Hearing Voices? What’s Next?

The results are in from the 2017 Employee Voice Survey. We are fortunate to have received a high percentage of responses from the employee population overall. Please thank all of your employees for their participation. This is just one way to hear the pulse of the organization. Now, it is up to all of us to add value to the feedback we received.

Each Appointing Authority has their organization’s individual results as well as the overall results of the Employee Voice Survey (visit the website at www.pinellascounty.org/hr/employeevoice). While the results are informative, it is helpful to think about how to interpret the findings.

The survey shows trends from past years through 2017. What is the overall movement of categories and individual questions? While trends indicate overall movement, what does the breakdown show? For instance, if 60% of respondents show a positive rating, what does that mean about the other 40%? Ideally, we build a workplace culture where we can explore the meaning with our direct reports, peers, supervisors and managers by having open dialogue about the findings.

A high performing customer service foundation is built on how well we treat each other internally, creating a strong and responsive culture to hear all of our clients and stakeholders daily. If I am not hearing the same types of things in regular conversations with employees, does that mean they do not feel the same way? Or does it mean, for some reason, they do not feel comfortable sharing without ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. One of the ways we can address this is to make sure we do not become defensive when our employees express an opinion that is hard to hear, and that we encourage tactful and respectful discussion working toward improvement and solutions. It becomes critical to model the importance of working through tougher conversations to understand multiple sides of an issue.

The overall results of the survey showed positive trends. It is also important to remember that even in organizations that are considered “best in class” for positive places to work, the percentages do not climb much higher than the 80th percentile range. However, there is always room to drill down into the results, which can best happen through your continued effort to create open dialogue.

Employee Relations staff in Human Resources will be reaching out to each Appointing Authority to assist in putting together next steps. It will be a priority to help employees understand how their input continues to affect positive progress. “We heard you, and as a result, we are taking action on the following things…..” For all of us, it is important to know that our voices matter.

Focus groups, individual discussions, staff meeting agenda items targeting survey results, incorporating key issues in performance discussions, coaching dialogue, and key decisions can all be ways to act upon information gleaned from the survey results. Checking for feedback from varied viewpoints can help us all discern if we are interpreting from an open mindset. In turn, this will assist us in meeting the needs of the diverse population in the public we serve.

Here’s to hearing voices, and responding proactively to those that took their time and energy to give us valuable feedback!