How's Work Going 2011

Department of Labour and Advanced Education Employee Survey Results



Evaluation & Accountability

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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 Labour and Advanced Education had a response rate of 60% (Labour 58% in 2009). The survey was open between March 2nd-31st, 2011.

1-3 How to read this report?

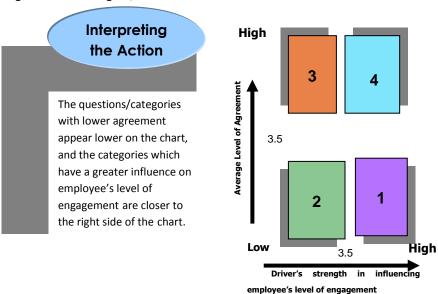
In this report, the results are presented in the following matter:

•	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 of respondents who strongly
	Percentage	disagreed and somewhat disagreed.
•	Neutral - Agreement Percentage	Percentage of respondents who either agreed or disagreed.
•	Agree - Agreement	Percentage of respondents who strongly agreed
	Percentage	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 Summary Results

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.

As the table below shows, Department of Labour and Advance Education employee index is 70. A score of 70 would be considered a strength.

	Agreement Score
Job Satisfaction	
Job Satisfaction	67
Organizational Satisfaction	
Department Satisfaction	67
Overall Satisfaction	76
Organizational Commitment	
Proud	70
Preference to stay with NS Government	66
Inspired	77
Would Recommend as a great place to work	66
Engagement Index	70

Table 1 Engagement Outcome for 2011

LAE has an employee engagement score of 70 which is considered an area of strength.

2-2 Engagement Outcome Details

Figure 1 below summarizes the disagree, neutral and agreement scores for the engagement outcome results

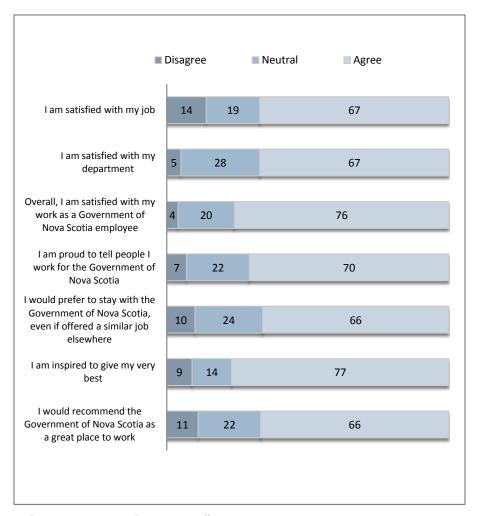


Figure 1 Engagement Outcome Details

2-3 How does Labour and Advanced Education engagement compared?

Table 2 below compares the LAE results to the overall corporate results for the 2011 employee engagement outcome survey results.

	Department Agreement Score	Corporate Agreement Score	
Job Satisfaction			
Job Satisfaction	67	59	
Organizational Satisfaction			
Department Satisfaction	67	53	
Overall Satisfaction	76	67	
Organizational Commitment			
Proud	70	62	
Preference to stay with Government of Nova Scotia	66	62	
Inspired	77	68	
Would Recommend as a great place to work	66	57	
Engagement Level	70	62	

Table 2 Comparison of engagement outcome for department and corporate results for 2011

Clear	Strength	Area for	Area for
Strength	Strength	Improvement	Concern

As noted in the table above, Labour and Advanced Education shares the similar strengths and areas for improvement as seen in the corporate results. Using the strength-improvement category guide, Labour and Advanced Education has stronger satisfaction (job, department, overall) and inspired 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 Labour and Advanced Education employees value:

- Challenging and interesting work -13%
- Pay and benefits- 13%
- Having the opportunity to balance work and personal life 11%
- Being treated with respect- 9%
- A chance to make a difference 9%
- Opportunities for growth and advancement- 9%
- 7. Working with people I like -8%
- 8. A chance to learn new skills and to develop -7%
- 9. Freedom to make decisions about how job is done -7%
- 10. Working for manager they respect -4%
- 11. A chance to have ideas adopted and put into use -4%
- 12. Working for a leader they respect -3%
- 13. Receiving recognition for a job well done -3%

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 -17%
- Compensation- 15%
- Quality work life balance 14%
- 4. Career advancement opportunities- 14%
- 5. Work Location 13%
- Desire to work for the public service- 12%
- 7. Support for training and related professional development activities -8%

2-4-3 What factors influences 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 on the next page illustrates this.

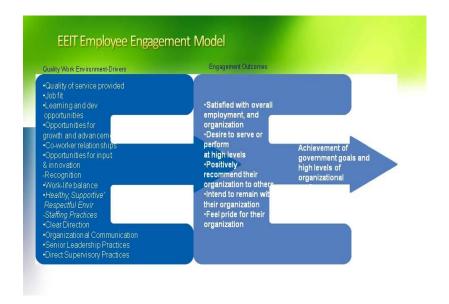


Figure 2 Employee Engagement Interjurisdictional Team - Employee Engagement Model

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



Figure 3 Drivers of Engagement category chart

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 top factors influencing employees' level of commitment and satisfaction, based on the Labour and Advanced Education 2011 survey results.

- 1. Job Satisfaction
- Opportunities for Career Growth and Advancement

- 3. Senior Leadership Practices
- 4. Recognition
- 5. Staffing Practices
- 6. Healthy, Supportive & Respectful Environment

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

- 1. Opportunities for Career Growth and Advancement
- 2. Job Fit
- 3. Recognition
- **Employee Involvement and Innovation**

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 LAE:

	Index
Job Productivity Index	68
Talent Capacity Index	47
Workplace Culture Index	54
Leadership Index	68
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, below provides a visual picture to illustrate how employees perceive their current work environment and what is influences their level of satisfaction and commitment.

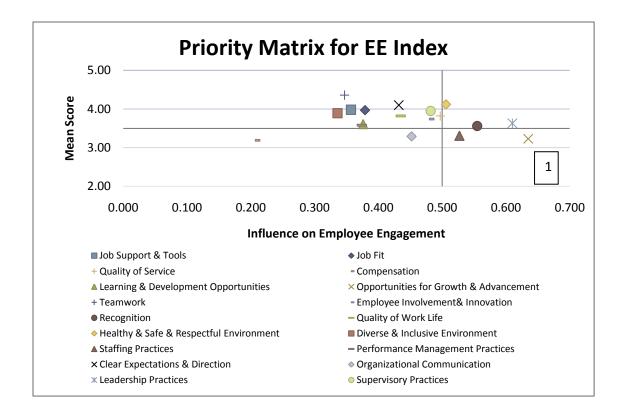


Figure 4 LAE Priority Matrix Graph

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 and what they consider as important to them Labour and Advanced Education's focus should be:

- Opportunities for Career Growth and Advancement
- **Staffing Practices**

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

The next section of this report provides insight into how Labour and Advanced 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 disagree, neutral and agreement scores for the job - productivity capacity (job support, job fit, quality of service provided and compensation drivers) results.

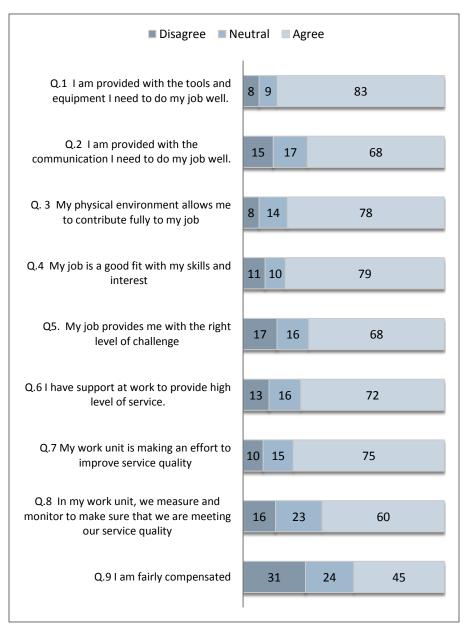


Figure 5 Job Productivity Capacity Detail Results

3-2-1 Productivity Capacity Comparison

Table 4 below compares the LAE results to the overall corporate results for the 2011 employee survey job productivity results.

	LAE	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	68	58		
Physical work environment allows employees to fully contribute to job	78	71		
Job Fit				
Job is a good fit with skills and interests	79	79		
Job provides right level of challenge	68	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	75	68		
Work unit measures and monitors to make sure they are meeting their service quality	60	56		
Compensation				
Compensated fairly for job	45	44		

Table 4 Productivity comparison between LAE and the corporate results for 2011

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

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

- Job Support and Tools category
- Work unit making an effort to improve service quality
- Work units measuring and monitoring to ensure service quality is met

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).

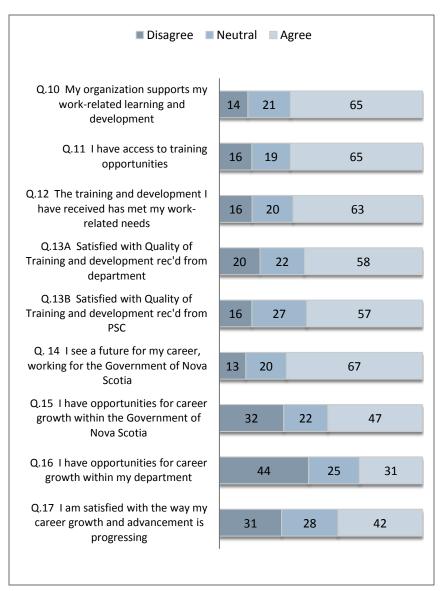


Figure 6 Talent Capacity Detail

3-2-2 Talent Capacity Comparison

Table 5 below compares the LAE results to the overall corporate results for the 2011 employee survey talent capacity results.

	LAE	Corporate
Learning and Development Opportunities		
Organization supports work-related learning and development	65	62
Have access to training opportunities	65	62
Training and development received met work- related needs	63	62
Satisfied with the quality of training and development received from department	58	54
Satisfied with the quality of training and development received from PSC	57	53
Opportunities for Career Growth and Advancement		
See a future for career working for the Government of Nova Scotia	67	60
Have opportunities for career growth within the Government of Nova Scotia	47	42
Have opportunities for career growth within the department	31	32
Satisfied with the way career growth and advancement is progressing	42	38

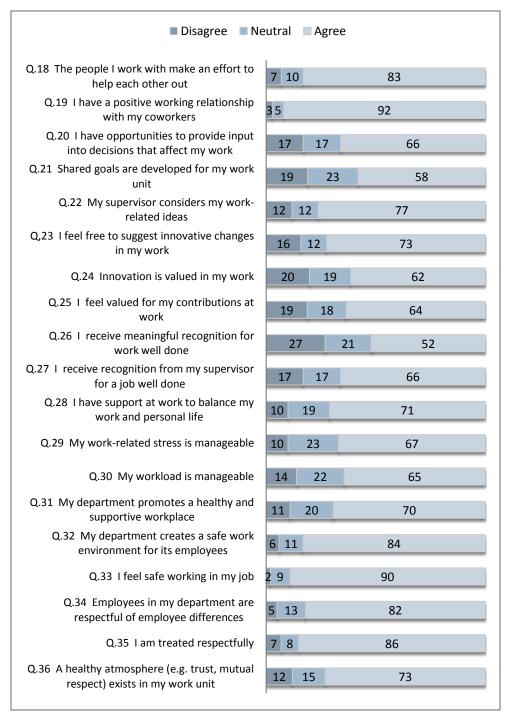
Table 5 Talent Capacity comparison between LAE and the corporate results for 2011

As noted in the table above, Labour and Advanced Education shares the same strengths and areas for improvement with the corporate results. Concern for opportunities for career growth and advancement and satisfaction with career progress are corporate-wide issues. Labour and Advanced Education does not have any unique areas of concern.

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).



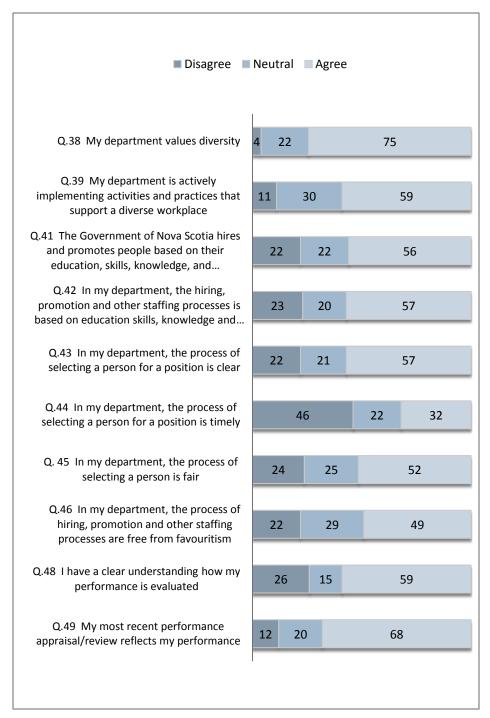


Figure 7 Workplace Culture Details

3-3-2 Workplace Culture Comparison

Table 6 below compares the LAE results to the overall corporate results for the 2011 employee survey workplace culture results.

	LAE	Corporate
Coworker Relationship		
The people I work with make an effort to help each other	83	77
Have a positive working relationship with coworkers	92	84
Employee Involvement and Innovation		
Have opportunities to provide into decisions that affect their work	66	60
Shared goals are developed for work unit	58	51
Supervisor considers their work-related ideas	77	69
Feel free to suggest innovative changes in their work	73	67
Innovation is valued in their work	62	54
Recognition		
Feel valued for contributions at work	64	54
Receive meaningful recognition for work well done	52	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	71	62
Work-related stress is manageable	67	59
Workload is manageable	65	58
Healthy, Supportive and Respectful Environment		
Department promotes a healthy and supportive workplace	70	59
Department creates a safe work environment for its employees	84	73
Employees feel safe working in their job	90	78
Employees in department are respectful of employee differences	82	69
Treated respectfully at work	86	74
A healthy atmosphere (trust, mutual respect) exists in work unit	73	62
Diverse and Inclusive Environment		
Department values diversity	75	67
Department is actively implementing activities and practices that support a diverse workplace	59	54
Staffing Practices		
NS Government hires and promotes people based on their education, skills, knowledge and experience	56	49
In the department, the hiring, promotion and other staffing processes is based on their education, skills, knowledge and experience	57	48
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is clear	57	47

In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is timely	32	21
In the department, the process of selecting a person is fair	52	41
In the department, hiring, promotion and other staffing processes are free from favouritism	49	38
Performance Management Practices		
Participated in a performance appraisal/review with direct supervisor in the past 12 months (yes/no scale)	61	65
% who didn't participate in a performance appraisal/review who would like to	93	76
Have a clear understanding of how performance is evaluated	59	59
Most recent performance appraisal/review reflects performance	68	67

Table 6 Workplace Culture comparison between LAE and corporate results for 2011

As noted in Table 6, Labour and Advanced 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.

Labour and Advanced Education does not have any unique areas of concern.

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

- Supervisor considering work-related ideas
- Valuing innovation
- Recognition
- Manageability of workload and work-related stress
- Promoting a healthy and safe environment
- Employees respecting employee differences
- Treating employees respectfully
- Valuing diversity
- Perception of merit hiring and understanding of the staffing 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).

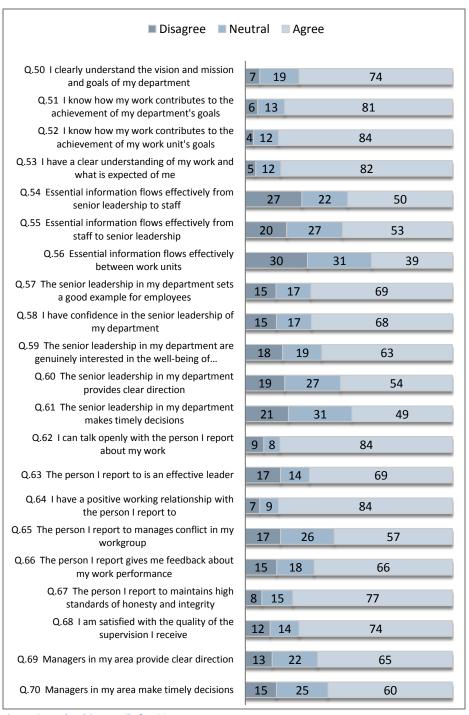


Figure 8 Leadership Details for 2011

3-4-2 Leadership Comparison

Table 7 below compares the LAE results to the overall corporate results for the 2011 employee survey leadership results.

	LAE	Corporate
Clear Direction and Expectations		
Clearly understood the vision, mission and goals of the department	74	68
Know how work contributes to the achievement of department goals	81	73
Know how work contributes to the achievement of work unit goals	84	79
Have a clear understanding of their work and what is expected of them	82	79
Organizational Communication		
Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff	50	37
Essential information flows effectively from staff to senior leadership	53	43
Essential information flows effectively between work units	39	33
Senior Leadership Practices		
Department senior leadership sets a good example	69	48
Have confidence in the department senior leadership	68	48
Department senior leadership are genuinely interested in the well being of employees	63	49
Department senior leadership provides clear direction	54	42
Department senior leadership makes timely decisions	49	36
Direct Supervisory Practices		
Employees can talk openly with the person they report to about work	84	76
Person report to is an effective leader	69	63
Employees have a positive working relationship with the person they report to	84	77
Person they report to manages conflict in the workgroup	57	54
Person they report to gives employees feedback on their work performance	66	63
Person they report to maintains high standards of honesty and integrity	77	72
Satisfied with the quality of supervision received	74	65
Managers provide clear direction	65	56
Managers make timely decisions	60	51

Table 7 Leadership comparison between LAE and corporate results for 2011

As noted in Table 7 on the previous page, Labour and Advanced Education shares similar strengths and areas for improvement with the corporate results. Labour and Advanced Education no unique areas of concern. Concern for the organizational communication within work unit and timeliness of senior leadership decisions are corporate-wide issues.

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

- Employees knowing how their work contributes to the achievement of the department goals
- Senior leadership setting a good example
- Confidence in senior leadership
- Senior leadership genuinely interested in employees
- Senior leadership providing clear direction
- Person they report to maintains high standards of honesty and integrity
- Managers providing clear direction and timeliness of their decisions

Chapter 4 - Other Work Environment Questions

4-1 Respectful Environment

As shown in the survey results, 19% of Labour and Advanced Education employees have experienced bullying behavior in the last 12months. And 40% 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 manager or coworker. Table 8 below outlines the percentages.

Experienced the bullying behavior from:	
The person they report to	33%
Coworker or colleague	19%
A member of the public	14%
Another manager in the organization	11%
A client	9%
Someone who works for another part of the organization	7%
Someone you manage	4%
Someone who works at a government workplace who is not a direct employee of government	2%
Someone else	2%

Table 8 Who harassed/bullied the employee 2011

4-2 Inclusive Environment

As shown in the survey results, 2% of Labour and Advanced Education employees have experienced racism and/or discrimination in the last None of the employees who experienced racism and/or 12months. 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 coworker or a manager. The table below outlines the percentage.

Experienced the racism and/or discrimination from:	
Coworker or colleague	33%
Another manager in the organization	33%
The person they report to	22%
Someone who works for another part of the organization	11%

Table 9 Who employee experienced racism/discrimination from- 2011

Table 10 below outlines the type of racism and/or discrimination experienced.

Racism and/or discrimination experienced:	
Sex (Gender)	25%
Physical disability	25%
Age	13%
Race	13%
Mental disability	13%
Source of income	13%

Table 10 Type of racism and/or discrimination experienced

4-3 Employees' Retention Intentions

As shown in the table below, 30% of Labour and Advanced Education employees are planning on leaving within the next 5 years. The main reason for leaving is retirement and to pursue other employment opportunities.

Table 11 outlines employees stated intentions to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia.

Employees intend to stay:	
2 years or less	8%
Between 3-5 years	22%
Between 6-10 years	23%
11 years or more	47%

Table 11 Employees retention intentions

Table 12 below outlines the reasons an employees is planning on leaving the organization within the next 5 years

Reason for Leaving:	
Retirement	65%
Pursuing other employment opportunities	15%
Management (lack of support or recognition)	8%
Other	5%
Job itself (not interesting work or lack of challenge)	4%
Family obligations	3%
End of contract or term appointment	1%

Table 12 Reasons employees are planning to leave the organization 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 4.11 3.76 Provided with the communication needed to do job well Physical work environment allows employees to fully contribute to job 4.08 Job Fit Job is a good fit with skills and interests 4.10 Job provides right level of challenge 3.84 **Quality of Service Provided** Have support at work to provide high level of service 3.85 Work unit is making an effort to improve service quality 3.99 Work unit measures and monitors to make sure they are meeting their 3.62 service quality Compensation Compensated fairly for job 3.19 **Talent Capacity Learning and Development** Organization supports work-related learning and development 3.72 Have access to training opportunities 3.70 Training and development received met work-related needs 3.61 Satisfied with the quality of training and development received from 3.51 department 3.50 Satisfied with the quality of training and development received from PSC **Opportunities for Career Growth and Advancement** See a future for career working for the Government of Nova Scotia 3.81 Have opportunities for career growth within the Government of Nova 3.20 Scotia Have opportunities for career growth within the department 2.77 Satisfied with the way career growth and advancement is progressing 3.12

	Mean Score
Workplace Culture	
Coworker Relationship	
The people I work with make an effort to help each other	4.27
Have a positive working relationship with coworkers	4.45
Employee Involvement and Innovation	
Have opportunities to provide into decisions that affect their work	3.66
Shared goals are developed for work unit	3.52
Supervisor considers their work-related ideas	3.99
Feel free to suggest innovative changes in their work	3.89
Innovation is valued in their work	3.65
Recognition	
Feel valued for contributions at work	3.62
Receive meaningful recognition for work well done	3.36
Receive recognition from supervisor for a job well done	3.70
Quality of Work Life	
Have support at work to balance work and personal life	3.93
Work-related stress is manageable	3.80
Workload is manageable	3.72
Healthy, Supportive and Respectful Environment	2.04
Department promotes a healthy and supportive workplace Department creates a safe work environment for its employees	3.84 4.20
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	
Employees feel safe working in their job	4.39
Employees in department are respectful of employee differences	4.15
Treated respectfully at work	4.21
A healthy atmosphere (trust, mutual respect) exists in work unit	3.93
Diverse and Inclusive Environment	
Department values diversity	4.05
Department is actively implementing activities and practices that support	3.71
a diverse workplace	
Staffing Practices	
NS Government hires and promotes people based on their education, skills, knowledge and experience	3.42
In the department, the hiring, promotion and other staffing processes is	3.48
based on their education, skills, knowledge and experience	
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is clear	3.48

	Mean Score
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is timely	2.74
In the department, the process of selecting a person is fair	3.40
In the department, hiring, promotion and other staffing processes are free from favouritism	3.36
Performance Management Practices	
Have a clear understanding of how performance is evaluated	3.41
Most recent performance appraisal/review reflects performance	3.80
Leadership	
Clear Direction and Expectations	
Clearly understood the vision, mission and goals of the department	3.94
Know how work contributes to the achievement of department goals	4.09
Know how work contributes to the achievement of work unit goals	4.21
Have a clear understanding of their work and what is expected of them	4.17
Organizational Communication	
Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff	3.30
Essential information flows effectively from staff to senior leadership	3.47
Essential information flows effectively between work units	3.11
Senior Leadership Practices	
Department senior leadership sets a good example	3.78
Have confidence in the department senior leadership	3.78
Department senior leadership are genuinely interested in the well-being of employees	3.70
Department senior leadership provides clear direction	3.51
Department senior leadership makes timely decisions	3.38
Direct Supervisory Practices	
Employees can talk openly with the person they report to about work	4.28
Person report to is an effective leader	3.88
Employees have a positive working relationship with the person they report to	4.30
Person they report to manages conflict in the workgroup	3.62
Person they report to gives employees feedback on their work performance	3.81
Person they report to maintains high standards of honesty and integrity	4.11
Satisfied with the quality of supervision received	3.99
Managers provide clear direction	3.80
Managers make timely decisions	3.70

	Mean Score
Overall Work for an effective organization Satisfied with my job Satisfied with my department	3.80 3.73 3.79
Overall satisfied with work as a Government of Nova Scotia employee Proud to tell people work as a Government of Nova Scotia employee Prefer to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia, even if offered a similar job elsewhere Inspired to give my very best Would recommend the Government of Nova Scotia as a great place to work	3.97 3.96 3.87 4.05 3.81