

How's Work Going 2011

Acadian Affairs, Gaelic Affairs & African Nova Scotian Affairs Employee Survey Results



Evaluation & Accountability
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Chapter 1 - Survey Background Information

1.1 Why do we survey?

We regularly survey employees to understand how to improve the public service workplace. Asking employees what they think about their work environment is common in the employment world today. It is a fundamental part of building a strong public service and improving client service for our citizens.

"How's Work Going" employee survey measures employee engagement and the drivers that lead to organizational satisfaction and commitment. Employee Engagement is a critical element to the success of any organization. Increased levels of employee engagement results in an increase in employee performance and retention creating a productive and committed public service.

Research has shown that an increase in employee engagement results in an increase in client satisfaction which builds confidence in government.

1.2 Who did we survey?

The survey was sent to all employees in an online format. This report contains the results of all permanent, contract and term employees who responded to the survey. Acadian, Gaelic and African Nova Scotian Affairs had a response rate of 92% (56% corporately). The survey was open between March 2 – 31, 2011.

1.3 How to read this report?

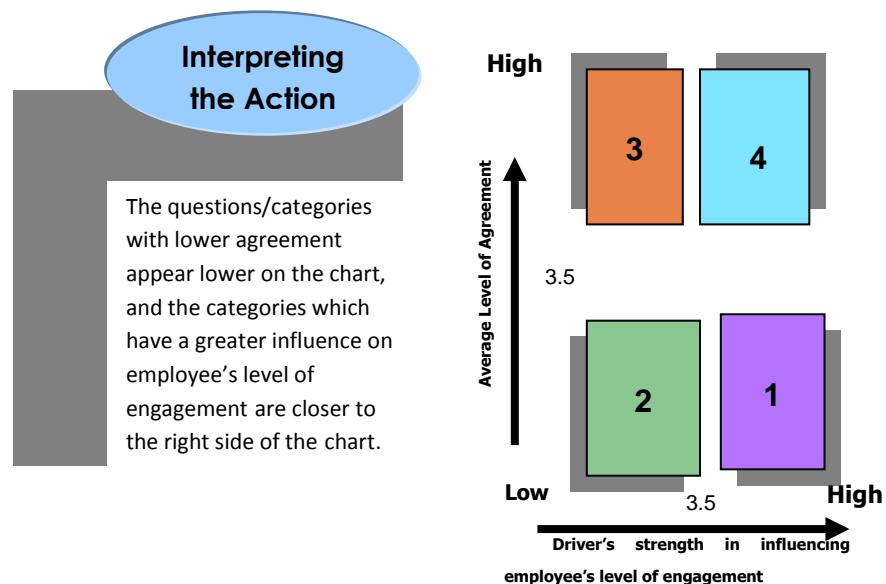
In this report, the results are presented in the following matter (note, due to the rounding of numbers the agreement scores may not equal 100%):

• Engagement Score	Engagement index which measures the extent to which individuals feel connected to and involved in their job and their organization and their level of satisfaction and commitment.
• Disagree- Agreement Percentage	Percentage of respondents who strongly disagreed and somewhat disagreed.
• Neutral - Agreement Percentage	Percentage of respondents who either agreed or disagreed.
• Agree - Agreement Percentage	Percentage of respondents who strongly agreed and somewhat agreed.
• Mean Category Score	The respondents average score calculated for each category (1-5 range).

Category Guide			
Clear Strength 75% and over	Strength 60-74%	Area for Improvement 50-59%	Area for Concern Under 50%

To help understand the results and to determine where government should continue to focus its response and action efforts, the 2011 survey was also analyzed using a method which comprises both the level of agreement and the strength of the category in influencing an employees' level of engagement (satisfaction and commitment)

The 2011 survey maps the average agreement score using descriptive statistics and driver strength on an action grid, as illustrated below:



Chapter 2 Engagement Outcome Results

2.1 Engagement Outcome Summary

In 2006, the Government of Nova Scotia established the Employee Engagement Index based on the Public Sector Interjurisdictional Engagement Model. The Employee Engagement Index measures the extent to which individuals feel connected to and involved in their job, organization, level of satisfaction, and commitment. The index is an average calculation of six satisfaction and commitment agreement scores. The percent who agreed with each of the six questions that comprise the Employee Engagement Index is also provided below.

	Agreement Score
Job Satisfaction	
Job Satisfaction	68
Organizational Satisfaction	
Department Satisfaction	68
Overall Satisfaction	77
Organizational Commitment	
Proud	83
Preference to stay with NS Government	74
Inspired	83
Would Recommend as a great place to work	87
Engagement Index	79

Table 1 Employee Engagement Agreement Scores

Acadian, Gaelic and African Nova Scotian Affairs' (AGANS) employee index is 79 and would be considered a clear strength. The corporate employee index is 62 and would be considered an area of strength.

2.2 Employee Engagement and Outcome Details

2.2.1 Engagement Outcome Details

Figure 1 below summarizes employees' responses regarding engagement outcome results.

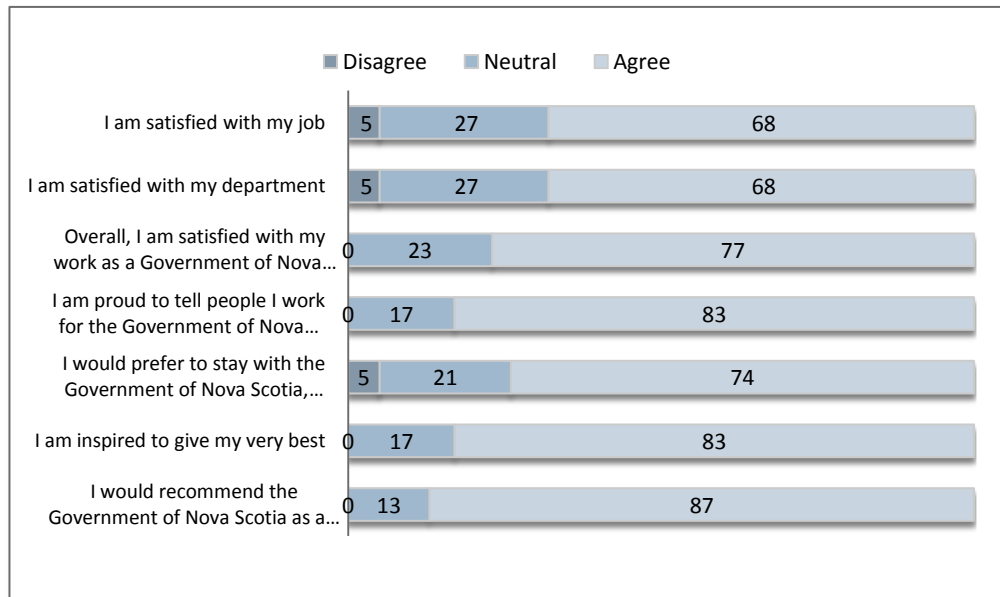


Figure 1 Detail engagement outcome results for 2011

2.2.2 How does the Department engagement compare?

Table 3 below compares the Department results to the overall corporate results for 2011 employee survey employee engagement outcome results.

	Agreement Scores	
	AGANS	Corporate
Job Satisfaction		
Job Satisfaction	68	59
Organizational Satisfaction		
Department Satisfaction	68	53
Overall Satisfaction	77	67
Organizational Commitment		
Proud	83	62
Preference to stay with Government of Nova Scotia	74	62
Inspired	83	68
Would Recommend as a great place to work	87	57
Engagement Level	79	62

Table 2 Employee Engagement score comparison

As noted in the table above, AGANS has stronger agreement scores for all the questions and has more areas of strength when compared to the corporate results. Recommending the Government of NS as a great place to work scored higher in agreement by 30 percentage points and is an area of clear strength, compared to the corporate results where that is an area for improvement. The overall engagement level is 17 percent higher for AGANS and an area of clear strength.

2.3 How can the level of employee engagement be improved?

To motivate and retain **employees** it is essential to understand what government employees **feel are important aspects** of their work environment. Management needs to know:

- What employees value?
- What attracted them to work for Government?
- What factor(s) influence employees' level of engagement (satisfaction and commitment)?
- How is the department performing in relations to the drivers (factors) of engagement?
- Where does AGANS need to focus to improve their employees' work environment to keep its employees engaged?

2.3.1 What do employees value?

The survey results reveal that AGANS employees value:

1. Challenging and interesting work – 78%
2. Pay and benefits – 74%
3. A chance to make a difference – 70%
4. Chance to learn new skills and develop – 52%
5. Opportunities for growth and advancement – 44%
6. Opportunities to balance work and personal life – 35%
7. Working for a leader they respect – 30%

2.3.2 What attracted them to work for Government?

What is important to them is very similar to what attracted them to work for the Government of Nova Scotia in the first place, which was:

1. Opportunity to work in chosen field – 74%
2. Compensation – 52%
3. Desire to work for the public service – 52%
4. Career advancement opportunities – 35%
5. Work Location – 35%
6. Support for training and related professional development activities – 26%
7. Opportunities for work-life balance – 26%

2.3.3 What factors influence employees' level of satisfaction and commitment with the organization?

There are several drivers of employee engagement, which can be measured. These include employees perceptions of their opportunities for input into decisions that affect their work; productive, collaborative and respectful working relationships; clear expectations and sense of direction for the organization; confidence in leadership; job fit with skills and interests; opportunities for learning and development; recognition for their work; and, having the support they need to provide customers quality service while achieving a balance between work and personal life. Figure 2 below illustrates this

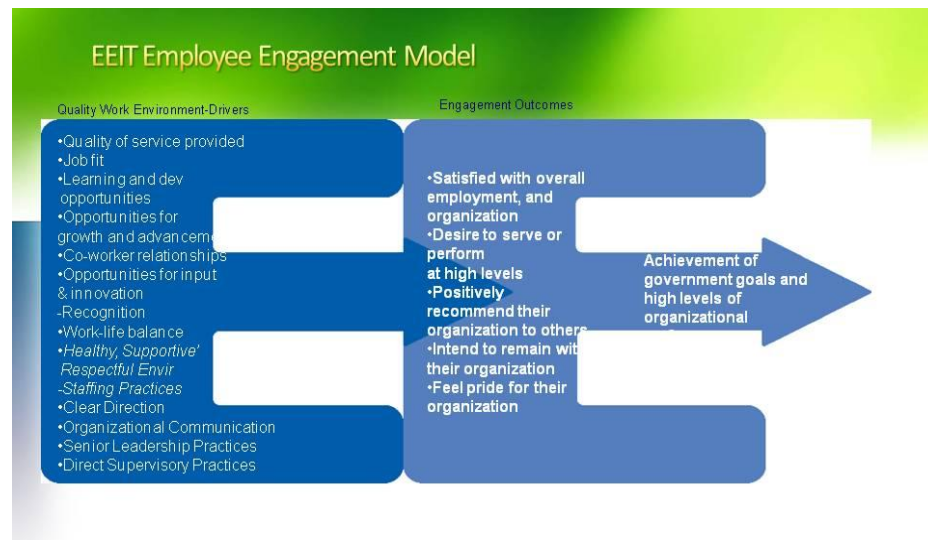


Figure 2 Employee Engagement Model

The drivers (quality environment indicators) can be grouped under four categories.

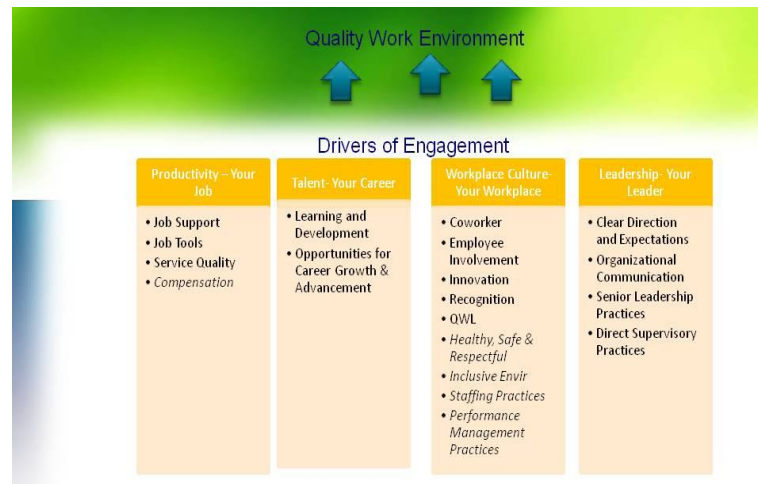


Figure 3 Drivers of Engagement category chart

To understand which drivers had a stronger influence for AGANS employees, a correlation analysis was conducted. An analysis of the correlations between the engagement drivers and indicators can show where action and attention should be focused to improve employee engagement and quality work environment. The Evaluation and Accountability unit of the PSC has performed this analysis. The list below outlines the factors influencing employees' level of commitment and satisfaction, based on the AGANS 2011 survey results.

1. Clear Direction and Expectations
2. Opportunities for Growth and Advancement
3. Staffing Practices

The list below outlines the top factors influencing employees' job satisfaction, based on the AGANS 2011 survey results.

1. Opportunities for Growth and Advancement
2. Job Fit
3. Involvement and Innovation
4. Recognition
5. Clear Direction and Expectations
6. Senior Leadership Practices
7. Quality of Service

2.3.4 How is AGANS performing in relation to the drivers (factors) of engagement?

A Quality Environment Index can be used to understand how a Department is performing in relation to the drivers of employee engagement. This report calculates a Quality Work Environment Index which is based on the quality environment indicators used in the Public Sector Interjurisdictional Engagement Model. The Quality Work Environment index is an average calculation of the 13 EEIT drivers' agreement scores.

For AGANS the Quality Environment Index (Average of all the drivers of engagement) is 74. The Corporate Quality Environment Index is 60.

2.3.5 Where does AGANS need to focus to improve their employees' work environment and to keep employees engaged?

To help understand the results and to determine where the Departments should continue to focus its response and action efforts, the 2011 survey was analyzed using a method which comprises both the level of agreement and the strength of the individual drivers.

Evaluation and Accountability calculated the average scores for each of the 18 factors. The mean score and the driver strength score for each of the 18 drivers were then mapped on the scatter plot below. To provide a visual picture to illustrate with regards to how employees perceive their current work environment and what they consider as important to them,

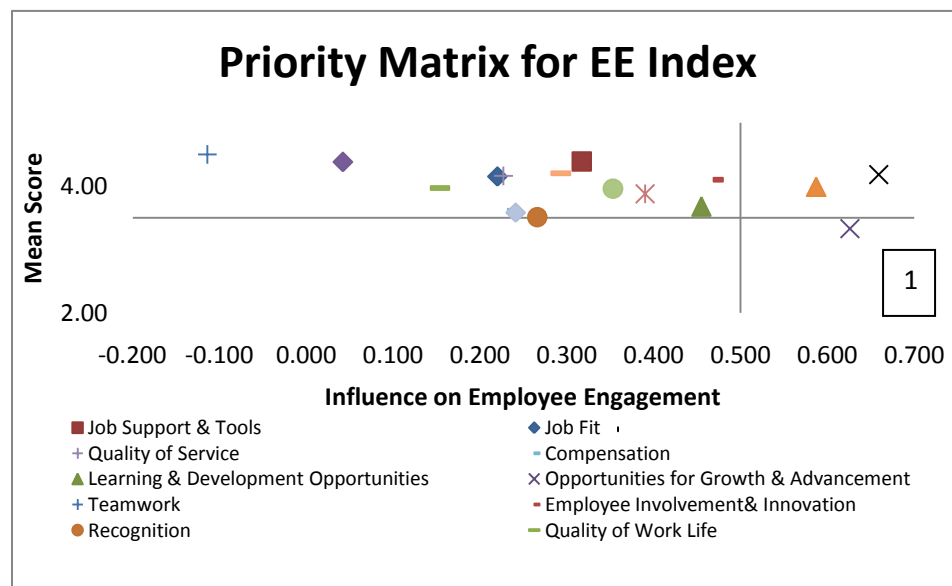


Figure 4 Priority Action Matrix Grid

As shown in Figure 4, the drivers with lower agreement appear lower on the chart, and the drivers which have a greater influence on employee's engagement are closer to the right side of the chart. The focus for AGANS would be in the lower right quadrant (Quadrant 1).

Based on the analysis of employee engagement drivers and analyzing how employees perceive their current work environment and what they consider as important to them AGANS's focus should be:

- Opportunities for Growth and Advancement

The next section of this report provides insight into how AGANS is progressing with each driver. By reviewing how employees responded to the drivers of engagement along with drilling down further by examining the favourable score per question, management can gain an understanding where to focus to improve employees' level of engagement (satisfaction and commitment).

Chapter 3 - Quality Work Environment

3.1 Your Job - Productivity Capacity

The following section provides details into AGANS's Productivity Capacity (job support, quality of service provided and compensation) drivers agreement scores by displaying question details and comparing with the corporate results.

3.1.1 Productivity Capacity Details

Figure 5 below summarizes the disagreement, neutral and agreement scores for the Productivity Capacity results.

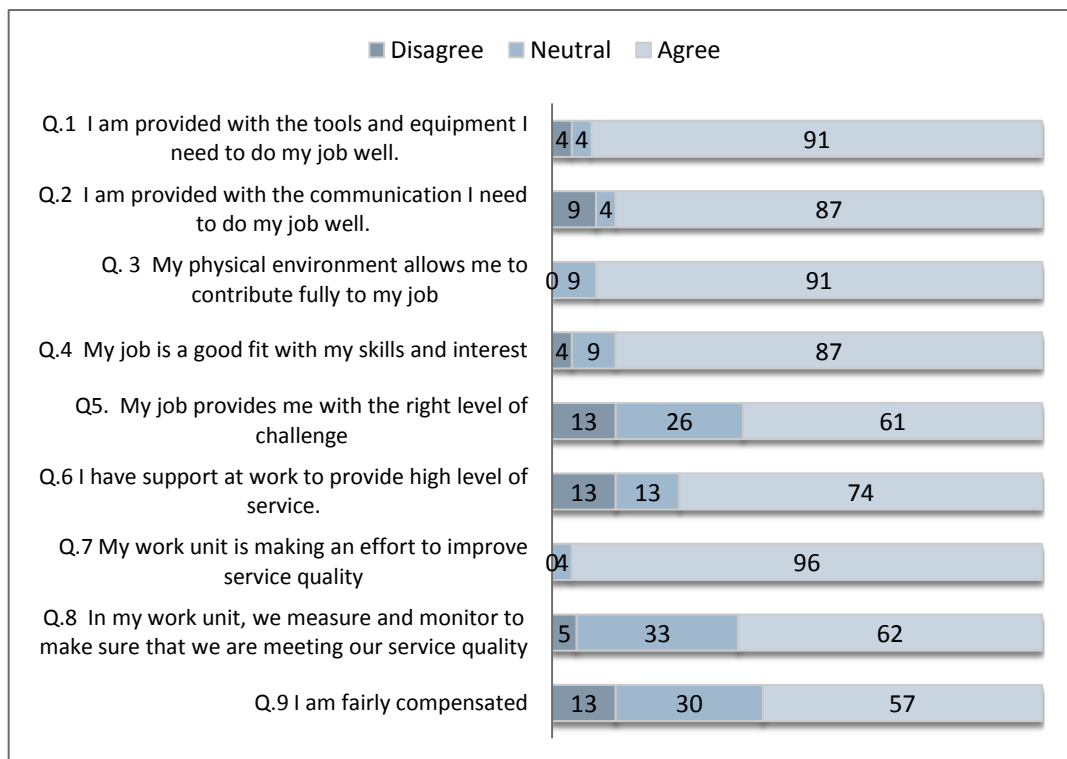


Figure 5 Detail job productivity capacity results for 2011

3.1.2 Productivity Capacity Comparison

Table 3 below compares the AGANS results to the overall corporate results for 2011 employee survey employee engagement outcome results.

	Agreement Scores	
	AGANS	Corporate
Job Support and Tools		
Provided with the tools and equipment needed to do job well	91	72
Provided with the communication needed to do job well	87	58
Physical work environment allows employees to fully contribute to job	91	71
Job Fit		
Job is a good fit with skills and interests	87	79
Job provides right level of challenge	61	66
Quality of Service Provided		
Have support at work to provide high level of service	74	61
Work unit is making an effort to improve service quality	96	68
Work unit measures and monitors to make sure they are meeting their service quality	62	56
Compensation		
Compensated fairly for job	57	44

Table 3 Productivity Capacity comparison

As noted in the table above, AGANS has higher agreement scores in all questions compared to the corporate results and has more areas of clear strength.

Using the strength-improvement category guide, in comparison to the corporate results AGANS employees' agreement responses are stronger the following areas:

- Job support and tools (all areas)
- Work units making an effort to improve service quality
- Work units measuring and monitoring to make sure they are meeting their service quality
- Compensation

3.2 Talent Capacity – Your Career

3.2.1 Talent Capacity Details

Figure 6 summarizes the disagreement, neutral, and agreement scores for the career-talent capacity results.

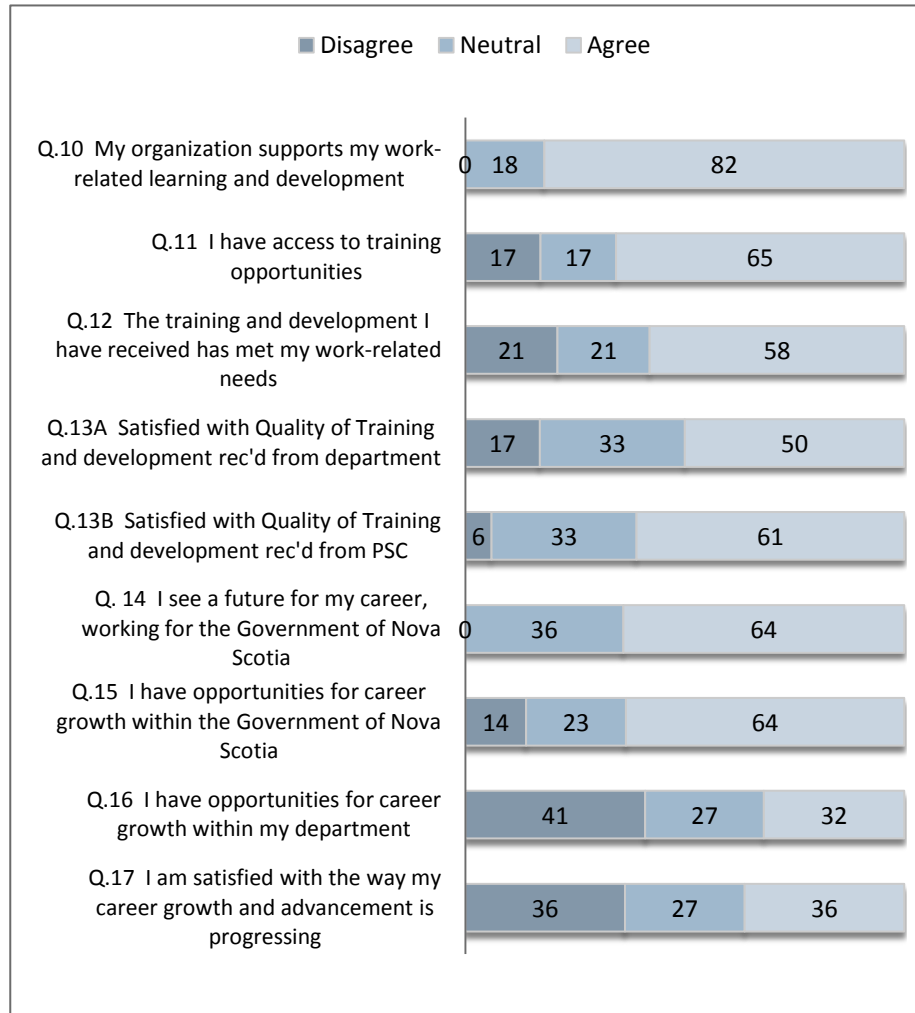


Figure 6 Detail talent capacity results for 2011

3.2.2 Talent Capacity Comparison

Table 4 below compares AGANS's results to the overall corporate results for 2011 employee survey talent capacity results.

	Agreement Score	
	AGANS	Corporate
Learning and Development Opportunities		
Organization supports work-related learning and development	82	62
Have access to training opportunities	65	62
Training and development received met work-related needs	58	62
Satisfied with the quality of training and development received from department	50	54
Satisfied with the quality of training and development received from PSC	61	53
Opportunities for Career Growth and Advancement		
See a future for career working for the Government of Nova Scotia	64	60
Have opportunities for career growth within the Government of Nova Scotia	64	42
Have opportunities for career growth within the department	32	32
Satisfied with the way career growth and advancement is progressing	36	38

Table 4 Talent Capacity Comparison

As noted in the table above, AGANS has similar strengths and areas for improvement compared to the corporate results; however, they are higher in agreement in the majority of areas. Concern for opportunities for career growth and advancement and satisfaction with career progress are corporate-wide issues. AGANS does not have any unique areas of concern.

Using the strength-improvement category guide, in comparison to the corporate results AGANS employees' agreement responses are not as strong in the following area:

- Training and development meeting employee's work-related needs

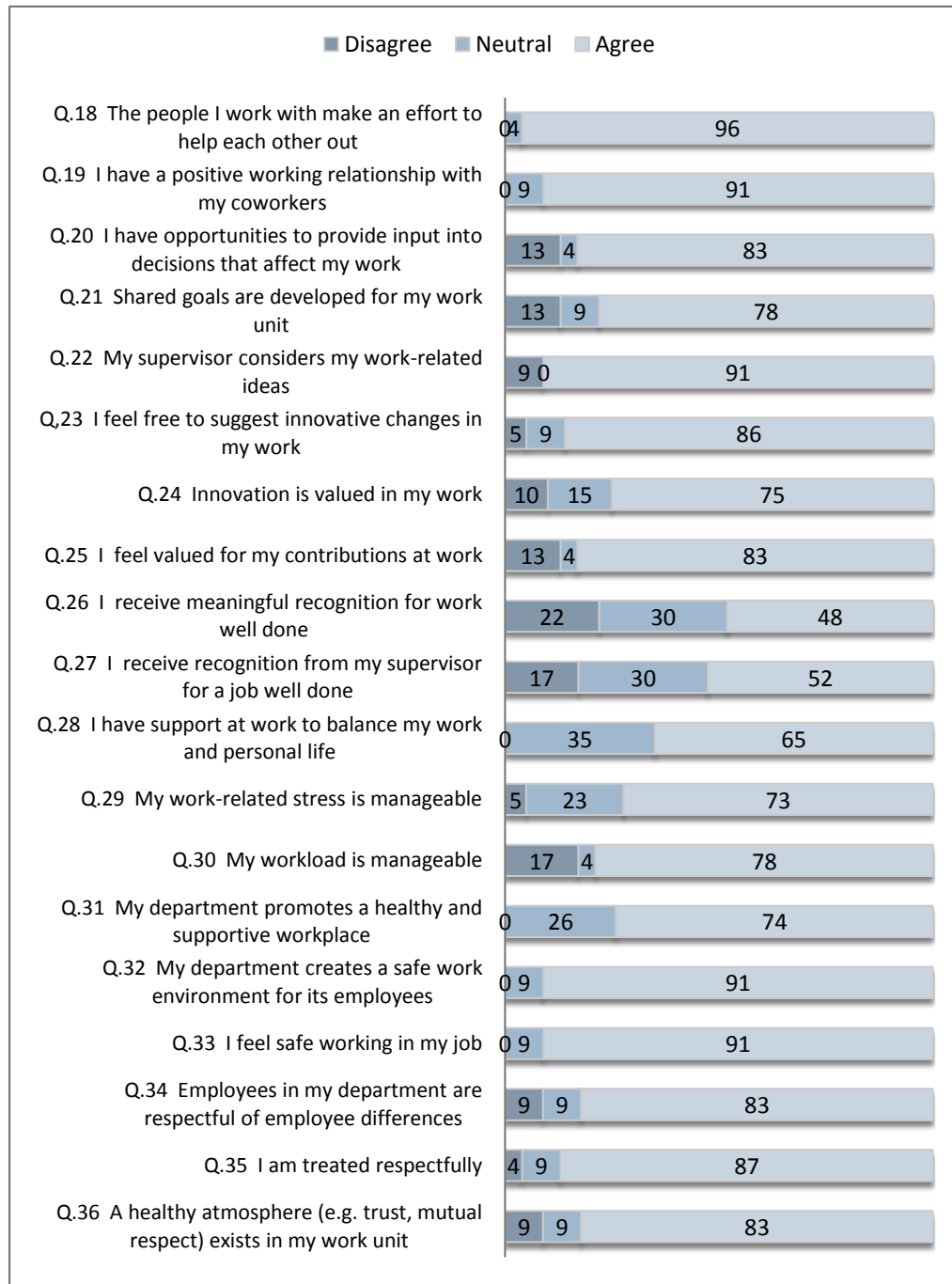
Using the strength-improvement category guide, in comparison to the corporate results AGANS employees' agreement responses are stronger in the following areas:

- Organization supporting work-related learning and development
- Satisfaction with the quality of training and development received from PSC
- Opportunities for career advancement within the Government of Nova Scotia

3.3 Workplace Culture - Your Workplace

3.3.1 Workplace Culture Details

Figure 7 (continued on next page) summarizes the disagreement, neutral, and agreement scores for the workplace culture results.



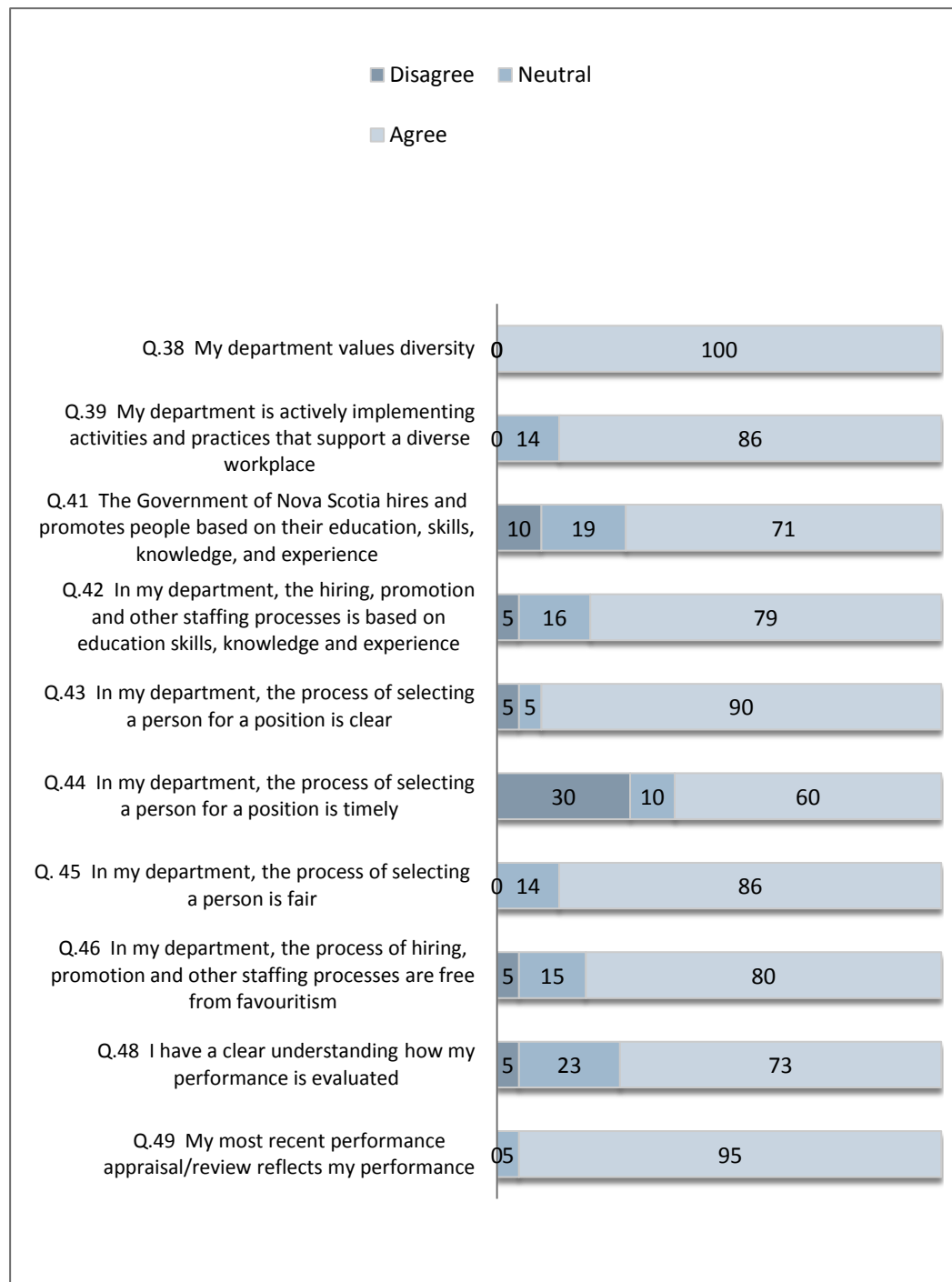


Figure 7 Detail workplace culture results for 2011

3.3.2 Workplace Culture Comparison

Table 5 (continued on next page) compares the Workplace Culture results for AGANS to the overall corporate results for 2011.

	Agreement Scores	
	AGANS	Corporate
Coworker Relationship		
The people I work with make an effort to help each other	96	77
Have a positive working relationship with coworkers	91	84
Employee Involvement and Innovation		
Have opportunities to provide input into decisions that affect their work	83	60
Shared goals are developed for work unit	78	51
Supervisor considers their work-related ideas	91	69
Feel free to suggest innovative changes in their work	86	67
Innovation is valued in their work	75	54
Recognition		
Feel valued for contributions at work	83	54
Receive meaningful recognition for work well done	48	47
Receive recognition from supervisor for a job well done	52	58
Quality of Work Life		
Have support at work to balance work and personal life	65	62
Work-related stress is manageable	73	59
Workload is manageable	78	58
Healthy, Supportive and Respectful Environment		
Department promotes a healthy and supportive workplace	74	59
Department creates a safe work environment for its employees	91	73
Employees feel safe working in their job	91	78
Employees in department are respectful of employee differences	83	69
Treated respectfully at work	87	74
A healthy atmosphere (trust, mutual respect) exists in work unit	83	62
Diverse and Inclusive Environment		
Department values diversity	100	67
Department is actively implementing activities and practices that support a diverse workplace	86	54
Staffing Practices		
NS Government hires and promotes people based on their education, skills, knowledge and experience	71	49
In the department, the hiring, promotion and other staffing processes is based on their education, skills, knowledge and experience	79	48
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is clear	90	47
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is timely	60	21

In the department, the process of selecting a person is fair	86	41
In the department, hiring, promotion and other staffing processes are free from favouritism	80	38
Performance Management Practices		
Participated in a performance appraisal/review with direct supervisor in the past 12 months (yes/no scale)	90	65
% who didn't participate in a performance appraisal/review who would like to	50	76
Have a clear understanding of how performance is evaluated	73	59
Most recent performance appraisal/review reflects performance	95	67

Table 5 Workplace Culture comparison with corporate results for 2011

As noted in Table 5, AGANS shares similar strengths and areas for improvement with the corporate results; however, AGANS scores higher in agreement in the majority of questions with more areas of clear strength and strength.

Using the strength-improvement category guide, in comparison to the corporate results AGANS employees' agreement responses is not as strong the following areas:

- Percentage of employees who did not participate in a performance review/appraisal and would like to.

Using the strength-improvement category guide, in comparison to the corporate results AGANS employees' agreement responses are stronger the following areas:

- Employee involvement and innovation (all areas)
- Employees feeling valued for their contributions
- Managing work-related stress
- Managing workloads
- Departments promoting a healthy and supportive workplace
- Departments creating a safe environment for employees
- Employees in department are respectful of employee differences
- Being treated respectfully at work
- Healthy atmospheres (trust, mutual respect) exist in work units
- Diverse and inclusive environment (all areas)
- Staffing practices (all areas)
- Percentage of employees who participated in a performance review/appraisal
- Clarity of how performance is evaluated
- Most recent performance review/appraisal reflects employee's performance

3.4 Leadership - Your Leader

3.4.1 Leadership Details

Figure 8 summarizes the disagreement, neutral, and agreement scores for leadership practices results.

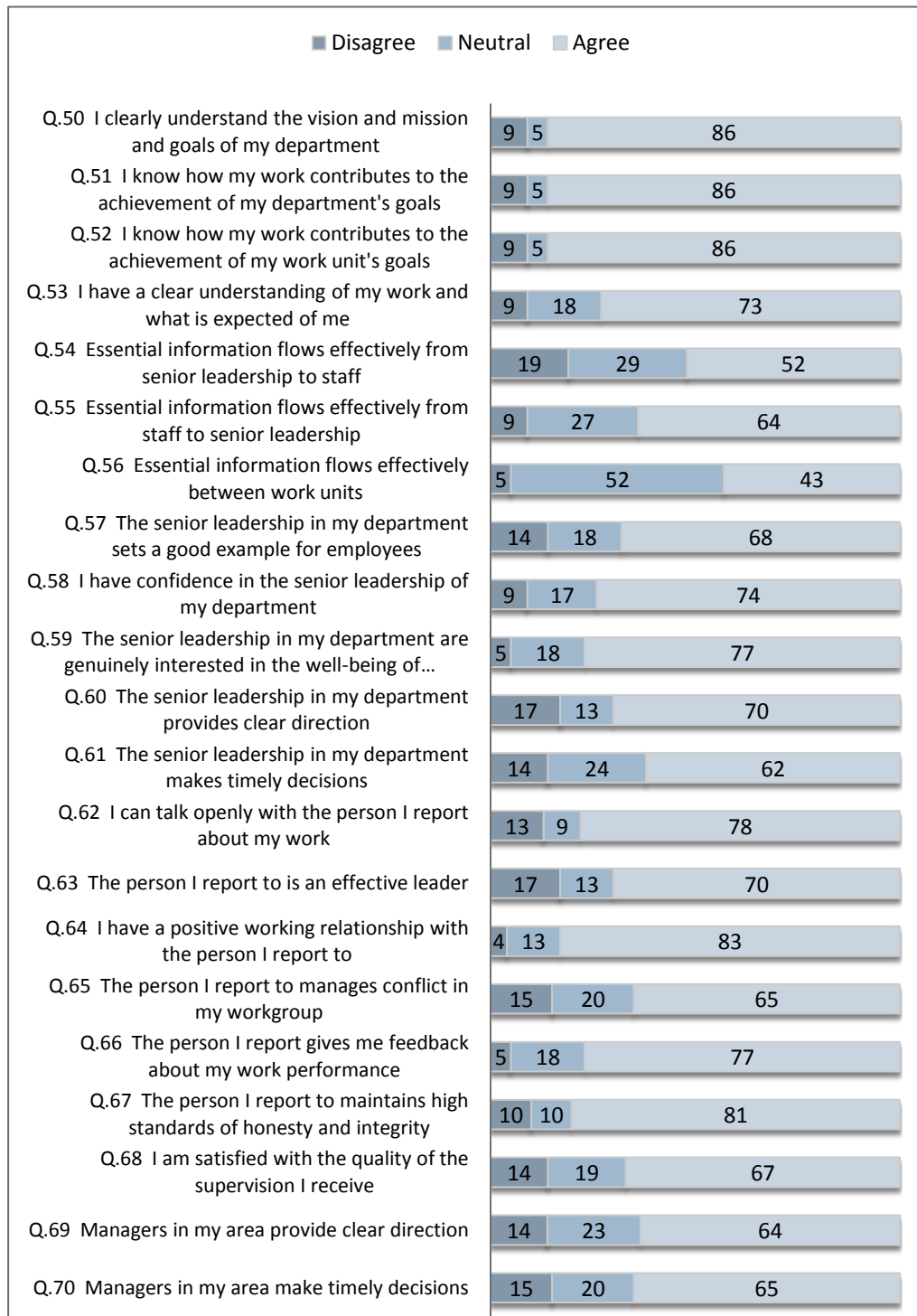


Figure 8 Leadership Capacity details

3.4.2 Leadership Comparison

Table 6 below compares AGANS results to the overall corporate results for 2011 employee survey leadership results.

	Agreement Scores	
	AGANS	Corporate
Clear Direction and Expectations		
Clearly understood the vision, mission and goals of the department	86	68
Know how work contributes to the achievement of department goals	86	73
Know how work contributes to the achievement of work unit goals	86	79
Have a clear understanding of their work and what is expected of them	73	79
Organizational Communication		
Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff	52	37
Essential information flows effectively from staff to senior leadership	64	43
Essential information flows effectively between work units	43	33
Senior Leadership Practices		
Department senior leadership sets a good example	68	48
Have confidence in the department senior leadership	74	48
Department senior leadership are genuinely interested in the well being of employees	77	49
Department senior leadership provides clear direction	70	42
Department senior leadership makes timely decisions	62	36
Direct Supervisory Practices		
Employees can talk openly with the person they report to about work	78	76
Person report to is an effective leader	70	63
Employees have a positive working relationship with the person they report to	83	77
Person they report to manages conflict in the workgroup	65	54
Person they report to gives employees feedback on their work performance	77	63
Person they report to maintains high standards of honesty and integrity	81	72
Satisfied with the quality of supervision received	67	65
Managers provide clear direction	64	56
Managers make timely decisions	65	51

Table 6 Leadership Comparisons

As noted in Table 6 on the previous page, AGANS shares similar strengths and areas for improvement with the corporate results. Concern for the organizational communication and senior leadership practices are corporate wide issues, however, the majority of AGANS agreement scores is in the strength category, apart from effective communication flow between work units which is an area for concern.

Using the strength-improvement category guide, in comparison to the corporate results AGANS employees' agreement responses are stronger the following areas:

- Clearly understood the vision, mission and goals of the department.
- Know how work contributes to the achievement of department goals.
- Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff.
- Essential information flows effectively from staff to senior leadership.
- Senior leadership practices (all areas).
- Person they report to manages conflict in the workgroup.
- Person they report to gives employees feedback on their work performance.
- Person they report to maintains high standards of honesty and integrity.
- Managers provide clear direction.
- Managers make timely decisions.

Chapter 4 - Other Work Environment Questions

4.1 Respectful Environment

As shown in the survey results, 14% of AGANS employees have experienced bullying behavior in the last 12 months. However, only 67% of employees who experienced bullying behavior reported the behavior. Corporately 25% of employees experienced bullying, with 45% stating they reported the behavior.

100% of the behaviour was experienced from a coworker or colleague.

4.2 Inclusive Environment

As shown in the survey results, 10% of AGANS employees say they have experienced racism and/or discrimination in the last 12 months and 50% of them reported the behavior. Corporately 7% of employees experienced racism and/or discrimination, with 30% stating they reported the behavior.

No responses were selected in the survey from AGANS employees to specify where or who the behaviour came from, nor the specific type of racism and/or discrimination.

4.3 Employees' Retention Intentions

As shown in the table below, 13% of AGANS employees are planning on leaving within the next 5 years. The main reason for leaving is retirement and to pursue other employment opportunities.

The table below outlines employees stated intentions to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia.

Employees intend to stay:	
2 years or less	0%
Between 3-5 years	13%
Between 6-10 years	25%
11 years or more	63%

Table 7 Employees retention intentions for 2011

The table below outlines the reasons an employees is planning on leaving the organization within the next 5 years.

Reason for Leaving:	
Retirement	33%
Pursuing other educational training	33%
Family obligations	33%

Table 8 Reason employees are planning to leave the department within the next 5 years

Appendix I Mean Scores

	Mean Score
Productivity	
<u>Job Support and Tools</u>	
Provided with the tools and equipment needed to do job well	4.52
Provided with the communication needed to do job well	4.13
Physical work environment allows employees to fully contribute to job	4.52
<u>Job Fit</u>	
Job is a good fit with skills and interests	4.39
Job provides right level of challenge	3.91
<u>Quality of Service Provided</u>	
Have support at work to provide high level of service	3.96
Work unit is making an effort to improve service quality	4.57
Work unit measures and monitors to make sure they are meeting their service quality	3.95
<u>Compensation</u>	
Compensated fairly for job	3.61
Talent Capacity	
<u>Learning and Development Opportunities</u>	
Organization supports work-related learning and development	4.23
Have access to training opportunities	3.70
Training and development received met work-related needs	3.42
Satisfied with the quality of training and development received from department	3.33
Satisfied with the quality of training and development received from PSC	3.61
<u>Opportunities for Career Growth and Advancement</u>	
See a future for career working for the Government of Nova Scotia	4.00
Have opportunities for career growth within the Government of Nova Scotia	3.59
Have opportunities for career growth within the department	2.77
Satisfied with the way career growth and advancement is progressing	2.95
Workplace Culture	
<u>Coworker Relationship</u>	

	Mean Score
The people I work with make an effort to help each other	4.48
Have a positive working relationship with coworkers	4.52
<u>Employee Involvement and Innovation</u>	
Have opportunities to provide input into decisions that affect their work	4.13
Shared goals are developed for work unit	3.87
Supervisor considers their work-related ideas	4.27
Feel free to suggest innovative changes in their work	4.27
Innovation is valued in their work	3.95
<u>Recognition</u>	
Feel valued for contributions at work	3.74
Receive meaningful recognition for work well done	3.22
Receive recognition from supervisor for a job well done	3.57
<u>Quality of Work Life</u>	
Have support at work to balance work and personal life	4.13
Work-related stress is manageable	3.91
Workload is manageable	3.87
<u>Healthy, Supportive and Respectful Environment</u>	
Department promotes a healthy and supportive workplace	4.13
Department creates a safe work environment for its employees	4.39
Employees feel safe working in their job	4.61
Employees in department are respectful of employee differences	4.39
Treated respectfully at work	4.52
A healthy atmosphere (trust, mutual respect) exists in work unit	4.26
<u>Diverse and Inclusive Environment</u>	
Department values diversity	4.73
Department is actively implementing activities and practices that support a diverse workplace	4.32
<u>Staffing Practices</u>	
NS Government hires and promotes people based on their education, skills, knowledge and experience	3.81
In the department, the hiring, promotion and other staffing processes is based on their education, skills, knowledge and experience	4.21

	Mean Score
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is clear	4.26
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is timely	3.35
In the department, the process of selecting a person is fair	4.19
In the department, hiring, promotion and other staffing processes are free from favouritism	4.15
<u>Performance Management Practices</u>	
Have a clear understanding of how performance is evaluated	3.95
Most recent performance appraisal/review reflects performance	4.47
<u>Leadership</u>	
<u>Clear Direction and Expectations</u>	
Clearly understood the vision, mission and goals of the department	4.27
Know how work contributes to the achievement of department goals	4.18
Know how work contributes to the achievement of work unit goals	4.27
Have a clear understanding of their work and what is expected of them	4.00
<u>Organizational Communication</u>	
Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff	3.48
Essential information flows effectively from staff to senior leadership	3.73
Essential information flows effectively between work units	3.52
<u>Senior Leadership Practices</u>	
Department senior leadership sets a good example	3.86
Have confidence in the department senior leadership	4.09
Department senior leadership are genuinely interested in the well-being of employees	4.27
Department senior leadership provides clear direction	3.57
Department senior leadership makes timely decisions	3.62
<u>Direct Supervisory Practices</u>	
Employees can talk openly with the person they report to about work	4.13
Person report to is an effective leader	3.83
Employees have a positive working relationship with the person they report to	4.22

	Mean Score
Person they report to manages conflict in the workgroup	3.75
Person they report to gives employees feedback on their work performance	4.09
Person they report to maintains high standards of honesty and integrity	4.19
Satisfied with the quality of supervision received	3.86
Managers provide clear direction	3.77
Managers make timely decisions	3.80
<u>Overall</u>	
Work for an effective organization	4.14
Satisfied with my job	3.86
Satisfied with my department	3.91
Overall satisfied with work as a Government of Nova Scotia employee	4.05
Proud to tell people work as a Government of Nova Scotia employee	4.30
Prefer to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia, even if offered a similar job elsewhere	4.16
Inspired to give my very best	4.35
Would recommend the Government of Nova Scotia as a great place to work	4.17