

EARLY RESULTS OF THE SECOND ANNUAL EMPLOYEE OPINION SURVEY

Employees Speak!

In October, the second annual University of Saskatchewan Employee Opinion Survey (EOS) was conducted. Responses were received from a total of 1,581 staff across all units and staff groups, an encouraging increase from the 1,122 responses received the previous year.

Thank you to all the employees who returned the survey! The increased response rate enhances the quality of the survey and its usefulness as a planning tool.

Where the initial survey provided important baseline data, the second survey begins to show trends in employees' opinions. These trends will help to measure the effectiveness of programs and initiatives designed to address employee concerns.

We have just received the preliminary data from this year's survey and are conducting a full analysis. A full report will be available on the Human Resources web site shortly. This bulletin shares the overall data.

The survey measured employee opinions in three key areas: Equity/Diversity, Employee Development and Engagement and Alignment with University Values.

Equity/Diversity

The University's equity/diversity programs are strongly supported by employees, with a remarkable 92% of respondents indicating they have no problem accepting direction from any particular demographic group. 75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that a more diverse workforce would be beneficial to the future of the University. We have yet to analyze the data to determine how employees in identified groups perceive the environment. That analysis will be contained in the full report.

Employee Development and Engagement

A full 75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they know what is expected of them at work. Areas of concern, however, are that only 38% believe they have a chance to get a better job at the University based on their skills, and only 41% had received recent recognition or praise for good work.

"Constructive evaluation and recognition are critical elements in a high performance culture," said Barb Daigle. "These aren't things that should happen only once a year. People in supervisory positions need to engage in these sorts of conversations on an ongoing basis. We all want recognition for our work."

Alignment with University Values

Respondents held a generally positive view of the culture in their workplaces. The percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree that the University is honest, supportive and sensitive in its communications remained constant at 58%.

Work Volume

Once again, for the second year in a row, employees identified work volume as a significant issue at the University. Employees see work volume as their greatest barrier to being fully engaged and successful at work, with the percentage of employees identifying work volume as a barrier growing to 40% from 36% the previous year.

"There is no question that the issues of work volume and work/life balance are critical ones for the University and a priority for Human Resources," said Associate Vice-President Barb Daigle. "Action plans will focus on that issue."

"Supporting a culture of high performance means that leaders model appropriate balance in their own lives and make work/life balance and priority setting a key area of conversation with their employees. "

"High performance does not mean accumulating more and more responsibilities or working longer and longer hours. It means setting priorities and taking a careful and critical look at our work to ensure we are doing the right things."

The University of Saskatchewan is committed to "... a healthy and productive work environment, characterized by teamwork, open communication and trust, in which employees at all levels have a strong sense of belonging...we will continue to be driven by principles of human dignity and fairness in all we do, including strategies for equity and diversity, in education, employment and all our activities."

- *Renewing the Dream*

The Results:

The survey asked questions in three key areas: Equity/Diversity, Employee Development and Engagement and Alignment with University Values. This summary provides combined 'agree' and 'strongly agree' responses.

Equity/Diversity:

Questions were asked to measure employee perceptions on fairness or equity, and whether or not diversity is appreciated and valued in the workplace. Here's what responding employees had to say:

- 53% agree that they are aware of the University's diversity strategies
- 75% agree that a more diverse workforce would be beneficial to the future of the University
- 52% agree that under-represented groups promoted into supervisory positions are treated with respect
- 92% did not report having difficulty accepting direction from any particular demographic group.
- The top five barriers to being fully engaged and successful at work were identified as:
 - ◊ Work volume (40%)
 - ◊ Conflict in the workplace (26%)
 - ◊ Leadership (25%)
 - ◊ Workplace relationships (23%)
 - ◊ Health (14%)

Employee Development and Engagement:

Questions were asked to measure perception of whether employees feel appreciated, valued and recognized. Those employees that responded said:

- 53% agree that getting ahead in this organization is based on who you know
- 51% feel recognized for a job well done
- 38% believe that they have a chance to get a better job at the University based on their skills
- 75% agree that they know what is expected of them at work
- 56% agree that they have the materials, equipment, information and/or resources they need to do their work well
- 65% agree that they get a real sense of achievement from their work
- 41% agree that they had received recent recognition or praise for good work - total disagreement was 39%

- 69% agree that someone at work seems to care about them as a person
- 57% agree that someone at work encourages their development
- 57% also agree that their opinions seem to count
- 60% agree that the purpose of the University and/or their work unit makes them feel their job is important
- 70% agree that their coworkers are committed to doing quality work
- 51% identified that someone at work had talked to them about their performance in the last six months
- 66% agree that they had opportunities at work to learn and grown in the prior year

Alignment with University Values:

Questions were asked to measure employee perception of workplace culture, and here's what they had to say:

- 58% agree that we are honest, supportive and sensitive in our communications
- 50% agree that we support innovation, creativity and risk-taking
- 60% agree that we learn from our failures
- 59% agree that we celebrate our successes
- 56% agree that we are fair and forthright in our dealings
- 39% agree that we confront problems and issues openly and directly
- 46% agree that we cultivate an environment of collegiality and trust