

# Denison Culture Survey Communication Examples

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## Pre-Survey Communication

### Communication to Internal Stakeholders

#### Sample 1

Dear colleagues,

As you know we are currently working on our strategy and setting our priorities for the future direction of the company. There is a saying that you may or may not have heard, but that is relevant for us today and it states that ‘Culture eats strategy for lunch’. The key point is that in order for us to successfully execute against our business strategies, we need to have important cultural attributes in place and in practice. To help us better understand where our culture will act as a facilitator of our strategies and where it might act as a roadblock to our success, we will be conducting a culture audit that includes a survey of our employee population.

When most of us think of an employee survey we think about the traditional measures of individual satisfaction, morale and engagement. While the individual connection to one’s job and employer is important, our ultimate success depends on our ‘collective’ ability to execute against our strategies and business objectives. Thus we will be broadening the lens as we conduct our audit and ask our leaders and workforce to make judgements about our culture with emphasis on the level of clarity and alignment that we have created among the collective workforce regarding our internal practices AND the relevance/impact of our strategies and goals to the external marketplace.

This broader cultural lens will help us answer important questions such as:

- Are the individual development plans and activities resulting in a more capable workforce – and are the capability development activities grounded in a clear strategy for the future?
- Do we believe we have a ‘shared’ understanding of strategies, goals, priorities?
- Do we have clarity across a range of drivers of employee engagement including important predictors such as Empowerment, Capability Development, Core Values and Vision?
- Do we have a ‘shared’ understanding of customer needs and wants and do we utilize customer feedback to shape our decisions?
- Do we have a clear set of Values and are those Values practiced (vs. simply espoused or aspirational)?
- Have we created the appropriate collective boundaries (WHAT – shared Vision, Strategy, Goals and HOW – shared Values, Coordination, Teamwork) to allow for higher levels of empowerment at the individual, team and organizational levels?

As part of this effort to understand our current culture and to align our culture to our business needs, we have engaged the support of Denison Consulting, a firm that specializes in this field. In the coming days we will be coordinating times for members of the Denison team to talk to you, one-on-one, and to gather your perspective on the key opportunities and challenges facing ABC Company today and your thoughts regarding the cultural strengths we should leverage as well as any cultural behaviors or practices that you think limit us and put us at risk for achieving our business objectives.

Thank you in advance for your participation and support of this important initiative and we will share the output of these discussion, along with the full range of culture data collected in the weeks and months to come, in an anonymous way that surfaces important issues while maintaining individual confidentiality.

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## Sample 2

Dear colleagues,

As you know we are currently working on our strategy and setting priorities for the future direction of the company. As we move forward with those strategies it will be important to understand the extent to which our current culture will act as a facilitator of our strategies and where it might act as a roadblock to our success. To that end we will be conducting a culture audit that includes a survey of our employee population as well as some one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders like yourself.

When most of us think of an employee survey we think about the traditional measures of individual satisfaction, morale and engagement. While the individual connection to one's job and employer is important, our ultimate success depends on our 'collective' ability to execute against our strategies and business objectives. Thus we will be broadening the lens as we conduct our audit and ask our leaders and workforce to make judgements about our culture with emphasis on the level of clarity and alignment that we have created among the collective workforce regarding our internal practices AND the relevance/impact of our strategies and goals to the external marketplace.

The cultural elements that we will assess focus on important aspects of the organization that have been shown to impact important performance metrics such as profitability, growth, quality, innovation, employee and customer satisfaction. As part of this effort to understand our current culture and to align our culture to our business needs, we have engaged the support of Denison Consulting, a firm that specializes in this field. In the coming days we will be coordinating times for members of the Denison team to talk to you, one-on-one, and to gather your perspective on the key opportunities and challenges facing ABC Company today and your thoughts regarding the cultural strengths we should leverage as well as any cultural behaviors or practices that you think limit us and put us at risk for achieving our business objectives.

I want to thank you in advance for your participation and support of this important initiative and we will share the output of these discussion, along with the full range of culture data collected in the weeks and months to come, in an anonymous way that surfaces important issues while maintaining individual confidentiality. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions regarding this process.

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## CEO Message to Management

### Sample 1

We will be implementing our Culture Survey in the month of June, beginning on the 1st and continuing through the 14th. This process will provide important insights regarding our organization's current cultural health – and, will provide guidance for continuing to build. Your role in this survey process is of utmost importance. We are striving for 100% participation by all because the future of the company and achievement of our business goals depends on the active participation of all employees.

The survey results are truly valuable only if individuals are honest, candid and straightforward in their responses. We need to hear “how things really get done” in our organization to be able to identify what's working and what's standing in our way in moving forward. Candid feedback ensures that we will be working on the right things to improve our culture and business results. Protecting individual anonymity is of utmost importance to us in this process because it allows employees to feel free to voice their honest opinions. All survey responses will remain confidential and will be sent directly to Denison Consulting to be aggregated. No one at ABC will view individual survey responses. Remember, the purpose of the survey is to explore patterns and trends across the organization on an aggregated group level, not review individual responses or opinions.

It is crucial that everyone understand that this survey is supported by all levels of the company, starting with me – and that all of us will be participating. It is also important that employees know their participation (in both the survey and the ongoing culture development process) is appreciated and necessary. If you have questions, feel free to contact [Contact Person]. Please discuss this upcoming process with your employees and teams. Let them know that this survey is forthcoming and that we look forward to their full participation.

Thank you in advance for your continued support and commitment to building a strong and successful company.

[CEO Name]

### Sample 2

Our 2016 Organizational Culture Survey launches on June 1st and it will be open through June 14th. This is one of the most significant ways for us to hear honest thoughts from employees about our work environment here at ABC Company. I am asking you to make it a priority to take the survey, to encourage your employees to take the survey and to make sure that they have the time to do so.

On June 1st, every employee will receive an invitation to be part of the ABC Company Culture Survey from the corporate HR. You and your employees should be able to complete the survey in 15-20 minutes. The questions are straight-forward – relating directly to our work environment. All responses are anonymous.

We expect to share results with the [Target Audience] in [Date or Time Frame], along with our plan to address any significant issues that we find.

I would like to issue you a direct challenge to achieve 100% leadership participation. For this survey to succeed, we need everyone to participate and to be frank about the work life here at ABC. Thanks for your support.

[CEO Name]

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## CEO Message to All Employees

### Sample 1

To all ABC Company Associates:

As part of our effort to preserve our strengths and continually improve, you will be receiving an email invitation to participate in the Denison Organizational Culture Survey on November 30th. The purpose of this survey is to obtain your opinions about the way our organization operates. The survey will help us understand specific aspects of our culture and identify opportunity areas. As the survey measures opinions and perceptions, there are no "right" or "wrong" responses. The information will be used to assist us in planning for our future, specifically in the way we manage our business and build relationships not only among ourselves, but also with our customers and suppliers.

Please be as honest as possible when completing the survey. Your responses are completely confidential and cannot be tracked. Individual surveys are collectively tabulated into a graphic profile that will compare our organization's culture to a database of other organizations. This will provide us with a measure of our organization's progress toward achieving a high-performance business culture.

After receiving the survey results, feedback sessions will be established to communicate and share the survey results in a timely manner. You may expect that we will work through a plan to address the key actionable items in a quick and expedient timeframe.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

[CEO]

### Sample 2

We know that our PEOPLE are the key to our realizing our growth and profit objectives. In order to have an effective and productive organization, we need to ensure that we have a healthy, well-defined and consistent corporate culture. With this in mind, I am pleased to announce that we will again ask our teammates to participate in the [company name] culture survey. Last year all teammates participated in the survey. We learned a great deal about our current cultural strengths and areas for improvement.

The survey measures opinions and perceptions; therefore, there are no "right" or "wrong" responses. I am asking all participants to be honest and open in their responses in order to best determine what is working and what is standing in our way in moving forward.

We are striving for 100% participation by surveyed teammates – the future of [company name] and achievement of our business goals depend on the active participation of all teammates. Your candid feedback will ensure that we are focused on the right things to improve our culture and our business. To ensure confidentiality, the survey will be administered by Denison. All responses will be sent directly to Denison. No one at [company name] will have access to individual survey responses. Remember, the purpose of the survey is to explore patterns and trends across the organization on an aggregated group level, not review individual responses or opinions.

We will begin the survey on [date] and continue through [date]. Please take 15-20 minutes to complete the survey. Thank you in advance for your continued support and commitment to building a strong and successful company.

[CEO]

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## Corporate Message to All Employees

### Sample 1

As part of our effort to preserve our strengths and continually improve, you will be receiving an email invitation to participate in the Denison Organizational Culture Survey on September 8th.

The purpose of this survey is to obtain your opinions about the way our organization operates. The survey will help us understand specific aspects of our culture and identify opportunity areas. As the survey measures opinions and perceptions, there are no "right" or "wrong" responses. The information will be used to assist us in planning for our future; specifically, in the way we manage our business and build relationships not only among ourselves but also with our customers and suppliers.

Please be as honest as possible when completing the survey. Your responses are completely confidential and cannot be tracked. Individual surveys are collectively tabulated into a graphic profile that will compare our organization's culture to a database of other organizations. This will provide us with a measure of our organization's progress toward achieving a high-performance business culture.

The results of the survey will be communicated during the week of DATE. At that point, we will then work together to develop a specific and targeted action plan to address key issues by no later than DATE.

If you have any questions about the Denison Organizational Culture Survey, feel free to contact CONTACT NAME at [contactname@yourcompany.com](mailto:contactname@yourcompany.com).

Thank you for your time and consideration,

## Talking Points and FAQs

### Culture

- **What is Culture?** An organization's culture is the beliefs, values, and behaviors that a group has adopted over time as a way to survive and succeed. Simply put, "culture is the way things are done around here."
- **Why does Culture matter?** Culture matters to us because we experience its effects on performance every day. Organizations are recognizing the need to manage their culture with the same skill and attention they pay to their strategy, their financials, and other key performance measures.

"The bottom line for leaders is that if they do not become conscious of the cultures in which they are embedded, those cultures will manage them. Cultural understanding is desirable for all of us, but it is essential to leaders if they are to lead. " –Edgar Schein, Ph.D. at MIT

### Denison Model

- The Denison Model provides you with a common language and structure to talk about culture in meaningful and productive ways in your organization.
- The Denison Model is based on a quarter century of research on how an organization's culture relates to performance. Denison's research has found notable links between organizational culture scores and important performance measures such as Profitability (ROE, ROA, ROI), Growth (Sales Growth, Market Share), Quality, Innovation, Customer and Employee Satisfaction.
- The Denison Model captures the unique tensions that most of us face every day and presents them as not an "either/or" but rather an "and". Research has found that organizations that best manage these dynamic tensions outperform the organizations that do not.
- Beliefs and assumptions, and their associated behaviors, determine the culture of an organization. The Denison model and surveys allow us to reveal the underlying beliefs and assumptions in recognizable and measurable ways that impact organizational performance.

### Denison Survey

- **What is the Survey designed to measure?** The survey is designed to measure the underlying beliefs, values, and assumptions held by members of an organization, as well as the practices and behaviors that exemplify and reinforce them. The survey focuses on the aspects of an organization's culture that have a direct link to business performance. The Denison Organizational Culture survey will answer four key questions about our organization:
  - Mission: Do we know where we are going?
  - Adaptability: Are we listening to the marketplace?
  - Involvement: Are our people aligned, engaged, and capable?
  - Consistency: Do we have the values, systems and precession in place to execute?
- Benchmarking your cultural strengths and weaknesses against our global database of organizations allows you to manage your culture, leverage your human capital and better serve your clients, customers and key stakeholders.
- **How long will the survey take?** The survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes for you to complete.

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- ***Are my responses confidential?*** Your responses are completely confidential and will only be presented as part of the overall organizational profile or subgroup. It is important that you respond openly and honestly to the survey for accurate results.
- ***When is the deadline?*** Please complete your survey by {Insert Survey Deadline Date}
- ***Who do I contact if I am having a problem?*** For general questions contact xxxxx. There is a link provided on the survey itself to address technical questions.



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## Survey Invitation

### CEO Message to All Employees

#### Sample 1

Good morning!

I am very pleased to once again invite you to participate in the Denison Organizational Culture Survey.

Over the past four years, we have conducted two culture assessments (previous year 1 & previous year 2) using the Denison Culture Survey. As you may recall, the purpose of this survey is to obtain your opinions about the way our Company operates. The survey measures opinions and perceptions...there are no right or wrong responses. The information is used to assist us in planning for our future and setting some areas of priority for development.

The survey consists of a number of questions and will take approximately 15-20 minutes for you to complete. All individual responses will be kept strictly confidential. No individual results will be provided either to me or to the company. Results will only be shown as part of the overall Plant profile.

The Denison Organizational Culture Survey is designed to measure the underlying beliefs, values and assumptions held by employees of a company, and the practices and behaviors that exemplify and reinforce them. The survey focuses on aspects of an organization's culture that have a direct link to how we perform our work.

Please click on the link that follows and fill in your answers to the survey items by no later than Deadline. Again, please respond in terms that best describes the way you feel our Plant operates today.

You will note that some of the items in the survey ask about our 'customer'. For this survey we are asking that you think about your PRIMARY customers as you complete the survey.

SURVEY LINK HERE

Thank you in advance for participating and helping our Company determine some priorities for the future.

Regards

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## **Sample 2**

To All Employees,

As you are aware, I am committed to a full assessment of our capabilities and strengths as an organization and using your input to identify areas of development. It is my desire that we become, and are perceived as, a high-performance organization. Therefore, I am very pleased to introduce the Denison Organizational Culture Survey. It is designed to measure the underlying beliefs, values and assumptions held by employees, and the practices and behaviors that exemplify and reinforce them. The survey focuses on aspects of an organization's culture that have a direct link to business performance.

This survey measures opinions and perceptions--there are no right or wrong responses. The information we gain will be valuable to our leadership and will assist us in planning for our future, especially in the way we manage our business and build relationships with ourselves, customers and suppliers.

The survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes for you to complete. All individual responses will be kept strictly confidential. No individual results will be provided either to me or to the company. Results will only be shown as part of the overall organizational profile or subgroup.

Please click on the link that follows and fill in your answers to the 60 questions no later than [Deadline Date]. As you respond to the questions, please think of our organization as it operates today.

Survey LINK

I value your input in helping us develop an organization and culture that will support our business objectives and take advantage of the skills and contributions of everyone here. Thank you in advance for participating and helping ORGANIZATION NAME determine its path for the future.

Regards,

CEO