

## Test: Knowing your staff

The ability and propensity of staff to advocate on your behalf is an increasingly important factor for councils. Research indicates those organisations rated as ‘excellent’ often have the highest number of staff freely advocating the merits of the organisation.<sup>1</sup>

There are three techniques that might help in encouraging staff to be more involved and better at taking on advocate roles:

### 1. Net promoter scoring

This was originally developed within marketing metrics as a way to measure customer satisfaction. It can also be used to measure the views of both staff and public

The Net Promoter Score is calculated based on responses to a single question: ‘How likely is it that you would recommend us to a friend, neighbour or colleague?’ The scoring for this answer is most often based on a 0 to 10 scale.

Those who respond with a score of nine to 10 are called Promoters, and are considered likely to exhibit positive behaviours, such as buying more, remaining customers for longer, and making more positive referrals to other potential customers. For a public body they are key people who will say positive things about the organisation so knowing how many you have is important

Those who respond with a score of 0 to six are labelled Detractors, and they are believed to be less likely to exhibit the behaviour and attitudes that an organisation would seek to promote.

Responses of seven and eight are labelled Passives, and their behaviour falls in the middle of Promoters and Detractors.

The Net Promoter Score is calculated by subtracting the percentage who are Detractors from the percentage of staff who are Promoters. For purposes of calculating a Net Promoter Score, Passives count towards the total number of respondents, thus decreasing the percentage of detractors and promoters and pushing the net score towards zero.

<sup>1</sup> ‘The reputation of local government’, Literature review to support the ‘my council’ campaign, Ipsos MORI, September 2008

This data can be supplemented by asking an open ‘why’ question for the score to understand what some of the drivers for the view are.

Residents cannot choose to be served by another local authority – they are locked into the relationship with the council as a monopoly provider. With that comes the responsibility for the council to manage that relationship as well as possible. Staff advocacy is an invaluable tool in that process.

## 2. General satisfaction measurement

For obvious reasons, staff who feel satisfied in their jobs are more likely to go out and be good ambassadors. Likewise, staff who feel dissatisfied or frustrated will probably be cynical or bitter when talking about the council to others. It is vital to have a real understanding of how satisfied the council’s employees are, and to track and update this regularly. Doing this is a relatively cheap and simple task, and can be set up in a way that allows cross-referencing with reward schemes or events like training days and internal engagement processes.

## 3. Staff engagement/advocacy about specific issues

This can again be measured through staff surveys and might cover specific surveys or policies such a green waste collection.

As this is engagement with staff, it is important that such research is done independently and the data collected is anonymised as staff frankness is vital for the council to understand how it is perceived.

If this is to work for all three measures, it’s important to poll regularly to establish **Baseline Measurement** so what is measured can be tracked over time. Identifying any past surveying from the initial audit in order to create measurements that track change so you can see whether new initiatives are working. Comparisons can also be made with other similar bodies and even with local control groups so Randomised Control Trial (RCT) methodology can be established in line with Cabinet Office Behavioural Insight Unit guidance<sup>2</sup> if required to test the effectiveness of measures for their value.

2 Behavioral Insights Team, Using Random Control Trials in Public Policy, 2013