

Quantify Survey Research March 2009

Bucking the trend

Even the most determined optimist would have to agree that recently news of the economy is mostly pretty grim. Despite that, amidst all the news of failing businesses, every now and then we hear of one which is experiencing increased sales, or is planning to open heaps of new branches in the next few months.

What marks them out from the others is that their offering is fitted to the times. They offer something which attracts customers in a time of financial stringency. For example, no frills supermarkets and cheap pizza takeaways come into their own when people need to economise.

If the business hasn't always been positioned to take advantage of such conditions, some repositioning might do the trick. We notice that even Waitrose and M&S are selling on price, lately, but trying to do so without undermining their core quality image. Perhaps your business can adapt to the current circumstances in a similar way.

At Quantify, we have always offered services which provide outcomes very similar to those which might be offered by much bigger, better-known concerns. And we do it at a fraction of the cost by keeping our overheads very low and working with our clients to find the most economical way to achieve the results they want.

If you have been using a big name for your Employee Satisfaction Survey, Customer Satisfaction Survey or 360° Feedback system, now might be a good time to find out how much you could save by switching to Quantify.



David Lusty
Principal Consultant
Quantify London

For a free initial consultation, please call David Lusty, Quantify London on 08452 41 41 60 or 020 8704 1296 or click to [email](#).

or call Jo Glover, Quantify Yorkshire on 0845 241 3450 or click to [email](#).



We can help with

Consultancy and bureau support for

[Employee Satisfaction Surveys](#)

[Customer Satisfaction Surveys](#)

[Internal Customer Satisfaction Surveys](#)

[Bespoke 360° Management Feedback](#)

[360° Feedback off the shelf](#)

We also offer:

A comprehensive [Employee Satisfaction Survey Research Kit](#) for those who just can't instruct a consultant to help. It provides everything you need to develop, administer and reports an employee survey in-house.

[Training Seminars](#)

You can access *Quantify Survey Research* for previous months [here](#).

Click [here](#) to see what clients say about us.



Jo Glover, Quantify Yorkshire

The QUANTIFY sample Web Survey

You can visit our sample web survey [here](#). This imaginary employee survey demonstrates the speed and flexibility of our system, provides links to selected outputs illustrations and describes the many aspects which can be configured to suit your preference.

If you know anyone who is considering a web survey, please forward this email to them and suggest they have a poke around in our sample survey.

Refer a Friend?

Would you please forward this email to anyone you know who might be interested in any of our services? Or if they prefer, pass us their details, and we'll get in touch directly.

Guest Spot

Jane Isaacs is Managing Partner with ATM Consulting where she also heads up the Workforce Division. The company specialises in senior level recruitment and board development in the NHS. Over the last ten years Jane has been an NHS Trust Chair and, prior to joining ATM as a Partner in 2006, was West Midlands Regional Appointments Commissioner with the NHS Appointments Commission, recruiting, supporting and appraising Chairs and Non-Executive Directors across the NHS.



As a consultant she has specialised in work with Boards and she has particular interests in governance and patient and public involvement. She has combined her NHS roles with academic interests and has written extensively for the Open University Business School, particularly on leadership and change management. If you'd like to know more, please contact Quantify and we will put you in touch.

Jane Isaacs writes...

Competency-based assessment in the NHS

ATM Consulting is involved in designing and delivering competency-based assessment centres for some of the most senior leadership roles in the NHS.

In 2006, some 60 years after the NHS was established, the restructuring of Primary Care Trusts brought with it the first national assessment and selection process ever run in the NHS in England; supporting the recruitment of Chief Executives to over 100 healthcare commissioning organisations. Since then competency-based assessment has moved firmly into the mainstream in recruitment to senior roles and as a component of the talent management programmes currently coming on-stream.

So what are some of the questions we have been asking ourselves in the company as we try to improve the robustness of our approach?

Are we doing things right?

As we set about gathering competency-based information, we use the **STAR** system –

Situation – we need to understand the context

Task –the specific responsibility that this person had in that situation

Action – what did the candidate actually do

Result – and what was the outcome.

ATM works mainly in healthcare and all our assessors have an in-depth knowledge of how the UK health systems operate and the scale and complexity of the issues NHS senior managers have to deal with. We have to make doubly sure when assessing 'external' candidates that we gain a similar insight into the context in which they are working and the responsibilities they have. Job titles are not always illuminating and the group turnover and headcount figures on CVs may mask the more modest level of responsibilities that managers at divisional level actually hold. Without **Situation** or **Task** the answers we are hearing may not make any sense.

Another challenge is getting beyond the 'We' to finding out 'What exactly did **you** do?' With an emphasis on team-working, empowerment and dispersed leadership, talking the language of 'I' and 'me' doesn't come easily to everyone. As a candidate said to me recently "It's uncomfortable – it feels like I'm blowing my own trumpet". Sometimes we need to probe to get specific actions: "What were the steps that you went through? Tell me what you did next." If the candidate doesn't say what the outcome was, again we need to probe: "So what happened? What did you deliver? What difference did you make?"

It's particularly important to probe when a response starts to become vague or generalised or moves to being hypothetical or future-oriented, which brings me to the second – and much bigger question.

Are we doing the right thing?

We still encounter a fair degree of scepticism. Critics of the competency-based approach suggest that its reliance on 'self-reporting' is a weakness. My response would be that it provides an additional source of information – to sit alongside CV, observed behaviours in group exercises, testing and profiling and other assessment centre components. For much of our assessment work we use the evidence-based NHS Leadership Qualities Framework as our template.

We are keen to embark on some research, in partnership with the NHS, weighing up the evidence and tracking the careers of those who have been assessed by ATM – now numbering in the high hundreds – to see if there is any correlation between high performance at assessment and in subsequent job roles.

On a personal basis I am also thoughtful about whether the competency-based approach in any way favours those who have a particular learning style or who have come through particular types of professional education in the past.

If you are interested in debating any of this, do get in touch.

Quantify Press Releases

[April 2008 Quantify launches Employee Satisfaction Survey Research Kit](#)

[January 2008 Quantify launches web-based 360 degree Feedback systems \(off the shelf\)](#)

[November 2007 British Medical Journal seeks second opinion](#)

[September 2007 Gold award to Quantify Principal Consultant for 50 blood donations.](#)

[September 2007 Harrow Council consults about the Way Ahead](#)

[June 2007 Quantify Principal Consultant enrolls as Blood Platelet Donor](#)

[April 2007 Quantify's unique presentation of employee survey results helps prevent a waste of resources](#)

[April 2007 Identifying room for business and individual improvement](#)

[April 2007 Quantify illumines Cara Irish Housing Association's room for improvement](#)

[April 2007 Quantify launches a bespoke 360° feedback system](#)

Blood Doning

Following my visit to India and Sri Lanka last August, I have finally been readmitted to the fold. Well, almost: I went along the other day so that they could take samples to check that I'm not incubating malaria. Assuming that I'm not, I should be back on the monthly donation routine in a few weeks, now.

David

P.S. If you aren't already a blood donor, click the logo below to visit the National Blood Service site to find out more about why it is so important and how easy it is.



David is the proud possessor of a Gold Award for 50 donations (illustrated on the left), and these days, he is a [blood platelet donor](#).

The process involves being connected for an hour or more to a machine which draws out blood, separates the platelets, and returns the rest of the blood.

Because most of the blood is returned to the donor, platelet donors can donate every four weeks. "Normal" whole blood donors give only three donations a year. The procedure is much simpler and their donation is limited to ten minutes.

Quantify in the Media

Date	Publication	Item	Link
March 2009	Training Journal	Article by David Lusty "Maximise the Response Rate to your Employee Survey". This is a digest version of a more detailed article. The full article is here .	Link
November 2007	Human Resource Management International Digest Vol 15 No 7	Article by David Lusty "Debunking the Benchmarking Myth".	Link
September 2007	Human Resource Management International Digest Vol 15 No 6	Article by David Lusty "How to avoid the pitfalls of employee satisfaction surveys".	Link
September / October 2007	Human Capital Management	Article by David Lusty "Answers Before Questions"; 12 key points to get useful information form an Employee Satisfaction Survey	Link
12 June	Personnel Today	Article by Kirstie Redford on 360 Feedback with a case study and expert comment from Azure Consulting (Quantify Yorkshire)	NA
May / June 2007	Human Capital Management	Article by David Lusty "Debunking the Benchmarking Myth" pointing out the risks associated with benchmarking comparisons.	Link
May 2007	Training & Coaching Today	"Digest" version of the HCM article above	Link
May 2007	Training Journal On Line	Announcement of bespoke 360 Feedback capability on the web, inventory based on client competencies framework	Link
March 2007	Training Journal On Line	Release of latest Subset Tabulation report providing significance indicators for differences between subset results for individual items, and for clusters of items	Link

Survey of the month

The survey of the month is not one of ours. It might not always be particularly topical, or very important or even serious, but we hope you will find it interesting.

OUR surveys are more than just interesting. They provide **management information** about how people **feel** doing business with you or working in your organisation. This allows you to manage your relationship with clients and employees, to retain clients and employees better, to reduce costs, improve customer satisfaction and to compete more successfully.

50% of British adults don't believe in evolution

At least 22% prefer the theories of creationism or intelligent design to explain how the world came about, according to the Rescuing Darwin survey, published to coincide with the 200th anniversary of Darwin's birth and the 150th anniversary of the publication of *On the Origin of Species*.

Of the 2,060 British people who responded, 25% think Darwin's theory of evolution is "definitely true", 25% think it is "probably true". Half were either strongly opposed to the theory or confused about it.

Rather than evolution, about 10% of people believe in "young Earth creationism" and about 12% preferred intelligent design. The rest were unsure, and many mix evolution, intelligent design and creationism together.

Read the story in more detail [here](#).

Free "How to" guides

- Your Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Your Employee Satisfaction Survey
- Your Internal Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Your Management Feedback System (360 Feedback)

These e-books are full of practical advice and checklists for planning every stage of the project. Most people will find something useful in them. To request your FREE copy, please [click here](#).

Questionnaire authors' Top Tips

These tips are drawn from our popular and successful one-day seminar, [Developing, Authoring and Designing Survey Questionnaires](#).

2008 open course dates are on the web page.

We also offer a seminar about analysing and interpreting the results of surveys.

"I feel" and "I believe"

Questionnaires often comprise a series of statements for informants to agree or disagree with. It is tempting to begin each one with "I feel (that)" or "I believe (that)" but these, or similar words usually add nothing to the meaning, so should be left out.

To improve response rate, we want our questionnaires to be quick and easy to complete, so it pays to keep them brief and to the point. We shouldn't include words which add nothing to the meaning.

I think this organisation has fair employment practices = This organisation has fair employment practices

I feel that I am fairly paid for the work I do = I am fairly paid for the work I do

I believe my job is secure = My job is secure



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More information

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Management information about how people FEEL

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