2015 E² Employee Engagement Survey
Guide for Action Planning
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Introduction

This guide provides information on how to use the University of Minnesota’s E² Employee Engagement Survey data to create and implement plans to enhance engagement. It provides principles and frameworks for leaders to take action based on survey results as well as questions for reflection and discussion.

Every leader who had at least 10 staff and/or 10 faculty respond to their respective surveys will be emailed a report from Hay Group, the University’s vendor partner. These reports are available via Hay Group's Insight2Action (I2A) online tool. These reports are PowerPoint presentations you can modify to share with faculty and staff.

One of the most important tasks for leaders is to connect engagement survey results to the mission and goals of their units because organizations solve problems more effectively, provide better service, and meet their mission through engaged employees. The engagement survey will not be administered in the fall of 2016 so that the University community will have a full year to dig deeper into action planning and take action to address areas of opportunity as well as leverage and celebrate strengths. You can make a significant impact by communicating your results and support for the follow-up process—planning and implementing concrete actions, monitoring the progress of your actions, and regularly communicating progress updates.

Better Understand the Data

The “Manager Training for the Employee Engagement Survey Report” is an on-demand webinar available on the employee engagement website (z.umn.edu/engagedU) that walks through each survey report slide with sample data. To help leaders better understand and interpret report data, the webinar discusses what the data measures and how to interpret year-to-year changes.

The webinar was designed to help leaders across the University gain confidence in sharing and discussing employee engagement data with their employees. In conducting the survey over the past two years, consultants in Leadership and Talent Development have found that conversation with faculty and staff about the survey responses are particularly helpful to support action. Employees can help clarify the meaning of responses, share ideas for how to refine or start action plans related to one or two items, and help identify areas of engagement that are strong and need to be celebrated and sustained.

Other Resources

A “Communications Toolkit” is available online from the Office of Human Resources which provides key messages, sample templates for communications, and frequently asked questions (z.umn.edu/engagedU). The toolkit includes sample communications for sharing results, action planning, and reminding faculty and staff of actions taken as a result of the engagement survey data. Additional resources are included on the final page of this guide.

Connecting Data, Strategy, and Goals

Leaders can use the current employee engagement data to align their engagement efforts with unit-specific strategies, goals and objectives, while following a few basic action-planning principles. Survey results are an important diagnostic tool, but they are only one source of information needed to fully understand faculty and staff opinions. Additional data
are needed to have a fuller understanding of the state of engagement. To increase employee engagement, soliciting faculty and staff feedback and conducting action planning are vital to ensure the success of next steps.

**Action-Planning Principles**

As you work to align your survey data with your strategy, goals, and objectives, the following action planning principles can guide your next steps.

- **Have a conversation (or several) about the survey data.** This will help you to understand why faculty and staff responded the way they did to the survey. Through sharing results, other questions or topics of importance can be raised and addressed. The real value in engagement actions comes in the discussion with employees and sharing results with faculty and staff is an important first step.

- **Work with your employees to understand results and underlying issues.** Develop an understanding of what influenced the responses before moving on to action. It is important to consider organizational changes over the last year as well as what events and context were occurring around the time of survey administration. Inviting your employees to understand and provide feedback on the data can help clarify and create deeper meaning based on the results. Sample questions for individual leaders to use in discussions with faculty and staff are included in this guide.

- **Involve faculty and staff in offering areas of priority for action.** Employees are integral to achieving the unit’s highest priorities. Faculty and staff can help you understand the context for engagement scores as well as provide ideas for appropriate solutions. Involve faculty and staff in creating and implementing solutions where appropriate.

- **Keep it simple.** Concentrate on taking action on between one to three issues that can be executed well and are tied to strategic priorities. Focus on issues within your control and spend time on areas where you can have the most impact. Also, consider whether there are quick wins you can achieve relatively easily.

- **Clear, contained, and connected.** The most effective action plans are clear and specific; linked to organizational objectives; limited to a manageable number of action priorities; focused on action areas that will have impact; and are clear in assigning accountability and follow-up.

- **Provide regular updates on progress.** When important work is done as a result of the survey, faculty and staff may not realize these actions were based on survey feedback and may not perceive leaders as having taken action. Take time to communicate that employees’ input was valuable and describe the ways you are making changes as a result.

The final action planning principle is to **prepare to communicate unfavorable results.** It is helpful to know that many leaders have concerns about this part of the process. The best approach is to be honest and straightforward in communicating survey results. You should present a balanced picture of the results and then ask any questions that will help clarify the reasons for the ratings. You could probe and ask about potential solutions to improve scores moving forward. It may be helpful to have an outside third party facilitate this conversation.

For most of us, feedback is not always easily received, and the idea of change can be difficult, even for experienced leaders. Leaders can unintentionally derail engagement if their own reactions to the data causes them to avoid taking action or act negatively. Therefore, leaders should be aware of their own emotions and responses to the data before
sharing results with their direct reports and refining their action plan. It’s very normal for leaders to experience a range of reactions to the data, including shock, anger, resistance, and acceptance. It is beneficial when leaders have the mindset of seeking help when they share the data with their direct reports. This frame of mind can prevent the data from being presented in a way that may appear defensive or as explaining away unfavorable results. It also ensures the leader is open to hearing possible ideas for action and potential solutions. Consultants in Leadership and Talent Development may be helpful resources during this part of the process.

In conclusion, three key questions are integral to the action-planning principles for using staff and faculty feedback to leverage employee engagement:

1. Have you identified and celebrated strengths?
2. What are the patterns of opportunity for increased engagement?
3. Where can increased employee engagement advance your highest priorities?
An Engagement-Readiness Framework to Prioritize Action

A key challenge in employee engagement is prioritizing one or two areas of focus. A new framework has been developed for University leaders to better understand whether their proposed areas for action planning align with the overall engagement readiness level within their group.

The following framework of employee engagement can be used to prioritize action planning efforts. The Basic-Intermediate-Advanced (BIA) Model helps leaders ensure underlying basic engagement structures and activities are in place before tackling more advanced issues. This framework is based on the TNS Employee Insights (www.tnsei.com) action planning prioritization model.

As you review the prioritization of each survey item, you can use the questions for discussion with faculty and staff in the next section to determine how best to impact this specific area of engagement. Below, the corresponding key metric, driver, and survey questions are organized by basic, intermediate, and advanced levels of the framework.

Basic: Tactical Focus

At this priority level, the focus is on the individual employee’s fundamental needs regarding his or her job, the environment, recognition, and effective supervision. If these needs are unmet, employees can become disengaged with their role and the unit.

**Commitment & Dedication**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment &amp; Dedication</th>
<th>“Given your choice, how long would you plan to continue working for the University of Minnesota?”</th>
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**Respect & Recognition**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Respect &amp; Recognition</th>
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<td>“I receive recognition when I do a good job.” (Staff)</td>
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**Effective Environment**

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<tr>
<th>Effective Environment</th>
<th>“Conditions in my job allow me to be about as productive as I can be.”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“My department proactively identifies and eliminates barriers to getting work done effectively.”</td>
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</table>

**Authority & Empowerment**

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<tr>
<th>Authority &amp; Empowerment</th>
<th>“I have enough authority to carry out my job effectively.”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I am encouraged to be innovative to find more effective ways of doing things.”</td>
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**Clear Expectations & Feedback**

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<tr>
<th>Clear Expectations &amp; Feedback</th>
<th>“I understand results expected of me in my work.”</th>
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### Support and Resources

- “My manager/supervisor provides clear and regular feedback on how well I do my work.” (Staff)
- “I receive clear and regular feedback on how well I do my work.” (Faculty)
- “I have the resources I need to do my job effectively.” (Staff)
- “I have the information I need to do my job well” (Staff)
- “I receive training I need to handle my present job well.” (Staff)
- “New employees receive the training they need to do their job well.” (Staff)
- “I have the resources and support I need to pursue my scholarly interests.” (Faculty)
- “I have the resources and support I need to deliver high quality teaching.” (Faculty)
- “I have the resources and support I need to deliver high quality service/clinical care.” (Faculty)

### Intermediate: Operational Focus

Once the basic areas of engagement are developed, the priority focus shifts to cooperation, teamwork, capabilities, communications, and opportunities for learning and career development. The intermediate/operational level of focus is the growth and development needs of every employee to enable exceptional performance and growth in his or her role and career.

### Commitment & Dedication

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<th>Commitment to Excellence</th>
<th>“The people in my department are committed to delivering high quality services.” (Staff)</th>
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<td>“Rate your department on the quality of customer service (i.e., responsiveness, flexibility, turnaround).” (Staff)</td>
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<td>“Rate your department on being student focused (seeking to understand and meet students’ needs and requirements).” (Faculty)</td>
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| Confidence in Leaders | “There is open and honest communication between me and my manager/supervisor.” (Staff) |

- “There is open and honest communication between me and my manager/supervisor.” (Staff)
### Development Opportunities
- “Rate your opportunities for learning and development.”
- “My manager/supervisor coaches me in my development.” (Staff)
- “My department offers effective mentoring and coaching to support my development.” (Faculty)
- “Rate your opportunities to achieve your personal career objective at your campus (Crookston, Duluth, Morris, Rochester, and Twin Cities).”

### Respect & Recognition
- “Overall, my department demonstrates a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion.”

## Effective Environment

### Effective Environment
- “My job provides me the opportunity to do challenging and interesting work.”
- “In my work, I am able to make full use of my skills and abilities.”

### Collaboration
- “There is good cooperation and sharing of ideas between my department and other departments.” (Staff)
- “My department supports and encourages interdisciplinary scholarship.” (Faculty)
- “There is good cooperation and teamwork within my department.”

## Advanced: Strategic Focus
In the final priority level, leaders focus on alignment, acceptance (buy in), and confidence in leaders. Once basic and intermediate needs are met, success in this area exceeds employees’ expectations and maximizes engagement.

### Commitment & Dedication
- “I feel motivated to go beyond my formal job responsibilities.”
- “I feel proud to work for the University of Minnesota.” (Staff)
- “I feel proud to work on my campus of the University of Minnesota.” (Faculty)

### Clear & Promising Direction
- “My department has a strategy and goals that address our most important challenges and opportunities.”
- “I understand what I can do to support my department’s strategy and goals.” (Staff)
Finally, in the BIA model, it is also important to recognize the parts of the engagement process where leaders can most directly impact employee engagement. These avenues for influence are in contrast to those areas where individual employees have a more direct impact, specifically in terms of their own personal investment and emotional commitment to the organization and their work. However, leaders can impact employee motivation to a degree, and this model and following graphic should be considered fluid with areas of overlapping influence.

**The Engagement Process**

**Critical questions**
- Will my efforts contribute to something meaningful?
- Do I believe that our leaders are capable and effective?
- Is the environment supportive and respectful?
- Can I grow and develop here?

**Emotional commitment**
- I am proud of my contributions
- I care about the future of my organization
- I am aware of my strengths and development needs
- I am willing to improve

**Personal investment**
- I push myself to do great work
- I go out of my way to help my coworkers and colleagues

**Empowerment**
- Clear roles and responsibilities
- Resources and support to succeed
- Autonomy
- Effective collaboration
- Administrative efficiency
- Job fit
- Training to close skill gaps

**Results**
- Wellbeing
- Retention/turnover
- Productivity and performance
- Overall organizational effectiveness

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Metrics and Drivers Defined with Key Questions for Reflection and Discussion

Introduction to Action Planning Questions
The University’s two key metrics and 10 associated drivers of engagement are summarized and related survey items are provided in the section below and each section includes two sets of reflection questions. The first set of questions is for leaders to consider the current state of engagement within the work group. The second set is to be used in discussion with faculty and staff to gather more specific information around survey results to guide follow-up actions. This may be done through focus groups, regular meetings, group discussion, or other gatherings. Customize the questions and the method you choose to collect the responses to best suit your workgroup.

Key Metric: Commitment and Dedication

How “Commitment and Dedication” Fit with Engagement
When employees are committed and dedicated to their work, they not only care about the quality of their own work, but also are invested in the collective work of their group, unit, campus, and university. This is a defining characteristic of employee engagement. Commitment and dedication refer to an individual’s level of personal motivation and conviction in their job. It is one of two key components in the University of Minnesota’s model of employee engagement, the other being effective environment.

Survey Questions on “Commitment and Dedication”
- “I feel motivated to go beyond my formal job responsibilities.”
- “I feel proud to work on my campus of the University of Minnesota.”
- “I would recommend my campus to peers at other institutions as a great place to work.” (Faculty)
- “I would recommend my campus to family and friends as a place to work.”
- “Given your choice, how long would you plan to continue working at your campus?” (Answer choices: less than a year, one to two years, three to five years, longer than five years)

Self-Reflection Questions for Leaders on “Commitment and Dedication”
- How do I know if employees are committed and dedicated to their work?
- What is motivating about our work? How do I motivate employees? Do I encourage others to motivate?
- What does dedication look like in our unit and how do we reward it?
- How do employees feel about working here? How do we promote our unit as a great place to work?
- How do we show we care about the personal as well as the academic/professional aspects of our work?
- How do leaders keep a close eye on retirement projections and the need for new talent?

Discussion Questions for Faculty and Staff Input on “Commitment and Dedication”
- Can you think of some examples where employees’ commitment and dedication were positively acknowledged?
- What motivates you to do your best work?
- How can leaders effectively motivate employees in their work?
- Are employees generally proud to work here? How do they show this?
• What could support more workplace pride?
• When you talk to others about working here, what do you say?
• How is the personal balanced with the professional/academic aspects of working here?
• How do you communicate with your leader about your future here at the University?

Driver: Clear and Promising Direction

How “Clear and Promising Direction” Fits with Engagement

Employees look for opportunities to contribute to something larger than themselves and to make a difference. Supporting faculty and staff in connecting their work to the goals of the department, college, and university is critical to creating a high level of engagement. The University of Minnesota’s mission to teach, research and serve the public should be tied to the work of every University employee. College and unit goals should directly influence and connect to the work of its faculty and staff.

Survey Questions on “Clear and Promising Direction”

• “My department has a strategy and goals that address our most important challenges and opportunities.”
• “I understand what I can do to support my department’s strategy and goals.”
• “I have the opportunity to set my goals in alignment with the strategic priorities of my college and department.” (Faculty)

Self-Reflection Questions for Leaders on “Clear and Promising Direction”

• How do faculty and staff demonstrate their role in driving unit/work group goals throughout my area? Are unit/work group goals included in individual objectives for each employee?
• How do I share important information I receive from leadership? Do people hear direct communications before rumors?
• How do faculty and staff contribute to the strategic planning and goal setting of our work group?
• When strategy and goals are communicated to faculty and staff, how are the reasons behind the strategy and goals communicated?
• How has my unit changed over the past few years? What changes are yet to come and why? How do I communicate this to faculty and staff?
• How are the University of Minnesota’s goals and my college/unit’s goals aligned? How do I communicate this alignment to faculty and staff? How often do these communications take place?
• What is my communication strategy for various groups and individuals in my unit? Do I share appropriate information with all appropriate individuals? Do I tell people only what they need to know (little piece of the puzzle) versus giving them the entire picture?
• How do I inform my group of connections and possible connections to the work of other work groups? How do I emphasize the value of these connections?
• How do I make connections between what people want to learn and do and the future work of my area? Do I ask people what they want to know, and what they want to learn about so that I can provide them information and direction?
• How do I speak to employees about how their contribution helps both the college/unit and the University of Minnesota achieve its goals?

• How do I reinforce my work group’s strategy and goals to faculty and staff? Do I have a communicate plan? Is there an intentional cascade throughout the organization? Do I reinforce/reward behaviors that align with the unit’s/work group’s strategy and goals? How?

Discussion Questions for Faculty and Staff Input on “Clear and Promising Direction”

• How are the reasons behind strategy communicated to faculty and staff in your college/unit?

• How is your unit/work group a leader amongst your peers? In what ways are you in the forefront and in what ways are you lagging behind?

• How do day-to-day behaviors within your work group support the group’s strategy and goals? Are there ways that day-to-day behaviors do not align with the group’s strategy and goals?

• Do faculty and staff understand why the unit/work group is focused on these particular strategies and goals? How can you tell?

• How is your work linked directly to the college/unit goals and the goals of the University?

• How do faculty and staff in your area hear about and make connections with others to further the work in your area?

• How do employees in your area hear about what’s happening at the leadership level in your college/unit?

• How do faculty and staff contribute to strategic goal setting for your college/unit?

Driver: Commitment to Excellence

How “Commitment to Excellence” Fits with Engagement

Delivering high-quality education and research is critical to the University’s success. Ensuring that employees are working together toward these common goals requires an environment that encourages and supports teamwork as well as promotes innovation and continuous improvement. Engaged faculty and staff want to contribute to the success of something greater than themselves through their work.

Survey Questions on “Commitment to Excellence”

• “The people in my department are committed to delivering high quality services.”

• “How would you rate your department on the following: the quality of customer support (i.e., responsiveness, flexibility, turnaround time) provided by my department?”

• “The people in my department are committed to delivering high impact, high quality scholarship.” (Faculty)

• “The people in my department are committed to delivering high quality service/clinical care.” (Faculty)

• “How would you rate your department on the following: being student focused (seeking to understand and meet students' needs and requirements)?” (Faculty)
Self-Reflection Questions for Leaders on “Commitment to Excellence”

• Have I established and documented quality standards in my work group? How do I hold individuals accountable?
• How do we measure service delivery? How does my area seek and use feedback from those receiving services from us? Are those results freely shared and celebrated?
• Where is quality routinely superior or routinely a problem? What plans have I put in place to promote/address these?
• How do I invite faculty and staff input on ways to maintain or improve quality and/or service focus? How do I invite employee ideas on ways to overcome quality barriers?
• Has increased workload had an impact on quality? If so, how can we meet our workload demands while still maintaining high levels of quality? What can be changed to ensure that the highest priority items are done in a high quality, timely manner?

Discussion Questions for Faculty and Staff on “Commitment to Excellence”

• How does your work group respond when a quality issue is identified? How does your work group handle internal and/or external customer or service complaints? How are complaints tracked, reported, resolved, and discussed?
• What would enable your work group to better understand how to collaborate, be more effective, and share best practices with others impacted by your work? Have you seen other groups collaborate well and if so, what characteristics make them successful?
• What impact, if any, has increased workload had on quality in your area? How can we meet our workload demands while still maintaining high levels of quality? What can be changed to ensure that highest priority items are done in a high quality, timely manner?
• How do you make best use of best practices in your area? What do you do when you encounter substandard quality issues?
• How do you share your ideas for improvement with leaders?
• What areas of work would benefit from having quality standards implemented?
• Where quality is routinely superior or substandard? How can you promote and overcome these?

Driver: Confidence in Leaders

How “Confidence in Leaders” Fits with Engagement

The success of your work group depends largely on the quality of its leaders throughout all levels of the organization. Leaders influence how faculty and staff perceive the unit/department as a whole and play a critical role in reinforcing strategies and goals. Effective leaders deliver key messages and share important information with employees in their group in a concise, relevant, and timely manner. Employees will have high levels of engagement when they understand the work group’s strategies and goals, and are confident that leaders are capable of achieving objectives.

Survey Questions on “Confidence in Leaders”

• “How would you rate the overall trust and confidence you have in your college’s leadership team?”
• “There is open and honest communication between me and my manager/supervisor.”
• “How would you rate your department on the following: being open and honest in communications to employees?” (Faculty)

Self-Reflection Questions for Leaders on “Confidence in Leaders”

• What methods of communication do I use to communicate with faculty and staff? Am I aware of the level of employee satisfaction with current methods of communication?
• Do I avoid communicating certain types of information to faculty and staff? How is “bad news” shared with employees?
• How do I share important information I receive from leadership with employees? How do I hold leaders who report to me accountable for communicating important information to employees?
• What procedures and processes are in place to ensure that employees get information about important changes in a timely and consistent manner? Do employees hear rumors before there is an opportunity to communicate important information directly to them?
• How do I demonstrate trust and respect for all team members?
• How do I know I have the trust of my work group? How do I intentionally foster trust?
• How does my personal style affect the way my communications are received? How do I solicit feedback on this?
• What are the communication processes and tools used within my area?
• How do I ensure follow-through on commitments? What are the consequences of over and under-promising?
• How do I ensure employees are being treated fairly?
• What do I do to motivate employees? What can I be doing differently or better to motivate faculty and staff?
• How do I hold poor performing employees accountable for their performance?
• How do I take responsibility for my mistakes? How do I respond when I don’t have an answer?
• How do I create a culture of transparent communications and trust?
• How do I support our leaders in modeling trust and open communication?

Discussion Questions for Faculty and Staff Input on “Confidence in Leaders”

• How do faculty and staff receive information they need to perform well?
• How do leaders demonstrate ethical behaviors?
• How do leaders in your area cultivate trusting relationships with their work group?
• What could leaders stop doing, start doing, or continue doing that would aid in building a trusting relationship with the work group?

Driver: Development Opportunities

How “Development Opportunities” Fit with Engagement

Development is often cited in engagement research as one of the top drivers of engagement. Employee development includes the ongoing learning and development of skills and knowledge, including job mastery and professional development, coupled with career planning activities. To remain motivated and productive, employees need to grow in their jobs—and perhaps grow beyond them. Given the changing nature of work, employees may need encouragement
and support in reviewing and assessing their goals and the activities that support those goals. Leaders are in a position to provide valuable career coaching and feedback to help employees reach their career objectives.

- Career planning and development clarifies the match between organizational and employee goals.
- Attention to career development helps attract and retain top talent.
- Development should be an integral part of the performance management process by identifying current and future development goals and making a plan to accomplish them.
- Development paths help align for the future of the organization.
- Opportunities for promotion and lateral moves contribute to an employee’s career satisfaction, motivation, and productivity.

**Survey Questions on “Development Opportunities”**

- “How would you rate the following: your opportunities to achieve your personal career objectives at the University of Minnesota?”
- “How would you rate the following: your opportunities for learning and development?”
- “My manager/supervisor coaches me in my development.”
- “My department offers effective mentoring and coaching to support my development.” (Faculty)

**Self-Reflection Questions for Leaders on “Development Opportunities”**

- Do I know the career paths available for faculty and staff in my area?
- Have I discussed the desire for career advancement and development with employees and the opportunities that exist for them?
- How do I discuss, document, and implement development plans for employees in my area?
- How do I communicate job opportunities to employees?
- How can I communicate to our employees the skills required to compete for open positions? How can I better communicate the required qualifications to prospective candidates?
- How do I support employees in understanding how to plan their careers and what they need to do to advance?
- How do I identify training opportunities that will allow employees to grow in their careers?
- Are employees ever kept in their current positions for longer than planned because no one has been identified to fill their position? If so, how can I better identify successors to job roles currently filled by employees identified as candidates for promotion?
- How do I help talented, ambitious employees remain challenged and satisfied at the University?

**Discussion Questions for Faculty and Staff on “Development Opportunities”**

- Have you thought about your own career development? What steps are you taking to develop your skills and abilities?
- How does leadership invest in your development?
- How do you access development opportunities at the University?
- What kinds of development opportunities exist for you and your work group to be more effective?
• How do you share your career goals and ambitions with leadership?
• Do you have skills and abilities that are not being used that could contribute to the success of your area?

Driver: Respect and Recognition

How “Respect and Recognition” Fits with Engagement
Faculty and staff who feel respected in their workplace will show respect for their work and for the organization. The University invests in creating the conditions that make work meaningful and rewarding for employees. And employees, in return, respect their work environment, colleagues and the reputation of the University. Organizations that make a reciprocal commitment of respect will have faculty and staff who take a personal interest in organizational objectives.

Survey Questions on “Respect and Recognition”
• “I am treated with respect as an individual.”
• “My department demonstrates a commitment to supporting my overall wellbeing.”
• “Overall, my department demonstrates a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion.”
• “I receive recognition when I do a good job.”
• “I receive recognition from my department for my contributions to my field/discipline.” (Faculty)

Self-Reflection Questions for Leaders on “Respect and Recognition”
• How do I ensure that policies and procedures are applied fairly?
• How familiar am I with the University’s Equal Opportunity Policy? How do I ensure knowledge of and adherence to these policies and procedures?
• How do I treat faculty and staff respectfully? How do I ensure respectful behaviors among the work group? How do I know that all groups and individuals are treated with respect and dignity?
• How do I know that all employee groups feel valued? Does the work group overlook the needs of any specific group?
• How can I be more supportive of employees who have personal or family matters to attend to?
• How do I give and share credit for success?
• How do I recognize faculty and staff, either individually or as a team, for doing a good job? Is this recognition meaningful to the employees?
• How do I model inclusive behavior toward people, ideas, and ways of working?

Discussion Questions for Faculty and Staff on “Respect and Recognition”
• Are policies and procedures applied fairly in this work group? How?
• Are faculty and staff treated with respect by leaders? Do employees treat each other in the workplace with respect?
• How are faculty and staff held accountable for ensuring a culture of respect in your work group?
• How are individual employee accomplishments celebrated? How is positive feedback given?
• Do you feel your contributions are important and valued?
• Are the needs of any specific group or person overlooked? How?
• How are you acknowledged for a job well done? Is this recognition meaningful to you?
• How is credit given and shared for successes?

Key Metric: Effective Environment

How “Effective Environment” Fits with Engagement

An effective work environment is one of two key components of employee engagement, along with commitment and dedication. Employees who are exerting their best efforts in their job will thrive and continue to give their best in a work environment that supports these efforts. Without an effective work environment, employees risk becoming frustrated. Research shows that frustrated employees typically do one of three things: find innovative ways around environmental barriers and become engaged; get tired of challenging environmental barriers and leave the organization; or, lower their expectations and become disengaged. Paying attention to environmental factors is something that usually lies within a unit’s span of control and can pay big dividends in engaging employees.

Survey Questions on “Effective Environment”

• “My job provides me the opportunity to do challenging and interesting work.”
• “In my work I am able to make full use of my skills and abilities.”
• “My department proactively identifies and eliminates barriers to getting work done efficiently.”
• “Conditions in my job allow me to be as productive as I can be.”

Self-Reflection Questions for Leaders on “Effective Environment”

• How does leadership know if employees are sufficiently challenged in their work?
• What departmental impacts result from employees not being sufficiently challenged in their work?
• Am I aware of the most critical and most frustrating barriers to our employees getting work done?
• How does leadership identify and attempt to remove significant barriers for our employees?
• How do we track the skills and abilities of our staff in order to make full use of them in accomplishing our mission?
• How do we create work conditions to support full productivity?

Discussion Questions for Faculty and Staff Input on “Effective Environment”

• What could be changed to allow you to be sufficiently challenged in your work?
• How do you discuss adequate job challenges with your supervisor?
• What barriers do you encounter in trying to do your job efficiently? Which barriers are critical to your work and which are simply frustrating?
• How can leaders help identify and remove barriers to efficient work?
• Does your job make full use of your skills and abilities? How?
• How do you discuss your skills and abilities with leaders?
• How could leaders make better use of your skills and abilities in accomplishing the work of the department/unit?
• Which work conditions are most important to your full productivity?
• What could leaders do to the work environment to best support productivity?

Driver: Authority and Empowerment

How “Authority and Empowerment” Fit with Engagement

Employees with appropriate autonomy and discretion to complete their work are better enabled to be more productive and effective. By managing how they work, employees are also more likely to find ways to fully use their skills and abilities leading to more input, innovation, and increased job satisfaction.

Survey Questions on “Authority and Empowerment”

• “I have enough authority to carry out my job effectively.”
• “I am encouraged to be innovative to find more effective ways of doing things.”

Self-Reflection Questions for Leaders on “Authority and Empowerment”

• Am I creating a climate where people can share their thoughts and opinions without fear of retribution? How do I know?
• How do I seek information from faculty and staff about what is going well and what can be improved in my area? How often do I do this? How do I implement the best ideas?
• What do I do to create an environment that welcomes new ideas and recognizes the sharing of ideas?
• How often do employees offer ideas for changing or enhancing the way the work group performs its function or individual team members carry out their jobs? What does this tell me?
• Examine the structure and accountabilities around different types of decisions. Do employees understand what decisions they can and cannot control? Do employees understand the rationale behind the delegation of decisions?
• How do I promote and encourage innovation?
• Am I making the majority of the decisions for my work groups? How can I drive the decision making down into lower levels within the organization?
• Do I involve employees in changes that impact them?
• Do I delegate challenging work and give employees the authority to complete the work?
• Do I use delegation as a means of developing the skills of faculty and staff? Am I clear on the results I desire, and support flexibility in the achievement of those results?

Discussion Questions for Faculty and Staff Input on “Authority and Empowerment”

• Can you think of some times recently where new ideas were shared? How well did it work?
• What suggestions would you make to better encourage idea contribution?
• How can faculty and staff best make suggestions regarding change in work processes?
• How can employees in your work group be appropriately recognized for sharing or implementing new ways of working?
• How are decisions made in your work group? Does it vary by situation? Which decisions can be made independently and which need to go through channels?
• What are some of the obstacles that prevent you or your work group from working as efficiently as possible for optimum results? What suggestions do you have for enabling innovative suggestions to be considered and implemented?

Driver: Clear Expectations and Feedback

How “Clear Expectations and Feedback” Fit with Engagement

Communicating expectations and giving feedback are two of the most important parts of a leader’s job. All employees need ongoing feedback on expectations and performance in order to continuously deliver high quality services. Leaders who do this successfully improve the chances of high productivity and quality work for individuals, work groups, departments, colleges/units, and the University overall. Clarity regarding goals and priorities enables excellent performance by allowing employees to focus their efforts on essential tasks. Likewise, by continually raising the bar, ongoing monitoring and feedback regarding performance helps ensure that faculty and staff capabilities are optimally developed and used.

Survey Questions on “Clear Expectations and Feedback”

• “I understand the results expected of me in my work.”
• “My manager/supervisor provides clear and regular feedback on how well I do my work.”
• “I receive clear and regular feedback on how well I do my work.” (Faculty)

Self-Reflection Questions for Leaders on “Clear Expectations and Feedback”

• How well do I understand the University’s performance management philosophy?
• How do faculty and staff in my area understand what work is expected of them and what results are expected?
• How do I identify and address poor performance? Is it timely?
• How do I identify and reward excellent performance?
• Do I avoid confronting poor performance? What are the consequences of doing this?
• How do I communicate the behaviors that differentiate high and low performance levels?
• How do I communicate performance expectations with faculty and staff? How clear and specific are these expectations? How often are these discussions occurring?
• How do I know that employees clearly understand expectations?
• How often do I discuss performance with and give feedback to faculty and staff? Do I do this on a regular and informal basis as opposed to a formal, annual event?
• What kind of feedback do I give to employees and how often is it given? How do I know if it is effective?
• How do I know my feedback is fair, balanced, timely, and specific? Do I give positive feedback when employees do well, as well as corrective feedback when employees need improvement?
• When reviewing performance, how do I agree specific behaviors or activities needed to perform jobs effectively with faculty and staff?
• How do I discuss ways to use core strengths to enhance job performance with faculty and staff?
• How do I determine if an employee is meeting performance expectations? Do I rely on objective performance goals? Do I seek feedback from those who work most closely with the employee?
• How do I leverage and highlight excellent performance in my area?

Discussion Questions for Faculty and Staff Input on “Clear Expectations and Feedback”
• How do you know what is expected of you in your job?
• How do you know what you should be working on and how it is important to the overall work of the group?
• Do you understand how your work fits with the goals of your college/unit and the University? (See Clear and Promising Direction resources.)
• How do you know how well you are performing? Do you know what differentiates poor from excellent performance?
• How does leadership support you in delivering excellent quality work?
• How do you communicate to leaders about the knowledge, skills, and experience you want and need to develop?
• How do you seek out opportunities for professional and career development? Do you utilize resources within the University? External learning resources?
• How do you ask leaders for feedback and guidance on job performance, especially when you encounter challenges?
• How do you accept constructive feedback and take the initiative to improve?
• How do leaders provide constructive feedback to help communicate job expectations?
• How do leaders support the skill development needed to perform the job well?
• How is poor performance addressed in your area? How could this be more effective?
• How do you take responsibility for your professional and career development?
• How frequently do you receive feedback about your performance? What could happen to make the feedback more useful?
• How is excellent performance highlighted in your area?

Driver: Collaboration
How “Collaboration” Fits with Engagement
Good cooperation and teamwork helps units develop better ways to get work done and react faster to changing needs. Collaboration can also lead to better cross-unit work and to highlight the work of the University within an industry/discipline. Collaborative behavior is an important skill for leaders and work groups. One way successful
organizations meet and exceed their goals is by optimizing cooperation across work groups that rely on each other, which in turn leads to:

- Heightened levels of morale and pride among faculty and staff, resulting from greater involvement.
- Increased efficiency by streamlining process steps and eliminating redundancies.
- More efficient and effective communication both horizontally across work groups and vertically up and down the organization.
- Better decision making through the sharing of internal best practices and experiences.
- Higher levels of service satisfaction (i.e., student, staff, faculty, external contacts, the public, industry leaders, etc.).

**Survey Questions on “Collaboration”**

- “There is good cooperation and teamwork within my department.”
- “There is good cooperation and sharing of ideas between my department and other departments.”
- “My department supports and encourages interdisciplinary scholarship.” (Faculty)

**Self-Reflection Questions for Leaders on “Collaboration”**

- How do I share information and keep both my group and other groups informed?
- How do I involve all impacted parties and stakeholders in changes and decision making?
- How do I encourage a participative approach within my group and across groups?
- How do I assign and coordinate roles to encourage collaboration?
- How do I develop a common sense of purpose within faculty and staff?
- How do I consciously build team spirit?
- How do I promote the benefits of working collaboratively with other groups?
- What are the benefits of getting work done by a team versus a highly trained individual? Which tasks are best accomplished using a formal team, and which tasks are best accomplished using individuals?
- Have I set specific team goals? How are goals communicated? How do I know work group goals are clear to all team members? How do I communicate results expected of group members? Is there any consequence for not meeting group objectives?
- How do I ensure employees know how they should collaborate with others in the context of their day-to-day jobs?
- How is teamwork behavior and performance measured? Are there better ways to measure collaborative behaviors? What collaborative behaviors should we measure and how?
- How do compensation, reward, and recognition systems encourage teamwork and collaborative behavior?
- Would cross-training between departments help us better understand how to serve internal service needs?
- How do the objectives of our department align with objectives of the departments we rely on for support? If our objectives differ, does this impede cooperation and teamwork?
Discussion Questions for Faculty and Staff Input on “Collaboration”

- How is information shared in and across your work unit?
- How are impacted parties and stakeholders involved in changes and decision making?
- How are you and your colleagues encouraged to collaborate within your group and across groups?
- How are roles assigned and coordinated to encourage collaboration?
- How is a common sense of purpose developed within faculty and staff?
- How can our work unit communicate more effectively with other departments?
- Would better cooperation and teamwork between departments have a positive effect on service provision? If so, what could we do differently?
- How is team spirit promoted? How do you promote team spirit?
- How are team and individual goals communicated when working on a collaborative project?
- How are the benefits of working collaboratively versus working individually communicated for various projects?
- How do employees know how they should collaborate with others in the context of their day-to-day jobs?
- How is collaboration rewarded and recognized?
- How could cross-training be beneficial to the work of your work group?

Driver: Support and Resources

How “Support and Resources” Fit with Engagement

Engaged employees who have the knowledge and resources to perform optimally are likely to meet the performance expectations and perform optimally. Commitment and discretionary effort offered by engaged employees can easily be squandered if leaders are not careful to provide them with the workplace support they need to be successful in their responsibilities.

Employees can only perform at optimal levels if they have the necessary information, training, and resources (e.g., tools, technology, equipment, and supplies) required to do their jobs effectively. Employees require on-going training and development to effectively handle the changing nature of job expectations and work environments.

Well-trained employees are more likely to have and use higher levels of skill in their jobs. They are also more likely to demonstrate enthusiasm and positive attitudes towards their work, and exhibit higher levels of commitment to the organization. In assessing the training and development needs within your area, take into consideration the skills employees need to help the organization achieve its objectives.

Survey Questions on “Support and Resources”

- “I have the information I need to do my job well.”
- “I have the resources I need to do my job effectively.”
- “I have the resources and support I need to pursue my scholarly interests.” (Faculty)
- “I have the resources and support I need to deliver high quality teaching.” (Faculty)
- “I have the resources and support I need to deliver high quality service/clinical care.” (Faculty)
• “I receive the training I need to handle my present job well.”
• “New employees receive the training they need to do their jobs well.”

**Self-Reflection Questions for Leaders on “Support and Resources”**

- How do I provide access to tools and resources (including information) in a timely manner and to those who need them?
- What equipment, tools, supplies, and materials do employees say they need in order to help them do their jobs more effectively? How do I gather this information?
- How do I plan for the most effective workspace to help employees do their work?
- How do I ensure staffing levels are adequate to accomplish key tasks—without risking employee burnout over time? How do I support resiliency for employees in today’s changing work environment?
- What is my level of understanding of the training and development opportunities available to employees?
- What skills are critical to the success of the work group both now and into the future? Do faculty and staff lack any of these critical skills? If yes, what resources are available to address needs?
- How do I identify, address, and measure the education/training needs of employees?
- How do I make use of training and development programs—both internal and external—that employees have completed? What gaps exist between the skills valued and the skills in which employees are trained?
- What training would help employees better perform their current jobs?
- What training would help employees qualify for specific advancement opportunities?
- Are employees discouraged from attending training due to high workload? Are there other reasons?
- How adequate is the training for new hires prior to placing them on the job? How long does it take new employees to hit an acceptable level of productivity? How can this time be shortened?
- How do I include other avenues of learning such as mentors, self-directed options, cross-training, stretch projects, skill development, etc.?

**Discussion Questions for Faculty and Staff Input on “Support and Resources”**

- How is access to tools and resources (including information) provided to those who need them?
- What equipment, tools, supplies, and materials are needed to help faculty do their job more effectively?
- How can the work environment be improved to support better productivity?
- Are staffing levels adequate to accomplish key tasks without risking employee burnout over time? How is resiliency supported to help cope with today’s changing work environment?
- Where do you look for training and development opportunities?
- How do you communicate training and resource needs to leaders?
- What skills are critical to your success in your work? Do you lack any of these critical skills? If yes, what resources are available to address needs?
- How are education/training needs of employees identified, measured, and addressed?
- How are training and development benefits shared with others? What gaps exist between the skills valued and the skills in which employees are trained?
• What training/development would help you better perform your work?
• What training/development would help you qualify for specific advancement opportunities?
• Are employees encouraged to professionally develop? If this is not happening, what reasons might there be for this?
• How adequate is new-hire training? How long does it take new employees to hit an acceptable level of productivity? What would help new employees the most in getting up to productivity?
• What are other avenues of learning (such as mentors, self-directed options, cross-training, stretch projects, skill development, etc.) that can be utilized as development resources?

Driver: Work, Structure, and Process

How “Work, Structure and Process” Fit with Engagement

We continue to be challenged to do more work with fewer resources. Operating efficiency not only ensures a productive workforce, but that our work environments run effectively, increase motivation and decrease frustration among faculty and staff. Employees closest to the work being performed often have the best ideas on how to improve work performance. Universities are increasingly competing for resources as well as faculty and staff effort and cannot afford to lose productivity due to inefficient processes. Tapping into employee feedback will have a positive impact on operating efficiencies, service, and employee satisfaction.

Survey Questions on “Work, Structure and Process”

• “There is an equitable distribution of workload within my department.”
• “How would you rate your department on the following: being innovative in how work is done (using new technologies or creative approaches to improve internal effectiveness)’?”

Self-Reflection Questions for Leaders on “Work, Structure and Process”

• Have I clearly communicated to employees the decisions they are responsible for making? What kinds of decisions could be delegated to employees to help them carry out their jobs more effectively?
• How well do I manage the current workload? How do I know?
• Do I over-assign work to top performers and under-assign work to lower performers? How do I invite faculty and staff input on work assignment practices?
• How can the workflow be better organized to help employees get their jobs done more effectively? What resources are there to help work more efficiently?
• How are work procedures defined and documented?
• What do employees feel are the greatest barriers to performing their jobs? To what extent are these factors under my control? How do I explore these issues with employees?
• How might the way work is currently done be changed to improve performance?
• How do I make the best use of technology to enhance and improve productivity?
• Has there been a change in the amount of work expected of employees? If so, has a reorganization of work, structures, and processes taken place to accommodate the changes? Has the number of employees kept pace with the workload?
• What do employees find most challenging and/or fulfilling? What do they find frustrating or unfulfilling? How do I invite this information? How frequently?
• How do I learn from past mistakes so that problems do not recur?

Discussion Questions for Faculty and Staff Input on “Work, Structure and Process”
• What types of decisions are you responsible for making?
• How well is the current workload managed?
• Is work over-assigned to top performers and under-assigned to lower performers? How do you provide feedback to leadership on work assignment practices?
• How can the workflow be better organized to get the work done more effectively? What resources are there to help work more efficiently?
• How are work procedures defined and documented?
• What do you feel are the greatest barriers to performing the work? To what extent are these factors under leadership’s control? How do you communicate this to leaders?
• How do you provide input on how to organize work and workflow for efficiency and effectiveness?
• How do you contribute to defining and documenting the procedures for performing the work?
• How might the way work is currently done be changed to improve performance?
• How is technology used? How can it enhance and improve productivity?
• Has there been a change in the amount of work expected? If so, how has work been reorganized to accommodate the changes? Has the number of employees kept pace with the workload?
• What do you find most challenging and/or fulfilling about your work? What do you find frustrating or unfulfilling? How do you share this with leadership?
• How do you learn from past mistakes so that problems do not recur?
Resources

Resources are available on the Action Planning page on the E² Employee Engagement website and include:

- **Communications Toolkit** includes specific communication messages and samples to support communication supporting the survey, sharing results, action plan refinement, and measuring and sharing progress.

- **Manager Training for the Employee Engagement Survey Report** an on-demand webinar to support managers in sharing and understanding the data.

- **Trend Data Interpretation Tutorial** designed to help leaders specifically understand and better interpret the 2013 and 2014 trend data (where available).

All managers who receive a report will have access to the Hay Group’s online tool called Insights to Action, or I2A. This website is where you will download your report. Access to the site will be emailed to you following your unit or college’s executive presentation. The online tool has an action planning library where you can get ideas on how to take action, as well as a place where you can record your action planning steps. You can import action steps from the library resources directly into your action plan and modify as appropriate, or create your own action items. To help track progress resulting from the survey, I2A provides manager/leader access to review the action plans developed by each of his or her direct reports. The “**Analyze Action Plans**” tab will take you to this tool.

Access to I2A to download your survey report as well as review and/or export action plans will be available through **November 1, 2016**. Please download reports and export your action plans to your hard drive before this date.

For technical difficulties with the I2A website, contact UofMNsurvey.US@haygroup.com with a detailed description of the problem and your full contact information.

For questions on action planning consultation, please contact the HR Lead on your campus or within your college or unit. A network of Employee Engagement Leads who have been trained to help support and deepen the capacity of their colleagues in their workplace to better understand and take action on survey results. The names of the Employee Engagement Lead(s) in your work area can be obtained from your HR staff and/or by emailing ee2@umn.edu

In addition, consultants in Leadership and Talent Development are available to answer questions, assist with action planning, and serve as an external resource to individual units, colleges and campuses. Work with your HR staff and/or Employee Engagement Lead, or email ee2@umn.edu for more information on working with Leadership and Talent Development consultants.

Finally, there are a number of leadership development programs available through Leadership and Talent Development for both you, as a leader, and your direct reports. While these opportunities are not focused on engagement exclusively, they do connect strongly with the common challenges and leadership competencies which support leaders overall, including developing engagement as well as providing professional development for individuals across the University. You can reach the Leadership and Talent Development consulting team at ltd@umn.edu.