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MSPB FINDS OPPORTUNITIES TO BETTER MOTIVATE EMPLOYEES

Making full use of Federal employees' talents and energy is critical to efficient and effective Government. To that end, a new MSPB report, [*Federal Employee Engagement: The Motivating Potential of Job Characteristics and Rewards*](#), examines motivation levels in the Federal workforce and discusses steps that Federal agencies can take to enhance employee engagement and performance. A reassuring finding is that most Federal employees reported that they were motivated, with more than 70 percent agreeing with the statement, "I feel highly motivated in my work." However, MSPB also found opportunities for improvement in two areas.

The first is job design. MSPB found that employees are likely to perform better when their jobs are meaningful, afford autonomy, and provide interesting and challenging assignments. As Chairman Susan Grundmann stated, "One key is to give employees meaningful work and the autonomy, support, and feedback they need to succeed. Often, significant improvements can be made on a cost-neutral basis."

The second is rewards. The good news is that Federal employees are not motivated primarily by monetary rewards, which is especially reassuring in a time of fiscal austerity. However, many employees did not see a strong connection between their work efforts, performance, and rewards. Chairman Grundmann noted that "Federal agencies must make sure that Federal employees see the results of their efforts and receive positive reinforcement for achieving goals and results. To ensure that recognition efforts are effective and use scarce resources wisely, Federal agencies and managers need to learn what rewards employees value most and design their programs accordingly."

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