

# 2023 People Matter Survey – Whole of Sector Response Plan

## Senior Managers/Middle Managers

Perceptions about managers provide important insight and have a direct link to organisational effectiveness. For senior managers, clearly communicating strategy and direction, and delivering effective change management from the top of an organisation builds employee trust, and creates credibility and confidence. There is also a direct link between effective senior management in organisational change, and employee engagement and commitment.

50% of respondents agree their senior managers effectively lead and manage change.

56% of respondents agree that their senior managers provide clear strategy and direction.

Managers play an increasingly important role in seeing that an organisation's vision and strategy are executed, and are responsible for translating organisational vision into targeted actions and tangible outcomes by providing direction, advice and support to individuals and teams.

Collectively, managers was a key theme in the feedback from employees with respondents agreeing this is a key focus area and commenting they feel:

- building the capability of both middle managers and senior managers needs to be addressed
- senior managers need to be held accountable for their actions, behaviour and decisions being made
- there is a lack of responsiveness to staff issues or matters being raised and not having the appropriate processes in place for staff to provide feedback or suggestions
- concerned about the skills and capability of managers in leadership positions
- there should be more engagement and recognition of employees

This focus area has been expanded to include both senior and middle managers. Actions have been adjusted to align with feedback provided and focus on development of manager's leadership and capability skills

1. OCPE - Continue to grow the capability of senior managers encouraging transparency, accountability and effective communication through the delivery of masterclasses, executive roundtables and career coaching where various tools such as 360 feedback are available.
2. OCPE - Develop and deliver a package of development programs for senior executives with a focus on large scale change and risk management; effectively communicating strategy and direction; and valuing the diversity of opinions and feedback.
3. DCDD - are currently developing a tool kit for middle managers which will provide information and resources on various topics for those managing people or who want to progress their career.

## Employees having a voice

Employee voice is crucial for organisational success as it helps drive improvement, engagement, problem-solving, inclusion, and effective communication. By valuing and actively seeking the input of employees, organisations can harness the full potential of their workforce and create a more productive and innovative workplace.

The key drivers with the highest influence on employee engagement across the sector are *'my organisation fairly considers recommendations from staff about how we could do things better'* and *'It is safe to speak up and challenge the way things are done in my organisation'*.

47% of respondents across the sector responded positively to their organisation fairly considers recommendations about how things could be done better (noting there are slight variances across agencies) and 20% were neutral.

49% of respondents across the sector responded positively to it being safe to speak up and challenge the way things are done in their organisation

Actions that increase the positive responses to employee voice questions will have a high impact on engagement and the discretionary effort of employees.

The issue of employees having a voice was raised in the feedback as being an appropriate area to focus on with employees suggesting:

- they need to feel their concerns or suggestions are being heard
- there is a lack of mechanisms for employees to contribute to discussions or provide feedback or solutions to the way things are done
- they would like to feel safe and supported about speaking up

Feedback responses support the perception that there are limited platforms and processes for employees to speak up and provide feedback or suggestions in their agency. The actions for this focus area will provide agencies with the necessary information and examples of successfully implemented feedback loops so they can adopt a suitable approach for employees to feel safe and heard when providing feedback or suggesting improvements. The delivery of training will permit managers to have the opportunity to increase their capability in receiving and progressing feedback up to senior leaders which will assist in implementation of a feedback loop in the organisation.

1. OCPE - will continue to invite employee feedback on whole of sector strategies and initiatives such as this survey response plan.
2. OCPE - Develop a suite of best practice case studies and resources from agencies and other organisations who have successfully implemented an effective feedback loop. This information will be available to all agencies and it will be strongly encouraged that agencies adopt an approach for employees to have a platform or process to provide feedback or suggestions.
3. OCPE - Deliver training programs for middle managers focusing on influencing up and how to progress employees' feedback up to senior leaders.

## Feedback and Performance Management

There is a strong, demonstrated link between the receipt of regular feedback on employees work performance, career development and engagement.

55% of respondents reported having a performance plan in place.

52% reported receiving formal feedback and 77% reported receiving informal feedback.

55% of respondents agree their manager discusses their career intentions

45% of respondents agree their manager appropriately deals with employees who perform poorly.

Critically though, only 49% of respondents reported that their manager had talked to them about what they could do to improve their performance.

In the comments received, it was agreed feedback and performance management should be a focus area for the action plan, with employees stating:

- there is a deficit in dealing with and managing poor performance
- there is limited support for career progression
- importance needs to be placed on providing feedback and completing individual development plans
- expectations on feedback and performance are varying depending on the agency

Unmanaged poor performance can impact many aspects of a team and the working environment. The actions in this response plan are designed to build the capability of managers and provide them with the tools needed to address and comfortably manage employee performance including providing both informal and formal feedback for underperforming and performing employees. The ability to ask for feedback has been added as an action to provide employees with information and empower them to actively seek feedback from their managers.

1. OCPE - Design and deliver an optional add-on session to the *Results through people* program to focus on improving performance and critical conversations with employees.
2. DCDD - to commence phase 4 for online orientation programs: agency specific orientation.
3. DCDD - launch the standardised online myPerformance tool across the sector. This will allow employees to actively contribute to their own career growth and success, and provide managers with the tools to easily record performance discussions and agreements they have with employees.
4. OCPE - An information section about employee responsibilities for performance and development will be added to NTG Central so employees can feel empowered to seek feedback and drive their own development.
5. OCPE - Based on employee and agency feedback, implement improvements to the NTPS Capability Framework and the Capability Discovery Tool.

## Overview

## Employee Feedback

## Actions