

Remote Workforce Employees Must Be Heard!

Establishing systematic listening posts, organizing employee inputs and analyzing the data, provide the keys to successful re-deployment of remote resources.

Customer satisfaction, business efficiency, operating costs, and profitability have all been adversely affected by the on going COVID-19 Pandemic. Most organizations are looking for sustainable and flexible solutions to help shore up business performance and stop the negative cash flow. To help weather this storm and create competitive, strategic advantage, we must take the time to understand and characterize the situation with data, facts, analysis, and most importantly, understand the system level effect of the change. Perhaps the most difficult and most critical effect on how work is performed is its effect on our human resource.

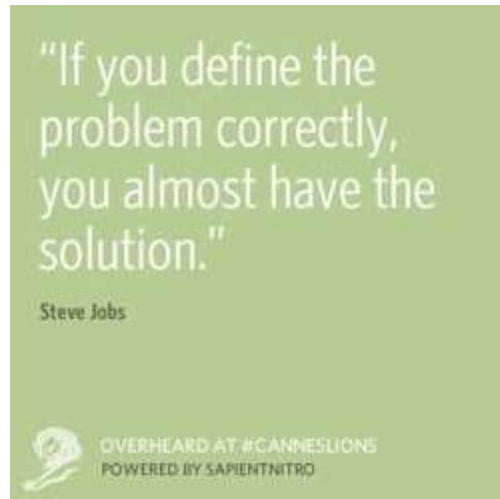
The challenges presented to service processes with remote workers, are far-reaching and changing on a daily basis. This is generating a massive ground swell of needed change, creating the biggest change management challenge of our lifetime. The global reset has been so fast and so extensive that, pre-existing change management models will need to be challenged for your specific environment.

Organized change management requires an understanding of what is driving current behaviors, so that a change roadmap can be identified. Understanding what is driving specific “on the job behaviors” (OTJB’s) is an important first step to driving the correct actions. Behaviors coupled with processes and tools, all must be measured, considered and modified to drive actions that yield permanent changes to OTJB’s and deliver needed results.

Consider the following situation from a well known service company.

- Pre pandemic, front line workers were organized into work cells in an office environment. Handoffs between departments, involvement of managers, and world class IT support, are all on a common floor, within easy reach of all. This high performing team is replicated regionally. It is a benchmark for success.
- All aspects of the processes were designed and developed assuming employees are working in a common area, with company infrastructure and tools. Performance data is collected, monitored and improved on a regular basis. Team meetings are daily. Processes are regularly tuned.
- Thrust into a home environment, initially using in-home technology and faced with the many distractions of the home environment, team performance is severely degraded. Service levels along with efficiency and customer satisfaction are dropping.
- IT is scrambling to evaluate remote phone system capabilities, collaboration tools, email overloads, extended hold times, unprecedented handoffs, etc. Reactive solutions are being implemented by the dozens, and often without understanding cause and effect.
- Employees and managers are struggling to manage processes with changing technology, home distractions, and rules written for a different environment.

The big question is, what is the *system* of change and how will it be efficiently and successfully be implemented.



The first step to answering this question is to gather relevant data. The employees living with this situation hold the keys to knowing what needs to change and why. As most successful problem solvers know, the first step to solving a problem is to define the problem and measure it. In this case, a measurement system is needed to assess employee's performance constraints across a broad spectrum of possible causes including, processes, technology, and even their home working environment. Working parameters from home are drastically different than working parameters in an office. Understanding these parameters are paramount to assure that customer satisfaction, efficiency and profitability are restored in a timely and efficient manner.

In person assessments are difficult to execute, restricted by social distancing protocols and are often subject to bias and the other variables of human nature. Very simply, having another person present marginalizes the advantage of the anonymous response. So how do we get accurate data? One way is to collect and analyze it using a web based system that asks cleverly designed questions, distributed to specific demographics and executed in an anonymous fashion. Such a system (**NeuraTool®** by **Neurametrics, Inc.**) has been used for almost 2 decades to evaluate multiple types of initiatives including Safety, Quality, Lean, Large Data, Six Sigma, and many others. It has been recently re-purposed to attack this newest challenge. It provides accurate data and analysis tools to help guide our change management initiatives related to COVID-19.

Simply modifying or implementing technology solutions is not an answer. It can be an answer, only if it is purposefully implemented and in sync with employee and customer needs. Without thoughtful analysis and accurate data, about how employees use the processes and technology, do we really have a chance of implementing successful solutions? It can be accomplished by working with measurement and problem solving professionals, with vast experience and armed with proven tools.

To learn more about this system and see other case studies please visit www.Neurametrics.com

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