

ARE YOU SICK OF ONLINE SURVEYS?

- Yes
- No
- Barrrrrfff!

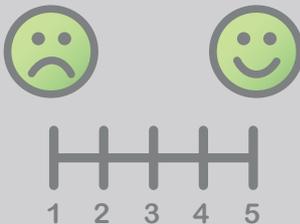
What an online survey misses, a Client Insight call reveals.

People tell us that they are sick of surveys. They either bin them or are so irritated that they respond with deliberately misleading scores.

That's why, at Client insight, we use real people to have real conversations with clients on your behalf. Survey scores may give you a clue about what's going on, but real insights come from real conversations, not online ratings.

See below a sample of what can come out of a real 20-minute Client Insight conversation. Every word in this is true, only the names have been changed.

AVERAGE SURVEY



CLIENT INSIGHT CALL

Note: John 'the Client' is giving feedback on a firm that works for him 'the Supplier'.

FEEDBACK

1 Overall, how do you feel about the service this year?

poor | OK | **good** | excellent | brilliant?

Broadly John feels that this year was a game of two halves. Ad hoc projects and maintenance have been excellent: **“great service, proactive, good ideas and excellent coordination.”** However, the annual project was severely hampered by the absence of key personnel in the early stages. **“There was a communication breakdown. We were getting things we hadn't asked for and not getting what we wanted. I think our temporary project manager was panicked.”**

2 **Enjoyment:** what are they like to work with?

hard work | OK | good | **a pleasure** | a delight

The people John has worked with, with the exception of the temporary project manager, have been excellent: **“Likeable and responsive.”** He named each member of the team to confirm how much he enjoyed working with them.





3 Listening: are they good at listening to you and understanding what you want?

no | quite | yes | **excellent** | brilliant

The main account manager is brilliant, but other members of the team have not always paid such good attention, hence the score of 4.

4 Problem solving: how good are they at thinking through problems and finding solutions?

poor | quite good | **good** | excellent | brilliant

John said that he felt his organisation was difficult to work with in this area. It's an engineering organisation and his colleagues generally feel proud of their own problem solving ability and determined to sort things out themselves "so they're not that open to help from outside, even when it's from people we're paying for their expertise". As a result "I feel we always keep them on a leash – they don't really get the chance to show us what they can do."

5 Value: are they worth what they charge?

no | on the whole | **yes** | definitely | worth every penny

John has worked with a lot of different suppliers. He started by saying that 'the Supplier' was expensive, but then expanded, "Compared to some firms, who are just crazy, they are pretty competitive, but there are some smaller cheaper firms whose work is just as good. Overall I would say that they're in the middle ground."

6 Competitors: how do they compare to other firms you work with?

poor | average | **good** | better than most | the best

This was a complex area for John to answer. He said, "Some are not as good as them. Some are better."

When I asked what better meant, he thought about it and replied, "I feel that they are very much a project machine. They have a vast number of clients – you can feel like just a number. Smaller firms can make you feel more special." In summary he said he thought that they held the middle ground.

7 Recommendation: would you recommend them?

No | Possibly | Probably | **Definitely** | I already have

John has recommended 'the Supplier' but he is careful only to recommend the individuals he knows for work which he is confident that they perform exceptionally well. He wouldn't feel comfortable making a recommendation about the project work this year, but would offer a testimonial for the ad hoc projects.





8 What is the most important thing they have done for you?

“We’re under-resourced in our department following some departures, so we’re not always as responsive as we could be. They’ve always managed around this brilliantly, keeping us on track without putting us under undue pressure. When we need it, they carry us.”

9 What would you like more of?

“I’d like them to be more proactive about supporting us. I’d value a catch up meeting once a quarter. I’d like them to feel like an extension of our department. I’ve got a big agenda, there are lots of things I’d like to get done, and I don’t have the resource. I’d like them to follow up, even when projects have been turned down before, because things change, budgets change.”

10 What would you like less of?

John is concerned that the focus seems to be shifting slightly following the recent merger of ‘the Supplier’ with another company. He’d like reassurance that he’ll continue to get the commitment he’s had previously. He added, “I’d also like better attention to detail on the project. It really suffered this year. I had to proof read myself – hours of my life I won’t see again.”

11 Any other messages you wish to pass back?

John said he hoped that he hadn’t come across as negative, and reiterated that his organisation could be difficult to work with. “I try to keep my sense of humour!”

INSIGHT GAINED

When Client Insight passed on John’s feedback to ‘The Supplier’ we were told that they had been well aware about the issues on the main project this year. However they had no idea that John would welcome reviving bids which had failed in the past. They see potential for a good deal of additional work from this. They were also grateful for the clarity gained about how to make John feel more valued in the relationship.

ACTIONS ARISING

- Arrange catchup meeting with John (the Client) as first of a series
- Give John reassurance that he will continue to be an important and valued client
- Review his needs and his interest in reviving past bids or commissioning new work
- Pay better attention to detail, especially proof reading and checking.

RESULT

- 2 old bids successfully revived offering significant additional work.
- Avoided potential fallout from issues on annual project this year.
- Improved the proof reading resource with a more satisfied client and knock on effect to other business.



CLIENT INSIGHT

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