WHAT IS AN ENGAGEMENT PULSE?

Engagement is a positive state of mind characterized by willingness to invest all of oneself into work and involves high levels of conscientiousness, persistence, and energy.

The intent of the Engagement Pulse survey is to measure engagement of team members at the team level. The items are designed to be actionable and under the control of the team leader to affect change.

The Engagement Pulse can be launched by the team leader (static or dynamic) at any time. The survey asks eight items that focus on the experience of the team member at a moment in time. The items address dimensions that predict team excellence and lead to high performance. There is a comments field for team members to share additional feedback of their choosing with the team leader.

All individual's answers to the survey are confidential. Only team averages for each of the 8 items are shown in the survey results. And to maintain confidentiality, a survey can only be launched to teams with 3 or more team members.

Employee engagement has been shown to have a statistical relationship with higher levels of performance, profitability, safety, customer satisfaction, and lower turnover and intention to leave (TMBC, 2015).

Launching the Engagement Pulse

1. Select ‘Engagement Pulse’ from the ‘My Teams’ menu.
2. Select a team with 3 or more team members.
3. Click the ‘Launch’ button to send the Engagement Pulse survey to your team (you can add a personal note as well)
   - The survey closes after two weeks or earlier if all team members complete the survey.
4. Do this once a quarter.

Team Member’s Role...

- **Be Honest.** This survey measures your experience of being on the team. Complete the survey openly and honestly. Individual responses are confidential and will never be shared.
- **Discuss.** Like individuals, teams have unique combinations of strengths. Discuss what your team does well and how those strengths can be further amplified for greater team performance.
- **Take Action.** Commit to actions and behaviors that will contribute positively to the team’s performance.

Team Leader’s Role...

- **Get curious.** Send quarterly surveys to your team. Let them know their input is important.
- **Share Results.** You have the greatest capacity for impacting engagement. Show the data to the team to prompt discussion; set the tone for an open, honest discussion; focus your attention on what matters to them.
- **Take Action.** In the debrief, help the team identify the strengths that have led to team success. Then help the team identify actions and behaviors that all can do to further improve the experience of the team.
THE ENGAGEMENT PULSE IS A LISTENING TOOL.
The Engagement Pulse survey was designed to gauge how effectively leaders are engaging their teams. These items measure the levers that a team leader can influence.

THE ENGAGEMENT PULSE ITEMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Engagement Pulse Items</th>
<th>ME</th>
<th>WE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PURPOSE</strong></td>
<td>“I am really enthusiastic about the mission of my company”</td>
<td>“At work, I clearly understand what is expected of me”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXCELLENCE</strong></td>
<td>“In my team, I am surrounded by people who share my values”</td>
<td>“I have a chance to use my strengths everyday at work”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPPORT</strong></td>
<td>“My teammates have my back”</td>
<td>“I know I will be recognized for excellent work”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FUTURE</strong></td>
<td>“I have great confidence in my company’s future”</td>
<td>“In my work, I am always challenged to grow”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Me vs. We

- The “We” items on the left measure aspects of the workplace that are communal — asking about the team and about Cisco.
- The “Me” items on the right measure aspects of the workplace that are individual — your relationship with the work you do and with your relationship with your leader.

Four Major Themes:

- **Purpose**: Do I believe in Cisco’s mission and do I clearly see my contribution to that mission in the work I do?
- **Excellence**: Do other team members share my commitment to do the best possible work? Am I given the opportunity to contribute my best by working to my strengths?
- **Support**: How valued and supported do I feel by my team? And by my team leader?
- **Future**: How certain am I about Cisco’s future success? How confident am I that I am being developed so that I can continue to have impact in the future?

These Engagement Pulse survey items may appear different than what you’ve seen in past engagement surveys. That is because they are designed to reduce psychometric error—otherwise called the idiosyncratic rater effect. These items were written with four specific criteria in mind: (1) a single thought per item, (2) extreme wording, (3) “me rating me” and (4) actionable for change. A white paper authored by The Marcus Buckingham Company (TMBC) provides an explanation of the science behind the survey and additional detail about the measurement intent for each item.

WHO SEES ENGAGEMENT PULSE DATA?

- Engagement Pulse results are only available to the Team Leader who launched the Pulse. However, they can - and should - share the results with their team.
- Team Leaders will see the average score for each of the eight items in the Engagement Pulse; there is no ability for the team leader to see an individual’s responses.
- Organization Leaders wanting an aggregate view of engagement within their organization can do so through the Team Space Insights Dashboard. However, leaders can only see data if it is comprised of an aggregate of 3 or more teams—they will not be able to view the results for any single team.
THE ENGAGEMENT PULSE DEBRIEF

Set Context & Share Purpose of Debrief

- What value do you, as the leader, get from the Engagement Pulse? What may be the value for team members?
- What outcomes do you hope will be achieved in this debrief?
- What behaviors do you want to encourage to make it a safe environment for sharing experiences?

Review the overall results with the team.

- Which scores are most and least favorable?
- Which scores are notable high or low as compared to the team previous results or to Cisco benchmarks?
- Are there any trends among the highest scores? Or among the lowest scores?
- Are the results what I/we expected? What scores surprised you?
- Have there been recent events that would help explain the results?

Concentrate on your top two strengths. Spend your energy focused on leveraging what you already do well as a team. You grow most in those areas where you are already strongest.

- When evaluating this item, what aspects are you considering? (everyone will likely consider different things)
- What are some things that our team does that differentiates us in this area? Provide specific events, actions and behaviors that you have observed.
- What are some additional things we can do to make us even stronger in this area? (team or leader actions)

Review remaining scores to identify one area of improvement.

- What one area that, if improved, would contribute most significantly to the team’s manner of working together? The area of improvement that the team identifies may not always be the area with the lowest score. Pay attention to any low scores that align to the top three findings from the Best Teams Study.
- What are some specific things that we can start or stop doing to create change in this area?
- What strengths, as observed in our top results, can be applied to this area?

Recap Conversation & Share Next Steps

- Thank the team for their participation
- Recap the conversation – highlighting any team commitments made or actions decided.
- Determine a cadence for revisiting progress on any actions

Look to the Debrief Discussion Guide for more questions to pose to your team to better understand their experience and surface actions to lift engagement.
DRIVING ENGAGEMENT ON YOUR TEAM

While it’s important to talk about the numbers, the real value is in the discussion the numbers drive. Over time, the numbers will become a barometer to track your team’s engagement and performance.

As you conduct these surveys, you will see some scores may go up while other go down. This is expected and is not to be feared. Embrace the valuable insights that are provided through lower scores. This indicates that your team members felt safe enough to respond candidly about their experience. You have people who are invested in your team and want to see things change.

While the aim is to improve engagement, it is not about driving people to give a 5 on each item. Recognize that people apply the response scale differently based on many individual factors. What’s most effective is to understand what is the usual pattern of response for your team and to get curious when you see dramatic changes from the norm.

Here are a few tips:

- The job of the leader is to ask questions and listen. Giving your team a voice should translate into a richer understanding of (and appreciation for) each member’s experience on the team.
- Let the resulting actions be driven naturally from the team’s discussion. The Engagement Pulse is quarterly so seek to focus on a small number of changes that can be implemented and assessed in a quarter’s time.
- For any actions noted, make an earnest commit to addressing them. Periodically, remind the team of the areas of focus and assess progress made.

KEEPING ENGAGEMENT TOP OF MIND

Interested in some best practices for attaining higher engagement? Here are a few suggestions:

Establish detailed plans for improvement. Best teams do more than discuss vague changes to implement. Many draft formal commitment plans that are precise in the actions they want to adopt, by whom and in what timeframe and with what success measures.

Keep commitments “top of mind”. Find ways to continually remind the team of the commitments made in the debrief and periodically track progress to ensure that the team is working towards its stated goals.

Continue the conversation with team members during check-ins. Especially when working to improve items that are individual to each person, Leverage the weekly Check-in conversation to gain clarity from team members about what they need to be at their best. These check-ins are also a time to explore the team dynamic and to understand whether more can be done to create trust among team members.

Capture Team Norms. During the team debrief, people will surface ways of working together that are beneficial and those that are not. Where there is common agreement, document those norms. This can be helpful in introducing new team members to how the team works. And when the team dynamic becomes strained, evaluating behaviors against the stated norms can help to pinpoint where teams may be off-track.

Learn from other Teams.
Ask other leaders about the strengths of their teams and the rituals that contribute to those strengths. Determine whether adopting any of those rituals would benefit your own team.