

Employee Engagement Survey 2009

Employee Engagement Surveys – Why They Matter

Employee engagement has been a leading edge management practice in the private sector for a number of years, largely in response to the need to recruit, retrain, reward and retain critical business talent.

In the private sector strong links have been shown between employee engagement, customer service, customer loyalty and, consequently, profits.

Research at the public sector level in Canada has been conducted largely by Dr. Brian Marson and his team¹, who have found a similar link to those found in the private sector. The key link, however, is to stronger confidence in public institutions.

Who Does Them

Private Sector

In North America, consultancies such as Towers Perrin have been tracking engagement in the private sector with their most recent effort a three year global study².

In the U.K. the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development conducted a nationwide survey of engagement in 2006³.

There is an extensive amount of literature on employee engagement available through the compensation association World at Work.⁴

Public Sector

In the Canadian public sector, engagement surveys are used at the municipal, provincial, territorial and federal levels. All members of the Inter-jurisdictional Initiative on Employee Engagement (B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, PEI, Newfoundland and Labrador) survey employees regularly.

In the public sector in the U.K., the Scottish Executive Social Research group conducted an intensive review of employee engagement early in 2007⁵. The Royal Bank of Scotland does regular engagement surveys.

The Conference Board of Canada also has an extensive amount of literature on employee engagement⁶.

¹ People, service and trust: is there a public sector service value chain? Heintzman, Ralph, Marson, Brian, International Review of Administrative Sciences, 2005

² Closing the Engagement Gap: A Road Map for Driving Superior Business Performance; Towers Perrin Global Workforce Study, 2007-2008 (www.towersperrin.com)

³ Reflections on Employee Engagement, Aitken, Greig, Marks, Nic, Purcell, John, Woodruffe, Charles, Worman, Dianah; Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, November 2006 (www.cipd.co.uk)

⁴ WorldatWork (www.worldatwork.org) – search keywords: employee engagement

⁵ Employee Engagement in the Public Sector: A review of literature; Office of Chief Researcher, Government of Scotland; May 2007 (www.scotland.gov.uk/socialresearch)

⁶ Conference Board of Canada: www.conferenceboard.ca