



# Merit Systems Protection Board

Contact: Arlin Winefordner  
(202) 653-6772, ext. 1162  
V/TDD 1-800-877-8339  
(Federal Relay Service)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
November 17, 2008

## **NEW MSPB REPORT FINDS THAT GREATER EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IS RELATED TO BETTER AGENCY OUTCOMES**

In this era of dwindling resources, Federal agencies continue to experience pressure to improve results while an increasing number of their employees reach retirement age and the struggle to find talented new employees intensifies. Federal agencies can continue to thrive in this atmosphere by employing management strategies that will fully engage their employees. In the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board's (MSPB) recent report, *The Power of Federal Employee Engagement*, MSPB notes that employees who are fully engaged tend to work in agencies that have better programmatic results, use less sick leave, and are less inclined to leave their agency.

Employee engagement is a heightened connection between employees and their work, their organization, or the people they work for or with. Federal employees are more engaged when they have pride in what they do and where they do it, are satisfied with their agency leadership, have an opportunity to perform well at work, are satisfied with the recognition they receive, have some prospect for future personal and professional growth, and work in a positive environment where there is a focus on teamwork.

“Federal supervisors and managers have an important role to play in engaging employees—those who are successful in engendering these attitudes will lead a more engaged work force that will produce better outcomes for their agencies,” observes Chairman Neil A. G. McPhie.

MSPB's report is based on results from the 2005 Merit Principles Survey of over 35,000 Federal employees. It reports that about one-third of Federal employees were fully

engaged, almost one-half were somewhat engaged, and the remaining 17 percent were not engaged. There were differences in the level of employee engagement among different groups of Federal employees. For example, more members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) were fully engaged than supervisory employees, who were, in turn, more engaged than nonsupervisory employees. In addition, there were wide differences in the engagement level of employees of different agencies—in some agencies almost half of the employees were fully engaged while in others, only about one-quarter were engaged.

Among the actions that agencies can take to improve the engagement level of their employees are ensuring a good fit between employees and their jobs, managing employee performance with the attention it deserves, stimulating employee commitment, and recruiting and selecting supervisors based on their supervisory proficiency instead of solely on their technical expertise. “By establishing a link between employee engagement and agency outcomes,” says McPhie, “we hope to refocus attention and energy on management practices that can increase the level of employee engagement in Federal agencies.”

The MSPB is an independent, quasi-judicial agency that protects Federal merit systems and the rights of individuals within those systems. To request a printed copy of the report, e-mail [STUDIES@mspb.gov](mailto: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](http://www.mspb.gov).

- END -