Our Approach

The Work Institute

Conducting Research on Workforce Preferences, Intents and Expectations
The Work Institute offers proprietary, customized solutions to get to the root of how people respond to your organization. With our emphasis on mixed method research, we get the best information – so we can give you the best information. With its commitment to meeting clients where they are, matching research and analysis to the client’s needs, and asking the right questions, The Work Institute gives your organization the power to improve overall satisfaction, reduce cost, and promote growth.

The Work Institute has been very successful implementing employee research studies in organizations throughout the U.S. We have developed responsive, adaptable best practice processes (start-up, communication, coding, interpretation, intelligence briefings) that are customized to the specific requirements and budgets of each customer. With our research data, workforce intelligence and results, The Work Institute will help you: understand your employees, manage more effectively, and compete at the highest level.
We conduct research across all stages of the employment lifecycle. Understanding employees' preferences, expectations, and intents is essential to minimizing the high cost of turnover, the expensive process of recruiting new hires, and the major issues that lead to dissatisfaction in the workplace. Employees' views change during the employment life-cycle, so it’s important to collect valuable intelligence from employees at varying times throughout the employment experience.

Use New Hire Studies/On-Boarding Studies to increase engagement and intent to stay for new employees. Use Employee Experience Studies (baseline and pulse based) with current employees to increase length of stay and measure additional employer specific objectives. Use Exit Studies with former employees to identify the real reasons for leaving, secure competitive analysis, identify interest in return, and minimize risk.

We take the time to listen. In a unique approach to research, we combine quantitative and qualitative methodology for a comprehensive look at what drives the people in your organization. No single research or survey tool can convey the breadth of factors that drive behavior in a workplace or institution. That’s why we utilize a variety of methods and customized reporting tools, giving you the best possible look at the people who make your organization strong. Any computer can perform a survey. But, it can’t tell you why one person rated overall satisfaction “1,” while another gave it a “5.”

That’s where we come in. It is important to capture more than just the surface reactions of employees or merely have them rate issues identified as important to management. The Work Institute recommends that a mixed method approach be used to collect data. In addition, we recommend asking primarily open ended questions that give the respondent the opportunity to talk about the issues that they think are important. Studies can be modified to ensure that key issues specified by organizations are addressed and measured.
The Work Institute puts a great deal of emphasis on high response rates. The Work Institute tele-researchers are skilled at establishing rapport with respondents, probing for specificity and eliciting other important issues for each question. Interviewers seek to obtain up to 4 reasons for each open ended question and respondents are then asked to identify which of their answers to a given question is most important. Frequently, it is not the first one mentioned. This rapport results in very high participation rates. In addition, tele-researchers will call each employee up to six times in order to obtain responses to the interview. Care is taken to rotate calls over weekday days, weekday evenings, weekend days, and weekend evenings. If an interviewer reaches a voicemail system, a toll free call back number is provided should the employee choose to initiate the interview.

Each respondent to The Work Institute’s open ended interview questions provides information in their own words. The Work Institute codes each response into categories and generates reports that include both the actual comments from respondents as well as percentages based on the coded responses. Thus, it is possible to track percentages over time as well as to drill down to the comments made by respondents. This makes the data far more actionable than mere ratings of specific issues or the percent of people who agree or disagree with specific statements. Results for all questions are displayed in breakouts as required by the client.

By employing our MyInterview™ platform, a combination of live, behavioral telephone interviews and our unique web-enabled interviews, we get beyond just ratings and get to the root of how employees respond to your organization. Using the same principals of our highly successful phone interviews, we can deploy web-based interviews when appropriate to provide a cost effective alternative.
The Work Institute offers exceptional reporting and customized decision support including: Detailed Reports, Analysis Reports by Question, Verbatim Reports, and Risk Avoidance/Affirmative Responsibility reports. Specifics of these reports are outlined on the following page. There are no additional costs for these reports which are available online whenever the client wants to access them.

The Work Institute analysis system includes reports that are available online, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. These reports have been developed over time in collaboration with many of our clients. Therefore, they represent data and data displays that have been found to be the most useful to our clients. A hallmark of all reports is that they are based on open-ended questions that provide truly actionable data. We code those open-ended comments into categories to create the reports that are described below. The actual comments are also included with the results described below. All reports are exportable to Excel or PDF, with or without graphs, percentages, or response numbers.

All reports can be made available online to anyone within an organization through a secure, password protected access system. Therefore, an organization can decide to whom it wishes to grant access. Some organizations grant access to all data available to all senior managers while others only grant access to data within a manager’s level of responsibility. It is up to you to decide how you want to make what data available to what managers.

Detailed Report

The Detailed Report is the most useful report for obtaining a high level overview of the data as well as for drilling down to specific areas within the organization. Components of this report:

- Summary – this component provides information on number of competes, response rates, and cost of turnover (if compensation data is provided by the Client), re-recruitment opportunity, and knowledge of illegal or unethical practices.
- Organization-wide reasons as well as reasons broken down by levels within the organization. This component makes it possible to identify what the specific drivers of, for example, retention/productivity are for each segment of the Client so that interventions can be targeted appropriately. For example, it may be that supervisors in one part of the Client are driving people away, while in another part, it is staffing levels. Therefore, the Client can spend their resources
Exceptional Reporting & Customized Decision Support Options

Analysis Reports by Question
This report is run by selecting a particular question and then selecting breakouts based on data fields provided by the Client. Thus, it is easy to look for reasons broken out by such demographics as gender, race, age groups, length of service groups, performance ratings, etc.

Verbatim Reports
Once categories of issues have been identified as warranting more attention, it is necessary to examine verbatim responses. For example, if supervision issues emerge as one of the most frequent categories mentioned, it is then necessary to review verbatim comments to identify most common reasons. Frequently, this is sufficient to identify specific issues that need to be addressed.

Risk Avoidance/Affirmative Responsibility Report
The Work Institute has two vehicles that are routinely used for Affirmative Responsibility purposes. The first vehicle is what is referred to as a Risk Flag. A Risk Flag is generated anytime an employee answers yes to a Risk or Safety or Fraud question. Flags (email alerts) are sent automatically as soon as the data are obtained.

The second vehicle is referred to as a Recruitment Flag and is generated whenever respondents say they would like to have their names given to the Client as someone who would be interested in talking to someone in HR about returning.
The Work Institute has been collecting, analyzing, and helping organizations use incumbent and exit interview data to increase retention, improve performance, and assist with recruitment since 2001. We have developed a series of open-ended questions that have been shown to be very useful. Based on thousands of responses to these open-ended questions, The Work Institute is in an excellent position to assist the client in identifying multiple items that are highly likely to be drivers of retention and to assist the client in re-recruiting former employees.

We help formulate open-ended questions that have been shown to be most useful with our other clients. As a result, The Work Institute, in conjunction with appropriate representatives from the client, will create a customized instrument based on our extensive experience, not just on theory, that will maximize the utility of the data collected, and as part of the process, The Work Institute will help the client identify those issues that are important to them.

The key to our proprietary MyInterview™ methodology is to design questions around key topics that will allow the employee to provide ratings while also providing the descriptive details as to why the question was given the specific rating. A typical question might be, “On a scale of Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair or Poor, how would you rate your direct supervisor?” After the rating is provided, the interviewee is asked to give as much detail and as many specifics as possible as to why the particular rating was given. This question design typically allows us to use only 6-10 questions in an interview to address a wide range of key topics. Those topics generally fall into the following questionnaire design element categories:

### Questionnaire Design Elements

#### Reason for Leaving or Intent to Stay

The responses to this question reveal the REAL reasons for employee departure or the critical issues around why employees remain at their company.

#### Support from the Company

This question is designed to explore the respondent’s perceptions of the support they received from the company to be successful in their job. The question allows the employee to define “support” in ways that are meaningful to them. The rating scale captures strengths as identified by employees (why the excellent rating?), as well as weaknesses that need...
immediate attention (why the fair or poor rating?). Moreover, the rating scale will explore recommendations for improvement identified by employees.

**Supervisor Performance**
This question is designed to explore the respondent’s perceptions of their interactions with their direct supervisor. The rating scale will capture strengths as identified by employees (why the excellent rating?), as well as weaknesses that need immediate attention (why the fair or poor rating?). Moreover, the rating scale will explore recommendations for improvement identified by employees. Comparing supervisor rating data by enables a company to identify the leaders that are performing well in their roles and what employees value about their performance (excellent ratings). Supervisors that need remediation can be identified and specific items addressed based on the responses provided by employees.

**Perception of Company**
This question is designed to explore the respondent’s perceptions of the company as an employer. The rating scale will capture strengths as identified by employees, as well as weaknesses that need immediate attention. The rating scale will also explore recommendations for improvement identified by employees. The open ended nature of the follow-up questions allows respondents to identify factors that are most relevant to employees. This question is designed to provide an evidence-basis for identifying the work-environment factors that influence employee perception of the organization, both favorably and unfavorably.

**Willingness to Recommend**
This question is designed to explore the respondent’s perceptions of the company and their willingness to recommend them as an employer to a friend or family member. The open ended nature of the follow-up questions allows respondents to identify factors that are most relevant to employees. This question is designed to provide an evidence-basis for identifying the work-environment factors that influence employee perception of the organization, and their willingness to recommend the company as an employer.

**Currently Employed**
This question is designed to identify the employment status of former employees, where they are currently working, and what attracted them to their new employer. This information provides insight into what employees perceive they were missing while they were employed by the company. Additionally, knowing where your employees are going provides insight into the competitive landscape of the local labor market.
Interest in Returning/Rehire Alert
This question is designed to identify those employees that are willing to return to the company. This information is valuable in developing a low-cost recruiting pipeline of trained and ready to work candidates. Re-recruitment strategies can significantly reduce hiring cost and time-to-fill measures. The follow-up questions explore required conditions to affect a prompt return. Many times, simply initiating a conversation with the respondent is sufficient to negotiate a return.

Risk Alert
This question is designed to identify those employees that have knowledge of illegal or unethical practices in the company. Proactively seeking out this information significantly enhances the overall compliance detection capability of the company and signals to the respondent that ethical business conduct is a company priority. Affirmative responses are reported in real time to the appropriate compliance team member at the company. Negative responses (“no” responses) provide a valuable piece of evidence supporting the company’s positions, should a former employee later pursue legal action against the company.

The Work Institute Advantage
• Sound behavior science, including high response rates. This supports data credibility and provides a way to discuss, observe, and measure what really matters.
• Proprietary reporting/delivery system – HAVA – Human Asset Vulnerability Analysis Technology.
• Understanding of ROI and the business case for utilization. With responsible, immediately cost effective metric services, The Work Institute quickly identifies areas of concern and their cost-benefit.
• Actionable intelligence as defined by employees rather than pre-determined categories of responses that permit only rating or agreement by respondents.
• High response rates so that the intelligence obtained can be generalized to all employees with statistical confidence. High response rates that are necessary to succeed with resolution decisions. IVR and paper/pencil methods do not yield the necessary response rates for statistically significant global assessments.
• In-depth qualitative data necessary for effective retention process improvement. Maintain the ability to probe for additional explanation for comments made by respondents.
• Candid feedback through high rapport-building tele-researchers from an outside company that promises and maintains strict guidelines for confidentiality of responses.
Access to Exceptional Reporting

- Multiple Login Levels for individualized access to data and reports. For example, administrative team members may have access to all reports for the entire organization; unit managers might only have access to their area of responsibility/accountability.
- Graphs, pie charts or bar charts for high level view of data and trends. Managers are able to look at responses to all questions in a rolled up view, such as by company, facility, department, and/or supervisor.
- Client has immediate e-mail notification of employee relations concerns (harassment, violence, bullying, risk) and employee interest in returning opportunities.
- Custom report formatting to match company goals and initiatives or to view trends over a specific time period.
- Key indicator reporting system that sends a specialized report to the client on an ad-hoc basis.
- Ability to have reports available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in multiple formats to meet the needs of the various constituent groups within the company. Reports are generated automatically; the client does not have to wait for a quarterly or monthly report.

The Work Institute avails a reliable and effective process for client leaders to continuously acquire and respond to information to immediately rectify problems, proactively respond to revealed opportunities, or strategically plan more optimal approaches to talent performance.

The Power of Workforce Intelligence

What is Workforce Intelligence? Have you ever tracked employee satisfaction and company profitability to determine if there is a correlation? When organizations bring workforce research and employee feedback, HR analytics and the company’s financials together, they start to paint a very powerful picture of the correlations and revelations of the organization based on both dollars and sense. This Workforce Intelligence delivers the robust information that organizations need to provide clear evidence of the priorities that must be addressed by the organization as well as the financial gain of pursuing action, or the cost of inaction.

- Reduce the ratio of human capital expense to operating expense.
- Zero in on most important problems or opportunities within specific workgroups or job groups within the Client. This allows users to focus in the most important areas within segments of the organization.
- Identify former employees who express an interest in returning in order to actively re-recruit valued former employees.
- Immediately respond to corporate compliance and risk issues as well as management and affirmative responsibility concerns. No waiting for full program completion to intervene. Apply JIT decision-making.
- Effectively utilized, The Work Institute process results allow the client to identify and remedy turnover, and make the client an employer of choice.
Summary
Understanding employees’ preferences, expectations, and intents is essential to eliminating the high cost of turnover, the expensive process of recruiting new hires, and the major issues that lead to dissatisfaction in the workplace. The Work Institute offers proprietary, customized solutions to get to the root of how people respond to your organization. With our emphasis on mixed method research, we get the best information – so we can give you the best information. With its commitment to meeting clients where they are, matching research and analysis to the client’s needs, and asking the right questions, The Work Institute gives your organization the power to improve overall satisfaction, reduce cost, and promote growth. Get results that give you a competitive advantage!