

How Schindler Group elevated performance in its corporate culture

In order to deliver on its goal of being the best service provider in the industry, Schindler Group sought to evolve to a more performance-driven culture. They asked Willis Towers Watson for help.

Here's how they did it, as told to us by **David Clymo, Deputy CEO and Head of HR** and **Norma Hernandez, Head of Leadership Development & Learning**.

Schindler Group at a glance

- Family-owned business for 145 years
- Headquartered in Switzerland
- 64,000 employees in over 100 countries (60% field workers)



Vision: To be the best service provider in the industry

The challenge:

Engage employees in a renewed company vision and bring them along the journey toward high performance in an authentic, sustainable way.

A series of leadership changes starting in 2014 resulted in a renewed emphasis on the company performing against objectives. But that was just the beginning. Schindler wanted to evolve to a broader measure of performance, which included increased attention to how results are delivered. And they wanted to evolve the measure of “top performer” to being a role model for behavior that’s reflective of the company values.

But they needed a benchmark to gauge progress on modernizing their workforce and making sure employees evolved with their vision. How would these changes be perceived by managers and employees and how could they create a unified culture of high performance?

Schindler developed strict standards for measuring high performance in their managers.

Schindler’s success metrics for high-performance leadership

1 Is the role model demonstrating **company values**?

- Safety
- Value for the customer
- Commitment to people development
- Integrity and trust
- Quality



2 Are they excellent **communicators**?

3 Do they promote **teamwork**?

Schindler’s standards for measuring high performance in their managers

- ✓ Develop, motivate and incentivize their people
- ✓ Deliver top performance
- ✓ Continuously improve performance
- ✓ Communicate a shared vision with their team
- ✓ Promote teamwork



The approach:

Use existing Schindler Employee Engagement Survey (SEES) to monitor perceptions of and progress toward high performance.



Beginning in 2006, Willis Towers Watson developed a survey to assess Schindler's employee engagement. Then, in 2014, a number of important changes were made to the survey to align with the company's focus on high performance.

Survey goals:



1 Obtain insight on employee engagement and overall employee experience with the company

2 Increase the power of individual employee voices and the company's ability to listen to them

3 Gain qualitative feedback on special topics of interest, such as digitization and Inclusion and Diversity

4 Align employee perceptions with company strategy through follow up actions, driven and owned by the business, and supported by HR

5 Create action plans to address survey findings and improve company performance

Survey design and KPIs:

39
questions

5
categories

Topics:
Day-to-day work experiences, safety items, Schindler's strategic direction

2 open-ended questions

Results: Analyzed by zone (geography), gender, function, tenure, job level and age breakdowns

97%
response rate
(up 2% from 2016)

63,000
individual comments



“We told our managers: ‘Don’t just fixate on meeting your budget. Your real goal is to be better this year than last year, and then do that every year, year after year.’”
– David Clymo

Important survey changes:

✓ Increased frequency of survey deployment to fuel engagement



People feel they have a say and can see some things being implemented sooner

✓ Reduced number of questions from 70+ to 30+



Knowing what areas to focus on was key to optimization

✓ Moved from paper to a mobile-enabled online survey and app offered in 33 languages



Digitization is a key area to address for the company

✓ Homed in on key topics to address and kept them consistent to gauge progress



The key topics became performance, teamwork, behavior, safety, quality and customers

Think global,
act local

“The true value of the survey is at the local level. As a multinational operating all over the world, the process needs to be decentralized and dissemination of our messages needs to occur locally.”

– David Clymo

“Now, everyone in every geographical zone has a strategy and clear plans in place – even a world map where we can see how each region ranks in the industry for each business line.”

– Norma Hernandez



The results:

The survey helped Schindler assess and modify its approach to high-performance.

Survey goal: To exceed the high-performing company norms* on every level



Results from the Schindler 2018 Employee Engagement Survey

Our team

Score **79%**

vs. 2016	+2
vs. Industry norm	+12
vs. GHP* norm	+1

“I go the extra mile to help Schindler succeed.”

Score			Benchmarks			
% fav	%?	% unfav	Difference in total favorable vs:			
94	4	2	2016	2014	Industry norm	GHP* norm
			1	+2	+8	0

* The collective responses to each question were compared to the following three benchmarks: 1) collective employee responses to the previous survey, 2) a comparative industry norm, and 3) a Global High Performing company norm (GHP).

What “employee engagement” means to Schindler:



Employees:

- Understand how they help the company to be successful
- Feel their company inspires them to do their best work
- Feel proud to be a part of the company
- Are willing to go the extra mile to help the company succeed

“High-quality performance is recognized.”

Benchmarks		
Difference in total favorable vs:		
2016	2014	Industry norm
+2	+9	+11

“ We make diversity a key item on our agenda in every global and regional meeting. We use the survey to assess and monitor our progress. ”

– David Clymo

“ At Schindler, people really want to have their voice; they want to see that something happens as a result. That’s one of the main drivers of the success of our survey. ”

– Norma Hernandez

Going forward

The survey indicated to Schindler that more progress could be made in three key areas of focus for the future.



Change management
The pace of change was too fast for some, not fast enough for others.



Digitization
Although digitization is happening now, Schindler employees want to see it embraced more, faster and better.



Diversity
Whether in the field or in top levels of the company, Schindler recognizes that a big push on diversity is needed, particularly in closing the gender gap.

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Lessons learned: How to achieve a high-performance culture

The Schindler employee survey revealed these key lessons:

1 Direct the culture from the top

Leadership fully embraced the view on what true performance means.



2 Develop a leadership framework

Describe behaviors expected from leaders. This is the foundation for all assessment, selection and development.



3 Create a development program for senior leaders

300+ senior managers have completed the training program, based on the Schindler leadership framework.



4 Share your culture – it has to be a real belief

Schindler's CEO preaches the leadership framework everywhere he goes.



5 Incentivize positive behaviors

Delivering against the leadership framework is part of the annual development plan and bonus structure.



For the first time in 2018, we've seen the answers to the survey questions really give a clear indication that a commitment to high performance was beginning to enter the DNA of the organization.

– Antoinette Lefevre-Stevens,
Employee Insights Practice
Leader, Western Europe,
Willis Towers Watson

The Willis Towers Watson difference

According to David Clymo, some key advantages of working with Willis Towers Watson are:

- A desire to evolve the whole process in a way that yields truly meaningful results
- A proactive approach to providing ideas about how to improve the survey: "Willis Towers Watson really understood what we were trying to achieve and helped us design the survey accordingly"
- The incorporation of action planning tools as a result, to actually address concerns of the survey so employees see they're getting support for what they've indicated

- The ability to manage the program on a local level (including delivering more than 100 results presentations to various teams around the world in less than four weeks)

Schindler's decision to focus on performance, teamwork and behavior – combined with changes in how they measured performance and how they communicated these messages from the top – made people engage with the survey, and therefore engage with their roles and the company.

For more information on implementing an employee survey or listening strategy at your company, contact your local Willis Towers Watson consultant or visit us at willistowerswatson.com

About Willis Towers Watson

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