How's Work Going 2011

Treasury Board & Executive Council Office
Employee Survey Results

Evaluation & Accountability

June 2011

Prepared by:

Katharine Cox-Brown, CGA, MPA
Director, Evaluation and Accountability
NS Public Service Commission

Rima Thomeh, BCD (Hons)
Coordinator, Evaluation and Accountability
NS Public Service Commission

Data Analysis by:

Melissa Neil, MASP, BSc (Hons)
Program Evaluator, Evaluation and Accountability
NS Public Service Commission

Contact Information:

Public Service Commission
5th Floor, World Trade & Convention Centre
PO Box 943
Halifax NS   B3J 2V9
Tel: 902-424-8383
Email: coxbrokm@gov.ns.ca

Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

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. Treasury Board and Executive Council Office (TBEC) had a response rate of 33% (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	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:

Interpreting the Action

The questions/categories with lower agreement appear lower on the chart, and the categories which have a greater influence on employee's level of engagement are closer to the right side of the chart.
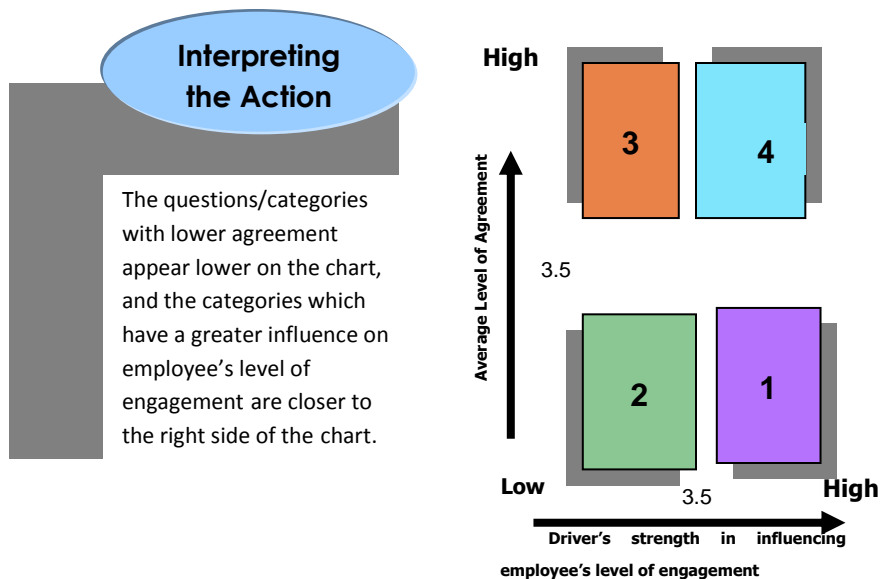
Chapter 2 - Engagement Outcome Results

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	80
Organizational Satisfaction	
Department Satisfaction	70
Overall Satisfaction	90
Organizational Commitment	
Proud	90
Preference to stay with NS Government	89
Inspired	80
Would Recommend as a great place to work	70
Engagement Index	**82**

Table 1 Employee Engagement Agreement Scores

As Table 1 demonstrates, TBEC has an employee index of 82 and would be considered an area of clear strength. The corporate employee index is 62 and would be considered an area of strength as well.

2.2   Employee Engagement and Outcome Details

The following section provides detail into the department's employee engagement agreement scores by displaying question details and comparing with the corporate results.

2.2.1 Engagement Outcome Details

Figure 1 below summarizes employees' responses regarding engagement outcome results.
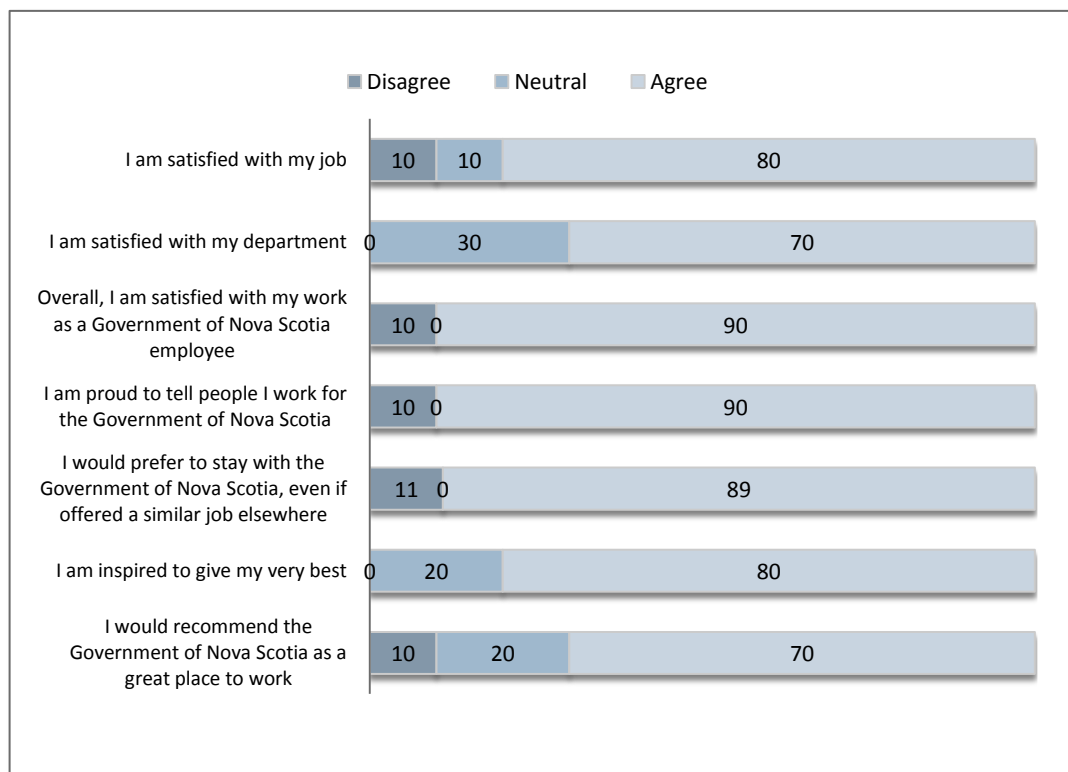
Figure 1 Detail engagement outcome results for 2011

2.2.2   How does their engagement compare?

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

	Department Agreement Score	Corporate Agreement Score
Job Satisfaction		
Job Satisfaction	80	59
Organizational Satisfaction		
Department Satisfaction	70	53
Overall Satisfaction	90	67
Organizational Commitment		
Proud	90	62
Preference to stay with Government of Nova Scotia	89	62
Inspired	80	68
Would Recommend as a great place to work	70	57
Engagement Level	82	62

Table 2 Employee Engagement score comparison

As noted in Table 2 above, Treasury Board and Executive Council shares the same strengths and areas for improvement as seen in the corporate results. Treasury Board and Executive Council has stronger satisfaction and commitment than in comparison to the corporate results.

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 TBEC 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 TBEC employees value:

1. Having the opportunity to balance work and personal life – 17%

2. Challenging and interesting work – 15%

3. Pay and benefits – 13%

4. Opportunities for growth and advancement – 8%

5. Being treated with respect – 18%

6. A chance to make a difference – 6%

7. A chance to learn new skills and to develop – 6%

8. Working with people I like – 6%

9. Freedom to make decisions about how job is done – 6%

10. Receiving recognition for a job well done – 6%

11. Working for a manager they respect –4%

12. Working for a leader they respect –2%

13. A chance to have ideas adopted and put into use –2%

2.3.2 What attracted them to work for Government?

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

1. Work Location – 21%

2. Compensation- 17%

3. Quality work life balance – 17%

4. Opportunity to work in chosen Field -13%

5. Career advancement opportunities- 13%

6. Desire to work for the public service- 13%

7. Support for training and related professional development activities - 4%

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:
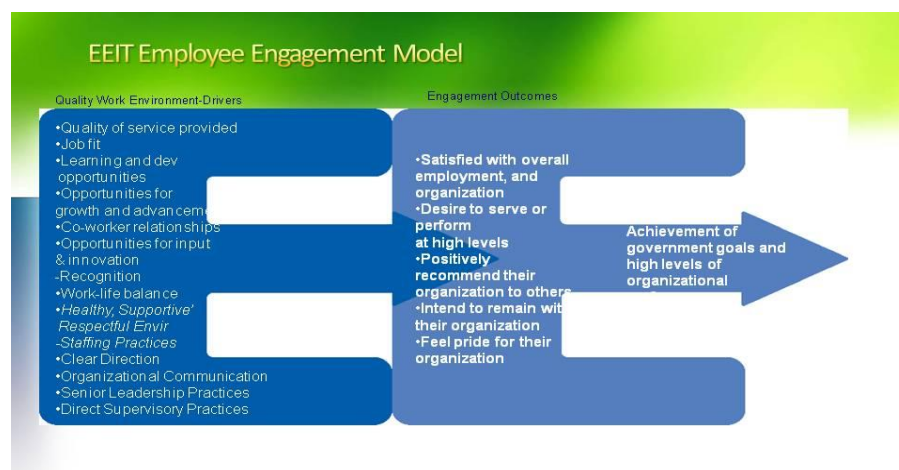
Figure 2 Employee Engagement Model

2.3.4 How can the Nova Scotia Government keep its employees engaged?

The next section of this report provides insight into how TBEC employees are progressing with the drivers that impact employee's level of engagement. By understanding and reviewing how employees responded to the drivers of engagement, management will gain insight into how to keep or enhance employees' level of engagement.

Chapter 3 - Quality Work Environment

The Quality Work Environment indicators (drivers) used in this report are based on the Public Sector Interjurisdictional Engagement Model. The Quality Environment indicators can be grouped under four categories, see Figure 3.

Quality Work Environment

Drivers of Engagement

Productivity – Your Job	Talent- Your Career	Workplace Culture- Your Workplace	Leadership- Your Leader
• Job Support • Job Tools • Service Quality • *Compensation*	• Learning and Development • Opportunities for Career Growth & Advancement	• Coworker • Employee Involvement • Innovation • Recognition • QWL • *Healthy, Safe & Respectful* • *Inclusive Envir* • *Staffing Practices* • *Performance Management Practices*	• Clear Direction and Expectations • Organizational Communication • Senior Leadership Practices • Direct Supervisory Practices

Figure 3 Drivers of Engagement category chart

To understand which drivers had a stronger influence for TBEC 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 their 2011 survey results.

1. Clear Expectations and Directions
2. Job Satisfaction
3. Employee Involvement and Innovation
4. Recognition

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

1. Employee Involvement and Innovation
2. Opportunities for Career Growth and Advancement
3. Job Support & Tools

3.1 How are they performing in relation to the drivers (factors) of engagement?

A Quality Environment Index can be used to understand how TBEC 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 Treasury Board and Executive Council:

	Index
Job Productivity Index	88
Talent Capacity Index	84
Workplace Culture Index	82
Leadership Index	83
Overall - Quality Environment Index	83

Table 3 Driver Indices for 2011

3.2 Where do they need to focus to improve their employees' work environment and to keep employees engaged?

To help understand the results and to determine where TBEC 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 on the next page, provides a visual picture to illustrate how employees perceive their current work environment and what is influences their level of satisfaction and commitment.

Priority Matrix for EE Index
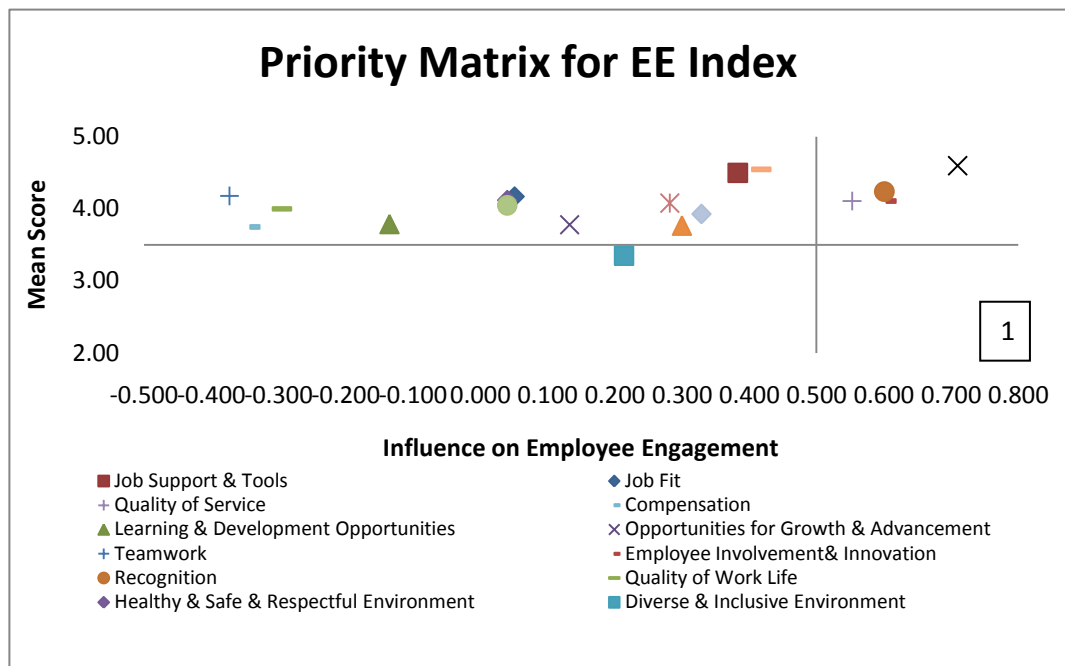
Figure 4 Priority Action Matrix Grid

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 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 Treasury Board and Executive Council does not have any categories in Quadrant 1. Treasury Board and Executive Council should focus on Quadrant 2 category such as:

- Diverse and Inclusive workplace

This category is not part of the corporate focus.

The next section of this report provides insight into how TBEC 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).

3.3   Your Job - Productivity Capacity

3.3.1   Productivity Capacity Details

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

Disagree   Neutral   Agree

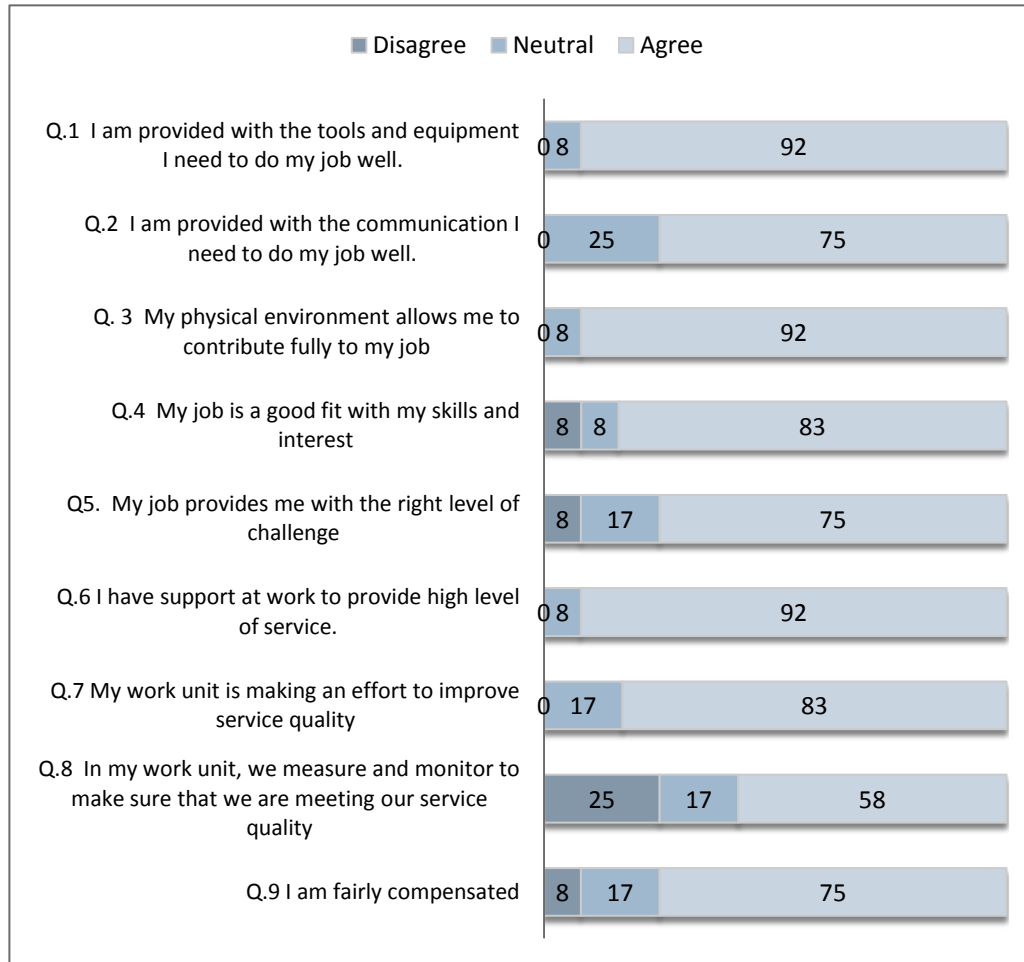| Question	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Q.1 I am provided with the tools and equipment I need to do my job well.	0	8	92
Q.2 I am provided with the communication I need to do my job well.	0	25	75
Q. 3 My physical environment allows me to contribute fully to my job	0	8	92
Q.4 My job is a good fit with my skills and interest	8	8	83
Q5. My job provides me with the right level of challenge	8	17	75
Q.6 I have support at work to provide high level of service.	0	8	92
Q.7 My work unit is making an effort to improve service quality	0	17	83
Q.8 In my work unit, we measure and monitor to make sure that we are meeting our service quality	25	17	58
Q.9 I am fairly compensated	8	17	75

Figure 5 Detail job productivity capacity results for 2011

3.3.2 Productivity Capacity Comparison

Table 4 below compares TBEC's results to the overall corporate results for 2011 employee survey employee engagement outcome results.

	Agreement Scores	
	TBEC	Corporate
Job Support and Tools		
Provided with the tools and equipment needed to do job well	92	72
Provided with the communication needed to do job well	75	58
Physical work environment allows employees to fully contribute to job	92	71
Job Fit		
Job is a good fit with skills and interests	83	79
Job provides right level of challenge	75	66
Quality of Service Provided		
Have support at work to provide high level of service	92	61
Work unit is making an effort to improve service quality	83	68
Work unit measures and monitors to make sure they are meeting their service quality	58	56
Compensation		
Compensated fairly for job	75	44

Table 4 Productivity Capacity comparison

As noted in Table 4, TBEC shares similar strengths with the corporate results. In comparison to the corporate results, TBEC is stronger in the following areas:

- Job Support and Tools
- Job challenge
- Having support at work to provide high level service
- Work unit making an effort to improve service quality
- Compensation

3.4 Talent Capacity – Your Career

3.4.1 Talent Capacity Details

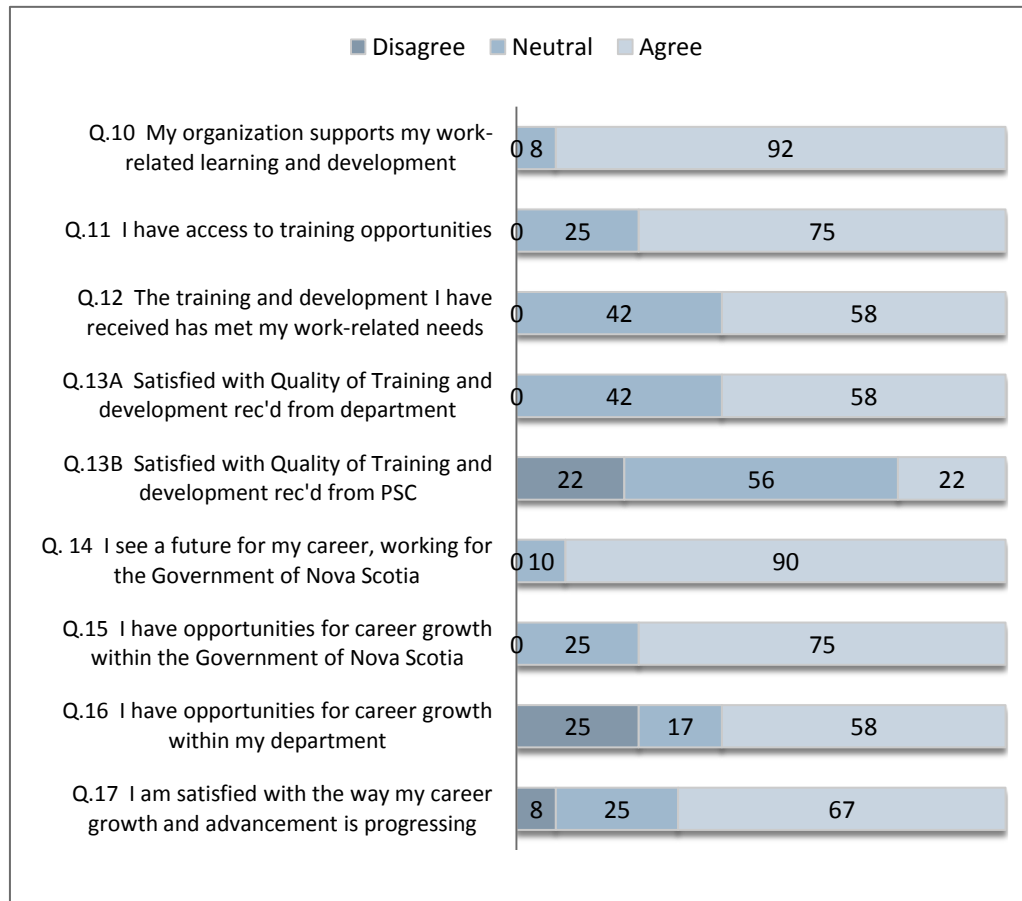Figure 6 summarizes the disagreement, neutral, and agreement scores for the career-talent capacity results.

Figure 6 Detail talent capacity results for 2011

3.4.2 Talent Capacity Comparison

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

	TB&EC	Corporate
Learning and Development Opportunities		
Organization supports work-related learning and development	92	62
Have access to training opportunities	75	62
Training and development received met work-related needs	58	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	22	53
Opportunities for Career Growth and Advancement		
See a future for career working for the Government of Nova Scotia	90	60
Have opportunities for career growth within the Government of Nova Scotia	75	42
Have opportunities for career growth within the department	58	32
Satisfied with the way career growth and advancement is progressing	67	38

Table 5 Talent Capacity Comparison

As noted in the table above, TBEC shares similar strengths and areas for improvement with the corporate results. TBEC does not two unique areas of concern – their satisfaction with the quality of training and development they received from PSC, and that the training and development they received met their work-related needs.

In comparison to the corporate results, TBEC is stronger in the following areas:

- Organization supports work-related learning and development
- Have access to training opportunities
- Opportunities for career growth and advancement category

3.5 Workplace Culture - Your Workplace

3.5.1 Workplace Culture Details
Figure 7 (continued on next page) summarizes the disagreement, neutral, and agreement scores for the workplace culture results.
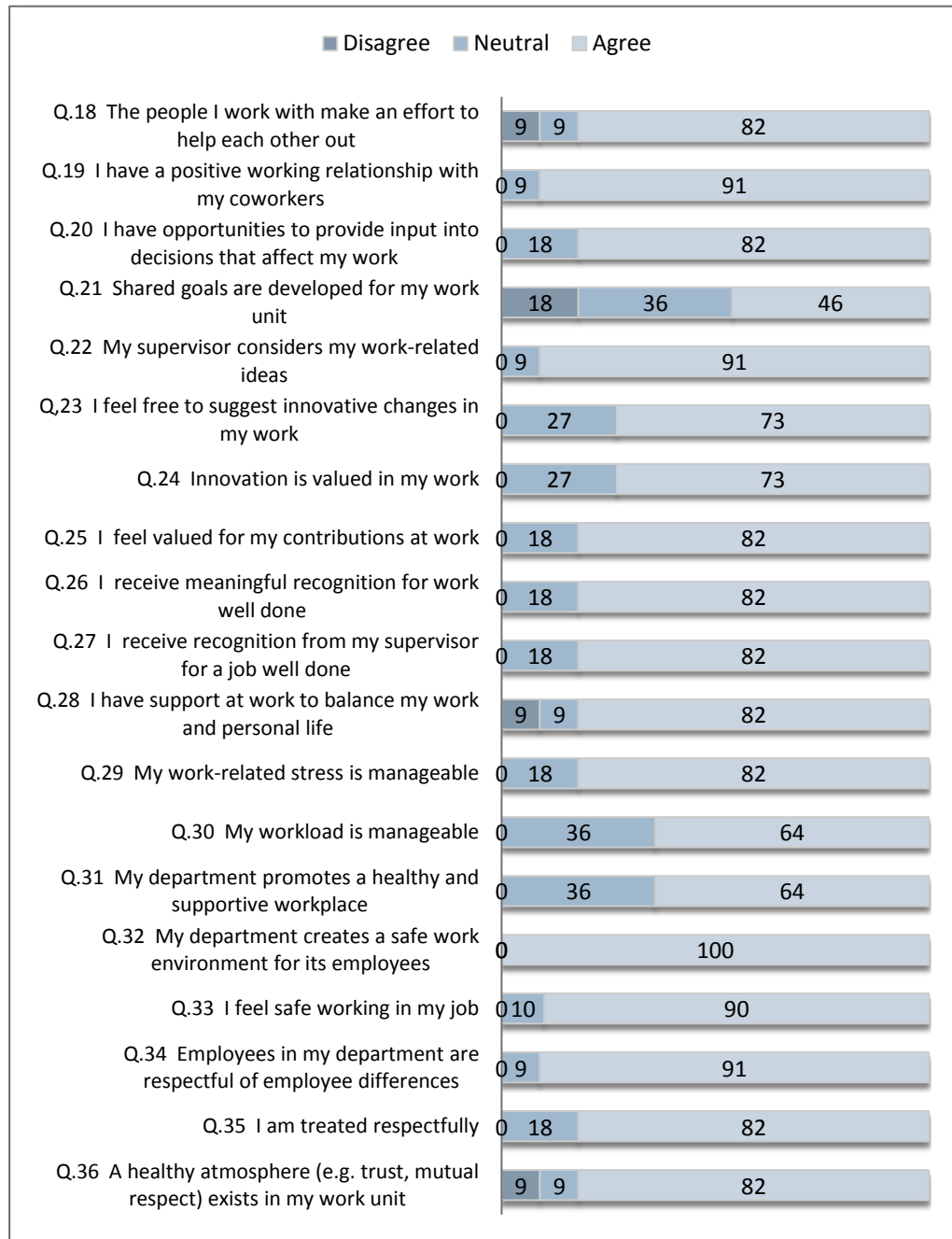
Figure 7 Detail workplace culture results for 2011

3.5.2 Workplace Culture Comparison

Table 6 (continued on next page) compares the Workplace Culture results for TBEC to the overall corporate results for 2011.

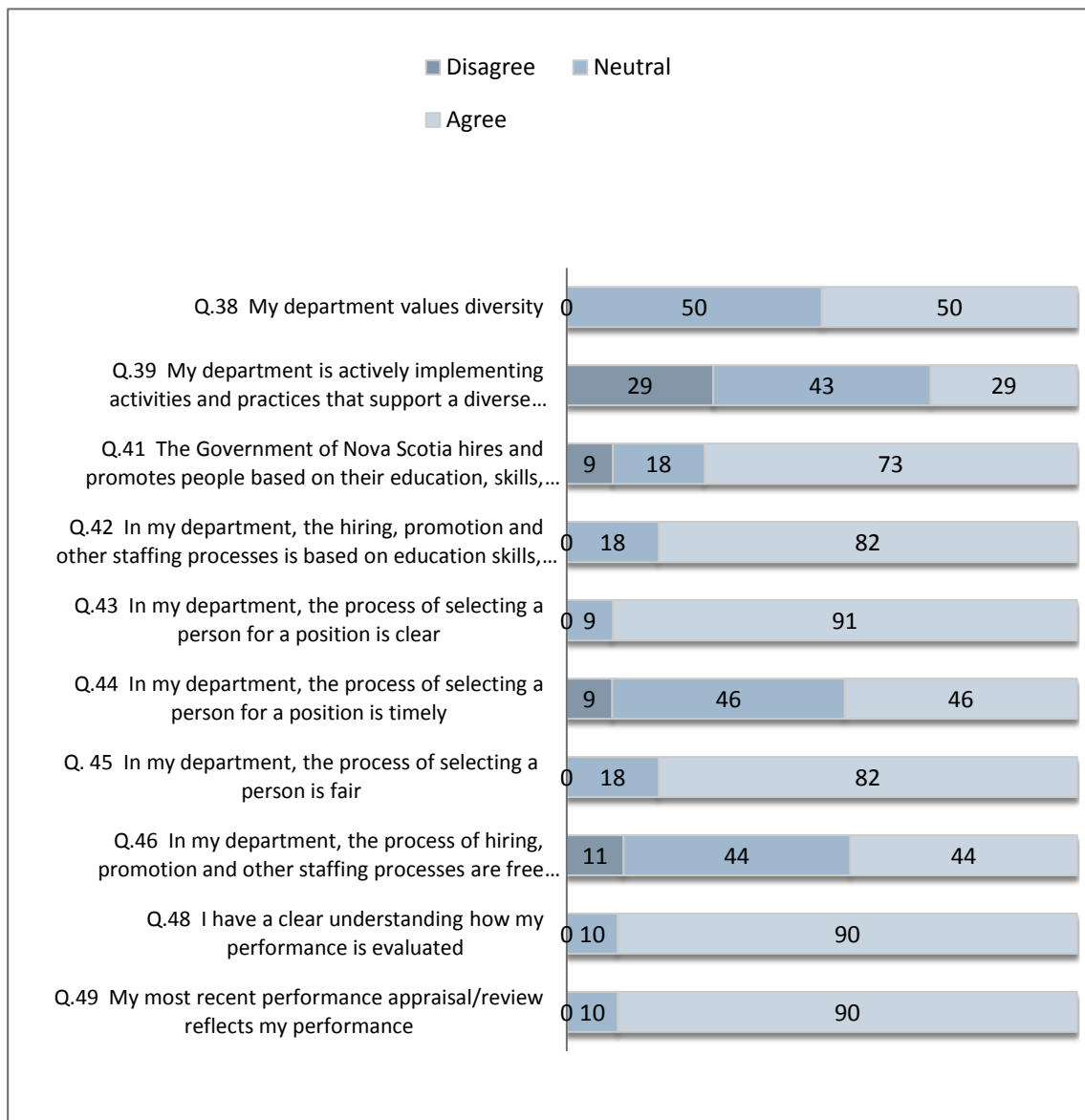|	TBEC	Corporate
Coworker Relationship		
The people I work with make an effort to help each other	82	77
Have a positive working relationship with coworkers	91	84
Employee Involvement and Innovation		
Have opportunities to provide into decisions that affect their work	82	60
Shared goals are developed for work unit	46	51
Supervisor considers their work-related ideas	91	69
Feel free to suggest innovative changes in their work	73	67
Innovation is valued in their work	73	54
Recognition		
Feel valued for contributions at work	82	54
Receive meaningful recognition for work well done	82	47
Receive recognition from supervisor for a job well done	82	58
Quality of Work Life		
Have support at work to balance work and personal life	82	62
Work-related stress is manageable	82	59
Workload is manageable	64	58
Healthy, Supportive and Respectful Environment		
Department promotes a healthy and supportive workplace	64	59
Department creates a safe work environment for its employees	100	73
Employees feel safe working in their job	90	78
Employees in department are respectful of employee differences	91	69
Treated respectfully at work	82	74
A healthy atmosphere (trust, mutual respect) exists in work unit	82	62
Diverse and Inclusive Environment		
Department values diversity	50	67
Department is actively implementing activities and practices that support a diverse workplace	29	54
Staffing Practices		
NS Government hires and promotes people based on their education, skills, knowledge and experience	73	49
In the department, the hiring, promotion and other staffing processes is based on their education, skills, knowledge and experience	82	48
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is clear	91	47

	TBEC	Corporate
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is timely	46	21
In the department, the process of selecting a person is fair	82	41
In the department, hiring, promotion and other staffing processes are free from favouritism	44	38
Performance Management Practices		
Participated in a performance appraisal/review with direct supervisor in the past 12 months (yes/no scale)	100	65
% who didn't participate in a performance appraisal/review who would like to	N/A	76
Have a clear understanding of how performance is evaluated	90	59
Most recent performance appraisal/review reflects performance	90	67

Table 6 Workplace Culture comparison with corporate results

As noted in Table 6, TBEC shares similar strengths and areas for improvement with the corporate results. Concern for the timeliness and favouritism in the staffing practice are a corporate wide issue.

TBEC does have two unique areas of concern – the development of shared goals within the work unit; and Department is actively implementing activities and practices that support a diverse workplace. TBEC is not as strong in the diversity category.

In comparison to the corporate results TBEC is stronger in the following areas:

- Having the opportunities to provide into decisions that affect their work
- Supervisor considers their work-related ideas
- Valuing innovation
- Recognition
- Quality of work life
- Healthy, supportive and respectful workplace
- Perception of merit hiring and understanding of the staffing practices
- Perception of the fairness of the staffing practices
- Performance Management practices

3.6   Leadership - Your Leader

3.6.1   Leadership Details

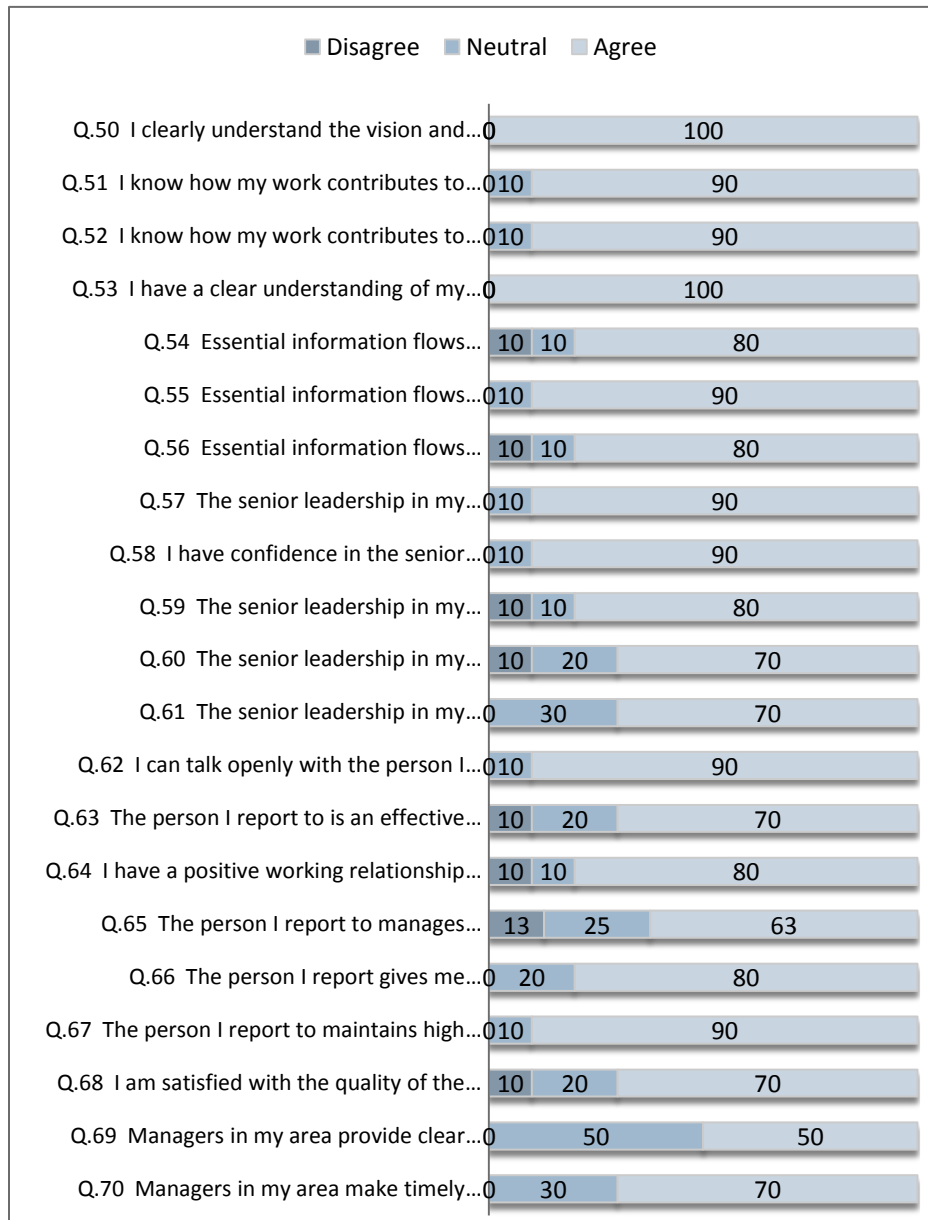Figure 8 summarizes the disagreement, neutral, and agreement scores for leadership practices results.

Figure 8 Leadership Capacity details

3.6.2 Leadership Comparison

Table 7 below compares TBEC's results to the overall corporate results for 2011 employee survey leadership results.

	TBEC	Corporate
Clear Direction and Expectations		
Clearly understood the vision, mission and goals of the department	100	68
Know how work contributes to the achievement of department goals	90	73
Know how work contributes to the achievement of work unit goals	90	79
Have a clear understanding of their work and what is expected of them	100	79
Organizational Communication		
Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff	80	37
Essential information flows effectively from staff to senior leadership	90	43
Essential information flows effectively between work units	80	33
Senior Leadership Practices		
Department senior leadership sets a good example	90	48
Have confidence in the department senior leadership	90	48
Department senior leadership are genuinely interested in the well being of employees	80	49
Department senior leadership provides clear direction	70	42
Department senior leadership makes timely decisions	70	36
Direct Supervisory Practices		
Employees can talk openly with the person they report to about work	90	76
Person report to is an effective leader	70	63
Employees have a positive working relationship with the person they report to	80	77
Person they report to manages conflict in the workgroup	63	54
Person they report to gives employees feedback on their work performance	80	63
Person they report to maintains high standards of honesty and integrity	90	72
Satisfied with the quality of supervision received	70	65
Managers provide clear direction	50	56
Managers make timely decisions	70	51

Table 7 Leadership Comparisons

As noted in Table 7 on the previous page, TBEC has no unique areas of concern.

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

- Understanding the vision, mission and goals of the department
- Knowing how their work contributes to the achievement of department goals
- Organizational Communication category
- Senior Leadership category
- Employees' perception that the person they report to manages conflict in the workgroup
- Employees' feeling that the person they report to gives employees feedback on their work performance
- Employees' belief that the person they report to maintains high standards of honesty and integrity
- Timeliness of managers decisions

Chapter 4 - Other Work Environment Questions

4.1 Respectful Environment

The Treasury Board and Executive Council Office survey results showed, 11% of Treasury Board and Executive Council Office employees have experienced bullying behavior in the last 12months. No data were available to determine if those 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 colleague. The table below outlines the percentage.

Experienced the bullying behavior from:	
Co-worker or colleague	100%

Table 8 Where bullying behaviour came from

4.2 Inclusive Environment

Survey results showed that no Treasury Board and Executive Council Office employees reported experiencing racism and/or discrimination in the last 12months.

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

4.3 Employees' Retention Intentions

As shown in Table 9 below, 39% of TBEC employees are planning on leaving within the next 5 years with the main reason for leaving being retirement. Table 8 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	22%
Between 6-10 years	19%
11 years or more	43%

Table 9 Employees retention intentions for 2011

Treasury Board & Executive Council Office 2011 Employee Survey   28

Appendix I   Mean Scores

	Mean Score
Productivity	
Job Support and Tools	
Provided with the tools and equipment needed to do job well	4.67
Provided with the communication needed to do job well	4.25
Physical work environment allows employees to fully contribute to job	4.58
Job Fit	
Job is a good fit with skills and interests	4.25
Job provides right level of challenge	4.08
Quality of Service Provided	
Have support at work to provide high level of service	4.33
Work unit is making an effort to improve service quality	4.33
Work unit measures and monitors to make sure they are meeting their service quality	3.67
Compensation	
Compensated fairly for job	3.75
Talent Capacity	
Learning and Development Opportunities	
Organization supports work-related learning and development	4.25
Have access to training opportunities	4.08
Training and development received met work-related needs	3.75
Satisfied with the quality of training and development received from department	3.67
Satisfied with the quality of training and development received from PSC	3.00
Opportunities for Career Growth and Advancement	
See a future for career working for the Government of Nova Scotia	4.40
Have opportunities for career growth within the Government of Nova Scotia	3.83
Have opportunities for career growth within the department	3.25
Satisfied with the way career growth and advancement is progressing	3.75
Workplace Culture	
Coworker Relationship	
The people I work with make an effort to help each other	4.09

June 2011

	Mean Score
Have a positive working relationship with coworkers	4.27
Employee Involvement and Innovation	
Have opportunities to provide into decisions that affect their work	4.27
Shared goals are developed for work unit	3.45
Supervisor considers their work-related ideas	4.36
Feel free to suggest innovative changes in their work	4.18
Innovation is valued in their work	4.27
Recognition	
Feel valued for contributions at work	4.27
Receive meaningful recognition for work well done	4.27
Receive recognition from supervisor for a job well done	4.18
Quality of Work Life	
Have support at work to balance work and personal life	3.82
Work-related stress is manageable	4.27
Workload is manageable	3.91
Healthy, Supportive and Respectful Environment	
Department promotes a healthy and supportive workplace	3.73
Department creates a safe work environment for its employees	4.45
Employees feel safe working in their job	4.30
Employees in department are respectful of employee differences	4.09
Treated respectfully at work	4.27
A healthy atmosphere (trust, mutual respect) exists in work unit	3.91
Diverse and Inclusive Environment	
Department values diversity	3.60
Department is actively implementing activities and practices that support a diverse workplace	3.00
Staffing Practices	
NS Government hires and promotes people based on their education, skills, knowledge and experience	3.73
In the department, the hiring, promotion and other staffing processes is based on their education, skills, knowledge and experience	4.09
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is clear	4.00

	Mean Score
In the department, the process of selecting a person for a position is timely	3.36
In the department, the process of selecting a person is fair	3.91
In the department, hiring, promotion and other staffing processes are free from favouritism	3.44
Performance Management Practices	
Have a clear understanding of how performance is evaluated	4.50
Most recent performance appraisal/review reflects performance	4.60
Leadership	
Clear Direction and Expectations	
Clearly understood the vision, mission and goals of the department	4.60
Know how work contributes to the achievement of department goals	4.60
Know how work contributes to the achievement of work unit goals	4.60
Have a clear understanding of their work and what is expected of them	4.60
Organizational Communication	
Essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff	3.90
Essential information flows effectively from staff to senior leadership	4.10
Essential information flows effectively between work units	3.80
Senior Leadership Practices	
Department senior leadership sets a good example	4.30
Have confidence in the department senior leadership	4.30
Department senior leadership are genuinely interested in the well-being of employees	3.90
Department senior leadership provides clear direction	3.90
Department senior leadership makes timely decisions	4.00
Direct Supervisory Practices	
Employees can talk openly with the person they report to about work	4.30
Person report to is an effective leader	3.90
Employees have a positive working relationship with the person they report to	4.30
Person they report to manages conflict in the workgroup	3.63
Person they report to gives employees feedback on their work performance	4.10
Person they report to maintains high standards of honesty and	4.10

	Mean Score
integrity	
Satisfied with the quality of supervision received	4.10
Managers provide clear direction	3.80
Managers make timely decisions	4.10
Overall	
Work for an effective organization	4.33
Satisfied with my job	4.00
Satisfied with my department	3.90
Overall satisfied with work as a Government of Nova Scotia employee	4.00
Proud to tell people work as a Government of Nova Scotia employee	4.10
Prefer to stay with the Government of Nova Scotia, even if offered a similar job elsewhere	4.11
Inspired to give my very best	4.10
Would recommend the Government of Nova Scotia as a great place to work	3.70