

Create a Pulse Survey

Pulse surveys are rising in popularity as an employee feedback tool for HR teams. These short surveys are designed to gather ongoing feedback from employees to help your organization gain insights, track goals, and get a sense of the overall *pulse* of the company. Think of pulse surveys as a quick check-in with your employees.

Visit the [Alchemer Blog](#) for tips on running successful pulse surveys.

Characteristics of Pulse Surveys

Pulse surveys can mean many different things and are implemented in a variety of ways across organizations. Having said that, there are several characteristics that pulse surveys commonly share:

- Pulse surveys are brief. In general these surveys should not have more than 15 to 20 questions. Often, 5 to 10 questions is recommended.
- Related to the above note, these surveys need to be quick-to-complete (they should take employees around five minutes or less). Any longer than that and you are likely to see decreased participation from employees.
- They are sent out on a regular basis (weekly, monthly, quarterly). Data is collected over time to better visualize trends and track progress.
- Pulse surveys include a mix of quantitative and qualitative (open-ended) questions. Keep in mind that open-ended questions are more time consuming to answer! You probably should not ask more than one of these question types.

Before you get started, you should determine both the *topic(s)* that you want to track as well as the *frequency* with which you will send out your survey. Depending on the topic, you may not need to solicit feedback each week. You can also adjust the frequency as needed based on feedback or need.

Below, we will discuss a couple common implementations of pulse surveys and how you can leverage Alchemer features to configure these.

Example One: Simple Pulse Survey

A common implementation of pulse surveys utilizes a handful of questions that remain unchanged for the duration of the survey.

- These are highly focused surveys that usually cover a single topic such as Employee Satisfaction, Team Dynamics, or track employee reaction to a particular initiative or internal project.
- Because the questions remain unchanged, you may want to run these types of pulse surveys less frequently, perhaps monthly rather than weekly, to avoid survey fatigue.

+ Create Simple Pulse Survey

Example Two: Modified Pulse Survey

Another common implementation of pulse surveys utilizes a *question bank*.

- For example, you might have a pulse survey that runs weekly.
- Perhaps the survey has twenty total questions, but each week of the survey only five of those questions are sent out to employees.
- Each set of five questions is focused around a different topic; week one might be overall employee satisfaction questions, week two might be team/department specific questions, and so on.

This type of pulse survey allows you to gather data on a wider set of topics while also combatting survey fatigue since employees are not answering the same questions each week when the survey is sent out.

Setting up this modified pulse survey requires the use of the following advanced Alchemer features:

- [Configuring URL Variables](#)
- [Using URL Variables in logic conditions](#)

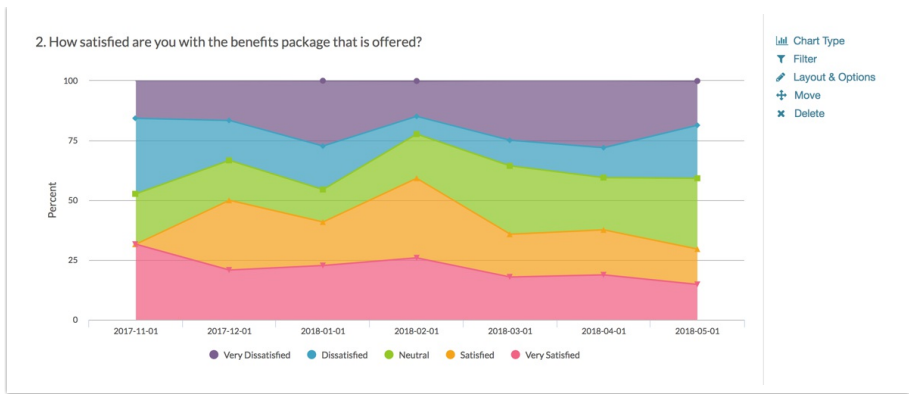
We recommend familiarizing yourself with the above features before proceeding.

+ Create Modified Pulse Survey

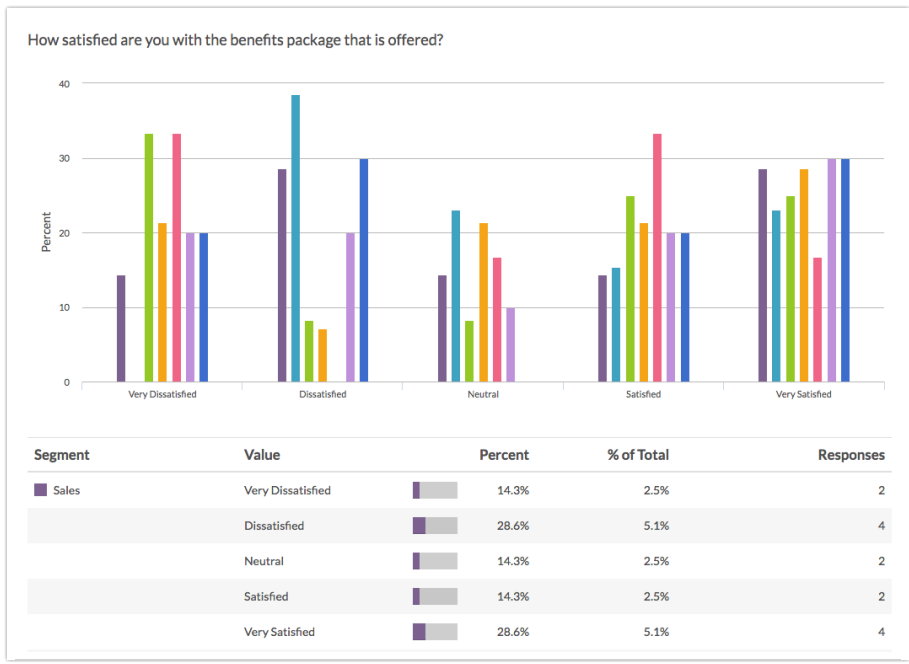
Report on Your Pulse Survey

Once you have started collecting data via your pulse survey, you can access this data via the [Standard Report](#). By default, the Standard Report will display all the aggregate data that the survey has collected (all-time).

- If you only want to see a subset of the data (or perhaps just the responses from the most recent week, month, or quarter), you can [filter your report by response date](#).
 - If you need to track changes overtime, the Standard Report [Longitudinal Reporting](#) feature is built just for that.
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- If you are collecting open-ended responses, consider the [Open Text Analysis tool](#). Analyzing your open ended responses will allow you to quantify this data and help you see trends on this type of feedback, too.
- If your pulse survey collects demographic information such as the employee's department, you can use this data to create [filters](#) and [segments](#) in your Standard Report to gain additional insights.



Optional Customizations

There are several Alchemer features that you can utilize to customize your Pulse survey.

Anonymous Responses

There are different schools of thought regarding pulse surveys and anonymity.

- You want your employees to trust the process and want them to be able to feel like they can provide honest feedback. Setting up a survey to be anonymous can help with that trust.
- You also want to be able to act on specific feedback that might not need to be addressed with the whole team/company.

The choice is ultimately yours, but one option is to make your survey anonymous and have an optional question for employee contact information for further followup, if needed. This allows to employee to opt-in to sharing their details.

If you have made the decision to make your survey anonymous, follow these steps to enable the setting:

1. Go to **Tools > Response Settings**.
2. Check the **Anonymous Responses** option.
3. Click **Save Settings** to finish.

Visit the [Anonymous Surveys documentation](#) for additional information about this setting.

Show Questions Randomly

If you have a bank of questions on your pulse survey and only want to ask a portion of these on each occurrence of the survey, one option that you can consider is [Question Randomization](#). One of Alchemer's randomization settings allows you to [show a random set of questions on a given survey page to each participant](#).

For example, if you have twenty questions on your pulse survey, you can elect to show a set of 5 questions each time your run your pulse survey. Before you go down this road, there are some potential drawbacks that you should consider:

- Using this method, each employee gets a different set of 5 questions. This is truly random so there is a chance that for certain questions you run the risk of getting either no data, or not enough data to make conclusions.
- If you are using this method, it's best for long running surveys that allow you to build up a large dataset for each question over time. You likely will not want to make conclusions early on if you are not getting a large or complete data sample for each question.

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