

Results from the

EMPLOYEE

SATISFACTION

SURVEY FORUMS

July 2002

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Planning and Research

Results from the
Employee Satisfaction Survey Forums

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INTRODUCTION

The Executive Team of the Adult Probation Department held a series of Employee Satisfaction Survey Forums between April 24, 2002 and June 26, 2002. The forum purpose was to present the most significant results of the Employee Satisfaction Survey conducted in the Fall of 2001 and to seek employees' ideas regarding how to make improvements in the areas of employee dissatisfaction. Ten forums were held, with two forums at each of the following five locations across the Valley: the Probation Service Center, the Wells Fargo building, the Southport facility, the Superior Court Building in Phoenix, and the Western Regional Center. The Chief Probation Officer participated in every forum and all three Deputy Chiefs attended most of the forums. There were at least two Division Directors at each forum.

Each two and a half-hour forum started with a presentation by members of the Executive Team lasting approximately 35 minutes. The presentation included opening remarks, the forum purpose and agenda, a description of the survey process, a comparison of Department results to County results, and the Department's positive and negative results. PowerPoint slides were used in making the presentation. Next, employees met in facilitator-led breakout groups for approximately one hour during which they discussed priorities and brainstormed ways to make improvements at Adult Probation. The larger group reconvened and each breakout group reported their group's priority rankings and ideas. The Chief Probation Officer made closing remarks for the forum, and then spoke with employees and answered questions regarding current topics of concern for an additional half-hour.

A total of 225 employees chose to participate in the Employee Satisfaction Survey forums, which is 20 percent of the Department's 1,100 employees.

This report contains a compilation of employees' input from the forums. The priority rankings from a total of 24 breakout groups were combined to determine the priorities expressed by employees from across the Department. Employees' suggestions were sorted and categorized within each of the seven problem areas. Every idea recorded at the forums is included in this report. A summary of the report's contents as well as concluding remarks are offered at the end in the Conclusion.

PRIORITY RANKINGS OF THE SEVEN PROBLEM AREAS

During the forums, employees met in breakout groups to discuss seven areas of employee dissatisfaction. Employees were asked to rank the seven problem areas according to 1) their *Importance* to them as individuals and 2) the *Ability to Impact* these issues individually and collectively given the current budget situation. Employees' rankings were summed within the breakout group to produce rankings for the group. Each group also produced a third *Combined* ranking by adding their *Importance* and *Ability to Impact* scores for each problem area. The *Combined* rankings suggested priority areas for the improvement efforts.

There were a total of 24 breakout groups. The rankings from all 24 groups were combined to determine the following priority rankings expressed by employees across the Department:

Importance

1. Pay
2. Respect/Recognition/Morale
3. Management Practices
4. Safety
5. Personnel Issues
6. Workload
7. Lack of Space

Ability to Impact

1. Respect/Recognition/Morale
2. Safety
3. Management Practices
4. Personnel Issues
5. Workload
6. Lack of Space
7. Pay

Combined (Importance + Ability to Impact)

1. Respect/Recognition/Morale
2. Management Practices
3. Safety
4. Pay
5. Personnel Issues
6. Workload
7. Lack of Space

IDEAS FOR ADDRESSING PROBLEM AREAS

METHODS:

Within the breakout groups at the Employee Satisfaction Survey forums, employees were asked how problem areas could be addressed. As the time allotted for the breakout groups did not allow for discussion of all seven problem areas, facilitators suggested that the topic areas for the group's discussion begin with top ranked problem areas from the Combined ranking. However, the groups were invited to address any of the seven problem areas they wished to discuss. Employees were asked how improvements could be made in the problem areas they chose to discuss. They were encouraged to think of ideas at multiple levels within the organization (individual, unit, building, etc.) Members of the breakout groups then brainstormed ideas for improvements. These ideas were recorded on flip charts. The merits of various ideas were not evaluated. In some cases, an employee's idea was their opinion alone; in other cases, all group members supported an individual's idea. The popularity of an idea within the group was not measured or recorded.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT:

Employees' ideas have been sorted, categorized, and listed within the seven problem areas identified prior to the forums. Every idea recorded at the forum is listed here under the problem area the group was discussing when the idea was offered. Due to the interrelationship between issues, ideas for addressing one problem area may actually be listed under another problem area (that is, an idea for addressing Workload may be listed under Safety). The categorization of ideas within these lists is intended to help identify these crossover ideas.

The report contains a separate section for each of the seven problem areas. **The seven problem areas are presented in the order of their Combined priority ranking (when both Importance and Ability to Impact were considered).** Within each section, ideas that individuals (at all levels) can use now are listed first in shaded text boxes. Ideas that supervisors can use now are listed next in plain text boxes. The remaining ideas, which may require further action by the Chief, are listed last. Summaries of the ideas offered for each problem area are included in the Conclusion section of the report.

Combined Ranking	
→	1-
	2-
	3-
	4-
	5-
	6-
	7-

RESPECT/RECOGNITION/ MORALE

This problem area was ranked number one in the Combined ranking, number two in the Importance ranking, and number one under Ability to Impact. Twenty of the 24 breakout groups discussed this issue.

Ideas that individuals can use now

BE POSITIVE

- *Take responsibility for your own morale. . My good morale rubs off on others. (2)
- *Positive attitude – all employees. Come in with a positive attitude and it will have a positive effect on others. (4)
- Highlight the positive; provide positive reinforcement and don't just emphasize the negative.
- Stop contributing to negative “gripe” sessions.
- Voice your displeasure at others negativity.
- Come up with solutions rather than complaining.
- * SMILE, ripple effect (2)
- *Be friendly. Smile – take note when someone tells you to “cheer up.”

PRAISE AND RECOGNIZE ONE ANOTHER

- Comments from peers (i.e., better showing at VOE ceremony, etc.)
- Visions of Excellence (better attendance)
- * Take time to thank people.
- Thanking people in front of others (in unit and division meetings)
- *Pat on the back, let peers AND supervisors know about a job well done.
- Act like you're interested in what people are doing – pass on recognition.
- * Kudos for a job well done-verbal, e-mail, written
- *Praise and recognition, for and among each other/among peers (3)
- Encourage more peer-to-peer recognition.
- Provide positive feedback; give validation to each other.
- Need to hear "You did a good job."
- Utilize VOE committee/nominate co-workers.
- Letters of Acknowledgement (up and down)

Ideas that individuals can use now, continued

BE RESPECTFUL

- Act professionally – earn respect.
- Carry yourself with self-respect.
- Model respect. (2)
- Officers should foster open communication from probationers and work on a collaborative treatment effort, thereby demonstrating respect from all areas and enhancing it in the workplace.
- Build relationships and listen to each other. Everyone agreed that listening is a major area of importance. Morale could be lifted if individuals gave each other the common courtesy of listening.
- Be respectful when disagreeing or pointing out mistakes.
- Have open communication and honesty for all parties.
- All MCAPD employees should accept more personal responsibility for their actions, owning up.
- Apology when appropriate
- Be aware of non-verbal communication, body language, tone, etc.
- Check yourself before opening your mouth.
- Know your audience before telling a joke.
- Obtain more concrete information --do not spread rumors. (2)
- Dispel preconceptions and biases.

STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS: BE CARING AND HAVE FUN

- Get involved with local/building morale committee. (2)
- Have more potlucks and Bar-B-Q's.
- * Food enhances any activity.
- *Watch out for one's self and each other.
- Assist other officers (especially new officers).
- Offer to be a mentor.

ATTEND TO PERSONAL NEEDS

- *Take better care of one's self.
- Mental Health day
- Stress management
- Look at what you want. Is it what you are giving? (Help, support, recognition)

Ideas that individuals can use now, continued

ATTEND TO PERSONAL NEEDS, continued

- Take steps to improve your own opportunities for career enhancements. (If you don't like your job, look for ways to improve it. Talk to your supervisor, or look for a different position or employer).
- Do not make your job the most important thing in your life.

OTHER

- Put up some kind of reminder to keep these suggestions in front of people.
- Strike
- Stronger union

* Employees expressed a commitment to act on this idea.

Ideas that supervisors can use now

PRAISE AND RECOGNIZE STAFF

- Unit Level/Supervisor recognition of staff
- Praise your staff publicly.
- Supervisors should focus more on individual recognition of daily jobs well done (little things).
- Utilize VOE more, write more "At a boy" letters.
- Employee recognition -- free events
- Individual Supervisor Awards (smiley face awards, spot awards, etc.)
- More formal and immediate acknowledgment (evaluations, etc.)
- Utilizing evaluations for positive reinforcement.
- Clarify expectations regarding employees and recognize positive efforts from people even if the end result is negative.
- More supervisor involvement: interviews, field

BE RESPECTFUL

- Reprimand in private, praise in public.
- Pay attention to private issues/privacy re: sup to officer.
- Have respect for quality and not just numbers.
- Treat staff with the same respect given to probationers.

Ideas that supervisors can use now, continued

STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS: BE CARING AND HAVE FUN

- *Joint meetings between support staff and field personnel (quarterly).
- Team building (3) -with a purpose; -individual units; -off site activities, unit meetings, lunch meetings
- Fun activities while learning Code of Conduct
- Give good and bad news with the bad in between.
- Supervisors should show a more caring attitude.
- Supervisor converse with staff on issues outside of work/getting to know them as individuals-not just officers.
- Provide help/support to employees going through problems.

IMPROVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND LINE STAFF

- Supervisors should allow employees to express their feelings or concerns, then take action with follow up.
- Supervisors should share employees' opinions and concerns with upper management.
- More open dialogue with supervisor

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES EFFECTING RESPECT/RECOGNITION/MORALE

- Management should address unethical practices. Not addressing them hurts morale.
- Follow policy.
- Consistent treatment from supervisors
- Trust from supervisors
- Acceptance

* Employees expressed a commitment to act on this idea.

Ideas that may require further action by the Chief

VISIONS OF EXCELLENCE/AWARD PROGRAMS

- Visions of Excellence: Feedback -- Revision -- No limit
- Re-explore VOE and its parameters for receiving this award due to redundancy.
- Rethink voting process and how VOE awards are given.
- Utilize VOE program more, re-organize VOE program, increase staff participation and disseminate info more.
- VOE recognition given more timely.
- Don't hear about the recognition that is given (e.g., what the person did to receive the VOE award and who they are)
- Feel good/on-the-spot awards (2) -that supervisors can give staff (such as meal coupons or movie tickets)
- Bonus dollars

RESPECT/RECOGNITION/MORALE, continued

Ideas that may require further action by the Chief, continued

APPRECIATION AND RECOGNITION

- Better Pay
- Other avenues of recognition need to be available when pay is not. This would help motivate people.
- More communication on recognition
- More positive recognition in Chronicle
- More “feel goods” from exec. Team to line staff
- Small signs of appreciation by management
- Encourage more recognition: supervisors and management to line staff.
- Open appreciation for staff
- Training at appropriate intervals

IMPROVED COMMUNICATION BETWEEN MANAGEMENT & LINE STAFF

- Open communication is a key issue.
- Bring back the “Ask Anything” question system, with an emphasis on confidentiality when addressing topics. (2)
- Respectful & constructive feedback from upper management (re: feedback on ideas from staff)
- When sharing information, provide specific, detailed explanations.
- Provide an explanation of policy; get feedback from field officers.
- There should be more contact between upper management and line staff, not just the occasional forums. The contact should not be managed contact. Examples include attending CPP graduations and unit meetings.
- The Executive Team should be more involved in ride alongs and community service.
- More Division Director involvement
- More regular contact with exec. team
- Hold open employee forums for line staff on an ongoing basis (perhaps at the Division level).
- Provide sensitivity training for EVERYBODY.

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES EFFECTING RESPECT/RECOGNITION/MORALE

- Management practices have a direct impact on this problem.
- Hold supervisors and field officers accountable.
- Deal with competency of line staff.
- All rankings on evaluations need to be attainable. This group expressed that the “Exceeds Performance” rating is no longer attainable; realistic expectations should be set.
- Practices need to support the probation officer.
- Statistics need to be a tool for the people in the field.

RESPECT/RECOGNITION/MORALE, continued

Ideas that may require further action by the Chief, continued

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES EFFECTING RESPECT/RECOGNITION/MORALE

Continued

- If upper management could clarify, or have consistent operations, morale would be raised. The group talked about units, buildings, or even officers within the same unit, going about the day to day aspects of their jobs differently. (One example provided was that when a case is transferred, does an officer have to complete a CMS? Some officers said yes, some said no).
- Provide clear direction for the department. For example, provide consistency of forms such as stats and APETS.
- Involve employees in decision making/problem solving. The Executive Team should seek input from the people closest to the problem before making decisions.
- Another morale booster would be if upper management could be aware of consequences/time impact of management directives on line staff.
- Don't create blanket policies to address individual problems. (ex. Work agreements, time sheets, and pager availability).
- Instead of mandated, community service should be voluntary. If mandated, should include upper management.
- More emphasis on qualitative aspects of work.
- More emphasis should be placed on how to help probationers and the community, (true case management), not on statistics and data entry.
- Refocus attention on relationship with client.
- Fieldwork (as APO's) versus data entry (as operators).
- Keep the job simple (KISS). This means, "all we can do is the best job we can, bring it down to the common denominator."
- Plan for impact on workload when on-call staff go (impact on morale).
- Is this all a workload issue? This means that management should be more attuned to what is going on in the field. Give them caseloads.
- More management leadership/interpersonal
- Fair treatment by management
- When advancement/transfer opportunities arise, notify all applicants of their status in a timely manner (throughout the process – interview results, etc).
- Too much micro-management of off-duty time.

One breakout group that discussed Respect/Recognition/Morale chose to list the problems that they wanted to discuss. This process helped them clarify the issues before they brainstormed methods for improvement. This list of problems can be found in Appendix A.

Combined Ranking	
	1-
⇒	2-
	3-
	4-
	5-
	6-
	7-

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

This problem area was ranked number two in the Combined ranking, number three in the Importance ranking, and number three under Ability to Impact. Thirteen breakout groups discussed this issue.

Ideas that individuals can use now

- “Niceness” is a business asset.
- * Provide feedback on issues (2) -don’t complain if you don’t offer feedback when asked.
- *Participate in all surveys – give input at every opportunity.
- *Staff must read e-mail, supervisors can call attention to particularly important ones.
- * Employees expressed a commitment to act on this idea.

Ideas that supervisors can use now

- Treat employees with respect and watch what is said in open or closed conversation (speaking badly about the unit or someone in the unit).
- Recognize day to day efforts and accomplishments.
- Accountability in regards to timeliness on employee performance evaluations
- Regular unit meetings with minutes distributed to relevant people
- *Invite management to unit meetings.
- When an issue is brought to a supervisor, it needs to be addressed and the person who brought the issue forward should receive a response.
- Supervisors need to be objective.
- Supervisors should balance time available to staff versus other activities- priority should be their unit.
- Supervisor should allow for flexibility and creativity with the way the job is done as long as it is within policy guidelines.
- Don’t dump mismanaged cases on good officers -- address problems with the original officer.
- * Employees expressed a commitment to act on this idea.

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES, continued

Ideas that may require further action by the Chief

ACCOUNTABILITY

- *Accountability- management and line staff
- Give employees the opportunity to evaluate supervisors and use that feedback in the supervisor's evaluation.
- Supervision and management tracked at all levels.

COMMUNICATION

- Value all feedback (3). -Management shouldn't criticize the feedback; "tell us what you want to hear;" -listen to and value staff input.
- Should have a safe environment for employee feedback.
- Communication- including **up** department wide
- Maintain open flow of communication both up and down the chain of command.
- Find better lines of communication.
- Ease up on rigidity in chain – want to see more open doors (up and down the chain).
- Tone of message -- should be, "Let's fix it", NOT "we are going to catch you."
- *Website for frequently asked questions
- Communication/visibility @ all levels modeling Chief Barbara Broderick
- Opportunity to give feedback on promotions.
- Send out minutes from Executive Team meetings department wide.
- Management can make expectations more clear to employees and follow up (goals & objectives).
- Define/explain/inform staff about AOC requirements.
- Require upper management to be more interactive with line staff.
- More face time with Deputy Chiefs will increase trust.
- Management more involved in day to day with line staff and community
- Executive team should have requirements for getting out, for example: Participating in ride alongs, sitting in on a Presentence interview, listening to employees in the front lines.
- Division Directors should participate in a "day with the employee" situation so they can be aware of what exactly is done in the field (support staff as well), or reverse it as a "reward" for a job well done
- Have a "be a supervisor for a day" program or "try my job for a day."
- Use discretion in Email, all communication.
- DIRE need for e-mail building distribution list(s)
- Put Chief's and Deputy Chiefs' pictures up in every building.
- Exec. team pictures at each office

Note: One group noted that they were pleased about the availability and openness that continues in the department.

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES, continued

Ideas that may require further action by the Chief, continued

CONSISTENCY

- Consistency in everything (2) -i.e. policy, reports, building to building; -across the board
- Management practices should be consistent. (4) -disciplinary actions, accepting or declining file transfers, etc.
- Procedural consistency
- Consistency in application of policy
- Consistency in personnel issues

DECISION-MAKING/PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT

- More participatory management
- When input is requested, it should be seriously considered and valued.
- More receptive atmosphere in regard to input
- Faster decision making from management especially concerning employee suggestions, at least some sort of follow-up
- Give feedback as to why the suggestion was not implemented if such is the case; explain to reduce feeling of frustration of “not being heard.”
- Management should have better insight in day to day actions.
- Determine impact before making change.
- Spend more time studying impact of proposed changes. (Listen to the people who will be affected by the proposed change).
- Consider input and suggestions from line staff when or before changes are made. (2)
- Inform supervisors that staff wants to receive rough drafts of policies for input.
- Participate more in management (communicate with line staff and supervisor--follow policy); “policy v. practice.”
- Develop a vertical staffing committee from the top on down (group of 20 to meet monthly).
- More line staff involvement in executive meetings and division meetings
- There should be less micro-management. Display trust in employees.
- Stop micro-management.
- Avoid the “good ol’ boy” politics/favoritism.
- Separate personal/professional relationships
- Approach what APD does in a more businesslike manner. Turn the business side of APD over to business professionals.
- Supervisor forums to discuss management practices

OTHER

- Try to avoid becoming a bureaucratic agency.
- Treat employees fairly – with dignity and respect.
- Don’t treat line staff as though they are expendable.
- Management should provide staff with the same level of respect that staff provides to clients.

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES, continued

Ideas that may require further action by the Chief, continued

OTHER, continued

- Don't let perfection be the enemy of the good.
- Supervisor sharing of strengths
- Establish a peer grievance panel. (Like compliance facilitation within the department.)
- Be fairer in the process of recognition.
- Managers letting their own staff get in the way of being impartial/fair. (all levels)

PERSONNEL ISSUES

- More timeliness in disciplinary matters
- *Add peer/subordinate review to managers' evaluations.
- Objective criteria for evaluations (we are headed in that direction)
- Upper management needs to provide training to supervisors:
 - HR issues
 - Empathy/understanding
 - Handling complaints
 - Confidentiality
 - Sexual harassment

WORKLOAD

- Get in touch with the work that probation officers do.
- Slow down change.
- Identify priorities.
- Adjust expectations and time frames to be realistic.
- Be realistic about what can be done in forty hours, or take away some responsibilities/expectations.
- Upper management does not understand how management practices affect workload.
- Provide better macros.
- Get rid of 180's.
- Get us the FROST now!
- Reduce duplication of efforts.

Combined Ranking	
	1-
	2-
⇒	3-
	4-
	5-
	6-
	7-

SAFETY

This problem was ranked number three in the Combined ranking, number four in the Importance ranking, and number two under Ability to Impact. Eleven breakout groups discussed this issue.

Ideas that individuals can use now

FOLLOW SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Follow safety policies and procedures.
- * Wear ID. (4)
- No tailgaters re: use of ID to enter building or office
- Be more conscious to lock doors. (Rug still holding door.)
- Inform management of questionable field incidents.
- Use radios (report any “dead” time or no response issues from dispatch).

BE MORE AWARE

- * Be more aware. (3) - of surroundings
- More safety awareness specifically regarding clients in building. (2) -i.e. escorting, leaving alone in office
- Obtain more info of areas (gang activity, apartment complexes, and hot spots...) from police, community action groups, possibly hold unit meetings at local police stations, and attend gang task force meetings.
- Utilize info from local community resources.

HAVE BACK-UP

- Build strong rapport with local police departments.
- Need to create a system for pairing up with other officers for fieldwork. (3) -It’s difficult to find someone to go on field visits with, in order to avoid going unescorted in dangerous areas.

* Employees expressed a commitment to act on this idea.

Ideas that supervisors can use now

- Better control of buildings (i.e. Keys)
- Established building coverage
- Look at employees' safety- alone at night in the building with clients.
- Have more staff in the buildings at a time.
- Training. We have and develop policies and procedures, but we may not know them. Need to have training on these procedures. Training needs to be ongoing; it should be provided more than once.

Ideas that may require further action by the Chief

OFFICE

- Build or rent space.
- Increase number of virtual officers.
- Access to a visible fire extinguisher
- Safety glass for reception
- Install office panic buttons. (2) –(lobby)
- Building alarm systems with card access
- Install metal detectors (6).
- Weapons screening in building
- Secure room (holding cell)
- Report with local law enforcement, fire department, etc.
- Building codes—all floors
- Concrete building evacuation plan visible for each building, including practice drills
- Emergency contingency plans/drills
- Addressing building issues via survey
- Safety czars should become more active.
- More off hours security (i.e. Entry of persons, sign in sheet for after hours staff entry, secure card)
- Increased security (2) -number of guards and number of hours security is working
- Security at each building
- Security personnel in parking lots (possibly in lieu of metal detectors)
- Parking lot safety: lights and security guard
- Modify buildings to be safer, better lighting at the East Probation Service Center.
- Outdoor lighting
- Parking lot cameras
- Office space /satellite offices—not always safe

*Ideas that may require
further action by the Chief, continued*

OFFICE, continued

- Place client lockers in the lobby.
- Monitor TV programs in waiting areas.
- Officers who share office space should be respectful of each other and de-escalate hostile situations.
- Monitor Community Service workers and/or replace with professional maintenance staff.
- Eliminate **AND/OR** closely monitor community service workers in offices.

TRAINING

- Training
- More training, better training, specific training
- More safety classes (office/field)
- Defensive driving
- Train officers to de-escalate.
- Defensive tactics training
- Self-defense training for all staff
- Office training re: arrests
- Being a part of officer safety training

FIELD

- Well-trained armed staff
- Weapons
- POs carrying guns is a “concern.”
- Lack of working cars
- Vest availability
- Give every officer a radio or modify the policy.
- Field security (one radio per officer)
- Better working radios
- Improve quality of radios and dispatchers.
- Dependable cell phones
- Electronic surveillance (Pass the cost to the probationer.)
- Identify clients and do not place clients who are dangerous on probation. Better screening of clients. PSI, PV writers should play more active roles in the court process.
- Interagency safety committee to review high risk/violent potential of probationers
- As field expectations increase, the ability to be safe in the field decreases.
- Specialization of duties in standard (i.e. SO does field work, PO does paper work and reports)
- More Teams (2) -i.e. One does all field work, one does all reports and paper work
- SO’s assigned to units to assist with field work in standard not just IPS

*Ideas that may require
further action by the Chief, continued*

FIELD, continued

- Workload and safety are related to area assigned to caseload
- Limit time in field (curfew)
- Eliminate late-night field contacts (curfew)

OTHER

- Actions are being taken- would like to know more about what is being done.
- Consideration of safety in policy making
- Continue to develop safety policies and procedures.
- Develop an internal crisis management team.

WORKLOAD

- As the workload and “plate” is becoming fuller, nothing is taken off the “plate” –officers too overloaded.
- Once an officer works their numbers down, they are slammed with more cases -- no incentive to want to work numbers.
- Re-vamp transfer policy. Seems like currently it is tied to PO success, not client success.

PAY

Combined Ranking
1-
2-
3-
→ 4-
5-
6-
7-

This problem area was ranked number four in the Combined ranking, number one in the Importance ranking, and number seven under Ability to Impact. Four breakout groups discussed this issue.

Ideas that individuals can use now

- Individuals offer political support to Chief's position. (Contact legislators on your own time). (2)
- Watch waste – paper, office supplies, etc.
- Earlier enforcement of monetary orders, right from adjudication
- Utilizing available resources, i.e., AZPOA to make greater impact
- Join union/stronger union (2)

Ideas that supervisors can use now

- Stress teamwork between P.O. and collector. A more stable client does better on paying their money.

Ideas that may require further action by the Chief

INFLUENCE POLICY MAKERS

- Have a joint labor/union committee work together to address the legislature with common goal.
- More support from bench.
- Educate the public.
- Define lobby-funding sources.

REVENUE PRODUCTION OR ENHANCEMENT

- Charge a fee for presentence reports.
- Take collections away from probation officers and give to privatized collections.
- Compare our collection methods with other departments/agencies.
- Less emphasis on P.O. collecting monies. Let them do other duties, i.e. CPP, Budget classes.

*Ideas that may require
further action by the Chief, continued*

ALTERNATIVE RESOURCE ALLOCATION

- Use PSF funds first towards pay increases (at least fair market value) over other issues.
- Create a bonus program based on “achieve and quota.”
- Get rid of cell phones. Turn in staff who do not get rid of desk phones when they get a cell phone.
- Reconsider the way equipment is issued, i.e. check out instead of individual.
- Re-analyze budget with respect to cost comparison of things we purchase.
- Re-evaluate and possibly re-assign staff to use funds more efficiently.
- Eliminate IPS.
- Restructure hierarchy.

INTERNAL EDUCATION

- Educate staff as to how funding, budget allocation works within APD and Maricopa County, respectively.
- Educate staff on how funds are used.

Combined Ranking	
	1-
	2-
	3-
	4-
→	5-
	6-
	7-

PERSONNEL ISSUES

This problem area was ranked number five in the Combined ranking, number five in the Importance ranking, and number four under Ability to Impact. Nine breakout groups discussed this issue.

Ideas that individuals can use now

EVALUATIONS

- *Sitting down with supervisor to clarify expectations
- Have a training plan worked out with the supervisor and follow up in the evaluation.
- *Take more active role in own evaluation (maybe employee should schedule on their calendar to meet with their supervisor to review progress).

OTHER

- Help your peers.
 - Team work
- * Employees expressed a commitment to act on this idea.

Ideas that supervisors can use now

EVALUATIONS

- More feedback prior to evaluation process
- Ongoing feedback on expectations and performance so evaluations are not a surprise
- Clarify requirements of evaluation classifications (Meets, exceeds, etc., and make it more objective).
- Supervisors must be more gutsy in pointing out performance issues.
- More employee input in the evaluation process.
- More interactive evaluation process
- Timely evaluations

Ideas that supervisors can use now, continued

DISCIPLINE

- Intolerance of unethical behavior
- Progressive discipline
- Sanctions when staff are not doing their job

OTHER

- Dealing with individuals with dignity/respect
- Confidentiality
- Incident specific ethics training
- Deal with the individual employee based on their issues.
- Supervisors following policy
- Lack of management skills
- Unfavorable working conditions within unit
- Focus more on unit level than management meetings.
- Stop the rumor mill, more communication.

Ideas that may require further action by the Chief

TRAINING

- Training (skills based)
- Better / More training on disciplinary issues as a supervisor would provide more consistency.

HIRING

- Complete background checks on persons prior to hiring
- Drug testing at hiring
- Hiring practices for retention of staff with more involvement from supervisors

POLICIES

- Known policies
- Consistent follow through on policies (inappropriate relationships with clients)
- Review the Transfer Policy. A point system based on seniority, interview, education/experience, prior casework and evaluations would be best.

*Ideas that may require
further action by the Chief, continued*

DISCIPLINE

- Consistency with personnel issues/disciplinary
- Policy written for minor issues; built in discipline policy
- Less blanket policy; more individual specific disciplinary action
- Arbitration/mediation board
- Investigative team
- More clear consequences for violations of Policy & Procedures

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

- Provide objective criteria for performance evaluation.
- Provide consistency in evaluations across the department. Why have “Exceeds Performance” ratings if it is unattainable?
- Set clear expectations – and follow up on those expectations.
- Consistency in performance evaluations
- More consistency with evaluation process
- Input from co-workers on annual evaluations

SUPERVISOR PERFORMANCE

- Deal with supervisors’ accountability.
- Turnover rate re: supervisors, directors

PROMOTIONS

- Promotion via merit/qualifications
- Do away with Master's requirement.
- Select supervisors who have a good foundation instead of just the time experience and/or certain skills only (as long as he/she knows where to get the information, that’s enough).

OTHER

- Pay
- Career Path/Ladder for non-traditional support (\$\$ as well as options)
- Consistency in personnel practices
- Consistency!
- Support for all staff
- More/better communication to staff from personnel manager
- Chief continues open communication with staff.
- Improved safety
- Less specialization

WORKLOAD

Combined Ranking
1-
2-
3-
4-
5-
→ 6-
7-

This problem area was ranked number six in the Combined ranking, number six in the Importance ranking, and number five under Ability to Impact. Four breakout groups discussed this issue.

Ideas that individuals can use now

- Utilizing RSC, Deadbeat and ET's
- Consider less than 3 years probation as the sentence.
- Better communications – all

Ideas that supervisors can use now

- Use e-mail instead of paper.
- Prioritization of tasks
- Share knowledge.
- Continually allow open dialogue.

Ideas that may require further action by the Chief

STUDY JOB REQUIREMENTS

- Review of policy and procedures
- Standing workload committee in Planning and Research
- Perform job task analysis and training with live personnel.

REDUCE DUPLICATION AND IMPROVE EFFICIENCY

- Redundancy of activity
- Reduce and/or eliminate duplication.

*Ideas that may require
further action by the Chief, continued*

REDUCE DUPLICATION AND IMPROVE EFFICIENCY, continued

- Reduce duplication in e-mail.
- Reduce paperwork (60% of time is spent doing paperwork).
- Screenings by computer- more efficient than by forms (better technology use)
- Streamline and simplify.
- Increase efficiency.
- Consistent work flow
- Reports: No reports on mandatory Department of Corrections / Increase number of quickies
- Group R&A's

BETTER DISTRIBUTION OF CASES

- More equal distribution of cases (transients, high need cases)
- Proposition 200 should have its own caseload.
- Expand Banked Caseloads
- Increase ET's and Civil Judgments.

MORE OFFICERS AND BETTER ALLOCATION OF OFFICERS

- Hire more officers to reduce caseloads.
- Retain more officers to reduce caseloads. (Pay officers better in order to retain them).
- Flexible resource and personnel allocation
- Reallocate officer resources when needed.
- Teamwork – Utilize individual strength.

SUPPORT STAFF

- Clerical support for counselors
- Better utilization of support staff: officers can do their own corrections -- have support staff do other things (print out RFR's, etc).

OTHER

- Help solve problems in the field. (Look at problems that result from a management decision. Need better communication – a feedback loop).
- Use U/A test kits and breathalyzers in office.

Combined Ranking	
	1-
	2-
	3-
	4-
	5-
	6-
⇒	7-

LACK OF SPACE

This problem area was ranked number seven in the Combined ranking, number seven in the Importance ranking, and number six under Ability to Impact. This problem area was not discussed by any of the breakout groups.

EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION SURVEY FORUM EVALUATION

Participants at each of the ten forums were asked to complete a one-page evaluation of the forum. Evaluations were received from 133 of the 225 participants for a response rate of 59 percent.

Employees from many different job classifications participated in the forums. Fifty-five percent of the respondents were line staff probation officers. Fourteen percent of respondents identified themselves as supervisors, and over half of the supervisors indicated that they were probation officer supervisors. The remaining respondents were from a variety of job classifications, which included but are not limited to, surveillance officers, administrative coordinators, caseload administrators, court information processors, collectors, counselors, and program coordinators. Respondents had been employees of Adult Probation for varying lengths of time, from less than one year up to 30 years, with an average time in the Department of eight years.

The majority of respondents (74%) indicated that the forum provided them with a better understanding of employee satisfaction at Adult Probation.

Strongly agree	23%	Strongly disagree	4%
Agree	51%	Disagree	6%
Neutral	16%		

Most respondents (82%) indicated that they were given the opportunity to contribute their ideas for addressing problem areas.

Strongly agree	41%	Strongly disagree	7%
Agree	41%	Disagree	4%
Neutral	8%		

Eighty percent of respondents felt that the time allowed for the presentation was adequate, and 61 percent felt that the time allowed for the breakout group was adequate. Thirty-seven percent of respondents would have liked more time in the breakout groups.

<u>Time Allowed</u>	<u>Presentation</u>	<u>Breakout Groups</u>
Adequate	80%	61%
Too Short	16%	37%
Too Long	5%	2%

Participants were asked if this type of forum will help to improve employee satisfaction. Fifty-eight percent of respondents agreed that they would, while 17 percent disagreed and 25 percent were unsure.

Strongly agree	13%	Strongly disagree	3%
Agree	45%	Disagree	14%
Neutral	25%		

How to improve the forum

Participants were asked for suggestions on how to improve the Employee Satisfaction Survey forum. The suggestions received are categorized below and samples are listed.

Follow-up: More suggestions focused on follow-up from the forums than any other topic. Staff want to be informed of the results from the forums, and they want to know that the results are used and how they are used. They recognize that there is more work to be done. The following is a representative sample of suggestions on this topic:

- At the end of the process, review the overall results with all of the participants as a whole. Possibly establish some committees (volunteer) to develop solutions for those issues that the Department does have the ability to address within.
- Explain how results of these forums will be used.
- Hopeful changes/improvements will take effect based on input given. Feedback would also be nice.
- Please show the direct effect, i.e. policy that resulted from the survey.
- PO rep from each unit on a committee and address issues. Policy and procedure review from practical and reasonable perspective -- many policies and issues that require more serious attention.
- Talk is great, but we need to see results. If management shows they are taking employee concerns seriously morale would be increased significantly.

Amount of time and use of time: There were nine suggestions indicating that more time was needed or that time could have been better spent. Most of the suggestions involved wanting more time in the breakout groups. There were two suggestions that the PowerPoint presentation could have been skipped or shortened and more time spent on management's perspective of the results and possible solutions, or on more question and answer time with the Chief. A sampling of the suggestions follows:

- Allow more time for breakout sessions.
- We wanted more time to work in the groups.
- An all day discussion of the topics is needed.
- Eliminate reading of survey results. We received them and can read them for ourselves. Spend time saved on management's perspective of results and possible solutions.

Management accountability and participation: Six individuals suggested that they would like management to take greater responsibility for solving the problems and they would like to hear upper management's ideas. Three of these suggestions follow.

- Provide more Executive Team ideas – what are they willing to do for line staff, to improve employee satisfaction?
- Forum was about what staff could do to improve our problem, but we want to know what management is going to do for staff.
- A pledge by management to enact changes.

Breakout group structure: Seven individuals were critical of the methods used in the breakout groups. Four of the participants felt that the process stirred them away from discussing financial issues. Two individuals stated that ideas were judged and true brainstorming was not

allowed. One suggestion was to ask more specific questions and allow for more specific answers. A sample of the suggestions follows:

- Combined score importance – does not accurately show importance because of division. Can not control a lot, but still a priority (exp.: pay).
- I think some of the results may be skewed because we had to rank “given the current budget situation.” Another forum when finances are better may show different concerns.
- Let employees express their own opinions, not just the ones they are allowed to discuss.

Satisfaction: Seven individuals wrote that they were satisfied with the forum overall or particular aspects of it. A few of these comments follow:

- Appreciated the Chief’s input and opportunity to be heard.
- Good job on this one. Good format and time constraints. Helped keep people focused.
- I felt the forum was well organized and dealt with our concerns.

Confidentiality: Three individuals were concerned about confidentiality and felt that staff were unable to express ideas freely due to supervisors or other unit members being in their groups. A couple of the suggestions follow:

- May be tough to do, but breakout group should not be individuals from the same unit (Sup’s and PO’s); it restricts comments.
- Have a way to communicate ideas confidentially.

Other: A number of suggestions were offered by one or two individuals on a variety of topics, including but not limited to, wanting forums to be held at every office, wanting all members of upper management present to be introduced, wishing more staff were involved, and wishing groups were smaller.

Other Comments

The evaluation ended with an opportunity for participants to provide “other comments”. The comments received are categorized below and samples are listed:

Appreciation: Fourteen individuals expressed appreciation regarding the forums and efforts being made by the Chief and other managers. A sample of these comments follows:

- Thanks to all the managers for taking this time during a hectic period to attend and be responsive. It is much appreciated.
- I enjoyed the Executive Team involvement and responses.
- Glad we were able to interject, glad the Chief was here, glad someone is listening.
- I think the Chief is doing her best to help the situation in Adult Probation. She seems very sincere.
- I thought it was a good idea to expand on the survey. I really feel that I could speak my opinion and be heard. Thank you to the Chief for reaffirming our opinions and letting us know we are being heard.

Follow-through: Nine individuals wrote comments on the importance of follow-through, some of them expressing skepticism about whether it will occur. A few of these comments follow:

- The follow-through is the most important aspect. If recommendations are not implemented, these sessions can have a detrimental effect.
- This type of forum does not look to address issues for solutions. It is clear that a rehash of topics important to “us” will be the norm. When I see it in progress, I will believe it.
- Hopefully, staff will see follow-through of these forums, and there will be implementations with respect to outcomes of this forum/project.
- Continue the process.
- Keep open communication to line staff on progress, and continue using actual employee comments in presentation.

Overall dissatisfaction: Three individuals expressed overall dissatisfaction with the forum, indicating that they were unproductive and a waste of time. A couple of these comments follow:

- I believe this forum was a waste of time. All I could hear was “I can’t, I can’t, I can’t.” Therefore, it was a waste of time.
- This forum made management “visible” with no real productivity or outcome.

Other: One or two comments were offered on a variety of different topics, including but not limited to, keeping open lines of communication, changing the organizational structure of the Department, recognizing that a lot of people are working more than 40 hours but can’t talk about it, and that certain issues were taboo at the forums.

CONCLUSION

Pay, Respect/Recognition/Morale, Management Practices, and Safety were ranked as the most important problem areas and are clearly the areas where employees most want to see improvements. When the *Ability to Impact* these issues was factored in with their *Importance*, Pay dropped from #1 to #4 in the priority ranking. The other three problem areas remained at the top of the list and in the same order.

Importance

1. Pay
2. Respect/Recognition/Morale
3. Management Practices
4. Safety

Combined (Importance + Ability to Impact)

1. Respect/Recognition/Morale
2. Management Practices
3. Safety
4. Pay

It is commonly believed that improving employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness can best be accomplished if all employees share an interest and responsibility in these efforts. Employees were asked to consider their “Circles of Influence” and to suggest ideas for making improvements that could occur at multiple levels in the organization. The forums yielded a rich mixture of ideas: those that can be used immediately (sometimes with an effort so simple as to smile more), ideas requiring intensive study (such as workload duplication), suggestions requiring concerted effort (such as greater consistency in policy and practice), and ideas that apply to every level, line staff to Chief Probation Officer.

The seven problem areas discussed at the forums are interrelated and this is apparent in the comments and suggestions offered by employees. For example, a significant number of the ideas for improving Respect/Recognition/Morale involve making improvements in Management Practices. One could therefore deduct that improvements made in one area would improve employee satisfaction in additional areas. That is, improvements in Management Practices would have a positive impact on employee morale as well as on employee satisfaction with Management Practices. Conversely, the ability to improve Respect/Recognition/Morale may be limited if efforts are not made to improve Management Practices. Recurring themes across the problem areas are the two C’s, Communication and Consistency. Employees want improved communication and greater consistency.

The discussions of **Respect/Recognition/Morale** generated numerous ideas calling for open appreciation and recognition of staff, expressed regularly, through a variety of methods, and from every level in the organization. There were many suggestions regarding being positive, being respectful, and working to strengthen relationships. If we recall that there is a high level of employee satisfaction with co-workers and immediate supervisors, it may be recognized that these activities already exist and the ideas offered reaffirm the value of respect, recognition, caring and supportiveness in our working relationships. Employees want to continue and build upon the existing efforts, as well as see improvement in areas within the Department where Recognition/Respect/Morale may be lagging. Staff indicated that they like spot awards from supervisors and that the Visions of Excellence program should be improved and used more. Employees felt that morale could be improved through improved communication between management and line staff, and through improved management practices.

Many of the ideas offered for improving **Management Practices** were focused on improved communication – its tone, its flow up and down, the ability to give and receive feedback, and the desire to be better informed of management’s direction, priorities and the reasons for changes. Staff suggested reinstating “Ask Anything” or a similar method to submit questions to management confidentially and have the question and answer published Department wide. More contact with members of the Executive Team is desired, and more informal contact between upper management and line staff was specifically mentioned. Employees indicated that management decision-making could be improved through greater management insight into day to day operations and through increased input from staff prior to making changes. Staff want accountability at all levels and adding peer/subordinate review to managers’ evaluations was suggested. The need to have greater consistency was repeated many times in regards to policy, practices, personnel issues, and reports. Employees want managers to be fair, respectful, appreciative and responsive.

In discussing **Safety**, employees suggested numerous ways in which safety could be enhanced through greater knowledge and use of existing safety policies and procedures. It was noted that safety can be improved through awareness of surroundings, knowledge of one’s work area/community, establishing relationships with law enforcement, and doing field work with a partner. It was suggested that more be done in terms of arranging building coverage and not leaving an employee alone in a building with clients. Training (on various safety topics) was mentioned numerous times. Safety ideas specific to offices included equipment and facility improvements (such as panic buttons, accessible fire extinguishers, safety glass, metal detectors, alarm systems with card access, a holding cell, client lockers, outdoor lighting, and outdoor cameras). There was significant interest in increasing the number of security personnel and the number of hours they work. It was suggested that safety czars be more active; community service workers be monitored more closely or replaced by professional maintenance staff; the number of virtual officers be increased; and space be built or rented. Safety ideas specific to the field included more and better equipment for officers (e.g., radios, vests, cell phones, cars, and weapons) and the use of electronic surveillance. It was recommended that offenders be screened to eliminate the placement of violent offenders on probation; late night field contacts be eliminated; PO’s work in teams; and SO’s assist with fieldwork for standard probation. Employees would like to know more about the efforts underway to improve safety. They recommended that safety policies and procedures continue to be developed and that safety be considered in policy making.

In discussing **Pay**, employees suggested that individuals avoid waste, contact their legislators as private citizens, enforce monetary orders earlier, and join the union. Other ideas for improving pay included influencing policy makers (with a joint management/labor committee to address common goals, support from the bench, and education of the public); and increasing revenues (through increased and improved use of collectors, learning about collections methods used by other agencies, and charging a fee for presentence reports). A variety of ideas were offered for cutting costs and reallocating resources, such as using PSF funds towards pay increases before other uses, reconsidering the distribution of equipment – a check out system rather than equipment issued to individuals, reanalyzing the budget using a cost comparison of items

purchased, reassigning staff, and eliminating IPS. Internal education was recommended to inform staff about the Department's funding sources and how funds are used.

In discussing **Personnel Issues**, most of the ideas focused on performance evaluations and discipline. Regarding performance evaluations, ideas included having objective, obtainable criteria, having discussions and feedback between the supervisor and employee regarding expectations and performance prior to the evaluation, increasing employee input in the evaluation, and having evaluations completed in a timely manner. Achieving greater consistency in the evaluation process was mentioned a few times. It was stated that supervisors need to be bolder in pointing out performance issues, and it was suggested that co-workers provide input on annual evaluations. Regarding discipline, employees recommended intolerance of unethical behavior, progressive discipline, and sanctions when employees are not doing their job. Employees suggested consistency in disciplinary processes, clear written consequences for violations of policy and procedures, and (perhaps conversely) less blanket policy and more individual specific disciplinary action. Other ideas included an arbitration/mediation board and an investigative team. It was recommended that supervisors receive more training on disciplinary issues and management skills. Employees want supervisors to be held accountable, and suggested looking at the turnover rate regarding supervisors and directors.

Regarding hiring, employees suggested a complete background check be completed prior to hiring, drug testing be done at hiring, and that supervisors be more involved with hiring practices aimed at retention of staff. Ideas on the topic of promotions included promotion based on merit, qualifications and a good foundation. Current promotional criteria such as requiring a Masters degree, or a certain amount of time/experience, and/or certain skills were questioned. Staff suggested that if the individual knows where to get the information, that's good enough. A variety of other ideas regarding Personnel Issues were offered including a career path/ladder for non-traditional support, incident specific ethics training, respecting confidentiality, treating individuals with dignity and respect, and addressing unfavorable working conditions within the unit.

In discussing **Workload** issues, many ideas focused on reducing duplication and improving efficiency. It was recommended that redundant activities be eliminated and paperwork reduced. Use of e-mail was suggested. Ideas to reduce work and improve efficiency included doing screenings by computer rather than using forms, conducting Group R&As, eliminating reports on mandatory Department of Corrections cases, increasing the number of quickie reports, and recommending less than three years probation as the sentence. Employees felt that continually allowing open dialogue would be beneficial to addressing workload issues. Knowing the priority of tasks would also be helpful. Ideas were offered regarding performing job task analyses and training, and reviewing policies and procedures. Better distribution of cases was recommended through a variety of means including utilizing RSC, Deadbeat caseload, ET's and civil judgements; expanding banked caseloads; having Proposition 200 caseloads; and more equitably distributing transient and high need cases. Ideas for addressing workload also included reducing caseloads by hiring and retaining more officers, and being flexible in resource and personnel allocation (e.g. reallocate officers when needed). Utilizing individual's strengths through teamwork was another suggestion. Ideas regarding support staff included having support staff assist the counselors and better utilizing support staff by changing their assigned tasks.

Overall, the employees who attended the Employee Satisfaction Survey forums found the presentation informative and were satisfied that they were given an opportunity to express their ideas. Many employees were appreciative that top management made this effort to interact with staff and to seek their input. Staff want to see results from the forums and are interested in what will be done. There is lingering doubt regarding what will happen after the forums. Will management do anything with our ideas? Will anything change?

The next step in improving employee satisfaction is to create action plans, using employees' ideas, and to communicate back to employees what is being done. A few quick and easy suggestions to get this started are:

- Inform staff of the overall forum results. Let them see whether groups across the Valley share their concerns and ideas and what suggestions others made.
- Inform staff how the priority rankings worked out.
- Ask all staff to consider implementing some of the ideas that individuals can use now.
- Encourage supervisors to adopt some of the ideas that were suggested under Respect/Recognition/Morale.

Two Maricopa County departments, Organizational Planning & Research and Research & Reporting, collaborated in writing an *Employee Satisfaction Survey Management Guide* which is available on-line (at <http://ebc.maricopa.gov/management/Tools/Survey/default.asp>). The Guide contains very straightforward sections specific to planning for action and action review, and it emphasizes the importance of follow through after receiving employee feedback. This is one of the resources that may be useful to the Department in the next phase of the employee satisfaction survey process.

APPENDIX A

One breakout group that discussed Respect/Recognition/Morale listed the following problems to clarify the issues that they wanted to address:

- Personnel issues- how are they dealt with
- Management not accessible
- Rumors/ games
- Padding the top
- Not utilizing people skills
- Dumping onto the field
- Mandatory committee meetings
- Compliance between officers and LEGIS
- Audits without feedback
- Large workloads
- Unreasonable expectations
- Duplications of duties
- Salaries
- No paid mileage for IPS
- Mileage not on par with federal
- Compensation for 24 hour coverage
- Space
- Lack of meaningful training