2016 Employee Survey Follow-Up

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the results of the 2016 Employee Survey and actions being taken in response to the survey results.

Background

The City of Greater Sudbury conducts biannual employee surveys to identify areas of opportunity in each area and in the organization as a whole. Council identified as part of their Strategic Plan *Greater Together* the employee survey as an important tool to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to employee engagement and the quality of work life.

The most recent employee survey was conducted in late 2016. Since 2008, the City has worked with Metrics@Work, a consultant with expertise in organizational measurement and employee engagement. This ensures the anonymity of survey results as the City never sees any individual response but instead receives aggregate reports from Metrics@Work.

Action planning has taken place over the last five months at the local, divisional, and organizational level. This report provides a summary of the action planning process and the resultant action items for Council's information.

Analysis

The 2016 Survey Showed Increasing Participation Rates

The 2016 employee survey saw a response rate of approximately 56%, compared to slightly less than 43% in 2014. This 13 percentage point increase can likely be attributed to a number of factors, including an active team of survey champions across the organization as well as high levels of engagement from areas with previously low participation rates.

Team Worker Cohesion Scored Highest While Employee Involvement (Organizational) Scored Lowest

The highest ranked driver at the City of Greater Sudbury for 2016 was "Co-worker Cohesion"; close to 70% of participants rated this measure in the high to very high range. Conversely, the lowest ranked driver for 2016 was "Employee Involvement (Organizational)": 14% of respondents rated this measure in the high to very high range, compared to 33% in the low to very low range.

On average, the City of Greater Sudbury scored slightly lower than other municipalities in the Metrics@Work database; however, there were a number of drivers where the City scored higher than the municipal database, including performance management, safety hazard reporting, and involvement in decision-making at the team level.

Respondents Identified Things Most in Need of Change

The 2016 survey asked respondents to choose the drivers they felt were "Most in need of change" in their job, in their team, in their division, and at the organizational level.

- Item most in need of change at the job level: "Enough Time". Items most in need of change at the team level: "Communication about Changes", "Resources and Supplies", and "Involvement in Decision-Making." These three drivers were selected as the three things most in need of change at the team level.

- Item most in need of change at the division level: "Divisional Communications". This item relates to employee satisfaction with divisional communication practices. Approximately 32% of respondents identified this as the one thing most in need of change about their division.

- Items most in need of change at the organizational level: "Benefits Satisfaction" and "Executive Leadership Trust" were identified as the two drivers most in need of change at the organizational level.

Action Planning Occurred at the Divisional and Organizational Levels

A coordinated approach to action planning process was implemented to follow up the results of the 2016 survey, both at the divisional and the organizational level. Each section and division was responsible for leading an action planning process with their teams. Consistency in reporting outcomes was achieved by way of an action plan template completed by each division, with their agreed upon action items.

Action Plans Are In Place for All Areas

Divisions have established action plans in response to local survey results. The outcomes identified by each area respond to their specific results. They range in scope from suggestion boxes, individual development plans for team members, communication tools and initiatives, and more.

Two Areas of Organizational Focus Were Selected for Follow-Up

The choices were made based on review of the survey results, comparison with previous years, and analysis of organizational priorities. They were also areas that we felt we had the most capacity to influence at the organizational level. While other drivers are also important to address, we ultimately decided to focus on the item ranked lowest of all - Organizational Employee Involvement, as well as a driver deemed critical to our success as a customer service driven organization - Citizen Service Culture.

A Cross-Departmental Task Force Provided Recommendations on Action Items

A cross-departmental task force made up of Unionized, non-Union, frontline, and outside workers met to discuss the results of the 2016 employee survey, conduct broad consultation within their areas, and ultimately identify recommended action items for the Executive Leadership Team to consider. As a result of that work, five action items will be implemented to follow up on the survey at the organizational level. The five action items are:

- Develop a "wallet card" that outlines tips for delivering effective customer service. This tool will be aligned with ongoing work around continuous improvement initiatives in customer service.

- Increase communication and visibility of good customer service practices by developing and rolling out a multimedia campaign related to education and promotion of municipal services.

- Develop standards and standard tools for supervisor communication with teams and staff to support enhanced communication practices across the organization.

- Explore options related to all-staff electronic communications. This initiative is being led by Information Technology.

- Create and support an ongoing cross-departmental working group. The working group's first area of focus will be to provide input and recommendations to enhance customer service initiatives.

Action Items Support Specific Priority Goals for the Organization

The action items identified for organizational follow-up support previously established organizational goals:

- Consistent and supported communication practices;

- Recognition of good work by employees, in particular as it relates to customer service;

- Build trust and confidence with the community: increased awareness about who does what within the organization for both employees and residents;

- Increased capacity for information sharing and participation from different levels of the organization.

Conclusion / Next Steps

Organizational action items are being led by members of the Survey Working Group (Communications and Community Engagement, and Human Resources and Organizational Development). They will be implemented over the next 6 to 12 months.

The next biannual employee survey will be conducted in 2018, in line with the organization's practice and with the expectations outlined in Council's Strategic Plan.