



THRIVING WORKPLACE

What if... Our Scores Go Down?

Simply increasing scores and means is *not* the goal of the Thriving Workplace Initiative. Changing and supporting behaviors that create an environment of engagement and inclusion *is*.

Understandably, when your scores have gone down, it can feel discouraging. But do remember, the real power of the survey is the opportunity it provides you to identify and address issues within the organization. Some approaches that may be useful:

1. Keep your scores in perspective.

Your scores provide a quantitative representation of your progress but do not tell the full story. An analogy is your bathroom scale. When you step on it, you get a numerical representation of your weight. The number gives you a reference point but does not itself create the change. What really counts is understanding the factors that impact your weight changes and then making good choices about what to do with this information. Weighing yourself at regular intervals (or taking the survey regularly) helps you see trends, but what has the greatest impact on change are the actions you take afterwards.

2. Adopt a mindset of curiosity.

Your unit's scores are not a report card or performance review. Although it is human nature to feel some trepidation about the results, this is the time to take a deep breath, adopt an attitude of curiosity, and commit to explore and learn more. It is through the follow-up conversations and actions that you will be able to unearth underlying causes of the trend and make relevant pivots to create a more engaged and inclusive environment.

Many factors can cause a decline in scores. As an organization shines a spotlight on creating and sustaining a thriving workplace, people may gain a greater awareness of the factors important to engagement and inclusion and more accurately assess their presence or absence. Similarly, internal changes such as a reorganization, hiring a new supervisor, or experiencing high turnover affect people's experience and can impact the survey results. What factors may have impacted your scores?

3. Engage in dialogue and conversations to better discern what factors contributed to the decline in your scores.

One of the most powerful strategies you can use is to get broad input from across your unit. Discuss what factors may have contributed to the decline. Determine what needs improvement. Build investment and agency in your organization to ensure that plans turn into action. Conversations like these will be an invaluable resource in identifying trends and relevant pivots needed to create a more engaged and inclusive environment.

4. Use the results as a springboard for intentional actions towards a thriving workplace.

Analysis of University of Maryland's survey results shows a positive correlation between high engagement scores and action taken to address engagement. Simply said, actions matter to employee engagement. Engage your unit in creating SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely) actions. Start small, monitor progress regularly, and be ready to identify another action as soon as the previous one is in place. Gallup's motto: Only one action, always one action.