

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are employee surveys done?

Since February 2004, employee surveys have been a regular part of how government gathers employee input about their work environment. It is recognized as a best practice for employers to conduct regular employee surveys.

Regular surveying allows employees a chance to anonymously share information about their workplace, their leadership and it helps government identify priority areas for action and track progress on issues that are important to employees. It is important to have reliable information on of the quality of the work environment from the people within the organization.

How will the employee survey benefit me?

The employee survey provides an opportunity for you to provide candid input to help shape your work environment and create a better workplace for you and your colleagues.

How can you assure my anonymity?

The survey responses are not connected to your name. We consider privacy implications prior to any publication of information from survey results. We only provide government departments with a summary of all the information collected. Departments do not have direct access to the responses.

To satisfy any confidentiality requirements, we have also imposed an explicit guideline for reporting on results, there needs to be a minimum number of 10 respondents within a group of least 20, before we can even release the summary results.

What will be done with the results?

The results will be presented to Deputy Heads. Employees may be invited to participate in further research activities (for example focus groups) or committees, to explore the issues raised in the survey, so that specific action plans can be developed. Your input is can also be integrated into each department's business plan, and is an indicator of your department's performance. The results also feed into your deputy heads' performance assessments.

How does Government follow-up on the survey results?

Every organization is expected to develop an action plan to address areas for improvement based on the opinion employees' voice in the "How's Work Going?" survey. Again, employees may be invited to participate in further action planning development work.

Can I see my department's results?

Department and agency reports will be posted on the employee survey website. If you do not see your department or agency listed, that means either your department did not have an adequate response rate. Department and/or agencies with less than 20 employees are combined in an "Other" group report.

Can I see the results for my division or branch?

We are in the process of completing division/branch reports and they will be sent out to your Deputy Minister by the end of August.

Who participates in the survey?

All permanent civil servants, term, contract; casual, temporary and seasonal employees including CUPE Local 1867 are encouraged to participate.

Who conducts the survey?

The Public Service Commission conducts the employee survey on behalf of the Government of Nova Scotia.

How are questions selected for the survey?

An Employee Engagement Inter-jurisdictional Team, with representation from most provinces and territories, as well as the Federal Government, developed common employee survey questions to measure employee engagement for use by interested public service jurisdictions across Canada. The How's Work Going? Employee Engagement Survey incorporates all of the common questions.

Other questions are submitted by management to gather information to help the development or refinement of government programs/policies/initiatives.

Why does the survey ask if I am in a designated group?

We feel it is important to determine if there are work environment differences for designated group members (Aboriginal people, African Nova Scotians or racially visible persons, and persons with disabilities) as compared with the perceptions of non-designated group members. The self-identification portion of the survey is voluntary. If you choose to do so, your information is confidential and will be presented in a summary format to ensure no individual can be identified.

This information will help determine areas that should be focused on for action planning, which is specific to designated group members, in order to create a more supportive and diverse work

environment. A report will be produced for the Corporate Diversity Round Table. This report is also posted online. Department level diversity reports are not created to maintain the confidentiality of employees within the department.

I did not receive, or have misplaced my e-mail or survey.

Send an e-mail to HowsWorkGoing@gov.ns.ca or call 1-855-424-1584.

Who can I contact for more information?

Visit the survey website at www.gov.ns.ca/psc/survey. Your senior management team can respond to questions about your department's results and any follow up activities. For questions about the survey program, or corporate results, contact Kathy Cox-Brown at the Public Service Commission's Evaluation and Accountability division at coxbrokm@gov.ns.ca or by phone at (902) 424-8383.