



 **WESTERN ASSET**

Geoff Blaisdell, the Head of Information Technology at Western Asset Management, was in the midst of a digital transformation with significant impact on the IT organization as well as the broader firm. Geoff was looking for a way to get feedback and manage candid conversations with his employees to build trust and create clarity through this change. Enter POPIn.

**Accelerated
Buy-In**
of Digital Transformation

**Created
Clarity** of IT Vision

Use Cases
POPIn for Meetings
POPIn for Improvement

“What questions or topics do you want Geoff to address at our town hall?”
“How effective were the topics covered in today’s Town Hall with Geoff, and where do you need more clarity?”



“Being able to understand the perception of the group was key to addressing those perceptions head on, which ultimately enabled me to build trust and provide the clarity my team needed.”

- Geoff Blaisdell, Western Asset Management

Background

Western Asset Management is a fixed income money management firm based in Pasadena, CA with offices worldwide. Geoff Blaisdell, the Head of Information Technology, was in the midst of a digital transformation with significant impact on the IT organization as well as the broader firm. The five-pillar IT vision, aimed at becoming a more agile organization, involved implementing changes to organizational structures, platforms, and tools. Geoff was looking for a way to get feedback and manage candid conversations with his employees to build trust and create clarity through this change.

Solution

Geoff began by leveraging POPin before every Town Hall, asking his employees to provide questions beforehand, to ensure his agenda would address the topics and issues that are important to them. For Geoff, “the benefit of anonymity is that we are able to tackle topics that employees may traditionally not be comfortable speaking with their managers about.” Geoff structured his hour-long Town Hall with 30 minutes of content and 15 minutes of addressing POPin questions, reserving the final minutes for a live Q&A. Following his Town Halls, Geoff asked for feedback through POPin to see if leadership was addressing the team’s questions effectively.

Using POPin for his Town Halls helped Geoff understand the topics that held the highest value for his employees. He could close the loop on many items quickly by addressing them directly in the Town Hall.

Geoff and his IT Leadership Team did not shy away from difficult questions and perceptions. They understood that directly answering tough questions, rather than waiting for them to resurface externally on places like Glassdoor, would earn them trust from their employees. According to Geoff, “being able to understand the perception of the group was key to addressing those perceptions head on” ultimately enabling him to build trust and provide the clarity his team needed.

Geoff’s POPin questions also uncovered more complex topics that would require additional discussion, and decision making by leadership. For those items, Geoff and the IT Leadership Team utilized POPin to seek clarity on the feedback and to engage the team in proposing solutions, thus enabling them to share in the authorship of those decisions.

Result

Using POPin has enabled Geoff to align his team with the IT Vision and get their buy-in of the digital transformation. The change management aspect of the transformation is essential to the initiative’s ultimate success, and what Geoff learned through POPin is that his employees not only understood the vision, they were also supporting it. According to Geoff, “when I sit around the room with my peers that are managing other departments in the firm, they want to know, how can I get some of that?” His response, “It’s there. You just have to go out and grab it. You’re taking that first step by actively soliciting questions. Addressing them head on is very refreshing and that’s the first step.”

