



Action Plan
Government of the Northwest Territories
2006 Employee Satisfaction and Engagement Survey

Background

Studies have shown that employees who are satisfied with their employment and fully engaged in their work are more productive and more likely to stay with their organization. As a result, governments across Canada are interested in the engagement and satisfaction of their workforce. In order to identify engagement in a way that provides good information for each government but also allows comparisons between jurisdictions, the Public Service Commissioners forum arranged for the development of a core set of questions to be used in surveying public service staff.

Government of the Northwest Territories' indeterminate and term employees were asked to complete a survey using these core questions in January and February 2006. Thirty-six percent of all employees responded (1561), providing an excellent snapshot of employee satisfaction.

Survey Results

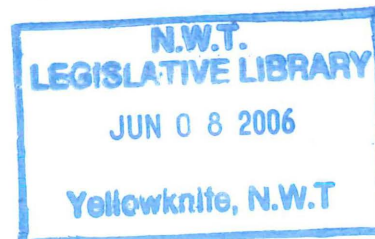
As seen in the attached chart, GNWT employees indicated a high degree of job satisfaction and engagement in many areas. The majority of questions had positive responses. While there is still room for improvement, the results are very encouraging. Over eighty percent of employees know how their work contributes to the achievement of GNWT goals, have positive working relationships with their co-workers and feel that their job is a good fit with their skills and interests.

While the overall results were positive, there were a number of areas where a significant number of employees either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements. Any questions where more than twenty percent of employees responded negatively were reviewed for further action.

It is also important that we compare our survey results to the rest of Canada. Mechanisms will be developed in order to ensure that information and ideas can be exchanged.

Actions to Address Specific Survey Results

There are specific actions that the Government of the Northwest Territories will undertake to begin addressing the challenges identified in the survey.



The first step is to get a clearer picture of why employees answered certain questions the way that they did. Three tools will be used for this: mini-surveys, the performance planning and review process, and exit and entry interviews.

Every four to six months, the GNWT will conduct mini-surveys to address specific questions about areas of employee engagement. For example, one survey would raise questions about career growth and what employees see as priorities and appropriate supports. Another could focus on how the workplace is or is not inclusive or why they are not satisfied with their workload. Each of these mini-surveys will provide additional information, which can then be addressed through specific action.

Action item: Complete mini-surveys at least twice annually and develop specific responses to the results.

A key piece of following up on the survey is to determine at the individual employee and unit levels what the issues are. This can be done through an increased focus on the performance planning and review process. Currently, the primary effort in this area is on an annual formal performance review for each employee. However, this formal review process should be the result of less formal communication throughout the year between staff and their direct supervisors. Managers must make the performance review process more meaningful. Support and training will be provided to all GNWT managers and supervisors on how to address the engagement of employees as part of the ongoing performance planning and review process.

Action item: Make material and training sessions available to managers and supervisors on addressing employee engagement and satisfaction. Finalize the manager's tool kit and deliver workshops on employee performance management.

Employee career development is supposed to be a component of the performance planning and review process. Managers should be having direct conversations with staff about development needs and opportunities as part of this process. Human Resources (HR) will be working with managers to provide support for required training and development.

Action item: Information is being gathered on training and development needs through an annual survey. The results of this survey will provide direction on what areas of training and development are required. Human Resources staff can work with departments, divisions or managers on development or training plans for groups or individual staff.

The need for improved management and leadership skills among GNWT managers is a theme not only in the survey but also in exit interviews. Human Resources is developing tools such as the manager's tool kit and a newsletter for

managers focusing on Human Resource issues. Human Resources will be developing mini-training sessions for managers on a variety of topics. Over the next year, Human Resources will offer an orientation that all new managers will be encouraged to complete. Human Resources will promote existing GNWT leadership training at various levels as well as the Leadership Certificate Program, delivered through Aurora College. Changes to the Management Assignment program will increase the number of employees going through the assessment phase as well as identifying individuals available for transfer assignments.

Action item: An orientation for new managers and mini-training session for existing managers will be offered to assist managers in better fulfilling their responsibilities with staff.

Exit and entry surveys are offered to employees at the start of employment and when leaving a position. These are both effective tools to hear more about specific areas of employee engagement and, in fact, some of the questions are identical to allow for comparison. Entry surveys are new and are being introduced in June 2006. The challenge is increasing the number of individuals completing exit interviews. The exit surveys are optional and very few employees complete them. Human Resources will work with managers and supervisors to strongly encourage an increase in the response rate on these surveys.

Action item: The length of the exit interview has been reduced to focus more on certain areas and to lessen the length of time required to complete. The completion of entry and exit surveys will be actively promoted by various means.

Two questions that were not rated strongly had to do with meaningful recognition and inspiration for employees to give their best. Both of these areas reflect on the GNWT's commitment to employee recognition.

Action item: Have each department review and/or develop an internal employee recognition approach and encourage all managers to be actively recognizing employee efforts. Non-financial awards have just been increased to recognize employees for long service and service appreciation.

Table A: Overview of Results

| | Strongly Disagree or Disagree | Undecided | Agree or Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| | (%) | (%) | (%) |
| I know how my work contributes to the achievement of my department's goals. | 5.4 | 5.4 | 87.5 |
| I have opportunities to provide meaningful input into decisions that affect my work. | 19.7 | 10.6 | 68.2 |
| I have positive working relationships with my co-workers. | 4.7 | 6.7 | 86.9 |
| I have confidence in our senior leadership | 22.5 | 21.3 | 54.5 |
| The person I report to is an effective leader. | 18.8 | 15.5 | 64.0 |
| I have a positive working relationship with the person I report to. | 7.8 | 11.3 | 79.2 |
| My job is a good fit with my skills and interests. | 5.5 | 7.8 | 85.1 |
| My organization supports my work related learning and development. | 15.2 | 15.2 | 68.2 |
| I have opportunities for career growth within this organization. | 25.2 | 21.7 | 52.1 |
| I receive meaningful recognition for work well done. | 27.2 | 19.0 | 52.8 |
| I have support at work to provide a high level of service. | 18.7 | 18.9 | 61.2 |
| I have support at work to balance my work and personal life. | 17.3 | 16.8 | 64.8 |
| I am satisfied with my job. | 11.7 | 15.9 | 70.9 |
| I am satisfied with this organization. | 20.1 | 23.4 | 54.9 |
| Overall, I am satisfied with my employment. | 9.7 | 16.3 | 72.6 |
| I am proud to tell people I work for this organization. | 11.1 | 20.1 | 67.6 |
| I would prefer to stay with this organization even if offered a similar job elsewhere. | 19.3 | 32.0 | 48.4 |
| Overall, people in this organization are inspired to give their very best. | 26.7 | 25.4 | 47.8 |
| I would recommend this organization as a great place to work. | 18.4 | 26.6 | 54.6 |

Table A Continued...

| | Strongly Disagree or Disagree | Undecided | Agree or Strongly Agree |
|---|--------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| | (%) | (%) | (%) |
| Overall, people in this organization strive to improve its results. | 16.0 | 22.1 | 61.5 |
| My job gives me the chance to do challenging and interesting work. | 10.2 | 10.1 | 79.4 |
| I am satisfied with my workload. | 24.9 | 15.8 | 58.7 |
| I am satisfied with my physical workplace conditions. | 21.3 | 11.6 | 66.5 |
| Commitment to quality is a high priority in this organization. | 19.7 | 19.2 | 60.6 |
| I feel this organization promotes an inclusive public service where staff are treated equitably. | 27.3 | 19.5 | 52.5 |

