



GNWT EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION ACTION PLAN

Strategic Human Resources

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Executive Summary

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) recognizes that employees of the territorial public service must feel safe, respected, and content in the workplace and it is committed to improving employee satisfaction across its workforce.

Ensuring employee satisfaction requires a strong, stable public service that is diverse, competent, engaged and representative of the population it serves. The GNWT continues to develop initiatives and to support existing programs and opportunities that promote employee satisfaction.

GNWT Departments and Agencies (Departments) contribute collectively and independently to building our public service. The GNWT Employee Satisfaction Action Plan outlines specific actions relating to short-, medium- and long-term goals intended to improve employee satisfaction across the GNWT.

Setting the Context

Since 2006, the Employee Engagement and Satisfaction Survey (EESS) has provided the Government of the Northwest Territories with the opportunity to gain insight into the engagement of GNWT employees.

One of the components reported on in the EESS is Employee Morale. Employee Morale is defined by the EESS as “the attitude, satisfaction, and overall outlook of employees during their tenure with an organization” and is calculated using both employee behavior and feedback.

The 2021 EESS results indicated a decrease in employee morale of 3.4% compared to the prior EESS, completed in 2016. The decrease in employee morale prompted the GNWT to assemble an Interdepartmental Employee Satisfaction Working Group (IESWG) created to gather information and propose actions to improve results.

To help with this work, the following information was gathered, analysed, and presented to the IESWG:

1. Interjurisdictional scan on employee satisfaction and employee recognition initiatives
2. Departmental scan on employee satisfaction and recognition initiatives
3. Research on best and emerging practices on improving employee morale
4. GNWT Employee survey, which honed in on some of the lowest scoring statements from recent EESS results

The IESWG’s research focused on the results of an additional employee survey that explored the five-lowest scoring statements from the recent years’ EESS results. The statements related to:

- Whether there were opportunities for career growth within the GNWT;
- Whether people in the GNWT strive for improvement;
- Whether employees felt theirs was a psychologically healthy workplace;
- Whether there was effective flow of essential information from senior management; and,
- Whether there were adequate reward programs that celebrate and acknowledge individual and team efforts.

With this information, the IESWG has come together to brainstorm impactful ways to positively influence employee morale with the goal of creating an Action Plan to address employee satisfaction across the GNWT.

The work of the IESWG was reflected in the Interdepartmental Employee Satisfaction Working Group Report, which set out recommendations for each of the target improvement areas. The report outlined two major priorities to improve employee satisfaction: improving on management transparency and clarity in communication and improving workplace psychological health and safety. Additional insights included putting more of a focus on informal recognition, increasing the availability of leadership and other development opportunities, and more regular, targeted information gathering from employees.

Paving the Way Forward

The Employee Satisfaction Action Plan envisions information gathering and policy initiatives, as well as the development of new—and review of existing—programs, training, and resources in an effort to improve employee satisfaction across the GNWT.

Action Plan Outline

Illustrated in the following tables are the suggested action items pulled and developed by the IESWG from findings in recent Employee Engagement and Satisfaction Surveys. Also included are the short-, medium- and long-term tasks each lead group or actor (i.e., Department of Finance, IESWG) is setting out to accomplish within the noted timeframe.

The Action Plan acts as an overarching document designed to guide the upcoming Implementation Plan, which will provide detailed information on how these tasks will be completed/implemented.

ACTION PLAN OUTLINE

Action Item Tasks: Short-Term (1-2 years)	Action Item Tasks: Medium Term (3-4 years)	Action Item Tasks: Long Term (5+ years)
ACTION ITEM 1: DEVELOP AND OVERSEE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN		
<p>The Department of Finance will establish an Employee Satisfaction Advisory Committee (advisory committee) to assist with the development and review of the Implementation Plan that will follow the items noted in this Action Plan.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will develop terms of reference for the advisory committee roles and responsibilities, including the length of committee membership.</p> <p>The advisory committee will meet on quarterly basis.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will provide annual updates on progress towards deliverables under the Implementation Plan and revise as required.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will update employees on how they can become involved.</p>	<p>The Department of Finance, in consultation with the advisory committee, will conduct a review of the action plan and update as required, including information gathered from review of surveys and employee engagement.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will review the advisory committee's membership and terms of reference.</p> <p>The advisory committee will continue to meet on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will provide annual updates on progress towards deliverables under the Implementation Plan and revise as required.</p>	<p>The Department of Finance, in consultation with the advisory committee, will conduct a review of the action plan and update as required.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will review the advisory committee's membership and terms of reference.</p> <p>The advisory committee will continue to meet on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will provide annual updates on progress towards deliverables under the Implementation Plan and revise as required.</p>

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Action Item Tasks: Short-Term (1-2 years)	Action Item Tasks: Medium Term (3-4 years)	Action Item Tasks: Long Term (5+ years)
<p>ACTION ITEM 2: IMPLEMENT THE NATIONAL STANDARD FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE (STANDARD) ACROSS THE GNWT</p> <p><i>The Diversity and Inclusion Unit within the Department of Finance is leading a standalone initiative with the goal of implementing the Standard across the GNWT.</i></p>		
<p>The Department of Finance will launch a Health, Safety, and Wellness Policy that incorporates both occupational health and safety and psychological health and safety.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will develop a plan to implement the Standard across the GNWT.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will establish and chair an interdepartmental psychological health and safety working group to assist with the implementation of the Standard.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will develop tools and basic messaging to engage with departmental senior management to assist them to champion the Standard within their workplace, helping foster a work environment that values health and safety.</p>	<p>The Department of Finance will build a multi-year action plan to implement the Standard, which includes vision, objectives, targets for improvement, and training requirements.</p> <p>Departments will implement the Standard, encouraging positive cultural change.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will chair the interdepartmental psychological health and safety working group that will focus on the implementation of the Standard and on wellness in the workplace.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will establish a monitoring and evaluation process for the implementation of the Standard.</p>	<p>Departments will continue to implement the Standard, encouraging positive cultural changes, and will develop a process for continuous improvement.</p> <p>Departments will report on tasks, improvements, and corrective actions.</p> <p>Senior Management will remain engaged and support employee involvement with the implementation of the Standard.</p>

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Action Item Tasks: Short-Term (1-2 years)	Action Item Tasks: Medium Term (3-4 years)	Action Item Tasks: Long Term (5+ years)
ACTION ITEM 3: CREATE EMPLOYEE RESOURCES AND AN INFORMATION TOOLKIT TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT		
<p>The Department of Finance will develop resources to support employee engagement.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will develop a toolkit with resources to promote informal employee recognition.</p>	<p>The Department of Finance will review and update toolkit resources.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will incorporate toolkit information into relevant training offerings where applicable.</p>	<p>The Department of Finance will review and update toolkit resources.</p>
ACTION ITEM 4: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES TO FOSTER BETTER INTERNAL COMMUNICATION		
<p>The Department of Finance will explore with departmental senior management on how we can use existing tools to ensure important operational information is being shared to employees.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will develop guidance on information to be shared by each Department to ensure consistency.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will develop a process to gather feedback from employees and if they are satisfied with the changes.</p>	<p>The Department of Finance, in consultation with departmental senior management, will continue to review and implement internal communication methods and available tools/media.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will continue to gather feedback from employees and if they are satisfied with the changes.</p>	<p>The Department of Finance, in consultation with departmental senior management, will continue to review and implement internal communication methods and available tools/media.</p>

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ACTION ITEM 5: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT GNWT-WIDE STANDARDIZED EMPLOYMENT SURVEYS AT PRE-DETERMINED INTERVALS		
<p>The Department of Finance will conduct research on exit interviews in other Canadian jurisdictions.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will develop and launch Exit interviews across the GNWT.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will develop reporting guidelines prior to gathering data for evaluation purposes.</p>	<p>The Department of Finance will consult with NTHSSA on the reporting of information gathered from exit interviews.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will conduct research on Stay Interviews and, in consultation with the advisory committee, will develop stay interview guidelines.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will research 360° interviews and, in consultation with the advisory committee, will develop 360° interview guides.</p>	<p>The Department of Finance will develop and launch a Stay interview process across the GNWT to gain insight on employee retention and engagement.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will develop and launch a 360° interview process across the GNWT to foster holistic assessment of management to aid in professional development.</p>
ACTION ITEM 6: REVIEW CURRENT GNWT EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AND REWARDS PROGRAMS		
<p>The advisory committee will prioritize the rewards and recognition programs offered throughout the GNWT to be reviewed.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will complete jurisdictional scans of employee recognition and rewards programs.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will develop resources to promote informal employee recognition</p>	<p>The Department of Finance to complete program reviews and address the recommendations brought forward for consideration.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will forward recommendations relating to recognition and rewards programs to the Deputy Minister Human Resource Committee for review and approval.</p>	<p>The Department of Finance will implement new programs and refresh existing programs based on direction from the Deputy Minister Human Resource Committee.</p>

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Action Item Tasks: Short-Term (1-2 years)	Action Item Tasks: Medium Term (3-4 years)	Action Item Tasks: Long Term (5+ years)
ACTION ITEM 7: DEVELOP A MECHANISM FOR EMPLOYEE FEEDBACK AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT REGARDING THE ACTION PLAN ITEMS		
<p>The Department of Finance will research best practices and methods of gathering employee feedback and will consult with the advisory committee.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will present options to the Deputy Minister Human Resource Committee along with a recommendation for preferred option.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will create materials to outline how feedback will be collected, addressed, and reported.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will launch the mechanism for employee feedback.</p>	<p>The Department of Finance will monitor and respond to employee contributions and feedback</p> <p>The Department of Finance will update communication materials as deemed necessary.</p>	<p>The Department of Finance will monitor and respond to employee contributions and feedback</p>
ACTION ITEM 8: LAUNCH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS THAT SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL EMPLOYEES		
<p>The Department of Finance will develop a Mentorship Program to help employees develop their competencies and leadership skills.</p> <p>The Department of Finance will re-launch the Leadership Development Program.</p>	<p>The Department of Finance, in collaboration with the advisory committee, will make recommendations across government to ensure that employees are afforded appropriate time, space, and support to participate in training offerings of the GNWT.</p>	<p>The Department of Finance will monitor, review, and administer the Mentorship Program and the Leadership Development Program.</p>

Monitoring & Evaluating Progress

Monitoring and evaluation will be used to measure the success of the Action Plan to improve employee satisfaction, better understand areas in which improvement is required, and ensure that progress is made in these areas.

Commitment to the Employee Satisfaction Action Plan requires all departments and agencies of the GNWT to understand and apply the strategies necessary to accomplish the Action Items through successful implementation of the Action Item Tasks.

Monitoring is undertaken through collection, analysis, and reporting of pertinent data and program implementation information. The monitoring process also provides the opportunity to identify and share successes in Employee Satisfaction, promoting further progress in increasing employee satisfaction. within the GNWT Public Service.

What is Monitoring and Evaluation?

Monitoring is the regular collection of information about the activities of a program. Evaluation is the assessment of a program to know if it is accomplishing its goals and to reflect on the lessons learned.