

Effectuating Statewide Employee Engagement Surveys

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Matthew Hudson

DC - CSOSA



Amy Pierce

SCC



Chris Grab

DHRM



Brahma Alaparathi

VITA

Statewide Employee Engagement Surveys

A Proposal for a Statewide Employee Survey

The Ask: Implementation of engagement survey to Virginia employees



What is an engagement survey?

What the Survey Will Measure

- ✓ Employee engagement drivers & satisfaction levels
- ✓ Workplace culture, inclusion, and belonging
- ✓ Leadership effectiveness & communication
- ✓ Professional development & growth opportunities
- ✓ Work-life balance & organizational support

Key Objectives

Identify Strengths

Recognize what drives employee commitment

Uncover Pain Points

Surface systemic issues before they escalate

Inform Policy

Provide data foundation for workforce legislation

Align Strategy

Connect findings to statewide workforce goals



The Case for Action

Why Act Now

Timing: Turnover of new administration is the right time to gather employee data and identify priorities

Recruitment gaps: Competing with private sector without understanding employee needs

No baseline data: Leaders lack systematic insight into workforce sentiment

Peer benchmarking: At least 10 states already leverage survey data to guide workforce strategy

Workforce Challenges Demand Attention

25%

Probationary turnover rate for VA state employees



Employee morale rated as most important to public sector organizations

10+

States now conducting regular engagement surveys

Our Process

- Researched employee engagement best practices
- Outreach to existing Virginia state agencies on survey practices
- Standardized interviews of other state subject matter experts
- Analyzed public, private, and higher education models



Subject Matter Expert Interviews

Colorado	Illinois
Indiana	Iowa
Maryland	Tennessee
Texas	Utah
Vermont	Washington



Overall Trends and Takeaways

- Executive sponsorship and leadership buy-in critical to success
- Communication at every stage
- Confidentiality vs. Anonymity
- Understand this is a long game
- Overall trend toward adopting surveys as a consistent practice



Washington State – A National Model

- ✓ Long-standing enterprise-wide survey
- ✓ Secure, modern platform
- ✓ Clear purpose
- ✓ Customizable, yet standardized
- ✓ Strong executive support
- ✓ Demonstrated positive outcomes



Expected Outcomes & Value

- Identify employment strengths and weaknesses
- Focus on key areas for attention
- Measure impacts of policy changes
- Enable data-driven conversations with leaders
- ROI: Engaged employees stay and are more productive
- ROI: Lower turnover saves personnel costs



Risks & Mitigations

Risk	Mitigation Strategy
Unintended Impact on Morale	Transparent communication and careful messaging around results
Failure to Act on Results	Provide resources around interpreting and acting on results; create action plans
Managing Expectations	Frame the initiative as a long-term strategic plan with phased improvements
Anonymity Concerns	Use third-party vendors and other mechanisms to guarantee anonymity
Survey Fatigue	Limit frequency and keep the survey concise and purposeful



Key Insight: The survey is a powerful asset but a double-edged sword — if not handled properly, it can inadvertently affect employee morale. Failing to act on findings erodes trust. Employees may expect immediate change.

Recommended Next Steps

1

Secure Administrative Support

Obtain authorization to proceed with survey implementation

2

Plan for Initial Survey Rollout

Select method and format for delivery of survey

3

Statewide Launch

Full deployment to all executive branch agencies (~65,000)

4

Deliver Results & Action Planning

Analysis, reporting, and data-driven action plans delivered to leadership

5

Appropriation for Continuous Biennial Surveys

Include funding for continuous surveys in baseline budget

The Ask

Implementation of engagement survey to Virginia employees