



Employee Engagement Survey Executive Summary

Background

This summary report provides an overview of the Employee Engagement Survey results. The Human Resources Department is committed to increasing employee engagement and completed Engagement Survey creates a baseline for measuring employee engagement from which improvements in engagement measurements may be calculated. Engagement is a critical measure in any organization and research has proven that an engaged workforce has many business benefits including decreased turnover, increased productivity and better performance outcomes.

Jackson County collaborated with UNC School of Government's Local Government Workplace Project to administer an employee engagement survey. The survey asked researched questions in different areas that influence an individual's level of engagement in their work and with their organization. Employees received invitations to participate directly from the UNC School of Government (UNC SOG). Qualtrics Survey Software was utilized by UNC SOG to collect survey data and provide confidentiality of participating employees and their individual responses.

The survey instrument collected information in the following areas that have direct impact on employee engagement:

- Job Satisfaction
- Teamwork
- Communications
- Structure (hierarchy, centralization, rules)
- Workplace Civility
- Supervisory Practices
- Trust
- Satisfaction with Benefits (pay, benefits, recognition, rewards, technology, etc.)

Survey Response & Highlights

Jackson County had an excellent response rate of 64%. The survey produced a significant amount of data affirming strengths of Jackson County as an employer and identifying areas that may need attention or improvement. Overall, the survey results demonstrated that Jackson County has great engagement highlighting teamwork, positive group dynamics and trust in the management. While the results were comparable to other local governments who participated in the survey, supervisory practices and performance feedback were areas that were scored less favorably by comparison.

Key Findings - Strengths

Jackson County responded positively to 90% of the engagement related questions asking employees their feelings and attitudes towards job satisfaction, workplace climate and values. Such questions included “The organization values me as an employee,” “I am enthusiastic about my job,” and “I am proud of the work that I do,” where employees indicated their level of agreement on a scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree with variations of agreement, disagreement and a feeling of neutrality in between the two points.

The results showed a majority of employees reported:

- Feeling enthusiastic about their work
- Feeling proud of their work
- Feeling happy and immersed in their work
- Satisfaction with their job
- Job providing an opportunity to do meaningful work
- Professional development and training opportunities available
- Satisfaction with traditional and non-traditional benefits
- Job security
- Commitment to a career with Jackson County
- Feeling valued as an employee
- Having access to technology and resources needed
- Work-life balance
- A workplace that embraces new ideas
- Appropriate guidance from supervisor
- Excellent teamwork within department and with other departments
- Trust in immediate supervisor, Department Head and County Manager

Key Findings – Areas of Improvement

The results identified numerous positive measures but also identified some areas that were viewed as less than favorable by many employees. In addition to engagement related questions, the survey asked employees about their feelings and attitudes towards their supervisor, Department Head, County Manager, effectiveness of organizational communications, resource availability and their perception on centralization. Such questions included “I have the time needed to do my job effectively,” “I trust my supervisor to tell me what I need to know,” “I have time to complete my job effectively,” and “I must check with my supervisor before I do most anything,” where employees indicated their level of agreement on a scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree with variations of agreement, disagreement and a feeling of neutrality in between the two points.

The results showed a significant number of employees reported:

- Not receiving recognition for a job well done
- Lack of advancement opportunities
- Expectations of supervisor unclear
- Dissatisfaction with monetary compensation received for work

- Rules/policies not being followed and consistently applied
- Not enough time to do their job effectively
- Lack of advancement opportunities
- Need for better communications at supervisory, Department Head and County Manager levels
- High level of centralization
- Lack of helpful performance feedback

It is important to note that Jackson County is not alone in many of these employee responses. In government and public sector employers, it is common for employees to report a high level of centralization, dissatisfaction with compensation, lack of advancement opportunities and limitations on time to complete work.

After analyzing the data, it was identified that improvements could be made in communications with employees (from all levels i.e. supervisor, Department Head, and County Manager), supervisory practices and performance feedback.

Next Steps

Survey data will be shared with employees after presentation of survey data to Board of County Commissioners and Department Heads. The Human Resources Department will solicit feedback on how employees feel Jackson County can improve on specific measures. Department Heads will be encouraged to identify areas of improvement for their department and address at least one area in the upcoming fiscal year.

Overall, the areas that are in need of improvement organization-wide include:

- Communications
- Supervisory Practices
- Performance Feedback

The Human Resources Department will develop action plans to address these three areas in the upcoming year and incorporate received feedback and suggestions. Other potential remedies and actions are included below that may be incorporated at the Department level should a particular area be identified as needing improvement.

| Area of Improvement | Possible Remedy or Action |
|----------------------------|---|
| Job Satisfaction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Employee Training – Professional Development ● Regular Performance Feedback – Formal/Informal ● Flexible Schedules/Telework |
| Teamwork | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage Collaboration within and across Department(s) ● Recognition Program ● Team Activities and Events |

| Area of Improvement | Possible Remedy or Action |
|---|---|
| Communications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular Staff Meetings: Unit, Departmental, Department Head • Published Meeting Minutes • Department/Employee Newsletter • Published Information – Policies, Documents |
| Structure (hierarchy, centralization, rules) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published Information – Policies • Employee Training • Supervisor Training • Quality Improvement Initiatives |
| Supervisory Practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor Training • Quality Improvement Initiatives |
| Trust | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage Open Communications • Published Meeting Minutes |
| Satisfaction with Pay, Benefits, Rewards, Recognition, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published Information – Pay Policies, Benefit Programs • Total Compensation Statements • Pay Plan Review • Recognition Program |