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# ELEVATING EMPLOYEE LISTENING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Best Practices & Templates for  
Meaningful Pulse Surveys

# EMPLOYEE LISTENING IN TIMES OF CRISIS

As the COVID-19 crisis evolves, we know one of your top priorities is to ensure that your workforce continues to feel supported and safe. One of the best ways to do this is listening.

You have a lot on your plate right now, so it's important you feel well-equipped to gather feedback and uncover employee concerns during uncertain times like this.

## Your Best Option: Launching a Quick Pulse Survey

Launching a survey may seem impractical right now. But surveys are a quick and efficient way to capture critical feedback from your workforce. It does not have to be perfect—but it does need to be intentional. A quick pulse can help you gather important information on employee needs and emotions so you can respond smartly and efficiently.

## A Good Option: Enhancing Manager-Employee 1-on-1s

We know a survey isn't feasible for everyone. At the end of the day, checking in with employees is more important than how you do it. If you don't have the tools or capacity to get a survey launched, lean on your managers to capture feedback during 1-on-1s.

## A Terrible Option: Doing Nothing

Your employees are counting on you right now. They are anxious and afraid, and it's in your best interest to create the most stable and supportive work environment possible. If you fail to listen and respond, you risk engagement, productivity, and your bottom line.

# GOOD NEWS: WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

Our mission is to make work better every day. It's a challenging time for that, we know. But we're committed to your success, and we are here to help.

## This guide contains:

- 5 reasons to collect employee feedback during a crisis
- A step-by-step guide to launching a pulse survey
- Two pulse survey templates for you to implement today, including:

**Remote Work Readiness Pulse:** Ask these questions to ensure employees are set up for success when working remotely. The results will highlight common challenges or opportunities your company may need to address.

**Emergency/Crisis Management Pulse:** Ask these questions to assess employee perceptions during times of uncertainty. Check in with employees to ensure they feel supported and in the loop when it's most critical.

**Note:** If launching a survey isn't feasible for your organization right now, we understand. Check out our [One-on-One Meeting Guide](#) for tips on navigating critical manager-employee conversations.

# 5 REASONS TO COLLECT EMPLOYEE FEEDBACK DURING A TIME OF CRISIS

Now more than ever, keeping a pulse on your organization is critical to keeping your employees engaged and productive. Collecting real-time employee feedback will give you a better understanding of what's happening day-to-day, and supply you with data and insights for action.

**Here are 5 reasons to collect employee feedback during a crisis:**

**1. Allow managers to uncover the unique needs and emotions of their teams.**

Different teams and departments will have different needs and challenges. Pulse surveys can help identify the unique needs of specific groups and individuals. Leaders can then create targeted strategies tailored specifically to their team.

**2. Show employees that leadership cares.**

A heard employee is an engaged employee. Everyone wants to know their opinions are valued and their needs are being considered. Collecting feedback shows employees that leaders care. It creates open lines of communication at all levels.

**3. Provide an easy way for managers to stay in tune with their teams.**

Your managers are especially overwhelmed. It's difficult for them to keep pace with their teams' changing motivations and needs. Helping managers collect real-time perceptions allows them to stay updated and prepare for a change if needed.

**4. Deep dive into critical issues before they become problems.**

The COVID-19 situation is rapidly evolving, and will probably continue to do so over the next several weeks. Leaders should be surfacing, dissecting, and responding to critical issues as they come up. Collecting feedback through pulse surveys is key.

**5. Foster a culture of trust and feedback.**

Feedback loops help break down walls that prevent necessary and invaluable communication. Maintaining an open dialogue empowers employees to share their thoughts, creating a stronger and more united workplace.

# STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO LAUNCHING A PULSE SURVEY

A pulse survey is a quick, targeted way to get opinions on a topic or issue. When the workplace looks and feels different, employees will likely have something to say about it. These lightweight surveys help you collect employee feedback to react and respond right away.

In a time of crisis, these steps might feel like a lot. But remember that it doesn't have to be perfect. Setting aside a little time to think through questions, results, communication, and strategy will help you take action faster once the data comes rolling in.

**1. Determine your purpose.** Before you even think of creating survey questions, clearly define the purpose of your efforts. What information do you need? How will you use the results? The answers to these questions will drive your strategy and communication.

**2. Identify participants.** The purpose of your pulse survey should help you determine who to include. Bigger decisions might require company-wide feedback, while smaller ones might only affect a select group of employees. Because purpose can vary, a pulse can be conducted for any population or demographic of your organization.

**3. Set a timeline.** Pulse surveys are fast and flexible, but that doesn't mean you should ping employees as often as you want. There's no surefire formula when it comes to pulse survey timing, but here are some general guidelines for determining the right frequency:

- Pulse regularly on topics that are likely to fluctuate
- Only survey as often as you can act on feedback
- Pulse when you need quick results
- Base timing and purpose on population

# STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO LAUNCHING A PULSE SURVEY

**4. Construct questions.** Pulse survey questions are intended to collect quick and actionable responses. They should be timely and address a specific need. Pulse surveys generally range from 5-15 questions and shouldn't take more than five minutes for an employee to complete.

**5. Follow up on results.** When you share results and take action after a survey, your employees can see that you took their feedback seriously and valued their opinions.

Here's a roadmap for pulse survey follow-up:

- Communicate results
- Select areas to improve
- Make and implement decisions
- Evaluate and keep moving forward

# REMOTE WORK READINESS PULSE TEMPLATE

Ask these pulse survey questions to ensure employees are set up for success when working remotely.

- 1 I have the materials and equipment I need to perform effectively at my home.**  
*(Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree)*
- 2 I have the technology I need to help me stay connected to my manager and team when working remotely.**  
*(Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree)*
- 3 Working remotely has \_\_\_\_\_ on my day-to-day performance.**  
*(Multiple choice: No Impact, Some Impact, A Major Impact, explain why for choices 2 and 3)*
- 4 What additional resources do you need to work effectively while remote?**  
*(Open-ended)*

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

**Attribute Responses:** Gathering attributed responses is essential to understanding which employees or employee groups need the most support.

**Pulse Frequently:** Perceptions of remote work could change frequently. We recommend asking every 1-2 weeks for the most recent and relevant data.

**Share Results:** Make sure your executive team and people leaders are aware of employee perceptions and respond accordingly.

**Take Action:** Address employee feedback accordingly. You may not be able to solve every challenge, but aim to address common challenges and find ways to flex moving forward.

# EMERGENCY/CRISIS MANAGEMENT PULSE TEMPLATE

Ask these pulse survey questions to assess employee perceptions during times of uncertainty.

- 1 I feel well-supported by my organization at this time.**  
*(Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree)*
- 2 I feel well-supported by my manager at this time.**  
*(Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree)*
- 3 The frequency of communication from leaders has been effective.**  
*(Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree)*
- 4 The communication from leaders helps me feel informed.**  
*(Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree)*

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

**Attribute Responses:** Gathering attributed responses is essential to understanding which employees or employee groups need the most support.

**Pulse Frequently:** Perceptions of support and communication effectiveness could change frequently. We recommend asking every 1-2 weeks for the most recent and relevant data.

**Share Results:** Make sure your executive team and people leaders are aware of employee perceptions and respond accordingly.

**Take Action:** Address employee feedback accordingly. You may not be able to solve every challenge, but aim to address common challenges and find ways to flex moving forward.





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# CONCLUSION

We want to help you continue to make work better every day, even when there are circumstances that make this challenging.

Listening to your employees during this chaotic and uncertain time—whether through surveys, one-on-one conversations, or other tools at your disposal—is critical to the success of your employees, your teams, and your organization.

**We have a variety of resources available to help you navigate these uncertain times. We invite you to read, download, and share them with your team.**

[VIEW MORE RESOURCES](#)

**We're all in this together! If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at [hello@quantumworkplace.com](mailto:hello@quantumworkplace.com).**