Project Love146
Talent Retention with Future Growth

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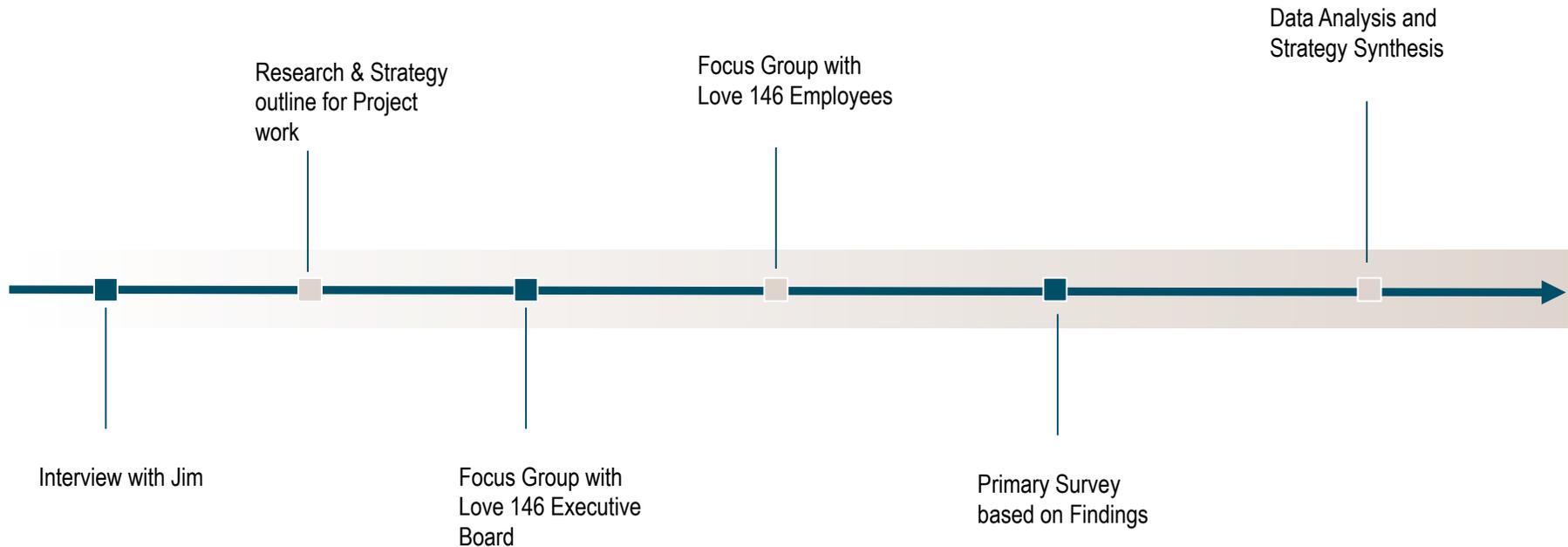- Strategy
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PROJECT SCOPE: How can Love146 continue to retain employees as it grows and its organizational structure shifts?

- **Scope of the Problem (from Jim Ehrman, Executive Director):**

  - "Our early staff members came from our ranks of volunteers, and were predominantly characterized by idealism and activism. In recent years, Love146 has broadened its approach and now hires to detailed job descriptions and specific professional skill-sets. As we grow, one of our new challenges is how to attract and keep specialized talent within a non-profit structure."

- **Our Project Statement:**

  - **'Identify HR policies that will increase talent satisfaction, beyond compensation attraction, that will enable long-term engagement and reduce the possibility of future attrition.'**

AN INDUSTRY-WIDE CONCERN IN NON-PROFITS

- 1/5 of nonprofits indicated that turnover has been the biggest employment challenge at their organization. - 2014 Nonprofit Employment Practices Survey

- "59 percent of HR professionals believe their biggest challenges over the next 10 years will involve retaining and rewarding the best employees."- Society for Human Resource Management

- Greatest Retention Challenges (based on exit surveys):

  - Inability to pay competitively (32%)

  - Inability to promote/ advance top performing staff (19%)

  - Excessive workloads (16%)

PROJECT METHODOLOGY: Love 146 Talent retention team worked to create an exhaustive understanding of the project

Research & Strategy outline for Project work

Focus Group with Love 146 Employees

Data Analysis and Strategy Synthesis

Interview with Jim

Focus Group with Love 146 Executive Board

Primary Survey based on Findings

- Love 146 Employee Retention project followed an exhaustive steps to understand the organization better

- Several interactions in tandem with the project plan were initiated

- Findings at each client interaction were synthesized to create a deeper understanding of the client issues

EXEC TEAM FOCUS GROUP KEY FINDINGS

- **Why did you join and what keeps you here?**
  - Called to the abolitionist mission of Love146
  - Saw a significant role for themselves in scaling and organizing the cause
  - Believed in the unique approach of Love146 (community-focused, no poverty porn, prevention + rehabilitation, unique story)

- **Why did your employees join, what keeps them here?**
  - Mission: "Nobody would be here without the mission"
  - Tight-nit community at the firm: "everyone loves couch time"
  - Commitment to always learning: "thoughtful practitioners"
  - Balance of idealism and strategy
  - Core Values: "Persevere, Hope, Dignify, Create, Collaborate"
  - Ownership and Autonomy over work

EMPLOYEE FOCUS GROUP KEY FINDINGS

- **Positives (The Heart and Soul of Love146 HR Practices):**
  - Family environment
  - Autonomy
  - Culture of learning
  - Mission

- **Negatives:**
  - Siloing
  - Job security among 30 and ups
  - Lack of professional developments for 30 and ups
  - Emotional burnout in the programming department
  - Communication Breakdowns
    - Between New Haven and Houston offices
    - Between the executive team and staff older than 30

KEY OVERLAPS AND DISCONNECTS

Overlaps:
- Organizational leaders in both New Haven and Houston have symbolic value.
- Community is core.
- Learning is central to the organization.

Disconnects:
- The executive team emphasized Love146's unique approach to abolition, but their employees never mentioned it.
- Not all employees feel that the organizational emphasis on learning translates to their personal development.
- The executive team views their approach to abolition is innovative, yet employees complain that there is little time to innovate on the job.
- Growth creates both opportunities and issues.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT CRITERION SELECTION: Team Love 146 researched to pin point criterion of employee engagement

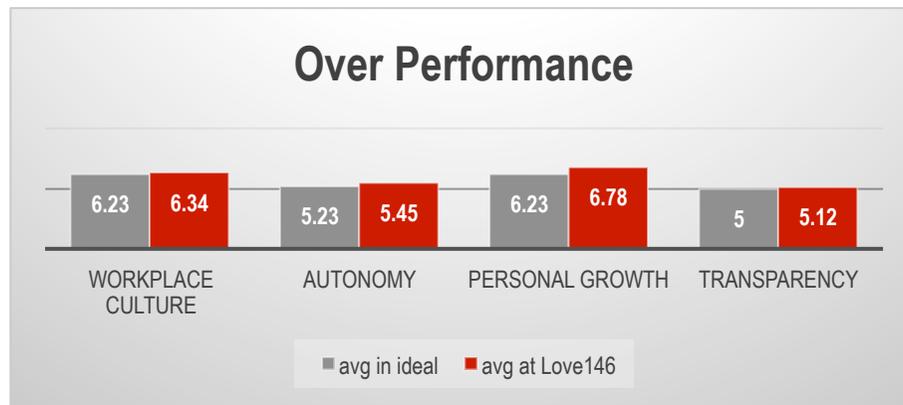| CRITERION	REASON
Workplace Culture	Culture is of critical importance at Love146, and the executive team views it as key to their retention strategy.
Autonomy	The executive team touts autonomy as a defining feature, and autonomy leads to satisfaction.
Personal Growth	Personal growth is strongly correlated with employee satisfaction, and we were interested to see how different age demographics value it.
Transparency	We were interested in seeing how Love146's transparency rates now that they have grown in size.
Status	Status is more relevant as organizations increase in size. We wanted to see if it had increased in importance for Love146 employees as the organization has grown.
Mission	Love146 is a mission-driven organization, yet 50% of individuals who leave non-profits do so to work at another non-profit.
Work-Life Balance	Work-life balance can present challenges in a small organization where employees wear many hats.
Role	Role's can become convoluted and confusing in smaller organizations, yet they are a key leverage point for job satisfaction because they affect the meaningfulness of work.
Job Security	Job security becomes increasingly important as employees age. We were interested in exploring how it affected different age groups.

EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION SURVEY: Love 146 ranks high on firm wide satisfaction but challenged at employee level expectation

Over Performance

Category	avg in ideal	avg at Love146
WORKPLACE CULTURE	6.23	6.34
AUTONOMY	5.23	5.45
PERSONAL GROWTH	6.23	6.78
TRANSPARENCY	5	5.12

■ avg in ideal   ■ avg at Love146

Under Performance

Category	avg in ideal	avg at Love146
STATUS	1.45	1.23
WORK-LIFE BALANCE	5	4.89
ROLE	4.45	4.34
MISSION	7.45	6.89
JOB SECURITY	4	4

■ avg in ideal   ■ avg at Love146

Love 146 outperforms employee expectations

- The workplace culture is better at Love146 than employees expect
- Employees are satisfied with the commitment of the firm to individual growth
- The operations of the firm, in terms of transparency and autonomy, are satisfying employees
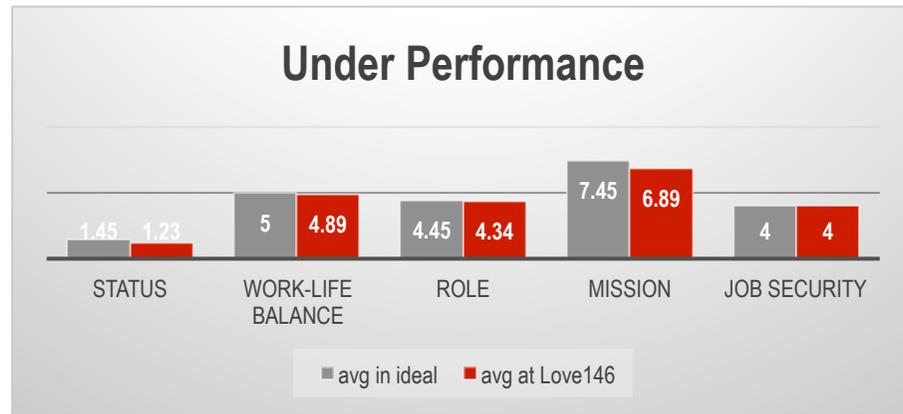
Love 146 underperforms employee expectations

- Employees would prefer to have greater status and acknowledgement relative to the work they do
- Work life balance is not maintained as well as employees would like
- While mission is the #1 driver of employee motivation, it is still not as high as employees would like
- Job security is exactly what employees would expect at an ideal firm

Employee Profiling: Similar yet different

Less Experienced

Seasoned Employee

WHO

We are new hires/ early career starters that have entered recently into the work streams

We have been active in non-profit sector or have been actively seeking work in this field

DIFFERENT

- They want to start a career in sector that impacts society positively
- They feel that their skill set match to the job is important, even within non profit industry
- They admire the action oriented style of Love 146 against other non-profits
- Age ranges 24 – 29

- These professionals have been active in non-profit sector
- Driven by vision of Love 146 leadership
- Their decision is more emotionally based, religious affiliation, dissatisfaction of impact in current job
- Experience in anti trafficking movement and chose Love 146 due to its leadership
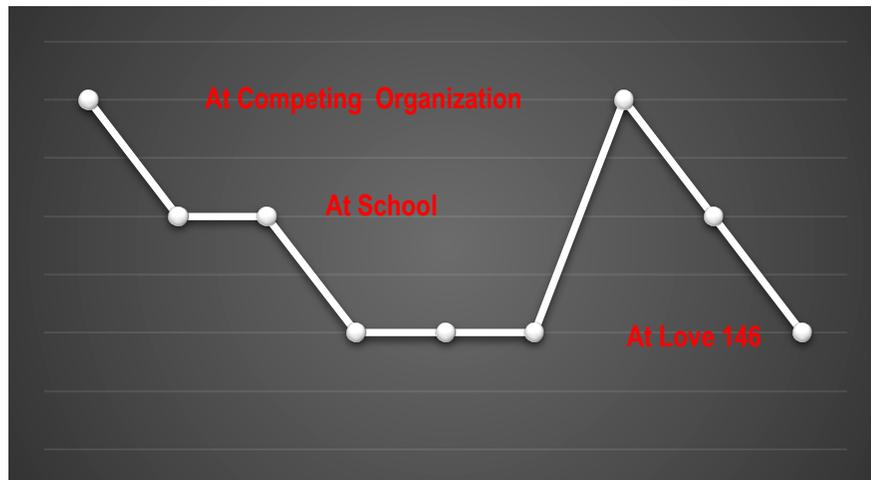- Age Range 30 - 46

SAME

- Mission at Love 146 is very important to them

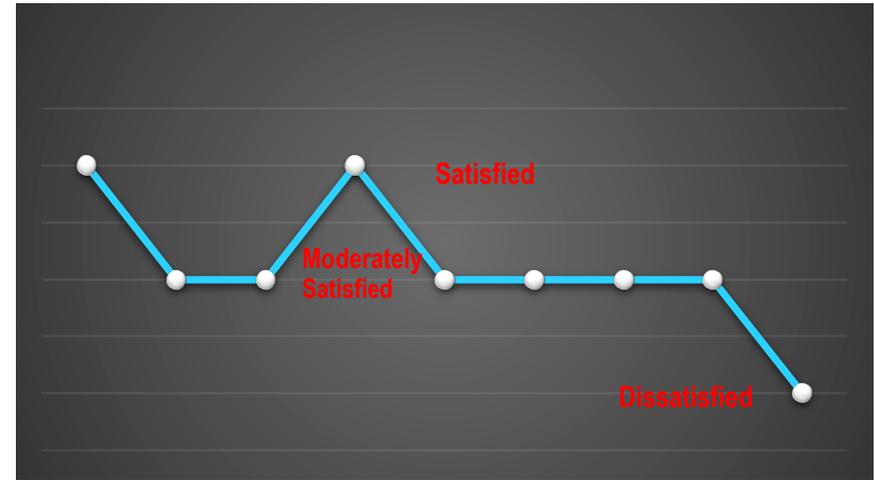- Mission at Love 146 is very important to them

EMPLOYEE CAREER PROGRESSION: Love 146 Younger Talent is not completely convinced of a long term career

Career Expectation in 5 years

At Competing Organization
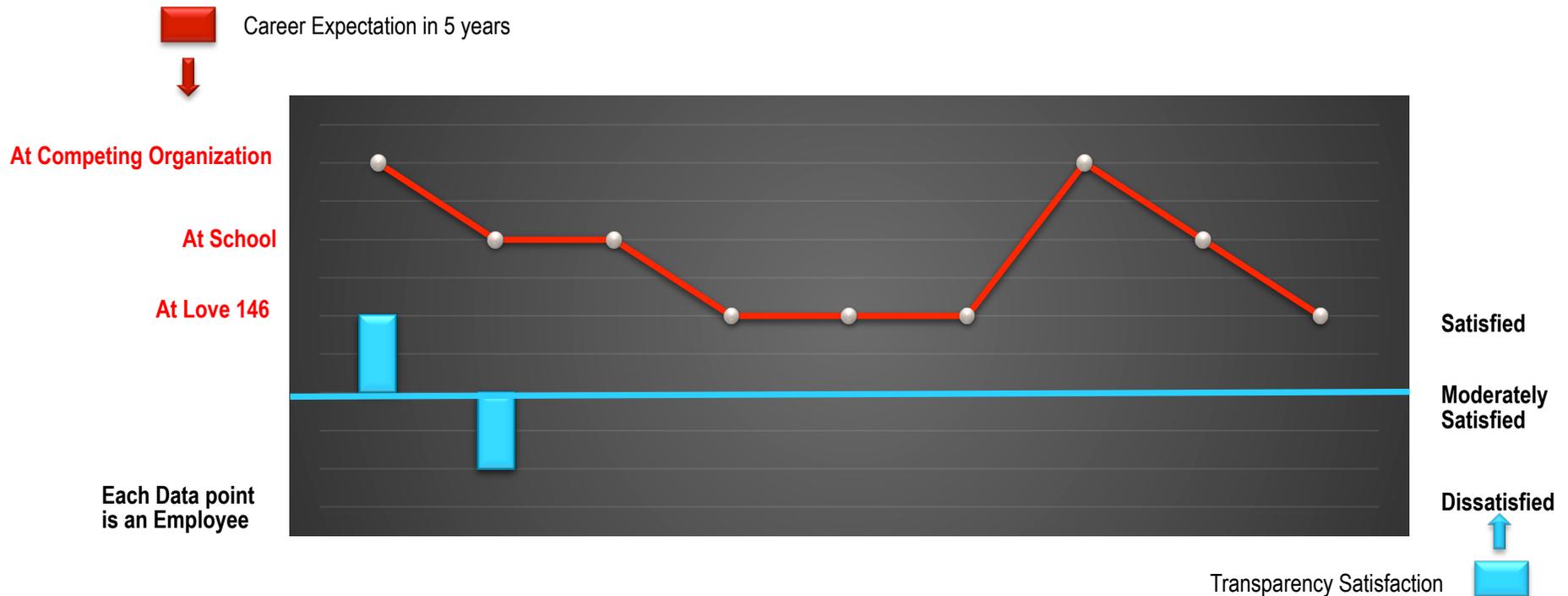
At School

At Love 146

Each Data point is an Employee

Professional Growth Expectation – Satisfaction

Satisfied

Moderately Satisfied

Dissatisfied
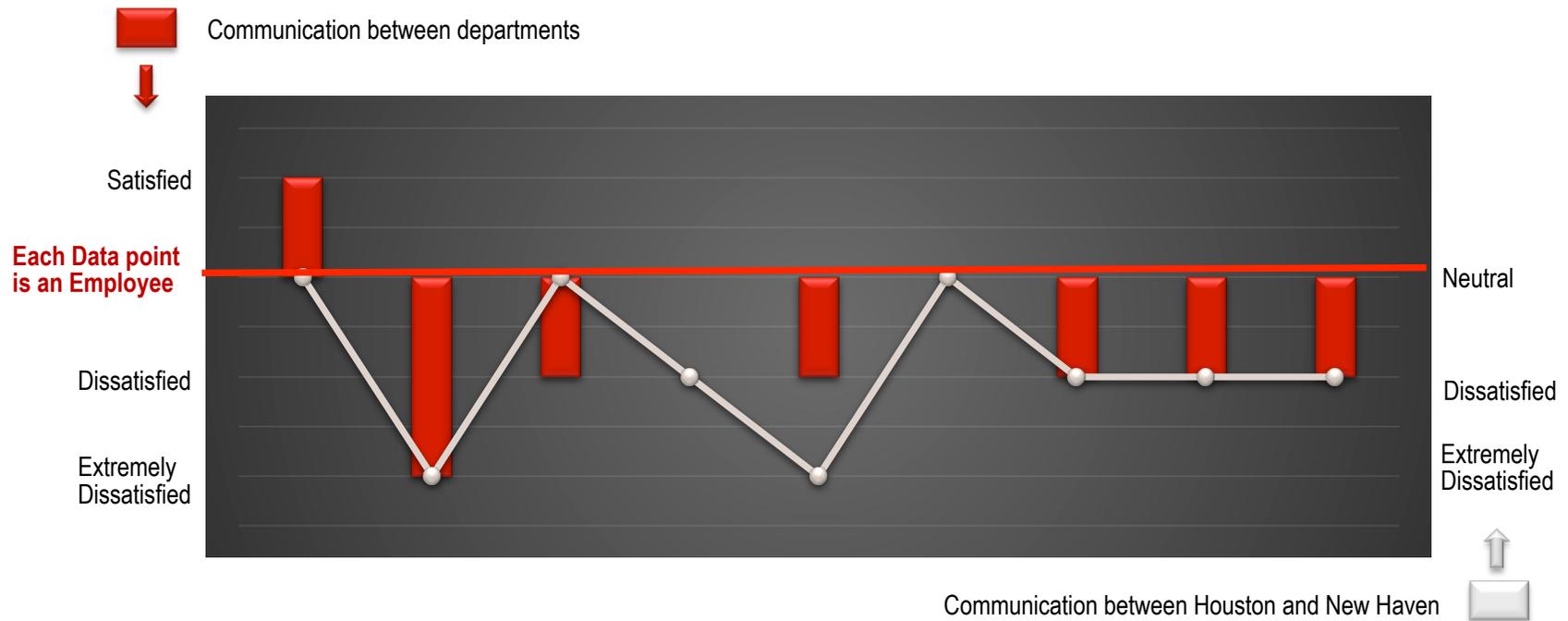
Each Data point is an Employee

- Total of **55%** of the employees do not see a long term career at Love 146

- Younger employees **75%** are more likely to leave for school than competing organization

- A large number of employees **67%** are only moderately positive about professional development opportunities at Love 146

EMPLOYEE WORK MOTIVATION: Low transperancy though an issue doesn`t seem to impact employee motivation

Career Expectation in 5 years

At Competing Organization

At School

At Love 146

Each Data point is an Employee

Satisfied

Moderately Satisfied

Dissatisfied

Transparency Satisfaction

- Total of 80% employees are satisfied with the transparency of the firm
- Perception of transparency is irregular amongst new hires
- There seems to be no negative correlation with transparency on probable attrition at Love 146

COMMUNICATION: Operations, as they expand, need to better communicate between teams

Communication between departments

Each Data point is an Employee

Satisfied

Neutral

Dissatisfied

Dissatisfied

Extremely Dissatisfied

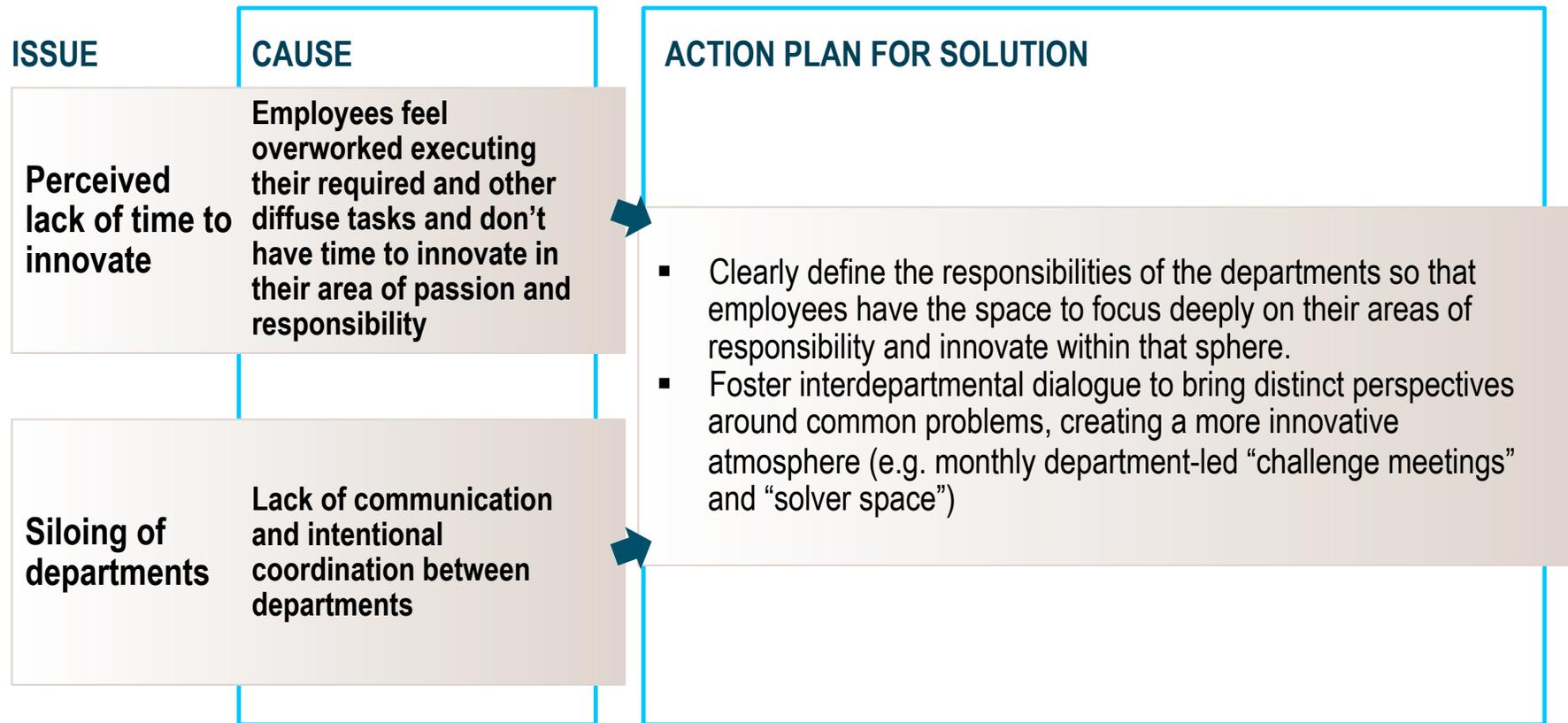Extremely Dissatisfied

Communication between Houston and New Haven

- Total of 67% employees feel there is less than desirable between departments and between offices
- There is a strong discontent in the employee pool against how operations are currently under advisement

Source: Employee Survey

Recommendations to Increase Retention with Future Growth

ISSUE	CAUSE	ACTION PLAN FOR SOLUTION
Uniqueness of mission not fully internalized	**Symbolic uniqueness around Rob and execs, but need to institutionalize this uniqueness as the firm grows**	▪ Implement mentorship program, beginning at onboarding ▪ In the onboarding materials connect stories to practice ▪ Department-specific connections b/w values and practice (e.g. materials, posters, behavior examples – values/practice stories at mtgs) ▪ Leverage "couch time" to facilitate an explicit dialogue about the distinctiveness of Love146
Perceived lack of opportunity for advancement	**As the organization has grown the leadership structure has remained flat, creating a lack of opportunity for advancement**	▪ Create partially self-directed leadership positions in inter-departmental initiatives. Promoting employees to Interdepartmental leadership roles allows for advancement, without creating a hierarchy (rotational roles). ▪ As the organization expands its salary bands and its leadership positions, promote internally whenever possible

Recommendations to Increase Retention with Future Growth

ISSUE

CAUSE

ACTION PLAN FOR SOLUTION

Perceived lack of time to innovate

Employees feel overworked executing their required and other diffuse tasks and don't have time to innovate in their area of passion and responsibility

Siloing of departments

Lack of communication and intentional coordination between departments

- Clearly define the responsibilities of the departments so that employees have the space to focus deeply on their areas of responsibility and innovate within that sphere.
- Foster interdepartmental dialogue to bring distinct perspectives around common problems, creating a more innovative atmosphere (e.g. monthly department-led "challenge meetings" and "solver space")

Recommendations to Increase Retention with Future Growth

ISSUE	CAUSE	ACTION PLAN FOR SOLUTION
Perceived lack of emphasis on PD for 30+ employees	**30+ were once in the "inner circle" but communication and personal investment by the exec team has decreased with growth.**	- Systematize regular performance reviews that also include career trajectories for all employees in the firm. - Incorporate performance reviews into the department heads' responsibilities with Jim's continued oversight - Introduce peer coaching and leadership check-ins that allow a range of mentoring relationships between senior leaders and young staff.
Burnout in the most emotionally demanding jobs	**Rapid growth in the most emotionally demanding, client-facing work, and inability for the staff to "take a break" from the stress.**	- Implement centralized data information for clients so that client-facing workers can take a break and allow peers to take responsibility in their absence - Encourage systems of story sharing among the firm so that the client-facing workers don't feel isolated from other employees