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Quality of Daily Life Solutions

# Employee Engagement in Organizations: Worth the Effort?

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## Overview

- Background
  - Sodexo
  - Engagement Survey
- Increasing effectiveness of engagement surveys
- Challenges to measuring engagement
- Methodology
- Engagement results over the years
- Using survey results for high impact
- Current state and future plans
- Key takeaways

## Sodexo is the leading Quality of Daily Life Solutions company in North America, delivering On-site Service Solutions

- Revenues: \$8 billion
- Clients: 6,000+
  - Corporate Services
  - Schools K-12
  - Universities & Colleges
  - Hospitals
  - Nursing and Retirement Homes
  - Government and Defense
  - Remote Sites
- Employees: 120,000



# Background: Engagement at Sodexo



- Business Case for Engagement: Engagement is related to the level of customer service we provide, thus differentiating us from our competitors and driving the bottom line of the company
- Global engagement survey began in 2006, conducted every other year with a single provider
- Engagement focuses on three behavioral elements:

**Say**

**Consistently speak positively about the organization to coworkers, potential employees, and customers**

**Stay**

**Have an intense desire to be part of the organization**

**Strive**

**Exert extra effort and engage in behaviors that contribute to business success**



# Increasing the Effectiveness of Engagement Surveys



- Organizational recognition of importance and impact of engagement
- Senior leadership sponsorship and support
- Global (enterprise-wide) initiative
- Worldwide (single) survey provider



- Size and dispersion of organization
- Reach to frontline employees
- Culture and language
- Confidentiality and anonymity
- Demonstrating impact of engagement
- Maintaining focus on engagement
- Reflecting current state of the organization on survey

- Surveyed Populations:
  - 100% of management employees
  - 20% of frontline employees
- Logistics:
  - Online for management and administrative employees
  - Paper forms for frontline employees
- Survey Content:
  - 59 standard questions in local languages
    - 6 Engagement Questions
    - 14 Drivers
  - Demographic Questions

# Methodology: Engagement Drivers



- Senior Leadership
- Recognition
- Work Activities
- Physical Work Environment
- Coworkers
- Immediate Manager
- Pay
- Benefits
- Communication
- Customer
- Work/Life Balance
- Diversity
- Learning and Development
- Resources





# Engagement Survey Results Over the Years



- Results analyzed to identify drivers that pose biggest threats to and opportunities for improving overall engagement
- Key Drivers:
  - 2006: Communication, Recognition, Senior Leadership
  - 2008: Recognition, Communication, Senior Leadership, Pay
  - 2010: Communication, Recognition, Senior Leadership, Pay
- Variations by region, country, market segment, division
- Same basic drivers identified, but improvements seen in all drivers from 2006 to 2008 and from 2008 to 2010



## ○ Surprises

- Increase in engagement in a challenging economy
- Stability in engagement can be a good thing
- Confidentiality ceased to be a concern of respondents

## ○ Lessons Learned

- Impact of organizational restructuring on administration, analysis, reporting, action planning
- Linking actions to results
- Connection of engagement to other organizational initiatives
- The devil is in the details!

- Results: Flexible reporting and analysis capabilities
- Action Plans: focused on key engagement drivers
- Actions: It is not enough to have a plan, must have visible, tangible action to go with it!
- Communication: multi-media, multiple audiences, consistent messaging
- Focus: Constant attention on engagement over time

- Common template for all entities to use in creating action plans:
  - Includes results for key drivers on current and previous surveys
  - Provides information on most and least engaged populations
  - Captures previous survey action plan and status for reference
- Focus on key engagement drivers for current survey results
  - Shared emphasis throughout the organization
  - Connection through enterprise, country, market segment plans
- Analysis of action plans across the organization – novel approaches, common threads, leveraging partnerships, highlighting successes and opportunities
- Progress checks quarterly to global headquarters, with senior leadership, and with implementation teams to ensure accountability for results

- Action plans (and actions) underway from 2010 results
- Sharing best practices globally with internal points of contact
- 2011 “pulse” survey to gauge progress
- 2012 engagement survey cycle
- Ongoing research linking engagement to organizational outcomes (e.g., retention)

- Importance of communication
- Visibility of results
- Connections of actions to results over time
- “Engagement” of stakeholders/champions
- Link to outcomes of interest for the organization (bottom line, turnover, efficiency, etc.)
- Consistency in content, practices, expectations
- Flexibility of data to meet organizational needs

# Questions and Contact Information



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