

Organizational Health & Employee Engagement

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Introduction

Organizational health is the foundation for a healthy store. This framework focuses on understanding the organization as it exists today—its values, leadership, strengths, and challenges—before identifying improvements. By connecting with employees and strengthening clarity, communication, autonomy, and accountability, the goal is to create an environment where people and the organization can grow.

1. Align with Management

Purpose / Goal

Establish a shared understanding of the organization's core values, definition of success, strengths, and key obstacles.

Questions to Answer

What does success look like?

What are the organization's greatest strengths and obstacles?

Do our stated values reflect how we want the organization to operate?

Activities

Meet individually and collectively with management to understand expectations, priorities, and concerns; review existing values, goals, and practices; and observe how leadership expectations translate into day-to-day operations.

Accountability Document

Create a concise management alignment summary documenting agreed-upon values, goals, strengths, obstacles, and areas requiring further exploration.

2. Connect with Employees

Purpose / Goal

Understand the employee experience and create meaningful opportunities for engagement, growth, autonomy, and fulfillment.

Questions to Answer

What helps employees do their best work, and what gets in the way?

What would employees like to learn at work and outside of work?

Where would employees like greater involvement or ownership?

Activities

Hold individual conversations with employees across departments and roles, supplemented by informal observation of daily work; explore interests, strengths, frustrations, development goals, and ideas for improvement. Examples include cross-training in another department, professional development opportunities, or experimenting with a recipe or product in a test-kitchen environment.

Accountability Document

Create an employee experience summary identifying common themes, strengths, opportunities, and employee interests without attributing individual comments.

3. Strengthen Organizational Health

Purpose / Goal

Build a healthier organization through greater clarity, communication, alignment, accountability, autonomy, and leadership.

Questions to Answer

Are expectations, responsibilities, and decision-making authority clear?

How effectively do leaders and departments communicate and work together?

Does the organization encourage ownership and autonomy rather than dependence and blame?

Activities

Compare management expectations with the employee experience to identify gaps and friction points; examine how problems, mistakes, decisions, and communication are handled across departments; and develop practical leadership principles that emphasize coaching, consistency, accountability, and autonomy.

Accountability Document

Create a simple organizational health assessment that identifies priority areas and establishes shared expectations for communication, leadership, accountability, and decision-making.

4. Turn Health into Improvement

Purpose / Goal

Create an environment where employee fulfillment and organizational health naturally generate tactical and strategic improvements.

Questions to Answer

What improvements would have the greatest impact?

Which opportunities can employees help identify or solve?

How will the organization continue learning and improving over time?

Activities

Prioritize opportunities identified through management and employee conversations, then test practical improvements before committing to larger initiatives; examples might include changes to communication, customer experience, training, cross-department collaboration, or employee development.

Accountability Document

Create an improvement roadmap that captures priorities, potential initiatives, responsible parties, and measures of progress.