Supporting McDonald's on their employee engagement journey

Case study

Global restaurant chain McDonald's commissioned ETS to devise and run a new employee survey. This was to be rolled out to its 85,000 UK employees across its offices and some 1,200 restaurants around the country.

CHALLENGE

McDonald's had historically run an employee satisfaction survey but wanted to move to one that was more engagement-focussed. This formed part of a large business turnaround plan for McDonald's, which could only be delivered through engaged people.

Meeta Zakharia, Corporate HR Officer at McDonald's Restaurants, explains:

We recognised that a great employee experience is about far more than just employee satisfaction, it is about engagement. Whilst satisfied employees may stay with us and do a satisfactory job, engaged employees who connect with our brand are exemplary. They are great for business, meaning lower employee turnover, higher sales and, ultimately, they help to deliver a great experience for our customers!

SURVEY REQUIREMENTS

It was important that the survey was relevant, easily accessible and quick to complete for all employees, particularly those working in the restaurants. McDonald's also wanted survey technology that featured more sophisticated and flexible reporting capability including the ability to generate 'local' reports for managers. This hadn't been possible with their previous survey platform.

Meeta Zakharia, comments:

We were looking for a provider who understood our challenges and appreciated the engagement journey that we wanted to embark on. We felt that ETS fitted the bill. It was also attractive that they have a large database of information from similar profile, large retailers. This external benchmark comparison was a bonus for us and wasn't something we'd benefited from before.

SOLUTION

Consultancy

Our business psychologists collaborated closely with McDonald's to design the survey. This involved arrying out a thorough review of their previous questionnaire. We suggested new questions and devised an Engagement Index, featuring those questions most impacting upon engagement for McDonald's employees.

Survey platform

The survey we created was to run twice annually and was to be accessed online by both employees and franchisees. To make it easy for restaurant-based employees to participate, McDonald's placed PCs or tablets in restaurant 'crew rooms' enabling people to complete the survey during breaks. They could gain access to the survey either via an email link sent direct to them or by scanning a QR code and completing it on their mobiles.

To ensure that the survey was highly relevant for all employees, McDonald's has three different versions: for crew (restaurant staff), restaurant managers and office-based employees.

One of the biggest challenges we faced was implementing McDonald's complex people hierarchy. It's different for their corporate division, owned and franchised restaurants which made granting levels of access to the survey reporting modules tricky and nuanced to protect data security.

Reporting

McDonald's reporting dashboard allowed line managers to access their team's aggregated results to explore trends and issues at a local level. Managers could also log into the dashboard whilst the survey was live to see the latest response rates and to view reports from previous survey cycles.

OUTCOMES

Detailed analysis

We've worked at length with McDonald's to analyse their previous survey results, looking at engagement data in top-performing restaurants to see what lessons can be shared. We also explored other demographic data splits to identify important trends and have mapped survey questions to McDonald's people strategy.

Meeta Zakharia, describes how the business is using employee survey results:

" *We use the survey results as a starting point for having honest conversations with our employees. At a local level, survey insights coupled with feedback from our crew and managers help determine the three or four commitments that restaurant teams will focus on to drive improved engagement.*

At a corporate level, the survey gives us a good indication as to how people feel about our strategic vision and, specifically, about our leadership. "

Business impact

Like many businesses, retention of staff is a major focus for McDonald's, and one way in which they've used the survey data is in understanding how engagement impacts upon intention to stay and length of service. Their aim, ultimately, is that they can use data to engage their people better and keep them in the business for longer.

Partnership

Meeta Zakharia comments on working in partnership with ETS:

" *ETS has been integral in our move away from measuring employee satisfaction to engagement. This change has required a mind-set shift across the business and ETS has worked closely with us over the last two years to guide and support us."*

The analysis we've had from ETS has also been really insightful, enabling us to link engagement patterns with business metrics. This is powerful and really helps to 'sell' the value of having an engaged workforce to our Franchisees. "