Results: 2022 Workplace Culture Assessment & Employee Engagement Survey

OFFICE of the INSURANCE COMMISSIONER WASHINGTON STATE

Presented to OIC staff on 1/12/23
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Today's goal:

Provide a **high level** summary:

- Synthesis of the findings of both the Culture Assessment and the Employee Engagement Survey

- Review general recommendations

- Briefly discuss next steps

What was focus?

Culture Assessment	Employee Engagement Survey (EES)
OIC only	Covers all state agencies
Overall perceptions of work culture	Relationships
Perceptions of welcoming	Autonomy ⟶ **RAMP**
Diversity culture	Mastery
Communication with EMT	Purpose
Perceptions of accountability	
Impact of media coverage	"I'm satisfied with my job"
Employee recommendations and thoughts	"I would recommend my agency as a great place to work"
Vendor: Communication Resources NW	New Baseline Questions: Personal Protective Equipment, Pro-Equity Anti-Racism Initiative

Timeline review

Workplace Culture Assessment	Employee Engagement Survey (EES)
CRNW retained September 2022	Surveys complete October 2022
Interviews and surveys completed in September and October 2022	Survey responses received from OFM in December 2022 and provided to CRNW
Data analysis October – November 2022	Combined analysis in December 2022

Notes
- OIC opted to not receive any drafts for comment and/or review.
- The final report was provided to OIC on December 31, 2022.
- The Executive Summary PowerPoint was provided to OIC on January 5, 2023.
- Excerpts cited here are taken verbatim from the 129 slides in the Executive Summary presentation from CSNW.

Survey participation breakdown

Workplace Culture Assessment	Employee Engagement Survey
Data includes interviews and anonymous surveys	Anonymous surveys only
50 interviews (20% of staff) 71 survey responses (30% of staff) • Some staff participated in both	201 employees responded (82% of staff) • OIC had 244 employees of October 31, 2023
Survey and interviews consisted of the same open-ended questions developed between vendor and OIC	Survey questions were standard from OFM, plus three added agency questions

Notes
- Collecting data from two surveys during the same timeframe allowed CRNW to get both a macro and micro view.
- Data from the assessment trended more negative than the state survey. Many staff stated they volunteered for the assessment to bring forward issues and concerns.

Culture Assessment vs. EES: Comparison of results

Excerpt from CRNW Executive Briefing, Slide 4:

"The EES revealed that while the majority of employees report being satisfied with their jobs, fully half are moderate to negative about recommending the OIC as a great place to work."

Office of the Insurance Commissioner - 2022 Employee Engagement Survey							
#	Question	2018 Percent Positive	2019 Percent Positive	2020 Percent Positive (Pandemic begins)	2021 Percent Positive (Pandemic continues)	2022 Percent Positive	Difference from 2021 to 2022
19	In general, I'm satisfied with my job.	87%	88%	82%	69%	75%	6%
20	I would recommend my agency as a great place to work.	82%	82%	79%	45%	49%	4%

"The Culture Assessment data strongly support that employees, even those who report being highly dissatisfied with the agency, report strong connection to the mission of the OIC and satisfaction with the people and microcultures with which they work."

Culture Assessment vs. EES: Comparison of results

Excerpt from CRNW Executive Briefing, Slide 4:

- "Across items measured in the EES, employees are much more satisfied with the aspects of their immediate jobs (supervision, meaning, resources, etc.) than they are with the agency (belonging, diversity, change management, connection to agency success metrics)."

- "The results of the Culture Assessment provide insight into why employees are not enthusiastic about the OIC as an agency though they remain satisfied with their jobs."

Office of the Insurance Commissioner 2022 Employee Engagement Survey	2019 Percent Positive	2020 Percent Positive (Pandemic begins)	2021 Percent Positive (Pandemic continues)	2022 Percent Positive		Difference from 2021 and 2022
Standard Questions						
I find meaning in my work.	94%	88%	81%	82%		1%
I have opportunities at work to learn and grow.	76%	76%	67%	71%		4%
I have the tools and resources I need to do my job effectively.	86%	87%	77%	83%		5%
My supervisor treats me with dignity and respect.	94%	92%	91%	89%		-2%

Agency-Specific Questions						
I know how my agency measures its success.	76%	73%	53%	56%		2%
My agency supports a diverse workforce.	86%	86%	72%	63%		-9%
My agency helps me navigate change.	72%	74%	47%	52%		4%

Culture Assessment vs. EES: Comparison of results

Excerpt from CRNW Executive Briefing, slide 5:

- Negative perceptions about the Commissioner, his alleged behavior, and the news reports are uniformly negative.

- The comparison of Culture Assessment and EES data suggest that these factors may influence employees at a macro level but do not appear to have significantly affected the job satisfaction of a large number of OIC employees.

- The Culture Assessment shows that participating employees report high levels of uncertainty, loss of morale, and anxiety over the future of the agency.

- Employees from both types of research do not report being as connected to the OIC as an agency as they are to their immediate work or the consumer protection mission of the OIC.
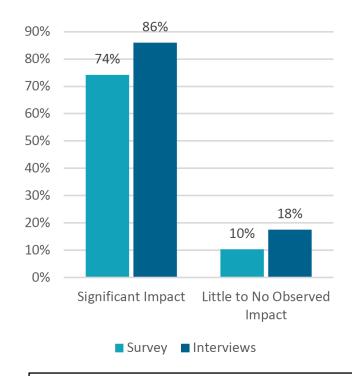
Impact of negative media stories on the OIC and employees

Impact of media coverage
- Survey: 77 comments
- Interviews: 110 comments

Significant Impact

- Employees demoralized

- Outside perception makes some tasks more difficult

- Loss of respect for agency and/or Commissioner

- Embarrassment

- Loss of expertise from turnover

- Perceived as contributing to staffing and workload issues

Data set
- 50 employee interviews (20% of staff)
- 71 survey responses (30% of staff)
- Some overlap between interviews and surveys

What employees like most about the OIC

Coworkers/team
- Focused on immediate team, unit, or division

Mission/consumer protection
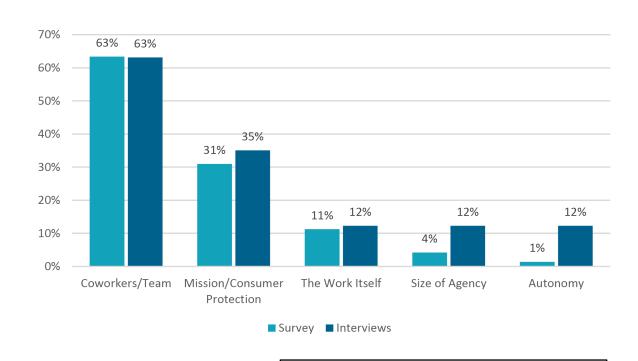- The agency's goal has meaning

The work itself
- Found enjoyment in their day-to-day tasks

Agency size
- Being a small agency has benefits

Overall Perceptions of Workplace Culture
- Survey: 98 comments
- Interviews: 97 comments

Chart legend: ■ Survey ■ Interviews

	Coworkers/Team	Mission/Consumer Protection	The Work Itself	Size of Agency	Autonomy
Survey	63%	31%	11%	4%	1%
Interviews	63%	35%	12%	12%	12%

Data set
- 50 employee interviews (20% of staff)
- 71 survey responses (30% of staff)
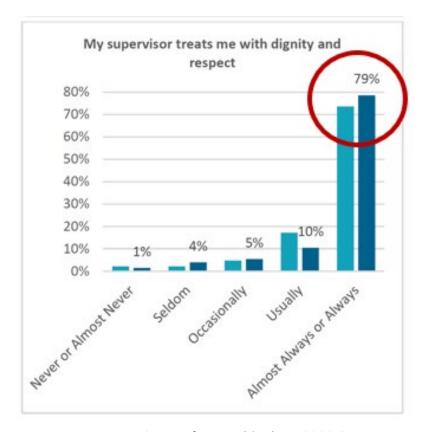- Some overlap between interviews and surveys

Culture Assessment vs. EES: Leadership

Excerpt from CRNW Executive Briefing, Slide 6

Employee perceptions of their supervisors are extremely positive.

- This finding is potentially explanatory as to why many employees report high satisfaction with their jobs and why many have stayed with the agency.

- Supervisors represent a significant potential for helping employees move forward from the current state to a more positive future for the OIC.

Source for graphic data: 2022 OFM Employee Engagement Survey results

Culture Assessment vs. EES: Leadership

Excerpt from CRNW Executive Briefing, Slide 6

Perceptions of the Executive Management Team and middle managers are more mixed.

- Both levels of management seem to have little impact on the day-to-day working lives of employees.

- While largely appreciative of Chief Deputy Wood's focus on clearer/targeted employee communication, many employees seem disconnected from the EMT.

- When employees reference middle management, some reported environments of toxicity and fear. Few employees mentioned positive attributes, though this suggests a lack of connection to this level of leadership rather than broad dissatisfaction.

What employees like least about working at the OIC

Excerpt from CRNW Executive Briefing, Slide 19

The Commissioner
- Commissioner's leadership style, alleged behaviors, and accountability

Remote work policy
- Dissatisfaction with impact to work/life and competitiveness as an employer
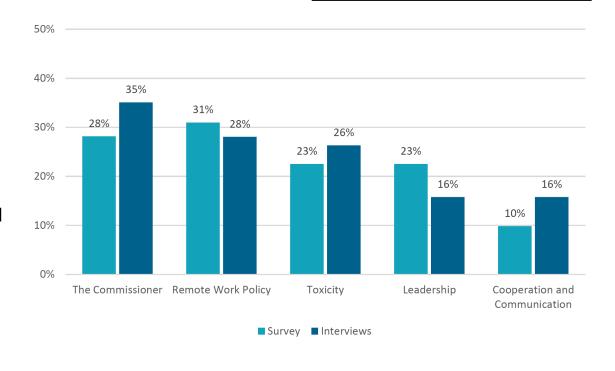
Toxicity
- Reports of fear, retaliation, and toxicity within some units or divisions

Leadership
- Feelings of ineffective or dysfunctional management at various levels of the agency

Perceptions of welcoming culture
- Survey: 127 comments
- Interviews: 96 comments

Chart data (Survey, Interviews):
- The Commissioner: 28%, 35%
- Remote Work Policy: 31%, 28%
- Toxicity: 23%, 26%
- Leadership: 23%, 16%
- Cooperation and Communication: 10%, 16%

Culture Assessment vs. ESS: Summary

The Culture Assessment and the EES had widely different response rates, but the results are consistent.

Excerpt from CRNW Executive Briefing, Slide 3

Micro-level: Positive

- I know what is expected of me at work (90%)
- My supervisor treats me with dignity and respect (89%)
- A spirit of cooperation and teamwork exists in my work group (83%)
- At my job, I have the opportunity to make good use of my skills (82%)
- My supervisor gives me helpful feedback (78%)
- In general, I'm satisfied with my job (75%)

Data source for metrics: ESS results

Culture Assessment vs. ESS: Summary

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Excerpt from CRNW Executive Briefing, Slide 3

Macro-level: More issues; needs some work

- I have the opportunity to give input on decisions affecting my work (69%)
- I receive helpful communication from my agency (64%)
- I know how my agency measures its success (56%)
- I am satisfied with the hybrid or remote work opportunities that my agency provides (51%)
- My agency encourages belonging in the workplace (54%)
- I would recommend my agency as a great place to work (49%)

Data source for metrics: ESS results

Recommendations

These recommendations are taken verbatim from Communications Resources NW's Culture Assessment Executive Summary.

The Commissioner

Excerpt from the CRNW Executive Summary, slide 123

- Visibly acknowledge current perceptions.

- Explain how the OIC's work can be effectively accomplished given the current relationship with the executive and legislative branches of State government.

- Consider an Executive Management Team restructuring with deputies delegated more leadership and operational responsibilities and the Commissioner focused on the vision and overall direction of the OIC and the work it champions.

Management

Excerpt from the CRNW Executive Summary, slide 124

- Acknowledge and address perceptions that toxic subcultures and retaliations are created, enabled, and tolerated by executive team members and managers within specific work units.

- EMT should develop a clear set of performance expectations for all levels of leadership.

- EMT and managers should engage in intensive leadership training.

- EMT should engage in internally focused strategic planning, including quickly establishing an improvement vision for the agency with clear milestones and metrics to be achieved over the next two years.

- EMT should celebrate the quality and performance of OIC supervisors as being central to the psychological health and wellbeing of employees and should consider working with supervisors to rebuild positive connection between OIC leadership and employees.

Employee Relations

Excerpt from the CRNW Executive Summary, slide 125

- As part of the internal strategic planning effort, the EMT should consider how the OIC can become an Employer of Choice.

- EMT should set goals and strategies for improving internal communication and fostering a sense of belonging and psychological safety for all employees.

- EMT should work with managers to develop performance objectives for each business unit, and employees should be actively engaged in developing performance metrics.

- All leadership personnel at every level should receive training in performance management.

- OIC Human Resources should work with managers and deputies to clarify, codify, and commit to a clear Code of Conduct, and employees should be included in these conversations.

- Human Resources should also establish clear parameters for the reporting of employee concerns, including mechanisms for closed-loop communication and setting expectations for follow-up and resolution of issues.

Telewor

Excerpt from the CRNW Executive Summary, slide 126

- Revisit telework policy to address significant negative perceptions among current employees and remain competitive with other public agencies offering full-time remote work.

- Consider researching current policies and practices of other government agencies and private entities with which it competes for prospective employees.

- Whether or not the telework policy is revised, the OIC's leadership should communicate clear reasoning that resonates with employees for why in-office work is required.

- When employees are asked to be in the office, OIC leadership at all levels should consider how to get best value out of collaboration and engagement time. Each manager should create and present a clear plan for optimizing the experience and maximizing the value of time spent in the office.

Communication

Excerpt from the CRNW Executive Summary, slide 127

- When appropriate, the EMT should provide clear and thorough explanation when policies are changed or enacted that impact employees' work life.

- The OIC would benefit from broader communication from all deputies.

- Consider including regular agency-wide status updates and/or lookaheads in Friday Focus email to give employees insight into happenings across the OIC as a whole.

- Leverage positive supervisor relationships with employees and work teams to improve the overall communication climate at the OIC.

Diversity, equity and inclusion

Excerpt from the CRNW Executive Summary, slide 128

- The OIC should consider elevating and expanding DEI-related engagement and training through strategies such as creating a DEI-focused role in Human Resources; participation by the Commissioner and Chief Deputy in DEI-related meetings; and implementing ongoing DEI-related training for all members of the OIC in onboarding and continuous development opportunities.
- Leaders should receive training on creating and maintaining a welcoming and inclusive work environment.
- Support and accommodation for employees living with disabilities should be reviewed and improved, including policies, accommodation, training, and outreach.
- EMT and Human Resources should review recruiting, retention, and promotion practices to further diversify the OIC at all levels.

Looking to the future

Excerpt from the CRNW Executive Summary, slide 7

- While central to many employees' perception of the agency, the Commissioner and his alleged behavior have little day-to-day impact on the work lives of employees.

- Regardless of the Commissioner and his status at the OIC, the organization has a difficult road ahead to navigate employee perceptions of the agency and the OIC's ability to conduct significant work in the coming two years.

Looking to the future (continued): Recommendations

Excerpt from the CRNW Executive Summary, slide 7

- **We see the OIC as healable**: While some employees may elect to leave the agency as a result of the Commissioner, his alleged behavior, the media, and/or their perception that the work of the OIC will be hindered in the coming two years, the strong job satisfaction scores and the strongly positive perceptions of supervisors suggest that this might be limited.

- The future of the OIC will be determined not by the commissioner, but by how the EMT, middle management, and supervisors come together to create and maintain a more positive workplace culture for employees.

- The OIC needs to move beyond these challenging times, regardless of what happens with the Commissioner, to continue the important consumer protection work of the OIC.

Next steps

- The full report from Communication Resources NW, their PPT presentation, this PPT and the Commissioner's letter to staff will be posted on the intranet and our website today.

- EMT members will discuss results at division level.

- EMT members will develop an action plan:
  - Planning will begin at Tuesday's Deputy meeting.
  - The plan will address every recommendation in the report.
  - More in-depth analysis and recommendations will include a cross section of the agency, with members dependent on the issue.
  - Staff will receive regular status updates.