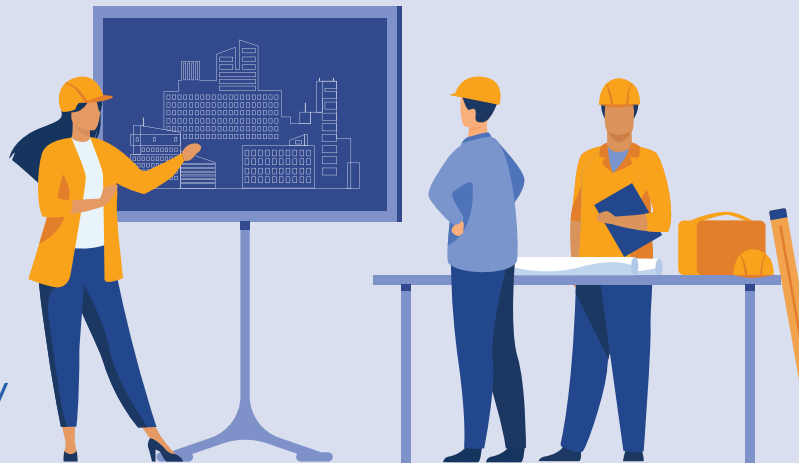


Leveraging Strong Leadership and Communication in Times of Uncertainty:

An Energy and Transportation Story



WSA | Celebration Story

Organization:
North American Company
Focused on Construction,
Transportation, and Energy

Industry:
Energy and Transportation

Employee count:
6,500–7,500

The Landscape

A large diversified North American company focused on construction, transportation, and energy had been planning for months to launch its employee engagement census survey when, in early February, the first few cases and outbreaks of COVID-19 in North America were beginning to surface. As the potential for a pandemic grew, it was time to make some important decisions about delivering the survey. Given that much of the work performed by this organization was deemed essential, as well as most jobs comprising the workforce, the client decided to move ahead with its engagement survey. **Leadership knew it was paramount and more important than ever to listen to employees during this unprecedented time of uncertainty and crisis.**

A couple of weeks after the employee engagement survey launched, it became clear how dire the healthcare and economic crisis could become. The organization began struggling to get a high response rate for the survey as the focus of leaders and managers turned to triage, employee communication, and delivering needed resources to the workforce. As a result, the leaders decided to close the survey rather than continue extending the participation period.

After closing the survey, WSA consultants advised the organization to create a filter that would compare employees who completed the engagement survey before the current crisis was visible to those who completed it after the organization ramped up crisis-communications and resources for employees. It's important to know that communication of the crisis was very



Consistent and transparent communication from leadership makes a huge impact on engagement during a crisis.

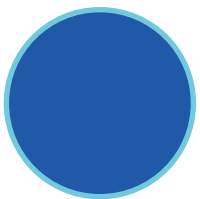
fluid throughout the organization. Employees received daily communications across multiple channels regarding its actions on safety, strategy, potential impact, critical leadership decisions and pre- and post-crisis-survival strategies.

The outcome was incredible. As a result of the proactive communications from leadership and continued listening efforts, scores on more than 80 percent of the items were more positive for the group who completed the survey after crisis communication began. In fact, seven items regarding communication, equipping employees, future vision, teamwork, and even diversity and inclusion, exhibited significantly more positive scores compared to employees who completed the engagement survey early on when the crisis was less apparent.

It's important to note that employees who completed the survey post-crisis visibility also had a much stronger belief that positive change would happen as a result of employees providing their feedback via the survey.

So, essentially, their efforts were worth it. Leadership cared what employees thought, leadership would take action and their voices would be heard. That's what creates a high performing workforce.

This is an organization that leveraged the power of Qualtrics' XM technology and WSA consulting to listen to employees in unprecedented times, make pivots to their strategy, and increase communication to ensure employees were receiving what they needed to be successful, feel safe, and to drive itself to a stronger workforce post-crisis.



Communication Is Critical Through Change



Leadership communication is one of the most valuable levers for an organization during times of change. To be effective, it must be consistent and transparent. Employees want honest visibility into impact on the organization. When a company can do this, it not only drives trust but belief in the future vision.

Knowing When To Listen Is Key



During times of high impact or change, effective listening is imperative to leadership taking the right actions across the workforce, pulling the right levers to accommodate the change, and understanding the true sentiment of its employees. Without this insight changes that are made will be off-kilter or harmful to the employee experience.

About WSA

We believe in the power of applying the right science to make people and organizations successful. We believe in empowering businesses to measure what matters when it matters—so they, in turn, can motivate their people to work harder, stay longer, and care more. We believe that behavioral science is the ingredient for ensuring that employees stay focused on the right things, at the right time, and with the right momentum. We believe that employees' lives are never better than when they are highly engaged and using their talents to contribute to a company they believe in. And we know that you need a partner who has workforce performance down to a science.