

Satisfaction with Direct Supervisor and Department Director Support

Direct supervisory support represents a strength for Ottawa County again in 2011, particularly on supervisors being approachable, encouraging innovation, and earning employee trust.

- ◆ Compared to 2009, performance is stable on almost all aspects of direct supervisory support.
- ◆ Due to significant declines on more than half of measures compared to 2009, employees with the Friend of the Court now report the lowest scores on most aspects related to direct supervisory support, while Health Administration/Health Promotion/Emergency Preparedness have the highest levels of satisfaction. Declines in satisfaction among employees < 2 years tenure are also seen on many supervisor related measures.

Improvement from 2009 is seen in Department Directors providing autonomy to make decisions, recognizing contributions, and encouraging innovative thinking, primarily due to gains among employees with > 10 years tenure.

- ◆ Employees with 6 – 10 years tenure and those in the Developmentally Disabled Service and Corrections department have significantly lower levels of satisfaction with Department Director support, while Administration/Health Promotion/Emergency Preparedness have the highest levels of satisfaction.
- ◆ Several employees comment on the need to have documented and consistent policies and procedures.

"Written procedures for system changes before it changes. To be informed of a system change and have it appear in writing and placed in a book where it can be accessed by all at the time of the change is necessary. Things are changing all of the time and many times, only half of the people are aware of it." (Non-supervisor, 6-10 years)

"Written policy and procedures manual so decisions are not "arbitrary" depending on which supervisor you are talking to, letting supports coordinators know clearly when there are changing agency philosophy - just overall less confusion." (Non-supervisor, 6-10 years)

"Recently it has been hard to keep up with all the changes both in procedures and staff. Either keeping things more consistent or having a place to reference current procedures/staff would be extremely helpful." (Non-supervisor, > 10 years)

Satisfaction With Job Responsibilities

Satisfaction with all aspects of employee job responsibilities is unchanged compared to 2009.

- ◆ Satisfaction with job responsibilities among employees in the Environmental Health department has stabilized in 2011, after declining between 2007 and 2009.
- ◆ Support provided by other departments and awareness of how employee roles contribute to Ottawa County's mission continue to be two areas for improvement, as less than half of employees express satisfaction with these two aspects of their job.

Recommendations and Implications

- ◆ Focus process change on areas that most strongly influence employee satisfaction, where current performance is relatively low or weakening, such as by:
 - ◇ Supporting merit-based promotions and making opportunities for advancement more visible (including promotions from within)
 - ◇ Continuing 'brown bag lunches' and other communication forums that promote a feeling of trust among employees, such as the well received communications about the impact of budget issues on employee benefits
 - ◇ Ensuring that employees in all departments are able take advantage of training opportunities
 - ◇ Having supervisors and county leadership be more specific when communicating the value of each employee and how their role contributes to the overall county mission.
 - ◇ Improving consistency in procedures through process documentation
- ◆ As soon as feasible, address employee concerns regarding compensation and benefits by re-instating COLA and tuition reimbursement; in the interim consider low-cost 'give-backs' such as flex time (e.g. 4 day/10 hour schedules).
- ◆ Focus attention on issues affecting departments that have relatively low employee satisfaction – Corrections, Developmentally Disabled Services and Friend of the Court; apply best practices from other departments that exhibit stronger performance in identified areas.
- ◆ Address employee concerns with the quality of the cleaning services at county facilities.
- ◆ Continue to re-survey employees on a bi-annual basis to assess performance related to organizational initiatives and goals.

RESULTS OF THE

2nd Quarter 2011 Ottawa County Employee Satisfaction Survey

June 2011

Survey Objective and Response Rate

In 2nd Qtr. 2011, an email invitation to complete an on-line employee satisfaction survey was emailed to all Ottawa County employees to determine current overall job satisfaction and to evaluate the attitudes of employees regarding various aspects of job satisfaction. These results were compared with previous findings to determine how satisfaction and attitudes have changed over time. RDA Group, a private market research and consulting firm, was responsible for collecting and analyzing all survey data.

- ◆ Note that care should be taken when comparing 2011 scores to scores from 2009, as the change from a mail to web methodology can have an effect on responses.

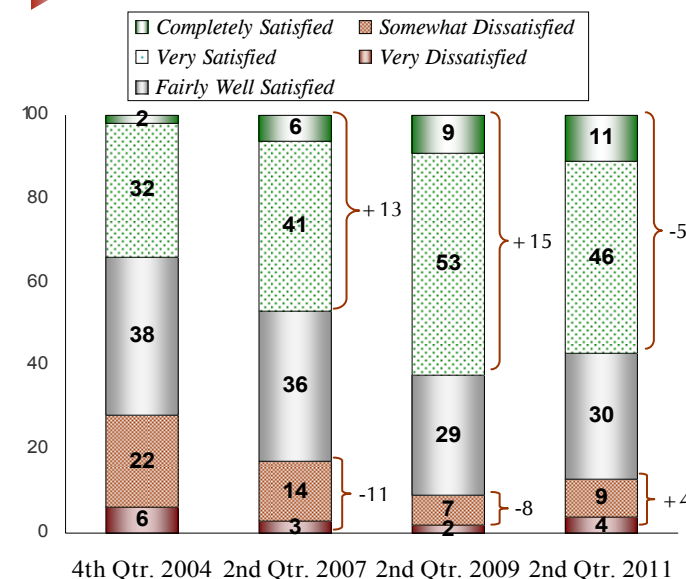
Of the 910 survey invitations that were emailed in 2011, 581 employees completed a survey, for a response rate of 64%, up 21 pct. pts. from 2009.

Overall Satisfaction

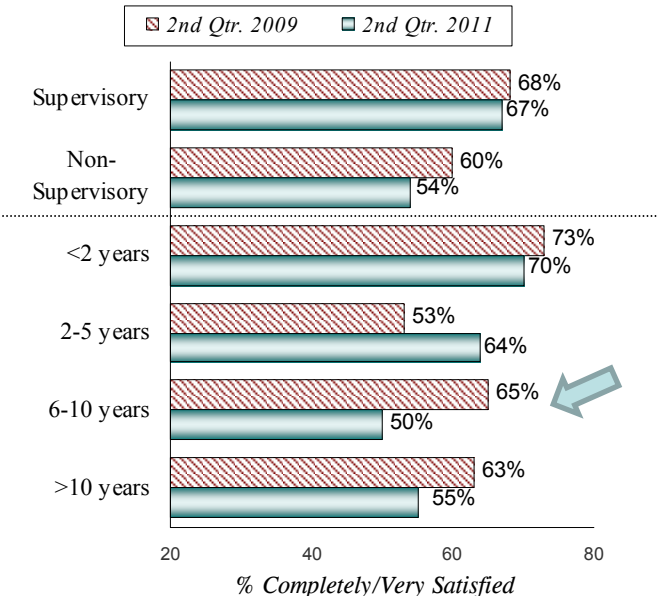
Overall satisfaction among county employees declines in 2011, with fewer employees reporting that they are completely or very satisfied compared to 2009. This is a reversal of the upward trend seen in both 2007 and 2009.

- ◆ 57% of Ottawa County employees are completely or very satisfied (vs. 62% in 2009), however this still represents a significant increase from the 2004 baseline score of 34%.
 - ◇ Employees with less than 2 years tenure continue to be the most satisfied, while non-supervisory employees and employees with 6 – 10 years tenure have the lowest levels of satisfaction.
 - ◇ Employees of the Circuit Court Trail Division continue to have the highest satisfaction (100%) followed by the Equalization/Property Description department (90%). The number of people expressing dissatisfaction in the MI Works! and Information Technology departments increases sharply, with only about ½ of employees in both departments expressing that they are extremely or very satisfied. Corrections and Environmental Health are again among the least satisfied (33% and 39%, respectively).
- ◆ The only gains in satisfaction compared to 2009 are seen among employees in the Health: Community Services department. However, satisfaction has eroded among employees with 6-10 years of tenure, and those in working in Holland District Court, Circuit Court Friend of the Court, Information Technology, MI Works! and Law Enforcement.
- ◆ The changes/restrictions related to compensation and benefits resulting from the economic reality of county governments appear to be a contributing factor to the degradation of employee satisfaction in 2011.

Overall Satisfaction Among Total Sample



Overall Satisfaction by Position and Tenure



Most Liked Aspects of Job

In 2011, employees are less likely to cite work schedule, job security and good insurance/health benefits as well liked aspects of their job compared to 2009.

- ◆ Co-workers (38%) and benefits (30%) continue to be the top rated job aspects appreciated by employees, followed by job responsibilities and management/supervisor support (18% each).

"The 'Team' atmosphere, and the kindness of that team. I appreciate my supervisor/teammates and all they do to encourage me, help me learn and be (sic) affective at my job. I appreciate the health and dental benefits for my entire family." (Non-supervisor, < 2 years)

"The County provides an excellent benefits package, which in this economy would be very difficult to match." (Supervisor, 2-5 years)

"I think that Ottawa County does an excellent job providing competitive benefits for their employees. They do their best to have competitive wages, great insurance and other benefits." (Non-supervisor, 2-5 years)

- ◆ Employees with 6 – 10 years of service are more likely to cite enjoyment of building/office facilities and much less likely to say that they enjoy co-workers, their job responsibilities and job security. Newer employees (< 2 years) are much less likely to cite appreciation of compensation and challenging work, but continue to be twice as likely to say they enjoy the cooperative workplace.

Satisfaction with Ottawa County Administration

The largest gains from 2009 are seen in measures related to satisfaction with Ottawa County's Administration.

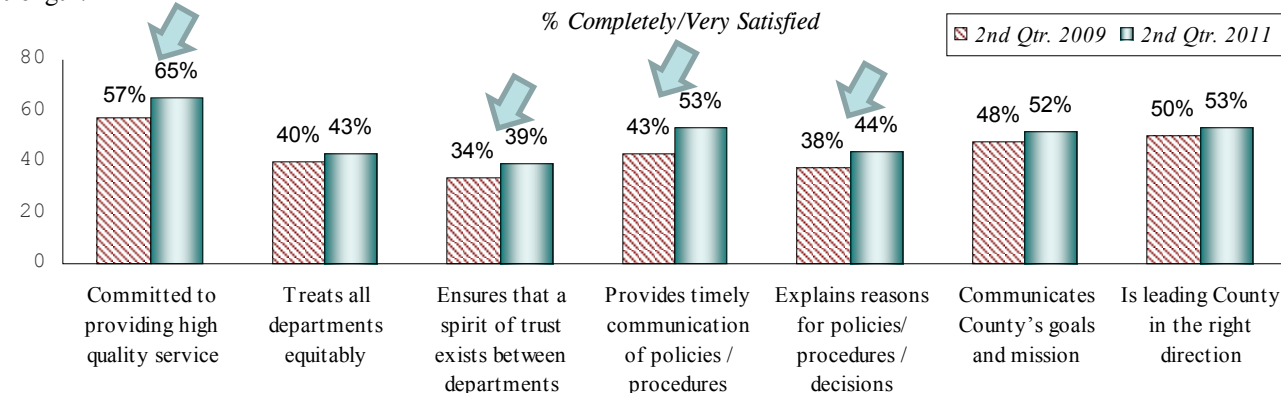
- ◆ Significant improvement is seen in the Administration's commitment to provide high quality service, ensuring a spirit of trust, and timely communication of policies and explaining reasons for policies, primarily due to the notable gains among non-supervisors and employees with > 10 years tenure.

"The HR Department is clear in communicating issues and provides fantastic training opportunities for staff at all experience and professional levels. County Administration does a good job of communicating issues to employees and I appreciate the brown bag lunches." (Supervisor, 6-10 years)

"I enjoy working for Ottawa County. Mr Vanderberg has been a very positive change for our County and he sees the 'big picture' for the future. It is obvious he really cares about the employees." (Supervisor, > 10 years)

"I believe that the County of Ottawa administration as a whole, is moving in the right direction in terms of the services provided to its residents which goes even beyond....In comparison to other counties, Ottawa County management definitely tops the list." (Non-supervisor, 6-10 years)

- ◆ Although gains are seen, opportunity for improvement remains, with around 50% or fewer employees reporting that they are completely or very satisfied on 6 of the 7 measures; commitment to providing high quality services remains a strength.



Ways to Improve Satisfaction

Substantially fewer employees cite the need to improve management direction/leadership, fair treatment of employees, and advancement opportunities than in 2009, primarily due to fewer non-supervisory employees citing the need to improve these factors.

- ◆ Improving compensation (13%) and communication (12%) remain the top two mentioned ways to increase satisfaction, with general benefits/health benefits (11%) mentioned third most often.
- ◆ Employees with < 2 years are much less likely to express concern over the level of communication; those with > 10 years tenure are more likely to express dissatisfaction with the insurance/health benefits and retirement/pension benefits.
- ◆ Many employees cite allowing flex-time across more departments as being important to improving satisfaction.

"Develop a county policy allowing flexible work hours, as the state has done. This would enable employees to make up for the lack of cost of living raises during these difficult economic times. Working four ten hour days may allow employees to save on gas and daycare." (Non-supervisory, > 10 years)

"Give our Flex time back!" (Non-supervisor, 6 – 10 years)

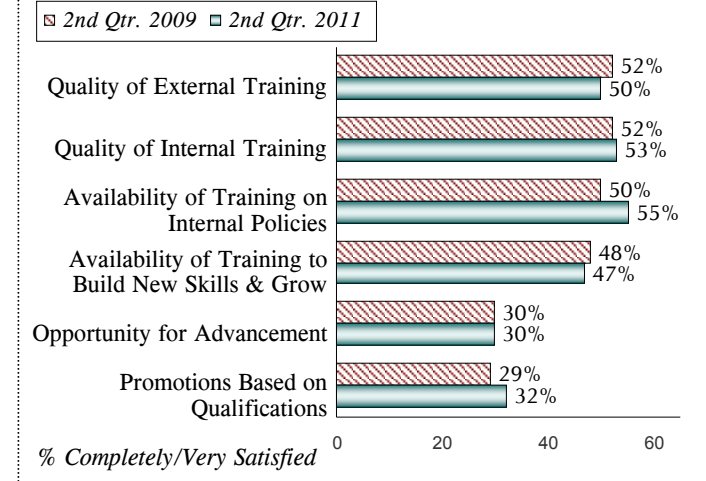
"Allow employees to flex time (within reason) to help save money on daycare and increase balance and satisfaction in their lives as a whole." (Non-supervisor, 6 – 10 years)

"Allow IT employees to work from home. Allow IT employees to have flexible work times." (Supervisor, > 10 years)

Satisfaction with Training and Career Development

Satisfaction with all aspects of training and career development is relatively unchanged compared to 2009, although this area is becoming more important to employee satisfaction.

- ◆ Satisfaction with all aspects of training and career development represent opportunities for improvement based on their high correlation to overall satisfaction.
 - ◇ 55% are completely/very satisfied with availability of training on internal policies and procedures, representing the highest level of satisfaction
 - ◇ Non-supervisory and Corrections Department employees report the lowest levels of satisfaction on all aspects of training and development
- ◆ Compared to 2009, employees in Mentally Ill Adult Services show a significant improvement on all aspects of training and career development.
- ◆ The high-impact areas of promotions being awarded based on qualifications and providing opportunity for advancement continue to be the most significant areas for improvement, as less than 1/3 of employees report being completely/very satisfied. Many employees continue to express a desire for more promotions to be awarded from within rather than hiring external applicants.



"Invest in employees for internal promotions, as you are investing in training for employees (Gold Leaders, etc.), but it doesn't seem to carry any weight for promotion, decreasing the value of the training and confidence in the County." (Supervisor, 6-10 years)

"I wish open positions were offered to current employees first and then if no one within the County accepted the position it would then move to the public. There have been several positions I have applied for and would have accepted, however it has gone to the outside." (Non-supervisor, 2-5 years)

Satisfaction with Work Conditions and Atmosphere

Of the 8 measures related to work conditions and atmosphere, physical comfort of work environment and safety of working conditions improve compared to 2009...trust and appreciation remain critical to employee satisfaction.

- ◆ Amount of job stress, contributions being valued, coordination of efforts between different departments and climate of trust continue to be high importance-low performing attributes related to work conditions and atmosphere, with satisfaction ranging from 34% – 41%.
 - ◇ Satisfaction is particularly low among non-supervisory employees and those working in Developmentally Disabled Services and Fiscal Services
- ◆ A number of employees express a strong dissatisfaction with office cleanliness, or a change in the level of cleanliness.

"I would like to improve the cleaning service. The current housekeeping is spotty at best. We have had a lot more flu and colds since they started. The office looks dusty and un-kept." (Supervisor, > 10 years)

"Return housekeeping to internal service, as the level of cleanliness has dramatically decreased to the point of affecting my health. With the new focus on employee health, environment should be identified as a major contributor." (Non-supervisor, 6-10 years)"

Satisfaction with Compensation and Benefits

Satisfaction with all aspects of compensation and benefits is unchanged in 2011, with the exception of employee benefits, which declines significantly.

- ◆ Declines in satisfaction with benefits are primarily due to lower levels of satisfaction among non-supervisory employees and those with 6 – 10 years tenure.

"...Reinstate the educational benefit and go back to ASR insurance. Priority Health is not a good fit." (Non-Supervisor, 2 – 5 years)

"I would have no problem paying more money for my premiums as long as we get our prescriptions. We were told in our Health Insurance meetings that this new insurance would be comparable to what we had with ASR Insurance but now our new insurance won't cover our medications that we were on for many years causing us to pay cash which we can't afford." (Non-supervisor, 6 – 10 years)

"Priority Health is embarrassing. They take a long time to pay claims, sometimes 3 months, and do not pay providers well. I would rather increase my contribution to Insurance costs and have ASR back." (Non-supervisor, 2-5 years)

"Commissioners should have reduced coverage in benefits because of their 'part-time' status. Their retirement packages should not be more than any full time employees." (Supervisor, > 10 years)

- ◆ Satisfaction with compensation remains below that of most other aspects of job satisfaction – Similar to 2009, less than half of employees report being satisfied that compensation is appropriate to performance or comparable to others in similar positions.

- ◆ Several employees expressed dissatisfaction that the wage study results have not been implemented.

"We were supposed to receive an increase from the last wage study and it didn't happen. I do not believe that I am paid for my experience and qualifications." (Non-supervisor, 2 – 5 years tenure)

"It's been almost a year since the CMH wage study was conducted. Several position groups evaluations indicated increases of as much as two pay grades in the 2009 wage study but have yet to see a dime. All we hear is it's stuck in HR due to staffing issues there." (Supervisor, 6-10 years)