# How's Work Going 2011

Department of Education Employee Survey Results



Evaluation & Accountability

June 2011

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Copies of this paper are available on the website of the Public Service Commission, www.gov.ns.ca/psc/survey Additionally, you can contact the Evaluation and Accountability division of the Public Service Commission at the address below.

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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 send to all employees in an online format. This report contains the results of all permanent, contract and term employees who responded to the survey. Department of Education had a response rate of 51%. The survey was open between March 2<sup>nd</sup>- 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011.

#### 1-3 How to read this report?

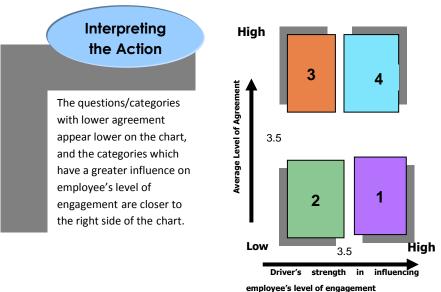
In this report, the results are presented in the following matter:

•	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	Strength	Area for Improvement	Area for Concern	
75% and over	60-74%	50-59%	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- 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 and their organization and their 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	60
Organizational Satisfaction	
Department Satisfaction	52
Overall Satisfaction	66
Organizational Commitment	
Proud	67
Preference to stay with NS Government	67
Inspired	71
Would Recommend as a great place to work	61
Engagement Index	64

Table 1 Engagement Index and Engagement Outcome Results for 2011

Education employee index is 64 and would be considered a strength.

# 2-2 Engagement Details

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

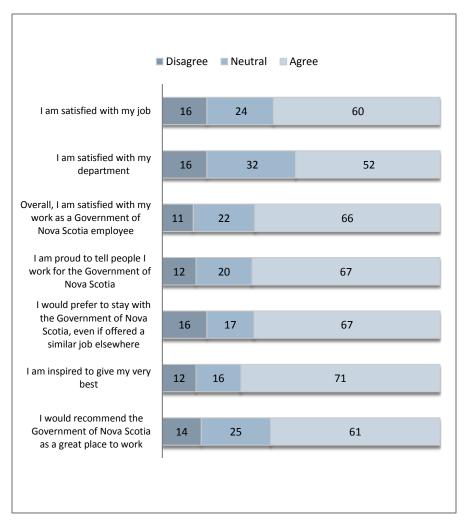


Figure 1 Detail engagement outcome results for 2011

## 2-3 How does Education's engagement compare?

Table 2 below compares the Department results to the overall Corporate results for 2011 employee survey employee engagement outcome results.

	Department Agreement Score	Corporate Agreement Score	
Job Satisfaction			
Job Satisfaction	60	59	
Organizational Satisfaction			
Department Satisfaction	52	53	
Overall Satisfaction	66	67	
Organizational Commitment	Organizational Commitment		
Proud	67	62	
Preference to stay with Government of Nova Scotia	67	62	
Inspired	71	68	
Would Recommend as a great place to work	61	57	
Engagement Level	64	62	

Table 2 Comparison between Department and Corporate results for 2011 for engagement outcomes

Clear	Strength	Area for	Area for
Strength	Strength	Improvement	Concern

As noted in the table above, Education shares the same strengths and areas for improvement as seen in the corporate results. Using the strengthimprovement category guide, Education has stronger job satisfaction and would recommend in comparison to the corporate results.

# 2-4 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 do 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 Department need to focus to improve their employees' work environment to keep its employees engaged?

#### 2-4-1 What do employees value?

The survey results reveal that Education employees value:

- 1. Challenging and interesting work -14%
- Pay and benefits- 13%
- Having the opportunity to balance work and personal life 10%
- 4. A chance to make a difference 9%
- 5. Opportunities for growth and advancement- 9%
- 6. A chance to learn new skills and to develop 8%
- 7. Freedom to make decisions about how I do my job- 8%

#### 2-4-2 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 -22%
- 2. Compensation- 14%
- Opportunity for work-life balance 14%
- 4. Work location- 13%
- 5. Desire to work for the public service- 13%
- 6. Career advancement opportunities- 12%
- 7. Support for training and related professional development activities-9%

# 2-4-3 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 illustrates this:

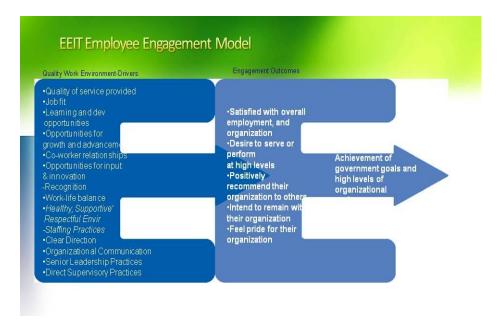
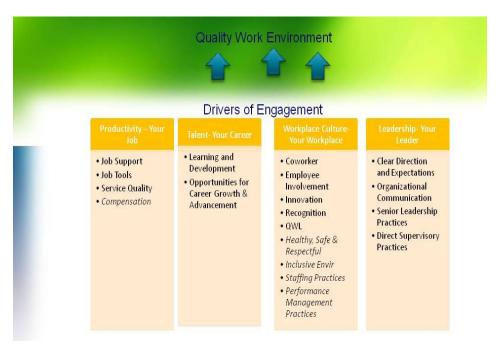


Figure 2 Interjurisdictional Employee Engagement Model

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



**Figure 3 Engagement Drivers by Category** 

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 Education 2011 survey results.

- 1. Job satisfaction
- 2. Opportunities for Career Growth and Advancement
- 3. Staffing Practices
- 4. Senior Leadership Practices
- Healthy, Supportive and Respectful work environment
- Organizational Communication

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

- 1. Recognition
- 2. Healthy, Supportive and Respectful work environment
- 3. Provided support to provide quality service
- 4. Senior Leadership Practices
- 5. Compensation
- Involvement and Innovation
- (tied) Quality Work Life, and Staffing Practices

# 2-4-4 How is the Department performing in relation to the drivers (factors) of engagement?

A Quality Environment Index can be used to understand how a Department is performing in relations 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. Additional indices have been calculated for each of the four categories of drivers as well using the EEIT driver's common questions.

#### For Education:

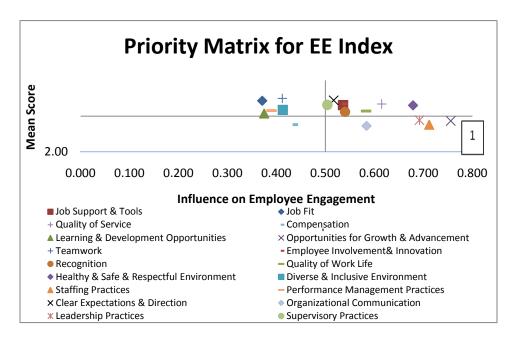
	Index
Job Productivity Index	78
Talent Capacity Index	61
Workplace Culture Index	71
Leadership Index	63
Overall- Quality Environment Index	68

**Table 3 Driver Indices for 2011** 

# 2-4-5 Where does the Department need to focus to improve their employees' work environment?

To help understand the results and to determine where Government 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 drivers. The mean score and the driver strength score for each of the 18 drivers was then mapped on a scatter plot. This scatter plot, shown in Figure 4, provides a visual picture to illustrate how employees perceive their current work environment and what is influences their level of satisfaction and commitment.



**Figure 4 Priority Action Matrix Grid** 

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 Government 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, the categories that follow into quadrant 1 and where the Department focus should be are:

- Opportunities for Career Growth and Advancement
- Staffing Practices
- Leadership Practices
- Organization Communication

All of these categories are also the corporate focus as well.

The next section of this report provides insight into how Education 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 improve employees' level of engagement (satisfaction and commitment).

# **Chapter 3- Quality Work Environment**

#### 3-1 Your Job - Productivity Capacity

#### **3-1-1 Productivity Capacity Details**

Figure 5 below summarizes the disagreement, neutral and agreement scores for the job - productivity capacity (job support, job fit, quality of service provided and compensation drivers) results.

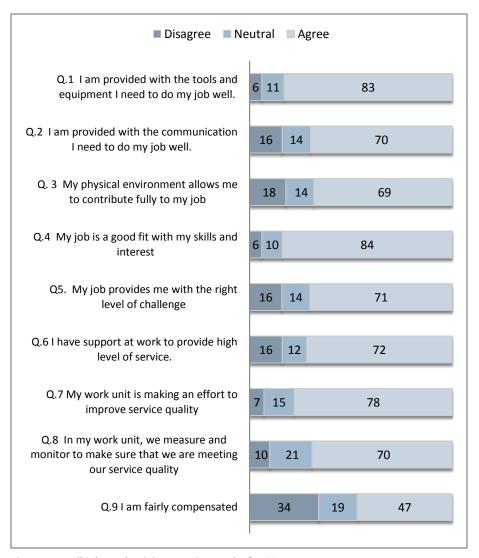


Figure 5 Detail job productivity capacity results for 2011

#### 3-1-2 Productivity Capacity Comparison

Table 4 below compares the Department results to the overall Corporate results for 2011 employee survey productivity capacity results.

	Education	Corporate		
Job Support and Tools				
Provided with the tools and equipment needed to do job well	83	72		
Provided with the communication needed to do job well	70	58		
Physical work environment allows employees to fully contribute to job	69	71		
Job Fit				
Job is a good fit with skills and interests	84	79		
Job provides right level of challenge	71	66		
Quality of Service Provided				
Have support at work to provide high level of service	72	61		
Work unit is making an effort to improve service quality	78	68		
Work unit measures and monitors to make sure they are meeting their service quality	70	56		
Compensation				
Compensated fairly for job	47	44		

Table 4 Comparison between Department and Corporate results for 2011 for job productivity survey results

As noted in the table above, Education shares similar strengths and areas for improvement with the corporate results. There is no unique area for concern for Education. Compensation is a corporate-wide concern.

Using the strength-improvement category guide, in comparison to the corporate results Education is stronger the following areas:

- Providing job support such as tools and equipment
- Communication
- Work units making an effort to improve service quality

# 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 (learning and development, opportunities for career advancement, and growth drivers).

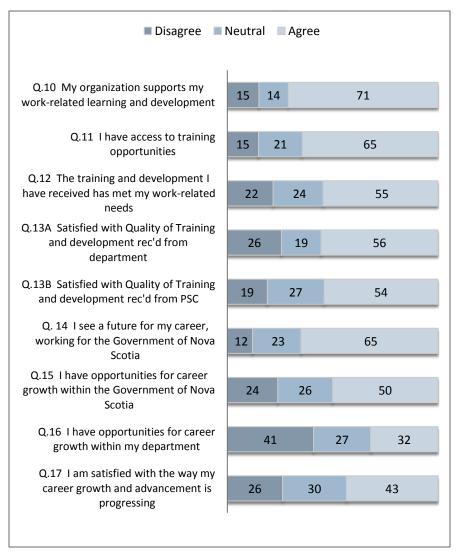


Figure 6 Detail talent capacity results for 2011

#### **3-2-2 Talent Capacity Comparison**

Table 5 below compares the Department results to the overall Corporate results for 2011 employee survey talent capacity results.

	Education	Corporate
Learning and Development Opportunities		
Organization supports work-related learning and development	71	62
Have access to training opportunities	65	62
Training and development received met work- related needs	55	62
Satisfied with the quality of training and development received from department	56	54
Satisfied with the quality of training and development received from PSC	54	53
Opportunities for Career Growth and Advancement		
See a future for career working for the Government of Nova Scotia	65	60
Have opportunities for career growth within the Government of Nova Scotia	50	42
Have opportunities for career growth within the department	32	32
Satisfied with the way career growth and advancement is progressing	43	38

Table 5 Comparison between Department and Corporate results for 2011 for talent capacity results

As noted in the table above, Education shares similar strengths and areas for improvement with the corporate results. Concern for opportunities for career growth and advancement and satisfaction with career progress are corporatewide issues.

Education does have one unique area of concern. Education is not as strong in the following area:

Training and development received met work-related needs

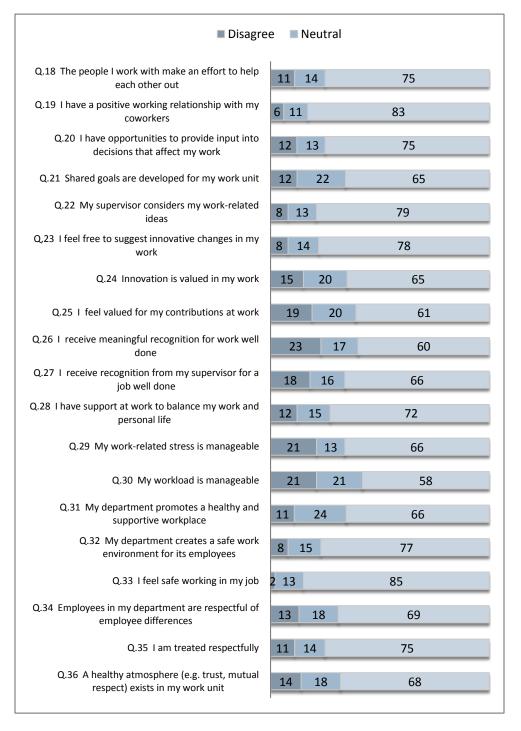
Using the strength-improvement category guide, in comparison to the corporate results Education is stronger the following area:

> Opportunities for career growth 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 (coworker relationships, employee involvement, innovation, recognition, quality of work life, healthy, supportive and respectful environment, diverse and inclusive workplace, staffing practices, and performance management practices).



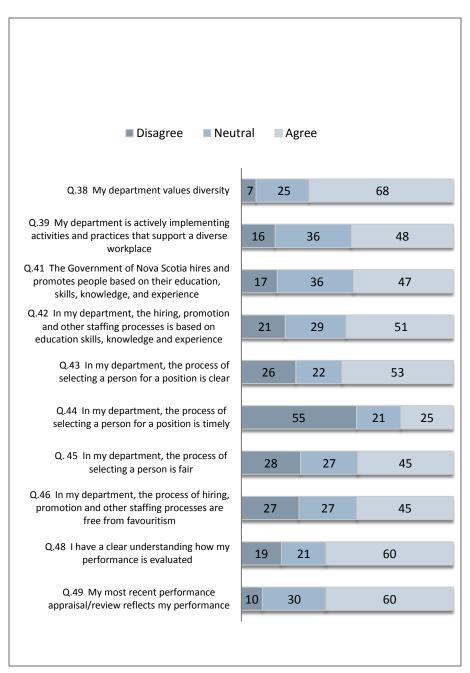


Figure 7 Detail workplace culture results for 2011

# 3-3-2 Workplace Culture Comparison

Table 6 (continued on next page) compares the Department results to the overall Corporate results for 2011 employee survey workplace culture results.

	Education	Corporate
Coworker Relationship		
The people I work with make an effort to help each other	75	77
Have a positive working relationship with coworkers	83	84
Employee Involvement and Innovation		
Have opportunities to provide into decisions that affect their work	75	60
Shared goals are developed for work unit	65	51
Supervisor considers their work-related ideas	79	69
Feel free to suggest innovative changes in their work	78	67
Innovation is valued in their work	65	54
Recognition		
Feel valued for contributions at work	61	54
Receive meaningful recognition for work well done	60	47
Receive recognition from supervisor for a job well done	66	58
Quality of Work Life		
Have support at work to balance work and personal life	72	62
Work-related stress is manageable	66	59
Workload is manageable	58	58
Healthy, Supportive and Respectful Environme	ent	
Department promotes a healthy and supportive workplace	66	59
Department creates a safe work environment for its employees	77	73
Employees feel safe working in their job	85	78
Employees in department are respectful of employee differences	69	69
Treated respectfully at work	75	74
A healthy atmosphere (trust, mutual respect) exists in work unit	68	62
Diverse and Inclusive Environment		
Department values diversity	65	67
Department is actively implementing activities and practices that support a diverse workplace	48	54
Staffing Practices		
NS Government hires and promotes people based on their education, skills, knowledge and experience	47	49

In the department, the hiring, promotion and other staffing processes is based on their education, skills, knowledge and experience	51	48
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is clear	53	47
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is timely	25	21
In the department, the process of selecting a person is fair	45	41
In the department, hiring, promotion and other staffing processes are free from favouritism	45	38
Performance Management Practices		
Participated in a performance appraisal/review with direct supervisor in the past 12 months (yes/no scale)	51	65
% who didn't participate in a performance appraisal/review who would like to	66	76
Have a clear understanding of how performance is evaluated	60	59
Most recent performance appraisal/review reflects performance	60	67

Table 6 Comparison between Department and Corporate results for 2011 for **Workplace Culture results** 

As noted in the table on this page and the previous page, Education shares similar strengths and areas for improvement with the corporate results. Concern for the timeliness, fairness and favouritism in the staffing practice are a corporate wide issue.

Education does have unique areas of concern. Using the strengthimprovement category guide, in comparison to the corporate results Education is not as strong the following areas:

- Department is actively implementing activities and practices that support a diverse workplace
- Participation in performance appraisals
- Employees desire to participate in performance appraisals.

Using the strength-improvement category guide, in comparison to the corporate results Education is stronger the following areas:

- **Employee Involvement and Innovation**
- Recognition
- Workload and work-related stress
- Creating a healthy supportive and safe environment
- Treating employees respectfully
- Perception of merit hiring and understanding of the staffing practices
- Understanding the performance management practices

# 3-4 Leadership - Your Leader

#### 3-4-1 Leadership Details

Figure 8 summarizes the disagreement, neutral, and agreement scores for leadership practices results (clear direction and expectations, organizational communication, senior leadership practices and direct supervisory practices drivers).

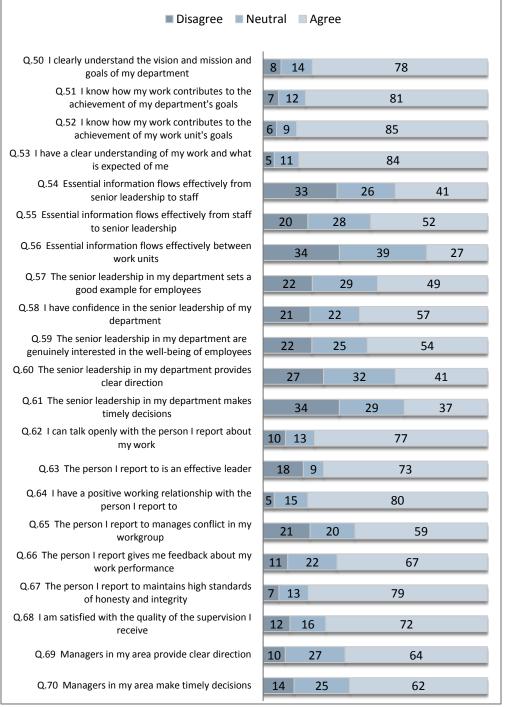


Figure 8 Leadership Details for 2011

## 3-4-2 Leadership Comparison

Table 7 below compares the Department results to the overall Corporate results for 2011 employee survey leadership results.

	Education	Corporate
Clear Direction and Expectations		
Clearly understood the vision, mission and goals of the department	78	68
Know how work contributes to the achievement of department goals	81	73
Know how work contributes to the achievement of work unit goals	85	79
Have a clear understanding of their work and what is expected of them	84	79
Organizational Communication		
Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff	41	37
Essential information flows effectively from staff to senior leadership	52	43
Essential information flows effectively between work units	27	33
Senior Leadership Practices		
Department senior leadership sets a good example	49	48
Have confidence in the department senior leadership	57	48
Department senior leadership are genuinely interested in the well being of employees	54	49
Department senior leadership provides clear direction	41	42
Department senior leadership makes timely decisions	37	36
Direct Supervisory Practices		
Employees can talk openly with the person they report to about work	77	76
Person report to is an effective leader	73	63
Employees have a positive working relationship with the person they report to	80	77
Person they report to manages conflict in the workgroup	59	54
Person they report to gives employees feedback on their work performance	67	63
Person they report to maintains high standards of honesty and integrity	79	72
Satisfied with the quality of supervision received	72	65
Managers provide clear direction	64	56
Managers make timely decisions	62	51

Table 7 Comparison between Department and Corporate results for 2011 for **Leadership results** 

As noted in the table on the previous page, Education shares similar strengths and areas for improvement with the corporate results. Concern for the organizational communication and senior leadership practices are corporatewide issues.

Education has no unique areas of concern.

Using the strength-improvement category guide, in comparison to the corporate results Education is stronger the following areas:

- Employees understanding of the departments visions, mission and goals
- Employees knowing how their work contributes to the achievement of the department goals.
- The effective flow of essential information from staff to senior leadership
- Confidence in senior leadership
- Senior leadership genuinely interested in employees
- Person they report to maintains high standards of honesty and integrity
- Managers clarity and timeliness of their decisions

# **Chapter 4 - Other Work Environment Questions**

# **4-1 Respectful Environment**

As shown in the survey, 18% of Education employees have experienced bullying behavior in the last 12months. And 41% who experienced bullying behavior reported the behavior.

Corporately 25% of employees experienced bullying, with 45% stating they reported the behavior.

The majority of the behaviour was experienced from a coworker or a manager. The table below outlines the percentage.

Experienced the bullying behavior from:	
Coworker or colleague	35%
Another manager in the organization	17%
Someone who works for another part of the organization	17%
The person they report to	13%
A member of the public	4%
A client	4%
Someone who works in the government workplace who is not a direct employee of government	4%
Someone you manage	4%

Table 8 Who harassed/bullied the employee in 2011

#### **4-2 Inclusive Environment**

As shown in the survey, 7% of Education employees have experienced racism and/or discrimination in the last 12months. Only 43% of employees who experienced racism and/or discrimination reported the behavior.

Corporately 7% of employees experienced racism and/or discrimination, with 30% stating they reported the behavior.

The majority of the behaviour was experienced from a manager or coworker. The table below outlines the percentage.

Experienced the racism and/or discrimination from:	
Another manager in your organization	33%
Coworker or colleague	22%
Someone who works for another part of the organization	22%
A member of the public	11%
Someone who works at a Government workplace but not a direct employee of Government	11%

Table 9 Who the employee experienced racism and/or discrimination from in 2011

The table below outlines the type of racism and/or discrimination experienced.

Racism and/or discrimination experien	ced:
Race	43%
Sex (Gender)	29%
National or Aboriginal origin	29%

Table 10 Type of racism and/or discrimination experienced in 2011

# 4-3 Employees' Retention Intentions

As shown in the tables below, 40% of Education 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	17%
Between 3-5 years	23%
Between 6-10 years	22%
11 years or more	39%

Table 11 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	53%
Pursuing other employment opportunities	18%
Job itself (not interesting work or lack of challenge)	10%
Management (lack of support or recognition)	10%
Other	8%
Pursuing other educational training	3%

Table 12 Reason employees are planning to leave the department within the next 5 years

# Appendix I Mean Scores

Mean Score **Productivity Job Support and Tools** Provided with the tools and equipment needed to do job well 4.26 3.85 Provided with the communication needed to do job well Physical work environment allows employees to fully 3.76 contribute to job Job Fit Job is a good fit with skills and interests 4.35 Job provides right level of challenge 3.93 **Quality of Service** Have support at work to provide high level of service 3.94 Work unit is making an effort to improve service quality 4.17 Work unit measures and monitors to make sure they are 3.91 meeting their service quality Compensation Compensated fairly for job 3.14 **Talent Capacity Learning and Development** Organization supports work-related learning and 3.84 development Have access to training opportunities 3.75 Training and development received met work-related needs 3.53 Satisfied with the quality of training and development 3.43 received from department Satisfied with the quality of training and development 3.46 received from PSC **Opportunities for Career Growth and Advancement** See a future for career working for the Government of Nova 3.79 Scotia Have opportunities for career growth within the 3.32 Government of Nova Scotia Have opportunities for career growth within the department 2.83 Satisfied with the way career growth and advancement is 3.25 progressing **Workplace Culture** 

	Mean Score
Coworker Relationship	
The people I work with make an effort to help each other	4.12
Have a positive working relationship with coworkers	4.35
Fundamental and transmitted	
Employee Involvement and Innovation  Have opportunities to provide into decisions that affect their	3.95
work	3.93
Shared goals are developed for work unit	3.81
Supervisor considers their work-related ideas	4.18
Feel free to suggest innovative changes in their work	4.21
Innovation is valued in their work	3.89
Recognition	
Feel valued for contributions at work	3.70
Receive meaningful recognition for work well done	3.56
Receive recognition from supervisor for a job well done	3.79
Quality of Work Life	
Have support at work to balance work and personal life	3.93
Work-related stress is manageable	3.67
Workload is manageable	3.53
, and the second	
Healthy, Supportive and Respectful Environment	
Department promotes a healthy and supportive workplace	3.74
Department creates a safe work environment for its	4.01
employees Employees feel safe working in their job	4.26
Employees in department are respectful of employee differences	3.86
Treated respectfully at work	4.02
A healthy atmosphere (trust, mutual respect) exists in work	3.80
unit	
Diverse and Inclusive Environment	
Department values diversity	3.89
Department is actively implementing activities and practices	3.62
that support a diverse workplace	
Staffing Practices	
NS Government hires and promotes people based on their	3.37
education, skills, knowledge and experience	
In the department, the hiring, promotion and other staffing processes is based on their education, skills, knowledge and	3.38
processes is based on their education, skins, knowledge and	

	Mean Score
experience	
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is clear	3.31
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is timely	2.45
In the department, the process of selecting a person is fair	3.17
In the department, hiring, promotion and other staffing processes are free from favouritism	3.18
Performance Management Practices	
Have a clear understanding of how performance is evaluated	3.65
Most recent performance appraisal/review reflects performance	3.82
Leadership	
Clear Direction and Expectations	
Clearly understood the vision, mission and goals of the department	4.01
Know how work contributes to the achievement of department goals	4.10
Know how work contributes to the achievement of work unit goals	4.25
Have a clear understanding of their work and what is expected of them	4.28
Organizational Communication	
Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff	3.03
Essential information flows effectively from staff to senior leadership	3.36
Essential information flows effectively between work units	2.88
Senior Leadership Practices	
Department senior leadership sets a good example	3.44
Have confidence in the department senior leadership	3.48
Department senior leadership are genuinely interested in the well-being of employees	3.45
Department senior leadership provides clear direction	3.19
Department senior leadership makes timely decisions	3.05
<u>Direct Supervisory Practices</u>	
Employees can talk openly with the person they report to about work	4.15
Person report to is an effective leader	3.96

	Mean Score
Employees have a positive working relationship with the person they report to	4.27
Person they report to manages conflict in the workgroup	3.64
Person they report to gives employees feedback on their work performance	3.88
Person they report to maintains high standards of honesty and integrity	4.23
Satisfied with the quality of supervision received	4.00
Managers provide clear direction	3.84
Managers make timely decisions	3.76
Overall  Work for an effective organization	3.72
Satisfied with my job	3.67
Satisfied with my department	3.52
Overall satisfied with work as a Government of Nova Scotia employee	3.79
Proud to tell people work as a Government of Nova Scotia employee	3.91
Prefer to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia, even if offered a similar job elsewhere	3.77
Inspired to give my very best	3.99
Would recommend the Government of Nova Scotia as a great place to work	3.72