



Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Addressing Employee Concerns



As in previous surveys, the 2007 Employee Survey confirms that DVR employees know how DVR measures success and how their work contributes to its goals. Staff in all three Areas and State Office say they know what is expected of them and believe they are held accountable for performance. These strengths will help tremendously as we move beyond order of selection and are able to provide services to people with disabilities when they come to us for services.

Almost every DVR employee (99%) participated in the survey and over 80% added comments in response to the open-ended questions. Over half of those who commented voiced their satisfaction in working directly with clients. This passion and commitment is what makes DVR a great organization!

The survey results also highlighted areas needing improvement. Two issues that I want to see DVR focus on over the next year include “using customer feedback to improve work processes” and “recognition for a job well done.” We need to learn from DVR clients how we can more effectively meet their needs and then follow up on their feedback. I also feel strongly about improving how we express appreciation for the important work our employees do every day.

We have the opportunity now to look forward with optimism and change our strategies from addressing the waiting list to improving services and outcomes for DVR clients. Your responses tell me you are ready for new challenges.

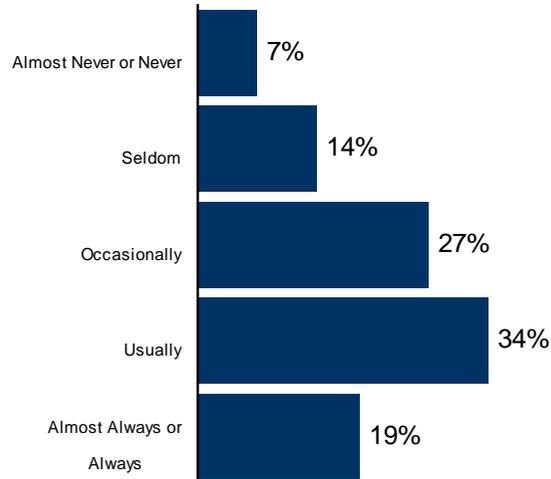
Thanks again for your input and for the work you are doing. You do make a difference!

– Lynnae Rutledge, Director



Focus Issue: Using Customer Feedback to Improve Work Processes

Question: *In my workgroup we use customer feedback to improve our work processes.*



Employees say:

"The contact with customers diminishes with increase of documentation and other paperwork."

"Need better communication and... figure out way to streamline the process."

Summary of the Issue

Some staff shared that they are not aware of how DVR gets customer feedback and not sure how or whether that feedback is used to improve work processes. 53% of staff answered this question with "always or usually." In addition, staff made 73 comments about needing to improve "work processes and policies."

What we're already doing

- DVR surveys customers who leave the program after receiving services in an individualized plan – whether they are rehabilitated or not.
- Survey results are studied annually and compared to other surveys of DVR clients.
- The State Rehabilitation Council holds quarterly forums to hear from clients in different geographic areas.

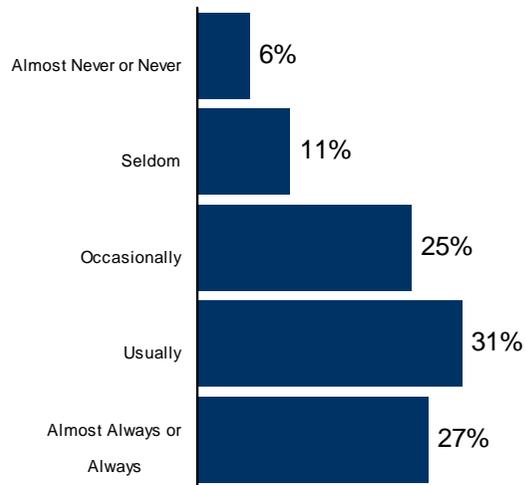
Our plan for the coming year

- Share results of DVR's Customer Survey broadly with staff and make the results available on the DVR Intranet.
- Use information in employee survey comments concerning work processes and policies to identify and make improvements.
- Work collaboratively with State Rehabilitation Council to learn more from customers attending forums and consider hosting additional focus groups in local areas with DVR.
- Identify links between customer feedback and ways to improve work processes.
- Learn from staff about informal feedback from customers and how to use the feedback to make improvements.
- Work with Customer Service Program Manager to capture and use feedback from customer service calls and customer complaints, including those that result in fair hearings.



Focus Issue: Recognition for Job Well Done

Question: *I receive recognition for a job well done.*



Employees say:

"I like the independence that we have on the job and the feeling of being appreciated and listened to by my supervisor."

"The message we receive is that we are not working hard enough."

Summary of the Issue

DVR staff contribute the heart, soul, and hard work that helps individuals with disabilities receive services and improve their lives. 128 staff commented about the satisfaction of working with clients. DVR knows that dedicated employees create success and staff need to know their efforts are appreciated. We want to continue improving in this area.

What we've recently done

- Lynnae and members of the Senior Leadership Team traveled throughout the state to personally thank staff and recognize efforts made to help end the waiting list.
- Area Managers and Supervisors held local celebrations to recognize the efforts of staff to serve everyone who had been waiting.
- Staff were recognized at Area In-Service training meetings.
- Various groups of staff provided input about how, and in which settings they prefer to be recognized.

Our plan for the coming year

- Supervisors will learn ways to provide on-going, timely, and personalized recognition to the staff in their units. This might include activities to learn from staff as well as learn from experts about recognition.
- Staff will have the opportunity to nominate co-workers for recognition at the September statewide in-service training.
- Area Managers and the Field Services Administrator will attend regional and local recognition events to reinforce recognition and further support staff.
- Each Field Services unit will receive training that focuses on individual strengths and effective teamwork. This training is intended to help recognize the unique skills and talents of staff, as well as strengthen DVR's work with customers.



Other important issues

Additional Information

- Statewide results include 29 comments on “Other Management Issues” that “need work.” These comments include issues and ideas with the following themes: pressure to perform, ways of doing business, case services, and personnel. Some of these ideas could result in additional organizational improvements.
- Results for the employees in each Area and State Office show a variety of perspectives and levels of satisfaction. The differences vary more at the unit level, and deserve individualized attention to recognize and identify possible improvements.
- The tool developed by RDA/DSHS has helped synthesize the results for each Area, State Office, and Statewide. This provides another way to analyze results and weigh the strength of the comments, changes from the prior survey, comparison to DSHS-wide results, and the actual scores for each question.

Our plan

- Supervisors will continue to review results with their units and get feedback from staff.
- The Director’s Advisory Committee will lead efforts to link the improvement efforts identified through the Employee Survey Results with organizational improvements and help communicate results to other staff.
- The Senior Leadership Team will help keep the focus on key areas for improvement and communicate the focus.
- The Field Services Unit will help make the strength based trainings support employee development and recognition.
- Progress will be periodically assessed at Statewide Management Team meetings and information shared with all staff on the Intranet.