1. **Are their opportunities for improvement in your organization that are well-known to frontline workers but may not be known to senior leaders?**
2. **What aspects of your company’s culture might keep people from sharing what they know?**
3. **How can you, as a leader, make it easier for people to share information with you?**

By David Witt, Program Director, The Ken Blanchard Companies

Via Bob Tiede

From Alli Polin: the most powerful question a leader can ask.

**How Can I Help?**

**Gallup’s seven questions to gauge how happy your employees are.**

The first three come from CIO’s article about TinyPulse. The other four come from other sources, as noted. The key, with all seven, is to make sure you’re getting honest answers from your employees (anonymity helps). And to make sure you’re asking far more frequently than once a year.

**1. Name one process that, were it eliminated, would make you more productive.**

This is a straightforward bureaucracy-buster. You know that if several employees cite the same process, you’ve hit on a source of serious frustration.

**2. How transparent is management?**

It’s not to imply that you have to tell your employees everything. What you’re trying to assess is whether employees feel surprised or blindsided by your decisions–or if you’re inconsistent on big-picture topics.

**3. Please rate the quality of the snacks in the kitchen.**

This may seem frivolous, but it matters. Niu told Florentine that he asked it to TinyPulse’s employees, and he learned that none of them liked the brand of pretzels he’d bring in every now and then. “In and of itself, that’s not a huge issue–but if you’re in management, and you don’t know these things, big or little, how can you fix them?” he says.

**4. Can you list for me the factors that could contribute to your doing the best work of your life?**

This question comes from [Dr. John Sullivan](http://leadingwithquestions.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4320a50bc672b2862b6f985c0&id=a90ff47389&e=f8f9a9fe45), an HR thought leader and former chief talent officer for Agilent Technologies. Sullivan notes that this –the “best work of your life” question–is the [No. 1 retention factor](http://leadingwithquestions.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4320a50bc672b2862b6f985c0&id=4f2dfb222f&e=f8f9a9fe45) for top performers.

**5. Can you highlight any recent recognition and acknowledgment that you have received that increased your commitment and loyalty?**

This question also comes from Sullivan, courtesy of a [superb article on TLNT](http://leadingwithquestions.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4320a50bc672b2862b6f985c0&id=9d3cb2b8ca&e=f8f9a9fe45). The aim is to identify actions that make employees feel appreciated.

**6. How would you assess your opportunities to grow and advance?**

There’s plenty of evidence that a lack of advancement opportunities–or better advancement opportunities, elsewhere–are why employees leave. Two-time founder Jason Lemkin stresses that finding a [growth path](http://leadingwithquestions.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4320a50bc672b2862b6f985c0&id=5363dfdfd4&e=f8f9a9fe45) for all employees is one of his five biggest lessons learned, when it comes to retention. Likewise, in a recent [LinkedIn survey](http://leadingwithquestions.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=4320a50bc672b2862b6f985c0&id=a831ab7898&e=f8f9a9fe45) of more than 7,500 employees who’d recently left their jobs, respondents cited greater opportunities for advancement as the number one reason they took new gigs.

**7. How confident are you in the leadership of this organization?**

In the same LinkedIn survey, the number two reason respondents chose their new jobs was “better leadership from senior management.” Beyond the retention benefits, learning if employees lack faith in your leadership can only improve your performance as CEO.

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| [**4 Questions Every Employee Asks**](http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/Leadingwithquestions/~3/CBwNPIyRoHk/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email)  12 Sep 2013  **by Lee J. Colan, Ph.D. and Julie Davis-Colan**  **If you want your team members to make every minute count, give them something to be passionate about.** When you get your team members inspired about a purpose, their hearts will follow.  Our purpose answers the most fundamental question, ***“Why do we do what we do?”*** Step back and look at the big picture. Consider how your team members improve conditions for others – what differences do they make? Be bold. Your team’s purpose should stir emotions. At the same time, keep your purpose real and relevant because people can commit only to what they understand.  **To paint the picture of that purpose, you must answer the**[**fundamental four**](http://www.thelgroup.com/stickwithitbook)**questions that every employee asks (whether or not they ask them aloud):**   1. **Where are we going?** 2. **What are we doing to get there?** 3. **How can I contribute?** 4. **What’s in it for me?**   **Lee J. Colan, Ph.D.**is a high-energy leadership adviser, engaging speaker and popular author of 12 books that have been translated into 10 languages.  His cut-through-the-clutter advice, which is anchored in his corporate leadership experience and robust consulting business, appears in hundreds of online and print outlets monthly.  **Julie Davis-Colan** is an innovative business consultant and a compelling speaker.  Julie turns vision and opportunity into a profitable reality.  She has an uncanny knack for creating and selling unique marketing initiatives to business partners. . Julie’s passion for leadership and life create an infectious energy for clients and audiences.  You can connect with Lee and Julie at [**thelgroup.com**](http://www.thelgroup.com/)  **••••••**  Guest Post by John Barrett  There are two questions that a leader must ask when a team member is not accomplishing the mission of the organization.  **The first question you must ask is, *“Is it because they don’t want to?”***  **The second question is, *“Is it because they don’t know how?”***  There is a world of difference between the answers to those two questions. The first answer is an issue of attitude and work ethic, the other is simply an issue of knowledge and skills. It is much easier to develop knowledge and skill than it is to develop attitude and work ethic. A leader must know what they are dealing with in order to know how to develop the individual.  •••••••••• |