

## Engagement Planning Options for Managers Without Q<sup>12</sup>® Results

To create a culture of engagement, employees at all levels need to be focused on creating an engaging workplace; however, often times managers or leaders do not receive data following the survey and are not sure what actions they should take. Nearly all Gallup clients have teams that are too small to qualify for a direct report, but that doesn't mean those teams, managers and employees can't take action.

What should those managers and teams do?

### IDENTIFY AN INCLUSIVE REPORT

When a team needs data to spark conversation, Gallup recommends providing a report or data cut that is inclusive of but not exclusive to the team members' responses. In other words, select a report that includes the employees' responses plus other employees who work for the same manager or work in the same department, position or location. While this report will include responses from employees who are not members of the smaller team, this approach allows the members of the smaller team to use the results that include their personal responses.

### EXAMPLE TEAM ACTIONS

In addition to obtaining an inclusive report, small teams can also participate in team activities geared at generating discussion and moving toward shared goals. When selecting the right activity for your team, consider their willingness to share openly and discuss their thoughts. Choose activities that are more "blinded" when the team's trust is low or when team members are quiet. Inviting someone to facilitate the activity, such as an engagement champion or a human resource business partner, can also be advantageous if teams are unwilling to share openly.

### OPTION 1: STOPLIGHT EXERCISE

1. Hang 12 posters or sheets around the room, each containing the text of one Q<sup>12</sup> item. Make sure each poster is visible and accessible to team members.
2. Give each team member 12 green, yellow and red stickers.
3. Tell the team members what each colored sticker means. Green: This Q<sup>12</sup> item is a strength of our team. I feel good about this item. Yellow: I don't know where we stand on this item. I feel neutral about this item. Red: This Q<sup>12</sup> item is a weakness of our team. I don't feel good about this item.

4. Direct team members to walk around the room, read each of the Q<sup>12</sup> items, evaluate how they feel about the item and place the corresponding colored sticker on the poster. If you feel the employees are hesitant to share, step out of the room while they complete the activity.
5. After every team member has placed all of his or her stickers on the posters, identify the posters that have the most green stickers (an item that the team is doing well on) and the poster that has the most red stickers (an item that the team doesn't feel good about). Your team will focus on these items.
6. If one or more items have the same number of stickers, then discuss both items and, as a group, decide which item to focus on. To facilitate this discussion, you might want to ask the following questions:
  - Of these items, which one has the most influence on our ability to complete our business goals?
  - Of these items, which one has the most influence on our ability to do great work?
  - Of these items, is there one that you feel most strongly about?
  - Of these items, which do you believe will be the easiest to effect positive change?

### **OPTION 2: S OR W?**

1. List the Q<sup>12</sup> items on one sheet of paper and distribute copies to each team member.
2. Instruct team members to read the list of Q<sup>12</sup> items and place an "S" next to the item if they consider it a strength for the team and a "W" if they consider it a weakness.
3. Ask team members to select the item they consider to be the team's greatest strength by circling the "S" they made next to that item.
4. Ask team members to select the item they consider to be the team's greatest weakness by circling the "W" they made next to that item.
5. Collect all the sheets and tabulate the number of circled S's and W's. The item with the most circled S's and the item with the most circled W's are the two items the team will focus on.

### **OPTION 3: TEAM SOCIOGRAPH**

This exercise works best when there are multiple Q<sup>12</sup> items that employees feel very strongly about. It typically works for teams with at least six employees but not enough employees to respond to the survey to receive results.

1. Clear an open area in the room for employees to move freely. With a piece of masking tape, mark the center plane of the open space.

2. Tell the team that according to Gallup's research, the Q<sup>12</sup> items are key measures of employee engagement. Further, if you can effect positive change on these items, you will have a positive impact on business outcomes.
3. Ask the team members to stand and move to the center of the open area and straddle the masking tape (they should form a straight line facing you).
4. Give the team the following instructions:

*This is an exercise designed for us to think about how we feel about each of the Q<sup>12</sup> items. Imagine the floor is a map or a graph. As I read each of the Q<sup>12</sup> items, I would like you to move to the area of the map (or floor) that best describes how you feel about how we are doing on this item. The line you are straddling is the center point. If you are on this line, you have neutral feelings about how we are doing. If you move to the right, you feel that this is an area of strength and an item on which we are doing well. The farther you move to the right, the stronger you think this item is for us as a team. If you move to the left, you feel that this is an area of weakness or an area that has the most opportunity for improvement. The farther you move to the left, the weaker you think this item is for us as a team. Again, a move to the right indicates strength; a move to the left indicates weakness.*

Read each item and allow the team to move. As the team comes to a stop, plot the question on a blank sheet of paper. Do this for each of the 12 items.

#### **OPTION 4: TEAM DISCUSSION**

1. After plotting each of the 12 items, share the graphs with the team and select the item that represents the highest degree of strength (most right), and the item that is plotted as the weakest (most left). Your team will focus on these items.
2. List the Q<sup>12</sup> items on one sheet of paper and distribute copies to each team member.
3. Tell the team that according to Gallup's research, the Q<sup>12</sup> items are key measures of employee engagement. Further, if you can effect positive change on these items, you will have a positive impact on business outcomes.
4. As a team, answer each set of questions to facilitate a brief discussion:

Identify a team performance goal.

- What are the three to four most important performance goals we face today?
- How would you prioritize these performance goals from most to least important?
- Which performance goal should we primarily focus on as a team?
- Analyze the Gallup Q<sup>12</sup> items.
  - Which engagement items do we excel at that help us achieve our performance goals?

- Which engagement items stand in the way of us achieving our performance goals?
- Of these items, which do you believe will be the easiest to effect positive change?
- Select the actions to take.
  - Based on the conversations between performance goals and engagement items, determine the actions to take to improve engagement on the items that most directly impact our team's ability to achieve our performance goals.
  - What three immediate actions should we focus on first?
  - Who can take ownership of these actions?

### **OPTION 5: ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION**

This option can be implemented in tandem with the other options or for very small teams in which a one-on-one discussion makes more sense.

During a scheduled conversation or touch base, ask your employee:

1. What helps you achieve your best work?
2. What do you think stands in the way of you doing your best work?
3. What engagement item is most important to you? Why?
4. Based on the responses of the employee, create action steps that the two of you can work on to facilitate a more engaging environment that helps the employee do his or her best work. Make a list of the actions you will take to support the employee to succeed in his or her role.