

# Field Guide to Ideas

The Energage Survey Statement

“New ideas are encouraged at this company.”

Survey Theme

Effectiveness

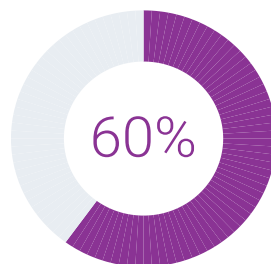
## Why New Ideas Matter

The organizations that succeed today are those that constantly improve themselves and their offerings. But don't expect the few people at the top to be responsible for all the interesting new thinking in the organization. After all, it's generally the people closest to the problem — and the customer — who are closest to the best solution.

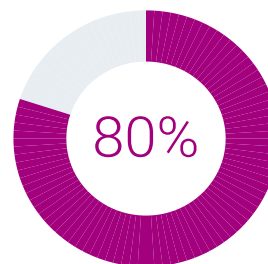
Encouraging ideas from all over the organization helps each individual employee reach their full potential. And this strengthens the culture by increasing trust and buy-in. When employees are empowered this way, they feel safe to take calculated risks and chase continuous improvement.

## New Ideas at Top Workplaces vs. Average Organizations

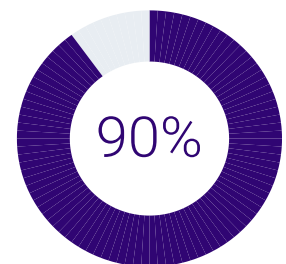
Only 60% of employees at average organizations responded positively to the Ideas statement on the [Energage Survey](#). But at Top Workplaces, this jumps to 80-90%.



Average  
Organizations



Top  
Workplaces



Top 10%  
Top Workplaces

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## How to Help

### Quick Fixes

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- Look through comments from the survey for improvement recommendations.
- Invite everybody to share ideas, and treat their ideas as equitably as possible.
- Celebrate the source of the idea when it succeeds, celebrate learnings if it doesn't.
- Make it safe to share all ideas — good or bad — with brainstorming sessions.

### Big Picture Plans

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- Bring in a tool like [Energage Connect](#) to create a real-time “open door” for any ideas.
- Create a formal process to collect and consider new ideas (or reach out about ours!).
- Form dedicated volunteer “ideas committees” to help act on employee ideas.
- Encourage employees and teams to dedicate time to innovation every week.

## What to Watch for

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- Our brains are wired to worry about change — that is, unless we had a part in planning it or truly and completely understand the reasons behind it. One way to help with this is to tie every new change or idea to your mission and values.
  - One of the best ways to encourage new ideas is to act on the ones you receive. Not all ideas will fit your culture or strategy. One way to handle these ideas is to encourage people to discuss them with their peers or seek out potential obstacles.
  - Ideas can — and should — come from anywhere! Often customers and the frontline people who work with them will have the most interesting and valuable ideas. Note that ideas are not industry-dependent; ideas on how to work are just as important as ideas on what to work on.
  - Encouraging new ideas starts with your culture, which means it starts with leadership. When everyone feels safe to offer new ways to work and reduce waste, your organization will have more ways to constantly improve.

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## What New Ideas Sound Like

“As a company, we encourage people to speak up, share different perspectives, and suggest new ideas. If someone has an idea to make us better, [the company] encourages individuals to take ownership, collaborate, and make those ideas become reality.”

“Teams are regularly requested to come up with new ideas. When ideas are given the green light, it is very visible how the company supports teams through the development process – both the successes and the glitches. When others see this level of support, they feel safe in proffering their own ideas and then working to make them a reality.”

“We have programs that encourage incubating new ideas. And the openness of the office encourages organic “spitballing” and idea generation in everyday interactions.”

“We are all encouraged to pave our own roads and to be fearless. So all new ideas are encouraged even if there is a possibility of failure.”

“Communications to employees about the culture set the tone that practices should be questioned and that new ideas are always welcome. It’s easy to find support for new ideas across the organization, and management seems to have open eyes and ears.”