



The Challenge

In 2021, dentsu consolidated more than 150 creative agencies into seven brands as part of the company's transformation to reduce complexity. Given the size of the organizational change, dentsu wanted to evaluate change readiness and employee sentiment.



Our Audience

With over 45,000 employees impacted by the change, dentsu approached the work regionally. Our primary focus was North America, understanding employee sentiment in the USA and Canada.



Key Insight

dentsu's culture is diverse and evolving —a culture of many cultures—but all grounded in a shared commitment to teamwork, clients, and meaningful problem-solving. However, the operation gap between the transformation vision and its execution heavily impacted employee sentiment and support of the transformation.



Our Story

Change works best when people feel grounded. By focusing on shared values across our businesses and streamlining how we work together, we'll help everyone feel more prepared and supported in adapting to what's next.



Creative Craft

Executive-ready presentation covering insights across key areas: culture, values, engagement, change readiness, communication preferences, and perceptions of the transformation

Researching organizational readiness for change and employee sentiment

Change Readiness Report

August 2021

dentsu

Interview Guide | Audience #1: Key Stakeholders & Sponsors

What we're here to do:

- As dentsu employees settle into the "new normal" after the re-org, we're evaluating the current organizational culture to identify opportunities to increase employee engagement, cultivate belonging, and strengthen the cultural connection.

What we're hoping to learn:

- Existing cultural climate and ways of working
- Impact of change on the organization and the culture
- Barriers and gaps to change adoption, and employee engagement
- Level of understanding of dentsu's priorities across the organization
- Existing perception around the employee's WIIFM (what's in it for me?)

Interview agenda:

- 5 min | Introductions
Who we are, what we're here to do, and what we're hoping to learn.
- 25 min | Q&A
Included below

Interview questions:

- Tell us about your role at dentsu
- What's your favorite part about coming to work every day?
- Let's talk about dentsu's culture.
 - What part of the dentsu culture motivates you most?
 - If you could snap your fingers and fix 3 things about the dentsu culture, what would you change?
 - How would you describe the cultures of the different service lines?
 - What about the brands within each service line?
 - Fast forward to a year from now, what's on your wish list for dentsu's culture? How do you hope it would have changed?
- Let's talk about vulnerability and trust across the organization.
 - How often do people talk about their weaknesses or mistakes they've made? How often does leadership share mistakes or failures made?
 - How much trust do you see and feel between employees and leadership?
 - How would you describe the hierarchical structure of the organization? (rigid, flat, dynamic) Can you give an example of what that looks like on

2. Establish a change readiness baseline (employee level)

Tell us about your attitude towards change:

	Not me at all	Not really	Sometimes	Most of the time	Describes me perfectly
I typically enjoy and embrace change, even though it can be hard	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
I generally find change/transformation challenging	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
I need information and resources to effectively navigate change	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In general, I only adopt change that I know is being measured	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am more likely to adopt change when I see my management demonstrating it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

If ☒

Then: Can you tell us a little more about this, and what type of challenges it presents, if any?

4. Change specific

Question	Answer Type
I am aware of transforming dentsu	Likert: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
Overall, I understand why dentsu needs to transform	Likert: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
I believe transforming dentsu will help our organisation achieve our goals	Likert: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
I've mainly heard about transforming dentsu from	Choice: Official program team, leaders or manager (CEO included), colleagues or informal communication, other (please state)
I believe my leaders actively support transforming dentsu	Likert: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
I am worried about: what the transformation means for me and my role	Likert: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
I am confident that I can deliver in my role throughout the transformation	Likert: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
I believe the dentsu culture will positively influence the transformation	Likert: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
Overall, I believe the transformation will be beneficial for our organization	Likert: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
What can dentsu do to make the process smoother	Free Text
What is one thing about the ATP/programme/new business model that you would like more explanation on?	Free Text
What is one thing you will do to support the ATP?	Free Text

People we talked to

From July 6, 2021 to August 16, 2021, we spoke with 91 dentsu employees, leaders, and executives across HQ, service lines, and functions, primarily in the USA and some in Canada.

7

Executive Leaders
(Americas & Service Lines)

27

People leaders across each service line

45

Employees from delivery teams across all six brands

12

Employees and leaders from functions

What the data says are:

Transformation Awareness



of respondents agree or strongly agree they are aware of dentsu's transformation, with HQ functions and Creative being the most aware.



of respondents agree or strongly agree they can confidently deliver in their role throughout the change.



of respondents agree or strongly agree they understand why dentsu is transforming.

Transformation Understanding



of respondents agree or strongly agree they believe this transformation will help dentsu achieve its goals.



of respondents agree or strongly agree they believe this transformation will help their teams.



of respondents agree or strongly agree they are excited about what the transformation means for them, with CXM seemingly the most "for the fence."

Interviews & Focus Groups

Facilitated org-wide stakeholder interviews and employee focus groups, talking to 91 employees and leaders across the business to understand change readiness and employee sentiment.

Survey Development & Analysis

Conducted an org-wide change and culture survey and analyzed 1,459 survey responses to evaluate employees' perceptions of change, culture, values, communication needs, and general engagement.

Research Report

Analyzed quantitative and qualitative data to identify themes and audience segments. Distilled key insights to diagnose gaps, barriers, and opportunities that could be leveraged to increase change readiness and employee engagement