



**Name of your organization:** Encova Insurance

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### **Encova Insurance prioritizes associates listening in its quest for continuous improvement**

Encova Insurance understands the importance of working together, operating as a team, listening to its people, and creating a culture that associates embrace. However, the company also knows it takes hard work, commitment and communication to accomplish those goals.

Through an affiliation agreement between Motorists Insurance Group and BrickStreet Mutual Insurance Co. in 2017, the two companies became one, and, in 2019, rebranded as Encova Insurance. Encova, a super-regional mutual insurance carrier, is based in Columbus, Ohio and employs around 1,200 associates. The company offers auto, home and business insurance through 14,000 independent insurance agents and operates in 27 states and the District of Columbia. It ranks in the top 20 mutual insurance companies in the United States and in 2021 was named one of *Columbus Business First's* Outstanding Diversity Organization honorees.

Bringing two groups of associates together and merging two companies to create one culture and truly embody the "We are Encova" mindset was no easy task. To reach its goal, the insurance provider used its associates listening program to learn from the affiliation process and establish a plan for continuous improvement.

"I'm really, really proud of the survey participation we've had, but for us, it's about continuous improvement," said Mark Peacock, senior vice president, chief human resources officer, for Encova. "We want the feedback; we want our associates to know that they have a voice and that they're being listened to. And then what we do with that feedback matters. Those are our primary goals when we survey our associates."

Since our initial company-wide survey in 2018, employee engagement has steadily increased – from 75.9% in 2018 to 86% in 2021, and in 2023, they saw 88% employee engagement.

This is a good indicator that Encova is living its mission to ensure their associates feel connected to the company and its vision.

### **Using feedback to focus on the future**

Encova listens to and creates action plans from the feedback received from associates, which sets itself up for future success. And the super-regional insurance provider is already seeing its

investments pay off in its people as its associates are optimistic about the future. That specific survey item (*"I am optimistic about the future of Encova"*) was one of the items with the biggest jump in favorability from 2018 to 2023. It went up 25 percentage points, from 59% to 84%.

Peacock notes that 2020 and 2021 were very successful years for Encova, both in profitability and in growing its people. He credits this to the positive culture they have been able to build. This correlates with a number of research reports that have found happy employees are more engaged, more engaged employees are more productive, and more productive employees result in better business outcomes.

"When you think about all of the business climate challenges in 2020 and 2021, for us to grow with profit, which is not easy to do in any economic condition for an insurance company, there's just no question that the performance of each associate is positively impacted by the knowledge that we care, we listen to them, and we're going to continue to do so," Peacock stated. "Again, does anyone raise their hand and say, 'Oh, it's because of the engagement survey that I had my best sales year' of course not. But there's just no doubt about it that A plus B equals C. And part of that equation is engagement, and part of getting that engagement, that clarity around our culture of listening, has been using the Perceptyx 1-2-3 action-planning methodology."

**Which business outcome measures did your organization use to determine the impact on employees?**

- Increased participation rates (surveys and listening events)
- Improved pride in the company, improved morale and sentiment
- Improved intent to stay with the company, decreased employee turnover
- Increase in job referrals from employees
- Improved sense of personal accomplishment, and discretionary effort
- Increased willingness to recommend the company's products and services