is rarely translated into effective action.

70% of team members' engagement is accounted for by their manager.

30% of the time they never use action plans, action libraries or any effective methodology – to act on engagement issues.

This workplace reality inspired Achievers to build a simple but powerful process, called Action Builder, for managers to follow to move from data to action in real time. Action Builder makes it easy for managers to identify the most important issues to address and then supports them in working with their team to identify real time microactions to drive to solution.

At the close of each survey, managers hold a Listening Session with their team to identify the one or two drivers that are working well (highlights) and the one to two areas that need improvement (hotspots). They work together to determine a small specific set of micro-actions to improve the hotspots, rather than relying on a stagnant action library to establish next steps.

Best practices

Given our mission at Achievers, to change the way the world works, we know that it is important to ensure that organizations are measuring and managing all of the key drivers of engagement.

The Driver and Indicator questions were specifically developed to measure the engagement drivers that most predict employee success. As these research-informed questions are removed or replaced, Listen™ loses its ability to impact engagement in a science-informed manner.

It is also important to maintain continuous listening best practices by limiting the number of survey questions.

At Achievers, we believe there is no such thing as survey fatigue, only inaction fatigue. Given that surveys are typically implemented up to four times a year, it is important to keep the number of questions low to ensure managers and their teams have time to act on engagement data before checking in again.

All of that said, if an organization still finds that there is a small number of questions that they wish to add in order to address topics not covered by the standard questions, the Workforce Institute offers a Mapping Session to discuss survey adaptation and to support ultimate survey success.

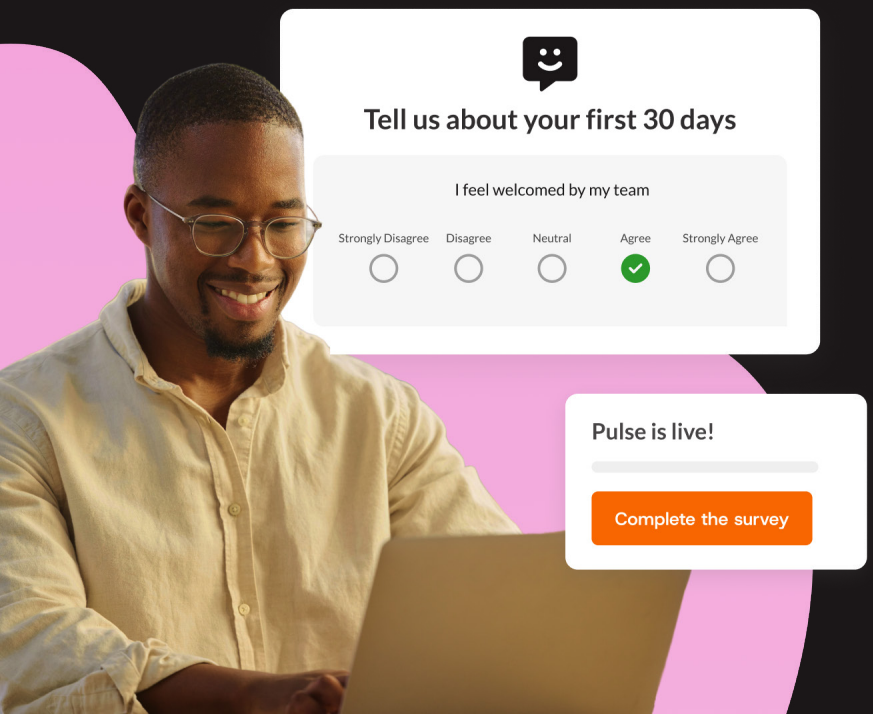
The leading employee engagement platform

Achievers is dedicated to changing the way the world works by empowering organizations to engage every employee by using tools that are rooted in rigorous research and science.

Listen™ brings that science to life by making it easy to measure and manage engagement in real time leading to higher productivity, lower turnover, and a happier workforce.

Achievers Listen™ surveys your employees, analyzes their feedback, and provides you with the insight and guidance needed to improve your culture in real time.

Get a demo →



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Expectations research citations
High expectations drive a sense of meaning but overwhelming demands result in physical, cognitive and emotional depletion. (Kahn, 1990) Overall engagement positively associated with cognitive demands (Christian, Garza, and Slaughter, 2011), role responsibility and high workload. (Crawford, LePine, and Rich, 2010)

Role research citations
Person–job fit is strongly related to a number of outcomes, including job performance and satisfaction. (Caldwell and O'Reilly,1990) Person–job fit is the most significant predictor of employee engagement. (Kennedy, Winstone, and Forsyth, 2018)

Support research citations
Access to necessary resources is one of the five levers of employee engagement. (Cardus, 2013). Access to resources is foundational for engagement and these needs must be met before more sophisticated requirements such as career growth. (Jonas, 2016)

Team research citations
Cooperation and teamwork facilitate: coordination, communication, adaptability and more. (Salas, Sims, and Klein, 2004) Effective teamwork can increase individual effort and commitment. (Fahn and Hakenes, 2019)

Development research citations
Person–job fit is strongly related to a number of outcomes, including job performance and satisfaction. (Caldwell and O'Reilly, 1990) Person–job fit is the most significant predictor of employee engagement. (Kennedy, Winstone, and Forsyth, 2018)

Feedback research citations
Formative feedback is an essential part of the supervisor's role. (Chur–Hansen and McLean, 2006) Feedback is key to development, but most people do not believe their companies do a good job providing feedback. (Cannon and Witherspoon, 2005)

Recognition research citations
Recognition substantially increases performance. (Bradler, Dur, Neckermann, and Non, 2016) Rewards and recognition are key to re–engaging disengaged employees. (Osborne and Hammoud, 2017)

Purpose research citations
Feeling meaning in work is linked to high job satisfaction. (Wrzesniewski, 2003) Meaning at work is a crucial component of employee engagement. (Ilouga et al, 2019)

Manager support research citations
Managerial support of employees has significant direct and indirect effects on perceived career success and retention. (Tyman, Stumpf, and Smith, 2011) Employees that regularly meet with their managers are almost 50% more likely to be engaged. (Mann and Darby, 2010)

Leadership and strategy research citations
An organization's senior leadership team has significant impact on its employees' overall opinions of the company and engagement levels, which have been linked to both earnings per share and total shareholder return. (Wiley, 2010) Employees with lower job involvement scores tend to have lower confidence and trust in their leaders. (Jones, James, and Bruni, 1975)

Culture research citations
Congruence between organizational culture and employee values is a predictor of turnover. (Vandenberghe, 1999) Perceived culture fit is positively correlated with employee commitment and intention to stay with an organization through organizational change. (Meyer, Hecht, Gill, Toplonytsy, 2010)

Work–life balance research citations
Work–life balance can improve organizational performance, including: enhanced social exchange processes, increased cost savings, improved productivity, and reduced turnover. (Garg, 2018) Work–life balance practices can influence organizational performance, including increased cost savings, improved productivity, and reduced turnover. (Beauregard and Henry, 2009)

Advocate research citations
Employee advocacy is positively related to job satisfaction and commitment to the organization. (Yeh, 2014) Committed research citations Affective commitment has positive correlation with job performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and attendance. (Meyer, 2014)

Enthusiastic research citations
Employee enthusiasm results in competitive advantages for companies able to maintain it for long–term results. (Sirota and Klein, 2013)