

Frequently Asked Questions About Employee Engagement

1. What is engagement?

Engagement refers to the psychological connection employees feel to their jobs. It goes beyond job satisfaction to reflect how invested and connected employees feel in the success of their teams and the organization. We know through research conducted by Gallup that high levels of employee engagement link directly to positive organizational outcomes, including productivity, retention, and cost-efficiency. Most importantly, engaged employees get more out of their work. They have opportunities to do what they do best every day.

2. Is engagement the same as satisfaction?

Engagement is the connection employees feel to their jobs, and satisfaction measures an employee's happiness with their jobs. While it's likely that engaged employees are also satisfied, satisfied employees are not necessarily engaged.



3. Is the purpose just to get good Gallup scores?

The Gallup survey is simply a measure of employee engagement at a point in time. JHU is committed to building employee engagement throughout the university and embedding engagement in our university culture. The Gallup survey measures how well we are accomplishing that, but is not an end unto itself.

4. Why is engagement important?

An engaged employee workforce is best able to help the university achieve its strategic goals. Engaged employees are safer, more productive, stay at Hopkins longer, and are committed to quality work outcomes.

5. Why does JHU care about employee engagement?

Johns Hopkins is committed to the employee engagement survey as an ongoing opportunity for employees to identify issues and to help make positive changes at their workplace. Johns Hopkins' senior leaders believe in the value of the survey and take the results very seriously.

6. Why do we focus on managers?

Every response is important, and it matters how each individual employee experiences their work here at Hopkins. Gallup research and experience tells us that all engagement is local—the person who is most likely to influence how engaged an employee feels is that person's direct manager. That is the person who recognizes your work, makes sure your work expectations are clear, and ensures that you have what you need to get your job done effectively and efficiently.

The Survey

7. Why does JHU measure employee engagement with a survey?

Engagement at JHU is more than just the Gallup survey—it is the way that each employee has clarity in their work assignments; has the materials, resources, and relationships that they need to accomplish their tasks; and feels recognized for what they accomplish. The Gallup Q12 survey is simply a method of periodically measuring how well we all are doing at creating an engaging work climate.

8. Why should I participate?

Sharing your thoughts about your work will help drive real change. It is one of the best ways we have to voice our opinions with the goal of improving our own work lives and Johns Hopkins University overall. The survey also is an investment in us as employees to ensure we have what we need to be successful.

9. Is my participation voluntary?

Yes. Participating in the survey allows you to express your opinions and help make a difference in your workplace, but it is not mandatory. We do hope that you will complete it so that we have the most accurate and complete picture of employee engagement in the university.

10. Who is administering the survey?

Gallup will conduct the survey for Johns Hopkins. Best known for conducting polls, Gallup provides research-based consulting for workplace leadership, marketing, and customer practices. They've been around for more than 70 years and are known as a trusted and independent research organization.

11. Is the survey confidential?

Yes. Gallup administers the Johns Hopkins University Employee Engagement Survey according to strict confidentiality policies. At no time does Gallup share data with Johns Hopkins or any other client in a way that would directly connect you to your responses.

12. What is the difference between anonymous and confidential?

Anonymous means that no one knows who is answering. Gallup's goal is not to collect information anonymously. In order to know which people to group together for team reports, Gallup needs to be able to identify which people belong to which teams. However, any information that is provided to Gallup is kept completely confidential, or private. Confidential means that your identity and answers will not be revealed or released. In addition, Gallup follows exceptionally strict procedures so that aggregated data that is reported cannot be attributed to specific employees.

13. Who will have access to my responses?

All personal responses to this survey will be kept completely confidential. Gallup will collect, report, and analyze the data. At no point will anyone at Johns Hopkins or an affiliate, including senior leaders and managers, be privy to the origins of specific feedback. All results will be reported at the team level. Managers will receive a scorecard in which all individual responses will be aggregated into group averages and percentages, as long as there are five or more responses to a given item. If there are fewer than five respondents that team's survey results will be included in a larger unit or department report.

14. Why does the survey questions about LGBTQ or disability status?

It's important for JHU to know if we are supporting engagement equally among all groups. In the last survey, we analyzed responses by these demographic groups and found small differences. We have expanded the options for responses this year to attempt to make the question more inclusive. We will analyze responses again this year. Results are reported only in aggregate for groups of 30 or more.

15. What if my team consists of fewer than five people?

Gallup's experience has shown that when there are five respondents in a group, it is very difficult to figure out one person's answers. That's why they only report the results at the workgroup level if there are at least five people in the group. If there are not five, your responses are reported at the next higher level of manager. So even if your manager doesn't receive a report, your responses are still included.

16. When and how do I take the survey?

On March 5, you will receive an invitation from Gallup with a website address to participate in the survey. You will use your JHED ID to sign in. This allows Gallup to identify you, but Gallup will not give out any data individually affiliated with that code. The survey is accessible online 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from work or home and you have until March 25 to complete it.

Employees with limited access to a computer will be given the option to complete the survey at a central location, and will receive instructions from their managers. Those employees can complete and submit the survey with the same confidentiality.

17. How long will it take to complete the survey?

It will only take about 15 minutes to complete the survey.

18. Will I be given time to complete the survey during work hours?

Yes. Completing the survey is very important and each employee will have time to complete it.

19. Is there someone who can help me with the survey?

Yes. Arrangements can be made to help you with the survey. Please talk to your manager or contact your HR representative.

20. What changes have been made to the survey since 2015?

This year, we are asking the same questions about diversity and inclusion in all Johns Hopkins entities – the university, the hospital, and the health system. This will allow us to know more about and compare employee experiences. Other questions are the same as past surveys, allowing the comparison of responses over time.

21. What have we done since the last survey?

As part of the 2015 Gallup survey, the university asked Gallup to conduct additional analysis that would help determine what drives engagement *at Hopkins*, specifically. To help accomplish this, we included a custom question, “I am willing to ‘go the extra mile’ for Johns Hopkins University, working above and beyond the required responsibilities of my job.” Gallup did a sophisticated machine learning analysis of the data, called C5, to identify themes based on clusters of the Q12 questions. Two themes emerged; one based on the extra mile question, and another based on the grand mean of the Q12 questions.

As a result of that analysis, we focused on the theme “The university cares about me and my professional growth and development.” Guided by that, the university:

- Streamlined myPerformance across the university which has allowed us to expand further, including SOM
- Focused on clear goal setting, and skillful assessment against those goals
 - Supported and encouraged two annual conversations between manager and employee about employee’s performance
 - Increased focus on including a professional development goal as part of goal-planning
- Expanded leadership development learning across the university
 - Refreshed and enhanced the university’s Leadership Development Program
 - Created the Supervisor Development Program and Manager Development Program
 - Created a half-day Effective Feedback course for both managers and employees – available in the catalog and bundled together with myPerformance learning
 - Developed short, online goal-setting courses
 - Created on-demand, multi-modality learning opportunities, centrally housed on TM website
- Four schools and departments have developed and delivered customized learning for their supervisors and managers in partnership with Talent Management.
- Groups, teams, departments, and divisions across the university worked in collaboration with their staff and faculty to take action in response to the survey.

22. What are we going to do with the information we collect on the survey? With the impact plans?

Gallup returns all of the aggregate, anonymous data to university leaders and managers. University leaders—specifically the Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration, Daniel Ennis—expect that leaders and managers across the university will complete an impact plan for each School and Division. Every manager with five or more direct reports (To help ensure anonymity, Gallup only provides data for managers with five or more reports.) Is encouraged to build an action plan by choosing one item that is affecting their group specifically.