



## Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

### *Addressing Employee Concerns*

As in previous surveys, the 2009 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. And most staff say that their supervisor treats them with dignity and respect. These are organizational strengths that help us provide services to people with disabilities when they come to us for services.

Most DVR employees (96%) participated in the survey and about 75% of those who participated 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. We will focus on two areas over the coming year, “recognition for a job well done” and “support in living a healthier life.” These are both extremely important and many staff feel they do not regularly get recognition or support.

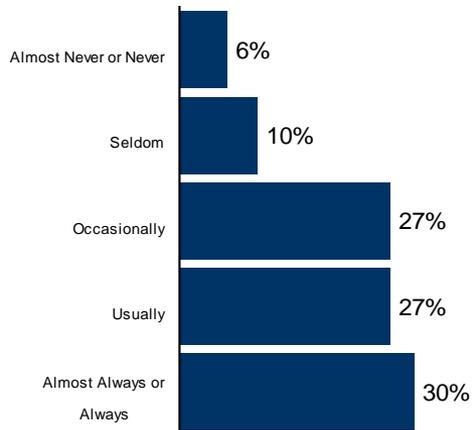
I welcome your ideas and input about how to make DVR a better place to work. Thanks again for your completion of the survey and your thoughtful input. I appreciate the work you do.

**– Andres Aguirre, Interim Director**



## Focus Issue: Recognition for Job Well Done

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



### Employees say:

*“Continue (and increase) efforts to give positive feedback and recognition to staff for their extra efforts and exemplary performance.”*

*“My supervisor is excellent at making me feel valued and acknowledges my hard work.”*

### Summary of the Issue

DVR staff contribute the heart, soul, and hard work that helps individuals with disabilities receive services and improve their lives. 109 staff commented about their satisfaction of working with clients. DVR knows that dedicated employees create success and staff need to know their efforts are appreciated. In addition to answering the question about receiving recognition, staff made 22 comments about recognition with 17 focused on the need for improvement.

### What we’ve already done

- DVR identified this as a top issue following the Employee Surveys in 2006 and 2007.
- Over the past two years, the Director’s Advisory Committee and Senior Rehabilitation Team have discussed what works best, what needs the most work, types of recognition, and preferences.
- Each year, DVR participates in peer nominations, a committee selection of staff awards, and annual employee celebrations in each of the 3 Areas and State Office.
- An integrated approach using motivational interviewing has started that is hoped to help staff build on their strengths as they work together and serve customers.

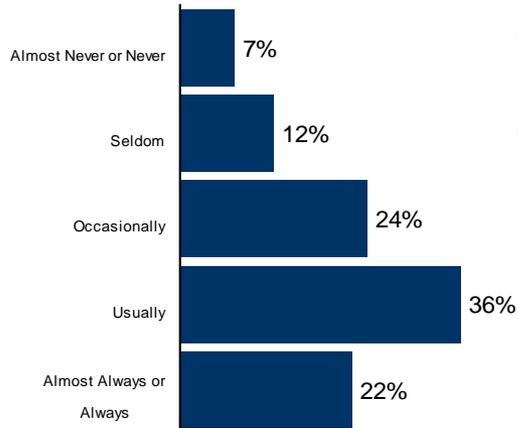
### Our plan for the coming year

- Continue focus on the recommendations from staff that encourage local efforts and “in the moment,” ongoing recognition.
- Provide statewide support for formal and informal recognition efforts, including on-line nominating and reference materials for helping develop meaningful informal focus.
- Develop training to help local supervisors take steps to use an integrated approach of motivational interviewing with units.
- Provide resources to the Areas and State Office to fund local recognition efforts.



## Focus Issue: Support Staff in Living a Healthier Life

**Question:** Overall, my agency supports me in living a healthier life.



### Summary of the Issue

Healthy living means a variety of things and at DVR includes providing a safe work setting, positive environment, and good work/life balance for staff. We recognize at both the business and personal levels that healthy living is influenced by a broad range of factors and choices. In order to impact those factors and choices it is important that we continue increasing our knowledgebase and awareness about healthy living initiatives. We need to act on decisions that will enhance our health and reduce our risk, both at work and at home.

### What we've recently done

- Wellness activities are discussed at some unit staff meetings and staff are encouraged to make healthy decisions, including snack choices and exercise.
- Resource and reference materials on wellness issues are shared through email and via wellness DVR SharePoint site and DSHS wellness information links.
- Staffing units participated in wellness discussion and information sharing.

### Our plan for the coming year

- Share ideas and encourage wellness activities at local level.
- Provide information and training on the link between stress and injuries and ergonomics that can help reduce and prevent repetitive stress problems.
- Review offices for safety and accessibility.
- Learn from staff their challenges in finding work/life balance.
- Continue to encourage the department's focus on completing the Health Risk Assessments provided by individual medical insurance programs.
- Use upcoming statewide management meetings to promote wellness and learn about needs.
- Management will ensure that hiring freeze exemption requests are submitted as direct service vacancies occur to maintain healthier caseload levels and prevent burnout.