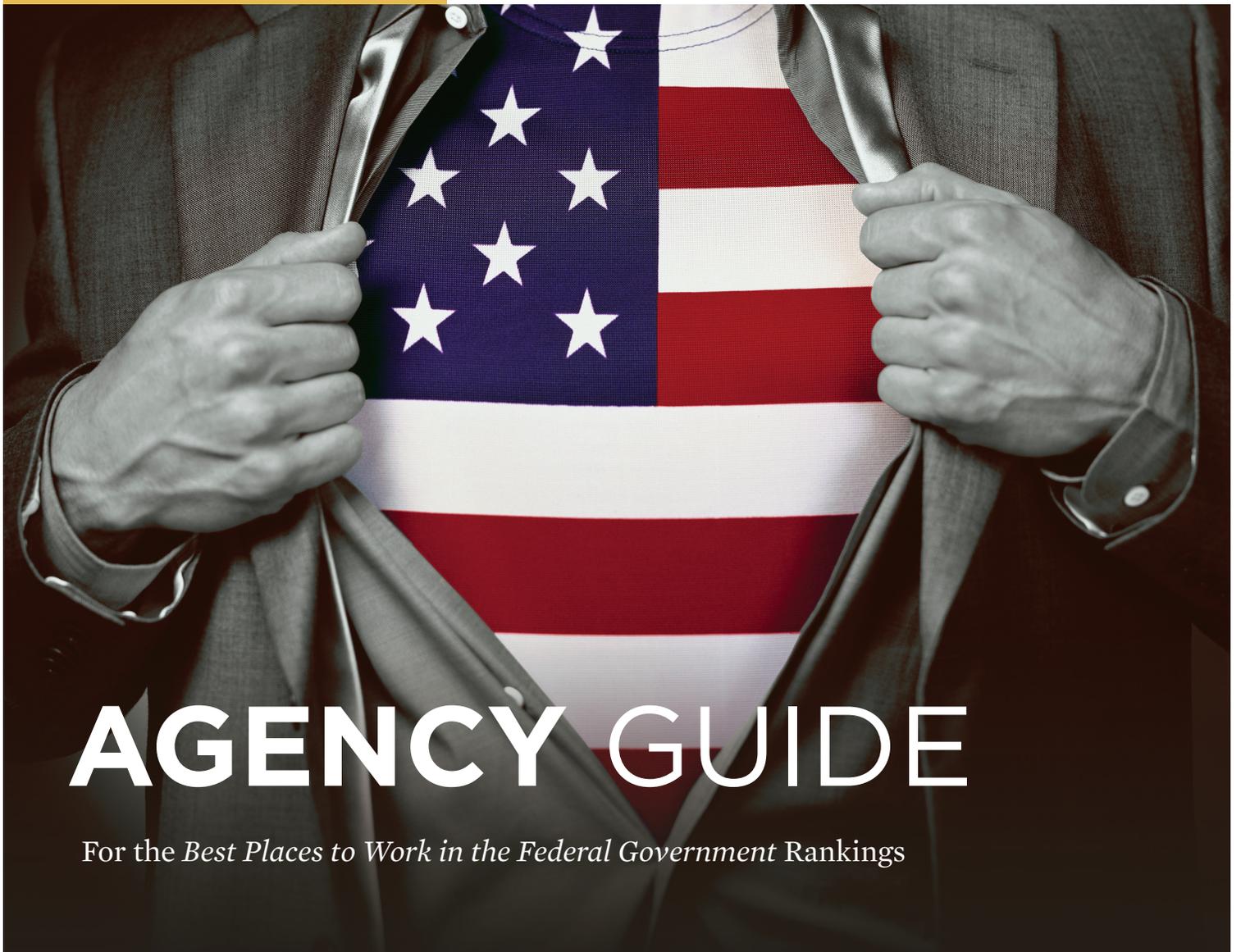


BESTPLACESTOWORK.ORG



AGENCY GUIDE

For the Best Places to Work in the Federal Government Rankings

NOVEMBER 2010



PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

The Partnership for Public Service is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that works to revitalize the federal government by inspiring a new generation to serve and by transforming the way government works.

CHAPTER 1

UNDERSTANDING YOUR DATA AND COMMUNICATION

The *Best Places to Work in the Federal Government*[®] rankings have shown that any agency can improve its employee satisfaction. Even top-ranked agencies can improve.

After hearing success stories from across government and viewing the *Best Places to Work* rankings for your own agency or subcomponent, you may be inspired and motivated to enhance the workplace environment for your employees. However, you may still have some questions about how to understand and use the *Best Places to Work* data and how to better address employee satisfaction and commitment in your organization.

This first chapter of the *Best Places to Work* Agency Guide will walk you through three initial steps to improve the workplace environment for your employees:

- Gather your *Best Places to Work* data and understand how each dataset can advance your objectives;
- Develop a strategic approach to improve employee satisfaction; and
- Identify and communicate with key stakeholders to garner buy-in for improvement efforts across your agency or subcomponent.

Use the Data Checklist and Stakeholder Engagement Plan tools in the Action Toolkit at the end of this chapter to keep track of your data and to plan your stakeholder outreach strategy.

STEP 1 UNDERSTAND YOUR DATA

- The *Best Places to Work* website
- Workplace Analysis Report
- Hay Group Excel Tool

STEP 2 DEVELOP A STRATEGIC APPROACH

- Take the long view
- Identify focus areas
- Form *Best Places to Work* action teams

STEP 3 ENGAGE KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- Identify key stakeholders
- Develop your message
- Begin stakeholder outreach

STEP 1 UNDERSTAND YOUR DATA

The *Best Places to Work* data is useful in a variety of ways. First, it allows you to see changes in employee satisfaction overall, along demographic lines and across workplace dimensions. Second, it shows you where there may be gaps in satisfaction at your agency or subcomponent—perhaps some demographic groups report lower satisfaction than others, or a particular workplace dimension has greater impact at your agency. Third, the data enable you to compare your agency or subcomponent to similar organizations as a point of reference for improvement.

The full set of *Best Places to Work* data can be accessed from three sources: 1) the *Best Places to Work* website, 2) your organization’s Workplace Analysis Report, and 3) the Hay Group Excel Tool. Each dataset offers a different level of insight about employee satisfaction at your agency or subcomponent.

The data will help you identify the specific challenges that your agency or subcomponent faces and set a course of action to dive deeper into—and address—these challenges. Learn more about the data sources below, and use the Data Checklist in the Action Toolkit located at the end of this chapter to gather your data together and organize it based on your objectives.

THE BEST PLACES TO WORK WEBSITE

Access:

Visit bestplacestowork.org

What you’ll find:

Rankings data for all participating agencies and subcomponents:

- Overall index scores
- Most improved agencies and subcomponents
- Scores in ten workplace dimensions, including four leadership subcomponents (empowerment, fairness, leaders and supervisors)
- Index scores by demographic group
- Ability to compare up to three specific agencies or subcomponents

Analysis:

- The big picture
- Profiles of notable movers
- Top trends
- Demographic perspectives

- Private sector comparison
- Understanding staff/manager alignment

WORKPLACE ANALYSIS REPORT

Access:

Ask your Office of Human Capital/Human Resources for agency code and password; visit the “For Agencies” section of bestplacestowork.org to log in and access this report.

What you’ll find:

Detailed comparison of your organization’s employee satisfaction and workplace environment ratings with the parent agency (if applicable) and the government as a whole, in each workplace dimension:

- An important tool to help you decide to what extent—and where—your organization needs to improve.
- Trend comparison of your organization’s employee satisfaction and workplace environment ratings:
- Consider focusing on drivers for which scores are low or have declined.

Breakdown of employee satisfaction by key demographic groups: Compare employee satisfaction along demographic lines to the rest of your agency (if applicable) and government-wide; identify any gaps within your agency or subcomponent.

Priority matrix: See which drivers require the most attention and set your organization’s priorities for action.

HAY GROUP EXCEL TOOL

Access:

Ask your Office of Human Capital/Human Resources for agency code and password; visit the “For Agencies” section of bestplacestowork.org to log in and access this tool.

What you’ll find:

Customizable question-level data outputs: Understand your agency’s specific challenges behind each workplace dimension and decide whether more data is needed.

Action Planning Worksheet: Organize your action plan by key issue, based on the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) questions.

STEP 2 DEVELOP A STRATEGIC APPROACH

As you become more familiar with the *Best Places to Work* data for your agency or subcomponent, you will be able to determine what type of action is needed. Some agencies and subcomponents may choose to implement gradual changes; others may decide to create action planning teams to target specific issues immediately. Some agencies will blend the two strategies.

TAKE THE LONG VIEW

Even the highest-ranked agencies and subcomponents find room for improvement and strive to go from “good” to “great.” Agencies and subcomponents that are doing well in the rankings may want to highlight and institutionalize their best practices to continue to maximize employee satisfaction. Some of the top-ranked agencies integrate continuous improvement into their cultures and missions.

IDENTIFY FOCUS AREAS

Use the *Best Places to Work* data to identify high-level focus areas. Senior leaders or action initiative leaders can complete this step prior to forming action teams, so that the action teams know where to focus their efforts.

Review rank and overall index scores

Figure out to what extent your agency or subcomponent can improve by checking your rank and overall index scores. A lower-ranked agency or subcomponent should further examine its data to better understand the specific challenges that it faces, but even highly ranked agencies still have room to improve. Score declines since the previous rankings may warrant special attention.

Scan your Workplace Analysis Report

This report shows you how your organization compares to the rest of government and the rest of your agency (i.e., for a subcomponent). The score comparisons also reveal any gaps in your organization between workplace dimensions or demographic groups. Finally, the Priority Matrix identifies the top priority drivers in your agency or subcomponent, which are the areas that require the most attention.

Become familiar with the Hay Group Excel Tool

This dynamic tool will be especially useful during the action planning process. Familiarize yourself with how it sorts the question-level data and how the questions interface with the Action Plan Worksheet.

FORM BEST PLACES TO WORK ACTION TEAMS

As we’ve mentioned, many agencies and subcomponents have successfully improved employee satisfaction by creating *Best Places to Work* action teams that focused on specific human capital challenges. These teams are generally responsible for identifying key issues, researching the problems, developing recommendations and assisting with implementation. This is an effective strategy for change, and if it’s one you can feasibly deploy, here’s how to get started:

Find an executive champion

Any effort requires executive-level support to be fully successful. If it hasn’t been done already, identify and engage an executive champion for the project to generate support, resources and buy-in from other stakeholders across the organization.

Build a team of volunteers

Agencies that have done *Best Places to Work* action projects in the past have experienced greater success with all-volunteer teams. It is important to select individuals who are personally invested in improving the workplace environment and open to the additional responsibility to serve on action teams. Action teams should be comprised of individuals with the right talent with a variety of backgrounds across functions, levels and demographic groups, who are motivated to make change.

Specify milestones and measurable goals

Set a broad timeline for the action team(s) and identify short-term, mid-term and long-term goals. Start thinking about your expectations for potential outcomes and develop an evaluation plan that your agency can use to measure success.

STEP 3 ENGAGE KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Change can't happen in a vacuum. Any successful improvements at your agency or subcomponent will require a shared vision of the future that starts with senior leadership and extends across levels. Improvement will require a significant effort to orient your organization toward change. Engage stakeholders at every level to start turning this vision of a better place to work into reality.

Communicate the need for change to key stakeholders, garner buy-in before you take action, and you will reap the benefits. As you engage senior leaders and managers, you will be able to generate more top-level support, enthusiasm and cooperation to sustain the improvement effort over time. Staff members, who are also credible sources of information for job seekers, will be encouraged to see that leaders and managers care about the well-being of their employees. Unions and Congressional staff/committees can also be powerful allies for change at your agency or subcomponent. Opening these lines of communication now will also help you start to better understand the issues at hand and facilitate research and learning for solutions later on.

Use the tips below and the Stakeholder Engagement Plan template in the Action Toolkit at the end of this chapter to identify key stakeholders, develop your key points and begin outreach.

IDENTIFY KEY STAKEHOLDERS

After you define high-level target areas by analyzing your data, you can begin to identify the key stakeholders both inside and outside your organization to garner buy-in for improvement, to prepare for additional data-gathering and to take some first steps to improve employee satisfaction.

Here are a number of key stakeholder groups to consider:

- **Senior leaders:** The data shows that leadership is the main driver of employee satisfaction government-wide and senior leadership is the biggest driver of overall leadership. Be sure to engage senior leaders early in the action planning process. Senior leaders who endorse the effort can help engage others across all levels in your organization to support the project. Senior leaders can also integrate the commitment to human capital issues into the agency's strategy, culture and long-term mission.
- **Supervisors and managers:** Buy-in at the supervisor and manager level is essential to coordinate support and resources from multiple departments and facilitate cooperation across your agency or subcomponent. If your organization has a low score for the supervisor subcategory in the leadership dimension, keeping managers informed and involved during the improvement process may also help improve employee satisfaction in this dimension.
- **Staff:** If senior leadership clearly communicates its intentions to improve the workplace environment, employees will respond positively because they will feel that leaders and managers are receptive to their concerns and well-being. Engaging staff members in the action planning process may also lead to better results, since they will share ownership of the effort. A team of volunteers may be more receptive to the responsibilities associated with an action planning project than a task force comprised of appointed members.
- **The general public:** Employees may feel less satisfied in their jobs if their agency receives negative public attention or bad press. Consider partnering with your Office of Public Affairs to highlight the positives in the rankings and spotlight the good things that are happening at your agency. Also think about making your existing methods of public communication (e.g., the agency website) more user-friendly to make it easier for people to learn about your organization. These efforts may have the additional benefit of helping your agency recruit top talent.
- **Unions:** Unions represent the voice of the employee and have a vested interest in human capital issues. They can be valuable allies for improvement and may be able to offer important information about ways to improve employee satisfaction. Be sure to go through the proper channels to share your plans with relevant unions, as they can become great advocates for your efforts once they get involved. Look into reaching out to professional associations and public interest groups as well.
- **Congressional staff/committees:** Congress is paying closer attention to agency performance. Work with your congressional affairs office to brief members of Congress on your plans to improve employee satisfaction as part of your efforts to improve your agency performance.

One way to start identifying stakeholders is to use the Action Planning Worksheet found in the Hay Group Excel Tool. You can select which dimensions and ques-

tions you want to focus on, and then start identifying the related stakeholders within your agency or subcomponent.

DEVELOP YOUR MESSAGE

As you garner buy-in from stakeholders, here are some important points to keep in mind as your agency or subcomponent prepares to take action. Some messages should be communicated to everyone, while others are more suitable for certain stakeholder groups over others. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Explain why it is important to improve the workplace environment

Use information from the *Best Places to Work* website and brochure to help senior leaders and managers understand that improving employee satisfaction can help the agency achieve its mission more effectively and attract top talent. Emphasize that improvements will require cooperation across the organization. Show how human capital issues directly relate to the goals of your senior leadership. Ask for input and feedback on ways to improve employee satisfaction at your agency or subcomponent.

Stress the importance of institutionalizing human capital issues into the agency culture and mission

Improving employee satisfaction is a long-term commitment to your agency's future. One way to sustain improvements over time is to integrate a focus on human capital issues into the agency's culture and mission.

Emphasize the need for senior leaders to communicate a clear vision and message to the rest of the agency or subcomponent

Effective leadership is the main driver of employee satisfaction across government, and senior leaders set the tone for improvement efforts moving forward. Ensuring that leaders and managers are all on the same page will facilitate cooperation across the agency during the improvement process. Job seekers also view current employees as credible sources of information, so employees who are encouraged by their leaders' dedication to human capital issues may be able to act as ambassadors for their agency and pass that information on to others.

Announce your agency or subcomponent's commitment to improving the workplace environment

This step is valuable even before the actual planning process begins. Simply announcing that your agency or subcomponent intends to focus on human capital is-

ues can make employees feel that leaders and managers care about them. Publicly announcing your agency's plans to address human capital issues shows current employees, job seekers and the general public that your organization is committed to the welfare of its workers.

Highlight the positives in the rankings and acknowledge areas for development

Praising the parts of your agency that are doing well can improve employee satisfaction by helping employees feel more positively about where they work and reinforce best practices. Acknowledging areas for development sets expectations and recognizes the challenges to improvement. Educating the public about your agency's work can help improve public opinion of your organization and positive news stories can encourage current employees to take greater pride in their agency.

BEGIN STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

Your stakeholder outreach method may depend on your intended audience. Here are some ideas to get you started, based on the past experiences of different agencies:

- **Individual in-person meetings:** Meeting with people individually may foster a more candid exchange and help you better understand and anticipate potential concerns down the road.
- **Symposiums and town hall meetings:** If senior leaders and managers also participate in organization-wide town hall meetings to convey information, employees will see your agency's commitment to human capital issues and better understand management decisions. They may also appreciate the opportunity to ask questions and receive answers in real-time.
- **Electronic communication:** E-mail newsletters, downloadable videos or agency-wide blogs can help you share information with large groups of people, as well as disseminate agency-wide policies and procedures.
- **Public announcements:** These messages can better educate job seekers and the general public about what your agency is doing. Employees may also be encouraged by positive news stories and their leaders' commitment to improving the workplace environment.

Action Toolkit Data checklist

Gain context on the Best Places to Work in the Federal Government rankings			
SOURCE	SECTION	HOW TO USE IT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Website	About Best Places and why the rankings matter	Read about the origin of this study and understand why improving employee satisfaction is important to helping your organization better achieve its mission.	
	Methodology	Learn how the data were collected and analyzed and see which questions were used to calculate the satisfaction index and Best in Class scores.	
	The Big Picture	Read about the top-level findings including government-wide trends, most improved, notable newcomers, and leadership as the key driver across government and public sector comparison to the private sector.	
	Top Trends	See high-level trends from the 2009 rankings.	
	Demographic Perspectives	Read about government-wide trends among gender, age and racial/national origin groups; look more closely at individual agencies and read about two “model agencies.”	
	Private Sector Comparison	See how the federal government compares to the private sector on 13 key questions and see where the gaps are.	

See how employee satisfaction at your agency or subcomponent has changed over time, and how it compares overall			
SOURCE	SECTION	HOW TO USE IT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Website	Overall index scores	On the “Rankings” page, you can see how your agency’s or subcomponent’s score has improved or declined since the 2007 rankings. You can also see how your agency or subcomponent ranks relative to others.	
	Agency or Subcomponent report	Click on your agency’s or subcomponent’s name to view its dedicated report. Under the “Scores and Rankings” heading, click on the “Previous Years” tab to see how your organization’s Best in Class, Demographic and Index scores have changed over time.	
	Government-wide High Performing Average, Average and Low Performing Average Index and Best in Class scores	Click on your agency or subcomponent’s link and scroll to down the page to see how your organization measures up to the rest of government. Use this knowledge to set a target benchmark for improvement.	
Workplace Analysis Report	Detailed comparison of your organization’s employee satisfaction and workplace environment ratings with the parent agency (if applicable) and the government as a whole	An important tool to help you decide to what extent—and where—your organization needs to improve.	

See how your agency or subcomponent compares to similar organizations			
SOURCE	SECTION	HOW TO USE IT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Website	Compare up to three specific agencies	See how your agency or subcomponent index, workplace dimension and demographic scores measure up to similar organizations, or any agency or subcomponent of your choice.	

Identify the employee satisfaction “gaps” at your agency or subcomponent			
SOURCE	SECTION	HOW TO USE IT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Website	Index scores by demographic group	See if demographic groups at your agency or subcomponent report different levels of satisfaction, identify any gaps and see how your organization measures up to others.	
Workplace Analysis Report	Breakdown of employee satisfaction and engagement by key demographic categories	Compare employee satisfaction along demographic lines to the rest of your agency (if applicable) and government-wide; identify any gaps within your agency or subcomponent.	

Figure out where your agency or subcomponent needs to focus its attention and prioritize resources			
SOURCE	SECTION	HOW TO USE IT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace Analysis Report	Trend comparison of your organization’s employee satisfaction and workplace environment ratings	Consider focusing on drivers for which scores are low or have declined.	
	Priority matrix	Understand which workplace dimensions require your attention and set your organization’s priorities for action.	

Better understand the root causes of low employee satisfaction at your agency or subcomponent			
SOURCE	SECTION	HOW TO USE IT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hay Group Excel Tool	Customizable question-level data outputs	Understand your agency’s specific challenges behind the categories and decide whether more data is needed.	
	Action Planning Worksheet	Organize your action plan by key issue, based on FHCS questions.	

Identify the highest-ranked agencies and subcomponents and read success stories			
SOURCE	SECTION	HOW TO USE IT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Website	Best in Class scores for each workplace dimension	See which agencies and subcomponents have the highest satisfaction in each workplace dimension, and take note of the top-ranked agencies in workplace dimensions that are most important to your agency or subcomponent according to the Priority Matrix in your Workplace Analysis Report.	
	Profiles of Excellence	Learn more about the experiences of top-ranked agencies and subcomponents.	
	Most improved agencies and subcomponents	See to what extent other agencies and subcomponents have improved since the last rankings and consider benchmarking the practices of the most improved organizations.	

Action Toolkit Stakeholder engagement plan

	Identify Key Stakeholders List names of individuals or stakeholder groups to contact.	Develop Your Message Fill in the important messages and key points that you want to communicate to each stakeholder group.	Begin Stakeholder Outreach Brainstorm methods to communicate with each individual or stakeholder group.
Senior Leaders Which key decision-makers need to support this effort?			
Managers Which groups and individuals will be involved to develop solutions to improve satisfaction?			
Staff Which staff groups require tailored messaging? Who can I partner with to develop a message for staff groups?			
General Public Who can I partner with to communicate with the general public?			
Unions, Professional Associations and Public Interest Groups Who can I partner with to communicate with employee groups?			
Congressional Committees Which Congressional committees work with my agency or subcomponent?			

CHAPTER 2

ACTION PLANNING

By now, you have likely gathered and organized your *Best Places to Work in the Federal Government* data sets, identified your top drivers of employee satisfaction and either started the improvement initiative yourself or created action teams to begin the process. Senior leadership is probably eager for rapid changes to achieve better employee satisfaction and a more committed, engaged workforce.

Your agency or subcomponent can take a number of approaches to improve employee satisfaction, depending on issues the data identify that you should address, your organizational mission and culture and available time and resources. Some organizations select interested and talented individuals with varied experiences to serve on action planning teams, while others choose to appoint one person to gather input and develop recommendations. This chapter presents our recommended approach to *Best Places to Work* action planning. Many agencies have successfully employed these strategies in the past. While we recommend that a team consist of four to eight members, this process can be adapted to a team of any size.

This second chapter of the *Best Places to Work* Agency Guide will help you:

1. Initiate—finalize goals, confirm deliverables, determine resources, budget and time and define metrics for success;
2. Plan—identify key phases; and
3. Execute, Monitor and Control—complete the work activities in each key phase and stay on track.

Use the Charter and Plan templates in the Action Toolkit at the end of this chapter to create the core reference documents for your plan. These resources will help you create a series of informed, prioritized recommendations you can then use to fill in the Action Plan Worksheet in the Hay Group Excel Tool. For more ideas and inspiration, refer to the additional resources in the Annotated Bibliography.

STEP 1 INITIATE

- Finalize goals
- Confirm deliverables
- Determine resources, budget and time
- Define metrics for success

STEP 2 PLAN

- Identify key phases
- Lay out activities in each phase
- Assign owners, start dates and completion deadlines

STEP 3 EXECUTE, MONITOR AND CONTROL

- Complete activities in each phase
- Stay on track

STEP 1 INITIATE

Whether you're on an action planning team with an executive champion or working on your own, there are a few things you should do to structure and orient your action plan before you begin. Use the Charter template in the Action Toolkit at the end of this chapter to keep the project focused.

FINALIZE GOALS

Work with your executive champion to identify and select the key areas for improvement by analyzing the priority matrix in your agency's Workplace Analysis Report. Together, finalize the goals and expectations for this action plan. For example:

- On which key drivers or issues will this initiative focus? (e.g., Effective Leadership, Work/Life Balance)
- What are the goals of this initiative? (e.g., improve communication across levels)
- Who will be responsible for implementing the recommendations? (e.g., this team, an implementation team, all senior staff, supervisors, etc.)

CONFIRM DELIVERABLES

Confirm what specific deliverables your executive champion will expect during and after the action plan. For example:

- What kind of deliverables will the team produce? (e.g., memo, report, presentation, a combination)
- How often will the team check in with its executive champion? (e.g., interim check-ins, one final briefing)
- Who will be the primary audience for any deliverables? (e.g., senior leaders, managers, staff)
- Will there be follow-up deliverables? (e.g., to assess results)

DETERMINE BUDGET, RESOURCES AND TIME

Review your cost estimates and resource requirements with your executive champion. He or she should provide a broad timeline for the entire effort, from planning through implementation. Identify any constraints, assumptions and potential risks moving forward. For example:

- What are the anticipated costs for the team to develop recommendations for the action plan and the initial estimated budget?
- What other resources are needed, and how will the team coordinate with managers across the organization? (e.g., facilitator, venue and staff time for focus groups or interviews)
- How much time does the team have to develop recommendations? What are the milestones for implementation?

DEFINE METRICS FOR SUCCESS

Identify methods to measure success throughout the process of developing recommendations. For example:

- How will you collect and analyze information to generate metrics?
- How will you determine the progress of your action plan leading up to your recommendations?
- How will you measure the impact of the implementation of your recommendations, and in what time period?

TIP

Establish Team Ground Rules

The action planning team should set ground rules for the project. These may include respect for one another and equal participation among members, to mitigate the risk of conflict later in the process. The team should clarify and assign basic roles and responsibilities. For example:

- Who will serve as team lead?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of the team members?
- What are the confidentiality concerns?
- Who will take notes during meetings?
- Who will communicate with senior leadership?
- How often will the team meet, and how?
- How will the team make decisions?

For more information on effective team practices, refer to *The Team Handbook, Third Edition* by Peter Scholtes or *Ground Rules for Effective Groups* by Roger Schwarz. Details about these resources are listed in the **Annotated Bibliography**.

Action Plan Key phases

	STEPS	WHO IS INVOLVED
PHASE 1	Review <i>Best Places to Work</i> data and determine whether additional research is necessary	Team
PHASE 2	Conduct additional research, identify themes and benchmark best practices	Team, with senior executive approval and support
PHASE 3	Brainstorm and prioritize recommendations	Team
PHASE 4	Finalize recommendations, build a budget and engage key stakeholders	Team, with senior executive approval and support
PHASE 5	Implement recommendations	Team, with senior executive approval and support

STEP 2 PLAN

In step two, you will identify the key phases of the improvement project and lay out the specific activities and tasks your team will complete in step three. Agencies may face different challenges, but your action plan will most likely consist of the following phases in the table above.

Create an action plan with activities, duration and schedule

Building off the goals and parameters stated in the Charter, list your plan's key phases, detailed activities, duration and schedule. Use this document as you research and develop recommendations for action. Use the Plan template in the Action Toolkit at the end of this chapter to fill in your own activities, set deadlines and assign specific responsibilities to team members. Read more about each of the five key phases below.

PHASE 1: REVIEW BEST PLACES TO WORK DATA AND DECIDE WHETHER ADDITIONAL RESEARCH IS NECESSARY

Review *Best Places to Work* data

Look at the workplace driver (or drivers) on which you will focus, and use the Hay Group Excel Tool to review the question-by-question responses that contributed to that score. This allows you to better understand what specific factors at your agency are behind that driver.

Determine whether additional research is necessary

You may decide that you need more information to understand specific root causes. If you conclude that additional research is necessary, you can learn more about your workplace environment by holding town hall meetings, administering additional surveys or conduct-

ing focus groups. If you decide to pursue additional research, submit a related budget request to your executive champion for approval.

PHASE 2: CONDUCT ADDITIONAL RESEARCH, IDENTIFY THEMES AND BENCHMARK BEST PRACTICES

Conduct additional research, if necessary

Complete the additional research efforts after your executive champion approves your budget. The key internal stakeholder groups identified for your communication plan in Chapter One may offer interesting perspectives and can be valuable sources of additional

TIP

Choose Additional Research Methods

There are a number of ways to gain a deeper understanding of your agency's workforce challenges, and each method has its strengths.

Town hall meetings allow staff members to ask questions and voice their concerns to managers and senior leaders in an open setting. They also allow employees across levels to engage in a real-time discussion.

Additional surveys allow staff, managers and leaders to respond anonymously to any specific outstanding questions that the team may have.

Focus groups let employees to speak at length on certain topics and allow the team to dive deeper into key areas of interest. Focus groups for staff members should be facilitated by a neutral third party and conducted separately from managers and leaders so employees can speak frankly and freely in a neutral setting.

information on the state of your agency’s workplace environment.

Identify themes

If you conducted additional research, use the supplementary data to build themes that provide more insight into the specific nuances of your agency’s challenges. If you did not conduct additional research, then define the root causes behind the agency challenges that you are addressing. These themes will help you figure out what kinds of best practices you will research in your next step.

Benchmark best practices

Once you identify the specific issue (or issues) within your agency, review other organizations to benchmark best practices and determine how other groups address similar challenges. Examples of how agencies have approached this activity in the past include:

- Looking at agencies or subcomponents of similar size or mission. Use the “Compare Up to 3 Specific Agencies” function on the Best Places to Work website to see which agencies have higher scores in the relevant dimensions.
- Interviewing and/or reading about the practices of the top performing and most-improved agencies and subcomponents in the *Best Places to Work* rankings.
- Interviewing and/or reading about other organizations in the for-profit, nonprofit or state/local government sectors (and perhaps even foreign governments).

PHASE 3: BRAINSTORM AND PRIORITIZE RECOMMENDATIONS

Brainstorm recommendations

Once you understand your agency’s challenges, identify your themes and benchmark best practices, use your knowledge to brainstorm a set of concrete recommendations. To do this efficiently and effectively, you could ask a neutral facilitator to moderate your brainstorming session. During this initial brainstorming phase, team members should be encouraged to temporarily suspend judgment and offer any solution that might address your agency’s challenges. See TMP’s Top Ten Brainstorming Tips in the Annotated Bibliography for guidelines that may help you during the brainstorming process.

Another approach is to solicit ideas from the entire agency staff. You could build an online forum where employees can submit their ideas to improve the work-

place environment, and allow other employees to vote on submissions or hold an idea contest.

Prioritize recommendations

Once your team has developed recommendations, prioritize them based on impact and effort and select the top ideas for implementation. Recommendations that are “low effort, high impact” will take the least amount of time and resources to implement, but will potentially have the biggest effect on employee satisfaction. Recommendations that are “high effort, high impact” are likewise expected to have a big effect on employee satisfaction, but they may require more energy to put into practice. Some recommendations may fall into the “low effort, low impact” or “high effort, low impact” categories; the energy and investment that these types of recommendations will require may not match the eventual payoff.

It’s best to first focus on “low effort, high impact” recommendations. Then, you can move to those that are “high effort, high impact.” Avoid recommendations that are “high effort, low impact.” You can use the Effort v. Impact Analysis diagram at the top of the following page to structure your prioritization process.

PHASE 4: FINALIZE RECOMMENDATIONS, BUILD A BUDGET AND ENGAGE KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Finalize recommendations

Once you have prioritized your recommendations, consider your agency’s time and resource restraints as you select the top recommendations to implement. Use the Action Plan Worksheet in the Hay Group Excel Tool to match recommendations to the specific survey questions they address.

Build a budget

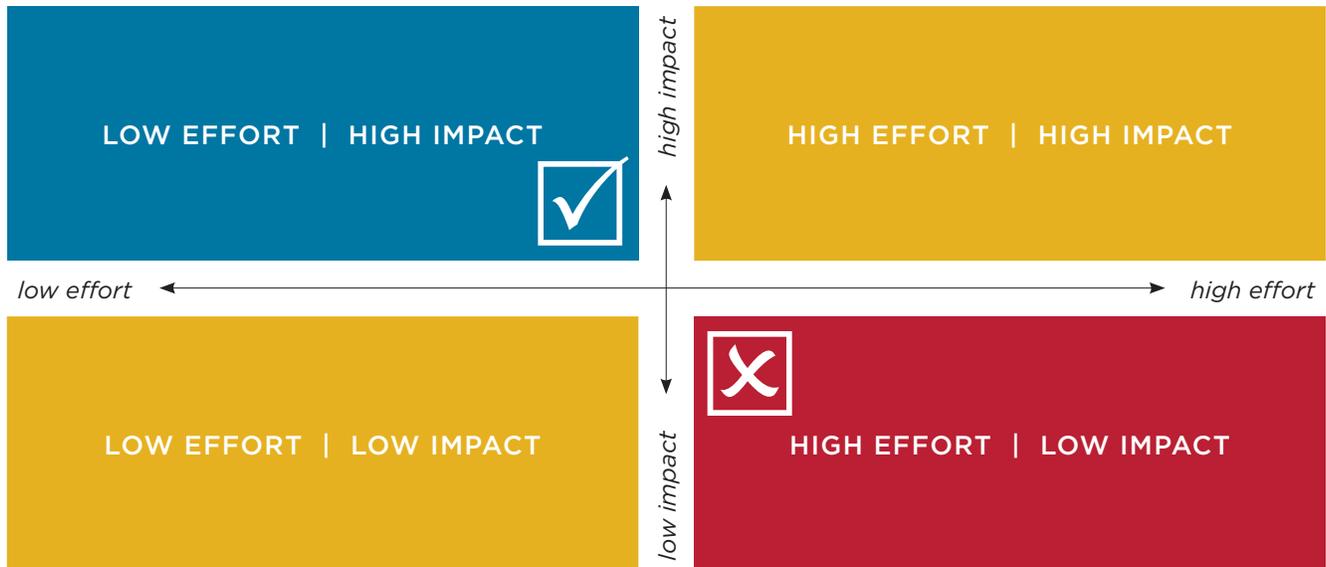
Calculate how much staff time and other resources your final recommendations will require to implement. Create ranges for scale and spread, so that senior leaders can understand what their options are as they approve the budget. Include potential metrics for success so that your agency will be able to measure the effectiveness of your recommendations and the value of the investment.

Engage key stakeholders

Complete your final deliverable(s), whether a memo, a report, a presentation or a combination. Use your findings from the *Best Places to Work* data, additional internal research and best practices benchmarking to build a business case for your final recommendations. Ensure that your final output is appropriate to engage stake-

Action Plan Effort v. impact analysis

Prioritize: focus first on recommendations that are low effort, but high impact



holders, especially senior leaders, and garner buy-in for the next step: implementation. You could also invite feedback on your recommendations so that others can have an opportunity to contribute.

PHASE 5: PLAN HOW TO IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Communicate your recommendations and implementation plan to your organization

Once approved, share your recommendations with employees throughout your agency so colleagues will know what to expect. Work with the appropriate leaders and managers to launch solutions and track success over time.

STEP 3 EXECUTE, MONITOR AND CONTROL

After you have agreed on a timeline and deliverables with your executive champion and identified the key phases and work activities for your action plan, it's time to complete each activity and make sure the plan stays on track. This section offers some tips on how to direct and manage the plan according to schedule.

EXECUTE: COMPLETE ACTIVITIES IN EACH PHASE

Reinforce stakeholder buy-in

Wherever possible, engage the appropriate stakeholders in the improvement effort, from early planning through implementation. Reinforce their buy-in by keeping them involved; their energy and support will be essential for successful implementation of your recommendations. Once you complete your action plan document to develop and implement recommendations, you may consider announcing your plans agency-wide to inform employees about efforts to improve the workplace environment.

Complete work activities, collect status information and conduct meetings

Direct and manage the plan according to the schedule, and stick to deadlines as best as possible to meet key

milestones. Conduct regular project status meetings. The team leader should create an agenda and circulate it to the group in advance of every meeting to facilitate an efficient and productive discussion.

Build team commitment and morale

If you decide on a team approach, it's important to build and maintain team morale throughout the planning process. To limit team challenges, use the beginning of team meetings to check the team "pulse" and plan activities accordingly. Provide immediate and specific feedback to group members. The team leader should encourage full participation and recognize individual contributions to the group's work.

Share information

The action planning team members should consistently share relevant information with each other. An Internet-based, file-sharing platform or shared server folder would help keep all documents organized in a central location. In addition to regular team meetings, the team should also check in with its executive champion (and other senior leaders) to discuss updates and challenges. Teams should also communicate progress to the rest of the organization as appropriate.

Assess quality

Developing and executing a plan is an iterative process. Situations may change, and the plan may have to adapt accordingly. The team should periodically ensure that it is completing the activities laid out in the plan. The team should also manage the quality of the deliverables to be sure they are in line with the executive champion's expectations and re-evaluate the plan against the identified issues and risks.

MONITOR AND CONTROL: STAY ON TRACK

Monitor and control progress

Compare progress against your action plan to track completed activities. Identify potential hurdles related to deadlines, deliverables and costs, and keep senior leaders appropriately informed of these issues. If the plan requires changes, update the plan with edits after they have been approved. Continue to keep key individuals and stakeholder groups apprised of your progress. Again, they can be valuable allies for your recommendations and will be an important part of the implementation process.

LOOKING FORWARD

Understanding your data, communicating with key stakeholders and developing an action plan all lead to this vital result: well-informed solutions to improve employee satisfaction. Your team's efforts to create a plan for developing and implementing recommendations to improve the workplace environment are critical to helping your agency better achieve its mission. A committed and engaged workforce will result in higher productivity and help your agency better meet its goals. Chapter Three: Sustaining and Building On Results will help you with next steps after you have implemented your recommendations.

Action Toolkit Charter template

Team Members**Goals**

List one to three strategic goals for this action plan.

Deliverables

List the deliverables that the team will be expected to produce at the end of the planning process and corresponding due dates.

Budget, Resources and Time

List the estimated initial budget and resources required to develop recommendations.

Specify the timeline set by the executive champion for developing recommendations and implementation.

Measuring Progress and Impact

List the measures that your team will use to determine your action plan progress leading up to recommendations and the impact of the recommendations themselves. Consider:

How will you collect and analyze information to generate metrics?

How will you determine the progress of your action plan leading up to your recommendations?

How will you measure the impact of the implementation of your recommendations and in what time period?

Action Toolkit Plan template

KEY PHASES AND EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES

The key phases of your action plan are outlined below. For each of these phases, identify the specific activities your team will undertake to complete that phase. Use the template on the following page to identify specific timelines and roles and responsibilities. Example activities are included below for your reference.

ACTION PLAN: KEY PHASES

	STEPS	WHO IS INVOLVED	SUGGESTED TIMELINE
PHASE 1	Review <i>Best Places to Work</i> data and determine whether additional research is necessary	Team	Month 1
PHASE 2	Conduct additional research, identify themes and benchmark best practices	Team, with senior executive approval and support	Month 2
PHASE 3	Brainstorm and prioritize recommendations	Team	Month 3
PHASE 4	Finalize recommendations, build a budget and engage key stakeholders	Team, with senior executive approval and support	Month 4
PHASE 5	Implement recommendations	Team, with senior executive approval and support	Month 5 and beyond

ACTION PLAN: KEY ACTIVITIES

PHASE 1: Review <i>Best Places to Work</i> data and determine whether additional research is necessary			
Activity	Owner	Start Date	Completion Deadline
Use Hay Tool to identify and summarize root causes behind workplace driver: Effective Leadership—Supervisors			
Use Hay Tool to identify and summarize root causes behind workplace driver: Effective Leadership—Empowerment			
Decide whether additional research is necessary, and if so, what kind			
Draft detailed budget for additional research (if necessary)			
Check-in with executive champion			
Draft E-mail to update staff on team progress			

Action Toolkit Action plan template**KEY PHASES AND ACTIVITIES**

A Word version of this template is available for download at http://bestplacestowork.org/BPTW/agencies/BPTW_ActionPlanTemplate.docx

PHASE 1: Review *Best Places to Work* data and determine whether additional research is necessary

Activity	Owner	Start Date	Completion Deadline

PHASE 2: Conduct additional research, identify themes and benchmark best practices

Activity	Owner	Start Date	Completion Deadline

PHASE 3: Brainstorm and prioritize recommendations

Activity	Owner	Start Date	Completion Deadline

PHASE 4: Finalize recommendations, build a budget and engage key stakeholders

Activity	Owner	Start Date	Completion Deadline

PHASE 5: Implement recommendations

Activity	Owner	Start Date	Completion Deadline

CHAPTER 3 ACTION PLANNING

Congratulations! So far, you have likely accomplished a great deal toward your mission to improve employee satisfaction in a way that also improves organizational effectiveness at your agency. You have analyzed your data, developed a strategic approach and engaged key stakeholders to garner buy-in for action. You have also developed an action plan (or plans), created a set of informed recommendations and implemented some, if not all of those solutions.

Sustaining higher levels of employee satisfaction at your agency takes time. It requires a long-term commitment, especially from leadership. It takes continuous effort to maintain positive changes, not just a one-time push—think of it as ongoing “diet and exercise” for your agency as opposed to a one-week fast. Don’t be discouraged if it takes longer than expected to see desired results; external events and setbacks can happen, but it’s up to you to be persistent in your efforts.

Long-term results often require cultural shifts to support changes in the workplace. Employees at all levels in your agency may need some time to adjust to change, and some may even resist. But staying steady is really getting left back. Government-wide employee satisfaction ratings have continued to rise since 2003, so agencies must change and improve to keep up with the average. As you help employees understand how new agency values translate into action and that higher levels of employee satisfaction relate to better agency outcomes, your agency can institutionalize changes and help turn “new” into “normal” to sustain improvements over time.

Chapter Three: Sustaining and Building on Results will help you incorporate your changes into the agency’s culture and mission to enhance efforts to improve the workplace environment for your employees over the long term. This third chapter will help you:

1. Document improvements and lessons learned;
2. Institutionalize changes from “new” to “normal”; and
3. Plan next steps.

STEP 1 DOCUMENT IMPROVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

- Gather information
- Evaluate outcomes
- Continue to engage with stakeholders

STEP 2 INSTITUTIONALIZE CHANGES FROM “NEW” TO “NORMAL”

- Share your success with others
- Leverage improvements for retention and recruitment
- Establish an ongoing improvement initiative that spans across levels

STEP 3 EXECUTE, MONITOR AND CONTROL

- Continue best practices
- Maintain alignment with senior leadership goals and agency mission
- Continue to evaluate the environment and adjust plans accordingly
- Plan for future improvement

STEP 1 DOCUMENT IMPROVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Some solutions that came out of your action planning may have worked well while others may have been less effective than previously hoped. It is important to measure, record and analyze the impact of your action plan recommendations to assess which solutions can become best practices and which should be reconsidered.

GATHER INFORMATION

Collect data based on the metrics you established during the action planning phase. Engage stakeholder groups as sources of information (e.g., leaders, managers, staff, unions, etc.) via additional surveys, meetings, focus groups, interviews or other feedback vehicles. As during the research phase of action planning, focus groups should be conducted by a neutral third party and separately from managers and leaders to ensure candid responses. You can also use this opportunity to gauge employee reactions to changes in the workplace across levels: are people welcoming the changes, or reacting defensively? This information can help you think about ways to help your employees adjust to future changes.

EVALUATE OUTCOMES

Return to the “effort vs. impact” framework that you used to prioritize and select which solutions to implement. Which actions had the biggest effect on employee satisfaction, while at the same time requiring a reasonable amount of effort and resources? Which solutions required too much effort for too little benefit? Track the solutions that worked well, those that didn’t, and why. Also note which successful changes require continued support and/or resources. Remember: big and small wins both count and deserve recognition to encourage continued success. Document any improvements in organizational outcomes related to employee satisfaction initiatives.

CONTINUE TO ENGAGE WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Share the results of your evaluation with key stakeholder groups to reinforce buy-in for future action. You can schedule meetings or disseminate a summary memo to communicate your findings. Work with your executive sponsor to ensure continued resources for solutions that require ongoing support. Check the alignment of these efforts with senior leadership goals and the agency’s mission. At the end of the day, sustained improve-

ment will require support from the top. Reinforce the point that higher levels of employee satisfaction have been linked to better agency outcomes and document outcome improvements if possible.

STEP 2 INSTITUTIONALIZE CHANGES FROM “NEW” TO “NORMAL”

It may be easy to be satisfied with immediate results after your action plan has been implemented. For employee satisfaction to continue to rise, however, your agency must institutionalize this “culture of improvement.” In other words, employees across all levels at your agency must assimilate new values and practices into their daily work life until “new” becomes “normal.” There are things you can do to maintain an organizational focus on workforce issues and encourage continued improvement over time. It may be difficult for this process to gain permanence, especially in organizations where leaders and budgets can change from year to year. External events can also influence employee satisfaction. However, if a commitment to improvement can become instilled in your agency’s culture, your efforts may endure for future generations of employees.

SHARE YOUR SUCCESS WITH OTHERS

Recognize and reward success within your agency. Improvement isn’t just about addressing weaknesses; it’s also about building on strengths. If your agency’s efforts are going well, you should communicate those achievements both inside and outside your organization. Highlight the highest or most improved scores to reinforce continued positive change.

Agency-wide

Encourage continued positive change and actions by communicating results and spotlighting what is going well in your agency. Recognize individuals who have made extraordinary efforts to improve the workplace environment, perhaps by means of an honorary award or other incentive. Rewards can inspire others across your agency to make their own improvements.

Job Seekers

Make it known among job seekers that your agency cares about the well-being of its employees. Your agency can mention its efforts to improve the workplace environment in its recruiting messaging and materials, which signals to potential employees that satisfaction is an agency priority.

Across Government

Have you ever wanted to know what other agencies are doing to improve employee satisfaction? Chances are they're curious about what you're doing as well. Sharing your experiences with other agencies—and learning from theirs—can help you broaden your knowledge of best practices and inspire new ideas, all while contributing to better federal management.

LEVERAGE IMPROVEMENTS FOR RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT

Improving the workplace environment can benefit your agency's retention and recruitment efforts. Not only do these efforts send the message that your agency's leadership cares about the well-being of its employees, but job seekers will also view such actions in a positive light. Overall, you want your current employees to share your vision for an improved workplace environment as they tell potential employees about what it's like to work at your agency. You can also use TMP Government's Top Retention Strategies in the Annotated Bibliography as an additional resource.

Make the connection between employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness

Communicate to employees across levels that research, such as the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board report, "The Power of Federal Employee Engagement," has linked higher levels of employee satisfaction and engagement to better agency outcomes. Remind key players in your organization that satisfied employees can help your agency better achieve its mission.

Communicate efforts and improvements to current and potential employees

Communicate regularly with current employees about ongoing efforts to improve employee satisfaction, as current employees are also credible information sources for potential hires. Consider including this information in your recruiting message, as well, to differentiate your agency as a competitive employer. You can engage your current employees in the recruitment process by inviting them to join the search for more top talent "just like you."

Understand what current and potential employees want in an employer

One way to gather information about what current employees seek is to conduct interim interviews. For example, you may have discovered that employees tend to depart at or around 13 months of employment. You can engage employees before this critical point in a "pulse

check" survey or by other means to get an idea of what they may be thinking. You can also use an exit interview to gather this information. Employees who are moving on to other opportunities will likely offer more candid feedback regarding their experiences at your agency, and this information can help you identify potential areas of improvement moving forward.

ESTABLISH AN ONGOING IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE THAT SPANS ACROSS LEVELS

Establish a standardized process for periodic or ongoing improvement with a timeline that includes points of accountability. Work with your executive sponsor to arrange ongoing budget support for this initiative. Assign accountability, responsibility and action planning across all levels to energize, engage and empower employees. You may even consider establishing a permanent, standing committee that is responsible for periodically reviewing employee satisfaction and initiating improvements as necessary.

TIP

All Hands on Deck! Key Roles for Continuous Improvement

Senior Leadership: Senior leaders in certain positions can act as permanent executive sponsors for *Best Places to Work* action planning teams. Their involvement is essential for continued resources and support.

Supervisors: Establish a process with supervisors to monitor the status of their offices. Periodic pulse checks on their employees' satisfaction levels can inform ongoing improvements.

Employees: Employees should continue to be part of action planning teams. Team participation can be a competitive process among volunteers, offered as a professional development opportunity or employees can also be empowered to pursue their own areas of concern or interest. People who are personally invested in improving the workplace environment may be even more committed to the cause.

Employees across levels who are involved in this improvement should plan to meet on a regular basis (e.g., quarterly, monthly) to maintain a current picture of employee satisfaction and to prepare for the next action planning cycle.

STEP 3 EXECUTE, MONITOR AND CONTROL

It takes continuous effort to maintain positive changes. Think about improvement as an ongoing cycle of assessing the workplace environment and employee satisfaction, and then creating, implementing and evaluating solutions, and repeating the process.

CONTINUE BEST PRACTICES

Be persistent. Continue applying solutions that have positively affected employee satisfaction and commitment. Maintain the momentum behind your efforts by making sure there will be future support and resources for lasting improvement. Keep collecting data on the metrics that you established throughout the effort. If solutions that were implemented only in a small section of your agency proved effective, employ those actions agency-wide. Keep results visible; share the good, the bad and the ugly.

MAINTAIN ALIGNMENT WITH SENIOR LEADERSHIP GOALS AND AGENCY MISSION

Keep senior leaders consistently involved and informed. Explain to leaders how efforts to improve the workplace environment align with their objectives and benefit the agency. Senior leadership support will help incorporate continuous workplace improvements into the agency mission and culture.

CONTINUE TO EVALUATE THE ENVIRONMENT AND ADJUST PLANS ACCORDINGLY

Any number of changes could affect your agency, from reorganization and/or changes in mission, to budget cuts, leadership shifts or external events. Assess the potential impact of these changes on employee satisfaction and opportunities as they arise. Remember that employees at all levels may face change with difficulty and may require additional encouragement and support during these periods. Beware of detractors. Monitoring employee satisfaction and improving the workplace environment accordingly is essential to better organizational outcomes. Even agencies that face major changes can adapt and improve.

PLAN FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENT

Keep managers and employees in the loop and engaged. Let them know in a variety of ways that improving the work environment and becoming a best place to work is an ongoing goal and commitment. Don't be discouraged if results slip one year—there will be another opportunity to improve the following year, and use lessons learned to adjust solutions. Create a central resource for future efforts so that successors can learn from past efforts. Start preparing for the next *Best Places to Work* action planning cycle and look forward to continued improvement for years to come.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER 2

TMP Government. *Internal Communications Idea Sheet*. 2009.

TMP Government, a global expert in communications strategies, published this list of its top internal communications tips. This idea sheet can help you develop an internal message based on your needs and audience. Ideas include various digital, printed and in-person solutions.

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CHAPTER 3

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This examination of the Universum IDEAL Employer Survey 2008, Universum USA's 2008 survey of undergraduates, identifies the qualities young people seek in an employer. Key findings suggest that the government's appeal to the younger generation extends beyond the new president. The report also offers operational advice to federal recruiters about how they can use this information to better attract and retain top talent.

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This diagnosis of the current challenges facing federal onboarding presents a model for strategic onboarding, which can serve as a guide for agency reforms. The model outlines a set of overriding principles that underpin effective onboarding programs. It identifies key stakeholders and clarifies their roles in the process, breaking down the onboarding process into five distinct time periods and explaining what agencies should be doing during each phase.

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According to a Harvard Business Review study, a 5 percent increase in retention efforts can garner a 10 percent decrease in costs and a 25 to 65 percent increase in productivity. These strategies from TMP Government can help give you ideas about how to better understand the ways your agency can keep its top talent.

United States Merit Systems Protection Board. *The Power of Federal Employee Engagement*. November 2008. <http://www.mspb.gov/netsearch/viewdocs.aspx?docnumber=379024&version=379721&application=ACROBAT>

The findings in this study suggest that a higher level of employee engagement, between federal employees and their organization, is related to better organizational outcomes. It also offers suggestions on how agencies can attract and retain their best employees.

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Partnership for Public Service

Janelle Callahan

Brad Golson

Laura Howes

Bevin Johnston

Erika Kaneko

Bob Lavigna

Katie Malague

John Palguta

Lara Shane

Tina Sung

TMP'S TOP TEN BRAINSTORMING TIPS

Group idea generation requires a balance of free, associative thinking, combined with goal direction, unobtrusive discipline and a little “out of the box” guidance. Here are some tips in reverse order of importance:

TIP NUMBER 10

Avoid sidebars. Brainstorming involves inclusivity. Side conversations and body language (e.g., eye rolling) disrupt the practical etiquette of brainstorming.

TIP NUMBER 9

Brainstorming is not a debate. There is a time to persuade. There is a time to speak your mind. There is a time to vote. All come later, not during.

TIP NUMBER 8

Honor the so-called off-the-wall idea. Almost any good idea was once off the wall for most. Wet blanketing could have stopped the iPod.

TIP NUMBER 7

See the synergy between the offbeat and mainstream. As Everett Rogers has shown in the popular *The Diffusion of Innovations*, change usually moves from the pioneers and early adopters to the majorities and the mainstream. Why limit ideas to what you think will work now?

TIP NUMBER 6

Your first thought may be the best. Or maybe it isn't. However, as Malcolm Gladwell has shown in *Blink*, if you have the ability for quick ideas, you can hit lots of nails on the head. And you'll spark the session.

TIP NUMBER 5

Ensure the moderator's active neutrality. Whiteboards encourage not power, but facilitation. The moderator can say anything that generates new perspectives from others... as long as it doesn't presume authority over the gathering.

TIP NUMBER 4

Appreciate diverse thinking styles. If everyone thinks the same way, innovation doesn't have much chance to break through. Brainstorming is great time to bring together your ENFJ and ISTP personality types as well as everyone else. That goes for just about every kind of diversity.

TIP NUMBER 3

Put away the judging cap until later. Evaluating ideas on the spot simply fizzles a brainstorming session. Inhibiting people leads to less creativity.

TIP NUMBER 2

Know who should come, where to start and where to stop. A good idea generation session consists of about 10 to 12 people. Smaller becomes a conversation that can drag. Larger can become unwieldy. In any case, everyone should know why they're there, and the facilitator should move to closure and evaluation at a high point.

TIP NUMBER 1

Have fun.

TMP GOVERNMENT INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS IDEA SHEET

Whether you're just starting to understand your agency's *Best Places to Work* in the Federal Government data or announcing your action plan for implementation, the need for clear, concise and accurate information sharing is vital.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS IDEAS TO MEET YOUR UNIQUE REQUIREMENTS

Training Program

Get new employees off to the right start and help to communicate the need for continuous learning.

Mentoring Program

Your enterprise's knowledge base is its greatest asset. As the aging of America's workplace continues to accelerate, now is the time to pass on gained experience, wisdom and the unique perspectives of individuals.

Employee Survey

Find out the advantages and disadvantages of your workplace by communicating with your employee base. It will help in all matters of recruitment, retention and productivity.

Open Enrollment

Smooth out the benefits administration process. Keep your employees well-informed and empowered to make the right decision for their particular needs.

Change Management/Business Process

Turning an operation around to a new way of doing business must be communicated well to your employee base. It will help to ensure their understanding, efficiency and effectiveness.

Internal Event

Promote your important events through well-crafted communications that align with your overall goals and employer brand.

Motivational Program

Promote initiative and inspire your employees through the creation of well-thought out communications pieces that support your internal activities.

Agency-wide Announcement

Whether it's announcing a new senior hire or a policy decision, say it with a look and feel that's consistent with your employer brand and in coordination with your overall human capital initiatives.

Other Internal Communication Needs

Other methods can help you communicate across all venues, ranging from signage to digital solutions.

TMP GOVERNMENT'S TOP RETENTION STRATEGIES

According to a Harvard Business Review study, a 5 percent increase in retention efforts will garner you a 10 percent decrease in costs and a 25 to 65 percent increase in productivity. It's a simple equation—losing valued employees will affect your organization. The proof is in the numbers, and these strategies can help you keep your retention numbers right where you want them.

Applicant View

Assess your employment process through the eyes of an applicant to pinpoint what's working well and where your organization could benefit from training and improvement.

New Hire Interviews

This is a way to immediately capture pertinent data that will help you to recruit better and determine the expectations of those just hired for greater retention success.

Incremental Interviews

Many jobs have a tenure threshold. You can interview employees over time to identify disengagement trends and measure your employer promise against the employee's reality.

Exit Interviews

Determine why people leave and discover what you can do to increase retention success.

Polling

Gain useful data on a variety of situations and initiatives within your organization for ensuring greater retention.

Onboarding Communications

Develop traditional and digital on-boarding communications that align with your brand and support your retention initiatives from day one.

New Hire Kits

Start your retention efforts by giving new hires a clear understanding of your programs and processes by developing integrated communications materials.

Internal Communications

Communicate well with employees to ensure consistency of your employer branding initiatives while keeping employees informed and involved.

Employee Portal

Increase job satisfaction by keeping in touch with employees and providing them the information they need and want.

Employee Referral Program

Build employee loyalty while attracting additional talented individuals through a hiring referral program that helps each employee participate in the recruiting process.

Career Pathing Tools

Develop electronic tools that allow employees to chart a course to where they want to head in their careers within your organization.

Mentoring Programs

Develop communications materials, traditional and digital, that support mentoring while offering an additional reason for individuals to stay, teach and learn.

Recognition Programs

Honoring employees for a job well done can increase retention while avoiding costly rehires. Develop a recognition program and communicate its key messages within a single location or across a worldwide enterprise.

Knowledge Transfer Programs

Knowledge transfer programs allow senior employees to leave a legacy while encouraging other employees to advance in their careers—all while ensuring job satisfaction and longevity. Develop the communications programs to make knowledge transfer a career-enhancing reality.



PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

1100 New York Avenue NW
Suite 1090 EAST
Washington DC 20005

202 775 9111
ourpublicservice.org