



Hamilton

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Mayor and Members, General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	April 3, 2019
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Our People Survey Update (HUR19006) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Aine Leadbetter 905-546-2424 Ext. 6667 Dawn Hannemann 905-546-2424 Ext. 4265
SUBMITTED BY:	Lora Fontana Executive Director Human Resources
SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction

On November 23, 2015, Council approved report HUR15014 regarding the Our People Survey and provided staff direction to proceed with a one survey approach for all City of Hamilton (City) employees. This was in follow up to Council's request for a corporate methodology, incorporating a unified approach for employee surveying that would occur every three years. The survey would measure five key areas including employee engagement, workplace culture, workplace ethics and integrity, health, safety and wellness, and workforce census and demographics.

Information

In September, 2017, the City launched the Our People Survey (OPS) to all employees. This voluntary and confidential employee survey was executed by a third-party vendor, Metrics@Work, an expert in municipal engagement surveys. The key objective for the survey was to collect meaningful feedback from our employees that would lead to thoughtful actions, enhance employee engagement, improve performance, and enable higher levels of trust and confidence in our City government. The survey was approved by Council as a nine-year project, with a plan to survey employees on three-year cycle including in 2017, 2020 and 2023, with a goal to measure improvement over time.

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

Phases of the Our People Survey

To ensure the success of the OPS project, the City established a robust survey process complete with specific phases and timelines. The phases included:

1. Phase 1 – Survey Launch (September – October 2017)
2. Phase 2 – Sharing Results (February – May 2018)
3. Phase 3 – Building Action Plans (June – September 2018)
4. **Phase 4 – Implementing Action Plans and Monitoring Progress (September 2018 – 2020)**

The City is currently engaged in phase four of the survey process, which will conclude in August of 2020. Employees will be re-surveyed in September 2020, and accordingly the phased approach allows the City to maintain momentum and keep employees engaged and informed leading up to the next survey. In addition, the development and implementation of action plans ensures that meaningful and relevant changes will occur within workgroups and across the City.

Under the guidance and direction of Human Resources, the City has successfully completed phases one to three on time, under budget and with great success. During phase one, the survey was launched to all employees achieving a 65% overall employee participation rate. This was a 25% increase in participation rate over the previous employee survey in 2006, and to achieve this level of participation required that the majority of our divisions achieve a participation rate of 80% or higher. Reaching the 65% participation rate meant that the results were reflective of the experience of most employees and that survey data we received was reliable and valid.

In phase two of the survey, the City shared the results of the survey with all employees using a cascading approach from senior leadership down to the front line. This phase occurred between the period of February 2018 and May 2018, with a small number of more difficult to reach areas receiving results by July, 2018. The City set a target of communicating survey results with all employees, and this target was met by the end of July, 2018.

Phase three of the survey process required that all work groups who had received a survey result report develop action plans. Leaders were tasked with engaging their employees to develop action plans that built on a current strength or to address an opportunity related to one of the focus areas of the OPS. Teams were to identify an action item, define the steps to take to implement the action item, and create metrics to measure and ensure success. This phase of work has been very successful; as of January 2018, 95% of areas that were expected to have an action plan in place had done so. The success of this phase was due to the work and dedication of employees who were involved in building the action in developing meaningful action plans.

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

At present, the City is engaged in phase four of the survey process; implementing action plans, monitoring progress and celebrating successes. This phase is primarily centered on ensuring that we do not lose momentum on action planning and that we continue to make improvements to the City work environment. A key component of this phase involves ensuring that groups are on track with action planning, and that they continue to identify and implement new actions as previous actions are completed. To monitor progress during this phase and to accurately capture action planning information, City staff developed an online action plan reporting tool. This innovative system allows leaders to input their action plan information and provide updates and progress reports on an ongoing basis. A schedule for action plan reporting was developed, and leaders have committed to providing updates on their action plans on a quarterly basis. Reports are built using action plan information from the online tool and are distributed to senior leaders to review progress for their areas and to drive compliance.

Results from Action Plan Reporting

Since the implementation of the action plan reporting tool in phase four of the OPS, the City has run through two full reporting cycles. The most recent reporting period began in December, 2018 and closed in January 2019. Information gathered through our reporting tool illustrates the high degree of engagement and success that the City has been able to achieve in the implementation phase. The City set an initial goal of having one action plan in place for each area that received a result report, and data from the 2019 update indicate that 95% of the expected actions achieving that goal have been documented in the tool. This translates to 186 action plans identified by workgroups actively involved in action planning, accounting for 774 individual action items. We anticipate that we will see an increase to this figure with the next round of reporting. The highest concentration of action items have focused in the areas of communication and workload manageability, with these two areas accounting for 30% of the total action items recorded. Corporately, the top five areas of focus for action plan items include (in order):

1. Communication (17%)
2. Workload Manageability (13%)
3. Team Morale (7%)
4. Managing Poor Work Performance (6%)
5. Job Clarity (6%)

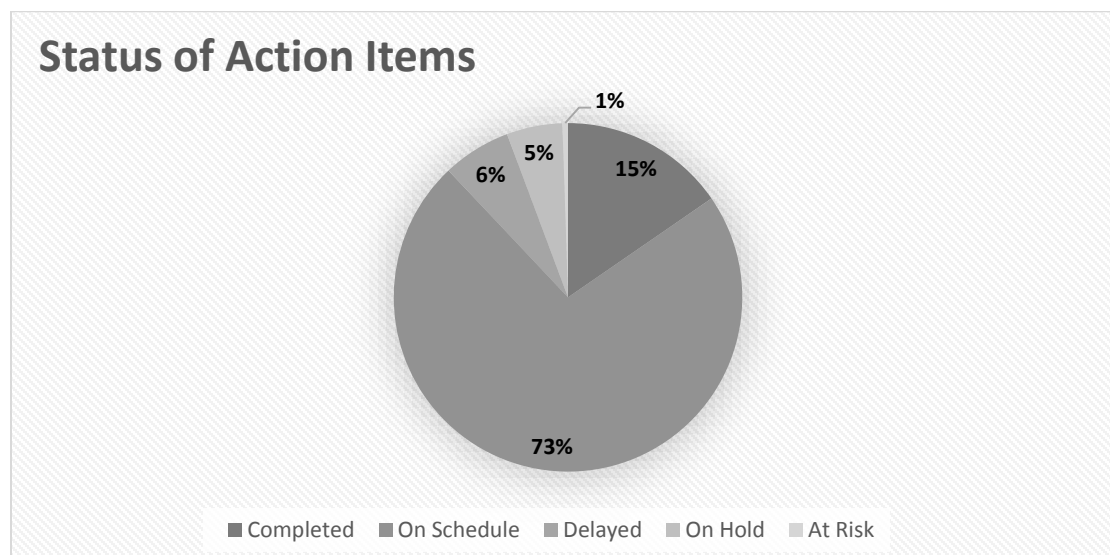
There were many additional areas that workgroups focused on, including but not limited to: support for training opportunities, consistent policies and practices, building pride in team, recognition, adequate staffing and attendance, enhancing sensational service, and building support from leadership.

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

City workgroups are making good progress in action planning. 15% of action items recorded in the reporting tool have been completed as of January, 2019. 73% are on schedule to be completed on time, with the remaining 11% on hold or delayed, and 1% at risk of not being completed in the original timeline specified by the work group.



As action plan items are completed, workgroups are expected to introduce and implement new action items until the conclusion of phase four, when the City re-surveys all employees in Fall of 2020. As such, the total number of action items is expected to grow as groups continue their work, and we anticipate that focus areas may shift as groups turn attention to other action items. Additionally, leaders are asked to identify in their corporate reporting the impact and specific outcomes that have been achieved as a result of implementing their action items and plans to demonstrate the return on their investment.

Ensuring Success

The success of each phase of the OPS was made possible through the dedication and commitment of our employees. In our phase one roll out of the survey, we engaged a large group of primarily front-line employees to act as survey ambassadors. Their role was to reach out to their peers, provide education about the survey, and to enable two-way conversation. Their work was critical to our communication strategy, and they were instrumental in the City reaching the response rate that was achieved.

The OPS Steering Committee has played a critical leadership role throughout each phase of the OPS. This group, comprised of a Director from each of our departments, provided guidance and support in the creation of the survey, assisted with communication in our roll out, educated and supported leaders in delivering survey results, championed action planning processes, and supported leaders in sharing action planning information. The OPS Steering Committee ensured that each phase of the survey was implemented within their

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

departments and also ensured that leaders and employees were supported throughout the process. The OPS Steering Committee has been supported by Departmental Working Groups who were tasked with implementing actions from the OPS Steering Committee and providing feedback and insights from their respective areas. Our Departmental Working Groups were essential in keeping the organization on track and ensuring that all voices were heard.

The work of these groups has been recognized by the City and by Senior Leadership throughout the process. Ambassadors were publicly recognized and thanked for their participation at the end of phase one of the survey. The OPS Steering Committee was publicly recognized at the beginning of 2019 when the team was awarded the City Manager's Award for Public Service Excellence in the team category. In March 2019, the OPS Steering Committee held a recognition event for the Departmental Working Groups to recognize their work in supporting the survey process.

Ensuring success of the OPS has further been made possible through holding leadership accountable for the process. In 2018, every leader in the organization was given a goal on their Performance Accountability and Development (PAD) that held them accountable for ensuring that survey results were disseminated to their workgroups and that the action planning process was implemented. In 2019, a goal has been included in every leader's PAD to ensure that leaders implement the specifics of their action plan items, report updates on action plan items in the corporate action plan roll up tool at the end of each quarter, communicate action plan status updates, metrics, and success stories to staff using multiple methods, with special attention given to hard to reach employees, share OPS Action Plan success stories from staff with the departmental/divisional OPS workgroups, and continue the action planning process throughout 2019. By holding leaders accountable through the PAD process, the City is continuing to make the survey and action planning a high priority for all employees.

Leaders have been supported throughout each phase of the survey process by comprehensive toolkits. A leader toolkit was developed specific to each phase of the survey, and included sample agendas, presentations, FAQ documents, communication maps, templates, and videos. The toolkits created by Human Resources with the support of the OPS Steering Committee allowed the organization to implement each phase of the survey in a consistent manner and at a consistent pace. Toolkits were housed on the City's eNet site on a dedicated OPS page in an accessible and transparent manner, so that employees could also review and understand how the City was implementing the survey and action planning process.

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

Workforce Demographics

It is important that the City understand the composition of its workforce in order to plan for future programs and policy development with a view to attracting a diverse candidate pool and equitable and inclusive selection and retention strategies to further develop our supportive and inclusive workplace. To assist in our understanding of our workforce beyond metrics that we traditionally capture, a demographic section was included in the OPS that asked employees to voluntarily provide demographic and workforce census information. Questions asked in this section of the survey were in alignment with the Federal Government's Census Survey in addition to questions used in the Workforce Census Survey, conducted at the City of Hamilton in 2011. The City intended to only use this data at a corporate level to inform corporate Human Resources programming and policy development.

At the time of our last OPS update at GIC on February 27, 2018, the demographic information had not been analysed. Since this time, City staff have reviewed the information and have identified challenges with collecting demographic and census information using the OPS format. The challenges identified will inform the City's future plans and strategies with regard to collecting data of this nature. As the workforce demographic and census section of the survey was voluntary, response rates for this section were significantly lower than all other sections of the survey. This presents a challenge with regard to validity and usefulness of results. As the census and demographic information collected was anonymous, the City cannot use the information gathered to develop advanced analytics to build a more comprehensive understanding of employee movement and tenure in the organization for groups. Collected in the current format, the information presents an understanding of a point in time, and the City would lack the ability to link this data to future surveys to identify potential barriers and opportunities to create inclusive practices.

The City recognizes the importance of collecting demographic and census data that is actionable and useful to inform program and policy development and to develop meaningful analytics. As such, the City has been exploring other approaches to gather more actionable demographic data. On February 1, 2019 Human Resources implemented a voluntary process to collect demographic information from external job applicants in line with Employment Equity standards. This will provide the City with an understanding of who is applying to the City and will provide baseline information for those who are hired. A similar voluntary demographic collection process has been successfully implemented with recruitment practices for the City's Agencies, Boards and Commissions. Human Resources is further exploring the possibility of surveying all City employees to gather information in line with Employment Equity Standards.

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.