



ECONOMIC SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Addressing Employee Concerns

Action Plan Progress Report

August 31, 2007

FOCUS AREAS:

- **Recognition for a job well done (50%)**
- **Opportunity to give input into the decision-making process (48%)**
- **Using customer feedback to improve work processes (43%)**
- **Lack of confidence in decision made by senior leaders (35%)**

So far, we've:

- Conducted focus groups, forums, and staff discussions at local, regional, and headquarter levels in an effort to better understand the responses
- Implemented local action plans based on the input received during these discussions
- Identified three primary themes, based on written comments and staff discussion, that cross-cut ESA
- Implemented a variety of initiatives designed to address concerns identified in the 2006 survey

Future actions:

- Continue to focus on making ESA an employer of choice, using a variety of initiatives, from providing strong staff development opportunities and "leadership at all levels" campaigns, to executive management listening tours and incorporating employee recognition into local GMAP reviews.
- Prepare for the 2007 survey, encouraging active staff participation



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So far, we've:

- Continued to build on the information gained from post-survey activities to: engage and learn from staff; provide opportunities for staff to learn and grow; recognize staff; improve work processes; improve communication and increase confidence in senior leadership
- Completed formal field office visits to all offices by DCS' Division Director. "Drop-in" visits to all field offices offer an opportunity to talk to each staff member individually and personally deliver a "thank you" letter for their effort on DCS FFY '06 performance results.
- Routinely used our iESA website to post articles on the staff survey, leadership, and related issues and activities in an attempt to engage staff (42 articles on posted to date)
- Implemented local activities directly targeted at recognition, such as:
 - ✓ **Spokane Division of Child Support** -- Teams within Spokane DCS present GMAP sessions to their Management Team. One slide on each team presentation is focused on what they are doing to recognize staff in their area. This keeps a spotlight on the importance of regularly seizing opportunities to recognize staff. This practice was shared by Spokane at their August 2007 DCS-level GMAP session in Olympia with other offices
 - ✓ **Operations Support** – Operations Support hosted its annual staff recognition and barbeque to celebrate the outstanding contributions of the Ops Support staff



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- Focused on gathering staff input into major issues concerning the administration. For example:
 - ✓ Conducted listening tours in each DEAP region to gather input from staff regarding the newly formed Division of Employment and Assistance Programs. The Division Director and Chiefs of Policy, Field Operations, and Communication had the opportunity to hear from roughly 180 staff regarding their concerns and recommendations. In the day-long tours, DEAP leadership met with management groups and cross-section staff groups to hear “what’s working” and “what’s not working”. Follow-up plans are being developed to address the key issues.
 - ✓ Focused significant attention on listening to staff through field office visits by senior DCS leaders to explain upcoming DRA changes in person and listen to staff suggestions. The draft policy document was posted for staff and stakeholder comment. Many changes were made because of input received.
 - ✓ Provided a tour of the Hub Imaging Unit (HIU) in the Region 3 Document Management System (DMS) and provided DEAP leadership (Dori Shoji, Acting Director; Cindy Mund, Acting Chief of Field Operations; and Pat Seigler, Acting Communications Chief) the opportunity to experience a “Day in the Life of the HIU” as part of the DEAP Listening Tour. HIU staff were honored by the visit and impressed with the interest shown by management in the work they do.



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- ✓ Hosted four sessions of "**Respect in the Workplace**" in **Region 4** – a diversity training developed by the EDGE Institute. The program was so well accepted, four line supervisors from Region 4 were trained as facilitators and are working to eventually train all staff in the region.
 - ✓ Established a new user group to address BarCode EBT change management. The new group is one of several User Groups monitoring change management for BarCode applications, including Incapacity Case Management, Document Management, and Electronic Benefits systems.



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So far, we've:

- Focused specific efforts on gathering additional customer input into critical decisions. For example:
 - ✓ DCS leaders will be attending a meeting in Spokane to listen to TANF client suggestions and input around how to best accomplish the child support pass through payment that will be effective October 2008. The invitation from "VOICES" came after DCS presented information to advocates at a recent ESA Advisory Committee meeting.
 - ✓ Continued to engage stakeholders and advocates through active participation in the Indian Policy Advisory Committee and the ESA Advisory Committee (ESAC).



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So far, we've:

- Developed a leadership video featuring interviews with staff from around the state. The interviews include the characteristics ESA staff believe exemplify quality leadership, focus on the concept of leadership at all levels of the organization, and include real stories about carrying out ESA's mission at the front line. The video will be ready for release by the end of September.
- Posted approximately 30 articles on leadership on iESA, including ESA's second "leadership summer" series completed in August.
- Posted four "virtual job shadowing" articles on iESA as part "leadership summer". The series was developed to give staff a firsthand look at jobs throughout the administration – whether considering a move to headquarters and working in the policy unit, or experiencing a day in the life of a financial worker.
- Developed a "what leadership means to me" essay contest. The participants' leadership essays will be reviewed and the top 5 posted on iESA and voted on by staff. The top winner will receive a \$200 training voucher for a leadership or related ESA training.
- Increased visits to field office by DCS senior leaders, who are even making surprise drop-in visits to simply talk to staff. DCS Director Messages are regularly posted to DCS News and maintained on a Director's webpage as a way to help staff know performance progress, pending issues, and why decisions are made.
- Provided "scholarships" for seven ESA staff to attend the Certified Public Managers program. We received 23 applications that were evaluated by a cross-administration panel to select the top candidates.