# Three Tips for Implementing a Results Driven Survey Program

Implementing a program to gather customer input can be an exciting endeavor.  The team spends hours defining the survey process, drafting the questions, creating customer incentives, and implementing technology.  The program is announced, the technology is activated, but customers don't seem to be filling out the surveys.  Although this is a common experience, it is because some critical steps are often overlooked.  The following three items will prove to be invaluable in ensuring the proper implementation of your customer survey program.

**Identify the goal of the survey.** The most important step in the creation of a survey program is to clearly define your goal in gathering feedback from your customers.  Take time to think about what factors are your true leading indicators for customer satisfaction.  Define processes that clearly outline what you will do with both positive and negative feedback.  Make sure you are ready to make changes to your company based on the input you receive.  Without a clearly defined goal and process for change management, your team may not take the program seriously and make it low on their list of priorities.

**Clearly communicate the goal and change process to your team.**  Once the goal has been identified by management, it is critical that it is clearly communicated to the team.  Make sure that the team understands why the program exists, what their role is in ensuring that the program is successful, and how you will use the feedback to improve customer experience.  Create scripts that make it easy for team members to explain and communicate the program.  Make sure that the team reviews the program with each customer and reinforce positive actions through multiple channels including team meetings, marketing materials, and staff incentives.  Make the program easy to deploy, give the team tools to be successful, and encourage positive action through daily management.

**Don't use the feedback as the only scorecard of performance.**  The easiest way to ensure the failure of a great survey program is to view the submissions as an absolute scorecard of performance.  The submissions should be opportunities for learning – both positive and negative.  Use the responses to create new training opportunities, update processes, and reward team members that go above and beyond.  Avoid using the surveys as a tool for reprimand or negative reinforcement.  As a leader in the organization, your role is to help each team member be the best that they can be and foster a culture of continuous improvement.   If individuals are afraid to learn because of negative repercussions, the leader has failed in their responsibilities.

As you can see, ensuring the proper execution of a survey program can be more important than the program itself.  Leaders in the organization need to create a positive culture, ensure that each team member understands the goal of the program, and implement changes across the organization based on the insights gained.  Leveraging these three simple tips should help to ensure the success of your survey program.  For additional information on finding out what your customers really think, contact AfterWords at [info@surveyafterwords.com](mailto:info@surveyafterwords.com) or 813.295.8033.