University of Houston Staff Morale Survey: Final Report

University of Houston Staff Council Staff Affairs Subcommittee

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Background and Methodology

• Staff Council’s desire to develop more targeted surveys that would provide actionable items.
• 1,146 staff (33%) completed the survey in Nov-Dec 2011.
  – Participants represent every division, college and job on the main campus.
Results 1: Staff Attitudes

- On the whole, staff attitudes about their jobs and UH in general are very positive.
Results 1: Staff Attitudes

- However, staff attitudes toward **specific aspects of their jobs** were less positive.
Results 2:
Why are Staff Attitudes Important?

• Staff who are satisfied with their jobs, communication, pay, and promotion opportunities take fewer sick days.

![Graph showing the relationship between job satisfaction and sick days for different satisfaction levels.]

- Lowest 1/3
- Middle 1/3
- Highest 1/3
Why are Staff Attitudes Important?

- Staff who are satisfied with their jobs, communication, pay, and promotion opportunities are more engaged in their work.
Results 2:
Why are Staff Attitudes Important?

• Staff who are satisfied with their jobs, communication, pay, and promotion opportunities are less likely to turnover.
The Big Picture:
What is Driving Staff Attitudes?

- Supervisor is Supportive: 69%
- Division is Supportive: 51%
- Procedures are Fair: 59%
- Rewards are Fair: 47%
The Big Picture: What is Driving Staff Attitudes?

- Expectations are Unclear: 32%
- Conflicting Directions/Guidelines: 37%
- Insecure about Job: 29%
The Big Picture:
What is Driving Staff Attitudes?

• Obstacles to Performance Top 5:
  1. Interruptions by other people
  2. Rules and procedures
  3. Conflicting job demands
  4. Other employees
  5. Inadequate help from others
Results 3:
Identifying Drivers of Staff Attitudes

• Survey results indicate that staff are satisfied with their jobs (70%) and UH in general (60%), thus we did not target those attitudes for further investigation.

• Because staff attitudes (i.e., satisfaction) were lowest for pay (16%), promotions (20%), and communication (44%), we conducted additional analyses to examine drivers of those attitudes.
Results 3: Identifying Drivers of Staff Attitudes

- We regressed the attitude variables onto the work context variables to determine which work context variables account for the most unique variance in staff attitudes.
Results 3: Identifying Drivers of Staff Attitudes

- Four aspects of the work context emerged as primary drivers of staff attitudes.
Identifying Areas/Jobs to Target

- We intended to compare staff responses across Divisions. However, 33% of staff did not identify their division.
- Thus, comparisons of staff attitudes were made across job categories instead (number of respondents in each category is listed in red).
  - Executive (Dean, Assoc/Asst VP, & higher) 14
  - Director (Exec. Director, Director, Assoc/Asst Director) 130
  - Manager (Manager, Assoc/Asst Manager, Coordinator) 152
  - Business Administrator (Division, College, Dept) 51
  - Professional (User Support Specialist, Counselor, Academic Advisor, etc) 367
  - Administrative/Clerical (Office Asst, Receptionist, Front Desk, etc) 239
  - Technical & Service Craft (Electrician, Groundskeeper, Custodian, etc) 105
Results by Job Category: Pay Satisfaction

- Executive: 3.02
- Director: 2.60
- Manager: 2.41
- Business administrator: 2.55
- Professional: 2.34
- Admin/Clerical: 2.54
- Technical & service craft: 1.99
- Total: 2.42
Results by Job Category: Communication Satisfaction
Results by Job Category: Support from Division

- Executive: 3.64
- Director: 3.47
- Manager: 3.33
- Business administrator: 3.52
- Professional: 3.29
- Admin/Clerical: 3.31
- Technical & service craft: 2.66
- Total: 3.27
Results by Job Category: Turnover Intentions

- Higher scores indicate greater intentions to leave UH.

![Bar chart showing turnover intentions by job category]
Recommendations

• Improve communication at all levels (Division, College, Department, Supervisor) in order to:
  – Demonstrate concern for staff well-being and appreciation for their contributions
  – Reduce perceptions of unfairness due to inadequate or inaccurate information
  – Reduce uncertainty about potential changes to jobs or other employment practices
  – Inform staff of the resources available to them to resolve conflict and other complaints through Staff Council, HR, and Ombuds Office.
Recommendations

• Examine training needs of supervisors
  – Staff and faculty promoted to supervisory positions may benefit from opportunities to develop the competencies necessary to be effective managers.
  – Content of training may include:
    • Importance of frequent, clear, open, and honest communication
    • Clarifying performance expectations
    • Effective strategies for performance management and feedback
    • Identifying informal opportunities to recognize and reward staff performance
Recommendations

• Examine administrative rules and procedures for clarity and consistency of application across campus, particularly between interdependent units.

• Monitor the organizational climate for employees working in Technical and Service Craft positions.
  – Issues with maintenance around campus were noted by staff in other areas which suggests that issues faced by those staff may indirectly affect staff in other areas.

• Examine policies used to determine pay and promotions
  – Ensure consistent communication and application of policies across campus.
  – Merit-based pay based on a transparent appraisal system.