

Check an AI research summary

You lead a team of 30. You asked an AI research tool whether to replace your once-a-year staff survey with a short monthly pulse. It gave you the summary below, with four sources. You plan to forward it to your HR director this afternoon.

1. Sort it

Who will see it? What does it carry?
Decide the depth before you read on.

2. List and trace

List every claim on page 3. Trace each one in the four sources on page 2, as if you had opened each page.

3. Then the key

There are five planted problems. Allow 20 minutes. Page 4 has the answers: don't look until you've tried.

AI OUTPUT

Prepared by an AI research assistant, 12 October 2026. Four sources.

Research summary: a monthly pulse instead of an annual staff survey

In a 2026 benchmark of 340 organisations, those running a monthly pulse had a higher average response rate than those running one annual survey: 52% for annual surveys and 71% for monthly pulses [1]. Of the organisations in the benchmark that had switched, most ran their first pulse within six weeks of deciding to switch [1].

Shorter surveys also seem to bring more honest answers. A university study of 2,400 employees found that staff answering a five-minute pulse were more willing to report problems than staff answering a 30-minute annual survey [2]. "Survey fatigue is a myth: people stop answering when nothing changes," says the study's lead author [2].

Keep pulses short. A professional body for HR managers recommends no more than ten questions, in guidance updated in March 2026 [3].

Share the results with staff every time. In organisations that never share survey results, participation drops by a third within a year [4].

Suggested next step: try a monthly pulse of no more than ten questions for one quarter, and share the results with staff every time.

Sources: [1] Employee listening benchmark 2026. [2] Survey length and completion. [3] Running pulse surveys. [4] What happens after the survey.

When you're done

Compare with the key, then write down the kind of problem you missed. That is the one to look for first next time.

With your team

Give it to two people for 20 minutes, then compare lists. People rarely miss the same things.

What each source actually says

Treat these as the pages you opened. Everything on them is made up for this practice.

[1] Benchmark report: "Employee listening benchmark 2026"

From an HR software company. Published 2 March 2026.

340 organisations took part in this year's benchmark.

Organisations running a monthly pulse had a higher average response rate (61%) than those running one annual survey (52%).

Of the 126 organisations in the benchmark that had switched from an annual survey to a monthly pulse, most (58%) ran their first pulse within six weeks of deciding to switch.

[2] Working paper: "Survey length and completion"

From a university business school. June 2026.

We followed 2,400 employees at six employers.

Staff given a five-minute pulse were more likely to finish it (91%) than staff given a 30-minute annual survey (64%).

We did not measure whether answers were more candid, or whether staff reported more problems.

[3] Guidance note: "Running pulse surveys"

From a professional body for HR managers. Updated 4 May 2025.

We recommend that pulse surveys have no more than ten questions, and that each question is asked the same way each time.

[4] Research briefing: "What happens after the survey"

From a business school. September 2025.

In one study of 48 organisations, participation fell by about a third over 12 months where results were never shared with staff.

Our advice: share the results with staff every time.

Your claims list

Sorted as

[Look / Sample / Every claim / Every claim + second reader]

Because

[who sees it, and what it carries]

#	Claim, in the summary's words	Source	Verdict	What the source says, and the fix
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				

Verdicts: true / true with a hedge / wrong / could not confirm.

The five planted problems

#	The problem	The summary says	The source says	Verdict and fix
1	An invented quote	"Survey fatigue is a myth: people stop answering when nothing changes," says the study's lead author [2].	Source [2] quotes nobody and names no lead author.	Could not confirm. Cut it. A quote you can't find at its source counts as invented.
2	A number that doesn't match its source	...52% for annual surveys and 71% for monthly pulses [1].	61% for a monthly pulse.	Wrong. Change 71% to 61%. The gap is 9 points, not 19.
3	A source that doesn't say what is claimed	Shorter surveys also seem to bring more honest answers. ... staff answering a five-minute pulse were more willing to report problems ... [2].	Source [2] measured who finished the survey (91% against 64%), and says it did not measure candour or whether staff reported more problems.	Wrong. Replace with what it found: staff given a five-minute pulse were more likely to finish it (91%) than staff given a 30-minute annual survey (64%).
4	A lost hedge	In organisations that never share survey results, participation drops by a third within a year [4].	"In one study of 48 organisations, participation fell by about a third over 12 months."	True with a hedge. Put back "in one study of 48 organisations" and "about", and keep the past tense: it fell, in those 48.
5	A date error	...in guidance updated in March 2026 [3].	Updated 4 May 2025.	Wrong. Change to "updated in May 2025". Then ask whether a newer version exists.

These match their sources

- 340 organisations, and the 52% for annual surveys [1].
- Of those that had switched, most ran their first pulse within six weeks [1]: the source says 58% of the 126 that switched.
- A university study of 2,400 employees, a five-minute pulse and a 30-minute annual survey [2].
- No more than ten questions [3].
- Share the results with staff every time [4], and the suggested next step, which is advice and is labelled as a suggestion.

How did you sort it?

It goes to your HR director, so it leaves the team. It carries numbers, a quote and dates, and no law or money: Every claim. If it will shape a decision that is hard to undo, add a second reader.

Also worth saying when you forward it, though not one of the five: source [1] comes from a company that sells HR software, and sources [2] and [4] are a working paper and a briefing, not peer-reviewed studies. Who said it is part of what makes it true.