

It's All Fun and Games

How to Play, Engage With, and Reward Your Team

Jenn Galvin, Practice Owner, ABA, Spreadsheet Queen

Employee engagement is mega important! The Gallup Organization did some research quite a while ago and found that businesses of a similar type focusing on engagement showed:

- 12% better customer loyalty
- 62% fewer safety incidents
- 51% less shrinkage
- 18% more productive
- 12% more profitable
- 27% less absenteeism

Okay, that sounds great! Who wouldn't want those kinds of results? So, you just have to pay your people a bit more and they will be happy and we can all move on, right? Unfortunately, it's not that easy. What the heck does employee engagement mean? How do you define it, understand it, measure it and improve it?

I believe much of the answer lies in feelings and the effect they have on behavior. Whether employees feel positively or negatively about the aspects of their job, it reflects in their work. It's not as simple as a person liking their job or not, but digging in further to find how emotionally invested they are in the work they do and who they do it for.

Let's talk about measuring engagement. Asking employees questions directly will backfire on you, so please avoid the mistakes I've made and come up with something else. I'm a big fan of the anonymous survey. Have employees answer some questions and see where you land. You won't score perfectly and you might be surprised by some of the results (and not always in a good way). It's important to remember to prepare for this and to **not take it personally**.

Here's some help to get you started.

Examples of Strongly Agree (5) –Agree (4) –Neutral (3) –Disagree (2) –Strongly Disagree (1):

1. I would recommend working here to others.
2. I can imagine myself still working here in a year.
3. I work harder for this hospital than I would at another hospital doing a similar job.
4. I understand what is expected of me.
5. I feel like management cares about me and believes in my goals.
6. I have the tools I need to do a great job.
7. When I go above and beyond I'm recognized for it.

To score your Agree/Disagree tests you assign numbers to each choice and then figure out what your highest score can be, multiply by the number of questions, and then by the number of employees. In the example above the highest score would be 35 (score 5 x 7 questions) – and if you had 10 employees the highest score possible would be 350. Add up all the points and divide by 350. This is your overall engagement score. It's really useful to tally each question's score separately so you can see what areas you need the most help in.

Open-ended:

1. What do you love about our hospital?
2. If you could change one thing about working here, what would it be?
3. What could we be doing better?

You can't improve things if you don't measure them and you can't prevent problems if you aren't proactively looking at this stuff. Over time you'll see what actions you need to take by how questions are answered and you'll see what you've nailed down and only have to monitor.

So, the big question now is – how do you improve?

First, look at possible follow up questions. If your score suffers in an area that involves having enough tools to do the job, what are the tools? It might be time to put together another survey asking questions like – “I have enough training to perform my job,” “The quality of the equipment at this hospital is adequate,” “I don't have to wait for things that break to be fixed,” etc.

It also depends on your team and how collaborative you are. Getting team buy-in is huge and giving your team ownership of something can really help it stick. Do you feel confident in asking your team to help brainstorm ideas? If your team feels they aren't recognized for a job well done, what can your whole team come up with to help bridge the gap? Can there be an employee of the month reward, compliment board or could your team come up with some amazing ideas that they can take ownership of? This is just one way to get team engagement.

Have Fun, play games, and REWARD your people!

- Know your people – have them fill out a “what I like” survey.
- I highly recommend DISC or CORE to find out what truly motivates people, it's not always money!
- Keep them in the loop about how the hospital is doing and how they are impacting things! I love reading good online reviews we receive from clients at meetings.
- You better recognize (your employees) – use specific examples and use them often.
- Provide a clear vision and if you don't have one create one with your team!
- Don't forget about your management team. They need the right tools to lead the team and they need praise and encouragement.
- Staff meetings need to be a little fun at least some of the time. Do something that has nothing to do with veterinary medicine once in a while. (Your reps can really help with this stuff!)
 - Pictionary PTO
 - Building trivia (with Nerf guns!)
 - Take a trip – leave the building

It's All Fun and Games – How to Play, Engage With, and Reward Your Team Worksheet

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OBJECTIVES

Let's learn about staff engagement – what it means, how to define it for your practice, how to measure it, and what to do about the results. I'll also review ways to reward your team for better engagement, a more profitable and efficient practice and a happier you.

TOOL KIT

- When coming up with engagement surveys keep it simple – **10 questions or less**.
- **Get specific** with follow up questions – especially in areas that need improvement.
- Use anonymous surveys – www.surveymonkey.com is a great way to go.
- If you feel like you don't have a lot of time to work on things or are having a hard time with follow up or follow through, try something like www.tinypulse.com.

- You have to **get to know your people** – or hire someone who will!
- **Act on results** of your engagement survey.
- **Don't fake it.** Find a way to reward and play with your staff that makes sense to you.

WORKSHOP TO DO LIST

1. Understand and define what engagement means to you:

2. Create 10 engagement questions.

3. What are two ways you can get to know your staff better?

4. List five fun things you can do with your staff:
