



Frequently Asked Questions



Confidentiality

Myth

Our Talkback surveys aren't confidential.

"We use our employee number to complete the survey, so you must know who said what"

We ask colleagues to type their employee number so our third party survey partner can make sure their response is added to the correct team, we use data from MyHR to help with this. No one at the Co-op can ever see individual responses (not even Steve Murrells or the HR team) because our third party partner is bound by lots of legal restrictions, including the new GDPR rules which mean organisations can never use data in a way that they haven't told people about upfront. More importantly, we decided Talkback should be confidential for lots of reasons, identifying what individuals have said isn't what Talkback's about. Most big organisations use employee numbers, in the past we've had to manually create and communicate 'team codes' which takes a lot of time, effort and cost.

"I work in a very small team, so it'll be obvious what my answers were"

We don't provide scores for very small teams to protect their confidentiality. There must be responses from five or more colleagues for data to be provided. So if you're in a team where fewer than five colleagues responded, a report won't be provided.

"I completed the demographic questions at the end of the survey. I'm the only female of my age group in the team, so it'll be obvious what I said."

We don't include demographic information in team reports, it's only used at a business or function level to support our Diversity and Inclusion strategy. We want to ensure that all colleagues have an equally positive experience of working at the Co-op. Like with small teams, for any data to be provided at all, there must be five responses in each category for our survey partner to provide any data. So, using the example from before, there would have to be five female colleagues of the same age group for scores to be made available.



Response rates

Myth

Response rates are more important than the results themselves.

“There’s a big focus on getting the response rates to be as high as possible where I work”

Response rates are of course important in any survey, but no colleague should be put under pressure to complete Talkback surveys. The response rates matter to the Co-op, because we want everyone to feel included and that they can have their say, and we want the results to represent as many colleagues as possible so we can feel confident in using the results to make changes for the better. Having a high response rate doesn’t mean the job is done, the most important part is using the feedback to drive change.

“I’m a manager with quite a low response rate, so I’m not planning to use the scores.”

One of the worst outcomes for the colleagues who have completed a survey is not seeing the results and action taken on the back of it...and this in turn will likely lead to even lower response rates next time around! And one of the best ways to help colleagues who haven’t previously got involved with completing the survey is to show them you take the feedback seriously.

So, talk to colleagues about the results. Of course they may not include everyone, so talk to the team about what the results mean to them. Try asking some open questions of yourself and the team:

Did anything surprise you about the results?

What opportunities did you notice within the results?

What are you proud of about the results?

What do we need to understand more on? Have the conversation!



The survey questions

Comment Some aspects of the survey are confusing, or should be changed for future.

“Why are most questions focused on my immediate line manager this year?”

We’d heard feedback that many line managers valued the ‘leadership wheel’ they got last year that helped them with what they need to do differently. Also, we’ve previously asked questions about ‘senior leaders’ and colleagues told us that they found it confusing and didn’t know who exactly that meant. All 4,000 leaders at all levels will get their own scores, so our most senior leaders will get a report on how their team experience their leadership. Don’t forget, surveys are only one way of giving feedback so please talk to your managers and leaders if there’s more you’d like to say.

“There were three questions in the survey where the scoring changed – so ‘Strongly agreeing’ was actually a bad thing. This confused colleagues.”

We’ve done some analysis, and 99%+ of colleagues responded in a similar way to these questions as they did about all the other questions about their leader. So, we can conclude that colleagues understood the question and the clear instruction above them about how to answer them. However, we’ll review this for future to make the survey as straightforward as possible to complete.

“There was no ‘open comment’ box this time for colleagues to type about how they were feeling more generally.”

We tried doing things differently this year, and we’ve put a big focus on the conversations that will happen when the results are out, so we didn’t include it. However, we’ve heard how much colleagues valued this, so it will be back for 2019.



The report

Comment

“Why are the scores for last year not included in the results report as usual?”

Part of the reason why last year's scores haven't been included in the report this year is that it is often impossible to compare like for like across most of the business, due to hierarchy change or turnover within the last year, in addition to situational/contextual changes in the businesses at local levels. As a result most business areas can't make meaningful comparisons. Additionally this year we have changed the focus of the surveys to make them really future directed. By including the score for the previous year this makes the results report more retrospective, comparing the last year to this one and looking at any ups and downs throughout that period of time, which is already in the past. Although you can look at last year's scores for your area if you wish we haven't built this in for the above reasons. We also know most other large organisations take this approach.

“I didn't get a report for myself even though I have more than 5 people in my team. Why is this, and what should I do?”

Team reports have only been produced if 5 or more responses were submitted within a team, this is to protect confidentiality. If you haven't received a team report, then you should still have a conversation with your team about their engagement and things that are going well in the team as well as things that could be improved. You could use these conversations as an opportunity to try and understand why you didn't an individual report form the team by assessing general sentiment in the team. We have further guidance on the approach on the Talkback page of the Colleague Website.

