

# Leading Company Change

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Every company, no matter how big or small, will undergo change. Even when change is meant to move the company in the right direction, employees can feel unsettled and can disconnect from the organization. When your workforce loses clarity about the organization's vision, managers struggle to get team buy-in and locations and departments become siloed. Smart business leaders know that they must garner organizational support and ensure alignment to effectively execute a shift in course. How can managers and leaders determine if their employees lack engagement, alignment and buy-in?

Like so many of the companies they serve, Blytheco has experienced the strain of growth, expansion and transformation. When dynamic COO Lori Seal was brought on by Stephen Blythe, CEO of Blytheco in 2012, it was the beginning of significant changes to come. Lori states, "We recognized that the industry was going through a major transformation and we committed to take our client experiences to new heights and to deliver new solutions. These drivers would involve changes to our products, our processes and, ultimately, to our culture."

Lori first wanted to gain a measurement of the internal baseline and monitor results moving forward. She enlisted Donna Baeza, Blytheco's Director of Human Resources & HRMS, to champion the launch of an employee survey tool into the organization. She wanted a survey tool that protected employee anonymity while summarizing results across demographic data, with a proven methodology, benchmarks to other company statistics, and assessment of leadership competencies. Donna added requirements of her own, such as, it needed to be "easy to launch," and contain built-in robust reporting and analytics tools.

## Painful Survey Attempts

At first, Donna was skeptical that any survey tool could meet these requirements. She had worked with various surveys in the past for Blytheco and found them to be challenging to use. In fact, in 2010 she employed the use of a popular internet survey tool to measure employee satisfaction. "I remember being excited to be able to gain insight into how Blytheco employees were feeling about the company," Donna stated. Once the survey was completed, however, Donna quickly realized that the information that she was getting from the survey tool was just superficial data. "The results were extremely shallow without any means to carve deeper into what it represented," stated Donna. "I had to specifically request more detailed results from the survey company" she added.

The raw data was sent to her in a labyrinth of 3 spreadsheets which consisted of 'x's in various rows and columns for each question asked to each employee. Not fit to consume, the raw information needed to be painstakingly arranged and formatted in another spreadsheet by hand. Employee anonymity was important to Donna and these files contained sensitive information from employees, including survey answers and comments which meant the use of a company administrative team member was out of the question. Donna would have to slice, dice and format the information by herself.

Reflecting back, Donna estimates that she spent no less than 30 full, uninterrupted days (literally hundreds of hours) cutting, pasting and formatting her way to a consumable report for the executives of

the company with the intent to share with the employees. According to Donna, “The initial baseline data I was able to extract just wasn’t enough.” She went on to say, “Understandably, the executives wanted even more granular information and the process of trying to gain deeper insight just kept going on and on.” Eight months into the project the plug was pulled. “With that kind of timeframe, providing the results would have been irrelevant and could have had a negative backlash.” While the report made it to the executive team, it never made it to the employees.

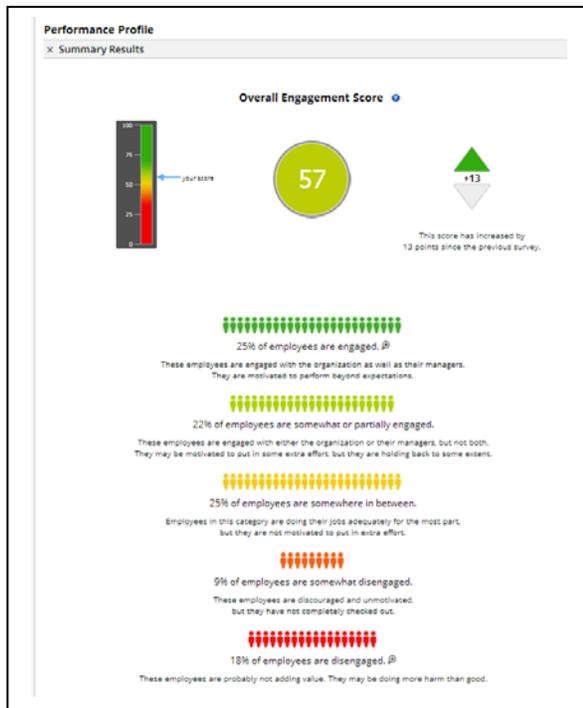
## Engaging the Disengaged

With this prior experience in mind, the team landed on a survey management tool called Focal Employee Engagement (Focal EE) by CustomInsight that embodied everything that they were looking for. In fact, it offered a lot more. Donna says, “We were beginning to think that our only option would be to go with one of the standard survey tools again, like Survey Monkey and Zoomerang, or, to go deeper, we would need to hire a survey consulting firm at an exorbitant cost.” She went on to say, “Both of those options were really out of the question for us; there had to be a better way and we found it with CustomInsight’s Focal EE.”

Focal EE offered Donna and Lori powerful tools right out-of-the-box that allowed them to be up and running quickly. It came as a complete package including pre-written employee email invitation templates which assisted in expediting the process. Packed with carefully selected questions developed by psychologists, the cloud-based solution was a breeze to setup and administer. The insightful questions were designed to measure engagement as well as alignment with company strategies such as values, goals, and strategic objectives. Donna mentioned, “Knowing that the questions were successfully used thousands of times before for over 20 years with other companies was a huge plus for us.” Lori was also delighted that they were able to measure their results with other companies that have used the questions in their surveys. “This was a huge bonus for us.” Lori stated. “Not only were we able to establish our own baseline for the first year in which we started the survey, but we were immediately equipped to compare our initial results with other organizations.”

After employees completed the survey, Donna and Lori were given access to an easy-to-use dashboard via their own secure CustomInsight website portal which gave them a top-line summary of the results. From there, they could quickly drill-down with hyperlinks as deeply into the data as they cared to go. While reviewing the extensive information, they could tag certain elements of the report as ‘follow-up’ items that would need further review and attention. Lori stated, “We could drill down to department level, position level, manager level and even by location while still keeping results confidential.” She continued, “The possibilities to slice and dice the data were almost endless.”

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This functionality literally cut the process time in half as they were able to get moving on action items that were created while poring through the information. Donna shared, “We never felt confused about the results we were viewing because Focal EE provides an overview section to explain what the information represents and how to interpret it.” She continued, “As soon as I began to view the reports, I realized that we were light-years ahead of where we were when compared to our 2010 survey.” Survey results allowed Blytheco’s Executive team to quickly identify challenge areas and work to formulate a strategy to impact those items in a timely manner.

## Driving Organizational Change

During their second survey using Focal EE, they were able to determine whether or not the changes they

had implemented made a difference in employee engagement. Lori shared, “Our second year results reflected positive improvements in the areas we had addressed from our first survey.” She continued, “We are seeing organizational silos coming down and we have better insight into what’s working. We understand our opportunities to improve organizational alignment and adherence to our vision and values.”

When asked if they would continue to use CustomInsight Focal EE, Lori shared, “We are committed to continuing this process. Our management team benefits from the insights and our employees appreciate being valued and heard.” Donna agrees, adding, “The ability to coach managers based on feedback from their teams is a huge benefit. It also assists us in identifying our blind spots and problem areas in our departments and locations. I feel like there is a better understanding of the organization by everyone.”

## How Will Employee Feedback Change Your Organization?

Measuring engagement and strategic alignment can help your company focus on forward-moving strategy versus the status quo. In fact, former General Electric CEO, Jack Welch once said, *“There are only three measurements that tell you nearly everything you need to know about your organization’s overall performance: employee engagement, customer satisfaction, and cash flow. It goes without saying that no company, small or large, can win over the long run without energized employees who believe in the mission and understand how to achieve it.”*

To learn more about the benefits of employee engagement and strategic alignment, visit [www.blytheco.com/engaged](http://www.blytheco.com/engaged)