

Your Compensation Survey Questions Answered

Thanks to everyone who attended our orientation webinars for the Solomon Coyle YE2018 Compensation and Practices Survey. We are publishing the answers to your frequently asked questions here. They are also available as a PDF download.

The FAQs are presented in four sections:

- General Compensation Survey Questions
- Questionnaire
- Staff Compensation Workbook – Positions
- Staff Compensation Workbook – Compensation

Please address new questions and requests for clarification to our Research Support inbox.

Completed Comp Surveys are due August 27. Our thanks for their participation to the dealer networks of Solomon Coyle's research partners: Allsteel, Haworth, Herman Miller, Knoll, Steelcase and Teknion LLC.

General Compensation Survey Questions

1. Should we submit one compensation survey covering all company locations or one survey per location?

Dealers operating multiple locations can submit one survey covering all locations. The Excel Workbook portion of the survey provides a column for entering the postal code of each employee's normal work location. We will use that data to develop our geographical analysis.

We are not opposed to dealers doing multiple, location-based submissions. For example, you might find it easier if one or more of your locations are in markets with markedly different economies or have markedly different compensation plans and benefits approaches. If you would like to submit multiple surveys, please email your request to researchsupport@solomoncoyle.com. We'll set you up with additional unique survey links as needed.

2. How long is it typically taking individuals to complete the Compensation Survey?

We've done no formal studies but a number of responding dealers have shared their experience with us anecdotally. First, recognize that the time it takes to complete the survey will vary based on the size and complexity of the organization. Once you have familiarized yourself with the survey requirements and assembled the necessary information, the Questionnaire could take about 90 minutes. The Staff

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Compensation Workbook will take about 2 minutes per person to enter the data.

3. Is it OK to use the Excel workbook tabs to move between sections instead of returning to the navigator each time?

Absolutely OK.

4. Can we exit the compensation survey and log back in to continue?

You can exit the Questionnaire and return to it to resume your work any time. Remember to use the Back button at the bottom of whatever page you're on to return to the Navigator page. That will save your latest entries. To exit, simply close the browser tab or window. Click your company's survey link to return to the Questionnaire.

5. Can more than one person work on the Questionnaire at the same time?

Yes. The Questionnaire definitely supports that kind of teamwork and efficiency. We recommend against working on the same page of the Questionnaire at the same time to avoid the possibility of undoing another's work.

6. How should we name our completed Workbook before uploading it?

Please append your company name to the Workbook file name. Use a shortened form of the name if you like as long as it's recognizable.

7. Does the survey carry over demographic data from previous Solomon Coyle compensation surveys?

No.

8. Are there any options for mapping system-stored data to cells in the Excel workbook?

We do not have a mapping tool for the Comp Survey. Make entries manually for each row. Copy-and-paste values are allowed. Caution: We really do mean copy and paste. Do not drag data from one cell into another. It could cause errors due to the presence of hidden formulas.

9. Where should we address questions about the Compensation Survey?

Please email your questions to researchsupport@solomoncoyle.com.

Questionnaire Questions

1. How should we treat temp, seasonal, and subcontract workers in this survey? What about summer help?

Exclude all individuals who are not regular employees of your company.

2. What if someone is promoted from within?

Regarding the Questionnaire portion of the compensation survey, ignore the promotion in both the Addition and Termination categories and include the person's year-end role in the final head count. Regarding the Workbook portion, provide annualized compensation data for the current position.

3. We have four layers of employee benefits – employee, spouse, children and family. How do we handle that?

Make entries only under Employee and Family.

4. If benefits are the same as for all employees, do we have to enter duplicate information for Regular and Executive?

No. Make entries in the Executive fields only if the information for Executives is different than the Non-Executive Employee benefit. For example, you would make separate entries if your company pays 50% of the Non-Executive Employee's cost and 75% of the Executive's cost.

5. Do you ask about Paid Time Off? Will you be benchmarking PTO?

We want to enable benchmarking for both PTO days and holidays. The Benefits section contains questions about PTO and Holidays. Please keep them distinct.

Staff Compensation Workbook – Position Questions

1. We have office/sales PMs and warehouse PMs. Where does the field PM count go and under what title on the wage sheet?

Limit your PM head count to positions that truly reflect the Project Manager definition provided on the Position List worksheet. Enter all PMs on the Project Management worksheet.

2. What if the owner is also a salesperson?

Show the owner in Non-Sales Staff and title the person President or General Manager.

3. Do you want furniture staff only?

The Comp Survey is geared to general office furniture dealers with a focus on Furniture, Architectural, and

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Technology/Audio-Visual. We want to enable benchmarking for all three categories.

4. Is it possible to add job titles, such as Installer-Architectural Products?

No, it is not possible to add job titles to our pulldowns. Select the best match for each of your positions and enter the actual job title in the next column. As we see trends in position titles, we will add them to the dropdowns in future Comp Surveys.

5. I have Sales Staff who are salaried but also receive commission. Which Sales Staff tab do you want them listed in?

Salaried. Note that the Sales Staff – Salary-Based worksheet includes columns for salary, commission, bonuses, and other compensation.

6. If an employee left prior to the end of our fiscal YE2018, should we exclude the person or include him/her and enter annualized compensation data?

Exclude the person.

7. Can we group employees having the same position title and enter average values?

No. Please create a row entry for each employee and enter the values specific to that individual. This is especially important in terms of assigning a Job Competency Level.

8. For hourly, do you also enter part-time employees?

No. Enter only full-time employees.

Staff Compensation Workbook – Compensation Questions

1. Please elaborate on commission calculated method.

The following definitions of various commission-calculation methods should aid your selection in completing the Sales Staff page of the Staff Compensation Workbook and the Sales Plan section of the Questionnaire:

Fixed Percent – a straightforward percentage calculation of sales

Point for Point – salesperson gets some percentage commission that tracks with gross margin on the sale.

Modified Point for Point – same as point-for-point, but there may be floors, ceilings, etc.

Tiered – a percentage of sales that increases or decreases as specific revenue milestones are reached

Sales Goal – a commission that is awarded only when a specific revenue milestone is achieved

Other – any other commission model that is not characterized by the models above

2. If someone left a position in 2018 and it was left vacant, do you want the comp annualized for that individual?

If you think the position reflects an important data point in your compensation practices, feel free to include it but be sure to annualize the compensation.

3. How should we report total owner/partner compensation for an LLC?

Do not include distributions. Enter the normal compensation annualized plus any commissions, performance bonuses and other types of compensation.

4. Could we aggregate by location and average the pay?

No. Please enter each regular, full-time employee's information in a separate row.

5. Do we include overtime for hourly Non-Sales Staff?

Yes.

6. For Hours in Regular Work Week, is that including OT hours?

Do not include OT hours in the regular work week. Be sure to include the OT pay in the Total Comp from Hourly Pay Paid Incl O/T column.

7. For Other Comp Paid, does that include cell and auto allowance?

Yes.

8. Do you want draw entered in the Commission column?

Where draws are involved, include the annualized draw amount in the column headed Total Commissions Paid Inc. Draw and enter the monthly draw amount in the column headed What is monthly DRAW \$ included in Commissions Paid?

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9. Sales staff commission question...Do you provide the dollar amount?

Yes.

10. What if a Salesperson and a Sales Manager both receive commission off the same account?

The source of the commission is irrelevant to the purpose of the Comp Survey. Including the commission earned by each person in their compensation calculation is highly relevant and that's what we hope you'll do.

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