



How Pavestep helped LifeLabs Learning re-activate and sustain its feedback culture during transition to remote work and significant growth



Case study with Tania Luna,
Co-founder of LifeLabs Learning

99%

employee adoption rate

99%

agreed on employee survey question *“In the last 7 days, I’ve received positive feedback, recognition and/or gratitude for my work”*

91%

agreed on survey question *“Generally, giving [my coworkers] feedback has been a positive experience, even when it is a difficult message.”* **0% disagreed.**

HIGHLIGHTS

Challenge:

The combination of suddenly working remotely and rapid team growth caused feedback satisfaction to plummet.

- Difficult to ask and request feedback spontaneously, especially across roles and departments
- No way of tracking patterns of feedback that individuals received, so that they could review with their Role Sponsors (manager-equivalent at LifeLabs)
- **Only 67% agreed and 14% disagreed** to the engagement survey question: *“I’m satisfied with the amount of useful feedback I receive at work”*

Solution:

LifeLabs assembled a Feedback Taskforce to diagnose challenges and explore & implement small experiments to try (e.g., feedback practice sessions).

These changes led to an immediate increase in satisfaction, but the Taskforce recognized that the changes won’t be sustainable or scalable without a system.

LifeLabs launched a pilot with Pavestep before rolling it out to the entire company.

Result:

Most LifeLabs team members responded enthusiastically to Pavestep, with nearly 100% using Pavestep within the first month of the launch.

After 1 year, LifeLabs saw a totally different picture and engagement survey scores, despite more than doubling the organization size:

- **95% agreed and 0% disagreed** to the engagement survey question: *“I’m satisfied with the amount of useful feedback I receive at work”*
- **96% agreed and 0% disagreed** to the question: *“We have systems in place that help me deliberately develop in my role”*

In my entire career, I’ve never seen a software catch on so quickly.

LifeLabs⁷ Learning

LifeLabs Learning is the source for instantly useful, refreshing, and science-backed training for managers, executives, and teams at innovative companies (including TED, GoPro, The New York Times, Reddit, and 1,000+ others). They focus on tipping point skills — the smallest changes that lead to the biggest impact on engagement, connection, and performance and help these skills stick by combining training with systems-level design.

Key information:

- Started using Pavestep at ~50 people. Currently at ~160 people and growing to ~200 in 2022.
- Combination of on-site and virtual team members, working across 6 time zones and 12 cities.

Adoption stats:

- 99% active user adoption rate
- 400+ pieces of feedback shared between team members on a monthly basis
- Top 10 percentile for feedback quality/specificity



CHALLENGE

Even though our team was very skilled at giving and receiving feedback and eager to hear it, the combination of suddenly working at a distance and our team growing quickly made our feedback satisfaction scores plummet. **This was a big concern for us because we deeply value learning from one another** and have seen time and time again that swift and smooth feedback exchanges improve the quality of our work and our experience.

Aside from anecdotal evidence that our previously strong feedback culture might be in trouble, we saw the following low scores on our employee engagement survey (in April 2020):

- “I’m satisfied with the amount of useful feedback I receive at work”: **only 67% agreed and 14% disagreed (the rest were neutral).**
- “We have systems in place that help me deliberately develop in my role”: 81% agreed and 6% disagreed (with the rest being neutral).

In reviewing the qualitative comments, we saw several trends:

- **Growing quickly made it harder for people to ask for and give feedback**, especially across roles and departments.
- There weren’t as many spontaneous opportunities to exchange feedback and it felt scarier to give feedback to people folks didn’t know as well.
- As we grew, there was also **no way to track patterns of feedback that individuals could review with their Role Sponsors** (the closest role we have at LifeLabs to a manager). This meant that we couldn’t flag problems early on when they were small, so once a problem came to the surface, it was challenging to address.

SOLUTION

We assembled a Feedback Taskforce to diagnose our challenges and then explore and implement small experiments to try. To support skills and confidence, the team launched live feedback practice sessions, a feedback campaign on Slack, and internal vocabulary to make feedback even easier to exchange.

These changes led to **an immediate increase in feedback satisfaction, but the taskforce recognized that the change wouldn't be sustainable** and scalable without system-level adjustments. That's where Pavestep came in!

We tested out Pavestep as a pilot first, then rolled it out to our entire company. We also baked in various nudges to use Pavestep into our existing systems (e.g., a weekly reminder to give and ask for feedback, easy links to Pavestep in various docs, and a monthly reminder to individuals and their Role Sponsors to review their Pavestep report together).

Pavestep also served as the catalyst we needed to get even clearer on role expectations, success metrics, and our development support systems. It unlocked a more robust, effective, and delightful employee success enablement strategy.

RESULT

In my entire career, I've never seen a software catch on so quickly and with virtually no training required. Most people on our team responded enthusiastically, and nearly 100% of people used Pavestep within the first month of the launch. Best of all, one year later, usage remains high. Pavestep rapidly became a seamless part of our overall workflow.

About one year since we saw those sad engagement survey scores, **we saw a totally different picture -- even though our team had more than doubled in size:**

- “I’m satisfied with the amount of useful feedback I receive at work”: **95% agreed and 0% disagreed.**
- “We have systems in place that help me deliberately develop in my role”: **96% agreed and 0% disagreed** ← and this was even though we added over 12 brand new roles and doubled in number of employees.

We also added these two questions to our survey:

- “In the last 7 days, I’ve received positive feedback, recognition and/or gratitude for my work” (based on Gallup’s research on the top predictors of engagement): 99% agreed and 1% disagreed.
- “Generally, giving [my coworkers] feedback has been a positive experience, even when it is a difficult message”: **91% agreed and 0% disagreed** ← this feels exciting because people’s biggest fear was that Pavestep could make feedback feel more uncomfortable. **But, in practice, it has made even difficult conversations easier.**