



Planning, Performance and Accountability

Building on Our Strengths



CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, please
contact
Jody Becker-Green, PhD
360.902-7790

It is both an honor and a privilege to work with you. Thank you for taking the time to respond to the employee survey as well as to participate in our recent employee focus groups. I appreciate your honest and frank dialog, your insights into what is working well and your thoughts about what we can continuously improve.

Together, we have created and fostered an environment that allows people to thrive, that promotes a healthy work-life balance, and that respects the unique talents, skills and contributions of each another. Even though we have faced many challenges over the past couple of years, we continue to deliver rigorous, strategic and timely work that truly does impact the lives of those we serve.

Our exceptionally high ratings on our employee survey allow us to build upon our strengths while finding ways to address those areas where we can make our work environment even better. Through our collective wisdom, increased opportunities for conversation with one another and targeting of efforts in a few areas, I am confident we will continue shine.

— Jody Becker-Green, Senior Director



FOCUS ISSUE | Communication

Summary of the issue

- This is a year of many transitions and it is critical that we are well-informed, strategic in our thinking and actions, and aligned with other departmental activities. This requires a new level of intentionality in all of our communications with one another and with our key customers and partners.

What we're already doing

- Convene PPA work groups on cross-agency issues to coordinate strategies and activities with one another (e.g., housing and homelessness and education).
- Redesigned PPA intranet site to be more user-friendly and reflective of the myriad of work that PPA is engaged in.
- Convene regular leadership team meetings to share information with one another.
- Conduct listening sessions with staff to hear concerns and questions.

Our plan for the coming year

- Convene regular opportunities (e.g., quarterly) to gather with one another to hear about what is happening within the department and PPA as well as to ask questions or raise concerns. Commit to creating a space and opportunity for staff to come together to think differently about our work, our future, and our priorities.
- Develop intentional communication strategies that are based on feedback from staff in terms of what they would like to know and how they would like to receive the information.
- Use meetings to establish a culture of shared management and strategic planning.
- Increase opportunities for dialog across PPA to learn from one another and identify areas for enhanced coordination.



FOCUS ISSUE | Opportunities for Growth and Learning

Summary of the issue

- We have a very professional and talented staff. Promoting opportunities for growth and learning was an issue identified in both the employee survey and focus groups as an area for continuous improvement.

What we're already doing

- Project leads and report authors are acknowledged and listed in project summaries, technical publications and correspondences.
- PPA websites broadly distribute staff reports and contributions.

Our plan for the coming year

- Use quarterly forums to discuss potential growth and learning opportunities for staff.
- Look for opportunities in contracted work to include expectations about dissemination of work products.
- With staff, develop strategies to identify opportunities for conference participation and training.
- Identify ways to fund staff development and growth within current budget restrictions.



FOCUS ISSUE | Recognition/Staff Appreciation Events

Summary of the issue

- PPA staff work very hard to accomplish all that we do. While team members are largely self-motivated and know their value, each person needs to be acknowledged for their efforts and appreciated for their unique contributions.

What we're already doing

- Events like the "Leap Year " event are held to acknowledge staff in a fun and respectful way.
- PPA websites broadly distribute staff reports and contributions.
- Some managers regularly acknowledge staff accomplishments.

Our plan for the coming year

- Use quarterly forms and other get-togethers as opportunity to recognize staff for their accomplishments and contributions.
- Look for opportunities within the current fiscal environment to honor staff for all they do.
- Ask staff to participate in identifying strategies and options for staff appreciation and recognition. This may include a committee to formulate and implement recommendations.



FOCUS ISSUE | Workload Prioritization and Management

Summary of the issue

- The work we do to support the Department in fulfilling its mission is vital. Oftentimes, we find ourselves with competing demands on our time. Working in a fast-paced environment requires us to be diligent about workload prioritization and management. This is an ongoing challenge that is ripe for continuous improvement.

What we're already doing

- Weekly Management Team meetings.
- Weekly meetings with Office Chiefs.
- Routine project specific planning meetings.

Our plan for the coming year

- Develop a process for managing and prioritizing the many *ad hoc* requests that come into the organization.
- Develop a process for managing and prioritizing the many data share agreements we manage on behalf of DSHS, the state and the Institutional Review Board.
- Develop a process for managing the many contracts we have with a wide variety of business partners.
- Share agency priorities regularly with managers and staff.
- Ensure communication at each level of management: Clearly define our priorities and alignment with overall PPA and DSHS priorities.
- Ask staff to participate in identifying strategies and options for prioritizing work in each section and across PPA. This may include a committee to formulate and implement recommendations.



Summary

Each focus issue identified is important. It is our intent to take your feedback and engage you in how we make PPA an even better environment for working and contributing to the public good. In addition to the specific activities detailed earlier we plan to:

- Look for ways to incorporate the focus issues into planning and daily work.
- Remind managers and staff why the issues are important
- Keep these in mind during our business planning process and in everyday decision making
- Encourage staff/managers/supervisors to work on and discuss these issues within workgroups
- Develop new and/or advertise existing methods for staff to surface serious issues like bullying and unfair practices
- Revisit these issues periodically with all staff

While we may not be able to separately address every individual concern or situation brought forward on the survey, we are glad to hear what issues concern our employees, and will do our best to respond.

Once again I want to reaffirm our gratitude for all the thoughtful input on the survey and all the terrific work you do every day on behalf of Washington State citizens.

It is truly an honor to get to know and work with each of you!