



## Management Services Administration

*Addressing Employee Concerns*

### **Thank you for your input. We are interested. We are committed.**

The workplace environment should be one that promotes open lines of communication, encourages teamwork and cooperation, and recognizes successes and personal achievement. It is my goal that every Management Services Administration (MSA) employee be satisfied with his/her job and the workplace. It's a goal that requires not only my support and commitment, but yours as well.

MSA had an outstanding survey response rate of 90 percent. I've reviewed the results of the survey and I've read all 677 comments. Your comments are instrumental in identifying what we're doing right, as well as areas where there is room for improvement. As you'll see on the following pages, we've selected a few important issues for initial focus – as many respondents point out, our workloads are high and many changes can be overwhelming. If we focus on everything, sometimes nothing gets done.

Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to share your thoughts. Your opinions matter and are the foundation for strengthening our workplace environment. Please visit the MSA home page on the web for more detailed information about the employee survey.

*Kathy*

– Kathleen Brockman, Chief Administrative Officer

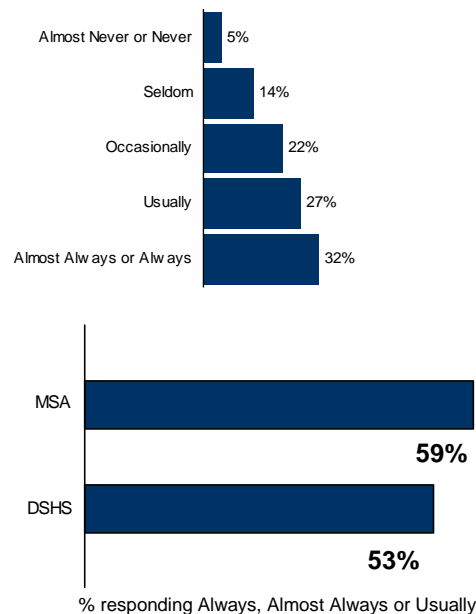
### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

For more information, please contact **Wendy Long** at **360-902-8180**.



## Focus Issue: Ensuring adequate training opportunities throughout MSA

**Question:** *I have opportunities at work to learn and grow.*



**Employees say:**

*“Allow more training funds for individuals...The costs may be expensive, but the paybacks are enormous...”*

### Summary of the Issue

Requests for more training opportunities was a common theme throughout the employee survey comments. Training is an integral element of growth and development throughout an employee’s career. It’s also a critical component of succession planning in order to ensure that we have an adequately trained staff to meet program needs in a constantly changing environment. Our challenge lies in delivering quality training to staff with limited resources.

### What we’re already doing

- Identifying individual training needs/desires as a component of the performance review process.
- Identifying ways to maximize training opportunities (i.e. large group settings).
- Ensuring completion of all mandatory training requirements.
- Providing a specific allotment for training to emphasize the importance of staff development.

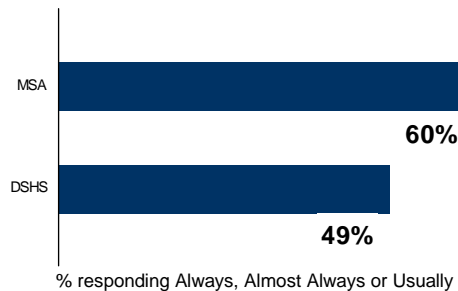
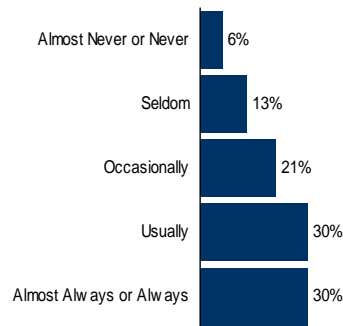
### Our plan for the coming year

- Identify and prioritize critical training needs.
- Develop cross-administration training opportunities on key topics.
- Identify training opportunities on the MSA website.



## Focus Issue: Employee Recognition

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



**Employees say they would like to see:**

*“More appreciation by upper management and a better connection with them as people.....Typically you only hear about your “good work” in speeches at employee recognition time or an all staff meeting...”*

### Summary of the Issue

Although 60 percent of MSA staff responded that they almost always or usually receive recognition for a job well done, the remaining 40 percent indicate that consistent recognition is missing. In a busy environment with constantly changing priorities, our focus often tends to be on getting the job done – on schedule and with high quality results. What we sometimes forget, is that behind that on-time delivery and quality product is a focused employee who gave extra effort and attention to ensuring successful completion of an assignment/project.

### What we’re already doing

- Annual employee recognition events.
- Informal employee recognition when we become aware of outstanding performance or a job well done.

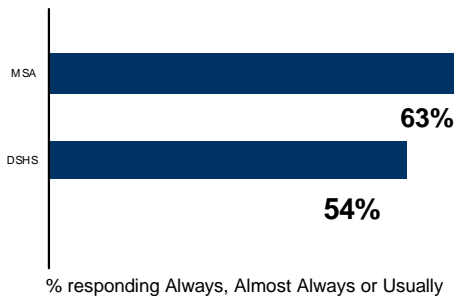
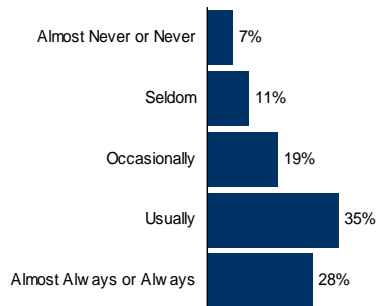
### Our plan for the coming year:

- Asking managers/supervisors to let senior managers know about jobs well done – we want to thank our employees for their efforts, but we need you to keep us informed of what’s happening in your work units.
- Asking employees for their suggestions on how we might improve the formal recognition process.
- Increasing the visibility of senior managers in workplaces so they can see and understand the work MSA employees do.
- Develop a Kudos page on the newly redesigned MSA intranet site. This page is intended to be a tool for all MSA managers/staff to publicly recognize the contributions of their employees/peers on an ongoing basis.



## Focus Issue: Providing meaningful performance evaluations

**Question:** *My performance evaluation provides me with meaningful information about my performance.*



### **Employees say they would like:**

*“More input about job performance. The evaluations that are given are too generic. They tell you nothing about how to better your job performance.”*

### **Summary of the Issue**

Our success as an organization depends upon ensuring that staff have the information they need to meet or exceed performance expectations. The annual employee performance evaluation is a critical part of the individual performance management process. It is intended to be an interactive process between the evaluating supervisor and employee. It allows the supervisor to establish clear expectations, support employee growth and development, provides assessment and feedback and allows for appropriate recognition or correction. Employee participation in the process is important, and allows the employee to communicate successes and problems, and to seek clarification regarding expectations and performance. In the current survey, over one-third of MSA staff have given us the message that we can improve the performance evaluation process.

### **What we’re already doing**

- Quarterly reporting of performance evaluation completion status in an effort to ensure that all employees’ performance is evaluated in a timely manner on an annual basis.

### **Our plan for the coming year**

- Establish annual performance expectations at the beginning of the evaluation period for each employee.
- Gather information about the performance evaluation process – through:
  - A closer look at individual survey comments
  - Requests for employee input via the MSA Suggestions email
- Consider possible solutions, among the possibilities:
  - Supervisor training on effective performance management
  - Development of an addendum to the performance development plan that allows for employee satisfaction feedback on the evaluation process.



## Other important issues

### **These are also important issues that we need to be aware of:**

- Communication throughout the organization can be improved.
- We need to increase efforts to improve employee confidence in senior management.
- Many of you would like to have more flexibility in your work schedule.

### **There are areas in which we're doing well:**

- MSA supervisors treat their staff with dignity and respect.
- MSA employees know what is expected of them and supervisors hold their employees accountable for performance.
- MSA employees find their jobs to be challenging, rewarding and feel a sense of accomplishment.

### **Our plan**

- It's important that we look at not only the areas in which improvements are needed, but also at the areas in which we are performing well.
- Your issues and suggestions will be considered in our everyday decision making.
- Although we've selected only three key areas to focus our improvement efforts, staff/managers/supervisors are encouraged to also identify focus areas for their division/office/workgroup.
- We intend to revisit these issues as we complete our action plans for other focus areas.

As you know, we can't separately address every individual situation brought forward on the survey. In many cases, the anonymity of the survey keeps us from finding an exact location. But we are glad to hear what issues concern you, and will do our best to respond to them. I encourage you to share your thoughts and suggestions regarding the workplace with me and have set up an email address for this purpose at [MSASuggestions@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:MSASuggestions@dshs.wa.gov).

Thank you again for your thoughtful input.