

Health, Wellbeing and Productivity in Buildings Toolkit: Designing Your Own Perception Survey

Introduction

Perception surveys enable organisations to assess direct responses relating to specific themes (such as productivity, stress, workplace environment, comfort and satisfaction) and while their outputs must not be over-relied upon in isolation, correlation analysis against financial and physical metrics provides a powerful tool for better understanding the impact of the office on its occupants.

Key drivers, objectives, organisational structure and outputs will vary across different organisations, and surveys will need to account for these differences if at all possible. However, as a general rule, surveys should attempt to address health, wellbeing and productivity as part of the same exercise.

Practical Considerations

Increasingly organisations see a benefit in sharing results with employees, and this has now become expected, irrespective of the results. You should consider how you will communicate the findings of your survey once completed. We suggest that responses should be anonymised, so people feel able to be truthful.

The majority of questions proposed below are designed so that rated or graded responses are possible as this provides the opportunity to convert subjective responses into quantitative data, observe trends through data analysis, and identify links to the other metrics (i.e. financial and physical).

On the scale of responses, unless otherwise stated, 1 represents a very negative response (strongly disagree/definitely not/very unsatisfactory etc), 3 represents a neutral or no opinion response, and 5 is very positive (strongly agree/definitely/very satisfactory etc).

Additionally we recommend you include an open ended question at the end of the survey (or at the end of each section) to allow respondents the freedom to provide more detailed responses, and/or to raise any particular issue which is not covered by the questions in the survey.

Please note that proposed questions/categories are for guidance only, and organisations should frame their questions to suit their own objectives.

A survey is only representative of a population if the response rate is adequate, but you will need to judge whether you can rely on a survey being completed electronically, or whether hard copies are necessary.

The survey should be short; there are a large number of potential questions below but you should be looking to take a selection of these that best suit your organisation in order to compile a survey that will take absolutely no longer than 15 minutes to fill out. After all you do not want to scare off potential respondents with too much detail.

It is worth making all responses mandatory as it can be extremely frustrating to go through a whole survey process to then find that a large proportion of respondents have chosen not to comment on key responses – this will diminish the representativeness of your dataset. Consider including a 'no response' option for the key questions in the survey but then ask why they have not responded in an open ended question – it may be that some respondents have only just started working in a given building and so are only able to make general comments about the building and cannot comment on improvements brought about through a refurbishment for example.

Possible Survey Questions

This is a deliberately long list of possible survey questions. We do not propose organisations use every single one, but decide what is most appropriate for them, bearing in mind the need to maximise responses and minimise administrative burden.

General Information:

- Male/Female
- Age (range <20; 21-30; 31-40 etc)
- Time at company (< 1 year; 2-4 years; 5-7 years etc)
- Department/team/building zone/location
- Time spent in office (part/full- time, 1 day a week etc)
- Workstation type (Open plan, cubicle, private/shared office, own desk/hot-desk etc)
- Time worked at company
- Time worked in that specific office building.

Building/Company General:

- Rate how happy you are in your job
- My employer invests in my health and wellbeing
- My company cares about sustainability
- I am proud to work for_____
- I work in a nice building
- My workplace (building, not organisation) supports me in carrying out my work
- My workplace provides a suitable and comfortable working environment
- I do not like the building that I work in
- There is nothing I would like to change about the building I work in
- My workplace is often very uncomfortable.

The Role of Sustainability:

- I am not interested in sustainability
- I often moderate my behaviour to reduce my environmental impact
- I do not care if my employer has a good sustainability record
- My company has taken targeted action on becoming more sustainable
- My employers demonstrate a proactive approach to sustainability
- I approve of my employers proactive approach to sustainability

- Investing in sustainable buildings demonstrates my employers commitment to me
- My company promotes flexible working (e.g. working from home/flexi-time)
- I would not work for a company which doesn't prioritise sustainability
- I am more likely to remain with my employer because they invest in sustainability.

Building Fabric and Systems:

- Rate your working environment (1-5)
- The building is generally very attractive
- The building is generally a comfortable place to work
- The building does not support a comfortable working environment
- The physical indoor environment of the office is poor
- I am often too cold in winter
- I am often too hot in summer
- Rate the artificial lighting levels in your office
- Rate your level of control over lighting in your office
- I believe the heating, ventilation and lighting in our office should be automated to save energy
- I find the lighting levels to be inadequate
- I suffer from glare from the windows
- I can see a window from my desk
- There are good levels of natural daylight in the office
- Fresh air levels in the office are excellent
- The office regularly becomes hot and stuffy
- The ventilation system is very noisy
- The ventilation system works well
- The Indoor Air Quality is poor
- The office always smells
- The air conditioning gives me a sore throat
- I never get too hot in the office
- I never get too cold in the office
- I dislike the lack of control of heat and light in my immediate proximity
- I am able to control the temperature at my workstation
- I am able to turn on and turn off lights as I please
- The office can get very draughty in autumn and winter
- Our office lights are controlled by absence/presence detectors
- I find automated lighting controls irritating
- The lack of control over lighting often affects my work.

Office Design/Layout:

- I sit within close proximity to those who I need to communicate with at work
- I have many friends at work
- I often get up and move around the office during my daily tasks
- I do not know many of my colleagues
- I have plenty of privacy at my workstation
- I am constantly distracted by office noise
- If we open the windows there is a lot of noise from the street
- There are lots of plants in our office
- There is somewhere for me to go and make quiet phone calls
- Where I work within my office depends on the task I am carrying out
- I always work at the same desk
- The person next to me always speaks loudly on the phone and distracts me
- There are too many people in our office
- Our office is normally half empty
- We have a great view from our office
- Our office feels spacious and pleasant.

Location and Amenities:

- The office is close to a train station (5 point scale: 1=>10 miles, 2=7-10 miles, 3=4-6 miles, 4=1-3 miles, 5=<1 mile)
- The office offers easy access to bus links
- I am able to walk to work
- My employer encourages me to walk to work
- My employer provides a complementary travel service (e.g. mini-bus)
- I have to drive to work as there is no other option
- Our office has adequate parking
- I am able to run to work
- My office is an easy commute from my home
- How long is your commute (1=>1.5 hours; 2=>1 hour; 3= 31-59 minutes; 4=15-30 minutes; <15 minutes)
- I am very stressed from my commute by the time I get to work (1= Everyday, 2=Often, 3=Sometimes, 4= Rarely, 5=Never)
- We have plenty of secure bicycle storage racks in our office
- We have plenty of showers in our office for all runners/ cyclists to shower at work
- We have safe storage facilities for personal belongings
- We have cupboards/clothes rails available for hanging up work clothes
- I would like to cycle/walk/run to work but we don't have shower/changing facilities
- I would like to cycle/ walk run to work but it is too far
- We have shower facilities but they are always dirty/messy
- We have a work canteen
- There is only unhealthy food available in our canteen
- Our canteen offers a great selection of healthy foods and snacks
- There are a number of shops/restaurants within an easy walk of my office
- I have to walk for 15 minutes just to get a coffee.

The Workplace and Me:

- I find the office an excellent environment to work in
- I have trouble concentrating at work
- Our office gets really hot in the afternoons and I struggle to concentrate
- I am more productive when I work from home than at the office
- I am very productive when I am at the office
- I often get headaches after a long day in the office
- Our office does not support good health.

Employer:Employee Engagement:

- I am made aware of sustainability initiatives and activities that take place in my workplace
- A large number of employees buy into our sustainability agenda
- I am very aware of why my employer takes actions relating to our building
- I had no idea this was a sustainable building
- Our employer is only investing in energy efficiency to save money
- I have begun to adopt the environmentally beneficial behaviours that are encouraged by my employer (switching off, closing doors, using less water etc)
- I have begun to adopt more efficient behaviours at home as a result of work initiatives
- Our employer encourages us to get up and walk around at certain intervals throughout the day
- Our employer encourages lunch-time activities (stretch and flex, going for a walk etc).

Post Refurbishment/ Post-move section:

- The general appearance of the office is much better than before
- I feel more comfortable at work since the move/refurbishment
- I do not like the new office
- I have noticed that my concentration levels have improved since the move/ refurbishment
- A low carbon refurbishment of our office was the right thing for our employer to do
- I am very proud to work in a sustainable building
- I feel fresher and more energetic since working in the new building

- The building looks great but some of the systems don't work very well
- The ventilation system is inadequate
- Our employer did a good job of communicating changes to us
- I was always aware of the works taking place and the reasons for carrying them out
- There has been a number of minor building issues since the move

Since the move/ refurbishment...

- ...I feel less stressed at work
- ...I feel less healthy at work
- ...I am able to get more work done (please give details)
- ...I spend more time doing productive work
- ...I feel more comfortable at work
- ...I am not able to control the temperature at my work station
- ...I have found the indoor office environment unpleasant.