

How to Create a SUGGESTION BOX



CARLA JOHNSON



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Getting feedback from employees can give you insights into your business for innovation opportunities you had no idea existed. This tool allows employees to feel empowered and offer their advice, many times on things that are a necessity. While the process doesn't have to be complicated, you do need to make sure that you're building trust along the way and not leaving employees in the dark once they make a suggestion. Asking people to contribute their ideas and then not responding or doing nothing about them is worse than doing nothing at all.

Here are four things to keep in mind as you're working on your suggestion box:

1. Not all suggestion boxes need to take the form of an actual box. You can use the traditional box in which people can put their suggestions. For some companies, it makes better sense to go the digital route. Use what best fits your culture.
2. Put the box where it's obvious for everyone to see. In a common area like the cafeteria in an office. Or on the front page of your intranet. Asking for people's input won't do any good if they don't know it exists.
3. Products don't sell themselves, and neither do suggestion boxes. Make a point of marketing it and getting people to pay attention. Be clear about what you're looking for in what employees submit. Talk about it on company calls, share stories of suggestions that you adopted, who submitted the idea, and how things turned out.
4. This may be the most important element, respond to people's suggestions. It doesn't mean you're going to move forward with everything that comes in but give everyone the courtesy of knowing that you received their idea and next steps. A suggestion box will only work if employees believe that someone actually reads them.

What to Include on a Suggestion Form

With your form, make sure you capture enough of the important information, but don't ask for so much that it's intimidating. Give people the option of including their name or not on the form. Sometimes the option of staying anonymous gives people the courage to speak up.



Some forms are as simple as asking for the idea, how it will help the company and the person's name. Consider the following list of things to include on your form:

- Date
- Name and email
- Idea
- Department it impacts
- How it will help the department/company including tangible savings, if any
- Budget to implement
- Comments
- To track the progress of the suggestion through the review channels you can include a section for committee evaluation and outcome

Going Digital

If you are looking for an online suggestion box service, here are several to consider:

- [SoGoSurvey](#) - An end-to-end survey design, distribution, and analysis platform.
- [Survey Monkey](#) - One of the most well-known survey tools, even the free versions offers plenty of resources.
- [ProProfs Survey Maker](#) - An online survey tool with advanced survey and analytical capabilities.
- [Typeform](#) - One of the most creative options, it delivers a beautiful design and hefty capabilities even in the free version.
- [Google Forms](#) - The only online survey tools that gives users free skip logic other than SoGoSurvey. For most going the online route, this is a common pick.
- [Survey Gizmo](#) - Creates some great looking surveys and good as long as you don't expect a large number of responses.
- [Survey Planet](#) - We're all about their mission to inspire curiosity, creativity, and authenticity. Their free version is robust but only Pro allows you to export to excel.
- [Customer Insights](#) - Offers free online suggestion boxes ready to go.



The Long-Term Impact

You can take your company from fighting expensive problems like low morale and turnover to building valuable outcomes just by asking for employee feedback with a suggestion box. One company collected and acted upon suggestions that totaled \$3.8 million! Whether you allow employees to make submissions anonymously or not, what's most important is that you give them an avenue that ensures that they are heard.

Work With Us



Carla Johnson and her team have worked with startups, Fortune 100 companies and every size in between. They've helped executives and leaders understand their starting points, design their innovation journey, and deliver the research, training, advice and experiences to help them make innovation a mindset. Through partnerships, clients learn the impact that a broader innovation practice

has on business, and the path to creating and sustaining a culture that welcomes new ideas, encourages experimentation, and rewards critical thinking.

This is how companies of all size become genuinely nimble, passionate, innovative powerhouses that deliver extraordinary outcomes in any industry and under any market condition. Look for her latest book, [*RE:Think Innovation*](#), and visit www.carlajohnson.co for more information or to get in touch.