

Innovation Project Report

Member-Employee Engagement Project

Developing A Theoretical Model for Funded and Commercial Research

Designed to meet the needs of employee-owned businesses, worker co-operatives, social firms and other social enterprises.

Prepared By

Dr Rory Ridley-Duff, Sheffield Business School

r.ridley-duff@shu.ac.uk

Alistair Ponton, Viewpoint Research CIC

alistair@viewpoint-research.co.uk

Publication and Revision History:

Date	Version	Comments
January 2011	1.0	First draft for discussion at February Viewpoint Research board meeting
February 2011	1.1	Final report for March Viewpoint Research board meeting
	1.2	Report ratified by the Viewpoint Research CIC board for circulation throughout the co-operative and social enterprise community.



Who is this document for?

This document provides feedback on a *Member-Employee Engagement Methodology* piloted by Viewpoint Research CIC in collaboration with Sheffield Business School, and funded by a Business Link Innovation Voucher. It is intended as a discussion document for the staff at Viewpoint Research CIC, to provide feedback and recommendations on the development of the member-employee survey instrument for use with client groups.

It may be useful to share this document with relevant sector, professional and industry bodies, client organisations, and policy makers who want further information on the underlying principles and purposes behind Viewpoint's member-engagement methodology and survey research instrument.

Project Outline

This project took Version 1.2 of a member-employee engagement survey and integrated it into a member-employee participation methodology as part of a pilot project funded by Business Link (Yorkshire and Humber). The overall project sought to learn how a member-engagement survey could be integrated into action research activities to develop knowledge about member-participation practices. The ability to increase theoretical and practical understanding of *participation* is a major priority for both the co-operative sector (to increase member involvement) and social enterprises (to work effectively with stakeholders).

Viewpoint Research CIC is itself a social firm: a type of business that exists to enhance the career-prospects and life-chances of staff who are disadvantaged in the labour market. As a result, it was appropriate to pilot the approach within Viewpoint, and allow its staff to contribute to the development of knowledge. The goal of the project - to further develop the methodology and produce Version 1.3 of a member-employee engagement survey instrument - has been achieved through feedback from staff at Viewpoint and Sheffield Business School.

What assumptions underpin the methodology?

The member-engagement methodology is underpinned by an approach to learning and development that seeks to stimulate curiosity in a subject/topic, and then explore the theoretical and practical knowledge that arises when the results of an intervention are discussed in focus groups and a whole-system event (Burns, 2007). In this case,

- a) A survey instrument was introduced to stimulate reflection and questions about the ways in which staff can participate at work, as well as the levels of participation that they desire. The survey instrument provides insights into different types of participation, and can produce a 'democracy index' that indicates whether staff want more (or less) participation in different types of business development and management activity.



- b) After inviting staff to complete the survey, focus groups were organised (internally) to discuss the same questions through conversation. This was recorded as 'qualitative data' by the CEO in the form of an informal note of the meeting.
- c) After analysis of the information gathered, the results of the survey instrument and the focus group discussions were used to guide an organisation development workshop. This was designed to explore staff knowledge in relation to the survey/focus group findings, and further explore topics that the staff survey suggested were in need of change.
- d) The learning/teaching style of the organisation development workshop was participative (stimulating conversations amongst staff, and then capturing their feedback). A summary of staff feedback is provided later in this report (see Appendix A).
- e) The result of this approach was the development of a 'staff-driven agenda' for organisation development that the company board could action in subsequent board/management meetings.

The methodology is represented pictorially in Figure 1, and is described in Table 1.

Figure 1 - Action Research Methodology (Diagrammatic)

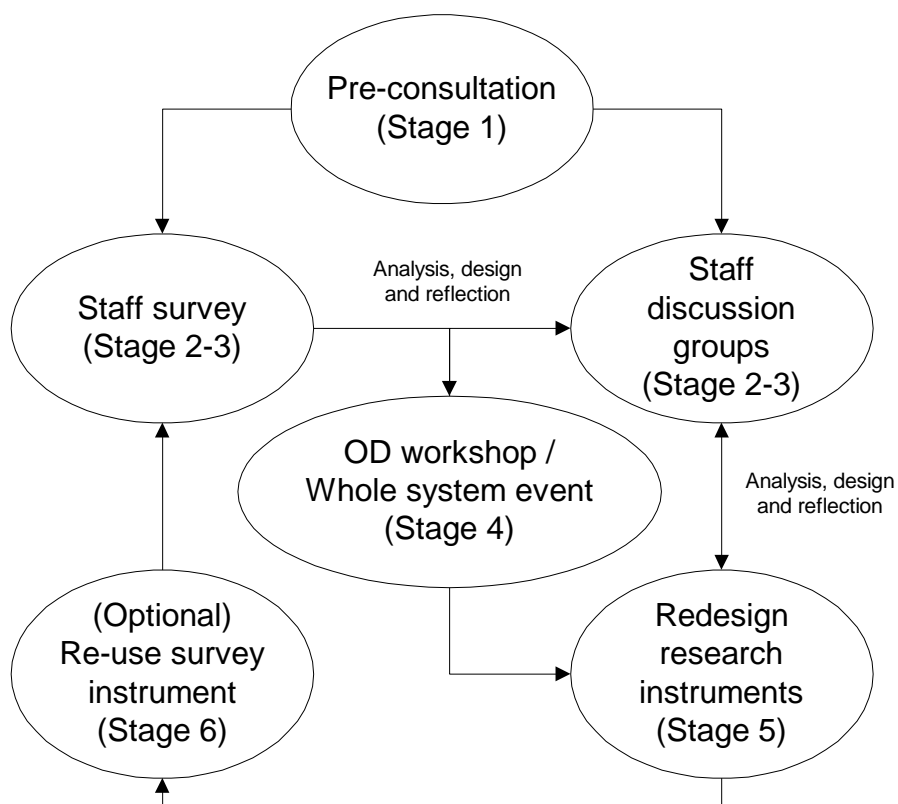


Table 1 provides suggestions for ways the approach might be adapted for funded and commercial research projects:



Table 1 - Action Research Methodology (Description)

Stage	Approach during a funded research project	Approach in commercial consultancy and/or market research project.
1. <i>Pre-consultation on areas of involvement and participation in which understanding/knowledge is sought.</i>	Background interviews with various stakeholders to establish the types of activity that will be investigated during the research.	Account management activity, or a chargeable consultancy service aimed at understanding the needs of stakeholders in the company.
2. <i>(or 3) First use of the member-engagement survey</i>	Distribution of the questionnaire (by any method considered appropriate to the setting), and collection of both quantitative and qualitative data from participants.	Distribution of the questionnaire, and collection of responses based on a royalty / administration fee per response.
3. <i>(or 2) Organisation of focus groups (typically in work- or peer-groups).</i>	Facilitation and collection of qualitative data, gathering views about the questionnaire itself, and the questions raised in the questionnaire.	Chargeable consultancy service to gather qualitative data about the questionnaire, as well as the questions raised in the questionnaire.
4. <i>Whole-system event (organisation development workshop), typically mixing people from different workgroups examining one or more organisational issues.</i> <i>(After analysing the data collected using the survey and focus groups).</i>	Facilitated workshop, focused on the areas of involvement and participation that participants most want to change. The workshop gathers further information and feedback from participants and identifies specific options for changing both the questionnaire and the organisation's policy/practice. If possible, agree the trajectory for change and set an agenda that can be delegated to representatives, managers and/or governors for action.	Chargeable consultancy to facilitate the workshop and discussions described in the adjacent paragraph.
5. <i>Update of the design of the member-engagement survey to confirm/amend areas of analysis, refine responses more closely to the context of the company.</i>	It is important that participants take ownership of this process by either leading it, or making final decisions on drafts prepared by the researcher.	In this phase, the consultant will need to facilitate the participants to lead the process and take ownership / authorship of the results.
6. <i>(Optional – dependant on research philosophy) Ongoing use of the member-engagement survey (steps 2-5) to identify whether the process has led to changes in the levels of member engagement (typically after 6 - 9 months, and annually thereafter).</i>	If undertaken, this part of the cycle should be wholly undertaken by the participants (including the sense-making process of examining the results). The researcher may wish to observe / interview participants about changes that occur.	If undertaken, the consultant should withdraw from this process except to provide mentoring/coaching of individuals on the challenges they face in updating their management systems and organisation.



What assumptions underpin the member-employee survey instrument?

The member-employee engagement survey is underpinned by established academic theories on employee relations (see Hyman and Mason, 1995; Hollinshead et al. 2003). These were modified in light of research into co-operative social enterprises (Ridley-Duff, 2009) to produce a theoretical framework that enables anyone to assess levels of member-employee participation. The survey design captures opinions on current situations and desired states, and compares the two to create a workplace democracy index. The concepts of participation and democracy are distinguished because highly participative styles of management may not be desired by members (in which case they cannot be said to be 'democratic' in the sense of reflecting members' wishes). Similarly, members may not have meaningful control over their own levels of participation in different business development and management activities.

The five levels of participation (modified after feedback from study participants) are set out in Table 2.

Table 2 - Levels of Involvement and Participation

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1 - No involvement: | <i>a management style where members/employees are not invited to meetings or elected to management bodies to contribute to operational or strategic decision-making. Typically, staff are not provided with any verbal or written guidance by managers and/or governors on company matters.</i> |
| 2 - Passive involvement: | <i>a management style where members/employees are provided with both written and verbal guidance by managers and/or governors, but are not invited or elected (individually or in groups) to contribute to operational or strategic decision-making.</i> |
| 3 - Active Involvement: | <i>a management style where members/employees (individually or in groups) have discussions about (pre-formed) management proposals, but are not invited or elected to participate in the formation of these proposals, or final decisions about their implementation.</i> |
| 4 - Managed Participation: | <i>a management style where members/employees (individually or in groups) can participate in the development of ideas, and where the managers focus on coaching members/employees to develop their ideas into proposals, and support them during implementation. Managers retain some powers to screen-out weak proposals.</i> |
| 5 - Democratic Participation: | <i>a management style where any member/employee (individually or in groups) can initiate discussions on operational or strategic issues, arrange and participate in meetings to develop proposals, and exercise both voice and voting power when decisions are made about implementation.</i> |

To assess levels of involvement and participation, questions are asked (in pairs) about an aspect of existing management practice. Each participant in the research gives their view on the way they think their workgroup (peer-group) operates at present, and how they think it should approach future practice. Below is an example:



An Example (incorporating feedback from participants)

How do you go about making operational decisions within the company? (Governance)					
	<i>No involvement</i> (Level 1)	<i>Passive Involvement</i> (Level 2)	<i>Active Involvement</i> (Level 3)	<i>Managed Participation</i> (Level 4)	<i>Democratic Participation</i> (Level 5)
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	In my work group, we do not participate in meetings, or receive information on what to do. We have no idea if we do things the way managers want them to be done.	In my work group, we have meetings with a manager, and s/he tells me (us) how things should be done.	In my work group, we have meetings with a manager, and they discuss their proposals with us before they make decisions.	My work group has meetings with a manager, and they listen to our proposals before discussing with us which proposal they think we should adopt.	Anyone in my work group can initiate a proposal and organise work group discussions, and decisions, on how to improve the contribution of the work group.
<i>What would you like to do in the future?</i>	I do not need or want to participate in work group decision-making – I prefer to work things out as I go.	I think our work group should have a meeting with a manager so they can tell us how things should be done.	I think our work group should have meetings with a manager so they can discuss their proposals with us before they take decisions.	I think our work group should have meetings with managers so they can listen to our proposals and help us choose which one to adopt.	I think anyone in my work group should be able to initiate a proposal and organise a discussion / debate on how we run the organisation.

When using the survey instrument, the possible responses are randomised (not presented with the above headings) to prevent particular psychological 'effects' (e.g. primacy effects, recency effects) from influencing the results. Any paper based version of the questionnaire should mix the responses and ensure that they appear in all positions on the questionnaire roughly the same number of times.

The following section outlines the findings of the project, and the outcomes of the project.

Project Outcomes

The member-employee survey was completed by all employees (including directors). Individual responses to the survey could be used to provide information for staff appraisals, although doing so could influence the responses that people give. In future projects, it may be useful to design an ICT system that enables staff to route a copy of their response to a member of staff of their choice, while maintaining an anonymous copy for data analysis.

Responses varied significantly amongst individuals and the reasons for this were discussed in focus groups and the organisation development workshop.

The responses were aggregated to assess involvement, participation and democratic sensitivity in seven aspects of the organisation's work. The topics were chosen after discussions in two consecutive board meetings, and the text of the survey instrument for the pilot was drafted by Rory Ridley-Duff at Sheffield Business School. The seven areas selected were:



- a. Skill Development
- b. Induction and Appraisal
- c. Governance (Strategic Management)
- d. Terms and Conditions of Employment
- e. Economic Participation / Wealth Sharing (Shares and Bonuses)
- f. Product / Service Development
- g. Market / Business Development

Group level responses on the **existing** level of participation are given in Table 3:

Table 3 - Existing Levels of Participation

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
	No Involvement	Passive Involvement	Active Involvement	Managed Participation	Democratic Participation
Skill Development		Here (2.5)			
Induction and Appraisal			Here (3.4)		
Governance		Here (2.6)			
Terms and Conditions		Here (1.9)			
Wealth Sharing	Here (1.0)				
Product Development		Here (2.6)			
Market Development			Here (3.0)		

The results from this part of the survey indicate that the organisation operates, or is moving towards, a consultative management style in 5 of the 7 aspects of management evaluated. There is currently no involvement and participation in decision-making on the wealth sharing system, and passive involvement in setting terms and conditions of employment.

Feedback from the organisation development workshop indicated that the text needed to be clearer on whether an individual or group view was being requested. In the revised survey instrument, all views on **existing** practice have been revised to assess practice amongst the participant's 'colleagues', 'work group' or 'peer-group'. This enables people at any level (from board level to production task or service delivery) to discuss their own experience of management practices. Responses to questions on desires have been revised to seek information on how the participants believe their own work group or peer group should be involved in decision-making.

To better interpret variations in the responses, it is recommended that demographic information about respondents' work group / department / position / gender and ethnicity are collected if using this as a survey research instrument. If the questionnaire is being used



as a heuristic (learning) device for personal development, no demographic information need be recorded. Secondly, it is recommended that the guidance notes (particularly for focus groups) are updated to stress that the methodology seeks to understand: what is happening; why it is happening; what (if anything) members / employees would like to do about what is happening.

Group level responses on the **desired** level of participation are given below in Table 4.

Table 4 - Existing Levels of Participation

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
	No Involvement	Passive Involvement	Active Involvement	Managed Participation	Democratic Participation
Skill Development			Here (3.5, +1.0)		
Induction and Appraisal		Here (2.8, -0.6)			
Governance			Here (3.4, +0.8)		
Terms and Conditions		Here (2.8, +0.9)			
Wealth Sharing		Here (2.5, +1.5)			
Product Development			Here (3.2, +0.6)		
Market Development			Here (2.9, -0.1)		

The 'democracy index' for each aspect of management activity is calculated by subtracting the results for **existing** levels of participation from **desired** levels of participation. This can be reported back to individuals, work groups, departments and company as a whole if demographic/organisational information is recorded with each response.

For the purposes of the pilot, only a company summary was produced. The results indicate that members/employees want **more** participation in:

- Skill Development (+ 1.0)
- Governance (+ 0.8)
- Setting Terms and Conditions of Employment (+ 0.9)
- Wealth Sharing (+1.5)
- Product Development (+0.6)

They want **less** participation in:

- Induction and appraisal (-0.6)
- Market development (-0.1)



The two topics where staff indicated they wanted most change (Wealth Sharing and Skill Development) became the focus for the organisation development workshop.

Focus Group Feedback

At the focus group, members of staff made five key points about the questionnaire:

1. There was not always a 'correct' option, and sometimes parts of different answers might have been combined to provide a better answer.
2. Questions could be 'narrow and specific' to the point where they did not seem to relate the situations in which they found themselves at Viewpoint Research CIC.
3. Questions are more relevant to a cooperative style company than to Viewpoint.
4. Questions may need to be different for people in different roles.
5. Questions may need to be tailored to meet company specific requirements.

In the organisation development workshop, these issues were discussed further giving rise to the following comments / recommendations:

1. Answers can be ranked 1 - 5 (with 1 indicating the most common experience, and 5 indicating the least common). In 'scoring' responses, each can be weighted 40%, 30%, 20%, 10%, 0% - maintaining the integrity of the scoring system for determining the level of participation experienced by each member of staff. Where respondents do not rank all choices, the score could be distributed to their other choices. For example, if a respondent only enters a single response, it would be weighted 100% instead of 40%. For the purposes of the 'democracy index', the answer ranked 1 in each question pair can be compared to identify the dominant management style.
2. No questionnaire instrument can ever fully cover the range of experiences in a company (this is an inherent weakness of questionnaires). It is recommended that free text boxes be added to enable staff to elaborate / qualify their choices.
3. Questions cover **all** styles of management from extreme authoritarian approaches to egalitarian cooperative approaches. It is necessary that all choices are available to make the research instrument useable in a wide variety of contexts. Secondly, the purpose of the questionnaire goes beyond data collection to opening up alternatives that participants might not have previously considered or experienced. When used this way, the questionnaire has an educative function regarding the kinds of participation / non-participation in management that occur in other organisations. Without awareness of other choices, it is harder for participants to appreciate the management styles that occur in their own organisation.
4. While job role might be used to interpret the results (and it would be expected that people in different job roles might have different experiences), the survey would not



be as useful for learning or research if the questions were modified for staff at different 'levels' (for the simple reason that this would reinforce those 'levels' artificially). The text in Version 1.3 of the questionnaire, and related guidance, has been modified. It is now framed in terms of involvement and participation of the respondent's peer-group / work-group. This goes a long way to addressing concerns about the use of the survey instrument with people at different 'levels' in a company structure.

5. It is acknowledged that questions (and responses) may need to be tailored to meet the specific needs of a company. Indeed, the methodology works most effectively where the introduction of the survey instrument triggers attempts to redefine and update the questions and responses. Where this occurs, it indicates that the action research methodology is working, and increasing both the theoretical and practical knowledge of staff members about involvement and participation. Where questions/text are updated, however, it is recommended that the integrity of the underlying theoretical model (the 5 levels) is maintained.

While any area of involvement and participation can be formulated into a question about existing and desired levels (and be turned into a focus group question), the responses need to be carefully worded to capture the management styles outlined in Table 1 (pages 3 - 4 of this report). If the wording does not reflect the type of involvement/participation set out in Table 1, then the integrity (validity) of the research instrument will be undermined.

Recommended Updates to the Focus Group Questions and Guidance

Based on feedback from researchers at SBS (see later in this report), it is recommended that the focus group questions be reworded to avoid the phrase 'should we', and be replaced with 'would you like'. Below are examples of the rewording suggested using the focus group questions put to staff at Viewpoint:

1. How should we go about developing staff skills? (Skill Development)

Change to: How would you like to go about developing staff skills?

2. How should we go about inducting and appraising staff? (Induction and Appraisal)

Change to: How would you like to induct and appraise staff?

The guidance notes can explain the rationale behind the (re)wording: that the new wording is more open to use with both individuals and groups, and can be directed in a group context to either individuals or the whole group. The previous wording implies the response should be framed collectively ('we') to the exclusion of individual needs/views. It is recommended that all focus group questions are rephrased accordingly.



Organisation Development (OD) Workshop

The following suggestions were made during the OD workshop (see Appendix A) - a 'response' is provided where a suggestion has not been fully implemented in the revised questionnaire instrument.

- i. Splitting induction and appraisal questions from each other **(accepted)**.
- ii. Including a question specifically about the role of informality in forming opinions, generating ideas and making local decisions **(accepted)**.
- iii. Ranking the options available rather than choosing only one **(accepted)**.
- iv. Scoring each of the options on the basis of how close they are to a description of the workplace (on a scale of 1 – 4) rather than choosing only one of them.

Response: In discussions with researchers at SBS, it was felt this would unnecessarily lengthen the time taken to answer the questionnaire (the number of questions would increase five-fold). It would also weaken the structure for analysis of participation and make the production of a democracy index difficult. It was recognised, however, that this approach would be easier if the questionnaire was being used in a telephone interview context. It is recommended that instead of using the approach suggested, a pilot is undertaken over the telephone in which two statements (Levels 2 and 3) would be read out for the respondent to choose between. After choosing one, the adjacent options can be read out (i.e. Levels 1 and 2, or 3 and 4) for the respondent to choose. Once a respondent reaffirms a choice, then the ranking levels of different responses can be established by the researcher and recorded in the same way as a person filling out the questionnaire on-line.

- v. Having a 'None of the above' option so people can describe, in free text terms, what the situation is, and what they would like the situation to be.

Response: Including a free text box, and ranking of choices, will enable more flexible responses. While appreciating that some people do not like quantifying their response, the value of their attempts to do so are considered important in some types of research. For this reason, the inclusion of a 'none of the above' option is not recommended.

- vi. Having a free text box even if you choose one of the answers **(accepted)**.
- vii. Clarifying whether questions should be answered from a personal perspective or a collective perspective (and clearer guidance / consistency throughout). **(accepted)**.

The following questions also arose during the OD workshop:



- Could there be a difference between what a person desires and what they think is appropriate for a given question?
- Should there be a discussion about the 5 levels of involvement and participation before the questionnaire is used?
- Should the questionnaire be explained to managers and/or, employees, HRM personnel etc. so they can help design the questionnaire before it is used?

Taken together, these questions might be framed using an overarching question:

Is the impact greater (in terms of *understanding* involvement and participation) from using a draft of the questionnaire, having focus groups and workshops, then redesigning the questionnaire and using it again?

The view of the researchers at Sheffield Business School is that the cycle of use and revision (through participative meetings to influence the design of the research instrument) is most valuable. This is where most learning and development will take place.

If there is adequate access to staff (and budgetary provision) for a design stage, then there is - at least in theory - no obstacle to starting the cycle with focus groups. However, it is likely that organisational 'gatekeepers' will seek to influence staff participation (or staff will defer to senior staff during design meetings). The danger is that the design process will screen out alternatives to the status quo before staff are able to indicate their preferences.

The methodology as it stands combines examination of the results of the questionnaire with a critique of the questionnaire itself (in focus groups and organisation development workshops). This helps to progress people from **single-loop** learning (looking at information and thinking about its implications) to **double-loop** learning (critiquing the system that produced the information and evaluating its usefulness) (Argyris, 1976). The recommended approach is designed to maximise theoretical knowledge development and engagement with the concepts of involvement and participation. By developing the desire to critique and change the questionnaire (and responding positively when that critique occurs) the process of using the questionnaire acts as a model for critical reflection and participation.

If the tool is to be used to acquire **management** knowledge (rather than develop workforce participation) it would still be problematic from a research point of view if the theoretical model was explained to participants before it is used. When known, respondents will use this knowledge to give the answers they think managers will want to hear. On balance, we believe most learning will take place (whatever the underlying research goal) if widespread knowledge of the underlying theory is only explained when participants undertake a critical examination of the questionnaire *after* it has been used. It may be fruitful to go further by asking *new members of staff* to reframe the questions/responses each year (for future new members of staff). In this scenario, each organisation member only fills out the questionnaire once. The goal is to develop their theoretical knowledge of participation and



democracy, and encourage them to critique participation practices in the organisation, rather than to collect their 'responses' for an annual quantitative analysis. A precedent for staff development activity based on inviting newcomers to undertake an important task for the whole organisation can be found in Theory Z (Ouchi, 1981).

Developing a Staff Driven Agenda for Board Meetings

In the final session of the OD workshop, staff organised into two groups (one with each director) to articulate their agenda for future board meetings. One group focussed on what to do with the 'collective' profits generated by the organisation (the 65% of profits in a CIC that must be reinvested in the social purposes of the company). The other group focussed on what to do with the 'private' profits that the company could distribute. This exercise was made 'real' by giving staff real amounts of money based on the first year of trading. Group 1 had £2000 to invest in private benefits, and Group 2 had £6000 to invest in social benefits.

Group 1 (Sharing out £2000 'privately'):

- a. Staff presents and a staff party
- b. No great support for bonuses or share dividends.
- c. Positive view on long-term saving: employee trust and/or pension scheme. Goal is to put money into future private provision. Concern about what would happen to this if the company stopped trading?
- d. Positive view of carrying on discussions about staff membership of the company with a view to electing one or more members of staff to the board.

Group 2 (Sharing Out £6000 'socially'):

- a. Top priority – protect Viewpoint.
- b. If Viewpoint does grow, may need a bigger office. Office/equipment costs. Reserve to meet moving costs.
- c. Put some money into Key Fund Yorkshire to increase social investments.
- d. Charity donation once a year.
- e. Putting money back into advertising, marketing and training.
- f. Investing in a better meeting space.

The two sets of investment priorities now guide strategic management in board meetings.



Feedback from Researchers at Sheffield Business School

The two following researchers at Sheffield Business School critiqued the pilot programme and reviewed the outputs of the research:

- Dr Tracey Chadwick-Coule obtained her PhD on Sustainability in the Voluntary Sector, and is currently a Senior Research Fellow in the Centre for Individual and Organisational Development.
- Dr Anthony Bennett leads teaching and research on Employee Relations, and is a Senior Lecturer in the Organisation Behaviour and Human Resource Management group.

Both researchers felt that the collection of demographic data (company, organisation type, industry, work group, department, position, management role, gender (identity), ethnicity, age group, location etc.) would increase the usefulness of the survey research instrument in a number of contexts. It would assist management groups in board-led organisations, the workforce in co-operatives, and also researchers seeking to test or describe patterns of participation across a group of organisations. While this information would not be necessary for critical learning in a seminar/workshop, it would add value for particular types of research, particularly where policy development/sector mapping is taking place.

In framing the collection of this demographic data, the choices need to be sensitive to the full spectrum of organisations with which the survey instrument will be used. From past experience, we learned that charities, companies and cooperatives often use different terms for people in governing roles, and do not react in the same way to terms such as 'manager', 'employee' and 'volunteer' (Ridley-Duff, 2008). In designing data collection systems for future projects, terminology appropriate to [organisation type] might need to be created for the following fields:

- work group
- position
- management role

Dr Anthony Bennett felt that Marchington's model of task-focussed and power-focussed decision-making would be helpful in organisation development workshops that examine the underlying theory of the questionnaire (see Wilkinson et al. 1997). Involvement tends to be *task*-focussed while participation tends to be *power*-focussed.

Options for Future Use

The questionnaire, following revisions, can act as a research instrument for both funded and commercial research. Plans are already underway to bid for additional funding to use the research instrument in a national project examining participation and democracy in worker co-operatives, non-coop social enterprises and private companies.

A number of commercial markets were suggested for further investigation. Firstly, the survey instrument and action research methodology will enable Viewpoint Research to offer



employee-surveys and development workshops on involvement and participation in any sector. Dr Anthony Bennett felt the theoretical model (and selection of questions) could be adapted to create an equality audit system, by checking whether various demographic groups report differences in their levels of involvement and participation in selected areas of management. If the protected characteristics set out in the Single Equality Act 2009 are collected as demographic data, the member-employee survey instrument could highlight gaps in involvement and participation, and guide action research to increase the participation of disenfranchised groups.

Other options arising from discussions with the Social Enterprise Coalition and Cooperatives UK include further development of questionnaire templates (underpinned by the same analysis model) for surveys of member participation in consumer co-operatives, community co-operatives, multi-stakeholder social firms, social enterprises, charities and voluntary groups.

With appropriate software development, use of this participation survey could be provided at low cost (on a royalty + admin fee per use basis), with a variety of questionnaire formats for different organisation types. The administration fee would ensure funds for sustainable software development and support, while the royalty fee would be split between the authors of the questionnaire (to encourage entrepreneurship amongst staff) and social investment. Software development can support the tailoring of the survey questions and responses for use with a single organisation (or network of related organisations). This would yield sector level data (and benchmarks) that would be attractive to policy makers and market research companies.

All the above possibilities can be explored through further market research.

Conclusions

Overall, the project has succeeded in contributing to a step change in staff participation and organisation development at Viewpoint Research, and also opened up new possibilities for both funded and commercial research development. An outcome of this project is Viewpoint's involvement in a bid for further research funding with Sheffield Business School, Co-operatives UK and the Social Enterprise Coalition. It has also triggered board discussion on the creation of a financially sustainable model for commercial development of a service based on royalty + administration fee per use for the survey, and consultancy fees for action research.

For future questionnaires and focus groups at Viewpoint Research CIC, the following template with 10 management themes are recommended as a starting point for developing survey and focus group questions:

1. **Skill Development** - "How do you develop staff skills?"
2. **Working Atmosphere** - "How would you describe the working environment?"



3. **Induction Processes** - “How do you induct newly appointed (elected) staff?”
4. **Staff Appraisal** - “How do you approach staff appraisal?”
5. **Strategic Management** - “How do you plan for the medium and long-term?”
6. **Operational Management** - “How do you make operational decisions?”
7. **Terms and Conditions** - “How do you set wages, hours and leave entitlements?”
8. **Wealth Sharing** - “How are surpluses (profits) and deficits (losses) allocated?”
9. **Product/Service Development** - “How do you design new products and services?”
10. **Market / Business Development** – “How do you access and develop markets?”

The recommendations of this report will be embedded in new versions of the *Member-Employee Engagement Model* (Version 1.3 for internal use at Viewpoint Research CIC, and Version 2.0 as a template for future academic and commercial research). Both can be commercially exploited by the partners to this project or licensed to other organisations for non-profit and commercial research. Both versions can be used by Sheffield Business School for educational writing, teaching and research activities.

Guidance for People Familiar with Academic Research

The survey / interview scripts can support both inductive (exploratory) and deductive (theory testing) research activity.

If, for example, **quantitative data** collected using the survey was used for an equality audit, it would need additional demographic information about participants to describe their education / job / role etc. At the very least, the protected characteristics set out in the Single Equality Act 2009 (sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, race and age) would need to be collected alongside other information needed to establish the equity of outcomes (e.g. occupation, pay, hours and location). The survey can then be used to examine the correlation between ‘protected characteristics’ and other variables.

If undertaking industry/sectoral analysis, some profile information about the company (size, legal form, first trading year, industry sector, turnover etc.) will be needed to describe or explore their inter-relationship. The goal may be to understand how organisation characteristics (size, age etc.) affect patterns of participation.

Qualitative data (from interviews and/or focus groups) can help researchers to:

- help participants construct a new staff survey following the action research methodology described earlier in this document.
- interpret data collected using a survey instrument to design educational interventions or write academic papers.



- understand how individual participants construct accounts of involvement and participation in their workplace
- understand how groups of people socially construct an account of their workplace culture, and set priorities for involvement and participation.

If imported and stored in an appropriately structured database, research findings and analysis:

- can be presented for single participants (or groups of participants) to understand local attitudes to involvement, participation and democracy.
- can be presented for single themes / questions to deepen both participants and researchers understanding of member/employee attitudes to organisation development.
- can be cross-referenced with other themes and individual/organisational characteristics to explore whether there are different attitudes in different member/staff groups, organisation types or industry sectors.

If undertaking deductive research, the researcher will need to formulate a hypothesis before using the survey instrument to test their prediction(s).

If undertaking inductive research, the process of using focus groups/interviews and workshops to help construct a new research instrument will help the participants and researchers to understand how they socially construct organisational reality.

In a management education setting, inductive research is often a more useful approach.

In a management research setting, both deductive and inductive approaches may be useful depending on the researcher's outlook and the research question to which an answer is sought.

For convenience, a copy of the revised member-engagement survey produced by this project is included in Appendix B¹. This document is also available separately from the authors of this report.

¹ This may be further revised by the company's staff before it is used again.



References

- Argyris, C. (1976) "Single-Loop and Double-Loop Models in Research on Decision Making", *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 21(3): 363-375.
- Burns, D. (2007) *Systemic Action Research: A strategy for whole system change*, Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Hollinshead, G. Nicholls, P. and Tailby, S. (2003) *Employee Relations (2nd Edition)*, London: FT Prentice Hall.
- Hyman, J. and Mason, B. (1995) *Managing Employee Involvement and Participation*, London: Sage.
- Ouchi, W. G. (1981) *Theory Z*, New York: Avon Books.
- Ridley-Duff, R. J. (2008) "Interpreting results: governance diagnostic questionnaire", paper to *Bridging the Divide: Governance and Decision-Making in the Third Sector* workshop, Sheffield Hallam University, 9th-10th July.
- Ridley-Duff, R. J. (2009) "Cooperative Social Enterprises: Company Rules, Access to Finance and Management Practice", *Social Enterprise Journal*, 5(1), 50-68.
- Wilkinson, A., Godfey, G. and Marchington, M. (1997) "Bouquets, Brickbats and Blinkers: Total Quality Management and Employee Involvement in Practice", *Organization Studies*, 18(5): 799-819.



Appendix A - Staff Responses at Organisational Development Workshop to the Design of the Questionnaire

2. Approaches to Participation – Staff Views

- a. Graham/Marjory – how much participation depends on where they work. Most people want to be involved in what affects them. Won't necessarily want to know what goes on at the board. Size of the company. Like to be kept in the loop. Being small helps. Not uncommon for [someone] to say "we need to do this, and this" – individual can give opinions. Being "kept in the loop is participation" – "being asked opinion about new contracts". Get more information than a large company. Large companies just 'give' information.
- b. Mos/Jean – can raise things with [managers], can put ideas across. Want to learn more, get more involved. [Managers] let Moss do work that he wants to do. Can talk to [manager] – creating/forming opinions. [Manager] helps put into practice.
- c. Sophie/Louse – keeping informed. Sophie – having been informed, after changing location. Likes that needs/issues are taken into account. Want to know more about the business. General communication. This location – "is that alright?", being told and included in meetings, having "consideration". Feel that they are always given an accessible place. Marjory – no longer have to struggle for equipment.
- d. Trish / Rachel – Trish - we already do a lot, understanding clients, putting feedback into other projects. Good to know how the business works, and contribute to it moving forward. Depends on interests. Everybody has an interest in doing more than Kier or Sheffield Homes. Coping with different levels of interest. Doing more than is needed. Jean – Ali / Rachel help people feel like a valued member of the team. Graham – the way people are treated makes people feel valued. Just getting information - but can just be ticking a box. Feeling listened to, feel valued beyond the immediate job. Not just what you are paid for, as a person. Being encouraged to take a more active role – Rachel good at this. Graham – going to Footsey.
- e. Rory/Ali – Ali – view of participation was about keeping people informed, and inputting into things. Questionnaire threw up a further stage. Being able to run with an idea, do more than bring it to the table. Could be problems as well.
- f. Rory led a discussion about the design and purposes of the questionnaire – there was vibrant discussion about whether the staff should participate in the design of the questions (i.e. understand the theoretical model before the questionnaire is



used with staff). We also discussed possible revisions to the design and scoring including:

- i. Splitting induction and appraisal from each other.
 - ii. Including a question specifically about the role of informality in forming opinions, generating ideas and making local decisions.
 - iii. Ranking the options available rather than choosing only one.
 - iv. Scoring each of the options on the basis of how close they are to a description of the workplace (on a scale of 1 – 4) rather than choosing only one of them.
 - v. Having a ‘None of the above’ option so people can describe, in free text terms, what the situation is, and what they would like the situation to be.
 - vi. Always having a free text box (even if you also choose one of the answers).
 - vii. Should the questions be answered from a personal perspective or a collective perspective (need clearer guidance and consistency throughout).
 - viii. Is there a difference between desire and appropriateness of giving a particular answer, and there is also the individual and collective perspective that needs to be clear in each answer.
- g. We also had a vibrant discussion about the order in which things should take place:
- i. Having a discussion about the 5 levels of involvement and participation before the questionnaire is used?
 - ii. Should the questionnaire be explained to managers and/or, employees, HRM personnel etc. so can help design the questionnaire before it is used?

Is there a greater impact (in terms of *understanding* involvement and participation) from using a draft of the questionnaire, having focus groups and workshops, then redesigning the questionnaire and using it again? In reuse, the response rate alone will indicate whether levels of participation are increasing.

3. Staff Learning and Development

- a. How do people learn (informally / formally)?



- b. Ali/Rory – thinking about Viewpoint, mostly informal, feeding off others. Informal learning – being able to respond straightaway (i.e. how can I ask a question in a better way?). Majority informal, but there is a case for some formal learning. Relationship between informal/formal learning, and participative v non-participative learning.
- c. Rachel / Trisha – In Viewpoint, very informal, on the job learning, hearing what people say. Formal is being more led by another person, more structured. Need for both? Can't do it all informally. Learn and do.
- d. Louise / Sophie – prefer informal, doing things together. In the last meeting, with getting ideas – how to ask certain questions. Different ways to ask questions, learn little tiny bits that pay off well. Listening and observing, shadowing (all parts of informal learning). Reading through before doing. Constructive criticism better than being told right or wrong. Better to do own thing at time, rather than being told exactly what to do. Experimenting? Recently, doing a new questionnaire (for tenant surveys) – can get mixed up with different questionnaire (if doing at the same time). Takes some weeks to get comfortable. Repetition can help to embed learning. Using the script as a guide rather than a rule book is advisable. Avoid becoming robotic – can be nicer if you are “having a conversation while on the call”.
- e. Jean / Mos – training on the job is definitely informal. Did enjoy the customer training – introduced different scenarios, how to gauge customer intent. Helps to get customer attention. Formal training is a good way of introducing new ideas. Can also provide dedicated time/space for learning.
- f. Majorie / Graham – most training is informal (at Viewpoint). The training day did introduce new aspects. Most useful was the session discussing how they dealt with different things. Training leader can formalise or informalise workshop learning. Learning from each other.
- g. Broke into two groups to explore the learning/development implications for induction/appraisal, and to discuss current approaches to learning.

4. Wealth Sharing

- a. What forms of investment do people make?
 - i. Buying shares (investing money)
 - ii. Choosing to work in a particular company
 - iii. Investing time
 - iv. Investing expertise
 - v. Investing



What wealth does Viewpoint create?

- b. Rachel/Graham – biggest wealth – people as primary assets – opportunities as a form of wealth, self-worth as a form of wealth. The first question people ask when you meet them is “what do you do?” Not having a job is impoverishing - it is a question of identity. There is the phrase ‘a wealth of experience’.
- c. Marjorie / Moz – said much the same thing. Providing services that improve the lives of tenants (creating wealth for customers in the form of improved repairs services/housing).
- d. Jean / Sophie – Good job we don’t work on commission, would never get paid! Sophie – only do 3 hours per shift, often feels going slower than she should do. Wonder if not “pushed” enough to persuade them to do interviews?
- e. Graham – clients may be ticking boxes by working with us. But we are adding value in other ways ... we must be creating value (i.e. wealth) or they would not continue working with us.
- f. Ali – completion rate good. Collegial / group working – is this a form of wealth (compared to what would be created under a piece-work system)? Valued by individuals.
- g. Trisha/Louise – reputation contributes to wealth. Feedback as a form of wealth. Recognise the “wealth of health”. Goodwill has both a social and financial value. Payment as wealth.
- h. Rory/Ali – quantity of work available as a form of wealth. Value of working rather than the value of the wages. Maximising the number of hours...? Differentiates social from private business – the hours that can be worked is valued as least as much as the pay. Graham – “the hours are the product”. Money as a form of wealth.



Appendix B – Revised Member-Engagement Survey (Viewpoint Research CIC)

Member / Employee Engagement Model

For Viewpoint Research CIC

Prepared By

The staff of Viewpoint Research CIC

Publication and Revision History:

Date	Version	Comments
April 2010	1.0	First draft for discussion at Viewpoint Research board meeting
June 2010	1.1	Second draft for use at Viewpoint Research CIC
August 2010	1.2	Version for generic development as a teaching/research aid.
February 2011	1.3	Post Business Link customised version for Viewpoint Research CIC for checking and finalisation by staff in the company

This document was prepared under the terms of a Creative Commons Licence. You may use and adapt the document for non-commercial purposes providing you acknowledge Rory Ridley-Duff, Alistair Ponton and Viewpoint Research CIC in all adaptations of this document.

Viewpoint Research CIC can provide services to create on-line (web-based) versions of this survey, and facilitate focus groups and development workshops to support its use.



Who is this document for?

This document is intended for the staff (and staff representatives) of Viewpoint Research CIC. This version can be refined and adapted for internal use as a survey instrument that captures information about staff involvement and participation for the purposes of organisation development workshops.

Why would you want to use it?

The approach described in this document provides a framework for managing and embedding participative management techniques that enhance the working lives of company members, employees and volunteers.

How should it be used?

The methodology makes use of:

- a) A questionnaire to encourage reflection and stimulate ideas about involvement and participation.
- b) Focus groups for further group discussion on ideas generated by use of the questionnaire.
- c) A development workshop in which key ideas can be further elaborated, for the purposes of setting an agenda for the governing body of your organisation.

The survey instrument collects some quantitative data that can be analysed. However, it is primarily intended to introduce members to different ways of conceptualising involvement and participation, and locating the practices of their own organisation within a theoretical framework. It does this by asking staff to assess current levels of participation in their work- or peer-group, and then the level of participation they think their work- or peer-group would like to have in the future. Desires regarding staff participation might be higher or lower than current participation levels and it is this that the survey instrument helps to establish for the purposes of negotiation and discussion.

The focus groups are designed to encourage discussion and the development of ideas in small groups. These enable managers or (elected) representatives to pursue further research into options for change, and to gauge whether a consensus can be reached amongst staff. If a consensus forms, managers or (elected) representatives can provide guidance to the organisation on how to implement the changes suggested by members, employees and volunteers.



How the Survey / Focus Group Approach Works...

A background document on using the questionnaire as part of an action research approach to change management has been prepared by Dr Rory Ridley-Duff (Senior Lecturer at Sheffield Business School) and Alistair Ponton (CEO, Viewpoint Research CIC). You can obtain this document by e-mailing:

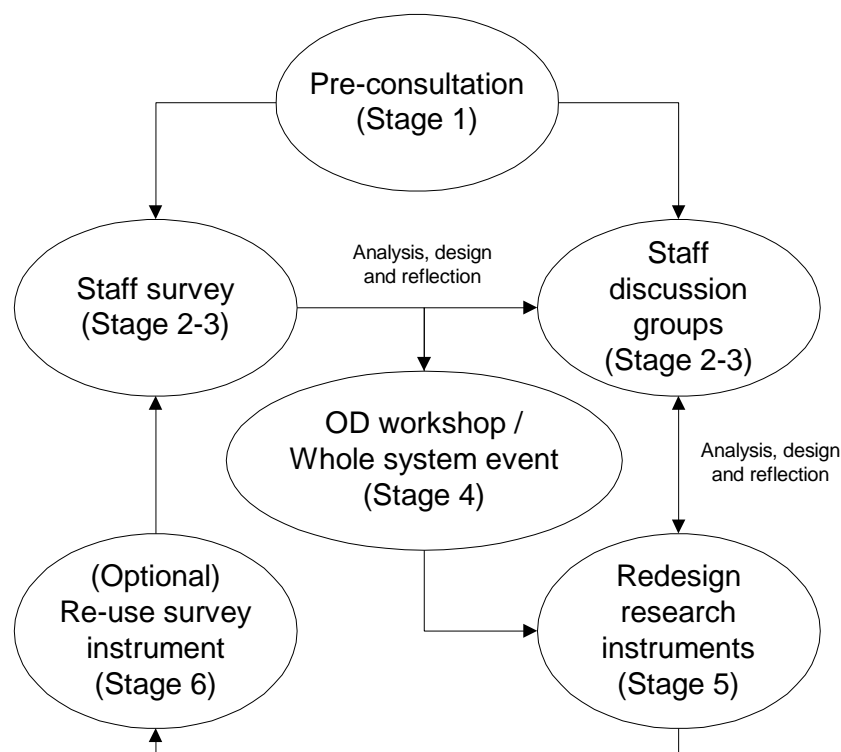
r.ridley-duff@shu.ac.uk (at Sheffield Business School)

or

alistair@viewpoint-research.co.uk (at Viewpoint Research CIC)

The questionnaire (staff survey) offers a choice of responses to questions decided by staff in the organisation. Each question explores an aspect of management practice selected by staff, and the responses provide a way of classifying the level of participation for the purposes of analysis and discussion. An overview of the process, and the role of the questionnaire in that process, is provided in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Action Research Methodology (Diagrammatic)



Each response can be ranked by respondents to indicate which descriptions are closest to the management style practised in their work group / peer group in a given area of operation. Each response is linked to a theory of involvement and participation described in Table 1².

² For more detail on the academic studies that underpin this theory see the background document



Table 1 - Levels of Involvement and Participation

1 - No involvement:	<i>a management style where members/employees are not invited to meetings or elected to management bodies to contribute to operational or strategic decision-making. Typically, staff are not provided with any verbal and/or written guidance by managers/governors on company matters.</i>
2 - Passive involvement:	<i>a management style where members/employees are provided with written and/or verbal guidance by managers/governors, but are not invited or elected (individually or in groups) to contribute to operational or strategic decision-making.</i>
3 – Active Involvement:	<i>a management style where members/employees (individually or in groups) have discussions about (pre-formed) management proposals, but are not invited or elected to participate in the formation of these proposals, or final decisions about their implementation.</i>
4 - Managed Participation:	<i>a management style where members/employees (individually or in groups) can participate in the development of ideas, and where the managers focus on coaching members/employees to develop their ideas into proposals, and support them during implementation. Managers retain some powers to screen-out weak proposals.</i>
5 - Democratic Participation:	<i>a management style where any member/employee (individually or in groups) can initiate discussions on operational or strategic issues, arrange and participate in meetings to develop proposals, and exercise both voice and voting power when decisions are made about implementation.</i>

Staff can decide (or select) which aspects of management practice they would like to examine. These themes guide the preparation of the survey instrument and focus group questions.

In the context of the staff survey, two answers are sought for each theme (question). The first answer reflects the member's view of the current situation. The second answer reflects the member's wish for the future. A *participation index* is calculated by totalling up scores for 'current situation' and 'future aspiration' for each question pair. A *democracy index* is calculated by subtracting 'current situation' from 'future desire' for each question pair.

For example: **How do you go about developing staff skills? (Skill Development)**

Respondent 1 chooses: Level 3 (current) and Level 4 (future) as the dominant management style

Respondent 2 chooses: Level 4 (current) and Level 3 (future) as the dominant management style

Participation Index = 3.5 (current), 3.5 (future).

This is the average of the response by both respondent 1 and 2.

N.B. This calculation assumes that a respondent has only ranked their top choice. If a respondent ranks more than one choice, then the weighting is adjusted as follows (Ranked 1 = 40%, Ranked 2 = 30%, Ranked 3 = 20%, Ranked 4 = 10%, Ranked 5 = 0%). If a respondent only ranks 1 and 2, the weighting for the third and fourth choices (20% and 10%) are reallocated to their top choice.

Democracy Index = 0

Respondent 1's result is 1 (4 - 3 indicates a desire for *more* participation in the future)

Respondent 2's result is -1 (3 - 4 indicates a desire for *less* participation in the future).



Areas for Exploration at Viewpoint Research CIC

Based on staff feedback on the pilot questionnaire and collegial feedback by academic staff at Sheffield Business School, the following revised list of management themes (and survey/focus group questions) have been developed *as a starting point* for the survey and focus groups:

1. **Skill Development** - “How do you develop staff skills?”
2. **Working Atmosphere** - “How would you describe the working environment?”
3. **Induction Processes** - “How do you induct newly appointed / elected staff?”
4. **Staff Appraisal** - “How do you approach staff appraisal?”
5. **Strategic Management** - “How do you plan for the medium and long-term?”
6. **Operational Management** - “How do you make operational decisions?”
7. **Terms and Conditions** - “How do you set wages, hours and leave entitlements?”
8. **Wealth Sharing** - “How are surpluses (profits) and deficits (losses) allocated?”
9. **Product/Service Development** - “How do you design new products and services?”
10. **Market / Business Development** – “How do you access and develop markets?”

In a focus group setting, give people 15 - 30 minutes to think individually about the questions (you might want to give different questions to different people), then organise small groups in which these ideas can be discussed further in conversation. In the final stages of the focus group, open up the meeting for full group discussion. Record the *options* that are being considered (and make a note of each option and its underlying rationale). Try to **avoid** discussing / agreeing solutions: the process will work better if facilitators encourage people to broaden the range of options that can be taken forward to an organisation development workshop. This provides a period for each person (as well as organised groups and/or external advisers) to reflect on and research the implications of adopting different options.

In the organisation development workshop, members can express and seek to achieve a consensus on investment and policy development priorities.

The following pages contain Version 1.3 of the staff survey. Future versions of the survey can be managed by a staff group.



Member-Employee Engagement Survey – (Viewpoint Research)

This survey / questionnaire is designed to develop knowledge about member/employee involvement and (democratic) participation in their organisation. It provides a way for each member-employee to comment on involvement and participation in different areas of practice.

Organisation Information (suggested)

1. *Organisation Name:* _____
2. *Company / Charity / IPS Number:* _____
3. *Sector / Industry:* _____ (use SIC Codes?)
4. *First year of trading:* _____
5. *Size of Workforce:* _____
6. *Income last year:* _____
7. *Expenditure last year:* _____

8. *Legal Form:*

- | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Registered Charity | <input type="checkbox"/> | Charitable Company (CLG) | <input type="checkbox"/> | (please tick one) |
| Community Benefit Society (BENCOM) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mutual/Cooperative (IPS) | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Mutual/Cooperative (CLG) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mutual/Cooperative (CLS) | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Mutual/Cooperative (LLP) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Community Interest Company (CLG) | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Community Interest Company (CLS) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Community Interest Company (plc) | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Other Social Enterprise (CLG) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other Social Enterprise (CLS) | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Other Social Enterprise (plc) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Private Company (CLS) | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Private Company (plc) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Private Company (LLP) | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Statutory Body | <input type="checkbox"/> | Church | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Other State Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> | Partnership | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Unincorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |

9. *Parent Organisation:* [OrgID]



Personal Information (suggested)

1. Name: _____

Organisation: [OrgID]

2. Job Title: _____

3. Role: Please tick all that apply (where known):

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| I supervise people and/or work | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am supervised by someone else | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I am elected to represent the workforce | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have been elected to the board | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I am a volunteer for the organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am an employee of the organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I am a customer of the organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> | I represent another organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I have managerial authority | <input type="checkbox"/> | I do <u>not</u> have managerial authority | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. Pay Band/Rate: _____ (please indicate level, if known. Choices may be company specific)

5. Length of Service: _____ (in years, to the nearest year)

6. Sex: Male / Female / Don't Wish to Say (please circle one)

7. Education (Highest Qualification):

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| None | <input type="checkbox"/> | GCSE or equivalent | <input type="checkbox"/> | (please tick one) |
| A-Level or equivalent | <input type="checkbox"/> | Foundation Degree or equivalent | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Undergraduate Degree | <input type="checkbox"/> | Postgraduate Degree | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Doctorate / PhD | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |



8. *Sexuality:* Heterosexual Lesbian (please tick one)
 Gay Sex Change
 Bi-sexual Don't wish to say

9. *Age Range:* 16-19 20-29 30-39 40-49
 50-59 Over 60 Don't wish to say

10. *Ethnicity:* White British White Irish (please tick one)
 Pakastani Bangladeshi
 Asian (Other) Mixed Origin
 Black Caribbean Black African
 Black (Other) Chinese
 Don't wish to say

11. *Religion:* None Christian (please tick one)
 Hindu Muslim
 Jewish Sikh
 Other Religion Don't wish to say

12. *Disability:* None Registered Disabled (Optional) Disability: _____ (please tick one)
 Don't wish to say



<i>Area of Business</i>	No Involvement (Level 1)	Passive Involvement (Level 2)	Active Involvement (Level 3)	Managed Participation (Level 4)	Democratic Participation (Level 5)
1. How do you develop staff skills? (Skill Development)					
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	In my work group no internal training or external courses are provided. We have to learn as best we can while doing the job.	In my work group, managers do provide training opportunities, and we are given instruction on how to develop our skills.	In my work group, we can discuss staff development with managers, and can influence the way training is provided.	In my work group, managers will listen to our proposals and usually support us in our efforts to design new learning and development opportunities.	Anyone in my group can propose a change to learning and development activities, and participate in decisions on how to implement them.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
<i>What would you like to do in the future?</i>	I think my colleagues and I prefer to learn on the job. No formal training is required.	I think my colleagues and I need training, and that managers should provide instruction on how to develop our skills.	I think my colleagues and I should have meetings with managers to discuss their plans for staff training and development.	I think managers should listen to proposals for learning and development proposals from members of my work group, and decide which to support.	Anyone should be able to propose learning and development activities to their colleagues, and participate in decisions on how they are funded and implemented.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
Further comments:					



<i>Area of Business</i>	No Involvement (Level 1)	Passive Involvement (Level 2)	Active Involvement (Level 3)	Managed Participation (Level 4)	Democratic Participation (Level 5)
2. How would you describe the working environment? (Working Atmosphere)					
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	In my work group there is not much talking, and my colleagues and I keep our heads down.	In my work group, we talk a bit, and managers do make the effort to communicate their ideas to us.	In my work group, there is quite a lot of conversation, and we are not afraid to have conversations with managers when we need to raise an issue.	In my work group, we converse with each other and our manager(s) frequently to address issues as they arise.	In my group, we are free to organise our time and converse with anyone else whenever we have an issue to discuss.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
<i>What would you like to do in the future?</i>	My colleagues / I just like to get on with our work and not be disturbed.	My colleagues / I like to hear managers' ideas as long as they do not expect us to come up with ideas of our own.	My colleagues / I like to discuss managers' ideas and contribute to their development.	My colleagues / I like to raise issues and formulate ideas, and have open discussion with our manager(s) about them.	My colleagues / I would like to be able to freely discuss any issue or idea, and choose which other members of staff to involve in the discussion.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
Further comments:					



<i>Area of Business</i>	No Involvement (Level 1)	Passive Involvement (Level 2)	Active Involvement (Level 3)	Managed Participation (Level 4)	Democratic Participation (Level 5)
3. How do you induct newly appointed / elected staff? (Induction Processes)					
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	People in my work group do not participate in staff induction.	Sometimes members of my work group are asked to brief new members of staff (or assess their skills).	Members of my work group discuss managers' proposals on how to induct new staff, and are involved in induction activities.	Managers listen to proposals for staff induction prepared by members of my work group and decide with us which proposals to implement.	Members of my group can propose and discuss changes to staff induction, and we all participate in decisions on how the proposals are implemented.
<i>Rank (1 -5)</i>					
<i>What would you like to do in the future?</i>	My colleagues / I do not want to be involved in staff induction activities.	My colleagues / I would consider briefing new staff (and assessing their skills) if asked to do so.	My colleagues / I would like to discuss managers' proposals for staff induction.	My colleagues / I would like to put our own proposals to managers for staff induction in our work group.	My colleagues and I would like to manage the induction of new staff into our work group.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
Further comments:					



<i>Area of Business</i>	No Involvement (Level 1)	Passive Involvement (Level 2)	Active Involvement (Level 3)	Managed Participation (Level 4)	Democratic Participation (Level 5)
4. How do you approach staff appraisal? (Staff Appraisal)					
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	Members of my work group do not appraise staff, or have staff appraisals.	Members of my work group have appraisals that are designed and conducted by a manager.	Members of my work group contribute to the design of the appraisal system, and have input into their own appraisal	Members of my work group contribute to the design of the appraisal system, and managers use the process to identify our career development needs.	Members of my work group can control their own appraisal, and ask a colleague of their own choosing to help them work out options for career development.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
<i>What would you like to do in the future?</i>	My colleagues / I do not want to be involved in a staff appraisal process.	My colleagues / I would like an appraisal from our manager to learn about our performance.	My colleagues / I would like to discuss the appraisal process with managers to improve it.	My colleagues / I would like to put proposals to managers on how they use appraisal to support career development.	My colleagues / I would like to control the appraisal process, and choose which colleague we want to help us work out options for career development.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
Further comments:					



<i>Area of Business</i>	No Involvement (Level 1)	Passive Involvement (Level 2)	Active Involvement (Level 3)	Managed Participation (Level 4)	Democratic Participation (Level 5)
5. How do you plan for the medium and long-term? (Strategic Management)					
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	In my work group, we do not participate in meetings, or receive information on the future plans of the organisation.	In my work group, we have meetings with a manager, and s/he tells me (us) what the executive group have decided to do.	In my work group, we have meetings with a manager, and they discuss their plans with us before they make any decisions.	My work group has meetings with a manager, and they listen to our ideas for the future of the organisation before working out with us which to adopt.	Anyone in my group can initiate a proposal and organise meetings to discuss and make decisions about the contribution of our work group to the future of the organisation.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
<i>What would you like to do in the future?</i>	I do not need or want to participate in planning activities – I prefer to work things out as I go.	I think our work group should have a meeting with a manager so they can tell us their plans.	I think our work group should have meetings with a manager so they can discuss their plans with us before they take decisions.	I think our work group should have meetings with managers so they can listen to our plans and help us choose which one(s) to adopt.	I think anyone in my group should be able to initiate a plan and organise a discussion / debate on whether to implement it.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
Further comments:					



<i>Area of Business</i>	No Involvement (Level 1)	Passive Involvement (Level 2)	Active Involvement (Level 3)	Managed Participation (Level 4)	Democratic Participation (Level 5)
6. How do you make operational decisions? (Operational Management)					
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	If an issue or problem arises, people in my work group ignore it until a manager wants to do something about it.	If an issue or problem arises, people in my work group will tell a manager and find what to do.	If an issue or problem arises, people in my work group will raise it with a manager and make suggestions to help the manager decide what to do.	If an issue or problem arises, people in my work group will propose a solution and clear it with a manager before going ahead with it.	If an issue or problem arises, people in my work group will work out a solution with anyone around at the time capable of helping them, then act on it.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
<i>What would you like to do in the future?</i>	My colleagues / I prefer to leave issues and problems for managers to sort out.	My colleagues / I would like to feel able to raise issues and problems, and for managers to act on them.	My colleagues / I would like to raise and discuss issues and problems so that managers can make informed decisions.	My colleagues / I like to come up with our own solutions to issues and problems, and get management approval to action them.	My colleagues / I like to resolve any issues and problems using our own creativity and skills. We like to involve others (at our discretion) if we cannot resolve it by ourselves.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
Further comments:					



<i>Area of Business</i>	No Involvement (Level 1)	Passive Involvement (Level 2)	Active Involvement (Level 3)	Managed Participation (Level 4)	Democratic Participation (Level 5)
7. How do you go about setting wages, hours and leave entitlements? (Terms and Conditions)					
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	People in my work group do not participate in meetings to discuss pay, employee benefits or leave entitlements.	People in my work group are given information about our pay policy, employee benefits and leave entitlements.	People in my work group can contribute to discussions about pay levels, employee benefits and leave entitlements before managers make decisions.	People in my work group can make proposals about pay levels, benefits and leave entitlements to managers, and managers work out whether we can put them into practice.	Everyone in my group can make proposals, and participate in discussions and decisions on pay levels, staff benefits and leave entitlements.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
<i>What would you like to do in the future?</i>	My colleagues / I do not want to participate in discussions on pay rates, benefits and leave entitlements. We / I prefer to leave that to others.	My colleagues / I would like to hear when there are planned changes to pay, benefits and leave entitlements so a manager can tell us why things have to change.	My colleagues / I would like to meet with the manager(s) to discuss proposed changes to pay, benefits and leave entitlements before they make decisions.	My colleagues / I would like managers to listen to staff proposals on pay, benefits and leave entitlements, and help to develop a sensible policy.	My colleague / I would like to make proposals for changes to pay, benefits and leave entitlements, and organise open discussions/debates until a new policy is agreed.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
Further comments:					



<i>Area of Business</i>	No Involvement (Level 1)	Passive Involvement (Level 2)	Active Involvement (Level 3)	Managed Participation (Level 4)	Democratic Participation (Level 5)
8. How are surpluses (profits) and deficits (losses) allocated? (Wealth Sharing)					
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	People in my peer group do not participate in decisions about what to do with surpluses (profits) and deficits (losses), and do not talk to us about the system for paying bonuses and dividends.	People in my peer group get told by managers what we will do with our surplus (profit) or cope with our deficit (loss). They decide and tell us about the system for paying bonuses and dividends.	Managers will consult people in my peer group on what to do with our surplus (profit), or how to reduce our deficit (loss). They like to hear our ideas on a system for paying bonuses and dividends.	People in my peer group can propose what to do with surpluses (profits) and deficits (losses). When appropriate, managers work with us to decide on a good system for paying bonuses and dividends.	People in my peer group can propose how to distribute our surpluses (profits) and reduce our deficits (losses). We debate and vote on what system to use for paying bonuses and dividends.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
<i>What would you like to do in the future?</i>	My colleagues / I just want a regular pay packet. We're / I'm not interested in discussing the system we use for paying bonuses and dividends.	My colleagues / I would appreciate being told what system managers have devised for paying bonuses and dividends.	My colleagues / I would like to contribute our ideas before managers make any decisions about the system for paying bonuses and dividends.	My colleagues / I would like to make proposals on the system for paying bonuses and dividends, and get managers guidance on which system they think will work best.	My colleagues / I would like to contribute to the development of any system for paying bonuses and dividends, and be part of any decision to change it.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
Further comments:					



<i>Area of Business</i>	No Involvement (Level 1)	Passive Involvement (Level 2)	Active Involvement (Level 3)	Managed Participation (Level 4)	Democratic Participation (Level 5)
9. How do you design new products and services? (Product / Service Development)					
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	People in my work group do not have meetings to discuss the development of our products and services.	People in my work group are told by their manager(s) how we are developing our products and services.	People in my work group are invited by manager(s) to contribute to discussions on new products and services.	People in my work group can propose new products and services to manager(s), and they help us work out which will fit best with business objectives.	People in my work group can propose new products and services to manager(s), and participate in decisions on whether to fund and develop them.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
<i>What would you like to do in the future?</i>	My colleagues / I do not want to be involved in the development of future products and services. We / I prefer to leave this to others.	My colleagues / I would like to be kept informed about the development of new products and services.	My colleagues / I appreciate having discussions on how to develop new products and services.	My colleagues / I would like to make proposals for new products and services, and to have the support of managers to develop them.	My colleagues / I would like to make proposals for new products and services, and participate in decisions about how they can be funded and developed.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
Further comments:					



<i>Area of Business</i>	No Involvement (Level 1)	Passive Involvement (Level 2)	Active Involvement (Level 3)	Managed Participation (Level 4)	Democratic Participation (Level 5)
10. How do you access and develop markets? (Market / Business Development)					
<i>What is the situation now?</i>	In my work group, we do not have meetings about developing markets, or receive any information on the development of our business.	In my work group, we have meetings to learn about the way our managers are developing the business.	In my work group, we are included in discussions on business development before managers make decisions.	In my work group, we have meetings to put our proposals to managers, and they guide us on which proposals they think will contribute most to developing the business.	In my group, we prepare business development plans for our area of work, and participate in discussions and decisions on how to fund and implement them.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
<i>What would you like to do in the future?</i>	My colleagues / I do not want to attend meetings on business / market developments. We / I prefer to leave that to others.	My colleagues / I would appreciate meetings where managers tell us about business / market developments.	My colleagues / I would like to have meetings where managers have a conversation with us about their ideas for business / market development before they take any decisions.	My colleagues / I would like to have meetings where we can present our proposals for business / market development, and get managers input on how to improve them.	My colleagues / I would like to prepare proposals for our contribution to business / market development, and meet with colleagues to make decisions on their funding and implementation.
<i>Rank (1 - 5)</i>					
Further comments:					



Options for Collecting and Reporting Information

The survey instrument can be set up in a number of ways.

If using SNAP (or other online method for data collection), ensure the order in which the possible answers are presented is randomised (not presented in the order shown in this document).

If preparing a paper-based version of this survey, vary the order in which options are presented and ensure that each 'level' appears at different positions in the same proportions (i.e. in first position four times, in second position four times, etc.).

If designing an on-line system, it would be helpful to have an option to email the summary and results back to the participant, and provide them with an option to forward a copy to a person/persons of their choice. It may be useful to have an option for people to indicate whether their results can be (anonymously) added to a central database for benchmarking purposes.

If designing an system integrated with a computer database, some thought will be need to be given to standard/customised reporting that can be produced from the results, and the 'data cubes' that can be designed to enable people in a single company, industry, organisation type or region to compare their own results to others'.

If using the questionnaire over the phone, the descriptions for Level 2 - 3 can be read out alternately with the descriptions for Level 3 - 4. When a participant chooses a preference the next description can be read out (either Level 1 or 4 in the first case, and Levels 2 or 5 in the second case) to see if the participant thinks the new description if closer or further away from their previous answer. Once a participant reaffirms a response as the most likely, this is the top ranked response and the ranking of other responses should be clear. A pilot (conducted in-house) will be needed to establish whether this will work in practice.

Reducing the number of questions - for commercial work (to save the client time/money), a random selection of questions (e.g. 5 of the 10) could be use for telephone surveys. Providing there is a sufficiently large sample, there could be useable results in all categories. However, the validity and generalisability of the results would be lower.

