

# Microsoft Viva Glint

**The essential guide to  
employee engagement**



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# Engaged employees: your competitive edge

It's easy to see why so many organizations are focused on employee engagement. Engaged employees look forward to coming to work, know their job responsibilities, and understand how their efforts contribute to the success of the organization.

**When employees are engaged, they help their organizations outperform the competition in profitability, brand perception, and even stock performance.<sup>1</sup>**

Although most organizations know employee engagement is important, many are unsure how to improve it—or even measure it. Annual employee engagement surveys can be cumbersome and lose relevance quickly. But a modern approach to employee engagement can help your organization take action and turn your team into a powerful force for consistent, positive change.

Here you'll learn about the core elements of a successful employee engagement program.

<sup>1</sup> 2023 Viva Glint study of 3,005,848 employees at 226 public organizations listed on U.S. financial exchanges

“During a year of economic instability, the most-engaged organizations showed financial resilience, even outperforming the broader market in 2022.”<sup>1</sup>



# Measuring employee engagement



Measuring employee engagement can be a challenge in many organizations. An employee's level of engagement depends on different factors, such as:

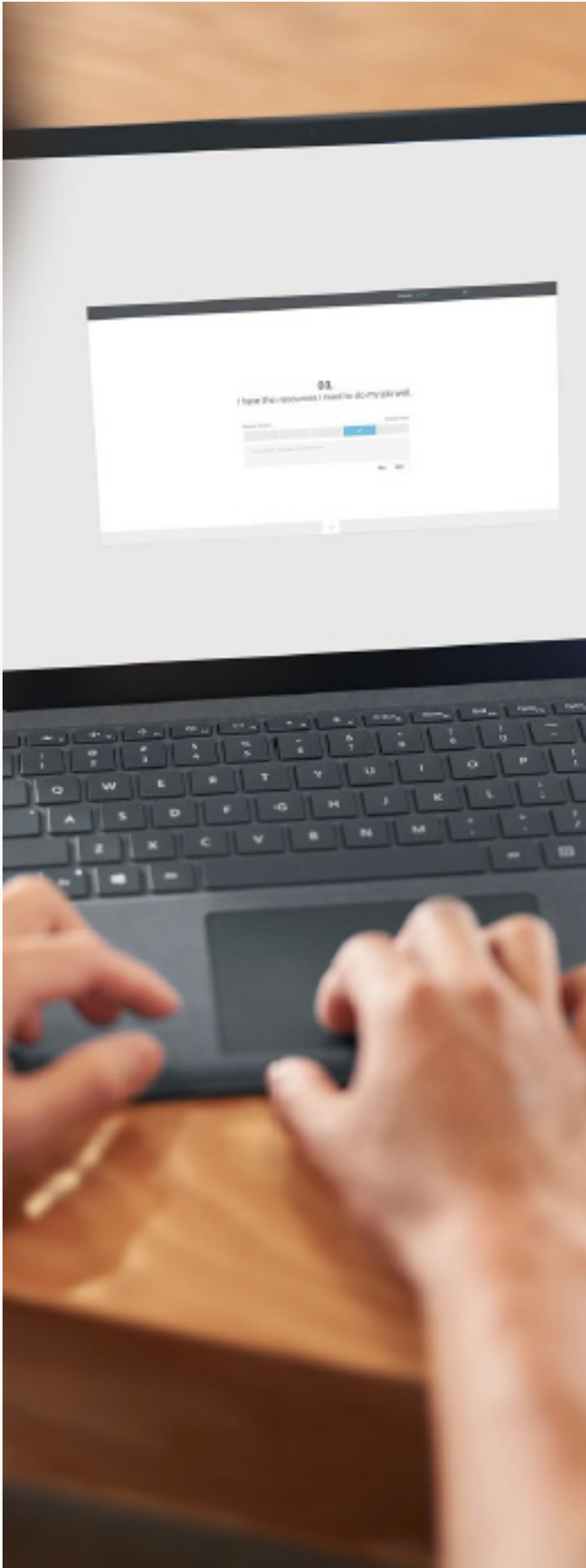
- **Relationships with managers and peers**
- **Opportunities for personal and professional growth**
- **Meaningful work**

A thoughtful approach to measuring employee engagement helps ensure an organization successfully navigates challenges and gets the most value out of the process.

# Creating a measurement strategy

Many organizations already conduct employee engagement surveys—but probably not frequently enough. Or they may not use the results to take steps towards actionable, timely improvements. In fact, many organizations still measure employee engagement only once a year. Some organizations fall into bad employee engagement habits, like being overprotective of engagement data or applying one-size-fits-all solutions to complex problems.





## An agile approach to feedback and action taking

The most effective employee engagement strategies include short, episodic surveys to gather data frequently and quickly.

These online and mobile accessible questionnaires typically include small, manageable sets of survey questions employees can answer in just a few minutes.

Regular data collection has several benefits.

- Reveals the state of employee engagement across the organization
- Uncovers opportunities for improvement
- Enables quick response to address problem areas

**“Employees at highly engaged organizations are 40% more likely to have confidence that their feedback will lead to action.”<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>2</sup> [The New Performance Equation in the Age of AI \(microsoft.com\)](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/learning/new-performance-equation-in-the-age-of-ai.aspx)





## When should you survey your employees?

Surveys can be scheduled monthly, quarterly, or at whatever frequency makes sense for your organization. The important thing is to follow up consistently to learn whether your efforts to increase employee engagement are working or if your strategy needs adjusting.

## Sync your surveys with your business strategy

Just as important is to align your employee engagement measurement strategy with your business strategy. For instance, if the success of your enterprise depends on providing superior customer service or ensuring a safe work environment, your employee engagement measurement strategy should incorporate those concepts. Your employees are key to meeting those goals, and we know that engaged employees positively affect business outcomes.

## Pulling in the right stakeholders

Involving the right stakeholders in your measurement strategy is critical to your success. You'll need people from across your enterprise to get involved in designing, administering, and taking meaningful action based on the input. You will also rely on multiple colleagues to determine and implement the next steps for your employee engagement program.



## Executives

Buy-in and collaboration from the c-suite are critical to the success of any employee engagement program. Executives provide input to the measurement strategy so that it aligns with business priorities. They also become role models of communication, accountability, and feedback, thereby empowering their employees to make change happen.



## HR

Human Resources traditionally leads the employee engagement survey process. They should drive the survey design and champion positive change based on results. HR leaders will coach executives to be role models and build managers' capabilities. The HR team can also promote the program across the enterprise to ensure everyone knows what is happening and when.



## Managers

Managers take ownership of the process, facilitating ongoing conversations and a two-way approach to improving employee engagement. They see survey results as a catalyst—not a replacement—for ongoing dialogue with their teams. They know their teams well and have a good understanding of what matters to them. Overall, your managers consider employee engagement vital to your organization's performance. everyone knows what is happening and when.



## Employees

Your employees are at the heart of any engagement program. Their open, honest responses are what will drive real improvements across the organization. Leaders must let employees know that their voices will be heard and acted on, making a positive impact on the organization. This includes encouraging their anonymous feedback, communicating survey results to them in real time, and promptly making improvements in response to their feedback. This approach sets up employees for feeling a shared ownership in making improvements.

## Setting accurate benchmarks

Successful employee engagement strategies also incorporate benchmarks. While external benchmarks can serve as a point of reference to help your organization determine how it compares to your peers by industry, geography, or size, internal comparisons become much more useful over time. Why? They're better at helping you identify and make incremental improvements in the areas that matter most.

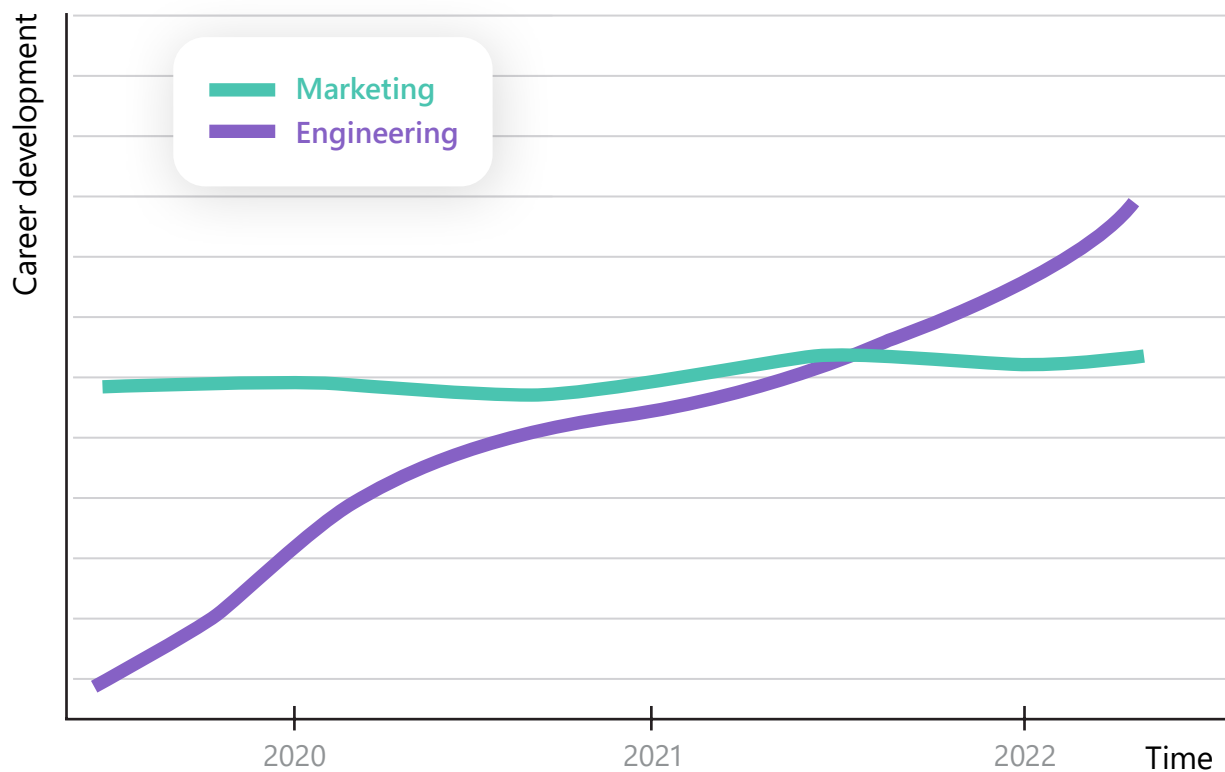
## Internal benchmarks

Internal benchmarks help you track what you're trying to accomplish as an organization.

**For example, if one of your goals is to retain your employees amidst a hyper-competitive market, and you know career development is a key driver of retention, you'll want to look at how**

**your internal teams are doing compared to one another to extract best practices to promote career growth and learning.**

Over time, you can also understand how your teams are trending and whether targeted actions to increase career-development opportunities are having an impact. By using internal benchmarks, you can understand how employees perceive career development and their likelihood of staying with your organization.

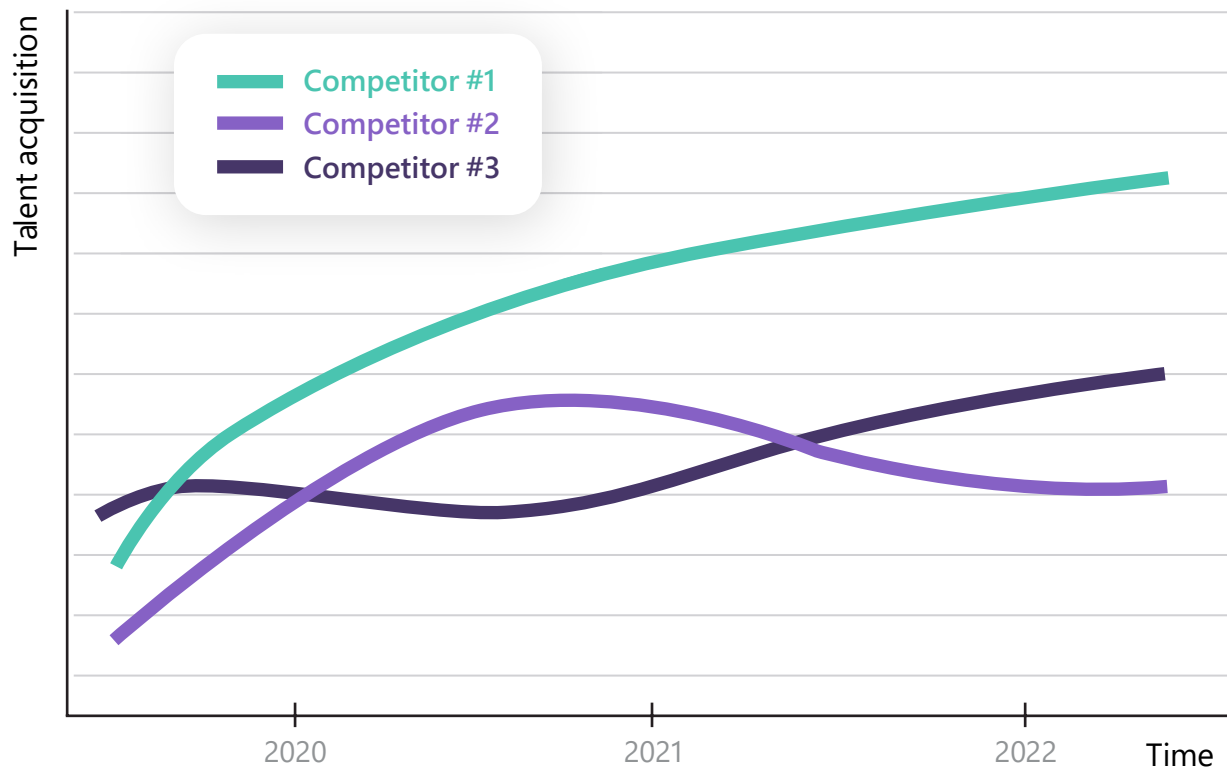


## External benchmarks

Overall, use external benchmarks with caution. Basing action on an external comparison may or may not be relevant or achievable.

To continue with the example of growing and retaining your workforce, an external benchmark may be helpful to see how you're likely to fare at attracting talent

against competitors. If you compete for talent mostly within your own industry (like financial services, for example), you will want to keep your external benchmark within the industry. Otherwise a global benchmark across industries will likely be more useful because it will show you how your practices stack up to a broader set of organizations.

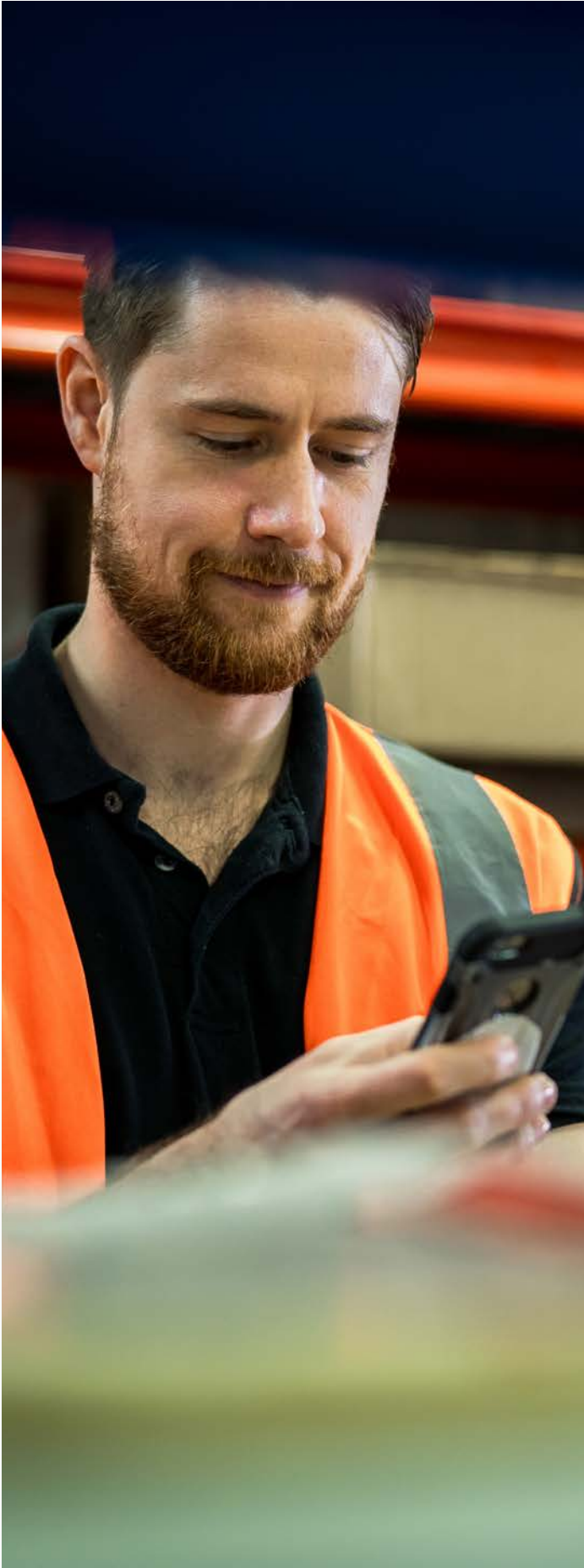






# Analyzing employee engagement data





Finding the real diamonds in the rough happens with proper employee engagement data analysis. It is the “when” and “how” of employee engagement data analyses that determine if you find valuable treasure in your data trove.

## The ‘when’ for employee engagement data analysis

Lengthy, annual surveys have evolved into a more frequent, and short survey approach intentionally designed to be conducted every few months.

**A agile approach to feedback and action taking can offer immediate understanding into the health of the organization.**

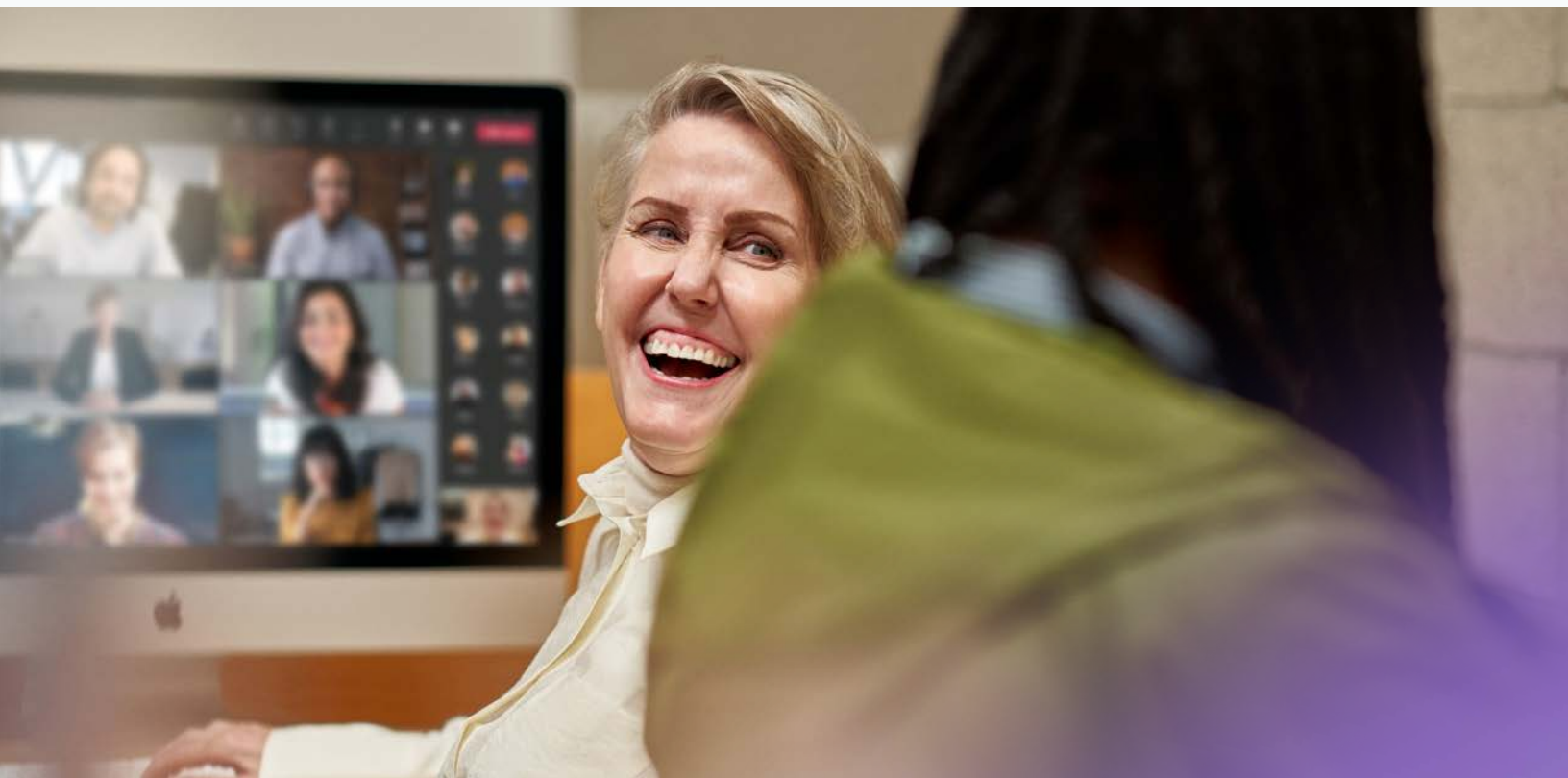
They enable managers to understand team sentiment and pinpoint issues early, rather than months—or even a year—after conditions may have worsened.

## The 'how' for employee engagement data analysis

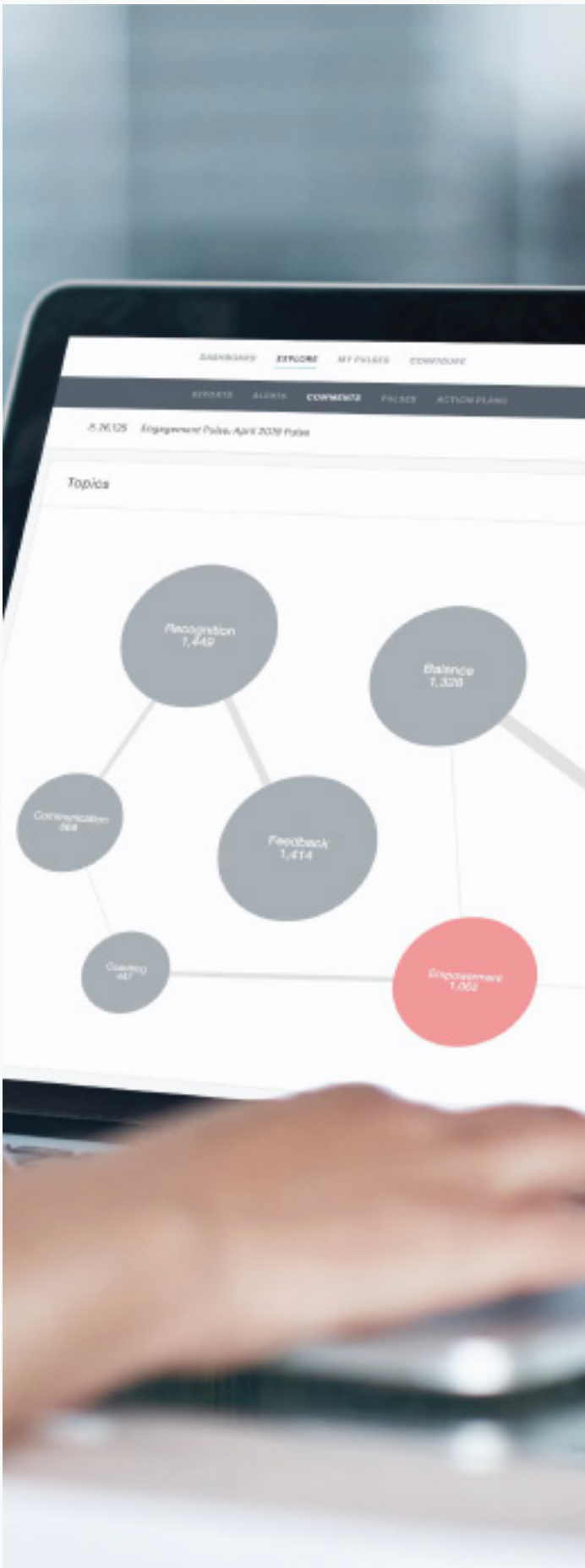
The key to employee engagement effectiveness lies in finding the right insights from data that lead to meaningful action. Automatic analysis of survey data immediately highlights strengths and opportunities according to the primary drivers of employee engagement, such as job alignment, sense of purpose, or opportunities for learning and growth. Managers and executive leadership can then slice and dice the data by different attributes, including business unit,

tenure, location, or performance rating, while protecting individual employee confidentiality.

To unlock the full value of engagement-survey data, organizations should combine it with employee data from HR systems, as well as information from enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, into a single platform that supports broad, ad-hoc analysis. This holistic view enables businesses to connect employee engagement data to the factors they care about most, such as performance and profitability.



Managers also play a critical role in employee engagement data analysis. They can look at how organizational decisions, internal programs, and their own actions affect employee perceptions over time, and gain powerful insight into employee motivation and morale.



## Qualitative vs. quantitative data

Including both quantitative (scores, rankings, etc.) and qualitative (narrative) components in your employee engagement surveys will ensure well-rounded feedback. Because open-ended comments may number in the thousands at large organizations, transforming such a large set of unstructured data into a meaningful story can seem daunting. That's why many organizations tend to focus only on the numbers, missing the "why" behind the scores, as well as suggestions for improvement.

Innovations in artificial intelligence such as machine learning (ML) and natural language processing (NLP) are helping organizations overcome this obstacle.

**Not only does NLP analyze a large volume of open-ended employee comments quickly, it also helps translate employees' thoughts and feelings into insights with context.**

This analysis leads to better insights. NLP even isolates prescriptive comments so leaders can zero in on employee suggestions. The result: Organizations can both make their surveys shorter, improving the employee experience, and also truly understand employee sentiment, helping them to take effective action.



# Taking action to improve employee engagement



Soliciting feedback from your employees is an obvious first step, but what's most important is how your organization responds to that feedback. Forward-thinking organizations are using a range of tactics to take insights to action.



## FICO

Analytics software company FICO surveys the organization quarterly, then leverages that data to pursue immediate opportunities and a long-term, longitudinal focus on strengthening engagement drivers. Intuitive dashboards give managers real-time insight into their teams, helping to identify and resolve engagement issues that had previously gone unnoticed. By introducing new programs and initiatives based on the recommendations from survey data, FICO has experienced strengthening engagement over each of the past four quarters and is now experiencing a steady decline in undesired employee attrition.

## ancestry

Ancestry, best known for helping people understand family histories, uses short episodic surveys to help leaders and managers discover the needs and engagement of their employees. Managers can uncover new opportunities as well as roadblocks to productivity, collaboration, and innovation. Then, managers can use that insight to ensure employee happiness and success, even as the organization continues to innovate at lightning-fast speed.

## Reimagining the post-analysis action plan

One thing FICO and Ancestry have in common is that they take action on their employee feedback.

The key to their progress? They recognized that in order for actions on feedback to be effective they have to be integrated into the flow of work. You can do this by rethinking how you invest your time.

Here are some key behaviors of a simple, agile strategy for taking action:

- **Share feedback more frequently.** Timely, relevant data informs important business decisions and priorities, and allows managers to build habits through repetition. If they only get feedback annually, they have to re-learn interpretation and conversation skills every 12 months.
- **Reduce the time between feedback and action.** Get the data in the hands of managers as soon as possible so they can get started working on it.
- **Focus on one impactful shift at a time.** While well-intentioned, action plans can easily become packed with activity and long in duration, these heavy action plans are daunting and lose steam quickly. Instead, identify one meaningful step you can make to address the problem at hand. Take the step, keep feedback and conversations going, and shift again.
- **Create a simple check-in process.** Help teams collaborate and hold each other accountable. This can be a 30-minute check-in when the results come out and 10 minutes on the weekly team agenda to keep it alive. The key is to not just talk about action when survey results come out.
- **Make adjustments and learn together.** Sometimes an attempt for improvement doesn't move the needle. Evaluate what's working and what's not, and course correct along the way.



# Reimagine employee engagement with Microsoft Viva Glint

When you have an effective employee engagement program, the result is an environment of continuous improvement that leads toward positive incremental change.

Clearly, employee engagement is good for business, but there is no one-size-fits-all strategy. Gaining a better understanding of what your employees need is the surest path to success.

Learn more about how the Microsoft Viva Glint employee engagement platform is helping companies gather, measure, analyze, and improve employee engagement.

Learn more at [aka.ms/VivaGlint](https://aka.ms/VivaGlint)

