

KING COUNTY 2012 EMPLOYEE SURVEY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY REPORT

Summary and Purpose

In March 2012, the King County Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget conducted the County's second survey of employees' opinions and perceptions. This survey gathered data across a broad range of categories, including:

- overall satisfaction
- professional development
- performance feedback
- supervision and management
- characteristics of the work environment
- internal communication
- familiarity with various King County initiatives

Survey results and analysis will be used to:

1. Inform 2012-2015 work plans of the Service Excellence and Quality Workforce Goal Teams. Action items will focus resources and organizational energy to advance objectives in support of the King County Strategic Plan.
2. Identify areas of high priority to focus resources and training for 2012-2013 around leadership development, supervisor training, and employee engagement.
3. Supply departments and agencies with data and analyses to better understand their particular workforce to inform individual training and organizational development work.

Survey Logistics and Response Rate

All County employees were invited to participate. District Court and Superior Court chose not to have their employees participate because they regularly participate in court-specific employee surveys. The survey was launched on-line, with four weeks allocated for employees to submit responses.

- **Employees with County email addresses:** Employees were notified via email with a letter from elected County leadership, encouraging their participation. The email contained a web link to the online survey. Several follow-up reminders were sent via email from both department and agency leadership and from Executive leadership.
- **Employees without County email addresses or easy computer access:** A paper copy survey with a pre-addressed, stamped envelope (mailed directly to the research consultant) was placed directly in employee mailboxes or made available in staff break rooms. Posters and postcards with the survey website link and additional contact information were posted. Reminder postcards were sent after two weeks to remind employees to participate. Eleven percent of all responses were paper copy surveys.



Of the 12,980 employees who were invited to participate in the survey, a total of 6,773 surveys were received. This resulted in a **52% response rate**. The response rate in 2009 was 51%, which did not include District Court, Superior Court, or members of the Amalgamated Transit Union (which alone counts for close to 4,000 individuals).

Key Findings

Most scores for questions measured in 2009 and 2012 rose significantly (approximately 25% of the questions in the 2012 survey were questions from the 2009 survey). The following table represents the questions with the greatest increases between 2009 and 2012.

QUESTION	2009 MEAN	2012 MEAN	Δ
My work group works well with other King County groups to solve problems to achieve goals. <i>2009 Question: The departments and agencies in King County are working together to achieve common goals.</i>	3.04	3.55	+0.51
My work group strives to provide high quality customer service. <i>2009 Question: King County strives to provide high quality customer service.</i>	3.70	4.09	+0.39
Overall, how satisfied are you with your job?	3.65	3.93	+0.28
My work group seeks feedback/input from customers. <i>2009 Question: King County seeks feedback/input from customers.</i>	3.43	3.67	+0.24

County employees strongly identify with their “membership” within the County organization. 77% of employees agree or strongly agree that they are proud to work for King County. 72% of employees agree or strongly agree that they would recommend King County as a good place to work. The averages around organizational affiliation are the highest in the analysis.

Supervisors play a critical role in both employee satisfaction and employee engagement.

Those employees who report strong, positive perceptions of the supervision they receive also report strong, positive perceptions of every other key measure in the study.

Performance communication makes a significant difference to employees. Employees who have received performance feedback in the previous year report dramatically higher overall job satisfaction and engagement than employees who did not. In fact, these employees also report significantly more positive perceptions of every other study measure.

Continuous improvement is strongly related to employee engagement, although currently it is rated low in employee perception. Employees see active engagement of supervisors and managers as a necessary component of continuous improvement.

Perceptions of customer service are among the highest in this study. Most employees believe that their agency/department strives to provide high quality customer service and is responsive to the needs and expectations of customers (71.9% agree or strongly agree).

Conclusions

County employees are extremely identified with being a part of King County and committed to the values of their organization. This is seen in the high perceptions of overall job satisfaction, positive perceptions of the value of their work to the mission and values of their departments/divisions, and strong, positive perceptions of customer service despite budget and other resource limitations.

As the County moves forward to increase resources available to training and employee development, the survey suggests that focused attention on supervisory skill development, performance feedback, and continuous improvement will yield some of the strongest and largest benefits for employee engagement and satisfaction.