Survey participant FAQs

Our main goal is to create a straight-forward survey experience. Here we'll answer some general queries about answering a survey using the Culture Amp system. Your first source of information is any emails or invitations sent to you. Your survey will also have a Welcome Screen that will explain the basics. If you ever have any questions or feedback, you can always connect directly with August M. Ball, august@creamcityconservation.org. (Please be sure to state which organization’s survey you are referring to in your email.)

Feeling comfortable to provide feedback

Most organizations care about getting honest feedback from their employees, partners and stakeholders, whether it’s good or bad, so they can use the data to help create better places to work, better partnerships and programs. With that said, we know some people may feel nervous about providing honest feedback. While we encourage you to answer every question there may be valid reasons not to answer a question. You may feel the question is not relevant to you. Or you may simply feel uncomfortable with the question for personal reasons. If this is the case for any of the questions, you can skip them. Or, if you feel your answers are more nuanced, you can add comments (on a per question basis), if configured in your survey (described more below).

Can you see my individual responses?

This depends on the type of survey and feedback being collected. For some surveys, it makes sense to see individual responses (e.g. onboarding or exit surveys). For other surveys (e.g. engagement surveys, culture assessments, inclusion surveys, etc.), it’s more important to understand how employees/individuals are feeling generally, so aggregated results provide more meaningful and representative feedback. Most engagement surveys are set-up in a way that does not allow Cream City Conservation to show individual-level data.

To understand how your particular survey is set up, the specific reporting rules for the survey are included in your invitation and reminder communications. The reporting rules outline the reporting group minimum for the survey, as well as whether survey
administrators have access to raw data. **We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the specific reporting rules for your survey.**

For example, Company X runs an engagement survey with a reporting group minimum of 5, and no access to raw data. In this case, because we do aggregate reporting, people with access to the results can only see results in groups of 5. So if 5 people in your location/department submit, people will be able to see the aggregate (combined) total for your area. **In this example, we do not reveal your individual responses.**

Part of our aim as an external party is to provide confidence around the confidentiality of the results.

**How will my answers be used?**

Survey information is used in a variety of ways. At Cream City Conservation we deal with a lot of organizations conducting surveys of their employees. Almost universally these companies have a genuine desire to connect with their employees and make positive changes. Talking to employees is the quickest and most direct method - that is, someone could just ask you for your opinion. However, surveys provide an opportunity to gather feedback in a different way. First and foremost, surveys allow for the confidential collection of feedback. This isn't always possible in other forums. Surveys also allow for an analytical view of the data. Surveys let organizations see trends over time. A simple conversation is very powerful, but it's very difficult to turn that into a reasonably objective, organization-wide picture. This is where surveys become essential.

**Is it just a waste of my time?**

We don't see that a lot. Generally, nobody begrudges doing a survey if they see real, positive change from it. The organizations we see genuinely want to make a positive change from their surveys. It's possible that there may not be any change from your survey. Or there may be, but you're not getting to see or hear about it. Sometimes it just takes time. If you feel that is the case, we'd encourage you to discuss with your manager and HR representatives and let them know. If that's not possible for you, see if you can let them know via the survey. It's possible to have serious issues with your
organization. We hope the survey is your opportunity to convey that and get heard. Your engagement in this process is one of the best mechanisms for enabling real change to occur.

Answering Rating Questions

Our general questions follow what is called the "Agree Format". For these questions, we put forward a statement, and you tell us how much you agree or disagree with that statement. In the Culture Amp platform, you use a "Heat Bar" to enter your answers. Simply swipe left to right to select from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Clicking on your response will select that answer. If you're on a laptop or desktop you use your trackpad or mouse pointer to select. If you're on a tablet or smartphone you can simply swipe.

Why only five answers? I'd like more choice.

The evidence on the effectiveness of more options is mixed at best. We favor having simpler surveys with clear questions that are quicker for you to complete. More options tends to be an issue when people weight questions against each other. Try not to do this. Answer each question on it's own merits. If you feel that an answer requires explanation, use the comments feature (where available).

Why are the questions framed positively?

It's not trying to bias the survey, in fact quite the opposite. We frame each question as an ideal state that we'd all generally like to be true of how we feel or experience our organizations. This makes the survey consistent - this is easy to understand, leads to less confusion and is quicker to complete. However, the response scale allows you to
be neutral or completely disagree with these statements - if you respond negatively the results will reflect this.

Is there a 'not applicable' option?

No. If a question does not apply to your situation, simply do not answer that question. This is the equivalent of a 'n/a' response.

Can I add comments?

Comments are not enabled on all Culture Amp surveys. If comments are enabled for your survey, you will be informed on the Welcome Screen. You will also see the comment icon for each question. Adding a comment is as simple as clicking the Add button, shown below:

Do not feel you need to add a comment on every question. Use comments to provide directed feedback on the topics you feel deserve additional attention. Many surveys also include free-text questions. Often you have the opportunity to provide feedback in these sections. It may not always be necessary to comment at the question level. Please avoid adding unnecessary comments like “N/A”, “This doesn’t apply to me” or “I don’t know”.

Will comments identify me?

Confidential surveys do not identify comments. However, it’s naturally possible to identify yourself by the content of your comment. If you’d like to remain confidential, do not include identifying information such as people’s names or departments.

Can I complete the survey on a smartphone or tablet?

Absolutely, in fact we think the experience is better! We support most modern desktop, laptop, tablet and mobile devices. If you're on a mobile device, we support Android
version 2.3 or higher and iOS (iPhone or iPad) version 2 or higher. We support most browsers.

Can I save my survey and complete it later?

No. Since most of our surveys are unattributed to a particular email address, you should only use the link provided once. It should take you no longer than 15 minutes to complete your survey.

Do I need to answer every question?

No. Some surveys have mandatory questions, but these are the exception. We encourage you to answer every question, however, there are valid reasons not to answer a question. You may feel the question is not relevant to you. Or you may simply feel uncomfortable with the question for personal reasons.

Can I change my answers?

You can change your answers anytime before finishing the survey. If you abandon the survey before hitting submit, you will need to complete the entire survey again.
I get surveyed too much!

Getting surveyed too much is an intrusion and we recognize that. It’s important that the contribution you’re making is recognized. We see terrific results from surveys. If you think the frequency or content of your surveys is affecting your results, let us know via the comments. Finally, we spend a bit of time trying to make our surveys as quick and easy to complete as possible. At the completion of any survey you get to give us feedback. If there is a way we can make the experience better, please let us know. We’re listening.

At Cream City Conservation, our goal is to help organizations put culture first, and one of the ways we do so is by allowing your organization to run a survey that allows you to share your valuable, and oftentimes vulnerable, feedback. As you complete a survey, you might wonder, “who can see my response and how?” We often get questions like this about confidentiality, anonymity, and the difference between the two.

Confidentiality vs. Anonymity

What is an anonymous survey?

A truly anonymous (called “unattributed” in the Culture Amp platform) survey means that there is a universal link for the survey that is sent to everyone. There is no way to truly identify who is providing what feedback, unless you provide information that will identify you (e.g., via demographics or providing an email address). This is how nearly all of our client surveys are conducted.

What is a confidential survey?

A confidential (or “attributed”’) survey means that you will receive a unique link to participate in the survey. This survey link connects survey responses to various information in the organization’s employee data system that allows the organization to slice and filter data by demographics such as tenure, department, or location. However, there are permissions set up on the backend of the survey (outlined in your invitation and survey communications) that outline things like reporting group minimums, which prevent the ability to directly or indirectly identify your response.
For example, if your organization has set a reporting group minimum of 5, that means that if your team has not provided at least 5 responses (note: this is not the number of people invited), then results will not be shared in order to protect the confidentiality of any team members who responded.

**Why would my company use a confidential instead of an anonymous survey?**

Confidential surveys provide your managers and leaders the ability to slice and filter data in a way that allows them to understand the various nuances of their organization. By connecting results to data that your organization already has access to, they can take a more targeted approach to improve the employee experience.

**How do I know what type of survey my company is launching?**

All pre-survey communications will include information regarding reporting group minimums, whether or not Raw Data Extract is available, and if so, who will have access to your feedback.

**What is a raw data extract?**

A raw data extract includes line-by-line results of a survey, meaning that your results are fully identifiable. This level of data is only accessible to a Survey Data Analyst, a role designated within the Culture Amp platform. They should ensure access to this data is extremely controlled. A company may make data exportable with a Raw Data Extract because they want to run more in-depth analyses of the data off of the platform.

**I still have questions?**

Email Cream City Conservation founder and CEO, August M. Ball at august@creamcityconservation.org.