



# CLIMATE ASSESSMENT SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

County of El Dorado

April 24, 2014



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**I. BRIEF INTRODUCTION**

The County of El Dorado (“El Dorado”) retained Van Dermyden Maddux Law Corporation to conduct an impartial workplace climate survey at the County of El Dorado. The workplace climate survey commenced on January 27, 2014.

The cultural assessment survey was developed with input from this Firm, consultant Municipal Resource Group, the Board of Supervisors, department heads, and union leadership. The survey was transmitted electronically to County employees on March 11, 2014. Consistent with representations to County employees, results are anonymous. The survey closed on April 2, 2014.

During the survey period, Van Dermyden Maddux sent electronic surveys to 1,934 current and former County employees and received a total of 1,228 responses, yielding a response rate of approximately 63%. Additionally, the undersigned received 21 paper copies of surveys from County employees that did not have access to a computer. These were manually input into the electronic survey tool. This Firm also conducted 45 interviews of employees who requested either a telephonic or an in-person interview.

As an overall matter, 60% of participants expressed they were satisfied (40%) or very satisfied (20%) working for El Dorado County, generally. The following departments each had satisfaction rates higher than average, based upon responses from within the department: Air Quality Management District (100%); Risk Management (100%); Clerk of the Board (100%); Elections (100%); Library (92%); Auditor Controller’s Office (92%); Assessor’s Office (78%); Veteran Affairs (75%); and County Counsel (86%).

On average, 17.5% of County employees were “dissatisfied” with their employment. The following departments each had dissatisfaction rates higher than average, based upon responses within the department: Information Technology (41%); Probation Field (32%); Public Defender (26.5%); Sheriff’s Office (23.5%); Community Development Agency (22%).

This Report provides the County a summary of the results of the survey. It is intended to provide a snapshot of the 211-pages of 1,228 survey responses. All quotations in this Report are repeated from the surveys verbatim, without modification.

**II. SURVEY QUESTIONS – PERSPECTIVE ON EMPLOYMENT**

Section one of the survey focused on employment satisfaction of County employees<sup>1</sup>. This section asked the following questions:

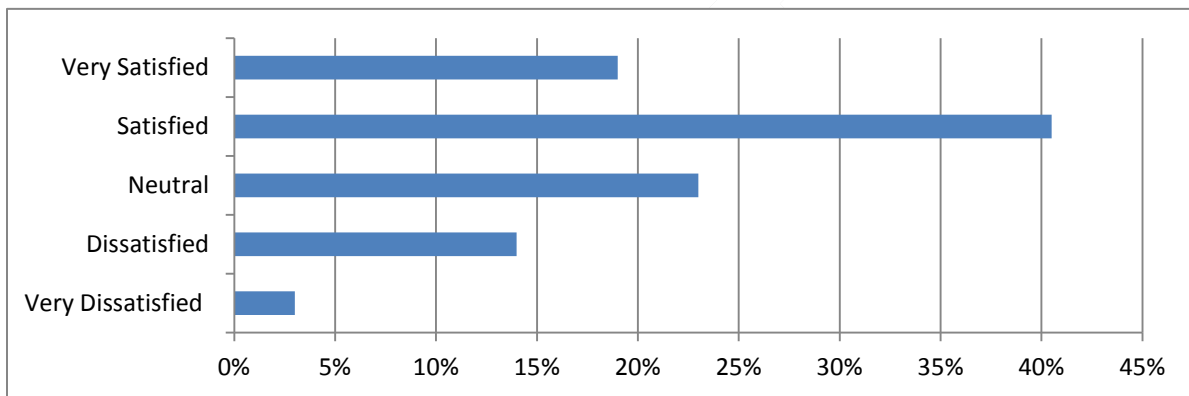
1. What is your general satisfaction with your employment with El Dorado County?
2. If an incident occurs in your department, do you feel comfortable reporting it?

<sup>1</sup> Questions one through five were not included in this summary. These questions focused on respondent demographics, and sought information related to office location, department, bargaining unit, length of employment, and gender.

3. Are you actively making plans to leave employment with El Dorado County?
4. What would you consider to be the most desirable aspects in your workplace?
5. What would you consider your greatest workplace challenges or difficulties?
6. What concerns do you have about the workplace (you may select more than one)?

Summaries of the responses to these questions are as follows.

**Q6: What is your general satisfaction with your employment with El Dorado County?**



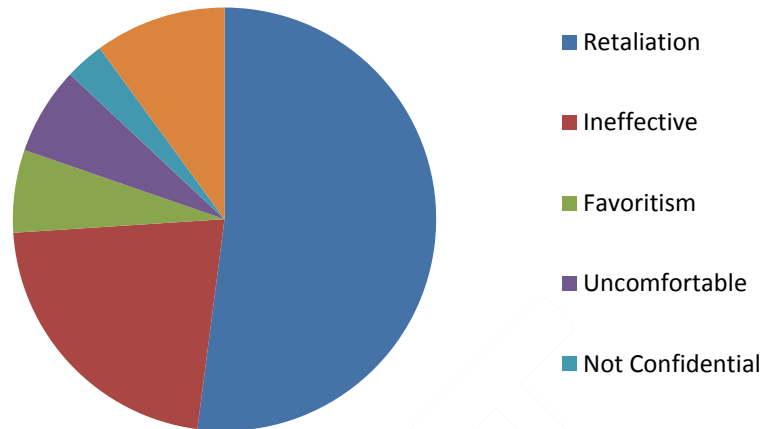
Responses	Answer Choices
41%	Satisfied
23 %	Neutral
19%	Very Satisfied
14%	Dissatisfied
3%	Very Dissatisfied

**Q7: If an incident occurs in your department, do you feel comfortable reporting it?**

Responses	Answer Choices
73%	Yes
27%	No

➤ **If no, why?**

There were 297 employees who responded they were uncomfortable reporting their concerns. These responses were roughly divided into the following six categories.



**Retaliation.** Approximately **140** employees stated that they would not feel comfortable reporting an incident because they *feared retaliation*. The following quotes are excerpts from the responses citing a fear of retaliation:

- “Fear of retaliation from management.”
- “Retribution or punitive action.”
- “You become a marked person for retaliation.”

**Ineffective.** Approximately **59** employees stated that they would not feel comfortable reporting an incident because they did not believe their complaint would effect change. The following quotes are excerpts from the responses citing a lack of faith in the process:

- “Tried in the past was told to drop it and let it go.”
- “Because nobody will do anything to resolve it.”
- “Any issues usually fall on deaf ears so there is no point.”

**Favoritism.** Approximately 17 employees stated that they would not feel comfortable reporting an incident due to favoritism within the County.

- “If you’re not one of their favorites. They make it a big a deal. If you’re a favorite they sweep it under the rug.”
- “Depending on who the complaint is against is a factor whether action will be taken or not.”
- “If an incident occurs with one of the ‘favorites’ unfair treatment is given.”

**Uncomfortable.** Approximately 18 employees stated that they would not feel comfortable reporting an incident because they did not feel comfortable being labeled as a “complainer” by their colleagues.

- “Being employed in a small department would make it very uncomfortable to report an incident.”
- “Fear of reputation being tainted.”
- “I don’t want to be labeled as a complainer.”

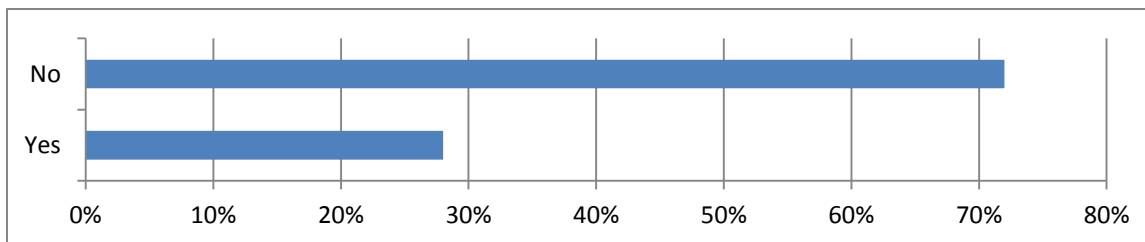
**Confidentiality.** Approximately eight employees stated that they would not feel comfortable reporting an incident because they did not believe their complaint would be kept confidential.

- “Things often do not stay confidential.”
- “Because I work with someone who doesn’t do anything all day and when I reported it they told her what I said.”
- “Although a report is to be confidential, co-workers find out and treat you differently.”

**Management.** Approximately 27 employees stated that they would not feel comfortable reporting an incident because they were either uncomfortable speaking with their direct supervisor, or generally did not trust County management.

- “Not comfortable discussing details with my boss”
- “Management unapproachable.”
- “Department head does not appear to have judgment sufficient to take appropriate action.”

**Q8: Are you actively making plans to leave employment with El Dorado County?**



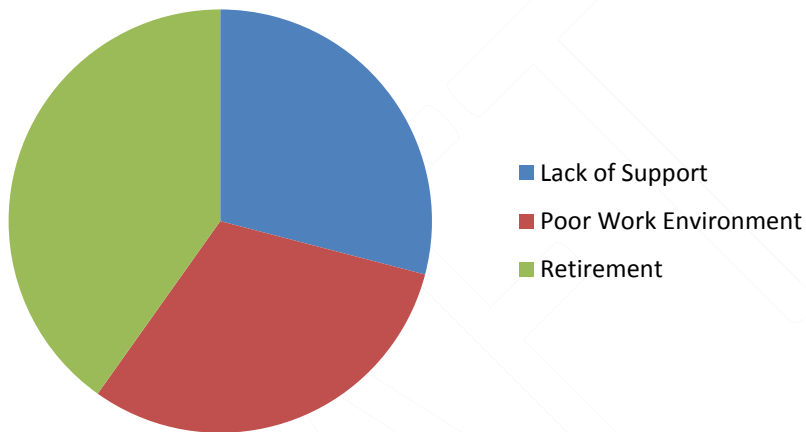
Responses	Answer Choices
72%	No
28%	Yes

**Q9: If yes, why?**

Responses	Answer Choices
51%	Salary and benefits
47%	Challenges with culture or climate of Department
38%	Other (please specify)
36%	Better career growth opportunities

15%	Flexible work schedule
7%	Desire career change
6%	Commute or work location

There were 153 employees who gave an explanation in the “Other (please specify)” box provided in the answer choices. Their responses centered primarily on a lack of support from management and a poor work environment, though a substantial number of employees cited more neutral reasons, including retirement, an expired contract, or ending term limits. These responses were roughly divided into the following three categories.



**Lack of Support.** Approximately 34 employees stated that they were planning to leave the County due to a lack of support or appreciation from their managers.

- “Lack of respect from mgmt. Lack of trust in my mgmt.[...]. Indications from my mgmt. that I am obsolete.”
- “To leave for a workplace where an administration treats you with respect.”
- “TO BE APPRECIATED”
- “Lack of respect exhibited by executive management.”
- “I do not trust management and I feel picked on.”

**Poor Work Environment.** Approximately 36 employees stated that they were planning to leave the County because of a poor work environment, which included bullying, excessive stress, and favoritism.

- “partiality, favoritisms, bullying”
- “harassment, hostility, retaliation, favoritism, nepotism.”
- “Inability to advance in my career; poorly managed transition; supervisor with ineffective management style; working in a dysfunctional unit; dread coming to work every day.”

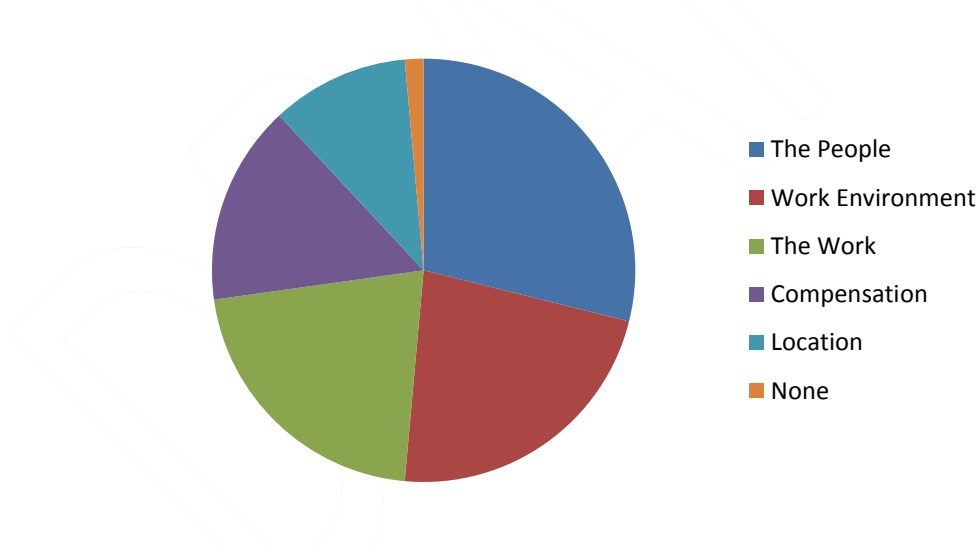
- “Work environment has deteriorated to a level not seen in 12+ yrs. Do not expect improvement any time soon.

**Retirement.** Approximately 47 employees stated that they were planning to leave the County to retire, or because their contract or term limits were expiring.

- “retirement”
- “I am thinking about retiring before too long.”
- “[...] I always have a transition plan.”
- “To retire ASAP.”

**Q10: What would you consider to be the most desirable aspects in your workplace?**

There were 1,051 employees who provided narrative comments elaborating on what they feel are the most desirable aspects of their workplace. The majority of the comments focused on the positive relationship they have with their colleagues, the environment or atmosphere of their workplace, and/or the work itself. Many employees also mentioned salary, benefits, and location as positive factors in their workplace. Very few employees could not find anything positive about their workplace.



**The People.** Approximately 365 employees stated that the people they work with are one of the most desirable aspects of their workplace. They cited having strong relationships with dedicated County employees. Many found these employees respectful, helpful, and hardworking,

- “I work with good people.”
- “Peers and coworkers”
- “Great co-workers”
- “The staff I work with”



- “The people are awesome (of course there are a few exceptions)
- “The wonderful people I work with/for.”

**Work Environment.** Approximately 285 employees stated that their work environment is one of the most desirable aspects of their workplace. Many employees considered their colleagues team members they could trust, and were pleased with the level of supervision and instruction they were receiving from their managers.

- “Autonomy when you demonstrate you’re worth of trust”
- “Co-workers team player participation and over-all positive attitude.”
- “Good teamwork, generally good partnerships with other divisions.”
- “Good working environment.”
- “Great work environment and welcoming atmosphere.”

**The Work.** Approximately 270 employees stated that the work they perform on a daily basis is one of the most desirable aspects of their workplace. These employees expressed a deep connection with their County and their work, and were interested in making the County a better place to live.

- “I love the actual work itself.”
- “The content of the actual work I do.”
- “Working with clients, helping those in need.”

**Compensation.** Approximately 193 employees stated that their salary, benefits, or opportunities to advance are some of the most desirable aspects of their workplace. Some employees expressed appreciation for both the flexibility and job security found in their position.

- “Health benefits”
- “The pay”
- “The pay and benefits.”
- “Job security, approved raises.”
- “Work hours, Salary, Benefits”

**Location.** Approximately 133 employees stated that the location of their office was one of the most desirable aspects of their workplace. These employees enjoyed working in their home county, and liked having a short commute.

- “Proximity to home”

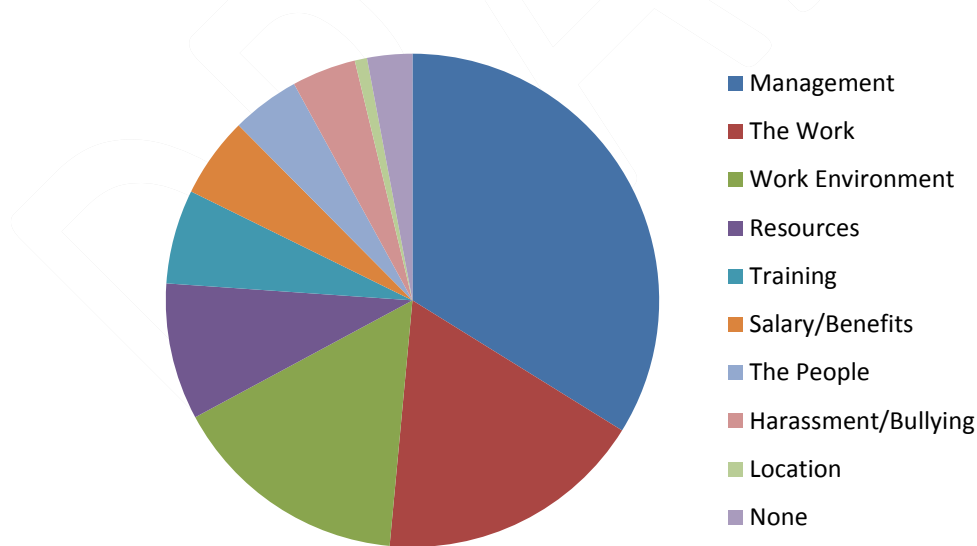
- “Location”
- “Safe community, living in the foothills.”
- “Location of workplace – close to home.”
- “Love the natural beauty and serenity of the County.”

**None.** Approximately 18 employees stated they could not think of a desirable aspect to their workplace.

- “Seriously can’t think of any.”
- “Nothing”
- “Leaving at the end of the day.”

**Q11: What would you consider your greatest workplace challenges or difficulties?**

There were 1,044 employees who provided narrative comments elaborating on what they feel are their greatest workplace challenges or difficulties. The majority of these comments focused on management frustrations, work responsibilities, and/or the work environment. Additionally, numerous employees commented on difficulties with resources, training, compensation, and/or their colleagues. Approximately 47 employees cited concerns related to harassment, discrimination, workplace bullying, favoritism, or retaliation, and nine cited concerns with the location.



**Management.** Approximately 378 employees expressed frustration with either the County’s management, or the management process in place. Many cited feeling a lack of support, communication, collaboration, and respect from their supervisors and their departmental directors.

- “The greatest workplace challenge is knowing that the uppermost management in the CDA has no respect for [professional class].”

- “Upper mgt. is far removed from my workplace and chooses to remain out of touch but attacks and undermines our work consistently. We know that mgt. wants us out despite our experience and expertise in [department].”
- “Lack of communication from upper management. Lack of support from management.”
- “The Supervisors and their ‘groups’.”
- “Lack of experienced and or adequately trained management.”
- “People who want to run everything and are drunk with power.”
- “Elected officials who have been here a long time who believe they can do whatever they can. They attempt, and at time are successful, in outreaching the authority of their position. They become a hindrance to the working being done.”
- “Not enough hours in the day to meet the requirements of the job. I feel that I am a good time manager, and it is getting impossible to keep up with all the program changes, while still trying to get the day to day Supervisor work done. There are so many e-mails and policy changes to read, decipher and try to teach staff that I feel that all information does not get out to staff despite my best efforts.”

**The Work.** Approximately 197 employees cited feeling pressure due to the demands of their job, or the increase in workload caused by reductions in staff.

- “Workload and stress due to lack of personnel.”
- “The workload can be challenging at times.”
- “Difficult and mentally ill patrons”
- “I have a very heavy workload, and the deadlines in my Division can be stressful. Additional staff would be welcomed.”
- “I like to stay busier it gets a little slow at times.”

**Work Environment.** Approximately 175 employees stated that the culture and climate within the County was unpleasant and made it more difficult to complete work. Many felt that morale was unnecessarily low, and the emphasis was placed on mistakes rather than accomplishments.

- “overall negative climate”
- “working staff that don’t like there job.”
- “Morale”
- “Negative attitudes of other coworkers or rigidity to change.”

**Resources.** Approximately 100 employees stated being frustrated by the tools or resources provided to them by the County. Some were upset with the temperature of their office, the age of their building, the lack of natural light, or the proximity of their coworkers.

- “The age of the facility and the updates it needs.”
- “Working in a cubicle”
- “Our building is old and employees are jammed in tight areas and not able to concentrate on your work.”
- “Crowded parking lot.”
- “How cold it is in our office.”

**Training.** Approximately 69 employees commented on what they perceived as a lack of instruction and training. Many requested additional guidance from their supervisors, both to complete necessary tasks and to advance in their career.

- “Training and support for moving up.”
- “Training.”
- “Lack of training for new job duties, lack of training to keep current in my field of work.”
- “Complex technical nature of work and lack of available specific instruction.”

**Compensation.** Approximately 59 employees wrote that they were disappointed with their salary and the reductions in benefits. Many employees stated that they receive much less than they would a neighboring county with a similar position.

- “limited salary or opportunities to promote, limited schedule, breaks and lunch, limited vacation and time off, very limited.”
- “retention of employees due to low salary.”
- “Lack of pay”
- “Shifts and schedules, use of sick time for scheduled dr appointments”
- “Ever-changing benefits”

**The People.** Approximately 50 employees expressed frustration about coworkers who were unmotivated and not completing their work. Employees also complained about working with individuals with difficult personalities.

- “Working with people who are here just to collect a paycheck and do everything they can to pass the buck or stir up drama.”

- “Co-Workers work ethic, department drama, daily dysfunction, childish behavior.”
- “Difficult personalities of people with whom I interact.”
- “Occasional lack in self motivation others have toward performance.”

**Harassment/Bullying.** Approximately 47 employees cited concerns of harassment, workplace bullying, favoritism, and/or retaliation, though it was unclear whether the cited actions were taken because of a protected characteristic.

- “Favoritism and desperate treatment.”
- “We work in hostile work environment. Employees are in fear of management employees are bullied by management employees are in fear of retaliation.”
- “Favoritism given certain employees. Management lacks integrity.”
- “Cliques between management and staff, favoritism, and harassment/disrespect from management toward line staff.”
- “Long term employees who are part of the culture that will not change their sense of entitlement and who are allowed to harass other employees.”

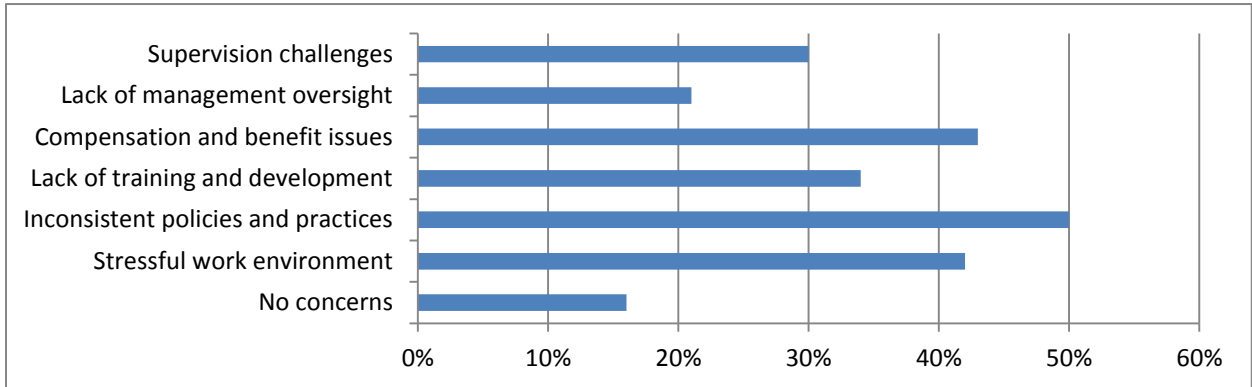
**Location.** Approximately nine employees had concerns about commuting to work, either due to distance, time, or safety.

- “Commute”
- “Geography, driving distances”
- “My commute is a hardship. IT is unreasonably long and onerous. The weather conditions are dangerous.”

**None.** Approximately 33 employees stated they could not think of a challenge or difficulty with their workplace.

- “None so far”
- “None”
- “N/A”
- “I wouldn’t really say there are any.”

**Q12: What concerns do you have about the workplace (you may select more than one)?**



Responses	Answer Choices
50%	Inconsistent policies and practices
43%	Compensation and benefit issues
42%	Stressful work environment
34%	Lack of training and development
30%	Supervision challenges
21%	Lack of management oversight
16%	No concerns

There were 242 employees who provided narrative comments citing their concerns about the workplace. These responses ranged from corruption to a lack of parking. Due to their variety, these responses were difficult to categorize. A non-exhaustive sample of the responses is as follows:

- Too much bureaucracy
- No parking
- Communication
- Micro-management
- Promotion opportunities are limited
- Better pay!
- Short staffed
- Doing more and more with less and less
- Favoritism
- Need a new building
- Misuse of County equipment
- Funding issues
- Retaliation
- Favoritism, Bullying, Retaliation
- Poor leadership
- Perpetual reorganization
- Hostile work environment
- Very large caseloads
- Corruption
- Admin processes are cumbersome
- Lack of ethics
- Lack of on time payment
- Constant policy and procedure changes
- Technology
- Not paid for travel time
- Managers who do not act professionally
- Disorganized
- Old building
- Condition of work place
- No long range planning

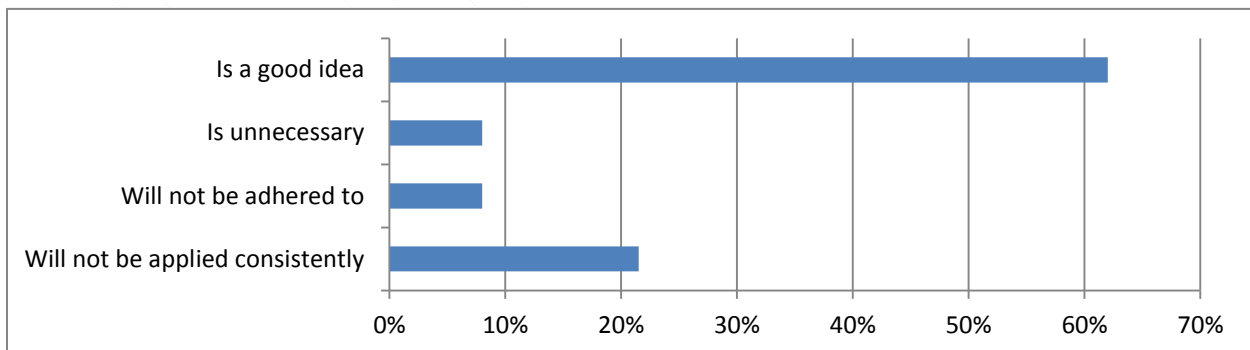
**III. SUPERVISORY/MANAGEMENT SUPPORT**

Section two of the survey focused on employee opinions of both supervisory and managerial support. It focused on the following issues:

1. Employee opinions on the County’s Respectful Workplace Policy.
2. Employee opinions on the County’s Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation and Reporting and Complaint Procedure.
3. Whether employees feel their work expectations are clear.
4. Whether employees feel they have access to their direct supervisors.
5. Whether employees feel their supervisor gives them clear and helpful feedback about their work.
6. Whether employees feel that when their coworkers are not getting along, their supervisors address it in a timely manner.
7. Whether employees feel their Department has clear standards of behavior.
8. Whether employees feel their department works collegially and productively with other departments.
9. Whether employees feel their Department Head is approachable.
10. Whether employees feel their supervisor communicates in a professional and respectful manner.
11. Whether employees feel their department provides a high level of customer service to the public.

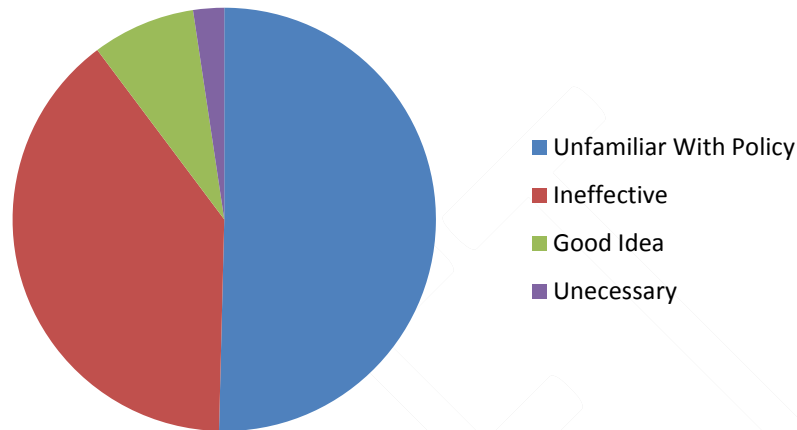
Summaries of the responses to these issues are as follows.

**Q13: I believe the County’s Respectful Workplace Policy:**



Responses	Answer Choices
62%	Is a good idea
22%	Will not be applied consistently
8%	Is unnecessary
8%	Will not be adhered to

There were 152 employees who provided narrative comments addressing whether they felt the County should adopt a Respectful Workplace policy, and whether it would be successful if it did. The majority of these responses expressed confusion, stating they had never read or heard of this policy. A large percentage of the narrative respondents felt the policy would not be effective. A minority felt it would either be a good idea, or was unnecessary.



**Unfamiliar With Policy.** Approximately 64 employees were unsure of what a Respectful Workplace Policy was or whether the County had one. Many said they would need to re-read the policy if it already existed.

- “I’ve never heard of this. Don’t know what it is. That, in itself, is telling, that there’s a lack of consistent communication throughout the organization.”
- “I HAVE NEVER HEARD OF THIS!”
- “Didn’t know the County had this policy.”

**Ineffective.** Approximately 50 employees did not feel a Respectful Workplace Policy would be effective primarily because it would not be adhered to by managers and elected officials. Further, some felt that such a policy would not be implemented consistently and would be used as a tool to target employees. Some employees felt that while it might be good in theory, it would lack the “teeth” to have a noticeable impact.

- “My only concern with this new policy is that it covers everyone. It often feels like these new policies are implemented to cover groups of people that have a political agenda to force acceptance of their behavior on others. Everyone should be treated equally at work, period. I’m hoping that this policy will be applied equally to all employees throughout the county.”
- “A do-gooder feel good policy that has no teeth and vision”
- “The County’s problems go much, much deeper than this policy can resolve.”



- “I think it goes overboard without really addressing the issues. Creating a blanket policy rarely changes an individuals behavior. Upper management would actually have to provide some tutelage to middle management.”
- “Will be ignored by some without any teeth to implement it.”
- “Until you clean up the poor managers across the County, no policy is going to solve the lack of respect in the workplace.”

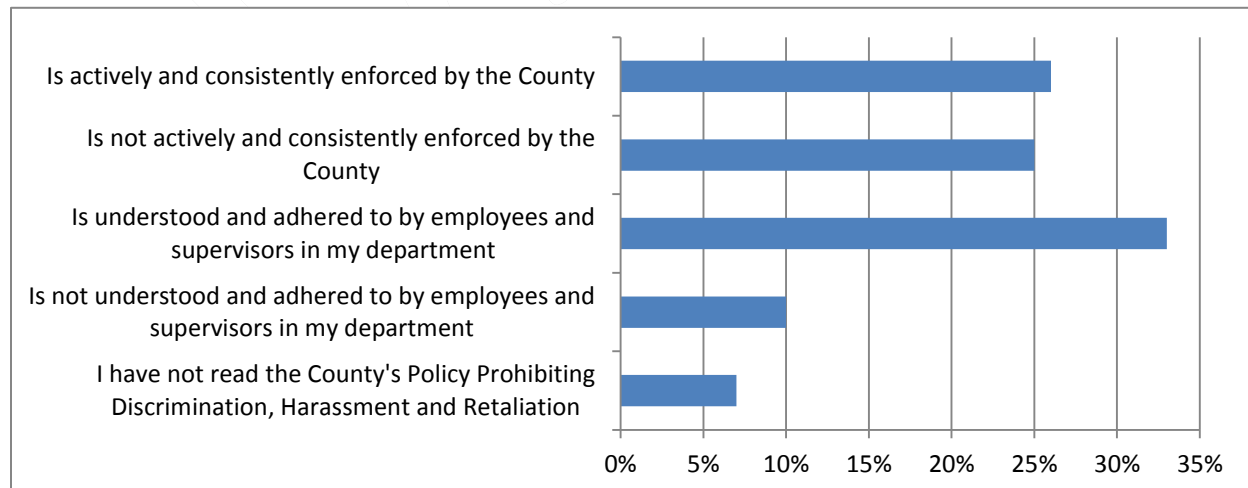
**Good Idea.** Approximately 10 employees felt that a Respectful Workplace Policy would be a good idea. Many were enthusiastic about such a policy, though others were skeptical.

- “A very good idea!!!”
- “It is a good idea.”
- “The County needs it!”
- “Good in concept – but HR/Management nightmare – one persons management is another’s bullying.”

**Unnecessary.** Approximately three employees did not feel the policy would be necessary because they had not observed any problems within the County. These responses were as follows.

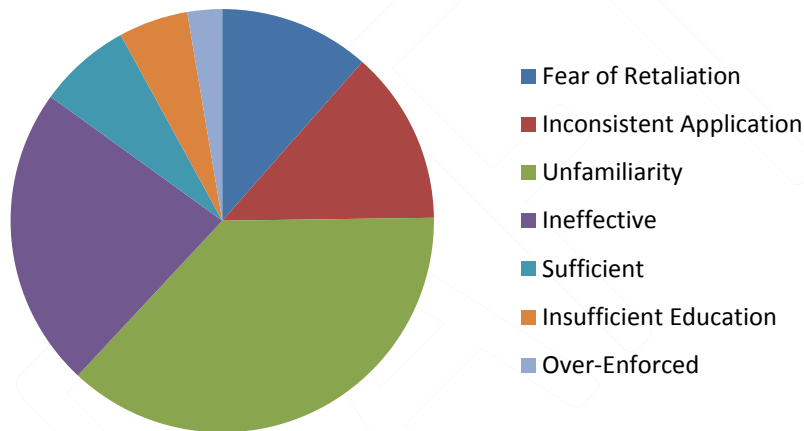
- “Should not be necessary, most everyone here is respectful. I find it very discerning that this policy is needed”
- “Most of the employees I have encountered have done their level best to help me.”
- “Had no problem.”

**Q14: I believe the County’s Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation and Reporting and Complaint Procedure:**



Responses	Answer Choices
33%	Is understood and adhered to by employees and supervisors in my department
26%	Is actively and consistently enforced by the County
25%	Is not actively and consistently enforced by the County
10%	Is not understood and adhered to by employees and supervisors in my department
7%	I have not read the County's Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation

There were 137 employees who provided narrative comments addressing their feelings regarding the County's Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation and Reporting and Complaint Procedure. These narrative comments primarily addressed the following topics: 1) fear of retaliation; 2) inconsistent application; 3) unfamiliarity; 4) ineffectiveness; 5) sufficiency; 6) insufficient education; and 7) over-enforced.



**Fear of Retaliation.** Approximately 13 employees stated that fears of retaliation made this policy difficult for employees to take advantage of it, or for the County to enforce.

- “People are too afraid to tell on anyone in a higher position anything for fear of losing their job.”
- “This is a joke, nothing more to say. You are ostercized when folks find out.”
- “Management has the ability to harass someone outside the scope of the policy and you would never be able to prove it (i.e., consistently passed over for promotion, extra steps to get your work done.”
- “Most employee’s fear retaliation.”
- “Management walks the line of their own policy. Retaliation is alive and well in the whole department!”

**Inconsistent Application.** Approximately 15 employees felt that the policy was being applied inconsistently, some stating it was used as a tool to target employees. Some comments are repeated here.

- “Is manipulated for Administrative purposes.”
- “Only used to benefit the county.”
- “Again pick and choose to be adhered too.”
- “Is taken advantage of by disgruntled employees or substandard employees who belongs to a protected group.”
- “Can be used as a tool against employees management does not like

**Unfamiliarity.** Approximately 42 employees were either unfamiliar with the contents of this policy, or had insufficient experience with its application so as to form an opinion.

- “I have not been employed long enough to discern it’s application and/or effectiveness”
- “I need to read the policy again. Sorry.”
- “I have not seen or been involved in the policy.”
- “I have not seen it in effect.”
- “I have no idea how to answer this.”
- “Has this policy been shared with the employees lately? I don’t believe that I have seen the reporting and complaint procedure for years.”

**Ineffective.** Approximately 26 employees felt that the policy was not enforced, making it “worthless.”

- “Those with good work ethics will adhere, those without won’t”
- “I submitted a complaint and HR looked the other way.”
- “A completely worthless document.”
- “Complaints previously have gone unanswered. Internal Affair Investigation one sided any not thoroughly investigated to get to the truth, used as a tool for bullying.”

**Sufficient.** Approximately eight employees stated the policy was effective and was sufficiently enforced.

- “Follow up discipline seems to be severe enough to change behavior so far.”
- “I cannot make a judgment as to the entire county, I do not believe it is an issue at my office.”
- “Has just recently been adhered to and enforced.”

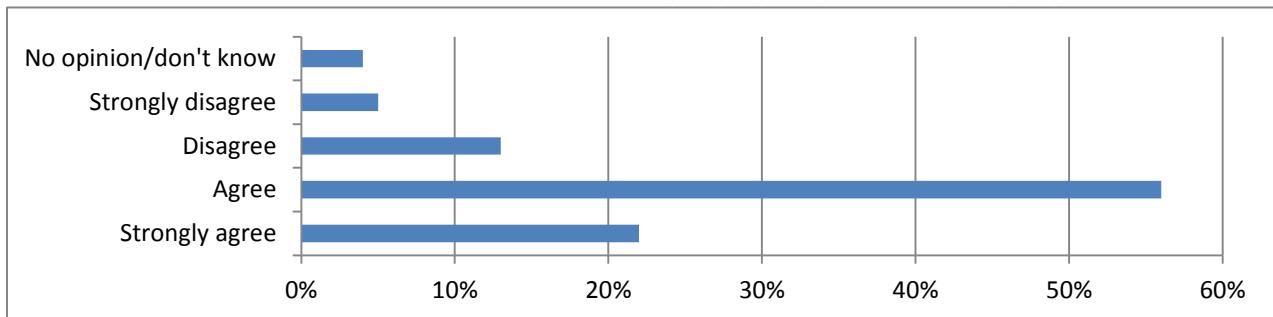
**Insufficient Education.** Approximately six employees felt that their County colleagues were not sufficiently educated on the policy.

- “Is not generally or readily known by employees or supervisors.”
- “I believe supervisors and managers understand and adhere, but I’m not sure all employees are educated on the policy.”
- “Is not understood by my department head.”

**Over-Enforced.** Three employees felt that the policy was not just sufficient, but was too heavily enforced or should be used with discretion.

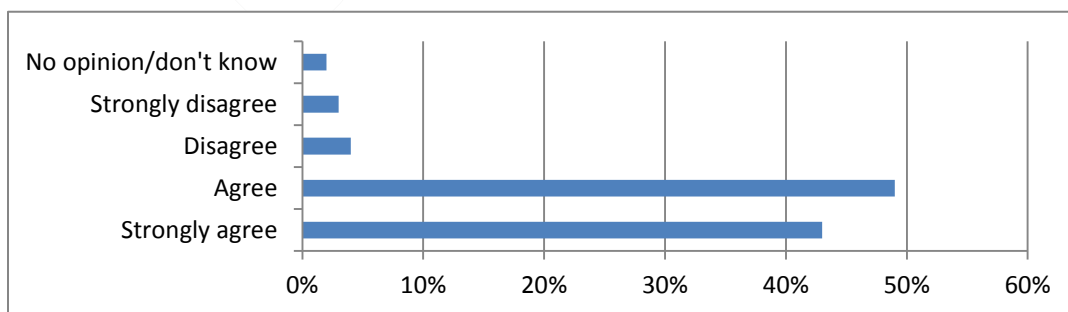
- “Is enforced in a completely over the top manner of late.”
- “Is a great idea but a little over the top in terms of what discipline could be imposed. It is WIDE OPEN including termination.”
- “Should be used with discretion”

**Q15: My work expectations are clear:**



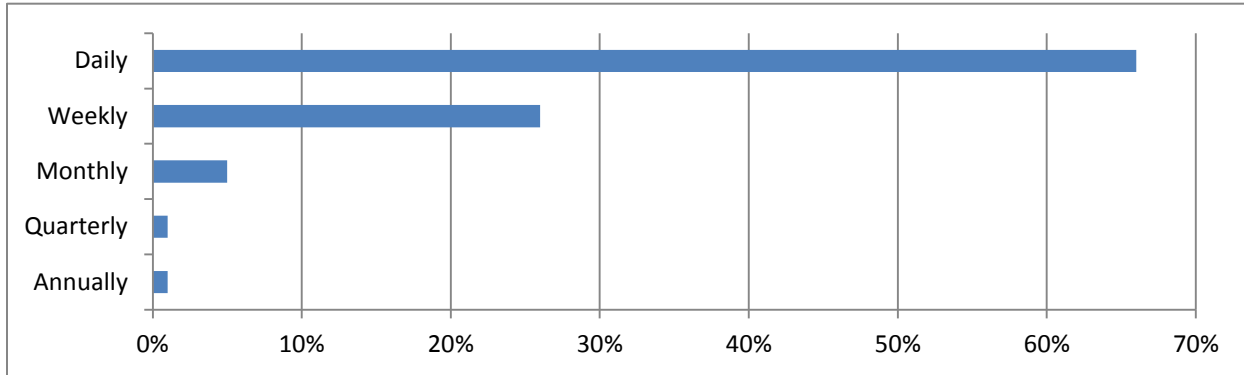
Responses	Answer Choices
56%	Agree
22%	Strongly agree
13%	Disagree
5%	Strongly disagree
4%	No opinion/don't know

**Q16: I have access to my direct supervisor as needed:**



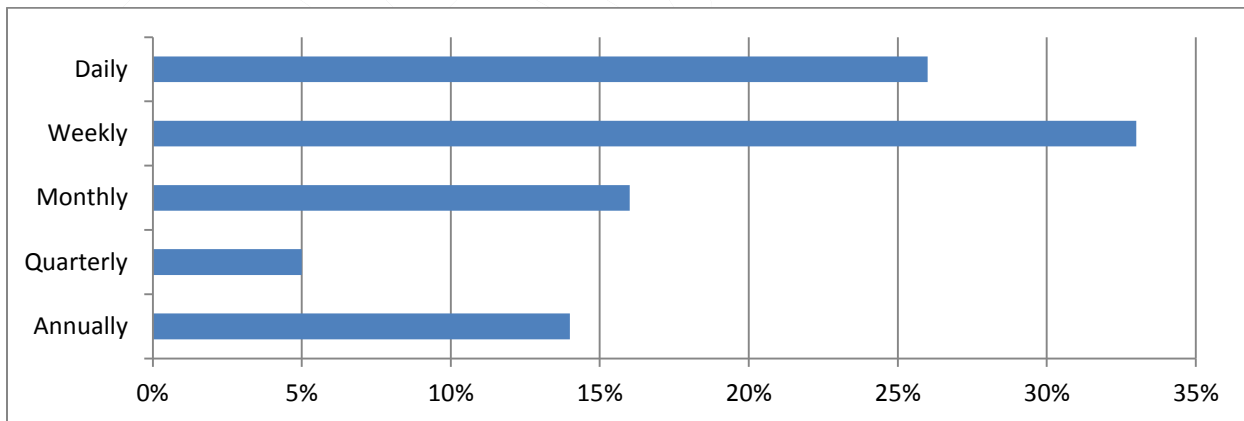
Responses	Answer Choices
49%	Agree
43%	Strongly agree
4%	Disagree
3%	Strongly disagree
2%	No opinion/don't know

**Q18: My supervisor communicates with me:**



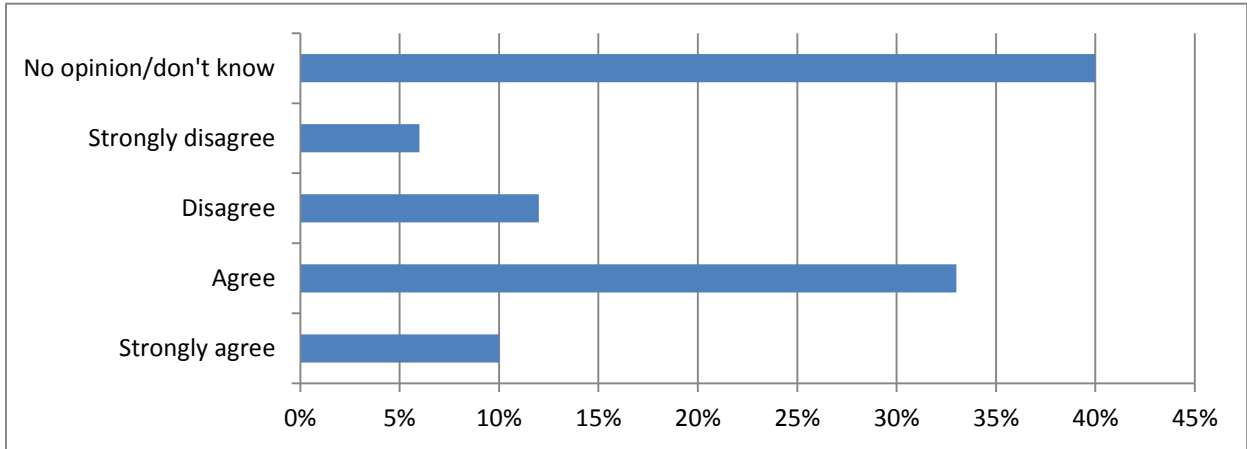
Responses	Answer Choices
66%	Daily
26%	Weekly
5%	Monthly
1%	Quarterly
1%	Annually

**Q18: My supervisor gives me clear and helpful spoken or written feedback about my work:**



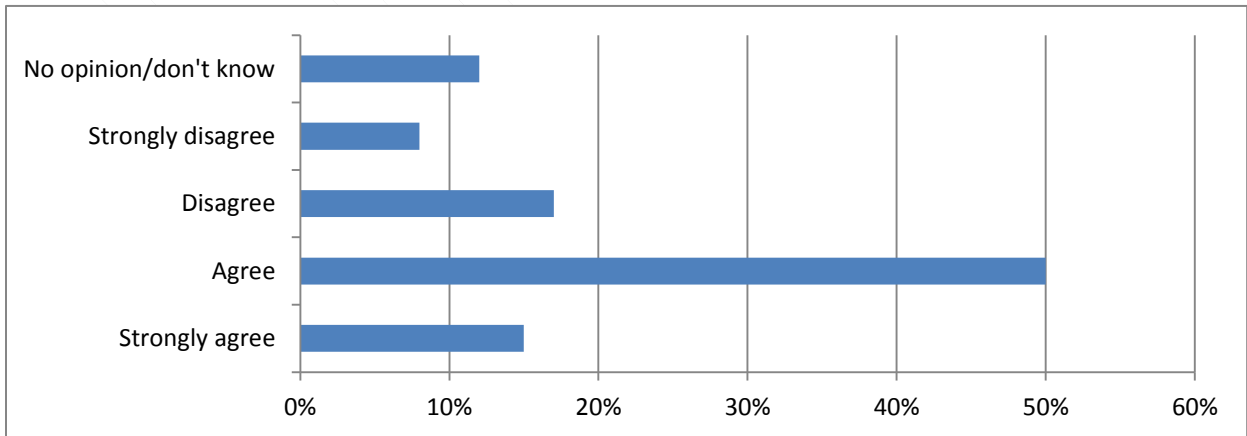
Responses	Answer Choices
33%	Weekly
26%	Daily
16%	Monthly
14%	Annually
5%	Quarterly

**Q19: When my coworkers are not getting along, my supervisor addresses it in a timely manner:**



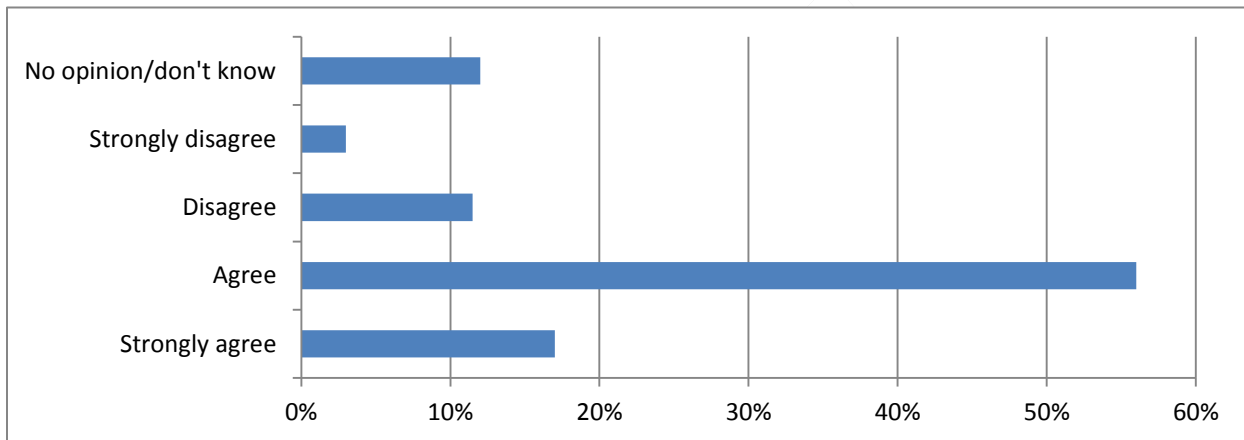
Responses	Answer Choices
40%	No opinion/don't know
33%	Agree
12%	Disagree
10%	Strongly agree
6%	Strongly disagree

**Q20: Our Department has clear standards of behavior:**



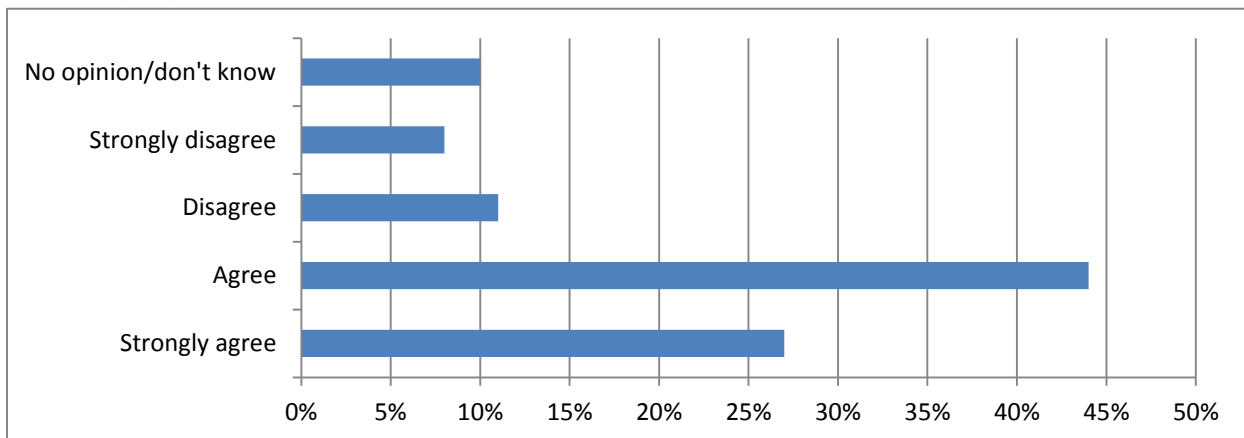
Responses	Answer Choices
50%	Agree
17%	Disagree
15%	Strongly agree
12%	No opinion/don't know
8%	Strongly disagree

**Q21: My department works collegially and productively with the department(s) with which we most frequently interact:**



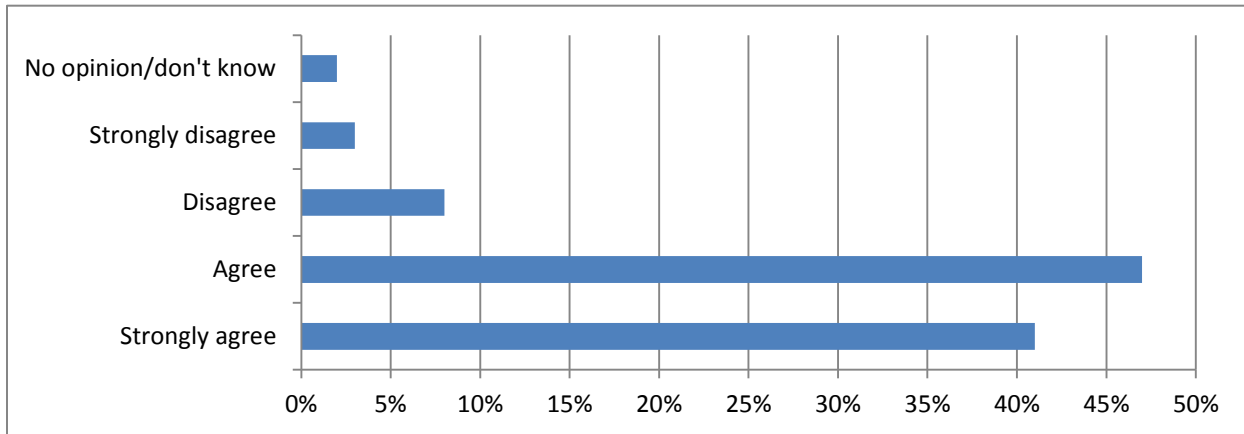
Responses	Answer Choices
56%	Agree
17%	Strongly agree
12%	No opinion/don't know
12%	Disagree
3%	Strongly disagree

**Q22: My Department Head is approachable:**



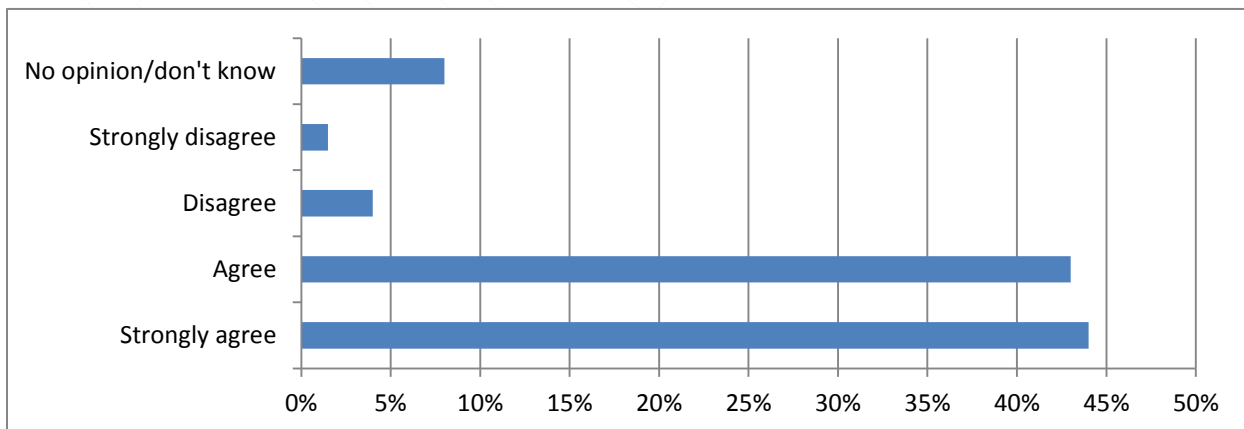
Responses	Answer Choices
44%	Agree
27%	Strongly agree
11%	Disagree
10%	No opinion/don't know
8%	Strongly disagree

**Q23: My supervisor communicates with me in a professional and respectful manner:**



Responses	Answer Choices
47%	Agree
41%	Strongly agree
8%	Disagree
3%	Strongly disagree
2%	No opinion/don't know

**Q24: My department provides a high level of customer service to the public:**





Responses	Answer Choices
44%	Strongly agree
43%	Agree
8%	No opinion/don't know
4%	Disagree
2%	Strongly disagree

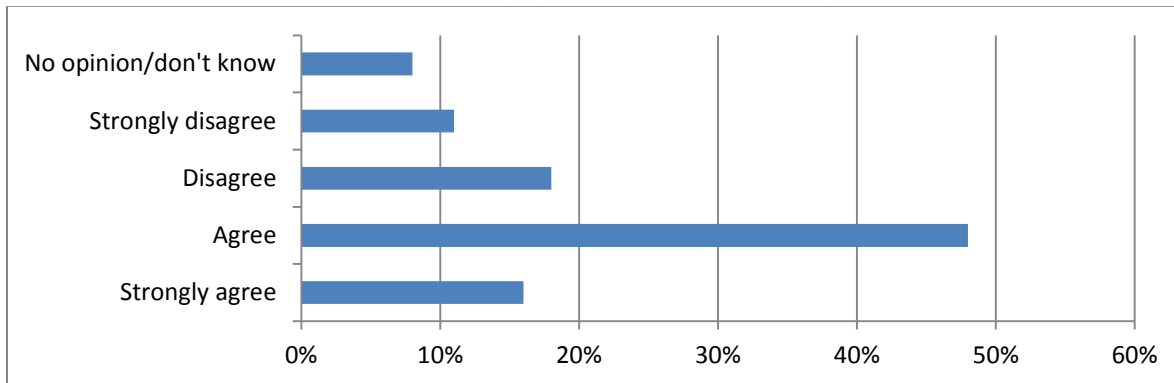
**IV. RECOGNITION**

Section three of the survey focused on whether employees felt they were being recognized by the County. It focused on the following issues:

1. Whether employees feel recognized for their work contributions.
2. Whether employees feel their work makes a difference to the citizens of El Dorado County.
3. Whether employees feel their ideas for workplace or workflow improvement are welcomed and considered.

Summaries of the responses to these issues are as follows.

**Q25: I feel recognized for my work contributions:**

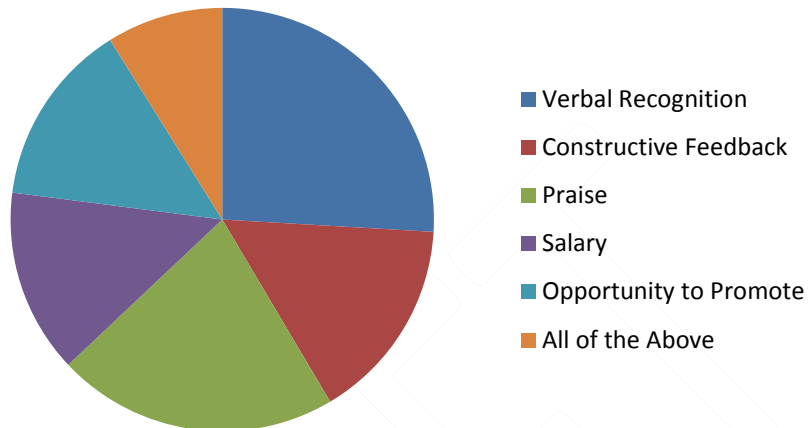


Responses	Answer Choices
48%	Agree
18%	Disagree
16%	Strongly agree
11%	Strongly disagree
8%	No opinion/don't know

**Q26: If you disagree, why?**

Responses	Answer Choices
34%	Additional professional development and training opportunities
29%	Constructive feedback
27%	Praise from a supervisor
10%	A Countywide employee recognition program

There were 156 employees who provided narrative comments stating what the County could do to make them feel recognized for their work contributions. County employees expressed a desire to receive verbal recognition, constructive feedback, praise, a salary increase, and promotional opportunities.



**Verbal Recognition.** Approximately 35 employees felt that verbal recognition by either a manager, supervisor, or director would improve employee morale.

- “I have not been acknowledged in 21 years”
- “Again my supervisor does recognize hardwork, but when you have an achievement the higher ups will find something negative in it.
- “Recognition by the Board.”
- “My manager consistently takes credit for work that our department does, and does not give credit where credit is due. And consistently undermines any progress we try to make or suggest. But makes sure to blame us if there are any mistakes on his part.”
- “When doing a dirty job, no one cares.”

**Constructive Feedback.** Approximately 21 employees stated that criticism was often negative and belittling, rather than constructive. These employees wanted assistance building their knowledgebase, rather than being disciplined for minor mistakes.

- “Negatives are focused on and belittling is common. Need to focus in positive and constructive rather than belittling feedback.”
- “Only feedback is given if a mistake is made and a letter of counseling/reprimand is written, ‘no because I have to, but because I want to’ quote from supe”

**Praise.** Approximately 29 employees believe their supervisors, managers, or directors give insufficient praise. These employee felt that encouragement and a positive atmosphere would improve the climate at the County.

- “I typically only hear from Management when I did something wrong and not when I did something above and beyond in my job.”
- “My supervisor is great with praise. Upper mgt. goes out of their way to give me and other targets no praise. At a meeting today, they praised my work....but attributed it to somebody else who wasn’t at mtg. It probably sounds implausible...I’m stunned by this situation.”
- “Praise from the Director”
- “I feel all apply and employees should be recognized for their positive contributions. A ‘thank you, job well done’ goes a long way”

**Salary.** Approximately 19 employees expressed a desire for a salary increase, commensurate with other counties. These employees stated that their salaries did not match the duties and responsibilities of their position with the County.

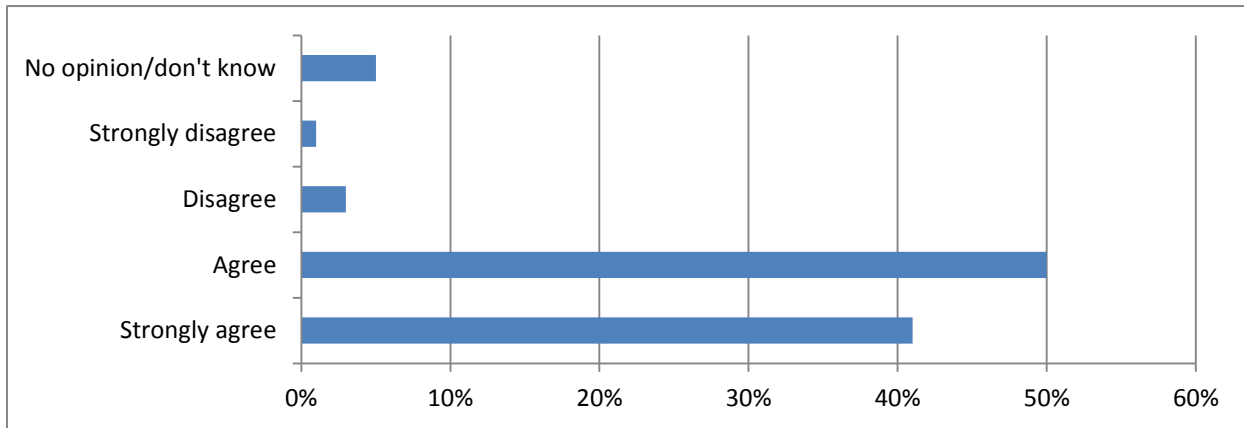
- “Equal pay in my profession that match surrounding counties.”
- “Higher wages and benefits”
- “Weak salary schedule. Same job at all adjacent municipalities pays a great deal more.”

**Opportunity to Promote.** Approximately 19 employees requested better opportunities for promotion. Some felt that they were repeatedly being passed over for promotion, despite having the qualifications.

- “With opportunities for promotion.”
- “If my work was acknowledged for promotion opportunities. Typically, I am given the task of training my new supervisor, with the promise of being considered in the next promotion.”
- “With opportunities for promotion.”

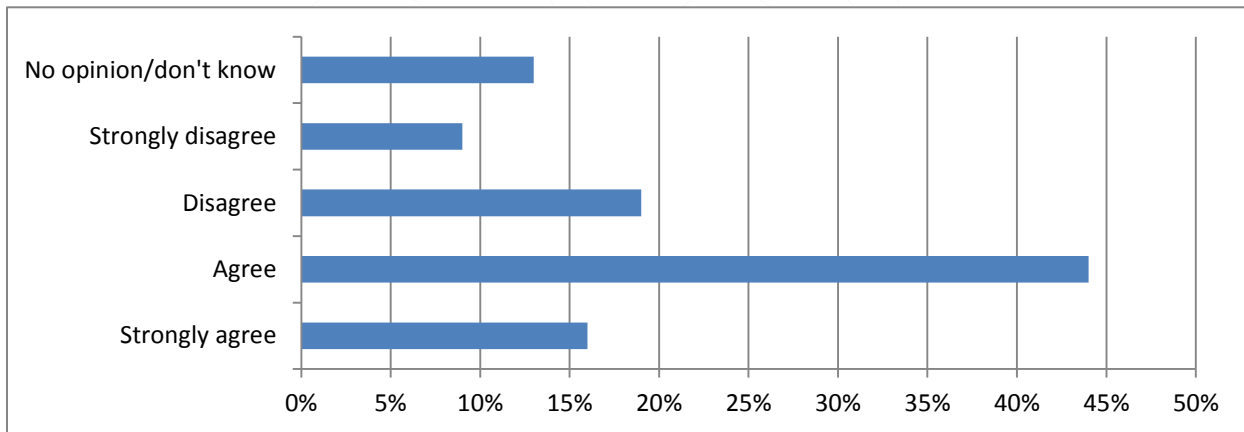
**All of the Above.** Approximately 12 employees stated “all of the above,” indicating that this should have been an option in Question 25.

**Q27: From my perspective, my work makes a difference to the citizens of El Dorado County:**



Responses	Answer Choices
50%	Agree
41%	Strongly agree
5%	No opinion/don't know
3%	Disagree
1%	Strongly disagree

**Q28: I feel my ideas for workplace or workflow improvement are welcomed and considered:**



Responses	Answer Choices
44%	Agree
19%	Disagree
16%	Strongly agree
13%	No opinion/don't know
9%	Strongly disagree

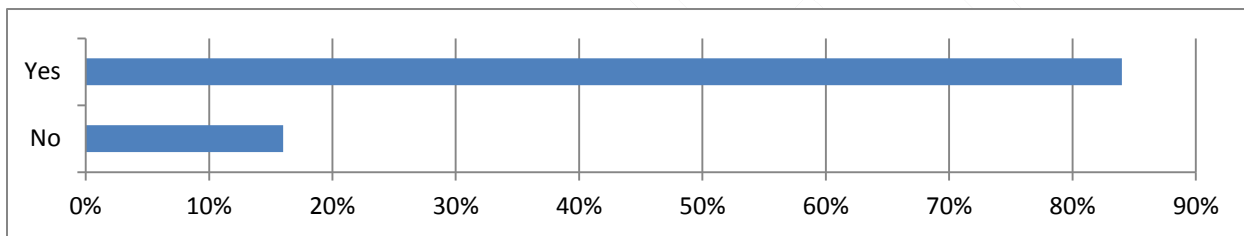
**V. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Section four of the survey focused on whether employees felt they were receiving adequate training and development. It focused on the following issues:

1. Whether employees receive a written performance evaluation at least once per year.
2. Whether employees feel they have access to training and development to maintain their skills.
3. The frequency of employee training and development.
4. Whether employees feel that there are promotional opportunities available to them within the County.
5. The specific areas in which employees would be interested in receiving additional training.

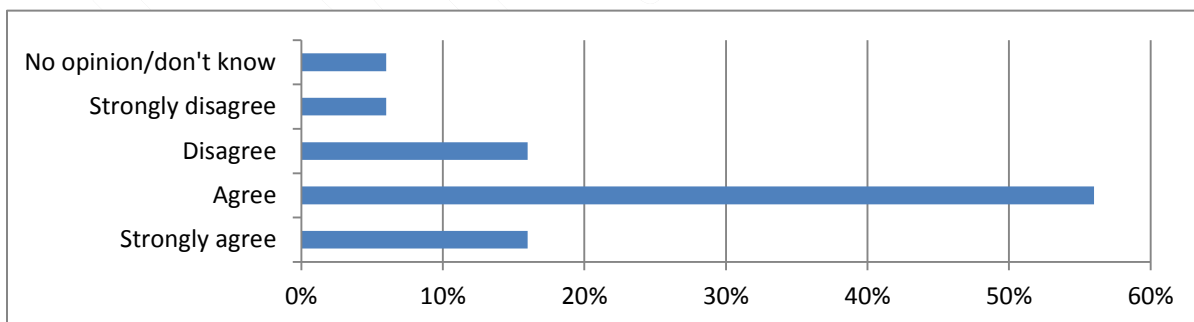
Summaries of the responses to these issues are as follows.

**Q29: I receive a written performance evaluation at least once per year:**



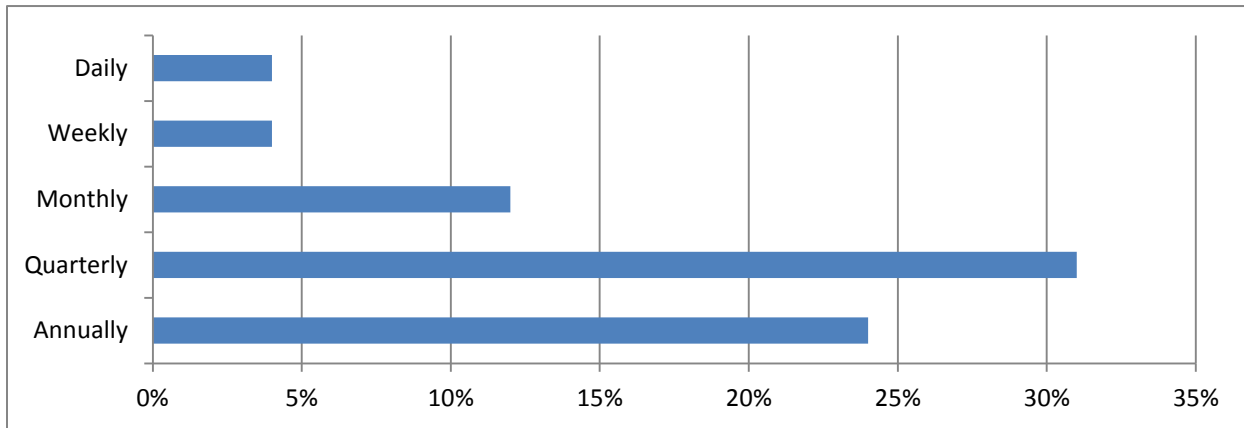
Responses	Answer Choices
84%	Yes
16%	No

**Q30: I have access to training and development to maintain my skills:**



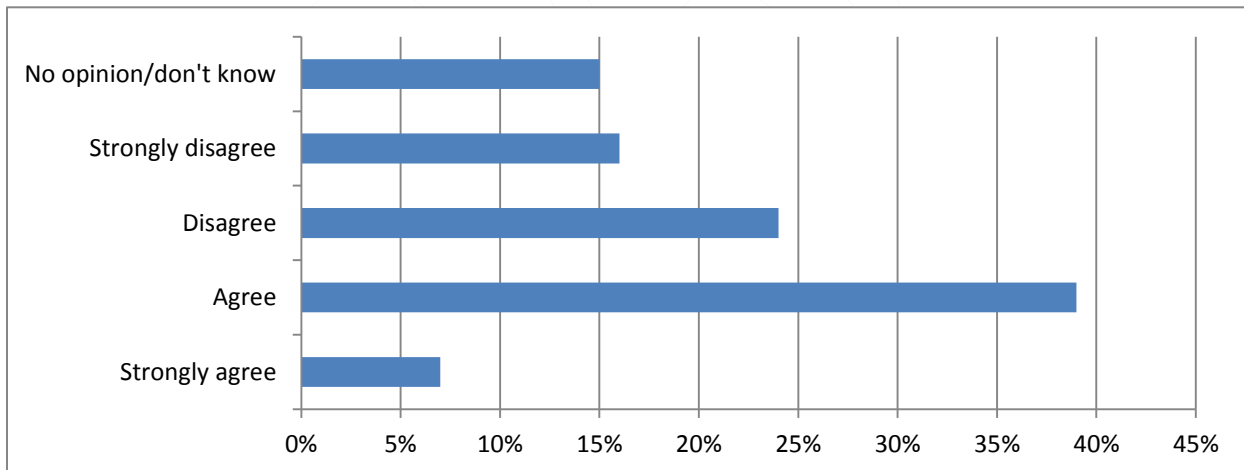
Responses	Answer Choices
56%	Agree
16%	Disagree
16%	Strongly agree
6%	No opinion/don't know
6%	Strongly disagree

**Q31: I receive training or development:**



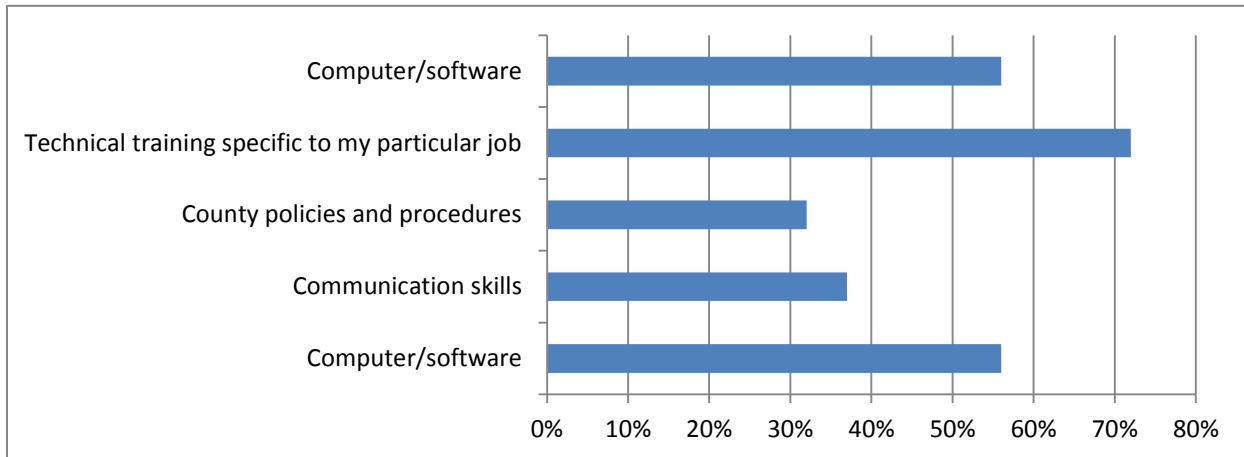
Responses	Answer Choices
31%	Quarterly
24%	Annually
12%	Monthly
4%	Daily
4%	Weekly

**Q32: Do you feel that there are promotional opportunities available to you within the County?**



Responses	Answer Choices
39%	Agree
24%	Disagree
16%	Strongly disagree
15%	No opinion/don't know
7%	Strongly agree

**Q33: I would be interested in access to training in the following area(s) (you may choose more than one):**



Responses	Answer Choices
72%	Technical training specific to my particular job
56%	Computer/software
37%	Communication skills
32%	County policies and procedures

**VI. OPTIONAL INTERACTIVE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

On the final page of the survey, two open-ended questions allowed County employees the opportunity to voice concerns outside the bounds of the structured questions. These questions, and corresponding results, are as follows:

**Q34: Is there anything that was not included in your responses that you would like to add with respect to workplace culture?**

Approximately 474 participants provided additional comments about the workplace culture, some of which were outside the scope of the structured questions. Of these 474 responses, 28 were highly positive – e.g. “my co-workers are the best!” – and 446 contained either negative comments or constructive criticism. Because these comments covered a myriad of topics and were often lengthy and incident specific, they are not easily summarized in a concise manner.

Many of the comments identified overall systemic issues in the County. Some comments referred to poor leadership – for example, supervisors were not taking “appropriate” actions; were treating employees inconsistently; and, were not supportive. Many employees raised concerns of nepotism, referring to the “good ol’ boy network.” Some expressed frustration with what they perceived as micromanagement by supervisors. The comments also revealed specific issues of challenging relationships between departments. Additionally, there were a substantial number of comments in which employees raised concerns of bullying, harassment, and retaliation.

Many other comments raised significant concerns focused on specific departments, and certain key administrators and elected department heads. The issues raised by participants were unique to the department or individual and cannot be summarized generally. Nor can these issues be addressed by general organizational change management, but instead will require focused developmental plans.

A sampling of the 476 responses to this question is as follows:

- “Too much micro-management by supervisors who appear to be competing with each other for promotion.”
- “Discipline is on a case by case basis. Too much favoritism – the ‘good ol’ boy’ system.”
- “I feel very strongly that the favoritism and nepotism in this department is out of control.[...]”
- “Management needs to stop thinking the workers are idiots. They need to believe in and have faith in the workers. Management says all the right things but they are so uptight. They have no trust in the workers.”
- “There is little respect between [departments [...]] There is a culture of ‘us against them’ where there is little understanding of the [departments...].”
- “I feel the County will say thank you verry much for the findings of this survey and then nothing will change.”
- “As a veteran employee of El Dorado County, I have seen the work environment erode over the past many years. It has gone from a workplace of respect and cooperative engagement in problems and issues to one of constant negativity and intimidation. This environment exists because there are a couple of [titles] who feel that they run the County and they have enough power to be able to control the negative environment. When an employee is targeted, it is unlikely they will ever be able to re-bound from it and ultimately they will either be demoted, moved to another position out of the line of fire or terminated. In some cases, if they are lucky, they may decide to resign or retire.”
- “I enjoy the work I do, however, I dread coming to work every day. I constantly worry if today is the day I will be verbally berated or punished for for something I didn’t do, or a mistake I made that doesn’t deserve the punishment or bereavement I receive. I work in a constant state of fear. I do not know who I can trust, and worry that a coworker might want my job and take advantage of the management situation and “throw me under the bus” for something I didn’t do using fabricated evidence.”
- “In my experience Department Heads and Managers are where the problem lies. Everyone is in someones pocket and if they dont like you they will work from the top down to make your life misserable or to get rid of you.”
- “There is no standard practice for addressing performance issues with department heads. Complaints are received at the highest levels of the organization and the issues are not



addressed in a timely manner. The County’s policies and procedures are painfully non-existent or antiquated.”

- “I have zero confidence the county will do anything about the corruption in my department. They have ignored all complaints. Nothing has changed.”
- “There is such a negative atmosphere the majority of the time. Most of us feel hopeless and come to work out of obligation instead of wanting to. The County has allowed bullying from Elected Officials, Directors, Supervisors and co-workers. When we mention that there is a problem with a coworker, it’s often turned around to being our fault, therefore, no one feels comfortable approaching their supervisor regarding issues with anyone as it will be used against you, even in writing. Supervisors have their favorites and if you’re not in the “in group”, you are less than and considered the problem. I have been with the County for 23 years, have a higher level position and have seen this type of atmosphere for the entire time I’ve been with the County.”

**Q35: Please provide any general topic area you would like to discuss such as: retaliation, harassment, equal employment opportunity issues, culture, workplace civility, etc.:**

The following is a list of the topics that employees requested to discuss:

Retaliation (18)	Harassment (11)	Culture (11)
Workplace Civility (7)	Equal Employment Opportunity (8)	Lack of Training (2)
Hostile Work Environment (2)	Job Classification (1)	Misuse of Power (1)
Accountability (1)	Communication (1)	Favoritism (1)
Salary (1)	Payment of Vendors (1)	Safety Regulations (1)
Micro-Managing (1)	Management Style (1)	Office Politics (1)

VII. CONCLUSION

This concludes the summary of the results of the anonymous survey.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sue Ann Van Dermyden

DRAFT