

FAM stopped turnover in its tracks

Background

Established in 1985, FAM, LLC (“FAM”) employs 350 people at its Los Angeles headquarters and owns well-known brands such as Marika, Three Dots, Ellie, and Bally Total Fitness. FAM designs and manufactures performance apparel and accessories, using innovative materials. With 50 factories worldwide and four key distribution centers, the company produces goods for multiple private labels and numerous licensing partners.

The Opportunity

Kasey Konkright can spot a turnover problem from a mile away. After more than 20 years in human resources roles, he knows the red flags and when to step in. That’s why he took swift action when he noticed an unusual turnover pattern at FAM.

“Last year was the first year that we ever had universal performance reviews, promotion evaluation, compensation evaluation, and bonus evaluation processes,” said Konkright, FAM Director of Talent. “We put in a lot of new programs so we wanted to see how [they’d] made an impact. We were identifying some turnover patterns in areas [and] couldn’t understand why there was turnover if things were so great.”

Although the company was rewarding employees for their hard work, FAM still hadn’t cracked the code on retention. So Konkright and FAM leadership team implemented their first engagement survey—a 12-question SurveyMonkey engagement survey—to try and get to the root of the problem. Questions such as “I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right” and “I have a best friend at work” were meant to shed light on areas for improvement—but Konkright realized they didn’t jive with FAM’s culture.

“We have such an important value on work-life balance,” said Konkright, noting that in an organization where only a handful of employees can open and close the building, ‘having a best friend’ isn’t as important as being home with family. “We found that these questions ended up being so generic that we spent most of the time just trying to understand how and why people answered [them].”

Needing a better tool to measure engagement, Konkright turned to other solutions, eventually landing on The Predictive Index®.

The Solution

Konkright had just started to use PI as a hiring tool at FAM when his client success manager mentioned the new PI Employee Experience Survey™ and complementary Take Action on Engagement workshop.

“I know a good tool when I see it, and I think ultimately what I liked the most is how granular [PI] got,” said Konkright. “I really haven’t seen not only this level of granularity in a product, but really how [employees] can also make it meaningful to themselves. And the fact that it integrated with our hiring tool ... these end-to-end solutions don’t really exist out there in the market.”

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Kasey Konkright
Director of Talent, FAM

Konkright and the FAM leadership team hosted a company-wide town hall to introduce the survey to employees, covering everything from what to expect to confidentiality. They followed up with reminder emails, then held another town hall two weeks after launching the survey to field any lingering questions. Leadership’s buy-in and frequent communications paid off: more than 80% of employees completed the survey.

“The questions that were asked in the survey brought to life a lot of issues because it was much more detailed in terms of the dimensionality of the questions, but also because people truly felt it was a confidential survey,” explained Konkright. “There’s that level of trust, so it really did help us make some immediate changes within the business.”

The Employee Experience Survey provides company-wide results plus team-based results, so Konkright worked with one particular team that didn’t feel their manager could help with their problems. A candid conversation identified business processes that were handcuffing the manager’s capabilities, so they worked together to fix the issue “The survey responses helped us have the right conversations that needed to happen in order to get at what the root of the problem actually was,” said Konkright.

The Results

Along with step-by-step Employee Experience Coaching from their PI client success manager, the FAM leadership team used the PI Employee Experience Survey to pinpoint blindspots that would’ve been missed by other surveys. Additionally, the survey anonymity and specificity of the action plans helped Konkright and his team take swift action while strengthening employee trust in the organization.

“What this survey does that DISC and Gallup and other surveys don’t, is it doesn’t require you to have to figure out the results. It brings the data to the team,” said Konkright, referring to the custom action plans the survey generates. “People said, ‘this was so much clearer than last year’ and ‘we were really able to answer the questions the way we wanted to and not just try to come up with a generic response for something that we had mixed feelings about.’”

Since implementing the Employee Experience Survey and Employee Experience Coaching, FAM has:

- Increased productivity by fixing broken processes and improving communication between teams.
- Implemented a one-on-one coaching program for high potential employees to improve leadership skills and develop the organization's next generation of leaders.
- Created a partner-level EVP role focused on engagement-related projects and held accountable for results related to strategic organizational initiatives.
- Overhauled medical, benefit, and performance review plan structures to give employees more say in how compensation and bonuses are evaluated.
- Updated company-wide data analytics and hindsight reporting to support business growth using new systems and data access tools.
- Increased employee engagement and trust.

At FAM, where culture and teamwork are central pillars, having engaged employees who are motivated and supported by leadership is the key to success. By focusing on talent strategy, Konkright and his team have been able to elevate business processes and results seamlessly.

"Talent optimization supports our operational standard of being lean and getting the most out of people without having to hire more people. So many companies just throw people at problems instead of fixing problems, inhibiting the ability to allow current employees to thrive and produce," said Konkright. "[The PI Employee Experience Survey] has been so much better than what we did last year because now we can write on a whiteboard all the things that we could potentially solve and [prioritize]. It's been really great."

