



Aging and Disability Services Administration

Addressing Employee Concerns

Thank you for your participation in the 2006 ADSA employee survey!

I am pleased that 75% of you took the time to give your feedback on how we are doing as an agency. The more people participate, the more accurate a picture we get of how ADSA is functioning. Your participation is important and I want you to know your voice is heard.

For technical reasons, we were required to have separate DDD and LTC surveys for the 2006 survey. That caused confusion for a few who somehow got into the wrong survey and thought their division was not included. For future surveys we hope to avoid that problem.

I'm happy to say that many of the survey results are positive, and recognize strengths within our organization. You are part of the team that created those strengths! Of the 18 items for all of DSHS, ADSA scored above the DSHS average for 15 items, and below the DSHS average for only three. (There were also five items added only for ADSA staff.)

While it's great to hear about areas where we are doing well, it's crucial that our supervisors, managers, the directors and I hear about areas where we need to improve. We are using your feedback to strengthen several key areas.

As a result of the survey comments, our main focus is on increasing and encouraging communication about how we use data to make decisions and measure success. We are also continuing to focus on:

- Use of client feedback to evaluate our services.
- Encouraging your feedback and contributions to policy.

I have read your comments and suggestions for improvement. While I cannot address every issue, I have considered your feedback, and prioritized some key issues. The directors are also planning to address specific concerns for their divisions.

Again, I thank you for your participation in the 2006 employee survey. I do take your feedback seriously. While I cannot guarantee changes in every area, I hope the strategies outlined in this Action Plan will address some of the key issues found in the survey. I appreciate your diligence and ongoing hard work for the people we support. I look forward to working with you to strengthen our agency, the ways we work together, and the services we deliver to our clients.

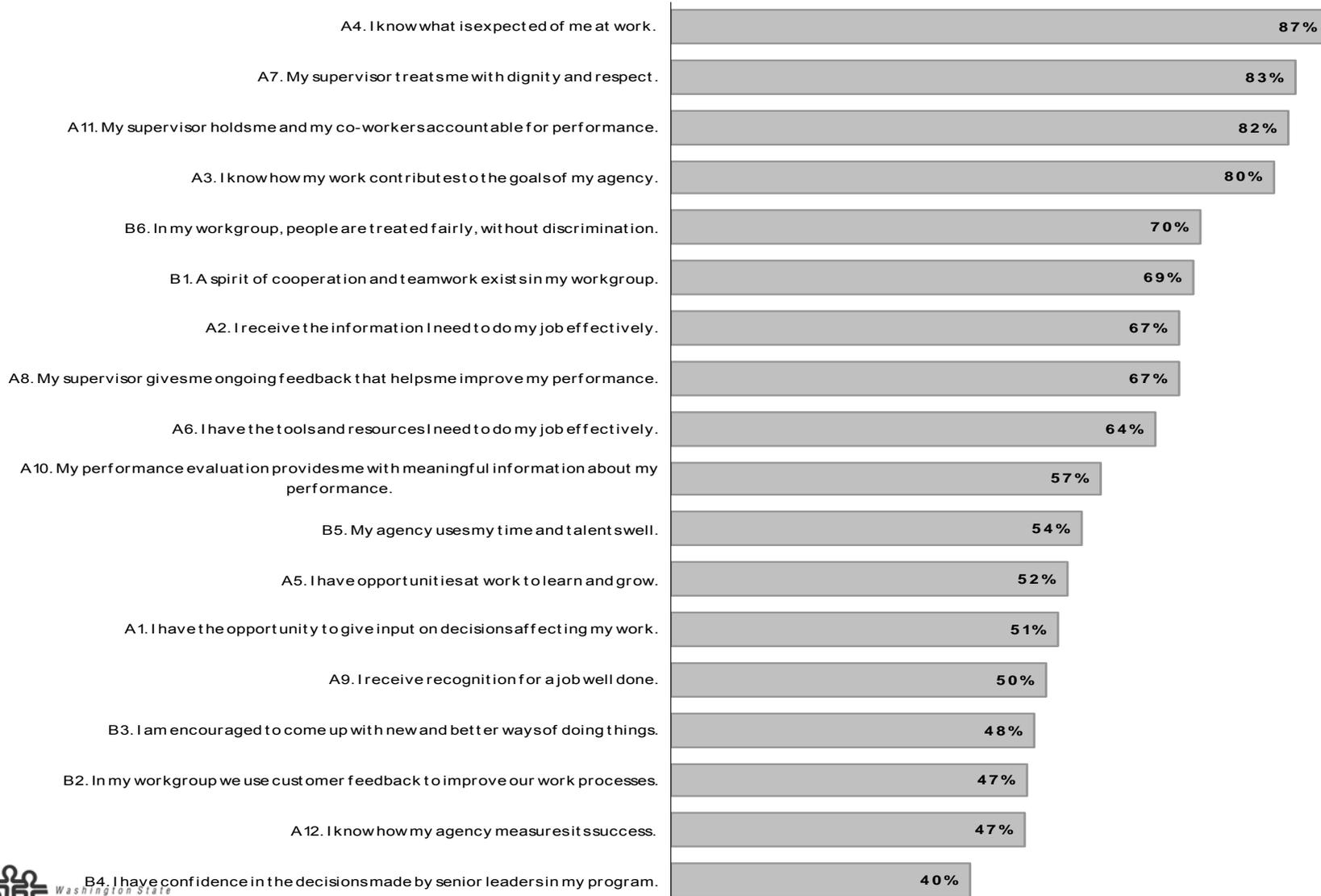
— Kathy Leitch, Assistant Secretary



DSHS Employee Questions

DSHS Employee Survey Action Plan
All AD SA (Including DD)

Questions Ordered By Highest to Lowest Percent Responding "Always" or "Usually"



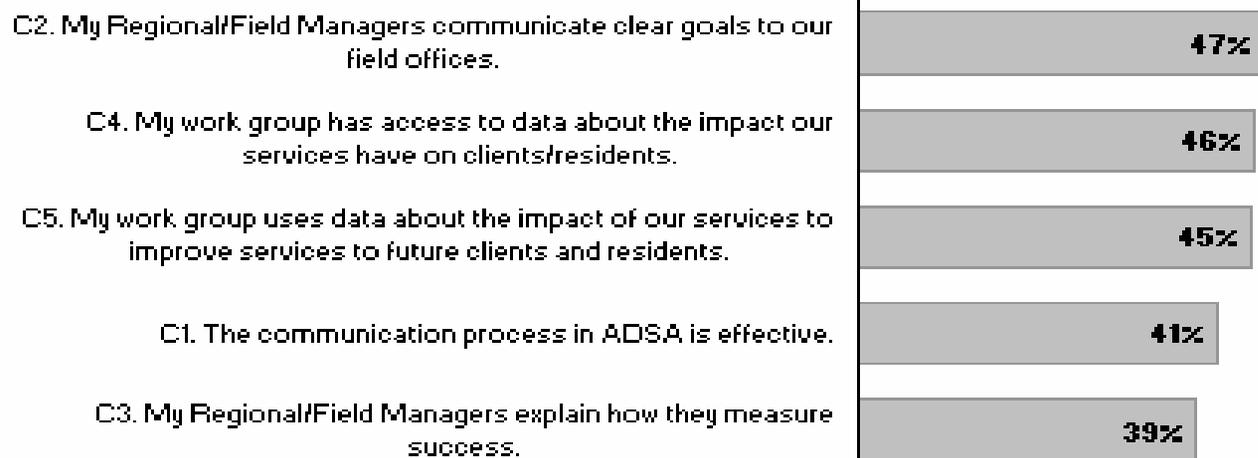


ADSA Questions (not included in other administration surveys)

DSHS Employee Survey - Mar-Apr 2006
ADSA - All ADSA (Including DD)

Questions Ordered By Highest to Lowest Percent Responding "Always" or "Usually"

C. QUESTIONS FOR ALL ADSA EMPLOYEES



4 • Chart C

DSHS RESEARCH AND DATA ANALYSIS DIVISION • MAY 8, 2006



Survey highlights: **Job Satisfaction**

Employee Comments:

"I like the fact that I am making a difference in the quality of life for the elderly and disabled."

"I appreciate my supervisor's flexibility, trust, and encouragement."

"The people I work with are professional and committed to delivering excellent services."

"I know what is expected of me...I appreciate the independence and variety of tasks involved in my every day work."

"More flexible work schedules, telecommuting, exchange time, and Merit raises independent of COLAs."

"We need more FTE's to get the job done successfully including responsiveness and ongoing quality improvement."

"More training for opportunities for career advancement within the agency."

Summary

Most ADSA staff said that things are going well in some very important areas that contribute to basic job satisfaction. For instance:

- 87% of ADSA staff say that they know what is expected of them at work;
- 83% say their supervisor treats them with dignity and respect;
- 82% say their supervisor holds them and their co-workers accountable for performance; and
- 80% say that they know how their work contributes to the goals of ADSA.

Your comments

Your comments in response to the open-ended questions added more detail to areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Here are a few highlights:

What do you like best about your job?

- Co-workers, teamwork, and direct report supervisors
- Having a positive impact on clients' lives
- Satisfaction working with other agencies and providers

What changes would you like to see in your workplace?

- Employee staffing levels, work loads too high
- Desire for more training
- More flexible work schedules
- Employee benefits, cost of living, and competitive wages

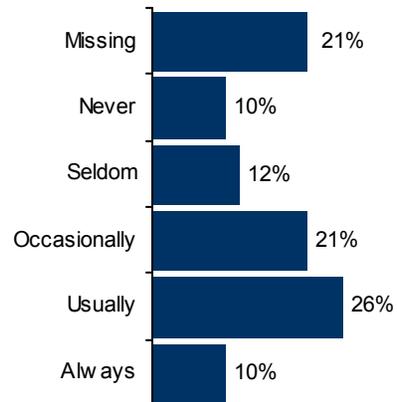
Moving Forward

It's very encouraging that most ADSA staff provided positive feedback on their job satisfaction. We will continue to address our staff's needs in the above areas and do our best to make improvements.



ADSA Questions

Question: My Regional/Field Managers communicate clear goals to our field offices.



Employee Comments:

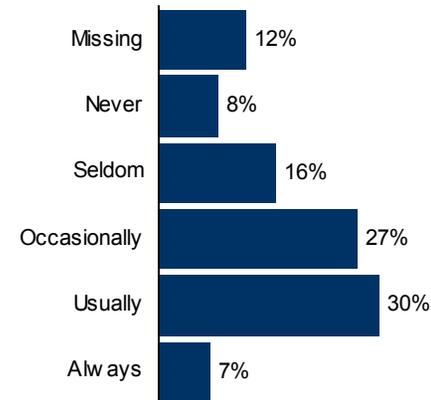
"More information about strategic initiatives and their relationships to various projects...including expected results."

"Big picture connected to little details so that change management can be more efficient and effective."

"Communication from Olympia is non-existent or incomprehensible. The communication between policy and staff who actually do the work has not improved."

"I would like to have input on the policy that I am supposed to implement."

Question: The communication process in ADSA is effective.



Employee Comments:

"Better communication – two way process with feedback. Not just a pass through from top down."

"More encouragement and positive feedback for line staff. Need better recognition of staff accomplishments."

"When you ask what we think be prepared to deal with the response in a positive way."

"The communication stinks. We see little or no information that gets down to the line worker level."



Focus issue: **Use of Data, Decision Making, Measuring Success**

Summary of the Issue

ADSA is one of the largest administrations within DSHS. With over 4,000 employees throughout four divisions it is a challenge to communicate effectively with everyone. A number of survey items point to poor overall and regional communication on goals and how we measure success. Another low scoring area is access to and use of data related to clients and services.

Comments

In the written comments, staff report feeling connected to their co-workers and immediate supervisors, but disconnected from the policy changes and decisions of senior management. Field staff cite poor communication in receiving changes to policy and how to handle increased work load. Some staff report that policy changes do not incorporate staff or client feedback. Many staff report low confidence in the decisions made by senior leaders.

What we are already doing

- All divisions regularly involve staff from the regions in development of policies and procedures but clearly many people are not aware of this level of involvement.
- Our Government Management Accountability and Performance (GMAP) reports and sessions with the governor are reported to all staff by e-mail and posted on the Intranet.
- Our Intranet websites and *Inside ADSA* newsletter feature information on new programs policy changes, and activities within the divisions.
- Management Bulletins (MBs) communicate changes to policy and procedure. Drafts of MB's are posted for staff to review and comment. MBs now include more context and background information for staff.



Our plan for the coming year

It appears ADSA staff would like more information on how decisions are made and data is used. We are creating talking points to assist supervisors in communicating with staff about how their work connects with data and measuring success. The talking points will help connect our employees' work with the ADSA mission, strategic plan, and the GMAP process.

Talking points will:

- Provide consistent information to understand links between line staff work, agency mission/strategic plan, and outcomes for GMAP.
- Support supervisors and office chiefs in providing information to staff.
- Provide regular opportunities for discussion or changes and challenges in our work.
- Broaden our understanding of efforts in other divisions.

In addition to the talking points, we want to gain a better understanding of these issues from the line staff point of view. Over the next year, the directors and I will work with staff in each region to get your input on communication and employee issues. I'll let you know more as we finalize the plans.



Other important issues

These are also important issues

- Less than half of employees feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.
- Only 47% of employees feel ADSA uses customer feedback to improve our work processes.

Our plan

As an administration, we will focus mainly on the issues around the use of data, decision making, and measuring success. However, our managers will also work to make improvements whenever possible in the areas above, and other issues they have identified that are specific to their divisions.

Thank you again for helping us understand what is important to you, and how ADSA is doing as an organization. Although we can't address every issue, the directors, Regional Administrators, and I will focus on the areas that appear to be highest priority.