



## Chapter 9

## Workplace Culture







# Work Place Culture Assessment

## Introduction

The consultant team conducted a Work Place Culture assessment for the purpose of evaluating the employee work environment, relationships in the work place, role and purpose in the job fit, and assessing job satisfaction, communication and organizational structure of the department.

The following process was used for data and input for the assessment:

- Conduct a work culture workshop presentation
- Dispense a 50 question survey to all staff who work 35 hours or more
- Interview 12 full time staff
- Interview with the Executive Director
- Analyze job descriptions and fit for positions
- Analyze data from the staff to assess report
- Produce recommendations for the report

## Background Research:

Research reveals that there is a direct link between engaged employees and better business results. The more employees are engaged, the better results for the agency, happier participants and stakeholders, and more productive and innovative that employee will be. To accomplish such a task, it is vital that leaders and their employees get on the same page with common goals, values and purpose. When there is a disconnect between the leader and their employees, research tells us performance as well as revenue are at risk. The strongest foundation a leader needs to build is trust. When trust resides in an operation, cooperation and collaboration are at its peak performance in the staff.

Since the traumatic event of September 11, there has been a shift in the way employees work to obtain their full potential. The last seventeen years, our country has experienced high levels of anxiety due to those creating

fear, such as bullying, violence on school campus' and churches, as well as ISIS. The global tension is extremely high and we've experienced more natural disasters than ever in past history. Due to this time in history, employees are seeking a psychologically and physically safe environment to work in. Employees desire an environment where trust between staff and leadership is crucial. When this cohesiveness happens, a company will thrive and grow as well as an increase in performance with staff.

Leadership, as well as managers must change as it will improve operations and high level of staff engagement. Employees are seeking to be lead and inspired. It is vital that staff are not only provided appropriate training and development, but have a work environment where leadership demonstrate empathy, sacrifice, recognition for hard work and the willingness to protect the staff from psychological dangers as well as physical.

Understanding the changing society trends is another area effecting the work place culture. All service related positions and agencies absorb the culture and climate of the society. One area to take into consideration is the shift in family dynamics, immigration, millennials' as well as the acceptance of the LGBTQ community. The park and recreation department needs to adjust their programming and work place culture in order to be as equitable as possible in distribution, diversity and inclusion.

The last area that links work place culture and improved performance is the area of technology. Too much exposure to social media, and technology can present emotional and physical/ health issues among employees. Research tells us that individuality is contributing toward anxiety, depression and poor work performance. Because we are designed as social beings, working in teams provides better innovation and

performance in the work place. Human connection and conversation is proven to work better than sending a text or email.

The following section will reveal the finding from a 50 question survey given to 12 employees who work 35 hours or more at the Munster Park and Recreation Department. These findings are based on a scale from 1- 5 and will reveal the average score. (1 being low, 5 being high)

### Questionnaire Findings

Communication:	3.5
Work place Satisfaction:	4.0
Compensation:	2.0
Resources:	4.0
Performance Accountability:	2.0
Personal Expression:	3.5
Diversity:	3.5
Feedback:	2.0
Quality of Customer Focus:	4.0
Fairness and Teamwork:	4.0
Opportunities for Growth:	3.0
Respect for Management:	3.5
Desire merit-based pay	4.0

Figure 27: Questionnaire Findings

### Organizational Structure:

The breakdown of the Munster Parks and Recreation Department consists of managing the organization structure of Board of Directors, City Council, Town Manager, Executive Director, Maintenance staff (Parks), and Recreation staff. The significant challenge of making a more personal and meaningful connection between each of these roles and responsibilities is of utmost importance. As each role is important to the town of Munster, each function must show support toward a common goal and purpose.

Each culture individually works very well together on

their own as they share common interest and purpose, however, aligning the mission, core values, and purpose will allow for more connection and support between these distinct roles and responsibilities. Overcoming the disconnect is the key as these separate cultures mend together the staff morale. Engagement will increase in job satisfaction and performance. When this cohesiveness improves, there will be an overall improvement in revenue as well.

Of the twelve employees who took the survey, they described the organizational culture as follows: “overworked, understaffed, unappreciated, demanding, favoritism, comfortable, teamwork, happy, micromanaged, rewarding, loyalty, challenging, stressful, old school, dedicated and adaptive.”

Although employees find their work challenging, and rewarding, there is very little room for advancement or promotion. In organizational structure it is important to provide opportunities for promotion and advancement. If an organization does not have that kind of capacity, it’s vital to provide feedback, reviews and recognition for accomplishments.

In the area of work- life balance, the maintenance staff do not believe they have the balance they need in order to provide the quality of work they want to provide the town of Munster. The concern these employees have is genuine as they need the safety and proper rest to do their jobs well.

The Following section is based on the last question from the survey in which employees were asked what they would like to happen here at the Munster Park and Recreation Department in their work place. This is a summary of their comments on culture only.

### Work Culture Wish List:

- More capable help
- Increase in pay
- Better communication between Rec Dept. and Parks Dept.

- More cohesive/ efficient work space with separate office/ desk/ proper storage
- Ability to take registration on all computers
- More recognition and value for what we accomplish
- More social time with co-workers
- More support from senior management
- Competitive- merit based salary
- Less favoritism
- More opportunities for growth and development/training
- Restructure of job titles to better fit duties more accurately
- More employee bonding
- Everyone treated equal
- Better computers, desks, and software
- More work spirit (afternoon or family day)
- More ways for advancement
- Job titles that fit what we do
- More recognition from Board and Town Manager
- More time to further relationships between Recreation staff and Maintenance staff
- Updated office especially the carpet.
- To be valued, respected and appreciated
- More functional work space
- New Rec Center facility, indoor pool, Kitchen, storage areas, classrooms for fitness, 2 basketball courts, arts and crafts room.
- Registration access on all computers
- Reimbursement for cell phone use
- Use overtime as comp time
- Wear more jeans to work

Figure 28: Work Culture Wish List

### Interviews

On February 22, the recreation, maintenance staff and Executive Director were interviewed by members of the consultant team. The purpose of the interviews was to gain additional information that would further assist in the work culture assessment. The confidential

interviews were approximately 30- 45 minutes allowing the employee to share any thoughts, concerns, and desires for the Munster Parks and Recreation Department. The goal was to look for consistent concerns, and common thoughts in order to better assist the leadership of Munster Parks and Recreation Department.

The following are the consistent common thoughts, concerns and desires from the Recreation and Maintenance staff:

- Job descriptions need to be adjusted to better fit the role of employee
- Over worked and understaffed
- Better pay for part-time employees
- Updated/ more functional office space
- Salary not competitive
- Under appreciated
- Never had a review
- Overall great teamwork and happy
- Disconnect with Board and Town Manager
- Desire for a Recreation Center

### Executive Director Interview Summary:

The Executive Director has a good handle on the staff as well as their needs and desires. He is well liked and respected from the staff. His leadership style is a “team player” which is what employees are looking for. He is not a micro-manager and appears to trust and appreciate his staff. He admits there is no perfect culture and would like to hire more staff and reward those who work extremely hard for the Department. He agrees with the staff for better and updated office space and the desire for a recreation center. He is open and willing to make any and all changes that are necessary.

## Recommendations

1. Continue to work on job descriptions to better align employee tasks and responsibilities.
2. Consider higher quality training and pay for part-time staff
3. Consider hiring more staff for maintenance team to ensure adequate time off for rest and safety purposes.
4. Ensure recreation staff receives multiple opportunities for learning and training for future ideas, trends and successful programs.
5. Ensure all staff receives feedback and twice a year reviews.
6. To improve the area of “disconnect”, arrange quarterly times for maintenance, recreation, and board members to enjoy social times together.
7. Consider the recreation office space to be updated and more efficient.
8. Consider merit-based pay for full time staff.