

Staff forum write up – 24.3.22

Thank you to everyone who attended our first forum for their input and insight! Below is a summary of the questions discussed, and the viewpoints put across.

Agreed format and next steps:

A monthly meeting with an open invite – anyone can attend. Each department will be responsible for making sure they are represented by at least one person.

The date will be announced in advance, and at that point a call for any agenda items. If there are lots of topics, this will go to a vote as to which items will be discussed and which are carried forward.

We will keep the time and day chosen for the forum under review so that all teams are able to attend, in recognition that there are several different working patterns in the company.

Suggested next forum date: 2pm on Monday 25th April (venue TBD depending on numbers attending)

Summary of group discussion

Questions we discussed:

What is the purpose of a forum here at CRC?

A place to:

- Bring together colleagues from different departments, who sit together as equals and share ideas and experiences around a table.
- Have open and free conversations and discuss – in an open and honest way – relevant topics and the reality of their experience at work.
- Share ideas and gain understanding of the experiences and realities of different departments.
- Identify opportunities to learn from each other about the different areas of the business.

What things should be brought to a staff forum?

Everything! Nothing should be off the table. The agenda should be decided and shaped by colleagues across the business.

A couple of “regular items” might be:

1. Questions or topics from Louise on issues where she wants to incorporate the views of people into business decisions
2. An “any other business” section as an opportunity for raising quick questions or “FYI”s

Potential topics for discussion included:

1. Cross-business learning (e.g., education about racing, other departments); a job shadowing programme
2. Team socials
 - a. what kind of events we’d like to see and how to make it work for operational teams?
 - b. thinking outside the “meet at the bar” format to more structured events
3. Charity work
 - a. reigniting Project 1000
 - b. looking at work we can do that boosts our business reputation in the community

4. A top level of “projects we’re working on” to share so other departments are made aware early doors
5. Staff benefits (e.g., can we get a discounted gym)

We should use different platforms (e.g., staff app? SharePoint?) to communicate forum dates and to gather topic suggestions.

What format works for a staff forum?

A group discussion, but with options to “mix it up” e.g., consultations on new projects and changes as and when they come up so people can share their thoughts and feedback.

The structure can evolve if need be. It would be nice to include a “good news” element of news and announcements to celebrate.

CEO questions segment – if we can have sight of questions to consider them in advance that would be helpful, or as a takeaway for the rest of their team to bring back answers the following month.

There should always be a communicated agenda for each meeting to keep the sessions purposeful.

Who should attend a staff forum?

Anyone from SMT should be attending if asked by the forum and in an observational listening role. Louise was invited back to the end of the session to hear the group discussion; this was potentially a good format combining SMT presence with some time for colleague discussion.

It was felt that a fluid approach was best at this point regarding attendees – dedicated Reps might be too structured and exclusionary at this point. However, this might be where the forum evolves to in the future.

For now, different faces are good and keep the conversation fresh.

Agreed approach: Announce forum date in advance - accountability is within teams to make sure they have someone attending to represent. It doesn’t have to be the same person each month.

How often should a staff forum take place?

Strong agreement it should be monthly to maintain momentum. More frequent, shorter sessions are better than long meetings with a big gap between.

The forum should be earlier in the week during busy periods, with the day and time varied to account for different working patterns. We should avoid racing days and a couple of days either side!

Other stuff

Location

This should be as low impact on the events teams as possible – no complicated room set up that creates extra work.

Accountability

Each forum should end with a timeline of actions and agreed outcomes.

Responsibility for actions around the forum should be allocated during the meeting so there is a sense of collective ownership.

Colleague suggestions

If we set up a company-wide “suggestion box” the forum would be a good place to look at these. Our people are best placed to act as a filter on what are “good” (workable) ideas and can then translate these into questions for the SMT.