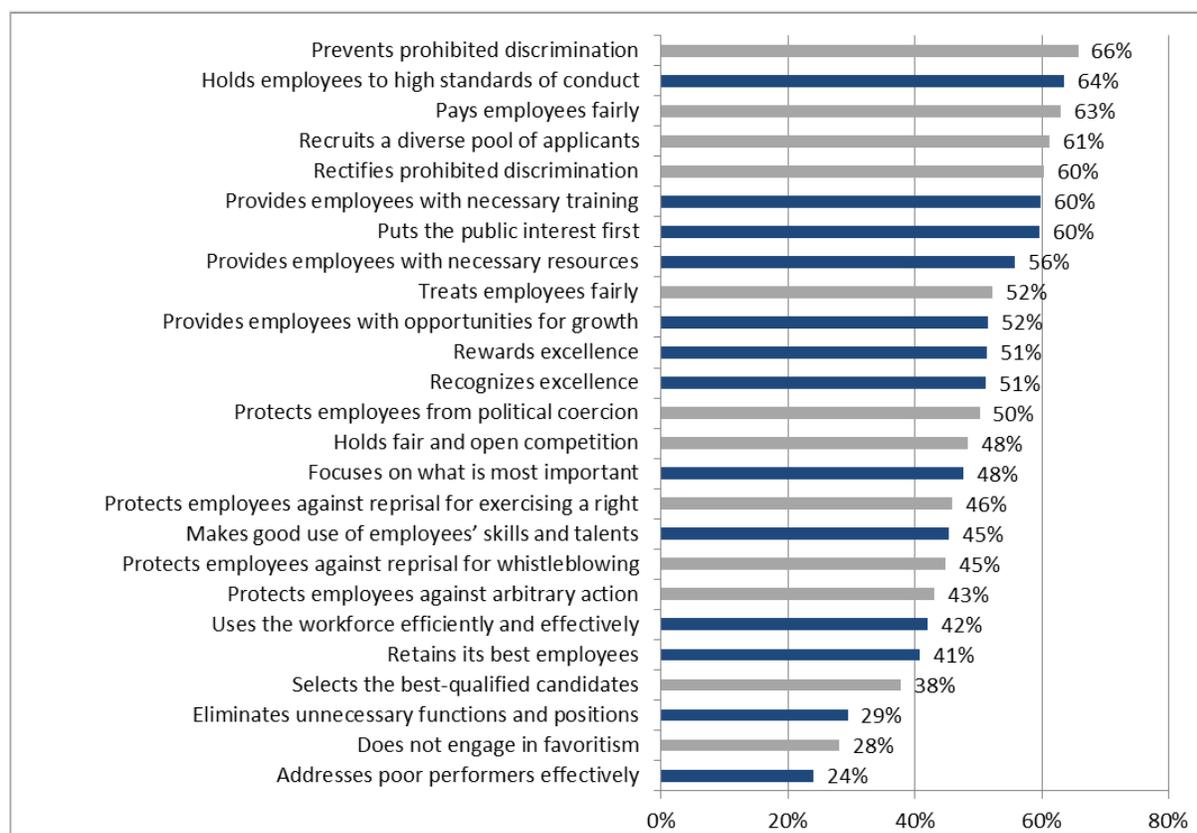




Managing Public Employees in the Public Interest

The Merit System Principles are the nine basic standards governing the management of the executive branch workforce codified at 5 U.S.C. § 2301(b). In our 2010 Merit Principles Survey, we asked Federal employees if they agreed that their organization acted in accordance with various aspects of the merit principles. As shown below, agreement varied greatly across items. Stewardship issues (highlighted in blue) appear to pose particular challenges for agencies, although results also reflect employee concerns about some aspects of fairness (e.g., workplace favoritism) and protection, which are the subject of previous and ongoing MSPB research.



In the current fiscal environment, it is essential that Federal agencies: (1) use the workforce efficiently and effectively; (2) examine existing programs and commitments and, if needed, restructure functions and organizations to focus scarce staff and resources on what is most important; and (3) address poor performers effectively. Many Federal employees saw considerable room for improvement in these areas.

Employees also expressed reservations about their organization's ability to retain its best employees. Turnover can benefit the civil service and the public interest when it improves skills matches, affords employees greater opportunities to contribute, or gives employees and organizations new skills and perspectives. However, excessive turnover and the loss of good employees for reasons related to poor or indifferent workforce stewardship can harm morale, organizational performance, and the broader civil service.

For the full report, including detailed survey results, please visit www.mspb.gov/studies.