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Feedback from 2011 Employee Survey Making a Difference



In November 2011, a record-high 61 percent of faculty and staff statewide submitted feedback through our new employee engagement survey, and I want to share with you some of the ways the input is being used to drive change.

It's been about a year since our survey partner, ModernThink, first presented results to you through open forums. Since then, work has been under way statewide to interpret, share and apply the data. These processes take time, but we're making noticeable progress. I continue to stress the essential role open and honest feedback plays in creating a great workplace.

Survey results are being used in many ways, big and small, at both system and campus levels. A statewide task force within UT's Compensation Advisory Board is using survey results to make recommendations for improving our work culture. Campuses and institutes have additional teams focused on strengths and opportunities specific to each entity. Teams are taking different approaches to analyzing the data. Some are studying feedback to identify overarching needs and opportunities while others such as UT Chattanooga, UT Martin and the Institute for Public Service already have or are in the process of distributing data specific to individual departments.

More than 60 questions were included in the survey covering 15 topics. From a University-wide perspective, communication, supervisory/managerial training and work/life balance emerged as initial focus areas. Additional areas campuses and institutes are focusing on range from compensation to employee appreciation and retention. A complete list of focus areas is available on the dedicated survey website at humanresources.tennessee.edu/yourvoice.

Some tangible outcomes from the survey include:

- Follow-up study at UT Martin to better understand employee preferences for communication
- Redesigns of inter- and intranet sites at the UT Institute for Public Service
- Recommendations for new supervisor training at UT Knoxville and the UT Space Institute on topics from performance management to employee recognition and shared governance
- Free access to the campus fitness facility for employees at the UT Health Science Center

- Work to identify opportunities for celebrating positive workforce changes at UT Chattanooga
- Focus on evaluating the effectiveness and possible redesign of employee orientation at the UT Institute of Agriculture

I encourage you to read more about each team's work by visiting the site referenced above and to contact team leads with questions or additional suggestions.

Plans are to re-administer the survey every three years with the next survey being launched in fall 2014.

Thanks to everyone who participated in the survey and to those working now to make use of the results.

All the best,
Joe

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