Strategies for Addressing NDDOT Employee Retention and Motivation

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Acknowledgments

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ABSTRACT

Human capital is the most critical asset in determining the success of an organization. Therefore, it is important to address issues that adversely affect the contributions that human capital can make. This idea accounts for why organizations have become more interested in assessing their own health or climate. It is no longer enough to simply conduct employee satisfaction surveys. It is important to the organization's bottom line to know how the organization is doing in many areas and to continually work toward improvement.

The general goal of this study was to examine organizational issues that affect employee motivation and retention. To obtain information about these issues that could be qualitatively analyzed and compared from state to state, we conducted face-to-face interviews with two or three individuals at the Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming, and Montana DOTs. The results of the first phase of this study were primarily used as background information for the next phase of the study, which focused on organizational health in the North Dakota DOT.

The second phase of the study included organization-wide surveys of managers and employees, and focus group discussions to follow up on the survey results. Survey results suggested that employees had positive opinions about the work environment, but more negative opinions concerning some of the policies surrounding pay and performance management. The focus group discussions served to clarify some information from the surveys and to suggest possible improvements for the organization.

**STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING NDDOT EMPLOYEE
RETENTION AND MOTIVATION**

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Recent research has shown that organizational climate or health is related to the organization's

human resources practices and to specific organizational outcomes, such as customer satisfaction.[1] An

earlier study also showed that employee attitudes about various work environment issues were related

to the organizations' level of employee turnover, financial performance, and customer satisfaction.[2]

Researchers have made the link between certain types of socialization programs for new hires and the

retention rate of those newcomers to the organization.[3] In addition, Griffeth and Hom, experts in the

area of employee retention, compiled information from many studies showing that job enrichment and

supportive supervision are related to reductions in the amount of unwanted employee turnover.[4] These

findings account for why organizations have become more interested in assessing their own health or

climate. It is no longer enough to just conduct employee satisfaction surveys. It is important to the

organization's bottom line to know how the organization is doing in many areas and to continually work

toward improvement.

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[1]Rogga, K., Schmidt, D., Shull, C., & Schmitt, N. (2001). Human resource practices, organizational climate, and customer satisfaction. Journal of Management.

[2]Ryan, A. M., Schmit, M. J., & Johnson, R. (1996). Attitudes and effectiveness: examining relations at an organizational level. Personnel Psychology, 49, 853-882.

[3]Ashforth, B. & Saks, A. (1996). Socialization tactics: longitudinal effects on newcomer adjustment. Academy of Management Journal, 39, 149-178.

[4]Griffeth, R. & Hom, P. (2001). Retaining Valued Employees. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

As a result, this study was designed to ultimately provide information about the organizational health of the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT). Specific objectives for the study included the following.

- Quantify and qualify the scope and seriousness of the problem of voluntary turnover and employee motivation issues on a regional basis.

- Assess perceptions of NDDOT employees and managers regarding organizational health factors that can influence employee motivation and retention.

- Identify and evaluate suggestions for potentially improving retention and motivation among NDDOT employees.

The first step in the process was to collect background information and benchmarking data from other state departments of transportation (DOTs) in the Mountain Plains region. This was accomplished by conducting interviews with individuals from seven state DOTs. Once that information had been collected, the second phase of the project involved the development, distribution, and analysis of surveys completed by NDDOT employees and managers. The final step in the project was to gather more specific information about some issues highlighted in the surveys through focus group discussions. Each of the phases of the project will be described in greater detail in subsequent sections of this report.

The following sections of this report will describe the general methods and procedures utilized throughout the project, the specific data gathering techniques and results for each phase of the project, and the resulting summarized conclusions and recommendations for the NDDOT. Each of the specific phases of the project will be outlined separately in order to maintain the relatively independent nature of each of these steps in the process of completing this study.

CHAPTER TWO: GENERAL METHODOLOGY

A technical advisory committee was created to provide guidance and technical assistance with the design and implementation of the study. The committee included nine individuals from the Federal Highway Administration, Eno Transportation Foundation, the NDDOT, and the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department.

The general methods used to accomplish the goals of this study were quite varied. Both qualitative and quantitative data-gathering techniques were employed. The specific methods utilized included individual interviews, organizational surveys, and focus group discussions.

The overall goal of the study was to examine organizational issues that affect employee motivation and retention. To obtain information about these issues that could be qualitatively analyzed and compared from state to state, we conducted face-to-face interviews with two or three individuals at the Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming, and Montana DOTs. The results of these interviews were primarily used as background information for the subsequent steps of the study, which focused on organizational health in the NDDOT.

The second and third parts of the study included organization-wide surveys of managers and employees, and focus group discussions to follow up on the survey results. Surveys were developed to address general issues affecting motivation and retention, in addition to issues that were specific to the NDDOT. All NDDOT employees and managers were given surveys to complete in order to allow every NDDOT employee to express his or her opinions. Alternatively, the focus group discussions were designed to allow small groups of NDDOT employees and managers to clarify some information from the surveys and to suggest possible improvements for the organization.

CHAPTER THREE: REGIONAL INTERVIEWS

Research Methodology

In July and August 2001, face-to-face interviews focused on employee retention and motivation were conducted with two or three employees from each of the seven DOTs included in the first phase of this regional study. The seven states that participated were North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Wyoming, and Montana. These states were chosen for their geographic proximity to one another and for other similarities, including financial situations and external environments.

In each state, the predetermined questions were asked of one Human Resources (HR) representative and one or two other employees from the DOT. Three interviewers, two from Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute and one from the NDDOT, participated in all but the NDDOT interviews. The interviews consisted of several items assessing general organizational issues such as communication, technology, and structure and many items focusing specifically on employee retention and motivation. Interviews lasted from 30 minutes to two hours, depending on the knowledge level and the willingness of the interviewee. All questions were not asked of every employee. Questions that focused specifically on the technical aspects of HR policies and practices only were asked of the HR representative at each DOT. The specific questions asked and the full summary of results from these interviews are included in Appendix A. However, several key points are outlined below.

Interview Highlights

Through the interview process, we were made aware of several innovative practices or programs that certain states had implemented or were in the process of implementing. Although some of these best practices are not specifically in the areas of employee retention and motivation, each of them contributes to the environment of the organization, which affects employee morale, motivation, and retention. The following list outlines best practices and programs along with the state or states that have implemented them.

- Formal succession planning is done in the Minnesota DOT at the highest levels. They currently are working to include other levels of employees in this program. This planning helps management develop a pool of employees who could potentially move to other positions in the organization.

- Mentoring programs are used for the development of employees in the Minnesota and the Wyoming DOTs. Although this mentoring may not be used with every employee, the beginning of this type of formal program in each of these organizations was seen as a strength.

- Self-directed work teams have been developed and used in Iowa and Wyoming to allow more start-to-finish work in some of the technical positions in the organization. Iowa's program is well-established and ongoing.

- Strong leadership in Nebraska has made the powerful vision of the director known to employees throughout the organization.

- An organizational health study has been conducted in South Dakota by its well-respected research division. The study was designed to assess many organizational factors that directly influence the behavior of employees, including staff competency, communication, work environment, and training and development. The research division has already conducted a follow up of its original study to determine whether desired changes have taken place.

- Rotation programs for new engineers are being used in Minnesota and Montana. These programs currently allow new engineers to rotate through different areas in the organization for a specified period of time.

- Montana is developing performance plans that will lead to changes in pay. Their goal is to move toward paying for performance and competencies rather than for seniority.
- An annual termination report which includes turnover by job title, location, and reason for leaving, is completed by the NDDOT. The report allows management to see where and why employees are leaving the organization.

There also were some areas where all of the DOTs that we interviewed could make improvements. The most consistent areas for improvement are listed below.

- DOTs should make better use of the information they obtain from their exit interviews. This was an area in which all seven DOTs were weak. This exit interview information could be used to determine trends in voluntary terminations, including why people are leaving, what jobs or other opportunities they may have had in hand, and what the DOT could have done to retain them.

- Workforce development should continue to be a goal for the DOTs. None of the DOTs we spoke with use individualized training or development plans, nor did they have various career ladders that allow employees to choose between technical and management career options.

- Rewarding high performing employees should continue to be a high priority. Many interviewees reported that there are few, if any, rewards for high performers. Although monetary rewards may not always be feasible, employees can sometimes be rewarded in other ways. Recognition and praise, as well as, new and challenging projects or assignments can be effective. Also, many of the employees indicated a desire to have flexibility in their work and working hours. Such perks could serve as rewards for high performing employees as well.

The interviews conducted for phase one of the Strategies for Addressing DOT Employee Retention and Motivation study contained a great deal of interesting and useful information (see Appendix A). The specific information reported by employees of the NDDOT indicated a few areas of concern that needed to be addressed in the second phase of the study. The issues that were noted in the NDDOT interviews included the following:

- There was some concern about micro-management and determining who has the responsibility and authority for making certain decisions.

- There was also a concern that without rewards for good performers, every one is treated the same, making it difficult to keep good employees motivated.

- Some of the employees reported frustration about slow deployment of new technology.

To allow all employees and managers in the NDDOT to have a chance to express their

opinions on issues highlighted in the interviews, survey questions were designed to specifically address

the areas of technology, accountability and decision making, and performance management. In

addition, many other issues affecting organizational health also were included as part of the surveys in

the second phase of this project.

CHAPTER FOUR: ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH SURVEYS

Research Methodology

The first step in this phase of the project was to conduct an organization-wide survey to assess employees' attitudes and perceptions about organizational issues. Two surveys were developed; one for managers (see Appendix B) and the second was for all other employees (see Appendix C). The management and employee surveys contained the same types of questions, although they were worded slightly different, with some questions in the employee survey being focused specifically on the individual's job.

Both surveys included two main sections. The first section contained questions assessing general organizational issues, including structure, climate, supervision, innovation, human resource development (HRD), performance management, accountability, technology, communication, and motivation and retention. Some of these issues or dimensions were included to gain more information on topics that seemed to stand out in the interviews we conducted in Phase 1; others were included to assess general organizational health, in accordance with standardized instruments, such as the *Survey of Organizations*.[5] The second section of the survey contained questions that focused more specifically on issues related to employee motivation and retention, including job characteristics, organizational commitment, career development, and compensation.

The surveys were comprised of several different items. Various statements requiring ratings, open-ended questions, and demographic items all were included in the surveys. Ratings of statements

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[5]Taylor, J. & Bowers, D. (1972). Survey of organizations: a machine scored standardized questionnaire instrument. Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.

were based on a one to five scale, with a rating of one representing strongly disagree and a rating of five representing strongly agree. All statements were written in the positive frame of reference to avoid confusion about the statements' meaning. Open-ended questions asked for respondents' opinions about how to deal with motivation and retention issues. Responses to these questions were categorized and summarized to protect the confidentiality of the respondents. The demographic items included in the survey assessed whether the employee was located in the Field or Central Office, the tenure as a NDDOT employee, gender, age, level of education, and functional job category.

Once an initial draft of the survey was completed, it was sent to every member of the technical advisory committee for their review and input. Some members of the committee gave constructive feedback for changing the survey in various ways. Suggested changes were made before the final draft of the survey was sent to the management team at the NDDOT for approval.

Surveys, which were accompanied by a letter from the NDDOT Director encouraging participation, were distributed to every employee at the NDDOT in January 2002. Employees initially were given one week to return the surveys in the business reply envelopes to the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute. However, the response rate in the first week was less than originally predicted. To increase the final return rate, employees were given two extra weeks to return their surveys. Fifty-two management and 968 employee surveys were originally distributed. Of those surveys, 39 manager and 672 employee surveys were completed and returned, giving an overall return rate of 70 percent.

Survey Results: Demographics

Although much care was taken to limit the amount of demographic information that was requested on the survey, many people left several items, or the entire section, blank. The goal was to get enough information that important comparisons could be made, but to avoid specific requests for information that could identify a certain individual or small groups of individuals. Despite the effort to protect anonymity of respondents, the results indicated that between 4 percent and 7 percent of the demographic information was missing or blank. The demographic information available from the completed management and employee surveys is displayed in Appendices B and C, respectively. A brief examination of the demographics of the survey respondents showed that they matched those of the population of NDDOT employees as a whole. As a result, it is reasonable to generalize the survey results to the entire population of the NDDOT.

Survey Results: Section 1

Responses on the first section of the survey were averaged across all respondents. Responses on the questions for each dimension also were averaged to obtain overall ratings. As a result, the mean or average response was obtained for each of the dimensions measured in Section 1. Analyses were conducted to ensure reliability of each of the dimensions. These analyses were calculated to show that all questions assessing a dimension were strongly related to one another. Results indicated that each of the dimensions had an acceptable level of consistency or reliability among the questions making up the dimension. The following table displays the mean responses (from ratings on the 1 to 5 scale) of employees and managers on each of these dimensions.

Dimension	Employees	Managers
Organizational Structure	3.13	3.37
Organizational Climate	3.36	3.74
Supervision	3.31	3.71
Innovation	3.05	3.26
Human Resource Develop.	2.73	3.35
Performance Management	2.74	2.71
Accountability	2.80	2.94
Technology	3.21	3.30
Communication	3.02	3.48
Motivation/Retention	2.83	3.31

By looking at the means in the table, one can see that there were areas in which the organization

was doing well. These organizational strengths all had means over 3.2 on the 1-5 scale. For

employees, the areas of strength in the organization were climate, supervision, and technology. In this

project, organization climate referred to work environment and co-workers. The supervision dimension

was assessed by whether supervisors encouraged and provided help and training to employees for the

purpose of improving their performance. The technology questions focused on the level and timeliness

of individual support. Managers also thought that organizational climate and supervision were strengths,

but instead of technology, saw communication as an additional strength. Communication was assessed

by questions about the access to other employees, voicing opinions, dealing with conflicts, and generally

being informed. The actual number of employees who gave each response for every question in the

communication and other dimensions are displayed in Appendix C. The management responses are documented in Appendix B.

There also were some dimensions that were rated more negatively, having means under 3.0 on the 1-5 scale. The dimensions having the lowest ratings for employees were human resource development, performance management, and accountability. Human resource development questions in the survey assessed the recruiting, hiring, developing, and promoting of employees. The performance management dimension included items assessing whether there was an appropriate difference between pay to high performing and average employees, whether the performance assessment system was perceived as fair and met the NDDOT's needs, whether rewards and recognition were prevalent, and whether performance standards were clear. Accountability questions focused on formal authority and decision making, rewards for good performance, and reprimands for poor performance. The lowest rated dimensions by managers were performance management and accountability, as well. However, managers rated HRD relatively positively, showing a large discrepancy between manager and employee ratings.

Section 1: Different Results Based upon Demographic Information

Analyses were conducted to look at potential differences among the job categories included in the survey: administrative, engineering, information technology, maintenance, driver and vehicle services, and construction. Results showed that there were differences among the groups in the organizational climate, supervision, HRD, performance management, accountability, communication, and motivation and retention. In most cases, responses by the maintenance group were more negative than those in the

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other job categories. However, in the HRD, motivation and retention, and accountability dimensions, the responses by those in construction also were more negative than those from other job groups. In the survey, motivation and retention was assessed by questions focused on the morale and motivation of employees, in addition to whether the NDDOT is able to retain qualified workers.

Analyses also were conducted to examine differences between the job locations (Central Office or the Field) and the gender of respondents. Those in the Field gave responses that were more negative than in Central Office on the organizational climate, supervision, innovation, HRD, communication, and motivation and retention dimensions. In addition, males were more negative about HRD than were females, even when the length of tenure was taken into account. However, tenure of employees was found to be related to the responses given on many dimensions. Results showed that the longer the employees had been with the DOT, the more negative they were about structure, climate, supervision, HRD, performance management, accountability, and communication. Organizational structure was assessed by questions concerning employee and group roles, structure of jobs, and the hierarchy.

Survey Results: Section 2

As in the first section of the survey, analyses were conducted to determine whether the questions associated with each dimension were consistent or reliable. Again, for each of the dimensions listed above, the analyses showed acceptable reliability among the questions assessing a particular category.

The survey results of Section 2 were positive overall. The following table displays the mean responses (from ratings on the 1 to 5 scale) of employees and managers on each of the dimensions measured in Section 2 of the survey.

Dimension	**Employees**	**Managers**
Job Characteristics	3.52	3.46
Organizational Commitment	3.45	3.35
Career Development	3.11	3.55
Compensation	2.55	2.46

Both employee and manager results showed that responses concerning characteristics of the job (variety of tasks, autonomy, feedback, etc.), commitment to the organization, and career development (learning, training, and advancement opportunities) were favorable. All of these dimensions had means greater than 3.1 on the 1-5 scale. In addition, employees reported high levels of job satisfaction at the NDDOT, with a mean of 3.5. Alternatively, the mean ratings associated with the compensation dimension were below 2.6 for managers and employees.

Survey respondents also were asked to prioritize 18 issues in terms of how well they motivate employees. Employees and managers ranked compensation as the highest priority. Other issues rated highly by employees were benefits and job security. This result was surprising since surveys conducted in other organizations typically show that employees are most motivated by career growth and opportunities. Managers were more consistent with the typical findings, in that they ranked opportunities for growth and advancement and rewards for performance as the next highest priorities

following compensation. Employees and managers rated formalized rules and procedures as the issue of least priority in terms of motivation. All of the employee ratings are displayed in Appendix C; management ratings are shown in Appendix B.

Managers also were asked to mark which of the 18 potentially motivating aspects of the job and organization would require additional funding. Only four of the issues were reported as needing additional funds by a substantial number of managers. The largest percentage of managers indicated that compensation needed additional funding (69 percent), followed by benefits (59 percent), new equipment and technology (54 percent), and rewards for good performance (46 percent). Unfortunately, two aspects of the job and organization that employees rated as having the highest priority also are the two aspects that the majority of managers reported as needing extra funding. This finding suggests that funding will continue to need consideration in the development of any plans focused on enhancing employee motivation.

Section 2: Different Results Based on Demographic Information

As was done for the Section 1 results, analyses were conducted to examine differences in the ratings of dimensions among job categories. Results showed that for the job characteristics, career development, and compensation dimensions, responses given by those in maintenance were more negative than other job categories. Construction also was lower than other job groups on the job characteristics dimension. Even though there were differences on many of these dimensions, there were no differences in job satisfaction among respondents in various job categories. Employees generally were satisfied with their jobs at the NDDOT.

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There also were differences in responses based on the respondents' job location, gender, and tenure. Ratings given by those in the Field were more negative than in Central Office on the job characteristics, organizational commitment, career development, and compensation dimensions. Also, males were more negative than females on questions assessing job characteristics and career development. Tenure of employees also was found to be related to the responses given on one dimension. Results showed that the longer the employees had been with the NDDOT, the more negative they were about career development opportunities.

Survey Results: Open-Ended Questions

In addition to having respondents rate various statements throughout the survey, open-ended questions were used to obtain opinions about how to deal with retention and motivation issues at the NDDOT. Employees were asked to report aspects of the job and organization that kept them working for the NDDOT. The most common responses were the benefits (272 people) and the actual work duties and tasks (234 people). However, 136 people also cited coworkers as another reason they have continued to work for the NDDOT. Employees also were asked what could be done to retain qualified employees at the NDDOT. The most common responses to this question were:

- to increase pay (381 people)
- to treat employees well and with respect (33 people)
- to improve benefits (49 people)

Using a pay-for-performance plan also was suggested by 29 respondents.

Managers were asked for their opinions regarding motivation and retention, as well. In response to a question asking for a realistic approach for dealing with NDDOT employee motivation

and retention, the most common response was to improve pay and/or benefits. The managers made

this suggestion. Other common answers to the question were:

- to challenge employees (five people)
- to offer rewards or incentives (four people)
- to deal with negative or poor performing employees (four people)
- to encourage less micro-management (four people)

The numbers of people who gave each response were small because suggestions from managers varied

widely on this question. These findings indicate that there is not a consensus about the best way of

dealing with employee retention and motivation issues.

Current Survey Results Compared to Previous

To determine whether there have been any changes in perceptions of employees over the last

few years, the current survey results were compared with those that were obtained from an employee

survey conducted in 1999. Because the surveys measured some different dimensions and included

different questions, only general comparisons could be made.

Results from the earlier survey showed that employees rated the categories of equal

opportunity, working conditions, and supervision most positively. These results are similar to findings

obtained in the current survey, which indicated that employees were most positive about the work

environment and supervision, as well. However, equal opportunity was not specifically measured in the

current survey, instead, technological resources and support received high ratings in this most recent

survey.

Similar findings were evident in the areas where employees had more negative perceptions. In both surveys, compensation was rated most negatively. In the earlier survey, professional ethics and training also were rated more negatively. Although the current survey did not have those exact same categories, the HRD and performance management dimensions that were rated more negatively did include some of the same issues. For example, the HRD dimension in the current survey did have one question specifically addressing training opportunities at the NDDOT. However, it may be that training is an area that has improved over the three years since the last survey was conducted. By examining responses given to the question assessing training (displayed in Appendix C), it seems that training was rated more positively than other issues included in the HRD dimension, thus supporting the idea that perceptions of training have improved.

CHAPTER FIVE: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Research Methodology

Focus group discussions were conducted with five groups of NDDOT employees in July 2002. The goal of the discussions was to further explore certain issues that had been raised in the organization-wide survey and to come up with some suggestions for possible improvements. The five groups that participated in the discussions included workers of mixed occupations from the eastern district; workers of mixed occupations from the western district; Central Office employees with over five years experience; Central Office employees with less than five years experience; and managers.

The number of people in each group ranged from seven to nine, with a total of 41 individuals participating. People were allowed to volunteer to be part of the pool from which focus groups were assembled. Other participants were chosen randomly in the constraints listed above for each group. Each of the sessions lasted 2.5 hours. Two individuals from the UGPTI took part in all of the sessions. This allowed one person to facilitate discussion, while the other kept detailed notes. Group members were led through questions in each of four areas that had been highlighted by the earlier survey results. These areas were:

- work environment
- performance management
- human resource development
- compensation

Focus group participants for each of these areas were asked:

- What is NDDOT doing well?
- What are the problems?
- What can realistically be done to make positive changes?

Information from all five focus groups is summarized on the following pages. It is organized into the four general areas that were addressed during the discussions. For each area, the positive aspects are listed first, concerns next, and suggestions for improvements are listed at the end of the section. Suggestions are broken down into specific categories. For example, the human resource development suggestions are broken down into the following categories:

- recruitment, hiring, and promotion
- training and development
- other HR-related issues

All information from the focus groups was summarized by using as much of the original wording as possible to maintain the integrity of the participants' ideas. The number of groups that discussed each item is noted in parentheses following the item.

Summary of Focus Group Information

Work Environment

What is NDDOT doing well in this area?

- good co-workers and employees/longevity (three groups)
- flexibility in time–flexible schedules; can take one-hour increments of time off (all groups)
- good benefits (three groups)
- good, improved equipment (two groups)
- job security (four groups)
- good facility; air conditioning (one group)
- resource people to help with benefits and questions (one group)
- social times together with co-workers–cookouts, pizza parties, Christmas party (one group)
- communication is improving; upper management group is more open (three groups)
- some money spent to help enforce speed limits in work zones (one group)
- a big improvement in working and sharing information with other districts (one group)
- good relationships with supervisors (two groups)

- diversity of jobs in the department–can try different positions; lateral moves (two groups; not a consensus)
- DOT stays aware of family issues, concerns, and events (one group)
- new employee manual is a good reference (one group)
- training opportunities (one group)
- welcoming atmosphere to new hires (one group)
- some employees experience good public perception of the organization (one group)

What are some concerns?

- micro-management (one group)
- nothing changes; gather data, but no action after concerns are expressed (one group)
- morale issues—compensation (one group)
- Central Office does not regard local employees positively (one group)
- maintenance and construction are important when needed, but are the least regarded of working groups; the jobs are the most risky and hazardous (two groups)
- trust of management is not there (one group)
- no feeling of teamwork (one group)
- poor communication from management, especially on projects at the organizational level; need more follow up information (two groups)
- shouldn't have to use vacation and/or sick days when you are hurt on the job (one group)
- lack of windows; enclosed work spaces (one group)
- concern about asbestos in Central Office (two groups)
- lack of parking for visitors and employees; employee parking lot is confusing (two groups)
- negative public perception of DOT employees (one group)
- traffic is hazardous in highway maintenance; public needs to be patient with delays (one group)
- some buildings are old and outdated (two groups)
- crowded work stations; lack of privacy; limited space (two groups)
- office furnishings are old and outdated (two groups)
- few opportunities in the districts for job changes/promotions without relocating (one group)
- motor vehicle located in the auditorium–very crowded and inefficiently arranged (one group)
- poor air quality and air handling systems in the buildings (two groups)
- increased security after 9/11 did not last; is now much more relaxed (one group)
- need software, technology, and equipment upgrades (one group)
- long-term employees are resistant to change, especially when implementing a new process or re-introducing an idea (one group)
- there is a lack of repercussions when a job isn't done by a worker (one group)
- giving too much work to consultants (one group)

Suggestions for this area:

<u>Work atmosphere/communication</u>

- take action on employee suggestions (one group)
- give good direct communications; don't withhold information from employees (two groups)
- need more cohesiveness with bigger group–department-wide meetings (one group)
- more social opportunities/fun competition (one group)
- could use memos to give information about the budget and progress of projects in relation to other organizational issues; could also be addressed in division staff meetings (one group)

<u>Physical working conditions</u>

- need to enforce speed limits in work zones, especially with temporary (smaller) jobs, like patching, etc. (one group)
- lobby for new legislation for mandatory speed limits in work zones (one group)

Performance Management

What is the NDDOT doing well in this area?

- employees are allowed to cash overtime hours into comp time (one group)
- some feedback for performance is given (one group)
- self-evaluation part of appraisal is good (three groups–not a consensus)
- during flood duty–some small rewards and thank yous were given (one group)
- organization is <u>trying</u> to improve on evaluation process and forms–new process has good potential (three groups)
- updating of PIQs; work elements are related to the PIQ–the effort is good (two groups)
- basic management structure is good–supervisors have open door (three groups), but dependent on the immediate supervisor–some are not effective (one group)
- day-to-day, workers who have been with the organization know what is expected of them (two groups)
- appreciate the more frequent (quarterly) feedback (two groups)
- more training opportunities available (one group)
- current merit raises and discretionary money (one group–not a consensus)
- praise and recognition are sometimes put in the "Grapevine" (one group)
- job standards are written (one group)
- can get rid of poor performers if necessary, but it is a long, complicated process (one group)
- good to have division heads as a check on supervisor ratings (one group)

What are some concerns?

- always "standard" or "satisfactory" on the performance evaluations; the steps above and below average are huge; no explanations are given with "average" ratings (four groups)
- employees are not given respect–only intermittent verbal or written praise (one group)
- some managers have difficulty dealing with problem employees; poor performers affect public perception (three groups)
- employees have more than one supervisor; support level above immediate supervisor is questionable (three groups)
- some managers have good technical skills, but not good people skills (in supervisory positions–role has been forced on them); training can't always help this (one group)
- employees close to retirement are always rated standard; get smaller raises (one group)
- questions of how performance evaluation ties in with compensation; unsure of how management comes to decisions on merit raises; raises are basically equal (four groups)
- inconsistent use of evaluation process by supervisors (three groups)
- evaluation form is changed too often–expectations differ from year to year; glitches with this transition (two groups)
- "be happy you have a job" attitude, at times (one group)
- new hires do not necessarily know what is expected of them; job standards may be too general or may not reflect the job accurately (three groups)
- difficult for employees to move upward (one group)
- no incentive to work hard; no distinction of harder workers from the rest (two groups)
- merit raises are discounted by "catch up" or equity raises–where poor performers are rewarded (two groups)
- new hires may be making as much as someone who has been in the organization for 15 years (with step raises); the ranges overlap too much (one group)
- PIQs are outdated (one group)
- evaluations are based on most recent month's performance–employee works more productively in that last month (one group)
- appears that some people who do more "special projects" get more recognition (one group)

Suggestions for this area:

Performance evaluations, two-way communication, and feedback

- evaluate for the job the person is doing, not just what the job is supposed to be (two groups)
- supervisors need to praise and punish; put notes of praise in the employee file and examples of work behaviors on the evaluations (three groups)
- supervisors need to look beyond the form and give good, regular feedback to employees on job performance, not just formal feedback (one group)
- implement bottom-up evaluations; so that supervisors can improve/develop (two groups)

- train supervisors in evaluating and giving feedback, also in decision making (one group)
- develop a system to measure performance at the individual, group, and organizational levels (one group)
- clarify information on the evaluations (self-evaluation part) to eliminate confusion (one group)
- have upper management come around more often so they can see what's going on (one group)
- listen to employees on how to cut waste and work more efficiently; change attitude that those without four-year degree don't have valuable input (one group)
- employees should be able to give input; involve employees in decision making (two groups)

Raises and pay for performance

- compensate for added responsibilities or use of special skills (two groups)
- implement policy as stated rather than "to the discretion of district supervisor"–should be the same across the state (one group)
- more money for merit raises (substantial, not minimal) (two groups)
- have open communication about available funding and possible raises (one group)
- let employees know at what level a decision was made (one group)
- raises should be based on performance of job, not who you are or department where you work–some are not regarded as valuable as others (two groups)
- treat all employees, especially those close to retirement, with respect (one group)
- revamp pay ranges; allow more employees to be above average (one group)
- give hazard pay for time on the road; note it separately from regular pay (one group)
- identify work behaviors with employees; communicate what leads to merit raises (one group)
- give higher entry-level salaries, but also avoid wage compression (one group)

Work expectations and development

- have more specific mandatory training for everybody (interpersonal skills, working with others, etc.) (one group)
- duties should be spelled out better–more specific for new hires (one group)
- update PIQs and classifications of workers (two groups)
- implement formal mentoring (one group)
- allow training and practice of different procedures (one group)

Rewards

- bonuses–give one time monetary rewards for extra work or projects (one group)
- have more social events–pizza parties, softball, bowling teams (one group)

Human Resource Development

What is the NDDOT doing well in this area?

- in Fargo district, they do promote from within (one group)
- many good training opportunities are provided–40 hours/year, training library, and other resources (five groups); employees can also request what training they want (two groups)
- good internal job announcement system (one group)
- tuition reimbursement (two groups)
- employee orientation (recent program) is good (three groups)
- mentoring to new employees–working toward a formal program (two groups)
- bonuses (especially for years of service) are good (one group)
- Unisys training was good (one group)
- able ro recruit with higher salaries and sign-on bonuses (one group)
- job descriptions, PIQs, and evaluation forms are online (one group)
- HRD is doing the best they can with available resources (one group)
- employee handbook is a good reference for employees; everything is spelled out (one group)

What are some concerns in this area?

- limited promotion opportunities; slow advancement first 10 years; promotion "peaks" with many years left to work (two groups)
- no lateral moves; locked into positions (one group)
- ND pays less than MN (one group)
- training is determined/directed by supervisors, not employees (one group)
- ROADEO training should be restructured–if using it for training, don't also evaluate or use points (one group)
- sometimes older workers are hired to avoid paying more for retirement (one group)
- sometimes people with less experience are hired in order to avoid paying more (one group)
- top management usually is made up of engineers who aren't necessarily "people" people (one group)
- some hiring/promotions are political; people are moved without jobs being posted; harder for women to get promotions–jobs are filled before others are aware of openings (one group)
- feeling that some jobs are mysteriously designed for some employees (three groups)
- some employees are groomed for specific promotions; some favoritism at lower levels (one group)
- changing minimum standards for jobs; can change at will of management (one group)
- financial constraints on some training; certain groups (IT, mechanics) could use more opportunities (three groups)
- sometimes wrong people or not enough people are sent for specific training (two groups)
- not compensated for additional/extra responsibilities–for example, training others (one group)

- may not be hiring the best person–pay scales are a limitation; difficult to recruit; when advertising jobs, whole salary range is given, but actual pay is mid-range (three groups)
- legislature gave 2% raises to public employees and 13% to lawmakers (one group)
- interview questions for hiring are too general, not related to job (one group)
- other employees have to pick up the slack for those who are going to school or training (one group)
- it's a slow process when changes are made in positions (PIQs); some paperwork sits on desks too long (one group)
- Job Service does a poor job of screening candidates before forwarding them on (one group)
- DOT is seen as a "stepping stone" for new people (one group)
- HRD is too conservative–process for terminating a poor employee is too lengthy (one group)
- there will be a large number of retirements in management in the near future; not enough preparation to fill those positions (two groups)
- there is a lot of repetition in training sessions that are offered (one group)
- other experience and training is often not valued as much as experience with the State (one group)
- some employees are not treated well once they give notice of retirement (one group)

Suggestions for this area:

<u>Recruitment, hiring, and promotion</u>

- pay competitively in order to recruit; pay for valuable experience, but also make sure that new employees aren't making more than valued long-term employees (three groups)
- when hiring, budget for the high end of the salary range, not the midpoint (one group)
- let section supervisor have more say in hiring process (one group)
- do not lower qualifications to fill positions (one group)
- have Job Service send all applications to HRD office so that they can weed out unqualified applicants (one group)
- HRD office needs more staff (one group)
- need more complete interview process–include a bigger pool of people, not just one (one group)
- improve interview guidelines–use more specific (job related) questions (one group)
- HRD should assist in writing PIQs (one group)
- re-classify working groups (i.e. mechanics) to help make pay more competitive; work for quicker results on this, set time limits (six months-one year) (one group)
- let perspective employees live where they want and see if they can get to work easily (10 mile or 20 minute rule); use common sense, not an absolute rule, follow the same policy everywhere throughout the state (one group)
- some positions should not require an engineering degree (one group)
- training or on-the-job experience could be used to qualify people for certain jobs (one group)

- reward years of service and additional responsibilities such as training others (two groups)
- allow employees to test for promotions; then they know what to work toward; employees need to know guidelines for promotions (one group)
- need "promotion goals" (one group)

Training and development

- restructure the ROADEO training (one group)
- larger training budget; need more comprehensive training in specific areas (IT, maintenance, motor vehicle) and more variety in training that is offered (three groups)
- have a state-level field training officer–one person in the state for maintenance equipment and procedures to mentor new employees and challenge experienced workers (one group)
- consider dual career track models (one group)
- help construction managers in process of getting their EIT and PE (one group)
- further develop formal mentoring program; use mentoring to transfer job knowledge from long-term employees to others (two groups)
- implement succession planning (specific skills and training needed) (one group)
- better follow up (quicker approval) from HRD on specific training opportunities (one group)
- plan for the large number of retirements in some departments; need to increase the number of middle range employees (one group)
- keep all employees involved as key players, including those giving their notice and those heading toward retirement (one group)
- use cross-training to secure job knowledge among employees (one group)

Other HR-related issues

- give hazard pay for hazardous conditions (one group)
- utilize retirees as a model for other employment–work from home/telecommuting (one group)
- HR office needs to show direct support to employees; explain why decisions are made, and give attention to employees when they bring concerns (one group)
- develop a "sick bank" of donated sick time to avoid abuses and so that unused days that are donated can go back to a pool to be used by someone else who needs it (one group)

Compensation

What is the NDDOT doing well in this area?

- benefits are good–health insurance (five groups)
- salaries have improved for newer employees and hard to fill positions (two groups)
- annual and sick leaves are good (four groups)
- merit raises used right can improve workers' productivity (two groups)
- annual raises (two groups)
- bonuses–sign-on and others; would like more (two groups)
- retirement multiplier increased to 2% is good; continue to raise it in the future (2 group)
- can be paid 100% of unused leave at retirement; should be a higher percentage (one group)
- pay checks are on time (one group)
- direct deposit feature is good (one group)
- being a state employee is very compatible with a military career (one group)
- good work hours (one group)
- holidays (one group)

What are the concerns?

- not enough compensation; legislature not committing money; North Dakota cost of living is not that low; compensation not keeping up with cost of living or market (four groups)
- step increases and equity raises invalidate merit raises (three groups)
- those close to retirement are less likely to receive merit raises (two groups)
- salaries tend to hover at mid-range; hard to get above mid-point, except for hard to fill positions (three groups)
- favoritism is a problem (one group)
- dual employment–no compensation for spouses both having insurance through state (one group)
- in the 70's, medical coverage was given in lieu of raises–employees haven't forgotten (one group)
- lack of equity in managers dispersing raises (one group)
- one classification gets raises, and others don't (one group)
- too much money spent on consultants that could be spent on employees (three groups)
- wage compression (two groups)
- there are still low entry level salaries in some areas (equipment operators) (one group)
- incorrect public perception of what DOT employees earn and what they do (one group)
- hard to control abuses of sick leave (one group)
- full-time, long-term temporary employees do not get benefits (one group)
- problems with health plan–BCBS has coverage restrictions (one group)
- those that work 10 hour days in the summer are only paid for 8-hour holidays (one group)

Suggestions in this area:

<u>Benefits</u>

- vision insurance (three groups)
- dental–expand plan (four groups)
- increase percentage of unused sick leave paid out at retirement or 10 years (one group)
- increase the $4.50 amount to cover health insurance in retirement (one group)
- give double time pay for working holidays (one group)
- more clothing allowances–for good boots, gloves, etc. (two groups)
- pay for tools required/used on the job; all districts should be reimbursed the same for tools purchased for work (make sure policy is consistently implemented) (one group)
- give back the extra 2 hours of holiday pay that used to be given to those employees on the four ten-hour day schedule in the summer (one group)

<u>Salary and compensation policies</u>

- step raises should be given annually (one group)
- when budget is submitted to legislature, ask for more compensation for employees–put together upper management and employee groups to lobby the legislature (three groups)
- have same percentage raise for management as for other employees (one group)
- give same raise in dollar amount (not percentage) to everyone (one group)
- cost of living raise needed (two groups)
- more bonuses needed, based on performance (one group)
- to stop losing people to Minnesota, need to be competitive in pay (one group)
- need to see positive movement in the future; not there yet (one group)
- pay employees two times a month, not just once (one group)
- compensate for training (one group)
- pay should be based on what you do–job performance, not length of time with the organization; spread out pay scales; move people to top of pay scale for job performance (don't lump group together); re-assess what skills are required and pay accordingly (one group)
- compare apples to apples in wage comparisons–include all important skills (one group)
- give significant merit increases periodically (otherwise the small percentages above legislated raises are not very motivating); maintain the merit pay and differences that result throughout employees' careers; don't give merit raises unless they are deserved (two groups)
- look into step increases for all areas (one group)
- quantify or spell out path to compensation, such as merit increases (one group)
- money spent on consultants could be shared with more employees (one group)
- compensate for overseeing and correcting work of consultants (one group)

Other rewards or options (non-compensation)

- supportive letters to the editor from the DOT Commissioner help employees feel supported and appreciated (one group)
- less red tape to get new equipment; get money where it needs to go–less re-routing of funds (one group)
- better lateral movement for employees with experience and qualifications; allow employees to test for other jobs (one group)
- show employees you are listening to them (one group)
- other rewards for good work, such as a half or whole day off (not counted against vacation time) (one group)
- personal touch–email from Director at holidays (one group)
- promote more teamwork; all work together on job (one group)

Public relations–making a case for better compensation

- publish salary info for public vs. private organizations and compare internal to external costs for a job or project (two groups)
- PR needs to improve for state employees; give information to public about what employees are doing–products and efficiency provided, compare productivity with other state DOTs, publish accomplishments (two groups)

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Many concerns were identified for each area addressed in the surveys and focus group discussions. The biggest area of concern was compensation, as it was in the last survey, conducted three years ago. Unfortunately, concerns about compensation may have overridden other concerns that could have been addressed more easily. With the many constraints the organization faces in the area of compensation, it probably is the most difficult issue to address. However, knowing that NDDOT employees are concerned about compensation probably explains why they reported compensation, benefits, and job security as the most motivating aspects of their jobs, even though these answers typically are not found as top motivators in similar surveys conducted in other organizations. Nonetheless, overall the current survey results were quite positive. They showed that employees generally are happy with their work environment, especially with their co-workers, and that employees typically like the work and tasks they perform.

Although overall results from the surveys were favorable, there were many instances where employees of different work groups or locations had conflicting opinions. The groups that tended to be more negative were maintenance and construction employees and those who have been with the NDDOT for a longer period of time. Information from the focus group discussions also suggested some differences among the groups that participated. Again, the groups made up of Field employees and those with longer tenure tended to be slightly more negative. This may be due to their longer histories and negative experiences in the past. The group of managers also differed from the other groups in that their opinions were more often split, with some group members expressing more negative opinions about various issues and other members expressing support for those same issues. What

resulted was a more thorough discussion of the pros and cons of each issue mentioned. Despite their differences, all the groups seemed to be appreciative of the chance to give their opinions and to try to come up with some possible ways for the organization to improve.

It also was evident from the focus groups that employees believed there were areas where the organization was doing well or at least had begun to make improvements. For example, compensation, which was rated negatively in the organizational health survey, was an area for which each focus group reported recent improvements. In addition, communication was another issue that, although we did not specifically address it during the discussions, employees reported as having changed in a positive way. Still, employees reported that they see much of this improvement as a good first step and look forward to more beneficial changes in the future. Comments from the surveys and focus group discussions suggested that employees are optimistic regarding possibilities for the organization as a result of having a new, more open group of top managers.

All of the focus groups provided good suggestions for possible improvements in the areas of work environment, performance management, human resource development, and compensation. Although many of the suggestions reflected ideas similar to those obtained from the surveys, the focus group participants spent a lot of time and effort trying to develop creative recommendations for improvements. One interesting point is that many of the suggestions made by the focus group participants are addressed by specific objectives for the new strategic plan. One example is the suggestion to develop, "a system to measure performance at the individual, group, and organizational levels." This recommendation is reflected in objective (3.1) to "develop a strategic performance

measurement system." Another clear example of the match between the focus group information and objectives from the strategic plan is the desire for a succession planning program.

Summarized Recommendations

It is clear that employees care about what is happening in the organization and that their perceptions affect the overall health and climate of the NDDOT. Focus group participants noted that even a small group of negative people can affect the morale of the entire organization. Therefore, considering all of the information and suggestions that were obtained during this study, the authors have summarized several recommendations that will lead to continued improvements in the health of the NDDOT.

Continue to take advantage of opportunities for involving employees in the planning and implementation of new processes or programs.

> In the focus groups and employee comments from the survey, many employees indicated that they would like to have more say in the development of new plans or processes. They also indicated that long-tenured employees are often more resistant to possible changes because they have had negative experiences in the past. One of the key ways to decrease employees' resistance to change is to have them participate in planning and allowing them to voice their concerns.

Update the PIQs and classification of workers to reflect the tasks that employees are actually doing.

> Employees expressed concern about being evaluated on the performance of only parts of their jobs. They believe they should be compensated for additional responsibilities and the use of special skills.

Continue to enhance safety for NDDOT employees.

Field employees that participated in the focus groups expressed a need for new legislation for mandatory speed limits in work zones. In addition, many employees also were concerned about the condition of buildings (air quality, ventilation, etc.) in which they work.

Develop a plan to prepare for future retirements.

To transfer job knowledge from long-term employees to others in the organization, employees suggested keeping all employees involved as key players by further developing a formal mentoring program. They also suggested the creation of a formal succession planning process to ensure that gaps left by retirements will be filled expeditiously.

Re-examine salary and merit raise policies, and work to improve overall compensation levels.

Employees are concerned about competitive pay for recruiting qualified employees and wage compression. They believe that pay ranges should be revamped to allow more employees to earn more than the midpoint of the pay range. Employees participating in the focus groups indicated they would like to see more money put toward merit raises and would like to have raises based on job performance rather than on how difficult certain positions are to fill. They also suggested improving the public perception of state employees in an effort to justify increases in overall compensation for NDDOT employees.

Continue to recognize and reward employees, even when financial rewards are not possible.

Employees appreciated the support shown by the NDDOT Director in letters to the editor of the newspaper. They also expressed a desire to have other rewards for good performance, such as a day off, when money was not a possibility.

Ensure that policies are implemented in the same way throughout the entire organization.

Some of the conflicting findings from the employee surveys may have resulted from differences in the way particular policies are implemented in different areas of the organization. Concerns about these differences were also expressed in the focus group discussions.

Improve the hiring and promotion processes.

Employees responded negatively to some of the questions surrounding these processes. They felt that the interview process could be improved with better guidelines and a larger pool of candidates. They also suggested allowing employees to test for certain promotions, thereby clarifying the qualifications needed for specific jobs.

Foster the family-like atmosphere with more social events.

Employees have stayed with the NDDOT because they believe they are part of the organizational family. This feeling is one that can best be maintained by allowing employees to have informal time together in non-threatening situations.

Ensure that all supervisors receive training that emphasizes leadership and interpersonal skills.

The training must include the skills for evaluating and providing feedback to employees about their work performance and dealing with conflict. In the survey and the focus groups, there was disagreement about how employees perceived their supervisors. Some employees indicated that their immediate supervisors were supportive and easy to work for, while others felt that their supervisors lacked the appropriate interpersonal skills to manage effectively. Some employees suggested that the NDDOT implement bottom-up evaluations for supervisors for developmental purposes.

Develop a system to measure performance at the individual, group, and organizational level.

Employees suggested that this information would be useful in dealing with the public. It would allow the NDDOT to compare productivity with other state DOTs and to provide the public with information about accomplishments and efficiency.

Expand employee benefits package.

Although employees generally are satisfied with their benefits, they indicated that they would like to have expanded vision and dental coverage.

Continue to focus on training and development opportunities for all employees.

Employees in the focus groups indicated that a larger training budget is needed to create more comprehensive training in some areas. They also were interested in the possibility of a dual career track model that would allow employees to progress on either a technical or a management career path.

Communicate frequently with employees about organizational issues.

Make sure that employees out in the districts are kept informed in a timely manner. Another common request from employees was for management to explain what actions will result from the findings of this study.

Continue to survey employees every two years with a modified version of the instrument developed for this study.

This will allow top management to assess changes and determine whether improvements have had the desired effects.

Next Steps

It is important to maintain the momentum of the current situation, which includes the completion of this study and the development of the new strategic plan. Employees are committed to the organization, and they want to see progress in the future. To keep moving forward, the organization will need to use all of its internal and external resources. Internally, the NDDOT has a great group of employees that are willing to share their good ideas and strategies for improvements. The organization can benefit from the expertise and knowledge of its long-tenured workforce. Externally, there are many examples of best practices and other resources at the federal level and at other state DOTs that may serve to assist in the implementation of the strategic plan's objectives.

APPENDIX A

General Organizational Questions

The questions are written in the boxes, while the summaries of the these answers are written in **bold** type below the questions.

Does your DOT have an organizational strategic plan and associated planning process?

Each of the states either has a strategic plan or is in the process of developing one; however, they differ in the extent to which there is an associated planning process that accompanies the strategy and in how current the strategic plan is.

Have the vision, mission, goals, objectives, strategies, etc. been effectively communicated to employees and integrated into your strategic and tactical operations?

In all but one case, the employees have been kept well informed; in the case where these have not been communicated, they are still being developed.

Have employees expressed positive or negative reactions to these efforts?

The reactions have been mixed both within and between states. There has been a lot of positive reaction from employees, but also some hesitation and resistance in some cases.

To what extent are employees' roles and responsibilities in the organization clear?

Every state claimed that the roles and responsibilities are clear, and this was corroborated by the employees we spoke with from each state. However, it was also mentioned that some employees might not see how their roles fit into the big picture of the organization.

How clear are the expectations of employees?

Every person interviewed reported that expectations of employees are clear, or in some cases, very clear.

To what extent are employees held accountable for their work (decisions and performance)?

Although this varied somewhat, the majority of interviewees indicated that employees are held accountable. Some of the employees with less tenure suggested that although they are held accountable, decisions are often made by the supervisor.

What does the DOT do to ensure that the right people are placed in the appropriate positions throughout the organization? How is the "fit" determined?

Most people interviewed feel that their DOTs do a fairly good job of fitting people with jobs; however, many indicated that there is still a problem with promoting people who have excellent technical skills but lack interpersonal skills into management. Something that was very apparent was that little focus has been placed on formal succession planning. At least one state is doing formal succession planning at higher levels. Many of the states use a team approach for hiring employees into specific departments.

How are performance appraisals used in the organization?

It varies–some states believe that their performance appraisal is good and useful, while others believe that it is useless.

How frequently are employees given formal and informal feedback about performance?

Formal performance appraisals are only done once a year, but in at least one state, supervisors are encouraged to do them at least twice a year in order to give their employees feedback. The majority of the employees we interviewed indicated that informal feedback is more frequent.

Are employees encouraged to be innovative?

The majority of states indicated that employees are encouraged to be innovative; however, there were two states that reported less of a focus on innovation and creativity.

Are standards for performance known to employees?

Overall, the responses seemed to show that employees are aware of the standards for performance. They may know about them through their performance appraisals or from other people in the Department.

How is good performance rewarded?

In most cases, good performance is rewarded non-monetarily. Still, some states are allowed to give some bonuses, but none of the states have been able to implement merit pay. Other rewards include praise, more challenging and interesting assignments, and recognition and rewards.

How does the DOT deal with those employees who are not meeting performance or behavior standards?

There is typically a disciplinary process; however, because this process usually involves a lot of effort on the part of supervisors, performance problems are often overlooked.

How does the DOT provide for the development and learning needs of the employees?

The seven states vary in the availability of technical and soft skill training, in addition to whether the employees are able to attend conferences and workshops (especially out of the state). None of the states has a formal process for creating individualized development plans for employees, although a few states have training and/or development plans for certain jobs. Leadership training is available in some states, but it has often been given as a one-time event.

To what extent are advancement opportunities available to employees?

This seems to really vary both within and between the states. In certain areas within the DOTs, there are less opportunities than others. In addition, advancement opportunities also depend upon the number of retirements and expected retirements. Employees seem to feel that there are more opportunities for them personally if there are a number of individuals who are close to retirement age in their area.

Does the organization make use of mentoring for employees?

At least two states have some sort of mentoring program (Wyoming has some mentoring for those who want it; Minnesota has it for high potential people), but most of the interviewees believe even though they do not have a formal mentoring program, informal mentoring takes place.

How does the mentoring work?

It may be in the form of OTJ training or coaching from a supervisor or another person who has similar interests.

Is the organization taking full advantage of technological advances?

Technology is definitely used at all of the DOTs, throughout their entire organization. However, the answer to this question varies from state to state, and it varies based on what area the person is in. In some cases, HR representatives indicated that the organization is making the most of technology, while employees in the technical areas indicated that it could use improvement. This may result from the fact that employees in different areas have different technological needs, making it difficult to determine exactly how well the organization is doing from a technological standpoint.

Is the technology support that is provided adequate and timely?

All states except for one indicated that technology support is good. The one state where this was an issue was concerned about getting new software in a timely manner. In addition, all but one state indicated good access to support staff for solving problems.

How would you describe the IT organization; is it flexible, rigid, supportive, responsive, etc.?

The majority of the states responded that the IT organization is supportive and/or responsive; however, there were two states that described IT as being inflexible or rigid in some areas, even though the day-to-day response may be good.

How would you characterize the communication throughout the organization?

The majority of interviewees responded that the communication is either good or at least decent, and some indicated that the communication is getting better by becoming more open. There were employees in two of the states that voiced specific concerns, but in most cases, communication did not seem to be a problem.

Do employees have easy access to others in the organization with whom they must work?

All but one person indicated that access to other people in the organization is good–especially with email.

To what extent do employees participate in decision making?

The answers to this question varied substantially from little participation or influence to a great amount of participation in decision making. This may have resulted from interviewing people at different levels of tenure and responsibility, in addition to the confusion that may have been caused by not specifically asking about decision making at a certain level.

| To what extent are employees informed about the decisions made in the organization? |

There were some mixed feelings about this question. Some employees feel that they are kept informed, but others do not. It may depend on the issue. Also, one state pointed out that even though the information is disseminated (via intranet, email, etc.), some people just do not get it.

| How are disagreements and conflicts between employees handled at the DOT? How are disagreements/conflicts between employees and their supervisors handled? |

None of the states seemed to think that disagreements and conflicts are a big issue for them. Some states have a structured approach for dealing with these situations when they arise; however, the success of the approach is not necessarily documented.

| To what extent do supervisors treat employees in a fair and ethical manner? |

Everyone seemed to report that supervisors treat employees fairly, or that the treatment is at least improving. However, a couple of interviewees suggested that there are still some supervisors who may need additional or better training in the area of interpersonal skills.

| Describe the organization's approach to managing diversity. |

All of the states seemed to be in the same place on this question. The region's lack of diversity makes it difficult to focus on a diverse workforce; however, most of the states are trying to increase the recruiting, hiring, and promoting of women and minorities.

| How would you rate the DOT's working environment for a diverse workforce? |

The majority of employees responded that the environment is good for a diverse workforce, but in some cases, the interviewees indicated that the environment could be better.

| Has the DOT considered the development and use of self-directed work teams? |

A lot of the states have adopted a teamwork environment, but only a few have used work teams that operated more like a consulting firm working on a project from start to finish (Iowa and Wyoming were best examples).

| What are the main strengths of the organization? |

The answers to this question varied widely, but one recurring theme focused on the hard-working, dedicated employees of each of the DOTs. Other strengths reported include the vision and leadership of the Director, being able to see the direct results of efforts, employee benefits, a cutting edge research division, a new progressive organization, stability and flexibility, change management, allowing employees to deal with personal/family matters, employees that like their work, open communication, IT support, national recognition in a specific area, a large amount of available resources, rotation program for new engineers, and innovativeness.

What are the main problems or weaknesses in the organization?

The answers to this question also varied widely; however, there was a lot of concern about the lack of incentives and rewards for high performing employees (merit raises and bonuses were specifically mentioned). Another weakness that was noted by more than one state was a problem with slow deployment or adoption of new technology.

What do you see as the main challenges for the organization in the next two to three years?

A trend in responses indicates that states worry about doing more work with less people (engineers were a specific concern). This response includes concerns about retention of quality workers, losing workers to retirements, and possible future RIFs. Another challenge that was noted will be keeping up with technology.

What things seem to be most in need of change in the organization?

Although there were many different answers to this question, one that was raised for many states was the need for a different salary structure and for rewarding high performing employees. However, another two issues that were noted were the need for workforce development and for a dual career track (technical versus management).

What opportunities are on the horizon that could most positively impact the organization?

Again, there was wide variation in the answers to this question. However, opportunities that were mentioned included the possibility of increased Federal funding, workforce development, keeping up with technological advances, and competency-based pay.

Retention and Motivation Questions

How are jobs at the DOT designed? Do they allow for adequate variety in the work? Are people able to work autonomously (with little supervision)? Are the jobs challenging? Do they allow employees to develop or produce an entire piece of work?

The answers to these questions varied based on the actual job, but in general, the jobs at each of the state DOTs have at least some of these motivating characteristics.

Are DOT employees given an appropriate amount of work?

In general, the responses showed that the interviewees believe that the amount of work is about right. However, there were a few people who suggested that there is more work than needed right now, and there was one person who said that there can be periods of "down time" resulting from "too many cooks in the kitchen."

How is this monitored?

None of the states has a formal process for monitoring this, but many indicated that it is the responsibility of supervisors to ensure that everyone has the right amount of work.

How satisfied are DOT employees with their compensation?

The majority of the interviewees indicated that the pay was not great, but about average. However, two states seemed to have some issues with pay. One of those states is planning to move toward competency-based pay. In addition, another state claimed that even though employees may not be extremely happy about their pay, they at least know how it is determined and what it is based on.

How satisfied are the employees with their benefits?

Most of the interviewees indicated that they are satisfied with their benefits, but two individuals said they were very satisfied. A couple of other individuals said that the benefits are not as good as they once were–because of increasing insurance costs.

What aspects of the job and the organization do you believe are most motivating for employees of the DOT? (Compensation, recognition, feedback, job security, relationship with supervisor, flexible work arrangements etc.)

The responses that were given most often were the work itself (challenging, interesting, and produces visible outcomes) and coworkers. Other aspects that were mentioned often included flexibility in work and in hours.

What aspects do you believe keep employees working for the DOT?

Besides the work itself, the other aspect that the majority of interviewees believe keep people working for the DOT is the environment, which includes the coworkers and the family-friendly policies that allow people to work flexible hours. It was also suggested that access to advanced technology is important to some employees.

What positions are having the highest degree of turnover?

The responses were: entry-level technicians, designers, clerical, IT, accountants/auditors, civil engineers, land surveyors, and equipment operators.

For what level of employees (in terms of tenure) is retention a problem?

Entry level for some jobs, but less than five years for most of the jobs.

Is low motivation an issue with your professional employees?

Three of the seven states indicated that they may have some sort of motivation issues with professional employees. Another state noted some morale issues resulting from pay dissatisfaction, but did not believe it experienced any negative consequences as a result of those issues.

If yes, what consequences has the organization experienced as a result of the motivation problems?

Two of the three states suggested that productivity may have been affected by motivation issues, but the other state reported more of a consequence in terms of morale rather than productivity.

What positions are associated with the highest degree of employee motivation problems?

For the three states that answered above, the responses were: entry-level fiscal, administration, and cross-functional.

To what type of employers do you lose the greatest number of employees?

Consulting firms was the most frequent answer; however, other employers mentioned included coal mines, contractors, other state agencies, cities and counties.

As far as you know, what incentives do they offer?

In almost all cases, the answer was money, but some people also cited different opportunities/projects.

Does your organization complete a periodic termination study that indicates turnover by title, location, and/or reason for leaving? If yes, would it be possible to get a copy?

Only two states currently collect and organize this information into a report. However, all seven states conduct some sort of exit interviews to determine why people are leaving. The two states that complete the termination report do not, however, compile those data from the exit interview.

What programs has the DOT **considered** implementing to retain valued employees?

Most of the interviewees did not really distinguish this question from the following one. Those that did answer the question reported consideration of pay for performance, variable pay programs, and succession planning.

What programs has the DOT **implemented** to retain valued employees?

The responses included working on salary issues (paying to Market, salary studies, giving increases, retention bonus plan), allowing people to work where they choose, conducting an organizational health study, giving challenging assignments, providing new technology, enhancing retirement benefits program, providing flexible work hours, expanding moving allowances, having career ladders, providing training opportunities, doing succession planning, providing educational assistance, accommodating employee needs by allowing relocation to other parts of the state, and using recognition programs.

North Dakota Department of Transportation Management Survey

Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute

North Dakota State University

Fargo, North Dakota

January 2002

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5. Feel free to use the back of the survey, as well as any white space, for any comments you may have.

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

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General Organizational Questions

Section 1. This section of the questionnaire asks you to describe the DOT organization (as a whole) as objectively as you can. Read through each statement and circle the number (1-5) that best represents the extent to which you agree or disagree with each item. Try to make your descriptions as accurate as possible.

Percentages and Means

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	Mean
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
1.	Red tape is kept to a minimum in this organization.	5.1	17.9	61.5	15.4	0	2.87
2.	Jobs in the DOT are well defined and logically structured.	0	12.8	30.8	51.3	5.1	3.49
3.	Most of the DOT employees share a clear understanding of where the organization is going and what it is trying to achieve.	2.6	17.9	35.9	41	2.6	3.23
4.	The DOT creates a very friendly atmosphere for employees.	2.6	2.6	20.5	56.4	17.9	3.85
5.	Employees of the DOT generally support each other well.	0	2.6	30.8	53.8	12.8	3.77
6.	The organization has a relaxed, easy-going working environment.	0	5.1	48.7	41	5.1	3.46
7.	In general, the DOT is a caring and cooperative organization.	0	7.7	17.9	51.3	23.1	3.90
8.	Supervisors encourage their employees to give their best effort at work.	0	2.6	35.9	46.2	15.4	3.74
9.	DOT supervisors provide help, training, and guidance so that employees can improve their performance.	0	7.7	23.1	64.1	5.1	3.67
10.	Employee roles within the organization are clearly defined, yet flexible enough to adapt to changing needs.	2.6	7.7	35.9	48.7	5.1	3.46
11.	The organization's work groups make good decisions and solve problems well.	0	12.8	20.5	59	7.7	3.62
12.	The DOT is willing to take a chance on an innovative idea.	5.1	28.2	30.8	23.1	12.8	3.10
13.	The organization supports employees' creative work solutions.	0	25.6	30.8	35.9	7.7	3.26
14.	The right people are placed in the appropriate jobs in the organization.	2.6	17.9	25.6	46.2	7.7	3.38
15.	The DOT is successful in developing people from within for advanced jobs.	2.6	7.7	41	41	7.7	3.44
16.	The performance appraisal system meets organizational needs.	23.1	33.3	35.9	5.1	2.6	2.31

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	Mean
17.	The organization's performance appraisal system leads to fair evaluations of employees' work on their jobs.	12.8	33.3	28.2	20.5	2.6	2.66
18.	The most qualified employees are hired and are promoted within the organization.	0	15.4	33.3	46.2	5.1	3.41
19.	The organization provides for the training and development needs of the employees.	0	7.7	25.6	56.4	10.3	3.69
20.	High performing employees in the DOT are rewarded appropriately.	7.7	33.3	38.5	20.5	0	2.72
21.	In the DOT, rewards and recognition are more prevalent than negativity and criticism.	2.6	5.1	43.6	43.6	5.1	3.44
22.	When employees do not meet performance standards, they are reprimanded or punished.	15.4	43.6	35.9	5.1	0	2.31
23.	There is an appropriate difference between the pay awarded to high performers and average employees.	25.6	61.5	7.7	5.1	0	1.92
24.	Overall, the organization's level of technical resources is appropriate to carry out its functions.	0	15.4	35.9	41	7.7	3.41
25.	In general, DOT employees have good access to technology support staff for solving problems.	2.6	7.7	35.9	48.7	2.6	3.42
26.	The technology support that is provided to employees is adequate and timely.	7.7	17.9	35.9	33.3	2.6	3.05
27.	Organizational plans, policies, and procedures are generally followed by employees.	0	5.1	30.8	56.4	7.7	3.67
28.	Organizational plans do provide adequate direction to the employees.	5.1	15.4	30.8	46.2	2.6	3.26
29.	In the organization, it is clear who has the formal authority to make decisions.	7.7	10.3	7.7	51.3	23.1	3.72
30.	In the organization, decisions are made in a timely manner.	15.4	17.9	30.8	23.1	12.8	3.00
31.	Employees in the organization feel that there is adequate, ongoing communication about the organization's activities.	0	25.6	38.5	28.2	7.7	3.18
32.	Employees are kept informed about significant issues in the organization as a whole.	0	28.2	23.1	46.2	2.6	3.23
33.	The information given to employees by management is accurate.	5.1	10.3	12.8	56.4	15.4	3.67
34.	People have easy access to those in the organization with whom they must work.	0	0	10.3	66.7	23.1	4.13
35.	The organization's policy for dealing with conflicts or disagreements among employees is effective.	5.1	12.8	35.9	41	5.1	3.28

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	Mean
36.	The organization is supportive of employees voicing their opinions even though conflicts or disagreements may result.	2.6	15.4	30.8	41	10.3	3.41
37.	The organization has ongoing partnerships with external organizations that bring in new ideas.	5.1	12.8	28.2	43.6	10.3	3.41
38.	Employees are provided with specific information about what level of work performance is expected of them.	2.6	17.9	43.6	35.9	0	3.13
39.	Specific goals have been set for each department within the organization.	10.3	23.1	30.8	35.9	0	2.92
40.	The organization is able to recruit highly qualified employees.	10.3	25.6	35.9	28.2	0	2.82
41.	The organization is able to retain qualified workers.	5.1	35.9	30.8	28.2	0	2.82
42.	Among the DOT employees, morale is high.	5.1	20.5	33.3	41	0	3.10
43.	In general, DOT employees are highly motivated to do a good job.	5.1	7.7	20.5	46.2	20.5	3.69
44.	The DOT is effective in getting employees to meet the organization's needs and contribute to its effectiveness.	2.6	10.3	17.9	61.5	7.7	3.62

Section 2. Listed below are several statements that are more specifically focused on retention and motivation. Indicate whether you *agree or disagree* with each statement in regard to **professional jobs** at the DOT. Please try to be as objective as you can. (circle number)

Percentages and Means

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	Mean
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
1.	DOT jobs involve production of a "whole" or substantial part of a product or service.	0	5.1	30.8	51.3	10.3	3.68
2.	The jobs at the DOT are challenging.	0	2.6	15.4	69.2	10.3	3.89
3.	The jobs at the DOT have a great deal of variety.	0	7.7	15.4	43.6	30.8	4.00
4.	At the DOT, there are opportunities for employees to work independently.	0	5.1	17.9	61.5	12.8	3.84
5.	The jobs at the DOT have clear goals and objectives.	0	10.3	43.6	38.5	5.1	3.39
6.	Jobs at the DOT are designed so that employees can tell from the work itself how well they are doing.	0	17.9	46.2	33.3	0	3.16
7.	Employees at the DOT feel a strong sense of belonging to the organization.	0	17.9	35.9	35.9	7.7	3.34
8.	At the DOT, there are opportunities for advancement.	2.6	12.8	25.6	51.3	5.1	3.45
9.	At the DOT, there are opportunities for learning.	0	0	23.1	59	15.4	3.92
10.	DOT employees have adequate technical training.	2.6	7.7	30.8	48.7	7.7	3.53
11.	DOT employees have access to adequate soft skill/supervisory training.	5.1	12.8	33.3	41	5.1	3.29
12.	At the DOT, employees feel like part of the family.	2.6	15.4	38.5	41	0	3.21
13.	DOT employees are given an appropriate amount of work.	0	10.3	41	46.2	0	3.37
14.	DOT employees are loyal to the organization.	0	5.1	33.3	46.2	12.8	3.68
15.	The DOT provides fair pay.	17.9	28.2	35.9	15.4	0	2.50
16.	The DOT provides fair benefits.	2.6	5.1	17.9	46.2	25.6	3.89
17.	Considering the work of DOT employees, present compensation levels are satisfactory.	12.8	46.2	25.6	10.3	2.6	2.42
18.	At the DOT, participation is invited and encouraged in matters that affect the employees.	5.1	25.6	20.5	46.2	0	3.11
19.	Employees are given explanations for the reasons decisions or requests are made (people are told "why").	12.8	17.9	12.8	48.7	5.1	3.16
20.	Employees are emotionally attached to the organization.	2.6	15.4	46.2	30.8	2.6	3.16
21.	Periodic meetings are held to review individual performance.	2.6	20.5	43.6	23.1	7.7	3.13
22.	Periodic meetings are held to review team or unit performance.	5.1	25.6	35.9	28.2	2.6	2.97

| 23. | Informal feedback about individual performance is constructive and frequent. | 2.6 | 17.9 | 46.2 | 28.2 | 2.6 | 3.11 |

For the following questions, please write in your brief answers.

24. In a very limited sample of employees interviewed at the NDDOT, findings indicated that employees with three to five years of experience are having the highest degree of voluntary turnover. What do you think the DOT can do to retain those people?

Answers contained in a separate document.

25. Findings from those interviews also suggested that many employees leave the DOT to go to other state agencies, cities and counties, and consulting engineering firms. What do you think the DOT should do to prevent losses of qualified employees to these other organizations?

Answers contained in a separate document.

26. In the interviews with NDDOT employees, it was also suggested that there may be low motivation among some of the professional employees, which could lead to negative organizational consequences. What do you think the DOT should do with employees who are having motivational problems?

Answers contained in a separate document.

27. What do you see as a realistic approach for dealing with DOT employee motivation and retention?

Answers contained in a separate document.

For each of the following items, please indicate to what extent you believe (1-5) the issue listed is motivating to the employees of the DOT. In the "Priority" column, please assign a rating from 1 to 18 to represent what you believe the priority of issue listed is. Give the rating of 1 to the issue that you believe is the highest priority and the rating of 18 to the lowest priority. In the last column, mark those issues that will require additional funding with an X. For those issues that do not require additional funding, leave the space in the last column blank.

Percentages and Means

Issue motivates DOT employees:	To a Very Small Extent			To a Very Large Extent		Priority	Req. Add. Funds
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean Rating	% of Yes
28. Compensation	0	2.6	12.8	41	35.9	3.67	69.2
29. Recognition	0	2.6	35.9	35.9	17.9	8.94	12.8
30. Autonomy or independence	0	7.7	35.9	41	7.7	11.61	2.6
31. Responsibility for work and/or outcomes	0	5.1	15.4	48.7	23.1	9.39	2.6
32. Feedback about work performance	0	2.6	41	41	7.7	11.61	2.6
33. Variety in work tasks	0	12.8	23.1	51.3	5.1	11.45	2.6
34. Benefits	2.6	0	23.1	43.6	23.1	6.36	59.0
35. Flexible work arrangements (e.g., flextime, job sharing, telecommuting)	2.6	7.7	30.8	30.8	20.5	10.00	5.1
36. Relationships with coworkers	0	0	33.3	43.6	15.4	9.06	5.1
37. Culture of the organization or work environment	0	17.9	17.9	30.8	25.6	11.06	5.1
38. Significance or importance of work	0	0	15.4	56.4	20.5	8.45	2.6
39. Relationships with supervisors or managers	0	0	30.8	48.7	12.8	8.91	2.6
40. New equipment or technology	0	5.1	28.2	43.6	15.4	9.58	53.8
41. Opportunities for growth and advancement	0	2.6	2.6	48.7	38.5	6.09	17.9
42. Communication in the organization	5.1	2.6	35.9	38.5	10.3	10.27	5.1
43. Rewards for good performance	0	2.6	15.4	38.5	35.9	6.15	46.2
44. Job security	0	5.1	25.6	41	20.5	8.61	2.6
45. Formalized rules and procedures	17.9	20.5	46.2	7.7	0	16.15	5.1

Section 3. Demographic Questions

Please check the appropriate response.

The numbers listed in bold indicate the number of respondents who gave each answer.

1. Where are you located in the NDDOT?   Central Office: **19**   Field: **18**

2. How long have you been a NDDOT employee?

   Less than a year: **0**   1-2 years: **1**   3-5 years: **1**
   6-10 years: **4**   More than 10 years: **31**

3. Sex: Male: **35**   Female: **2**

4. Age: Under age 25: **0**   31-40: **9**   51-60: **17**
       25-30: **0**   41-50: **10**   Over age 60: **1**

5. What is the highest level of education you have achieved?

   Less than high school: **0**   High school diploma or equivalent: **0**
   Technical school: **0**   Some college: **6**
   College degree: **23**   Graduate school: **8**

6. In which of the following functional categories would your job be classified?

   Administrative and Clerical: **21**   Engineering and Related: **11**
   Information Technology: **1**   Maintenance: **1**
   Driver and Vehicle Services: **2**   Construction: **1**

**Please use this space for any additional comments
or recommendations you wish to make**

THANK YOU!

North Dakota Department of Transportation Employee Survey

Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute

North Dakota State University

Fargo, North Dakota

January 2002

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Section 1. This section of the questionnaire asks you to describe the DOT organization (as a whole) as objectively as you can. Read through each statement and circle the number (1-5) that best represents the extent to which you agree or disagree with each item. Try to make your descriptions as accurate as possible.

Percentages

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	Means
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
1.	Red tape is kept to a minimum in this organization.	8.9	23.7	48.4	12.1	2.7	2.75
2.	Jobs in the DOT are well defined and logically structured.	5.5	20	39.3	28.9	5.9	3.10
3.	Most of the DOT employees share a clear understanding of where the organization is going and what it is trying to achieve.	6.7	19.1	33.5	33.6	7	3.15
4.	The DOT creates a very friendly atmosphere for employees.	6.2	12.4	32.1	34.5	14.4	3.38
5.	Employees of the DOT generally support each other well.	5.3	13	28.6	41.8	11.1	3.40
6.	The organization has a relaxed, easy-going working environment.	6.2	15.4	31.3	37.6	9.3	3.28
7.	In general, the DOT is a caring and cooperative organization.	4.6	14.2	33.2	37.8	10.1	3.35
8.	Supervisors encourage their employees to give their best effort at work.	6.8	11.1	28.9	40.9	12.1	3.41
9.	DOT supervisors provide help, training, and guidance so that employees can improve their performance.	8.7	16.3	29.6	34.1	10.8	3.22
10.	Employee roles within the organization are clearly defined, yet flexible enough to adapt to changing needs.	3.7	14.1	38.5	37.3	5.9	3.28
11.	The organization's work groups make good decisions and solve problems well.	6.5	20.1	44.3	24.9	3.1	2.98
12.	The DOT is willing to take a chance on an innovative idea.	6.7	21.9	38.2	28.3	3.4	3.00
13.	The organization supports employees' creative work solutions.	5.6	19	41.8	28.1	4.4	3.07
14.	The right people are placed in the appropriate jobs in the organization.	19.6	29.3	31.7	16	3	2.53
15.	The DOT is successful in developing people from within for advanced jobs.	11.1	20.1	33.8	28.1	5.2	2.96
16.	The performance appraisal system meets organizational needs.	21.2	25	35	13.9	3.7	2.53
17.	The organization's performance appraisal system leads to fair evaluations of employees' work on their jobs.	21.8	27.7	31.4	14.9	3.6	2.50

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	Means
18.	The most qualified employees are hired and are promoted within the organization.	21	26.1	32.3	16.6	3.1	2.54
19.	The organization provides for the training and development needs of the employees.	5.8	19	37.9	28.6	8.3	3.15
20.	High performing employees in the DOT are rewarded appropriately.	22.5	29.5	30.4	14.2	2.2	2.43
21.	In the DOT, rewards and recognition are more prevalent than negativity and criticism.	11.6	23.3	38.8	21.3	4.3	2.83
22.	When employees do not meet performance standards, they are reprimanded or punished.	17.5	34.5	32.7	9.5	3.1	2.45
23.	There is an appropriate difference between the pay awarded to high performers and average employees.	32.1	30.8	21.9	7.4	5.3	2.21
24.	Overall, the organization's level of technical resources is appropriate to carry out its functions.	2.1	12.9	45	33.3	5.9	3.28
25.	In general, DOT employees have good access to technology support staff for solving problems.	4	16	38.8	32.7	7.7	3.24
26.	The technology support that is provided to employees is adequate and timely.	4.3	18.2	45.5	25.3	5.2	3.09
27.	Organizational plans, policies, and procedures are generally followed by employees.	3.3	8.4	35.4	44.3	8.1	3.46
28.	Organizational plans do provide adequate direction to the employees.	3.3	12.6	44.3	33.8	4.4	3.24
29.	In the organization, it is clear who has the formal authority to make decisions.	4.9	14.7	24.1	38.7	17.2	3.49
30.	In the organization, decisions are made in a timely manner.	10.1	25.3	35.9	23.1	4.7	2.87
31.	Employees in the organization feel that there is adequate, ongoing communication about the organization's activities.	11.7	26.5	37.2	20.6	2.8	2.76
32.	Employees are kept informed about significant issues in the organization as a whole.	11.4	23.4	32.7	27.3	4.4	2.90
33.	The information given to employees by management is accurate.	6.7	15.7	38.8	31.3	6.7	3.16
34.	People have easy access to those in the organization with whom they must work.	1.6	5.5	31.1	47.1	13.9	3.67
35.	The organization's policy for dealing with conflicts or disagreements among employees is effective.	13.5	18.5	34.8	24.7	5.6	2.90
36.	The organization is supportive of employees voicing their opinions even though conflicts or disagreements may result.	16	23	33.8	21.8	3.6	2.73
37.	The organization has ongoing partnerships with external organizations that bring in new ideas.	3.6	14.2	50.2	22.8	3	3.08

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	Means
38.	Employees are provided with specific information about what level of work performance is expected of them.	4.6	17	39	32	7	3.20
39.	Specific goals have been set for each department within the organization.	4	14.5	43.6	29	6.2	3.19
40.	The organization is able to recruit highly qualified employees.	21.6	30.8	30.2	13.6	2.7	2.44
41.	The organization is able to retain qualified workers.	20.4	34.7	29.5	12.3	2.8	2.42
42.	Among the DOT employees, morale is high.	17.2	27.7	34.7	16.6	3.4	2.61
43.	In general, DOT employees are highly motivated to do a good job.	7.1	17	35.7	32	8	3.17
44.	The DOT is effective in getting employees to meet the organization's needs and contribute to its effectiveness.	3.6	16.4	46.5	28.1	4.7	3.15

Section 2. On this page, there are several statements that are specifically focused on your job within the DOT. Indicate whether you *agree or disagree* with each statement in regard to your own job at the DOT. Please try to be as objective as you can. (circle number)

Percentages

		Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
1.	My job at the DOT involves production of a "whole" or substantial part of a product or service.	1	4.3	24.1	42.1	26.2	3.90
2.	My job at the DOT is challenging.	3	5.6	21.5	41.3	27.9	3.86
3.	My job at the DOT has a great deal of variety.	2.1	5	18.8	43	30.2	3.95
4.	At the DOT, I have opportunities to work independently.	2.1	4.7	19.3	43.4	29.5	3.94
5.	My job at the DOT has clear goals and objectives.	3.7	8.6	31	40.4	15.4	3.56
6.	My job at the DOT is designed so that I can tell from the work itself how well I am doing.	2.4	7.1	28.9	43	17.9	3.67
7.	I feel a strong sense of belonging to the organization.	6.1	12.1	31.1	32.3	17.5	3.43
8.	At the DOT, there are opportunities for advancement.	19	23.9	30.2	17.9	8.3	2.73
9.	At the DOT, there are opportunities for learning.	4	10.4	32.3	38.1	14.5	3.49
10.	I have adequate technical training at the DOT.	7.6	15.4	33.9	32.3	9.9	3.22
11.	I have access to adequate soft skill/supervisory training.	11.6	18.2	35.1	24.9	9	3.02
12.	At the DOT, I feel like part of the family.	9.8	14.2	32.4	30.7	12	3.21
13.	I am given an appropriate amount of work.	3.4	7.1	24.6	43.4	20.4	3.71
14.	I am loyal to the organization.	1.6	1.6	13.6	37.5	44.7	4.23
15.	The DOT provides fair pay.	24.1	26.5	27.1	16.6	4.4	2.50
16.	The DOT provides fair benefits.	3.1	7.7	16.4	40.9	30.5	3.89
17.	Considering the work I do at the DOT, my present compensation level is satisfactory.	17.9	28.7	30.4	17.6	4.3	2.61
18.	At the DOT, participation is invited and encouraged in matters that affect me.	7.4	17	38.1	29	7.1	3.12
19.	I am given explanations for the reasons decisions or requests are made at the DOT (I am told "why").	13	21.2	36.6	21	7	2.88
20.	I am emotionally attached to the organization.	12.1	19.3	36.7	23.4	7.1	2.94
21.	Periodic meetings are held to review my individual performance.	10.2	18.8	33.2	27.3	9.2	3.06
22.	Periodic meetings are held to review my team or unit performance.	14.5	25.3	35.1	17.6	5.6	2.74
23.	Informal feedback about my individual performance is constructive and frequent.	13.5	20.6	33.9	22.8	8	2.91
24.	I am satisfied with my job at the DOT	3.7	10.5	30.8	36.1	17.9	3.55

For the two questions listed below, please write in your brief answers.

25. What aspects of the job and the organization keep you working for the DOT?

Responses contained in a separate document.

_____

_____

26. It had been suggested that many employees leave the DOT to go to other state agencies, cities and counties, and consulting engineering firms. What do you think the DOT should do to prevent losses of qualified employees to these other organizations?

Responses contained in a separate document.

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For each of the following items on this page, please indicate to what extent you believe (1-5) the issue listed motivates you as a DOT employee. In the "Priority" column, please assign a rating from 1 to 18 to represent what you believe the priority of issue listed is. Give the rating of 1 to the issue that you believe is the highest priority and the rating of 18 to the lowest priority.

Percentages

	Issue motivates me:	To a Very Small Extent			To a Very Large Extent		Priority
		1	2	3	4	5	Mean Rating
27.	Compensation	1.8	6.7	22.4	31.6	31.6	4.22
28.	Recognition	4.3	11.9	34.4	29.3	14.2	9.65
29.	Autonomy or independence	1.2	6.2	35.4	37.9	13.2	10.09
30.	Responsibility for work and/or outcomes	.6	2.1	21.9	47.4	21.8	8.28
31.	Feedback about work performance	4	11.4	32.6	34.1	12	11.40
32.	Variety in work tasks	1.3	3.7	22.1	44.9	21.9	9.43
33.	Benefits	1.8	2.4	11.1	32.9	46.2	4.36
34.	Flexible work arrangements (e.g., flextime, job sharing, telecommuting)	5.2	8	26.1	29.8	25	10.17
35.	Relationships with coworkers	1	3.9	22.2	44.1	23	8.09
36.	Culture of the organization or work environment	2.4	10.8	41.9	29.5	9.5	13.33
37.	Significance or importance of work	.4	3.4	23.9	45.5	21.2	8.79
38.	Relationships with supervisors or managers	4.1	7.1	24.7	35	23.3	9.69
39.	New equipment or technology	3	11	28.3	35.9	16.4	11.46
40.	Opportunities for growth and advancement	5.8	11.3	21.9	31.7	23.1	8.99
41.	Communication in the organization	5.5	12.6	35.4	28.6	11.9	12.02
42.	Rewards for good performance	7.3	11.6	20	31	23.9	8.94
43.	Job security	.7	2.4	15.4	33.8	41.8	6.19
44.	Formalized rules and procedures	7.4	14.8	40.3	23.6	8	14.72

Section 3. Demographic Questions

Please check the appropriate response.

The numbers listed in bold indicate the number of respondents who gave each answer.

1. Where are you located in the NDDOT?   Central Office: **213**   Field: **432**

2. How long have you been a NDDOT employee?

   Less than a year: **35**   1-2 years: **63**   3-5 years: **89**
   6-10 years: **91**   More than 10 years: **368**

3. Sex: Male: **481**   Female: **156**

4. Age: Under age 25: **17**   31-40: **118**   51-60: **186**
            25-30: **48**   41-50: **233**   Over age 60: **37**

5. What is the highest level of education you have achieved?

   Less than high school: **6**   High school diploma or equivalent: **159**
   Technical school: **107**   Some college: **165**
   College degree: **185**   Graduate school: **24**

6. In which of the following functional categories would your job be classified?

   Administrative and Clerical: **69**   Engineering and Related: **145**
   Information Technology: **27**   Maintenance: **263**
   Driver and Vehicle Services: **54**   Construction: **72**

**Please use this space for any additional comments
or recommendations you wish to make**

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THANK YOU!