BUILDING YOUR WORKPLACE CULTURE: IDEAS POOL

An integral part of the process of building your ideal workplace culture is conversation and the sharing of ideas. In the first instance, gather everyone's input without critiquing. This can be difficult to do, but many a gold nugget of an idea emerges out of something that seems impossible or unpalatable to begin with! These sessions will need to be carefully facilitated because some people are naturally going to want to go down the road of writing-off ideas that don't appeal to them or that they can't envisage.

It may pay to separate out your ideas-gathering sessions:

1. 'blue sky' thinking – anything and everything goes! This isn't a time to think pessimistically.
2. issues – being real and honest about what isn't working. With this one, be sure to also capture ideas for what the solutions to the issues might be, so that great outcomes are always the main focus.

To support your managers and get creative juices flowing, we've started with some ideas on the following page as prompts, and have included a blank ideas-capturing page after that. You can do this exercise all together or you can get your team thinking about it ahead of time and filling out their own sheet ready to bring to the group session.

After your session(s), you may like to post the captured ideas where everyone can see them, and ask them to add any extra ideas they come up with.

Surveys – find out what your people think

There are plenty of online tools to help you with this process. From free/inexpensive ones that you analyse yourself, to more sophisticated systems where specialists are available to analyse the feedback for you.

Discussion groups for identifying issues or for 'blue sky' thinking

Set up opportunities for your team to be involved in designing solutions. Be clear what the purpose of these get-togethers are about. Encourage feedback and ideas. Avoid critiquing, you want your participants to feel safe to share. Always advise the outcomes and next steps (if there are any).

Show some love

Subsidise some healthy food and drinks, provide a fruit/snack basket, surprise the team with morning tea, leave a small surprise at someone's workstation, chat to your team about how they're doing inside and outside work, sent a note of thanks.

Work life hacks & tips

Get your team recording short videos with tips and ideas that others' may benefit from.

Create & document your culture vision

Using everyone's input, develop what your ultimate culture would be and put it somewhere visible to everyone. Use it to help inform your future decisions.

Be visible & accessible

Get your people involved in defining what could be included in your programme. What makes them feel appreciated and recognised?

Set up regular updates

Let your people know what's going on – what ideas have been suggested and What ideas are being considered and/or implemented.

Be all about supporting your people

Have support systems in place and be sure your team know what they are – peer support, employee assistance programme, access to managers, a neutral party for employees to speak with, stress breaks.

Create a space for your people to express themselves & keep in touch

Have an online platform for your team to interact, especially if you have remote or hybrid workers.

Create a rewards & recognition programme

Get your people involved in defining what could be included in your programme. What makes them feel appreciated and recognised?