

Nova Scotia Employee Survey: How's Work Going?

Since the results of the 2004 Employee Survey were released, teams and individuals have been working on those issues identified by employees as needing improvement. Work has been done at both corporate and departmental levels depending on the issue and where it is best dealt with.

Howard Windsor, Deputy Minister and Rick Nurse, Public Service Commissioner have taken on the role of advocates for change and co chair the Corporate Employee Advisory Committee made up of the following individuals:

- Mike MacIsaac, Transportation and Public Works
- Anne James, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations
- Nadene MacAulay, Agriculture and Fisheries
- Helen Desmond-Morris, Education
- Scott Logan, Office of Health Promotion
- Mitch Simpson, Department of Justice
- Scott Drummond, Department of Health
- Michael Noonan, Human Rights Commission
- Hugh Gillis, Department of Natural Resources
- Brenda Murray, Department of Community Services
- Laura Lee Langley, Communications Nova Scotia

In conjunction with departmental working groups, the corporate advisory committee acts as the link between departments and corporate initiatives to ensure that employees are kept informed on what is happening as a result of the employee survey recommendations.

Many departments have on their own initiative begun to drill down into the survey results to ask very specific questions of employees to ensure that the actions taken are what employees have asked for. The following are concrete examples of the initiatives departments are taking as a result of the employee surveys:

DEPARTMENT	ACTION
Office of Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bi weekly staff meetings are mandated to ensure communication• Additional surveys conducted in OED for staff and clients to further drill down into areas of concern• More engagement by staff into the business planning process• Additional opportunities for career planning and growth• Assessment of physical working environments
Department of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishment of departmental working committee• Focus groups held to drill down into survey results to get specifics of concerns and actions to be taken• Department's OH&S Committee has been given a list of health and wellness issues to address and make recommendations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations have been made for improved internal communication • Professional development sessions are now being held on a more frequent and accessible basis • More employee participation in budget and business planning • Succession planning initiatives have begun • Department wide policies and standards under redevelopment
Tourism, Culture and Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations for Management: An information toolkit designed to assist managers with managing human resource issues and processes. This kit includes a handbook, website and training courses • Planning for the Future: Will position Tourism, Culture and Heritage to have the necessary employees with the right skill sets to support its mission and strategic plans • Employee Recognition: An employee task force was struck in 2004 with a mandate to provide a framework to encourage recognition activity within the department. The plan is currently being developed. • OH&S: Priorities include an OH&S system audit, promotion of the internal responsibility system; orientation, continued management support and development. • Diversity and Performance Management: Establishment of a 3-year diversity and performance management plan for the department.
Environment and Labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups were conducted between January and March 2005 in follow up to the 2004 Survey. Focus groups were held across the province. The focus groups were held to gain a full understanding of the perceptions and opinions expressed by staff and to find ways to make the workplace a better place. Recommendations have just been presented to Senior Management and a plan is to be established.
Department of Agriculture and Fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An action plan with eight action items has been put together by a newly formed departmental working group and recently presented to Senior Management with recommendations to begin implementation in the fall of 2005. A cross-branch implementation team is being established.
Treasury and Policy Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular staff meetings have been established to ensure clear communication • Recommended reorganization was put into place with input from all staff
Department of Community Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff have clearly expressed a wish to be more involved in the direction and activities of the

	<p>Department. A number of venues have been established to enable staff to have opportunities to become more involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client Service Improvement Teams have been established in all regions and in Head Office. Staff involved in these teams have the opportunity to make changes which will improve the quality of service delivery. One of the projects recently completed was the launch of the new website, which makes information about the Department's programs and services more readily available to clients. • Planning champions from each region and program area have been involved with the rollout of the Department's Strategic and Business Plans. The rollout will be complete by the end of July 2005. feedback from the sessions is being collected to help identify ways to strengthen connections with the planning process of the Department. • Staff are also involved in a number of strategic initiatives like Integrated Case Management and Community Supports for Adults Renewal. • The new staff orientation program was successfully launched in the Fall 2004 and the feedback to date has been very positive. • All staff have now completed Individual Training and Development Plans, which will aid in identifying training needs to support staff in personal growth and professional development.
Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group sessions have been completed to provide recommendations to senior management • Establishment of an employee working group
Public Service Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups were conducted with the result being recommendations recently made to Senior Management.