How to Amplify Employee Voice

STRATEGY	HOW	WHY
Design intentional team meetings	*Before meetings* • Consider schedules (work hours, PTO) • Include meeting objective(s) in cal invite & link to context docs • Timestamp the agenda and earmark item owners • Send agenda at least a day ahead of time	Employees feel unconsidered when: • Meetings are scheduled outside of their work hours • They're unsure of their role in the meeting • The "usual suspects" are the only people scheduled to present • They aren't given time to think and **prepare to contribute fully**
	During meetings • **Diversify the engagement modalities you use (all-hands verbal debate, silent reflection, breakout groups/pairs, etc)** • Monitor airtime & WAIT (WAIT is an acronym for asking yourself "Why am I talking?") • Check interruptions • Attribute ideas	Employees are unheard when: • **Their learning and collaboration styles aren't designed for** • They don't get time to speak during meetings • They're interrupted while speaking
	After meetings • Send summary and next steps to all invitees • Create space for any additional thoughts/ideas	Employees become undervalued when: • They don't get credit for their contributions • Their ideas aren't solicited

Upwork

STRATEGY	HOW	WHY
Design 1:1s that empower employees	*Create psychological safety* • Use 1:1s as time for your employee to share what they're thinking (vs. doing) • Encourage your employee to share half-baked ideas with you • Listen more than you speak • Encourage your employee to take risks *Build trust* • Avoid jumping straight to solutions. **Give employees space to be heard and understood.** • **Reflect their concerns back to them, confirm that you have understood them correctly, and then ask if they would like to think through solutions with you.** *Foster camaraderie* • Your employee should be the 1:1 Driver; you should be the Contributor • Your employee should leave the 1:1 knowing you have their back	**The purpose of 1:1s is for employees to feel—and it to be true—that your job is to maximize their success. Without a foundation of psychological safety, trust and camaraderie; it will be uncomfortable, or even harmful, to broach conversations about identity when needed.**

STRATEGY	HOW	WHY
Be transparent with your decision making	**Reflect employees' contributions and anticipate their reactions to decisions you've made or are passing down** When sharing your own decisions: • Take care to articulate why you view it as the best option • Share the ideas that you considered but rejected • Thank employees for their input • Call out employee contributors by name, as appropriate When passing down a decision that isn't yours: • Take care to understand the rationale behind what you're communicating • Preempt and speak to how employees might react to the news • Make it clear that employees can share feedback (even if it won't affect the outcome)	Employees want to know that decisions were thoughtful and that their perspectives and ideas were considered. Even if employees disagree with a decision, hearing themselves in it can still amplify voice and keep them motivated to share their input in the future.