



Merit Systems Protection Board

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MSPB SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF TRUST BETWEEN EMPLOYEES AND THEIR SUPERVISORS

The U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) is an independent, quasi-judicial agency established to protect Federal merit systems and the rights of individuals within those systems. As part of this responsibility, MSPB conducts a periodic Merit Principles Survey (MPS) to elicit the views of Federal employees about working conditions, job satisfaction, and interactions with their coworkers and supervisors.

A new MSPB report, *Accomplishing Our Mission: Results of the Merit Principles Survey 2005*, discusses the views of Federal employees who participated in the most recent Merit Principles Survey. This report summarizes the responses of 36,926 Federal employees who completed this online survey—a representative sample of the 1.8 million full-time, permanent employees of the Federal Government. The report reveals that Federal employees generally believe they are well managed, have jobs that they like, and are highly motivated by the opportunity to help their agencies succeed.

The MPS 2005 specifically explored the performance of the Federal workforce. “We wanted to know how successful agencies are at achieving their missions, as they attempt to build a well-qualified workforce, overcome barriers to mission accomplishment, and preserve individual and organizational success through rewards, recognition, and retention,” explained Chairman Neil A. G. McPhie.

The survey results confirm that employees at all levels are dedicated to ensuring that their agencies achieve their missions, but are concerned about how the Federal Government can maintain a qualified and motivated workforce. The MPS 2005 also found continuing high job

satisfaction despite perceptions of less organizational stability and fear of pending changes in the Federal pay system.

The report presents and explores several challenges that agencies face in the workplace. For example, hiring officials are often not satisfied with the applicant pool they must draw from to fill Federal job openings. Employees already on the job would like additional training to do their jobs at a higher level of performance. A large percentage of nonsupervisory employees feel uninformed about performance evaluation, organizational changes, and other issues. Additionally, both supervisors and nonsupervisors report a moderate level of serious conflict in the workplace that may erode the motivation of some employees to succeed.

The good news is that most employees and their supervisors have formed good relationships and are working together to meet these challenges. “A primary finding throughout this report is the importance of trust between employees and their first-line supervisors,” emphasized Chairman McPhie. “Agencies, supervisors, and employees should continue to strengthen the working relationship between supervisors and their employees. Ensuring that the lines of communication are open and that employees are comfortable talking with their supervisors are keys to maintaining this trust.”

To request a printed copy of the report, e-mail STUDIES@mspb.gov; call (202) 653-6772, extension 1350, or write: Merit Systems Protection Board, Office of Policy and Evaluation, 1615 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20419. The report may be downloaded from the Board’s website at www.mspb.gov.

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