



Financial Services Administration

Addressing Employee Concerns

We value:

Diversity in race, ethnicity, personal beliefs, and opinions, which enrich our working environment

Respect for the dignity of self-worth of each individual and each other as our most valuable resource and individual contributions

Open, honest, and clear communication

Personal responsibility for creating a professional and friendly workplace

Participation in problem solving, teamwork, and the generation and implementation of new ideas to accomplish FSA goals

Recognition of employee accomplishments and opportunities for personal and professional growth

Clearly defined goals and expectations and continuous quality improvement of our services

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, please contact **Davis Garabato** at **360.664.5849**.



Thank you for your input. We've heard what you had to say and we're committed to addressing your concerns.

This year, 211 out of 246 (86%) of staff responded to the 2006 FSA Employee Survey, an increase of 34% from 2003-2004. Such a high percentage of responses not only helps us in providing an accurate look at the health of our organization but also reaffirms our core set of values that guide our actions in the workplace.

Many of the survey results are encouraging and recognize improvements made after the last survey. Overall:

- We improved in 18 of 23 questions over the 2004 results
- Scored above the DSHS average on all of the 18 DSHS-wide questions
- Had double digit increases in such areas as:
 - Supervisors giving feedback that helps staff improve performance
 - Knowing how your work contributes to agency goals
 - Staff are treated fairly, with dignity and respect
 - Work Performance accountability
- We scored significantly above the DSHS average in areas such as:
 - Opportunity to give input on decisions affecting your work
 - Opportunity to learn and grow
 - Encouragement to come up with new and better ways of doing things
 - Cooperation and Teamwork

While these results are reassuring, you also shared information about areas that could use improvement. Issues that are most important to you are:

- Using customer feedback to improve work processes
- Receiving recognition for a job well done
- Using your time and talents well
- Expanding Performance Accountability

Each office (OAS, OFR, ITO and Budget) has developed an action plan to identify solutions to address 3-5 areas that staff identified as the greatest potential for showing realistic improvement. This Action Plan summarizes common issues shared by each office and provides an opportunity for us to address them over the next two years. It was created by the Executive Management Team and represents managements commitment to work on the issues identified from your survey responses.

I know I can count on each of you to actively participate in these solutions within your respective offices. Your participation and feedback are critical.

Thank you for responding to the survey, for all of your hard work and making FSA a better place to work. For more detailed information about the employee survey, visit the FSA Web site.

- Stan Marshburn, Chief Financial Officer



Focus Issue: Using Customer Feedback to Improve Work Processes

Summary of the Issue

FSA scored 9% higher than the DSHS average on this topic, however 43 staff (28%) felt we seldom or never use customer feedback to improve processes. In addition, FSA experienced a 22% decrease in this category over the past two years.

What we're already doing

Focus/work groups, including line staff, to review survey results, determine common definitions of terms and identify the cause for the ratings and to propose solutions. Each office has a different perspective on how they view their clients and how to provide effective customer service. Questions for staff feedback include:

- Is the focus on customer feedback or on the ability to improve a process
- Why do you believe this level of feedback was given
- Who is the customer for your position, section and office
- How should we address this item – by each individual section or an office as whole
- If addressed, what would this do to improve your position, section or office

“Some ideas include presenting our findings at unit meetings and making our presentation to the Executive Management Team and made available to staff on line”

Our plan - Convene focus/workgroups within each office with strong representation from line staff to address this issue by:

- Gathering more information and conducting customer surveys.
- Developing an FSA wide strategy for obtaining routine customer feedback.
- Providing feedback and recommendations for solutions
- Discussing proposals for improvement and try to reach common agreement and understanding
- Gathering feedback on related training issues and propose suggestions
- Allowing staff to select option(s) and to assist with implementation



Focus Issue: Receiving Recognition For a Job Well Done

Employees say:

"More opportunities for advancement and recognition of employees who do a good job."

"Here I can show I have talents though these are hardly recognized. But I don't care because I know that I am doing a good job."

"My current position has allowed for me to feel that my input is important."

Summary of the Issue

While 61% of staff felt they received recognition for a job well done, 33 staff (39%) felt we seldom or never recognize staff. In addition, FSA experienced an 8% increase in this category over the past two years and scored 12% above the DSHS average.

In the past two years, each office within FSA have made great efforts to recognize and appreciate the work of it's employees. This was prompted in part by input from the 2002-2004 survey. In the current survey, the general feeling among line staff was that they were not valued. After reviewing survey responses, we concluded that staff wanted to be recognized more from management and not just appreciation from supervisors for doing good deeds.

What we're already doing

- Employee appreciation and recognition provided at Quarterly All staff meetings
- Employee recognition and appreciation awards at the Annual FSA Picnic
- Office staff social gatherings throughout the year
- Selection of outstanding employees to attend the Certified Public Manager Course and the UW, Cascade Center's Executive Management Program.

Our plan – Convene a workgroup with strong representation from line staff to address this issue by:

- Changing the Quarterly All Staff Meeting to a Semi-Annual Employee Recognition Celebration to announce milestones recognized, retirements, and new staff introductions. The difference should be recognition, not business.
- Developing a website (w/mailbox) for all staff to complete an appreciation award.
- Having each supervisor be responsible for writing up recognition for 1 employee or unit group to be presented at Employee Recognition Meeting by their Manager.
- Developing appropriate guidelines to avoid "popularity contests" and to ensure that the same staff are not the only employee's recognized.



Focus Issue: Using Your Time and Talents Well

Question: *My agency uses my time and talents well.*

Employees say:
I can use my talents to help the rest of my unit succeed and make it a better working place. My supervisor trusts in me and my decisions.

I'm able to add value to the team based on my proven talents and abilities.

I have the flexibility to do my job in a way that makes me more effective.

My supervisor seeks out my skills and expertise to contribute.

Summary of the Issue

FSA scored 6% higher than the DSHS average of 51% on this issue. 44 staff responded that we occasionally use their skills and abilities, but 28 staff felt we seldom or never used their time and talents well.

What we're already doing

- Focus/work group reviewing survey results and comments
- Focus/work group encouraged to think out of the box when brainstorming suggestions and recommending solutions
- Define the two issues in the wording "time and talent" e.g.. Do staff members really believe their time here is wasted or that because their talents are not being utilized, their time is wasted?

Our Plan - Convene a workgroup with strong representation from line staff to address this issue by:

- Discussing rotational assignments/positions designed to discover "hidden" talents
- Conducting internal survey of staff to identify areas of interest and aptitudes
- Compiling survey data and use as a resource for future positions in teams, projects, etc. that best utilizes an individual's talent.
- Surveying each unit or office for clarification by researching and identifying additional tools that could better utilize staff talents.



Focus Issue: Expanding Performance Accountability

Question: *My supervisor holds me and my co-workers accountable for performance.*

Employees say: *Potential for improvement from the research I do.*

Hold everyone accountable.

Always given the opportunity to do new things.

My opinion is respected and I am allowed to work independently.

Flexibility and high standards.

I'd like to see more mentoring from DSHS managers.

Summary of the Issue

77% of staff felt they received ongoing feedback and that they and their co-workers were held Accountable for performance, only 13% did not. However, FSA scored 13% above the DSHS average on this issue, which is an increase of 15% from the 2003-04 survey. In addition, five questions related to goals, merit and measures were the lowest scoring questions on the survey.

What we're already doing

- FSA supervisors and managers complete timely performance evaluations on all staff
- Staff are held accountable through the performance development plan process
- FSA is held accountable for measures related to FSA activities that appear on the FSA GMAP report

Our plan

- Report FSA data for the new GMAP Human Resource Management Report on Standard Performance Measures (HR Scorecard). Address results as needed.
- Complete an all FSA self-assessment using the Governor's Agency Self-Assessment Form as a model and follow up with results.
- Identify and work on better ways to coach and mentor employees between evaluations



Other important issues

We probably can't appropriately address every individual situation brought forward on the survey in our action plan. However, that doesn't mean additional issues are not important to us or will not be addressed in some way. Each office has developed separate action plans to address those additional issues staff identified as needing improvement. The following are some of the additional issues raised by the survey and our informal plans to address them.

Other issues identified as important

- Confidence in the decisions made by senior leaders
- How my agency measures its success
- Opportunities to learn and grow
- Tools and resources

Our informal plans to address these issues

- Remind managers and staff why these are important
- Discuss future measurement/tracking of office progress outside the formal survey process
- Encourage staff/managers/supervisors to work on and discuss these at the workgroup level
- Incorporate into supervisor/management training
- Encourage informal and formal mentoring
- Build and follow-up on employee succession plans
- Encourage career development opportunities such as in-training, cross-training, or developmental job assignments

We are glad to hear what issues concern our employees, and we will do our best to respond to them. Thank you again for your thoughtful, honest and invaluable input. We are committed to working together with you in making FSA a better place work.