



HR: Are you measuring a year too late?

How Dallant found a way to stay on top of their team between yearly employee surveys

HR professionals' journey towards a strategic decision making partner is typically slowed down by their lack of 'hard facts'. The HR Director of Dallant has found a new way to constantly get a pulse on their employees. His team can now deliver 'hard facts' to management which can be used for more agile decision making.

A growing pain

Preparing for their bi-annual employee survey, there was a certain element of frustration surfacing within the HR team at Dallant. They wanted to accelerate their initiatives in order to get their people more engaged at work. However, the HR department were stifled by the lack of up to date information regarding these initiatives, as there was a big gap between their bi-annual surveys. Year-end metrics often fail to provide the essential data necessary to employ solutions to problems occurring throughout the working year.

How to quantify progress?

Dallant operates in a competitive high-tech driven sector, delivering flavourings and ingredients to leading food and beverage companies worldwide. As part of the process to remain among the top providers, Dallant systematically put themselves through tough audits. Joan Manuel Torres, HR Director at Dallant, didn't feel he had the insights he needed.

"We knew we were making progress in between audits, but had no way of quantifying it."

Engagement translated into money

Previously, Dallant had found a clear correlation between their sales figures and engagement. “For every percentage point we rose in employee engagement, there was a corresponding increase in sales volume” states Joan Manuel Torres. This helped the company reach a consensus to continue and enhance their focus on their employees.

The search for a solution

As a first step Dallant decided to add more questions to their survey, to gage their level of employee engagement better. This however didn't resolve the issue of not having a continuous measurement of the impact of company initiatives. How did their people react to different news and events in the company? How could they work preventively?

The HR team was well accustomed to providing metrics highlighting salaries, working hours, productivity, etc. They looked into traditional solutions to measure and further increase the level of employee engagement, but were left feeling that there were plenty of consultants generating a limited value and lacking flexibility.

Insights on a daily basis

Joan Manel was intrigued by the possibility to measure people's work satisfaction on a frequent basis, and in an easy way. When he came into contact with the DailyPulse from Celpax, he quickly realized he could get insights on a daily basis, and associate the results to what was going on in his company. He decided to take it further.

The DailyPulse has one powerful question people answer before heading home: **How was your day?** After coworkers press green or red, the lights show the proportional result from the last 24 hours. The full result is available online.



Happiness in a click

Joan Manel sat down with his HR team who shared his enthusiasm, and together they decided to install a DailyPulse on the wall in the reception area, close to the exit doors. As Dallant is a multi-located company they had several DailyPulse's installed, enabling them to benchmark the results. During a brainstorm session a newly arrived team member came up with the slogan 'Happiness in a click', and they customized the DailyPulse using photos of fresh berries to align with their flavoring business.



For Dallant it was important to send 3 clear messages to their coworkers:

- 1 Work satisfaction is important to us and we want to cultivate it.
- 2 We are interested in measuring and getting access to the results fast, so we can make changes as quickly as possible.
- 3 We want to provide insights to the relationship between our profitability and our work satisfaction.

Real time monitoring

Thanks to this new way of measuring, Joan Manel and his team are able to follow the results in almost real time. “We consult the dashboard when something happens like a conflicting decision; we see trends when there is less production, tension or when the workload peaks”. The HR team finally has a way to track important milestones and see what impact things have on their people: communications sent out, meetings, and sales figures. The list is endless.

Most companies would say employees are 'their greatest assets', but few would say they find these assets easy to measure. How can leaders and management easily put a finger on what's working or not working within the organisation?

Difference in engagement levels

Dallant understand that an ongoing approach to measuring can help to add value to a company by benchmarking their internal results. Joan Manel was very pleased to finally get constructive insights as they got the results from their internal benchmark.

He had suspected there might be differences, but the whole team was taken aback by the data. They had a significant difference in the satisfaction level between one facility and the others: "We had some previous indicators that this was the case, but it was not really clear, and we couldn't quantify it."



"We got the proof we needed for our HR department to clearly and precisely communicate to management that more improvement initiatives were necessary in this area."

Tying HR achievements to profitability

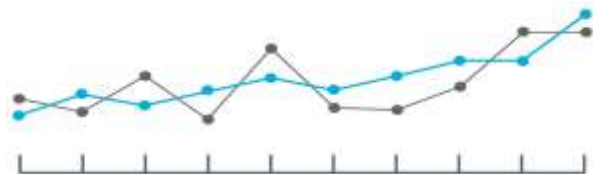
Understanding the core dynamics of the workforce has become increasingly critical as management teams realize their companies are only as good as their employees. By analyzing and using the data collected, the HR team's goal is to tie HR – and people's achievements – to profitability. Taking appropriate action means the company can quicker steer towards a better workplace.

Joan Manel sees a clear benefit: "Companies check production levels on a daily basis. But HR departments aren't used to measuring and quantifying. We might measure the impact of training, giving us a snapshot of one moment in time. We couldn't do stuff like this before, it's like changing from photos to video! Now we actually have traceability, giving us similar insights as when manufacturing our products!"

What impact does it have when you don't have continuous insights into how people feel at work?

Do sales figures have an impact?

Dallant's goal is to measure in a repetitive manner, this way they can compare the impact: what effect does it have when they publish their sales figures? Or send out their internal digital magazine? They get immediate insights and can measure the impact when there are changes in the collective work agreement, or insurance changes.



"We can interpret the results by looking at the events that took place and see the impact on our people's job satisfaction".

Controlled measuring

Joan Manel and his team have agreed to be ambitious when measuring impacts, controlling the environment when possible. They want to make sure that as little as possible interferes when sending out the sustainability report for example. They first check the trend from the last seven days to see if the base line is stable, and if there are other major communications or events planned. Then they send the communication. "If there's a production delay or a sudden sales slump then that has an impact when measuring. We crosscheck figures with events such as when the R&D division has a lot of open projects, or when everybody is rushing to get the best possible quarter company result.'

Metrics enables HR to speak to senior management in the language of business. Present hard data to back up your issues, needs or ideas.

The impact of negative news

The HR director continues 'My team takes an interest and asks about the results. As for the number of people pressing, i.e. participation, the numbers are usually up after there's been an All-Staff meeting.

We've also seen that there's more participation when there's negative news, maybe people are more likely to press when they're less happy?'. Dallant recently launched a 1-question survey, and the green results bumped up 15%.

Helping leaders

The HR department also discovered that they could give valuable direct feedback to managers; "One coworker decided to change his role in the company, the day we announced it we could see the impact as our levels fell that day." This is the type of value that gets HR their well-deserved 'seat at the table', and strengthens their strategic position.

When looking back at the situation before they started measuring on a daily basis, Joan Manel sees a clear 'before and after', and highlights the following benefits:

- 1 You get **daily insights** into how people experience the work climate
- 2 It's **simple**
- 3 It gives **traceability**

By adding a warning system, HR managers can be made aware of the problem as it is occurring.

Detecting early Warning Signs

The company is pleased to have a way to receive early warning signs. Referring to their 1-question survey, the HR director suggests "the plan is to ask the same question in 6 months, and then compare the results".

Joan Manuel is happy to finally have a detector to take preventive actions "it's like a smoke alarm closely linked to getting an even better score at the international audits, and to the bi-annual employee survey". This means leaders at Dallant can be made aware of the problem when it is actually occurring, or get direct feedback on the impact.

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