

**Improving Recruitment and Retention
at The Municipal Court of Seattle**

Creating a Two Year Plan

Institute for Court Management
Court Executive Development Program
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I. Abstract

This project reviews the recruitment and retention problems at The Municipal Court of Seattle (SMC). While the problems are courtwide they are more readily apparent in the areas of the court experiencing a high turnover. These include court services and customer services, which include courtroom staff and phone and counter staff respectively. With the changing role of the court in the community and greater expectations of the court's constituency, the court needs to recruit top individuals and retain them to pursue new initiatives such as mental health court, community court, and online services. With a courtwide vacancy rate near 15% for most of the year turnover, recruitment, and training costs are using court resources needed for new initiatives and lowering the morale of remaining staff.

The goal of the project is the creation of a two-year plan to improve recruitment and retention at the court. The plan will be based on a review of relevant literature, a survey of court employees, and a review of exit interviews on employees who have left the court. This research project seeks answers to the following questions:

- *What is the court doing right and wrong for its employees?*
- *Why are employees leaving the court?*
- *Why are some candidates declining job offers after going the recruitment process?*
- *Are any of the successful recruitment and retention practices in the private sector or other public sector agencies applicable to the court?*

A survey of permanent court employees was conducted in September and October of 2000. The survey group consisted of two hundred and fifty-three employees of SMC working in three buildings in downtown Seattle. The survey consisted of fifteen questions covering why did

they accept a position with the court, why they are staying at the court, what they like least and most, and what they would change if they could. The survey also asked if they were planning on leaving in the next twelve months, and what, if anything could be done to change their mind. Additional questions asked about interaction with supervisors and training. They were also asked to indicate the area of the court where they worked, age group, and length of employment with the court. The survey questions were based in part on what was learned in the literature review which was underway prior to the survey. The surveys were returned to the researcher who entered the data into a database.

Other sources utilized by the researcher included exit interviews and summaries of comments from employee focus groups. SMC Human Resources had implemented an improved exit interview form in March of 2000. There were seventeen available for review in October of 2000 and the researcher reviewed the comments made by those leaving. During October of 2000, 10% of the employees from each court division were asked to participate in one of three focus groups discussing how employees view the Court's current programs regarding employee motivation and job satisfaction. One additional source presented itself in December of 2000 when a new manager was hired. At the request of the researcher the manager related her view of the court's interview and recruitment process.

One hundred and nineteen responses to the survey were received. This represents a response rate of 47%. The findings highlighted several areas that the court staff felt needed improvement. Most were areas that are common to other government agencies and the private sector. The researcher feels the project was definitely worthwhile and will provide a benchmark for employee satisfaction in the future. Additionally, the research showed that some of the measures the court has recently undertaken are in the areas most needing attention.

The researcher's recommendations provide several ideas that can be implemented, and highlight other areas for short and long-term improvement. The most consistent theme to the researcher was the management and leadership problems either real or perceived by the staff. This was the most frequent answer to what was liked least and what they would change if they could. Responses to this question are also tied to communication problems mentioned by respondents. The court instituted an extensive training program for supervisors, managers, and directors during the second half of 2000. This will need follow-up to ensure that the skills passed along are used. Creating a training plan for each employee will answer other staff concerns. There are also several other recommendations the researcher feels should be implemented. Moving ahead with the compensation review the court is planning and which the City of Seattle supports is important to all employees. Compensation reviews and budget changes take time but some changes can be implemented immediately to make a difference. The court needs to re-recruit existing employees. SMC needs to let them know their contribution is valued. Improve recognition and reward of staff. Everyone appreciates a compliment. The court should try re-orientating existing staff. By sending a few current staff through orientation with each group of new hires several benefits can be accomplished. They can participate in the orientation by explaining their areas to the group. Improved communication can result from their learning about changes in other areas of the court. The new hires will have more contact with existing staff to help their transition to the court.

II. Introduction

Courts across the country are facing the dilemma of doing more with less or at best doing more with the same amount of staffing. The problem is exacerbated by the high turnover and recruitment problems faced by most courts and other government agencies. The Municipal Court of Seattle is no exception. The court has experienced an overall vacancy rate of almost 15% for the last year. The outlook for the future appears to be more of the same with more than 25% of the current staff, including some very key personnel, expected to reach retirement eligibility in the next five years. To replace these key individuals the court needs to retain staff so that they can receive the necessary training and experience to fill these positions in the future.

The Municipal Court of Seattle is the largest limited jurisdiction court in the state, authorized under the Revised Code of Washington 35.20, with jurisdiction over all violations of the Seattle Municipal Code. The Court has ten elected Judges and six appointed Magistrates and is located at Third and James, in the heart of downtown Seattle. The Court handles all misdemeanors occurring in Seattle. Misdemeanors are crimes which carry a maximum sentence of a year in jail and a \$5,000 fine, including offences such as DUI's, domestic violence, theft, and trespass. In addition, Magistrates handle parking citations, traffic infractions, and non-traffic infractions. Seattle has a diverse population totaling 540,500 in 1999, making it the largest city in Washington State. The City of Seattle issues approximately 500,000 parking citations and 100,000 other infractions annually to be adjudicated and collected by the court. The court has a budget of over \$18.6 million in 2000. SMC is a leader in some areas with a Mental Health Court and a strong customer service commitment including credit and debit card acceptance in person, over the Internet, and using an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system. The court has also

partnered with community groups to work with individuals to clear their driving record so license suspensions can be removed and has sent cashiers to an area mall and a local university to answer questions and collect payments. A new courthouse is under construction two blocks east of the current facility. This will provide much improved physical surroundings for court employees and customers in the fall of 2002. At the time of this research project the court had two hundred fifty-three permanent employees including judges and magistrates.

To enable the court to meet its goals and provide the type of service the community has a right to expect, the court needs to attract top recruits in a competitive market. Courts are being asked to adapt to their changing role in society and the changing expectations of their constituency. This requires top individuals who will bring new ideas and are willing to challenge the way the court does business.

Once individuals have been recruited and a substantial amount of time and money invested in their training it is necessary to retain them. Some court positions such as record management, data entry, human resources and accounting are similar to private sector and other government agency positions. However, a majority of the positions in the court are different enough from other positions in the public and private sectors to require a substantial amount of training investment. These positions include the courtroom staff and customer service staff who are expected to have a substantial knowledge of court operations and functions. Most courts will make the necessary investment in training because it is required to make the employee productive. Unfortunately the retention of this investment does not receive priority it should be accorded.

To improve recruitment and retention it was necessary to learn the answers to several questions. 1) What is the court doing right and wrong for its employees? 2) Why have

employees left the court? 3) Why are some candidates declining job offers after going through the recruitment process? 4) Are any of the successful practices in the private sector or other public sector agencies applicable to the court? The answers to these questions will form the basis of a two-year plan to improve recruitment and retention at the court. The objective is to make the plan applicable to all areas of the court while recognizing the inherent differences between diverse groups such as security, information technology, and court clerks.

The next section of this report covers the review of relevant literature including books and articles, both in print and on the Internet, survey results, and summaries of exit interviews and focus groups held by SMC. The survey instrument, methodology, and results will also be covered. Exit interviews of employees leaving the court will be reviewed and the recent experience of a new employee will be described. Later sections include findings, conclusion, and end materials including references cited, other sources of information, and appendices.

III. Review of Relevant Literature

There is no shortage of literature on this topic. Because some of the reasons for recruitment and retention problems are created with economic and societal changes the majority of the researcher's review is of literature published after 1997. This allowed for the inclusion of new factors with the ones that have been around for the last fifty-years or more.

Recruitment

Recruitment and retention are difficult to separate because they are so inter-related. If an organization hired the right person to fill a vacancy the organization may have accomplished its' goal. However, if the wrong person was hired the organization may have set itself up for future retention problems and additional recruitment time and expense. The two themes emphasized in the literature reviewed are attracting the right individuals and then making sure the candidate is the right fit for the job. Attracting top candidates in a competitive market may require approaches to recruiting that were not considered in the public sector a few years ago. The literature reviewed and the researcher's own experience certainly indicates that courts are not putting enough emphasis on selling themselves to the candidates.

Recruitment – Attracting Candidates

Many states and government agencies have had to adopt new recruiting methods to deal with record low unemployment in some areas. States are launching strong recruiting campaigns highlighting positives such as recreational opportunities, natural beauty, lifestyles, and well-known businesses and universities. In some areas the problem has become finding enough

employees to satisfy the demand of business and government. To recruit workers for the high-tech industry Maryland offers \$3,000 annual scholarships in science and technology to any school in the state for students who will work one-year in the state for each year they receive the scholarship (Joinson "Reeling in the Talent," 1-5).

The available talent for management positions is growing slower than the number of openings. Revenue at search firms has increased at double the rate of the Gross Domestic Product from 1994-1999. After other firms recruit lower level talent, organizations are finding out the hard way that they did not recognize the in-house talent that was not being utilized (Grossman 3).

Recruitment – Sell Your Organization

In the last few years SMC feels it has made tremendous progress in moving from an average, middle of the road court to a court known for being a leader in some innovative programs and services. Unfortunately, their recruiting program does not address this fact. Too often, you hear comments in orientation sessions for new employees indicating surprise at finding out the advances that have taken place in court operations and that SMC is a leader in some areas. Courts and other government agencies appear to be behind private industry in tooting their own horn and selling their organizations to key candidates.

Roger Herman writes in Keeping Good People:

Separate yourself from the crowd. What is unique about your company? Why should someone work for you instead of working for your competitor or a company in another industry? How can you establish your organization, and your

opportunity, as being different from other alternatives in the employment marketplace? (32)

When you have talented prospects for your organization you must be prepared to sell your organization to candidates. Let them know what makes your organization unique and a great place to work. Do not oversell your organization; simply tell the truth. If candidates accept your offer and find out later you were exaggerating you will have lost the trust and confidence of the individual (Kaye and Jordan-Evans 61-62).

Recruitment – Finding the Right Fit

A major clothing manufacturer reduced turnover 36% over a three-year period by using computer-assisted interviewing to screen out inappropriate applicants early in the hiring process. Nike believes computer-assisted interviewing has paid a large part in reducing the turnover in their retail stores by 21% (Thornburg 1-2).

In an article “Recruiting, Retention & Returns”, George Donnelly discusses how Southwest Airlines maintains its customer-focused environment which receives a lot of credit for the airlines success.

For instance, to fill 4,200 job openings last year [1999], the company interviewed nearly 80,000 people. Candidates undergo a rigorous interview process that can take as long as six weeks before they are hired. About 20% of new hires fail to make it through the training period. The payback: low turnover, high customer satisfaction, and in Sartain’s [Libby Sartain, Vice-President of People for Southwest] estimation, a self-monitoring culture of self-motivated employees (1).

Spending time on recruitment has clearly created a benefit for Southwest. Their turnover rate is significantly lower than the average for their industry and they rank sixth in Fortune magazine's listing of most-admired companies. Other companies with familiar names that have proven that investment in recruiting practice can pay big dividends in turnover rate and job satisfaction include A. C. Nielsen, Sears, Roebuck and Co., GTE Corp., Dell Computer Corp., and Microsoft (Donnelly 2).

Turnover Costs

The national rate of turnover averaged 1.2% per month or 14.4% annualized for 1999. Slightly over half of companies surveyed estimated their turnover costs to be between \$1,000 and \$10,000 per employee but 10% felt the costs exceeded \$40,000 per person. Many companies have discovered that they don't know their true turnover costs. One suggestion is to use categories to make sure all costs are collected. Possibilities include:

- Pre-turnover could include costs that result from a slower work pace, increased absenteeism, and grievance process.
- Separation costs such as severance pay, unemployment costs and litigation fees.
- Vacancy costs could include amounts paid to other staff to fill in as well as lost opportunities in sales and service depending on your industry.
- Recruitment and new-hire processing includes costs such as advertising and promotional materials, referral bonuses, relocation expenses, sign-on bonuses, and background checks. Also included would be costs of employees who recruit, process paperwork, conduct interviews and tours, give tests, train, conduct orientation, hook up computers and phones, issue identification badges, and the list goes on and on

(Joinson “Capturing Turnover Costs,” 2-3).

Organizations are recognizing the high cost of vacancies and taking advantage of the number of recruiting software packages that are on the market that allow them to break the hiring process down and track time and cost from the first response to the employee’s start date (Fitz-Enz 1-2).

For courts and other government agencies it seems apparent that the usually drawn-out recruiting process that public agencies follow forces higher turnover costs upon them. This begins even before the recruiting process due to the lack of flexibility public agencies have to adjust salaries and benefits to keep talented personnel. Private industry managers sometimes have an advantage in this area.

Orientation and Training

Research has shown that the length of time an employee stays with the organization is directly related to the length of time the employer invests in an orientation program. A good approach is to stage several sessions over the first few days or weeks to avoid information overload. Use the orientation program to resell the organization and the opportunity the new employee has accepted. Consider repeating the key points at a later date. The excitement and stress of the new job will assure that some information will be forgotten (Herman 181-182).

Human resources can only do part of the orientation and support necessary to make new hires a productive part of your team. The manager needs to be involved as well as key staff in the area they will be working. Spend time, tell stories, and share experiences to give the culture and feel of the organization. A mentoring program is good way to bridge the inevitable skill gaps (Kaye and Jordan-Evans 65-66).

Organizations noted for best practices in customer service invest heavily in initial training and in annual training. Hours of initial training ranged from one hundred fifty to one thousand eight with an average of three hundred ninety-seven. Annual training ranged from sixteen to sixty with an average of thirty-nine hours (Best 3). For comparison SMC provides the majority of new hires with approximately one hundred twenty hours of initial training and twenty hours of training annually.

While selecting, orienting, and training new hires do not neglect your long-term employees. Re-recruit your existing employees. Show them that they are important to you and critical to the success of team. Too many times reality, being treated like everyone else, follows the rush of recruitment. Research shows employees are easily lost during their first three years (Kaye and Jordan-Evans 67).

Consider re-orienting your existing employees every few years. A few employees that have been with the organization for awhile can join each group of new hires. Keep the attitude positive by encouraging their participation in discussing their areas. This will allow you to make sure they remain current about what the organization is doing and the new projects in different divisions. Invite them to critique the process after they've experienced the sessions. Have an existing employee sponsor each of the new hires. They will gain a sense of ownership for the assimilation of the new employees into the organization's culture and reinforce the positive feelings for themselves at the same time (Herman 183).

The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), the standard of statistical measurement for the quality of goods and services in the private sector, has included government agencies in its measurements for the last few years. The survey data reveals that employees that

are poorly trained will have a much lower job satisfaction, which in turn will reduce customer satisfaction (Tobias 3).

Retention

The literature reviewed indicates that money is not the deciding factor for most employees in changing jobs. There are other factors that play a stronger role. Money does become a deciding factor when the existing salary structure is below the current market rates. However, outside of the information technology area where salaries have rocketed out-of-sight, research indicates areas other than money should play a larger role in an organization's retention strategy.

In an interview Jack Deal of Deal Consulting, a management consulting company, points out that retaining good employees is just as important as recruiting them. "Employees are becoming the competitive advantage for business in the modern world. Bad employees can cause a business to fail, and mediocre ones can cause a business to break even. But good employees can make a business soar."

Retention – Importance of Values

Studies show that retention is based on values. People leave organizations and move on when they realize the organization's values are not the same as their personal values. The leaving may not happen immediately but the process will have begun. This type of separation will most likely occur within six months of being hired. The employees core values must mesh with those of the organization and the work team for job satisfaction. These are not the same for everyone and to improve retention the employer needs to find out the candidate's values during

the interview process. Employers must find out what their existing employee values are to ensure that organizational and employee values are upheld in the workplace (Specht 44-51).

Why do some employees stay with you and others leave? The following list contains the most common reasons people stay in order of popularity and frequency. According to Beverly Kaye and Sharon Jordan-Evans, the authors of Love 'em or Lose 'em, 90% of respondents listed at least one of the first three among their top reasons for staying.

1. Career growth, learning, and development
2. Exciting work and challenge
3. Meaningful work, making a difference and a contribution
4. Great people
5. Being part of a team.
6. Good boss
7. Recognition for work well done
8. Fun on the job
9. Autonomy, sense of control over my work
10. Flexibility – for example, in work hours and dress code
11. Fair pay and benefits
12. Inspiring leadership
13. Pride in organization, its mission, and quality of product
14. Great work environment
15. Location
16. Job security
17. Family-friendly
18. Cutting-edge technology

In “A New Relationship with Employees”, George M. C. Fisher writes about the changes taking place at Kodak.

The new employer-employee relationship should be based on plain language that states the company's values, company expectations of employees based on those values, and how the company will measure compliance with those values. It should be easily understood, and all employees, managers, and top executives should agree to it.

Wetherill Associates, Martin Marietta, and NovaCare are among companies that have used values reorientation and an emphasis on integrity to improve employee satisfaction and reduce turnover in the early 1990's. NovaCare reduced turnover from 57% to 27% in five years after adopting vision and purpose statements to support "four key beliefs: respect for the individual, service to the customer, pursuit of excellence, and commitment to personal integrity" (Paine 115-117).

Retention of computer technology staff is a hot issue in any organization in today's market. Most can find more money without looking very hard. When AverStar looked at retention issues they came up with a list of employee priorities in order of preference: "challenging and interesting work, company support (training, education, benefits, bonuses, recognition), salary, and possibilities for promotion and advancement" (Miles 1).

Retention – Employee Satisfaction

In a compilation of survey responses titled Employee Satisfaction by the Business Research Lab "more than eight out of ten employees who describe themselves as being highly satisfied intend to stay more than two years, compared to only two of ten who describe themselves as being dissatisfied."

In a comparison of employee satisfaction and turnover at two fast-food restaurants near a major university major difference were found in employee satisfaction and turnover. In Restaurant 1 workers were given greater responsibility and learned about allocating resources, systems thinking, use of technology, and interpersonal skills. In Restaurant 2 the workers were part of a team but the manager decided everything and told staff what to do. Restaurant 1 had double the employee satisfaction and one-tenth the turnover of Restaurant 2 (Stone 1-3).

Work/Life balances were mentioned as an increasingly important part of employee retention by several sources. This is having a life outside of work whether it is family or other interests. This balance appears to be gaining in importance according to these sources.

The response to a Texas study of employee satisfaction at a government agency show that over 80% of the respondents have some concern about the balance between their work and their personal lives. The committee reviewing the study has recommended that the agency create new norms in this area (Boltes, Lippke, and Gregory 4).

A 1998 survey by Kristine Hafner showed the following common themes in employee satisfaction at American Express, Digital, Federal Express, Hewlett Packard, and IBM:

- Belief in people as primary source of competitive advantage
- Concern for total employee well-being
- Proactive leadership and direction from the top
- Managerial accountability for effective people management
- Investment in leadership development
- Meaningful employee involvement
- Structured communication channels (15)

Responses from 1,400 chief information officers in a random sample of U.S. companies with more than 100 employees, 53% indicated work/life balances were much more important today in retaining top talent than they were five years ago. Another 35% said they were somewhat more important (Work/Life 1).

Each year a technology-consulting company conducts a survey on employee satisfaction. Based on their 1998 survey they consider the following to be the “key drivers” of employee satisfaction in order of importance:

1. Opportunity. Career advancement, including the chance to work with emerging technologies, played the biggest role in overall satisfaction.
2. Environment. Providing employees with the best possible atmosphere.
3. Achievement. Feelings of accomplishment, or personal satisfaction.
4. Reward. Compensation, yes, and also recognition and acknowledgement of a job well done were key.
5. Community. Support from other employees, from both a technical and a morale standpoint.
6. Balance. Helping employees balance work and family concerns (Fenn 6-7).

Retention – Effect of Immediate Supervisor

The literature reviewed was consistent in emphasizing the importance of the direct supervisor of the employee. The following series of quotations point out how key this individual is to the employee.

“The most important person in the company to an employee is their supervisor.” Dr. Jac Fritz-Enz in the article “Savvy Staffing” urges organizations to never underestimate the impact of an employee’s immediate supervisor. Frequently an employee has left the organization as a direct result of the interaction with the supervisor. (1-3)

Five hundred retention and employee development specialists were surveyed about what causes employee dissatisfaction. The three most commonly mentioned causes were dissatisfaction with the boss, lack of respect for the boss, and the lack of integrity of the manager. At the other end the three most critical factors in employee commitment were fair

treatment, the employees felt the company considered them vital to its success, and financial successes are shared with the employees (Hanging 1).

The relationship between the manager/supervisor and the employee is a major factor in their satisfaction and their decision to stay or leave. A 1997 study by the Saratoga Institute “[. . .] found that 50% of work life satisfaction is determined by the relationship a worker has with his or her immediate boss” (qtd. in Kaye and Jordan-Evans 10). The manager/supervisor should create an atmosphere where staff feels “motivated, cared about and rewarded” (Kaye and Jordan-Evans 11).

Sometimes the manager/supervisor can prevent turnover by listening to their employees. Help them identify several career goals. By supporting employees with viable alternatives within the organization you can hold on to valuable talent to support the organizational mission. Some alternatives within the organization besides promotion include:

1. lateral movement to gain experience.
2. realignment – a small step backward to be in a better position to move up.
3. exploration – moving to another area of the organization that interests the employee.
4. enrichment – acquiring new skills in place (Kaye and Jordan-Evans 47-53).

Retention – Reward and Recognition

In his book Keeping Good People, Roger Herman writes that supervisors and managers “[. . .] need to provide recognition of achievement or even just reports of progress toward agreed-upon goals.” Feedback helps employees have a commitment to the job. “When commitment and recognition levels are low, workers will seek recognition elsewhere-perhaps from outside the

organization.” Mr. Herman states that employees have a need to be recognized. By meeting their needs they will be more satisfied and more likely to remain with the employer. (48-49)

Beverly Kaye and Sharon Jordan-Evans devote a chapter of their book Love ‘em or Lose ‘em to reward and recognition. They call praise “The Universal Reward” because according to them it works for everyone. They recommend praising your employees:

- ***Spontaneously.*** Catch people doing something right and thank them then and there.
- ***Specifically.*** Praise people for specific (rather than generic) accomplishments or efforts
- ***Purposefully.*** Take an employee to lunch or dinner in a great restaurant to show your appreciation of work well done.
- ***Privately.*** Go to your employee’s office to give a personal thank-you and praise.
- ***Publicly.*** Praise an employee in the presence of others (peers, family members, your boss).
- ***In writing.*** Send a letter, memo or e-mail. Possibly send a copy to team members or higher-level management.

They ended this section of the chapter with what the researcher felt was a great quote from Rosabeth Moss Kanter, author and management consultant, “Compensation is a right; recognition is a gift.” (146-147)

Generation “X”

Numerous sources have sections or chapters devoted to Generation X’ers, individuals born between 1965 and 1976 or 1966 and 1981 depending on the source you are reviewing. In the survey of SMC employees the researcher used the 1965 to 1976 period. In 2000 this group ranges in age from twenty-four to thirty-five and should form a significant part of your workforce. If it is not a significant part of your workforce the organization is not promoting the values and work environment this group requires for job satisfaction.

Generation X’ers want autonomy, latitude, trust, and a sense of entrepreneurialism. They want authority to make basic decisions, task ownership, want to do the work the way they think will create the highest quality product, and need to know they are trusted (Muchnick 18).

Studies of Generation X’ers indicate that while compensation is important it doesn’t stand alone as an incentive. “Most X-ers want to know:”

1. What new skills can be learned? How will this job build my resume?
2. Does the job fit within the context of my larger career goals?
3. Does the position fit with my personal interests and values?
4. Will the position offer me ongoing challenges and the opportunity to contribute and be recognized within the organization?
5. What’s the pay?

X-ers want information, space, and resources to produce the desired result. They cannot tolerate micromanagement and providing information and freedom builds the trust they expect (Kaye and Jordan-Evans 198-201).

The article “How to Hire Stars and How to Keep Them Shining on You” by Kal Lifson covers many of the same expectations of the X’ers. “Stars thrive in positions in which:

- The results are meaningful to the success of the organization.
- The results are measurable and are regularly and frequently measured.
- The results are obvious and widely known.
- They are accountable for the results.”

He also mentions other characteristics that will help attract and retain Stars:

1. An atmosphere of challenge, commitment to excellence, and goals for the organization and individual.
2. Fast-paced atmosphere with decisions made promptly, lack of red tape.
3. Teamwork with interesting, competent people.
4. No tolerance of mediocrity.
5. Freedom of action and receptiveness to suggestions for change.
6. Empowerment to make decisions.
7. Open lines of communication – staff not kept in dark.
8. Organization focused on progress not internal competition.
9. Immediate open feedback on errors and mistakes – no put-downs. (1-4)

Generation X employees have changed employer-employee relationships now and in the future. By rejecting organizational loyalty and replacing it with common goals between employers and employees the workplace has been changed (Kaye and Jordan-Evans 2003).

Court2Court Listserv

The Court2Court listserv was queried on August 21, 2000 for information on successful recruitment and retention efforts. The researcher received less than ten responses with most indicating they had the same problem and would like to know any solutions that were developed.

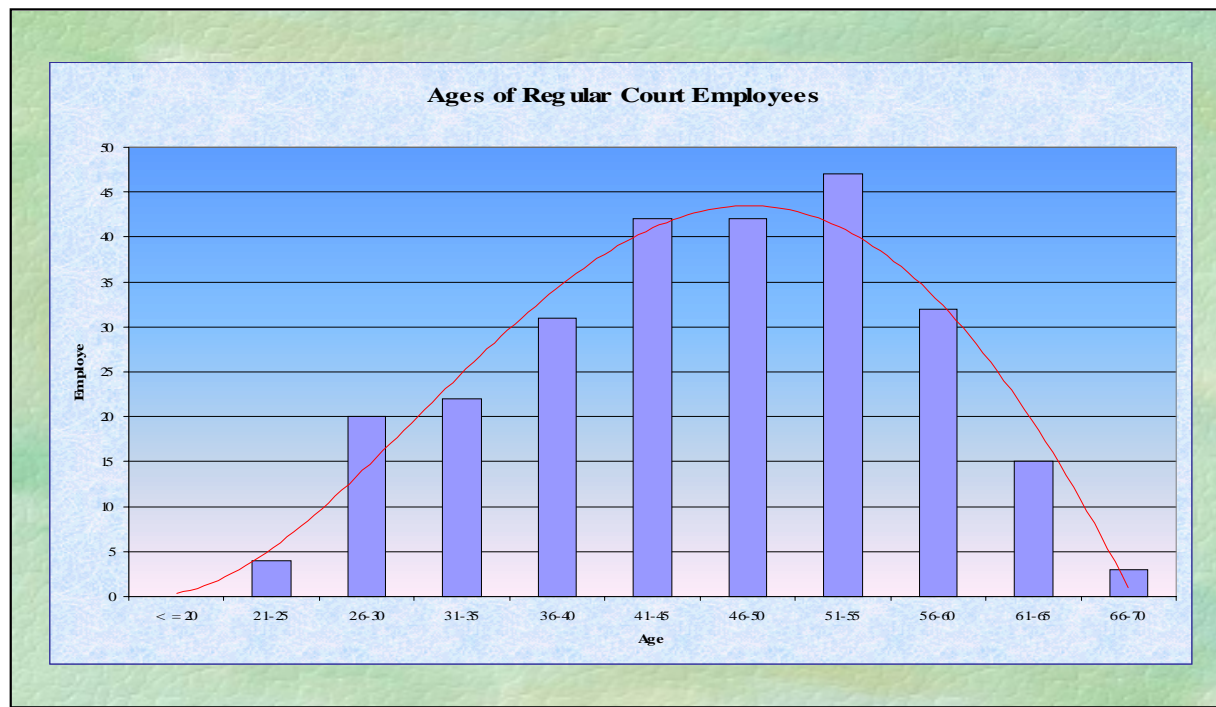
A more detailed response listing several programs implemented was received from James M. Strong III, Manager of Judicial Human Resources for the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit in Lake County, Illinois (Appendix K). Some of the programs they have had success with include shift differential for all employees, pay increases in several areas as a result of market studies, an internship program, recruiting teams to colleges and universities, on-the-spot cash reward programs, recruiting retiring military personnel and spouses, and a career path program.

IV. Research Methodology

Background

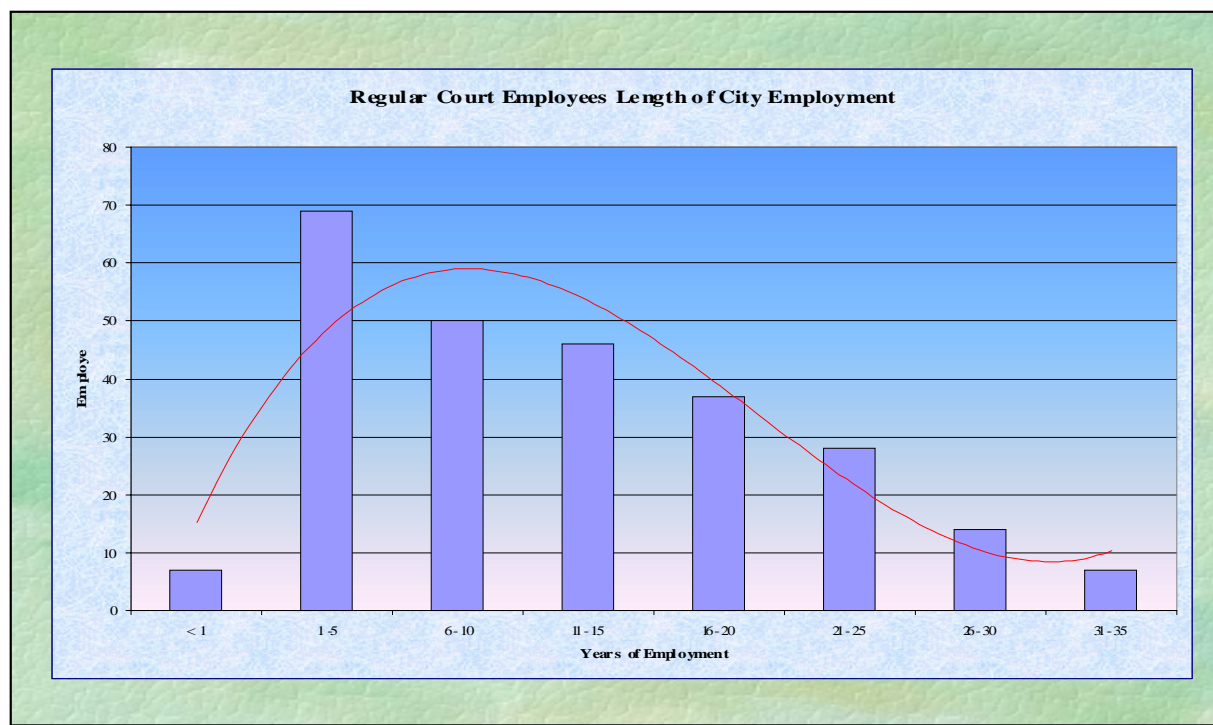
When the researcher selected this topic for his research project in May of 2000, SMC was already experiencing a vacancy rate of about 12% and there was widespread frustration among court staff over the time it was taking to fill the openings. Earlier that spring the court administrator, who had started in October 1999, had requested some information from the human resources manager regarding the workforce and the potential effects of upcoming retirements. His research showed that while over 28% of the workforce had been with the court less than ten years, almost 20% of the workforce were over fifty-five years old. It became clear that, over the next five years, the court was going to need to replace some key employees. The charts he presented are presented as Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Figure 1
Ages of Regular Court Employees



The Municipal Court of Seattle Human Resources Division

Figure 2
Regular Court Employees Length of City Employment



The Municipal Court of Seattle Human Resources Division

In meetings with Yolande Williams, the Court Administrator in early 2000 the researcher had not selected a topic but wanted one that would be of value to SMC. One of her suggestions was a two-year plan to improve recruitment and retention at the court. After giving it some consideration and knowing from experience the importance of the issue to the court, the researcher proceeded with the topic. To attack the problem from another angle at the same time Ms. Williams directed the human resources manager to create a group to look at streamlining the hiring process once human resources has been notified of a vacancy. As a department of the City of Seattle, the court has a cumbersome recruiting and hiring process that has been developed over the years to ensure fair and equal treatment at the expense of responding quickly to market

place changes. Focus groups were also formed to give employees from each area of the court a chance to express their concerns.

Research Design

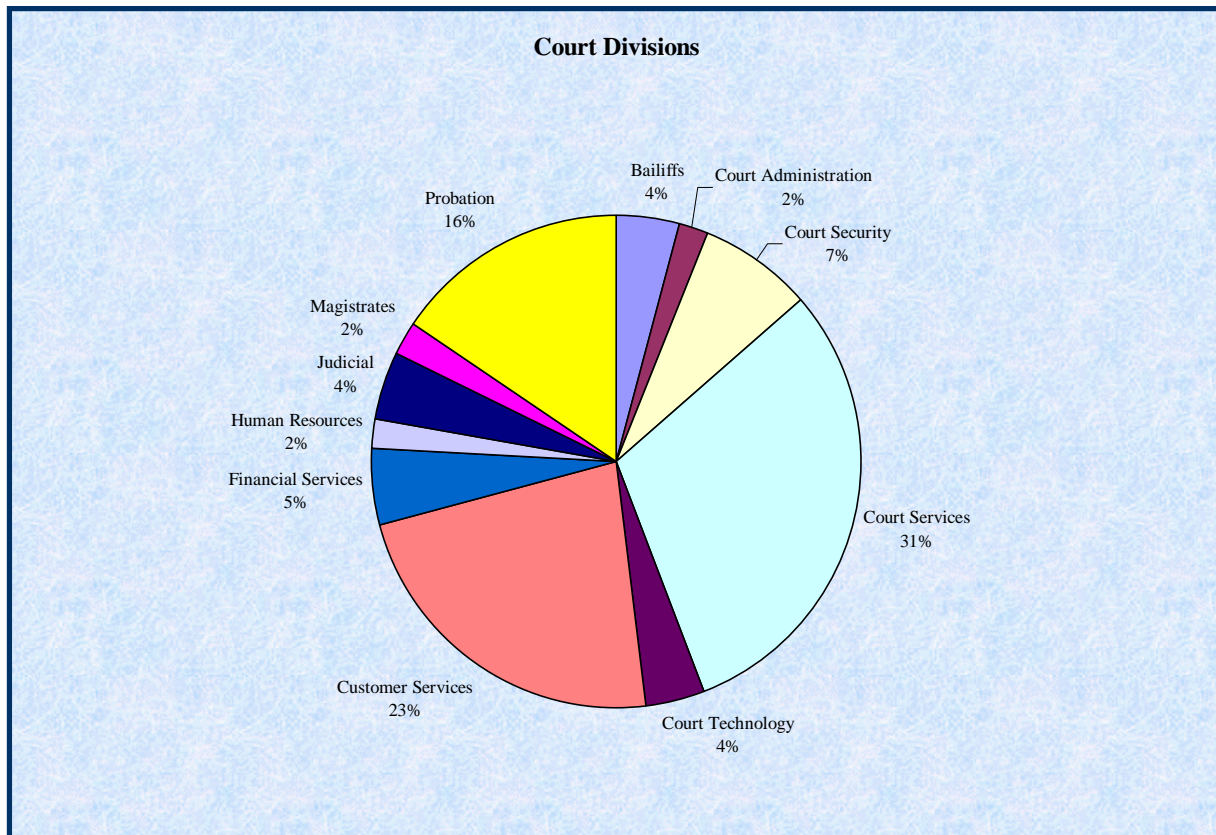
To improve the court needed to know what it was doing right and what it was doing wrong. A survey was designed to collect the data necessary for analysis and conclusions. The literature review was well underway before the survey was designed so some of the points presented in various sources were incorporated into the survey. The survey was kept relatively short, fifteen questions, and the purpose of the survey was explained in a cover letter. A copy of survey and cover can be found in Appendix A.

Survey Group

The survey group was all permanent employees at SMC. There are two hundred seventy-nine permanent positions including both full-time and part-time. After subtracting the twenty-six vacant positions at the time of the survey there were a total of two hundred fifty-three in the survey group.

The survey asked for the organizational unit the employee worked in to try to ensure response from all areas of the court and to identify responses from areas that have specific recruiting issues and market pressures such as court marshals and technology professionals. Figure 3 shows the percentage of employees in each organizational area. All employees were given the option of not answering any questions they thought might identify them if they were concerned about this aspect.

Figure 3
Percentage of Employees by Court Division



The Municipal Court of Seattle Human Resources Division

Once the survey was distributed several of the court managers supported the effort by encouraging their employees to take time to complete the survey stressing its importance to the court.

Pre-Test

Prior to distributing the survey to the court employees it was necessary to pre-test the survey to see if it met the criteria that had been established. The goal was to create a survey that:

- Could be completed in approximately ten minutes.
- Contained questions respondents would be willing to answer.

- Was interesting enough to the employees that they would complete it.
- Would not offend any individual or group.
- Would provide the information needed for improvement.

Two of the SMC staff had inquired about the project and volunteered their help. The researcher selected them for the pre-test. One worked in the financial services and one in court operations. Both individuals felt the survey met the established criteria and would provide some valuable feedback. The survey and cover letter were also sent to the researcher's project advisor, the court administrator, and the human resources manager for their comments. A few comments were received back and minor changes were made to a few of the questions.

Survey Questionnaire-Distribution and Collection

The data collection instrument for this project is a two-page questionnaire (Appendix A) that was distributed with employees' paychecks on September 7, 2000. It was followed up with an email on September 8, 2000 passing along late comments the researcher had received back from his advisor regarding writing in an answer on the multiple choice and not answering any question that they felt might identify them. On September 15, 2000 an email was sent to all court employees (all have email) and copies of the survey and cover letter were attached. Employees were urged to take the time to complete the survey and the confidentiality of their answers were stressed. The communication stated again that responses would be entered into a database and that the researcher would be the only one to see the original survey. Copies of these communications are in Appendix B. One additional courtwide email was sent out on September 29, 2000 and the researcher visited each area of the court personally to ask anyone who had not responded to please do so. The survey was distributed in hard-copy form once and

electronically as an attachment to courtwide email twice. A total of one hundred nineteen responses were received out of two hundred fifty-three in the survey group for return of 47%. Fortunately all but one of the respondents appear to have taken the survey seriously. Since twenty-six of the surveys, 21.8% of the responses, did not indicate which area of the court they worked in it is impossible to say for sure which areas are not represented.

No responses were returned indicating the judicial, magistrate, or court security organizational areas. Due to significant differences in their recruitment and retention processes a high response rate was not expected from these areas. In conversations since the survey two of the elected judges and one of the appointed magistrates told the researcher they did complete the survey but probably did not answer the organizational unit question. In the past court marshals have been recruited from the ranks of retired police officers or military. Because of their background and specialized training their recruitment and retention concerns has been quite different in the past. The court is moving to change this mix by hiring younger personnel and providing the necessary training through the law enforcement academy.

Data Compilation and Analysis

Responses from the survey ranged from one-word answers to multiple paragraphs. It also became obvious that while some individuals were concerned about being identified others were not. Some dropped off their surveys to the researcher in person and asked questions about the project. Another signed her survey, added her phone number, and asked the researcher to call if there were any questions. Data was entered exactly as the researcher received it. No attempt was made to correct spelling or grammatical errors. Individual names were not entered nor were titles if there were so few of that title to be identifying. For clarification, the term “no answer”

was entered if respondent left the question totally blank. Any other response is the respondent's answer to the question.

While waiting for the surveys to be returned the researcher created a database in Microsoft Access 97TM SR-2 to store the data for various queries and reports. Surveys were received between September 8th and October 11th. The researcher planned on entering the data personally to get a feel for the responses. After the first six responses were entered time was taken to review the database and make any necessary adjustments to accommodate the data. At this point several new fields were added to allow for additional answers and the data entry form in Access was revised to add the fields and change the size of others. The objective was to have each response to the survey print out on a one-page form with all responses readable. Appendix M contains printouts of the one hundred nineteen responses received. Three of the fields, organizational unit, length of service, and age group, were deleted to maintain anonymity.

V. Research Findings

Individual Profile – Survey

At the time the survey was in progress SMC had eleven different organizational areas. The court was reorganized on January 1, 2001 to be in line with its new business plan and budget. Table 1 lists the different areas, the number of employees in each, and the number of responses that could be tied to that organizational unit. As the table indicates no responses used the organizational units for court security, magistrates, or judicial chambers. Time was spent explaining the survey and purpose to several of the marshals including the two sergeants and the chief marshal but no response was received unless they are among the twenty-six unidentified. Since the marshals are retired police officers or military police their recruitment and retention has much different parameters from the rest of the court. The response from the remaining eight units ranged from 31% to 80% with three areas between 30% and 40% and three areas between 75% and 80%.

Table 1
Survey Response as a Percent of Survey Group Sorted by Organizational Unit

The Municipal Court of Seattle Organizational Unit	# of filled Positions	% of permanent positions	# of Responses	% of unit responding
Court Administrators Office	4	1.6%	3	75.0%
Court Technology	10	4.0%	6	60.0%
Court Services	76	30.0%	27	35.5%
Customer Services	55	21.7%	27	49.1%
Court Security	20	7.9%	0	0.0%
Human Resources	5	2.0%	4	80.0%
Financial Services	10	3.9%	8	80.0%
Probation Services	44	17.4%	14	31.2%
Magistrates	6	2.4%	0	0.0%
Judicial Chambers	12	4.7%	0	0.0%
Bailiffs	11	4.4%	4	36.4%
No unit specified			26	--
	253	100.0%	119	47.0%

The researcher was unable to find any other surveys like the one completed. The results were compared to employee satisfaction surveys, which are similar. The response rate of 47% was comparable to employee satisfaction survey responses. Employee satisfaction surveys were conducted by Vice President Gore's National Partnership for Reinventing Government 40% (13,657 out of 34,401), the State of North Carolina 1998-1999 Annual State Employee Survey 30% (1,306 out of 4,318), and the Texas Extension faculty and staff 66% (1,139 out of 1,720). The other surveys mentioned were much longer and all were mailed to employees' home with a mailed response to a tabulation service. The researcher was hoping for better response rate, 60+% but it did not materialize. In post-survey discussions with court staff reasons ranged from "too busy to take time" to "why bother nothing will come of it."

Analysis of data at the organizational unit level is hampered by the 22% of respondents who did not indicate where they worked at the court. The researcher will note in lessons learned that this probably should have been a multiple-choice answer or pre-coded to make response easier.

Table 2 shows the responses by length of service. Findings show that an employee with five years or less service was twice as likely to respond as those with over twenty or more years of service. The employees with six to twenty years of service had only a slightly better response rate than those with over twenty years with the large drop in response showing among respondents with six to ten years of service. With response rates ranging from 34.8% to 69.8% all groups have enough response to draw some conclusions. The figures used for comparison in this chart are actually based on the employees' hire date with the City of Seattle. Figures on hire dates for individual departments are not computerized. If an employee started with a different City of Seattle department and then transferred to the court the original hire date by the City of

Seattle is the only date stored in the personnel database. The researcher feels this will have no significant effect on findings but will be noted in lessons learned. Table 3 shows response by length of service and organizational area.

Table 2
Survey Response by Length of Service

Length of Service	# of Employees	# of Responses	% Responding
< 1 year	22	15	68.1
1-5 years	53	37	69.8
6-10 years	43	17	39.5
11-20 years	89	32	40.0
20+ years	46	16	34.8
No Answer		2	--
	253	119	47.0

Table 3
Survey Response by Length of Service by Organizational Area

Organizational Area	< 1 year	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-20 years	20+ years	No Answer
Court Administration	1	2				
Court Technology	1	2		2	1	
Court Services	1	9	3	9	4	1
Customer Services	6	7	4	6	4	
Human Resources		2	1	1		
Financial Services		4	1	2	1	
Probation Services	2	2	2	4	4	
Bailiffs		1	1	1	1	
No Answer	4	8	5	7	1	1
Total	15	37	17	32	16	2

Table 4
Survey Response by Age Group

Year of Birth	# Responding	Percent
1950 & earlier	40	33.6%
1951-1964	47	39.5%
1965-1976	27	22.7%
1977-1982	2	1.7%
No Answer	3	2.5%
	119	100.0%

When the responses are sorted by age group (Table 4) the spread appears consistent with what is recognized as an aging population group. Since only three of the responses, 2.5%, did not answer the age question, answers to the other questions on the survey can be sorted by age group with some meaningfulness. The thirty-six to forty-nine age group had the largest number of responses, forty-seven, which equaled 39.5% of the total. Forty responses or 33.6% came from the fifty and over age group. Generation “X”, the twenty-four to thirty-five age group had twenty-seven responses or 22.7%. The remaining two responses were from those twenty-three and younger. This spread is representative of the court population as represented in Figure 3 produced by the SMC human resources division earlier this year.

Analysis of Survey Data-Why Accept a Position at the Court

Survey question number three asked, “Which one of the following best describes why you accepted a position with the court?” Respondents were offered a multiple choice of five answers ranging from just needed a job to wanting to work in the court system. Several also wrote in their own choice but all respondents answered the question. The most common answer with thirty-three out of the one hundred nineteen surveys returned listed good starting pay and benefits as the reason they accepted the position with the court. The next highest answer was twenty-five respondents, 21% said they wanted to work in the court system. Twenty-two respondents just needed a job and twenty-one said they wanted an interesting job. Table 5 shows a breakdown of respondents’ answers by length of service and Table 6 shows the breakdown by age group. While the breakdown of the answers is fairly consistent across age groups and time with reasons changing position only slightly in order there are some interesting results. Those with over six years of service clearly indicate that good starting pay and benefits were the

deciding factor for most. That appears to be changing with the more recent hires. Almost 50%, seven out of 15 hired in the last year listed wanting to work for the court as the deciding factor with only four listing good starting pay and benefits. This could be the result of a better pool of applicants who are interested in court service or a result of pay increases in the private sector that make the beginning pay not as attractive or a combination of both.

Table 5

Survey Response to Why You Accepted a Position at the Court? – Sorted by Length of Service

Why you accepted a position at the court?	< 1 years service	1-5 years service	6-10 years service	11-20 years service	20+ years service	No Answer	Total	Per- cent
Good Starting Pay & Benefits	4	8	7	9	4	1	33	27.7%
Just needed a job-took the first position offered		9	2	7	3	1	22	18.5%
Needed a job-was offered several in the city-the Court seemed the best offering customer service					1		1	0.8%
Offered flexible hours-this was a long time ago!					1		1	0.8%
Took the first position offered to me				1			1	0.8%
Transfer from another City Department		1		2			3	2.5%
Wanted an interesting job	1	7	3	7	3		21	17.6%
Wanted to work for a government agency	3	3	2	1	3		12	10.1%
Wanted to work in the court system	7	9	3	5	1		25	21.0%
Totals	15	37	17	32	16	2	119	100%

Table 6

Survey Response to Why You Accepted a Position at the Court? – Sorted by Age Group

Why you accepted a position at the court?	DOB 1950 & earlier	DOB 1951- 1964	DOB 1965- 1976	DOB 1977- 1982	No Answer	Total	Percent
Good Starting Pay & Benefits	10	13	9		1	33	27.7%
Just needed a job- took the first position offered	9	8	3		2	22	18.5%
Needed a job-was offered several in the city-the Court seemed the best offering customer service	1					1	0.8%
Offered flexible hours - This was a long time ago!	1					1	0.8%
Took the first position offered to me	1					1	0.8%
Transfer from another City Department	1	2				3	2.5%
Wanted an interesting job	9	8	4			21	17.6%
Wanted to work for a government agency	1	7	2	2		12	10.1%
Wanted to work in the court system	7	9	9			25	21.0%
Totals	40	47	27	2	3	119	100.0%

Table 7 sorts the responses to the question by organizational area. The responses vary little between different areas of the court with the most common responses coming from all but one or two areas of the court.

Table 7
Survey Response to Why You Accepted a Position at the Court? – Sorted by Organizational Area

Why you accepted a position at the court?	Court Admin	Court Tech	Court Services	Customer Services	Human Resources	Financial Services	Probation Services	Bailiffs	No Answer	Total
Good Starting Pay & Benefits		1	11	8	1	2	2	1	7	33
Just needed a job-took the first position offered	1	2	5	5	1	3			5	22
Needed a job-was offered several in the city-the Court seemed the best offering				1						1
customer service				1						1
Offered flexible hours - This was a long time ago!				1						1
Took the first position offered to me				1						1
Transfer from another City Department		1				1			1	3
Wanted an interesting job		1	5	4		1	5		5	21
Wanted to work for a government agency		1	4	4			2		1	12
Wanted to work in the court system	2		2	3	2	1	5	3	7	25
	3	6	27	27	4	8	14	4	26	119

Analysis of Survey Data-Why Are You Staying at the Court

Survey question number four dealt with why employees are staying with their position at the court. The survey offered a choice of seventeen of the eighteen answers listed in the literature review on page 15 from the book Love ‘em or Lose ‘em by Beverly Kaye and Sharon Jordan-Evans. The eighteenth “cutting-edge technology” seemed inappropriate to the organization given the age of the court’s software. The results are in Table 8 and are sorted by length of service. The researcher mixed up the order since the authors’ list is in response order. Respondents were asked to select the two that best fit their reasons. They could also write in anything that was not listed. Six respondents only listed one reason and the researcher entered

no response for the second. One respondent answered “There is no other reason” for their second choice. Several respondents tried to list four to ten answers in order of preference but only the first two are shown on the tables.

The most frequent response was job security and it was a choice of almost 20% of the respondents. Pay and benefits came in second appearing on 18% of the surveys. Other frequent responses included 12.6% listing meaningful work, and career growth and exciting work each were listed on over 8% of the responses. When the answers were broken down by length of service there were several interesting results noted. Staff with over twenty years of service listed job security more frequently than any other choice followed closely fair pay and benefits. In this group job security and pay and benefits totaled over 50% of all answers and no other answers were close. The eleven to twenty year group still listed job security most frequently but pay and benefits came in sixth following exciting work and challenge, meaningful work, career growth, and location. Staff with six to ten years of service listed pay and benefits most frequently with job security second and other answers considerably lower. Those with one to five years’ experience listed pay and benefits first and meaningful work and job security tied for second with other answers much less popular. The newest employees listed career growth most frequently with everything else considerably lower.

The results pose challenges for management. Career growth, including learning and development is listed on 23% of the responses among those with less than one-year experience. It is listed by 8% of those with one to five years of experience and is not listed once among those with six to ten years of experience. It then was a response by over 9% of those with eleven to twenty years of experience. Providing career development opportunities would provide a positive response to employees in several groups. As was discussed in the literature review,

career development does not have to mean a promotion. Opportunities for cross training in another area of the court might provide the needed challenge. It also appears that the court has an opportunity to benefit by exploring opportunities to motivate its more senior employees.

Those with more than twenty years experience have tenure at their positions and are looked at as examples by less senior staff. Their responses indicate that they do not find their work exciting or a challenge. They need to be motivated and challenged to set an example for the newer staff.

This is part of the retention challenge for which there is no magic answer.

With the responses indicating meaningful work to ranks fairly high, the court should consider emphasizing the important role that the court and all employees play in the community.

As Table 8 indicates meaningful work was a reason for staying by some respondents in each group.

Table 8

Survey Response to Why Do You Stay with Your Present Job? - Sorted by Length of Service

Why do you stay with your present job at the court?	0-1 years	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-20 years	20+ years	No Answer	Total
Autonomy, sense of control over my work	1	2	0	3	4	0	10
Being part of a team	0	2	1	2	0	0	5
Career growth, learning & development	7	6	0	6	1	0	20
Exciting work & challenge	3	6	2	8	2	0	21
Fair benefits	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Fair pay & benefits	4	14	9	5	8	1	41
Fair pay & benefits & job security	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Family-friendly	1	3	1	0	1	0	6
Flexibility in work hours	0	5	2	1	1	0	9
Fun on the Job	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Good leadership	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Good manager or supervisor	0	2	1	1	0	0	4
Great people	2	1	1	1	1	0	6
Great work environment	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
Job security	3	12	7	14	9	2	47
Learning & development	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Location	2	5	4	6	0	1	18
Meaningful work, making a difference/contribution	3	12	4	7	4	0	30
No Answer	0	1	2	3	0	0	6
Pride in organization, mission, quality of product	2	1	0	2	0	0	5
Recognition for work well done	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
There is no other reason	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

	30	74	34	64	32	4	238
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Analysis of Survey Data-Recognition

The review of relevant literature included in this project indicated that reward and recognition is important to all individuals. When the researcher selected questions for the survey question number five was included to see if SMC employees felt they were getting at least a passing comment type of recognition. SMC does have a formal recognition program that recognizes five employees each year for various contributions. The program is currently under review and subject to change. Table 9 illustrates the responses sorted by length of service and organizational area. Again, this indicates an area where the court needs to improve or at least where the perception among the employees is that the court is not meeting their needs in this area. When the researcher wrote the question, he initially put two weeks as the time period. This was based on his own feelings about the minimum contact with staff. It was changed to a period of month due to the large number of staff some managers and supervisors have and the difficulty in reaching each in a shorter period of time with different work shifts and vacation time. In reviewing the survey data, reward and recognition was listed only twice by court staff as a reason for staying with their current position (Table 8). It was listed several times as a reason for leaving by those planning on leaving, in exit interviews, and as what was liked least about working for the court.

and 57% respectively. Since lack of recognition is a concern for some of those who have left or who are planning on leaving, it makes sense for the court to improve the response in an area where improvement can be made with a little effort on the part of management.

Analysis of Survey Data-Expectations

According to the literature reviewed employees, especially Generation “X” employees, want to know what is expected of them and want frequent feedback on how they are doing. Survey question number six deals with the court’s expectation of employees. The City of Seattle, including SMC, switched to a new expectation/evaluation booklet two years ago. Some court divisions have been quicker to implement this than others. Overall response to this question indicates SMC could make some improvement in this area (Table 10). Only 39% of respondents (forty-six out of one hundred nineteen) answered that they had received an expectation booklet. Three organizational areas had zero yes answers to this question and only one area, customer services, had a response rate higher than 60%. The respondents who did not indicate their organizational unit had a higher response rate than all but one court division. In retrospect the question should have been phrased differently since some areas of the court are not using the booklet. This is another area for improvement that has been given a priority by the court in 2001.

Table 10
Survey Responses to Questions Regarding Court's Expectations and Evaluations of Employee
Sorted by Organizational Area

Have you been given an expectation booklet showing what's expected and what your evaluation will be based on?				Have you been formally evaluated in the last 2 Years?			
Organizational Area	Yes	# of surveys	Percent	Organizational Area	Yes	# of surveys	Percent
Court Administration	1	3	33%	Court Administration	0	3	0%
Court Technology	0	6	0%	Court Technology	2	6	33%
Court Services	9	27	33%	Court Services	13	27	48%
Customer Services	17	27	63%	Customer Services	17	27	63%
Human Resources	0	4	0%	Human Resources	1	4	25%
Financial Services	3	8	38%	Financial Services	3	8	38%
Probation Services	5	14	36%	Probation Services	12	14	86%
Bailiffs	0	4	0%	Bailiffs	0	4	0%
No Answer	11	26	42%	No Answer	15	26	58%
	46	119	39%		63	119	53%

Analysis of Survey Data-Evaluations

As the researcher pointed out in the previous section, evaluations are a form of feedback that Generation "X" considers important. It is another area that is easy for organizations to let slip in the pressures of doing the everyday work. In answer to the question "Have you been formally evaluated in the last two years?" 53% of the survey respondents indicated they had been formally evaluated (Table 10). Answers by organizational area of the court ranged from zero in two areas to a high of 86% in probation services. The customer services division was the only other area receiving a response rate above 50% and they achieved 63%. Fifteen of the twenty-six who did not identify an organizational responded that they had been evaluated. A discrepancy was noted between those who have received an expectation's booklet (39%) and those that have been formally evaluated (53%). Further investigation revealed that this was a result of poor wording on the researchers part in the questions and the fact that some areas are

using the new evaluation form without issuing the formal booklets asked about in question number six. As was discussed in the previous paragraph regarding the expectation booklets, evaluations are another thing that gets pushed aside when the pressure to complete other projects occurs. The literature reviewed was consistent in the importance of timely evaluations. They need the feedback to know how they are meeting the expectations of their managers and supervisors. It is difficult to hold an employee accountable if you have not made the court's expectations known and given them feedback on how they are doing. The researcher understands that the SMC human resources division will be notifying managers when evaluations are due and following up to make sure they are done starting in 2001.

Analysis of Survey Data-Would You Recommend Working at the Court?

This researcher included this question in the survey for two reasons. The first is it is a very good way to find out how an employee feels about their employer. If they would not recommend working for their employer to a friend then employee satisfaction is probably low. The second reason is that some of the literature review mentioned that the retention rate is higher on applicants who were recommended by a current employee. Table 11 sorts the responses to this question by length of service and by organizational unit within the court.

Table 11

Survey Response to Question: Would You Recommend Working at the Court to a Friend? Sorted by Length of Service and Organizational Unit

Would you recommend working at the court to a friend?							
Length of Service	Yes	# of Surveys	Percent	Organizational Area	Yes	# of Surveys	Percent
0-1 year	13	15	87%	Court Administration	2	3	67%
1-5 years	19	37	51%	Court Technology	4	6	67%
6-10 years	8	17	47%	Court Services	14	27	52%
11-20 years	12	32	38%	Customer Services	13	27	48%
20+ years	5	16	31%	Human Resources	3	4	75%
No Answer		2	0%	Financial Services	6	8	75%
	57	119	48%	Probation Services	4	14	29%
				Bailiffs	3	4	75%
				No Answer	8	26	31%
					57	119	48%

The data sorted by length of service shows a dramatic drop off in positive answers after one year of service. This drop continues illustrating that the longer an employee works for the court the less likely the employee is to recommend working there to a friend. Results show 87% of those with less than one year of experience would recommend the court as an employer. This drops to 51% for the group with one to five years of service, 47% for those with six to ten years of service, 38% of those with eleven to twenty years of service, and a low of 31% for those with more than twenty years of service. From the researcher's point of view it appears obvious that the longer an employee works for SMC the less satisfied the employee is with the court as an employer. After five years less than half the staff is willing to recommend the court as an employer to friends. However, they have reasons for staying at the court that outweigh their dissatisfaction and prevent them from leaving.

When the responses are sorted by organizational unit the difference in responses is almost as great as it was in the sort by length of service. While only 29% of the responses from

probation services indicated they would recommend working at the court to a friend, 75% of the respondents in human resources, financial services and the bailiffs indicated they would recommend working at the court. Court services and customer services with 52% of the filled positions at the court at the time of the survey had positive responses from 52% and 48%, respectively, of the respondents from those areas. Responses from court technology, which has had trouble recruiting and retaining staff, indicate that 67% of staff in that area would recommend working for SMC. Whether the responses are due to the stress of work in some areas or management style cannot be determined from the data. The results seem to indicate that the organizational area of the court has more to do with the willingness to recommend the court than age since areas of the court with high marks in this area have a number of longtime employees. With increased attention being paid to the retention of staff, SMC should be able to improve its performance in this area.

Analysis of Survey Data-Have You Been Given the Training Necessary for Your Job?

The researcher posed the question regarding training to open the door for comments to this question and those that follow where respondents could write out what they like least, most and what they would change. Overall 61% of the survey respondents answered that they had received the training necessary to do their jobs. This leaves 39% feeling they need additional training to meet the expectations of their current job. When the responses were sorted by organizational unit they ranged from a low of 50% for probation services and human resources to a high of 100% in the court administrators office. Responses from the court services and customer services areas were identical with 59% indicating they had received the necessary training. There were a few additional write-in responses to this question. They include: "Some",

“Mostly”, “Never!”, “Not fully”, “Bare Minimum”, and “Need more time to practice what I’ve been shown but don’t use enough to retain.” Since this survey was completed SMC has queried staff to find out the type of training needed and a training committee that had been formed earlier in the year has increased its efforts.

Analysis of Survey Data-What Employees Like Least About Working for the Court?

Survey question number ten posed by the researcher was an open ended question to allow the survey group the opportunity to write what they like least about working for the court. As expected responses ranged from nothing to a paragraph of venting. A complete listing of the responses to this question is in Appendix C. Eight of the respondents did not answer the question. Everyone one should have had some sort of answer to this question. Four wrote “none” or “N/A”. The responses that were received were sorted by common themes for reporting purposes (Table 12).

The most common answer expressed dissatisfaction with the management and leadership at the court. The responses included “too many managers and directors”, “lack of leadership”, “poor management”, “management doesn’t listen”, “unqualified managers”, “childish middle school supervisors”, and “judicial whim.” Court management and leadership appeared in twenty-two of the answers to this question, over 18% of the responses. Seventeen of the twenty-two responses came from the three largest organizational units at the court: court services, customer services, and probation services. Four of the remaining five answers came from respondents who did not indicate their organizational area.

Included as liked least in nineteen of the responses were comments about the attitudes of co-workers. Comments included “negative attitudes”, “bad attitudes”, “disrespectful”,

“uninterested”, “lazy”, and “the complaining and whining of senior co-workers [. . .].” The answers indicate that a number of court employees feel that it is their co-workers who are creating an unpleasant work environment since over 34% of the responses listed either their peers or their supervisors/managers as what they like least about working for the court.

Training was listed as an issue on ten of the responses to this question. Most of the ten responses dealt with the lack of training, inconsistency of the training, and the way individuals are selected for the training. Two of the responses listed training for functions that are not used frequently enough to remember what was taught and another listed too many training classes that they did not like.

Another common theme is the lack of communication between management and staff. Nine of the nineteen responses listed the lack of communication as the thing they liked least about working for the court. The research indicates that the lack of communication may cause some of the dissatisfaction with management. Employees would probably be more supportive of some management decisions if they were aware of the reasons behind them.

The next most common response had to do with the physical environment of the court. Six of the responses listed the court's older facilities as what they liked least about working for the court. These answers highlighted the outdated facilities, poor air quality, and cleanliness. SMC is working at correcting this aspect of employee satisfaction with the new Justice Center, which is under construction and scheduled for occupancy at the end of 2002.

Only four of the responses listed reasons having to do with compensation. This does follow the results of the literature review, which indicated that while pay is important it is not the most important or deciding factor to most employees. Analysis of the data showed there were

several themes that appeared in at least three of the responses. The list that follows highlights some of these.

- Flex schedules – Not available in all areas of the court but desired by employees.
- Lack of recognition – Discussed earlier and mentioned on a few responses.
- Too many changes – Several responses indicated there had been a number of changes and little time to assimilate them.
- Favoritism (and nepotism) – Several complaints about how individuals are selected for training, out-of-class assignments and other opportunities.
- Too much politics – Mentioned a few times but the context was not clear enough to say if the politics were internal or external.

One respondent did list “the defendants” as what they liked least about working for the court.

Table 12

Survey Responses to the Questions: What Do You Like Least About the Court? And What Do You Like Most About the Court? Sorted by Common Theme

Themes of responses to What do you like <i>Least</i> about working for the court?		Themes of responses to What do you like <i>Most</i> about working for the court?	
Theme	# of responses	Theme	# of responses
Management and Leadership	22	People/Customers/Community	28
Attitudes of Co-workers	19	Co-workers	13
Training	10	The Challenge	10
Communication	9	No Answer by Respondent	8
No Answer by Respondent	8	Supervisor and Manager	6
Building and Environment	6	Nothing	3
None or N/A	4	Other	51
Other	41		119
	119		

Analysis of Survey Data-What Employees Like Most About Working for the Court?

As with the previous question this question, number eleven, “What do you like Most about working for the court?” elicited a variety of responses. A complete listing of the responses is at Appendix D. A review of the surveys confirmed that most of the “no answer” responses to

questions eleven and twelve were from the same individuals, who apparently only completed the quick check-off responses. A summary of the most common responses to this question is listed in Table 12. The reader will notice that some of the same items that were listed as “liked Least” in the previous question will appear as “liked Most” in this question.

The most common response, which appeared twenty-eight times, dealt with people, customers, and community. This group listed things like “helping people”, “working with people”, “interaction w/other people”, “making a change in others lives”, “the customers”, and “helping people society has written off.” Several mentioned how much they liked the courts new focus on customer service. Seven of the responses specifically mentioned that what was liked most was the feeling of giving back or helping the community. “Making a difference” in the community.

The second most common answer had to deal with co-workers and employees. Comments like “Interaction with employees”, “I love my co-workers”, “the employees, they are like family to me”, “Diversity of employees”, and “[. . .] my unit as a big family.” Thirteen responses shared this theme. In the answer to what was liked least nineteen responses noted the attitudes of co-workers. A lot of the answers were from the same organizational units. This is obviously an area that is important to many employees and they share different views on their co-workers at the court.

The other theme that garnered double-digit response mentioned the challenges encountered in their everyday work. Ten responses mentioned the fact that the variety of work makes it a daily challenge. Other common topics in the response to what they liked most were mentioned and are listed below.

- Supervisor/Manager/Boss – was mentioned in six responses.

- Flexible hours – was mentioned in three responses.
- Job security – was mentioned in three responses.
- Being part of the legal community – mentioned in several responses.
- Job independence (autonomy) – mentioned in several responses.

The high percentage of respondents to this question who like customer service whether it is to individuals or the community will find what they like with this type of organization which has a strong customer service focus. In lessons learned the researcher will note that maybe there should have been a couple of questions directed at customer service and how the survey group felt about working with the public.

Analysis of Survey Data-What Would You Change About Your Job?

Responses to this question varied from one word to a paragraph (Appendix E). Sixteen responses left a blank answer and six that answered nothing, none, “N/A”, or “?”. Fifty-eight of the remaining responses fell into the following groups or themes. They are listed in Table 13 and summarized below.

- Management changes were mentioned on eighteen of the responses.
- Increased compensation was the topic in eleven responses.
- Changes in work schedules appeared in seven of the responses.
- Increase staff (or lighten workload) was in six of the responses
- Poor facilities were mentioned five times.
- Improve communications was included in four responses.
- Lower stress levels appeared three times.
- Probation software was mentioned twice.

- Telecommuting was mentioned twice as well.

The eighteen responses grouped under the common theme of management changes covered a wide range of topics. These included “empowerment and respect”, “promotion policy”, “reduce management”, “decreasing the supervision”, “attitude of supervisor/management”, “Employee (Managers, Directors), be held accountable and be expected to put in a full days work”, “change management style”, “Replace! Manager & director and one supervisor”, and “a sick leave policy that should be considered harassment!” Since leadership and management was the most frequent topic in response to what was liked least it is not a surprise that it is what the employees would like to change the most. Eleven responses mentioned compensation in one form or another. One respondent phrased it that “I would have higher pay so people wouldn’t leave because we get paid less for hard work.” Seven of the responses listed changes in scheduling as what they would change if they had a choice. The responses included the following types of schedule changes.

- Flex schedule – either a 4/10 or 9/80.
- Working an earlier eight-hour shift – does not like working till 5:00 p.m.
- Having a work schedule one week in advance (no organizational unit was given by this respondent.

The need for more staff or a lighter workload was listed in six responses, half of which were from the probation services area. Several initiatives are underway to reduce the total caseload in probation services. More and better communication only appeared in four responses but the responses did include better communication between different court divisions as well as better vertical communications within the organization.

Table 13
 Survey Responses to the Question: What Would You Change About Your Job if You Could?
 Sorted by Common Theme

Common themes of responses to If you could change one thing about your job, what would you change?	
Theme	# of responses
Management and Leadership	18
No Answer by Respondent	16
Compensation	11
Work Schedule	7
Staffing level	6
Nothing, None, N/A, ?	6
Facility	5
Communication	4
Other	46
	119

Analysis of Survey Data-Career Goal and Can the Court Help You Attain It?

The complete answers to this question are listed in Appendix F. Over half of the responses to this question were no, not yet, or no answer. Several want the court to provide skills, training, or college tuition for a degree that would enable them to go elsewhere. Unfortunately this is at conflict with the City of Seattle personnel policy which puts this type of training low on the priority list so that it will not be funded. At least ten of the responses mention the inequity in how the current training budgets are allocated. An equal number are looking for cross training opportunities in other court divisions than the one they are in. This is very difficult to work out because of staffing needs in the employees current area while they are cross training in another area. More computer classes are also mentioned in several of the responses. The researcher discussed some of the training issues cited with some members of the management team at the court. They are also frustrated that staff are sent to training, return to work, and do not apply what they have learned to their job. The court has empowered a training committee to better allocate training funds over all court employees and to provide more of the

training opportunities requested by court staff. The court has not charted training expenses by type of training in the past. During 2000 SMC spent \$198,357 on training and the travel expenses associated with that training.

Analysis of Survey Data- Planning on leaving?

Survey question number fourteen asked if the individual was planning on leaving the court within the next twelve months. Almost 29%, thirty-four out of one hundred nineteen, answered yes. Breakdown of the affirmative answers by length of service and organizational unit is detailed in Table 14. The number leaving is spread across all length of service groupings and most organizational units. The researcher notes that the percentage of respondents planning on leaving with less than one year of service seems very high. Even taking into account today's very mobile society, having one-third of the respondents hired in the last year already planning on leaving indicates a recruitment problem. It appears from the statistics that the court is not hiring for the "right fit" as described in the literature review. The breakdown of the respondents planning on leaving by organizational unit is consistent with known data. 62% of those planning on leaving are from court services, customer services, or probation, which have 69% of the filled positions at the court at the time of the survey. The number planning to leave from court services (37%) is indicative of an area where the court has had and is having recruiting and retention problems. Since it takes over six months to train a court clerk this rate of turnover will have an affect on the quality of service by this division in the short term until the retention problem can be overcome.

Table 14

Survey Responses to the Question Are You Planning on Leaving Within One Year? Sorted by Length of Service and Organizational Unit

Length of Service	Total Responses	Leaving < 1 yr.	% of Total	Organizational Unit	Total Responses	Leaving < 1 yr.	% of Total
< 1 year	15	5	33.3%	Court Administration	3	0	0.0%
1-5 years	37	10	27.0%	Court Technology	6	1	16.7%
6-10 years	17	5	29.4%	Court Services	27	10	37.0%
11-20 years	32	9	28.1%	Customer Services	27	8	29.6%
20+ years	16	4	25.0%	Human Resources	4	1	25.0%
No Answer	2	1	50.0%	Financial Services	8	0	0.0%
	119	34	28.6%	Probation Services	14	3	21.4%
				Bailiffs	4	1	25.0%
				No Answer	26	10	38.5%
					119	34	

Analysis of Survey Data- Can the Court Do Anything to Keep You?

As a follow-up question number fifteen asked why they were leaving and what it would take to keep them at the court. The complete responses to question fifteen are listed at Appendix G and a summary by theme is in Table 15. Twenty of the thirty-two responses dealt with either career growth and advancement or management and leadership. Some of the comments included:

- “Give outside clerks an assigned courtroom and some actual responsibility.”
- “No growth opportunity. . . no trust in management/system”
- “No room for advancement . . . “
- “Change in leadership position.”
- “Dysfunctional work environment . . .”
- “Promote me”

- “Serious change in management style”
- “No upward mobility”

Three of the respondents indicated they were changing careers and looking for a high-tech job. Reading the responses to this question the researcher feels that this group is probably lost to the court. Any changes would probably come too late to have an effect on most of the individuals that have already made up their mind to leave if they do leave in the time frame indicated. If they are unable to find the opportunity they are looking for outside the court then the challenge to the court management will be to change their attitude and satisfaction level.

Table 15

Survey Responses to the question: What would it take to change your mind about leaving the court? Sorted by common theme.

Common themes of responses to What would it take to change your mind about leaving the court?	
Theme	# of responses
Career Growth and Advancement	12
Management and Leadership	8
Politics	2
Other	10
	32

Analysis of Survey Data- Other Comments

Five respondents added comments at the bottom of the survey form and the researcher created a field to store the comments in the database. Two of the comments dealt with the question about whether they were planning on leaving in the next year. Both answered no to the question then added a comment of “unsure” and the other added the comment “depending on the circumstances.” Another respondent wrote that they asked a colleague “Were you honest?” “Well I was in a good mood. Later, I realized hmmmm maybe not.”

Exit Interviews

In March of 2000 SMC changed the format of exit interviews to provide more detailed information. Prior to that time the form in use provided very little relevant information. When the researcher reviewed the data in October of 2000, there were seventeen completed questionnaires available for review. Eighteen individuals had left during the period and one had declined to complete the form. The form has several areas for comment including job satisfaction, getting your job done, supervision, court wide areas, and work environment. While the number reviewed is very small the comments follow closely the survey results. Most of those exiting took time to make some comments. Only a couple appeared to have rushed through the form just checking boxes and not taking the time to give good feedback. A summary of the exit interviews completed for the court administrator is included in Appendix H.

Analysis of Exit Interview Data- What Did You Like Least About Your Job?

Responses here were very similar to the survey results. The most frequent response listed by five of the respondents was about leadership and management. Two of the responses listed negative attitudes of co-workers. Other areas listed as problems were communication, promotional opportunities, training, facilities, and compensation. Some quotations from the interview forms follow:

- Director. Unable to offer input without severe criticism.
- Treatment of line staff by management, lack of leadership, duplicity and incompetence.
- Inappropriate management style (director and supervisor).

- Supervision – unprofessional, inappropriate.
- Repetitiveness, negative attitudes (both customers and co-workers).
- Not very challenging, dissatisfied co-workers.
- Lack of communication, lack of respect, little or no recognition.
- Inadequate compensation.
- Lack of promotional opportunities
- Lack of funding for continuing education

Analysis of Exit Interview Data- What Did You Like Best About Your Job?

Responses to what did you like best included co-workers and staff, helping people, and autonomy. Work schedule, cross training, learning about the legal system, and job security were also mentioned. Some quotations from the forms follow:

- Friendly Staff
- Work unit great with aiding and employee.
- People I worked with.
- Independence and variety of responsibility.
- Autonomy, variety, flexibility in shift work.
- Flexibility my boss gave me.
- Working with the public, sense of service, reasonable pay.
- Interviewing, probationer contact.
- Personal satisfaction, accomplishment.

Analysis of Exit Interview Data- What Did You Think of Your Supervision?

Most of the ratings in this area were good to poor and most of the comments were negative. There were a couple of excellent ratings in this area but no comments to support the rating. A sample of the comments follows:

- Fair treatment was given those who would not challenge the supervisor.
Teamwork was created out of fear and unhappiness.
- Odd, poor communication and social skills in each manager's makeup resulted in their defensiveness, and fear, and had the above results.
- The Court Administrator needs to take a look at the overall operations within the Court. Management is not concerned with morale and I feel it is a major problem.
- Application of policies is not clear and consistent.
- This supervisor does not listen to what is said, treatment of employees dependent on supervisor's mood or who she/he is mad at.

Analysis of Exit Interview Data- Department Information

This section collected comments regarding, orientation, training, the recruiting and interview process, career development, and work environment. Most of the comments were on lack of training and career development. A sampling of the comments is below:

- Training opportunities and career development – minimal to none.
- We had one shift for day, swing, and evening then thrown to the wolves. The environment when new can be very intimidating and to be expected to work

alone on a holiday after getting minimal training is scary. Some new hires have quit their jobs based on that fact.

- Training is insufficient in my work unit. Career development does not exist in the unit.
- Very slow process. (Describing recruiting & interview process)

Focus Group Summary

During October 2000 10% of the employees in each court division were invited to participate in one of three focus groups led by a human resource analyst. The purpose of these groups was to find out how the employees perceive the court's programs regarding employee motivation and job satisfaction. These discussions highlighted the same concerns that were expressed in the employee survey and the exit interviews. A summary of these focus groups prepared for the court administrator is included as Appendix I.

Performance feedback and performance appraisals were mentioned as important feedback that is not happening on a regular basis. Staff would also like the opportunity to give feedback on the performance of their managers and supervisors. More communication especially across division lines was also an issue. Training was another area where the staff expressed concern. From the comments it appears that there is not a courtwide policy and that requests for training are treated differently between divisions. Other areas where the participants felt the court was lacking are reward and recognition of employees and the relationship between staff and management. The areas of concern from this source echoed the concerns from other sources for this project.

Analysis of Data- A Personal Experience

A new manager recently joined the court and the researcher asked this manager to write about the recruiting process experience. This was after learning that the individual almost did not accept the position when information about the compensation and the City of Seattle benefits were not explained. To get the needed information the recruit had to contact a friend of a friend in another City department to get the information. The narrative that the researcher received is in Appendix J. The final paragraph of the narrative highlights one of the points detailed in this report and also provides an end to the research findings section.

Now that I am working there I am happy that I accepted the position, however, I believe that most government agencies are at a disadvantage against private industry so in order to attract qualified individuals they must sell their other benefits. If I had not done all of the research I did about the City Seattle and the benefits it had to offer on my own I would not have accepted the position based on the information I received from the Human Resource department, which is sad. The City has put in place a lot of new and exciting programs compared to other local governments and someone who is representing the City should be selling them.

VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The purpose of this project was to research ways to improve the recruitment and retention of employees at SMC and to create a plan to implement the recommended changes. The project sought the answer to the following questions:

- *What is the court doing right and wrong for its employees?*
- *Why are employees leaving the court?*
- *Why are some candidates declining job offers after going the recruitment process?*
- *Are any of the successful recruitment and retention practices in the private sector or other public sector agencies applicable to the court?*

What survey respondents disliked about the court included leadership and management, attitudes of co-workers, lack of training and career goals, and poor communication.

Management and leadership came in on top, as what was liked least and what the respondents would most like to change. The court has been aware of the employees' concerns in this area and arranged for all management and supervisory personnel to attend several training sessions this fall to improve the situation. It will take time to tell if these sessions provided the needed skills for change. The next highest response on what respondents liked least was the attitudes of co-workers. Descriptions used included negative, bad, disrespectful, uninterested, and lazy. Several respondents felt they needed more training to do their current jobs and were desirous of training to prepare them for promotions and career goals. A number of respondents felt that training was only available for management. A few responses mentioned the poor facilities including poor air quality and lack of space.

In responses to the survey questions what was liked most revolved around people and the community. Survey respondents wrote that they liked helping their customers and the community. Being able to help others provided satisfaction and appeared from the responses to give individuals pride in their work. Other favorable areas of response included their co-workers and the daily challenge of their work. Co-workers appeared near the top in what was most liked as well as what was least liked. Responses that their work unit was a “big family”, and “my best friends work here” were representative of the favorable responses. Favorable comments were also received about the variety of work and the challenge of each day’s work. Positive responses were made about the courts new customer service focus and partnering with community agencies to help individuals rather than punish them.

The exit interviews reviewed indicated that employees are leaving for the same reasons given as answers to what they liked least. While leadership and management were frequently mentioned poor communication, lack of training, and not enough recognition were also mentioned. Compensation also appeared as a response in several areas of the survey and on exit interviews. The research findings seem to indicate that the court has fairly attractive starting pay and benefits in most areas. Once individuals are trained and look around at their peers in other City departments they begin to feel they are undercompensated for the amount of work and stress that goes with the job. The court administrator has secured a promise from the City Personnel Department to support the results of a compensation survey the court plans to undertake in the near future.

Declining job offers at the court has only happened a few times. Although it is a very small number three reasons were noted. The first was that the recruiting and interview process is very slow at the City and the court. This means top candidates will probably receive other job

offers before they get one from the court. Unless the court is their first choice as an employer they are off the market by the time the offer arrives. The second reason is detailed in the experience of the new manager in Appendix J. All of the benefits were not fully explained and if the individual had not taken the time to do some research the offer would have been declined. The third reason was experienced by this researcher several years ago and was also mentioned by a new staff person going through orientation about two weeks ago. Both cases involved transfers from other City departments and in both cases individuals were told not to go to work for the court because it was a bad place to work. Apparently the court has a reputation of not being a good place to work among other City employees. The court is addressing all three of the reasons listed. A committee is looking at ways to speed up the recruitment and interviewing process while remaining within City guidelines. Some of the committee's recommendations have been tried in the last month and reduced one process by a week and another by several weeks. The human resources manager has agreed to look into the recruitment process for the new manager and coach the staff involved. The bad reputation with other City departments will only change when the current court employees spread the word that it is a good place to work. There are employees who feel this is a good place to work and they need to spread the word.

Are there other practices the court can implement to improve recruitment and retention?

The research findings indicate there are several improvements that can be implemented and have proven successful with other employers. The court needs to sell itself to the candidates it wants. Changes could be made to the ads the court places and our handling of candidates especially during and after the first (and maybe only) interview. We need to make sure candidates know why we are unique and be sure to market some of the things our current staff indicates that they like about the court. The court needs to pay more attention to the right fit in its recruiting. In

talking about the “right fit” in their book, Love ‘em or Lose ‘em Beverly Kaye and Sharon Jordan-Evans quote a Southwest Airlines pilot on his job interview with the airline. He had heard a rumor “that Southwest managers’ hire for attitude and train for skill.” His interview led him to believe that this was the case. Although he had an exemplary record as a pilot and felt this was enough to get him an offer, the interviewer spent a great deal of time questioning his attitudes and behaviors to learn about how he would treat co-workers. Certain skills are needed to meet the qualifications for the position. The research just concluded indicates that the skill level should be confirmed as early as possible and that the interview and selection procedures should be directed to finding the right fit among those with the necessary skills. This also means keeping in mind other openings when interviewing. The person you are talking to may be just what another area of the organization is looking for to fill their vacancy.

Better allocation of training money might help satisfy some of the unmet needs and this will be critical to improving employee satisfaction. The court has empowered a group to make changes in this area. A proposal is under review to set aside a block of funds for the exclusive use of non-management personnel. The court needs to re-recruit existing staff and let them know that they are important to the success of the organization and that their contributions are valued. This is where recognition plays an important part. The management team needs to spend more time rewarding and recognizing employees. All employees need to have recognition for good work, helping a co-worker, or for something positive that they have accomplished. A simple “thank you” or “good job” can have an effect. Something other employers have found useful is to re-orient current employees every few years. A few existing employees can join each group of new hires. This will allow them to remain current with new court directions and also allow them to participate in the orientation by discussing their own areas. New employees will also

have the opportunity to get to know others outside their own area that they can go to with a question or for advice. Finally, supervisors, managers, and directors need to be constantly reminded of the effect they have on staff. They are the primary reason employees leave or stay with an organization. The recently received training should be a part of their daily interaction with employees.

The researcher believes that the effect of recent failures in the dot com industry will have an impact on recruiting and retaining technology employees. There have been a number of comments in the news recently by dot com employees who had been lured by the stock option and bonus potential of these fairly new companies only to find their potential payoff disappear overnight. The situation should have the effect of making the court more competitive in the recruitment process and slow the drain of current employees.

Some of the suggestions made by Jack M. Strong, III (Appendix K) make sense to investigate for applicability in the Seattle area. There is a strong military presence in the Puget Sound area that could be tapped as Mr. Strong did in Illinois. SMC is already utilizing the City's "Talent Bank" where resumes are kept on file electronically to sort for required skills. The latest manager hired by the court came from this source. The court needs to improve and strengthen its contacts with local colleges and universities. The researcher was informed that at least two of the local community colleges offer a two-year paralegal degree. SMC could establish relationships with these institutions that would benefit both the court and the institution. Benefits to the college could include internship, work-study, placement opportunities, and perhaps guest speakers. The court would benefit from a placement pool of future staff interested in the legal system and further opportunities for community outreach.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are included in Plan to Improve Recruitment and Retention in Appendix L.

- Ensure that directors, managers, and supervisors use the skills presented in the training sessions during the last six months of 2000. The Two Year Plan in Appendix L details some monitoring and semiannual one-on-one meetings between directors, managers, and supervisors and the HR manager or analyst that are designed to emphasize how important the court considers the practice of these skills.
- Look for new ways to keep employees in the know.
- Create a training plan for each employee as part of the evaluation process.
- Move ahead with the compensation review as soon as possible. Set a goal to have the new structure in place at the beginning of 2002 if possible.
- Emphasize the important role that all employees have in operation of the court; that the programs of the court are meaningful and that we are making a difference in the community.
- Speed up the recruiting and interview process.
- Be sure that human resource personnel making job offers have all the information that a candidate might want or need to make their decision. Since management employees are recruited less frequently, create a reference sheet for the benefits to this class that differ from the norm.
- Sell the organization to the candidates we want to hire. Know what makes us unique.
- Pay attention to fit. Screen out the candidates without the proper skills as early in the recruiting process as possible. Then look for the proper fit.

- Contact local colleges and universities regarding job fairs. Make the community colleges (and others) with paralegal degrees a priority.
- Re-recruit current employees. Let them know they are valued by the organization.
- Recognize and reward wherever possible.
- Re-orient existing employees. This may even help with some of the communication problems noted.
- Contact the local military bases about opportunities for personnel leaving the service and family members of those in service.

Lessons Learned

As with any project lessons are learned some hard and some easy. The following are lessons the researcher learned while completing this project.

- Organizational unit or area – The researcher still feels that it is important information that could help in defining whether the problem is courtwide or deals with specific area of the court. However, the question should have been a multiple choice type question. The researcher feels this would reduce the amount of responses without answers.
- The respondent was asked to identify his age group for comparison purposes and to identify responses from Generation “X’ers.” Since only three respondents failed to answer the question the researcher assumes there is not widespread reluctance to answer. If there had not been a need to establish responses from “X’ers” the length of service answer alone would probable have been sufficient. Whether a response is required in terms of age or year of birth the researcher would still recommend a multiple-choice answer with age ranges or groups.

- Length of service – When the survey was created the researcher did not realize that getting length of service at the court for court employees would be difficult. The only date stored with the employee data is the date the employee started to work for the City of Seattle. The researcher feels this had no significant impact on the survey but should be taken into consideration in the future.
- Customer service – In analyzing the responses to the survey it became obvious that employee satisfaction had a great deal to do with whether or not the respondents enjoyed providing good customer service to internal and external customers. It also extended to the satisfaction received from providing a service to the community. In a customer service oriented organization such as the court, the employee will experience a much higher level of job satisfaction if this is what they enjoy. A question or two regarding customer service should be considered in any future surveys.

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I. X. Appendices

- A. Cover Letter and Survey Instrument
- B. Follow-up Emails to Sample Group
- C. Responses to Survey Question #10 “What do you like least about working for the court?”
- D. Responses to Survey Question #11 “What do you like most about working for the court?”
- E. Responses to Survey Question #12 “If you could change one thing about your job, what would you change?”
- F. Responses to Survey Question #13 “Do you have a career goal in mind? What can the court do to help you attain that goal?”
- G. Responses to Survey Question #15 “Why are you planning on leaving the court? What would it take to change your mind?”
- H. Summary of Comments from Employee Exit Interviews March through October 2000
- I. Summary of Comments from Employee Focus Groups October 2000
- J. A Narrative on the Interview and Recruitment Process by a recently Hired Manager at The Municipal Court of Seattle
- K. Response to Court2Court inquiry from James M. Strong, III, Judicial Human Resources Manager for the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit in Lake County, Illinois
- L. Two Year Plan to Improve Recruitment and Retention at The Municipal Court of Seattle
- M. Data Forms for the 119 Survey Responses Received

The Municipal Court of Seattle



To: Court Staff

From: Kip Rodda

Date: September 7, 2000

Re: Employee survey

I am enrolled in the Court Executive Development Program (CEDP) offered through the National Center for State Courts Institute for Court Management. My current assignment is to complete a "Court Improvement Project" for my court. I am researching recruitment and retention issues to come up with a three-year plan to improve recruitment and retention at our court.

To do this I need your help. Please complete the attached questionnaire and return it to me. You don't have to identify yourself and I would appreciate candid answers to the questions. I have gathered a lot of data and information from almost a hundred different sources about recruitment and retention but your input is necessary because only each of you know what brought you to the court and what has kept you at the court.

Please complete the attached questionnaire (15 questions) and return it to me by September 15, 2000. The survey took less than ten minutes to complete when it was tested. This data will be entered into a database and reports will be created from the database to help the court create a plan to improve recruitment and retention. The data and the resulting plan will be the key parts of my research project that I plan to present to my classmates and reviewers at graduation next spring in Washington, D.C. Please put the completed survey in an envelope with my name on it and put it in the inter-office mail, leave in the Financial Services box in the mailroom, or in the box on the wall outside room 1207.

Thanks for your help.

Please enter your low org number.

For questions 1-3 please circle the letter of your response.

1. How long have you worked for the court?
 - a. Less than 1 year
 - b. 1-5 years
 - c. 6-10 years
 - d. 11-20 years
 - e. more than 20 years

2. What year were you born?
 - a. 1950 & earlier
 - b. 1951-1964
 - c. 1965-1976
 - d. 1977-1982

3. Which one of the following best describes why you accepted a position with the court?
 - a. Just needed a job – took the first position offered to me
 - b. Good starting pay and benefits
 - c. Wanted an interesting job
 - d. Wanted to work for a government agency
 - e. Wanted to work in the court system

4. The list below contains answers given in various surveys of employees when asked why they stayed with a particular employer or job. **Please select the 2 reasons that best describe why you have stayed at the court. Please circle the letter and indicate #1 or #2. (Taken from “Love ‘em or Lose ‘em” by Beverly Kaye & Sharon Jordan-Evans)**
 - a. Family-friendly
 - b. Career growth, learning and development
 - c. Job security
 - d. Exciting work and challenge
 - e. Location
 - f. Meaningful work, making a difference and a contribution
 - g. Great work environment
 - h. Great people
 - i. Pride in organization, its mission and quality of product
 - j. Being part of a team
 - k. Good leadership
 - l. Good manager or supervisor
 - m. Fair pay and benefits
 - n. Recognition for work well done
 - o. Flexibility in work hours
 - p. Fun on the job
 - q. Autonomy, sense of control over my work

5. Has your supervisor/manager told you you're doing a "good job" or thanked you for doing something in the last month? Yes No
6. Have you been given an expectation booklet showing what's expected of you and what your evaluation will be based on? Yes No
7. Have you been formally evaluated in the last 2 years? Yes No
8. Would you recommend working at the court to a friend? Yes No
9. Have you been given the training necessary for your job? Yes No
10. What do you like *least* about working for the court?

11. What do you like *most* about your job?

12. If you could change one thing about your job, what would you change?

13. Do you have a career goal in mind? What can the court do to help you attain that goal?

14. Are you planning on leaving the court in the next year? Yes No

If you answered "Yes" to the previous question please answer the next question.

15. Why are you planning on leaving the court? What would it take to change your mind?

Please return to Kip Rodda, PSB 1207

From: Kip Rodda
To: Rodda, Kip
Date: Fri, Sep 8, 2000 8:31 AM
Subject: Employee Survey

Thanks again to everyone for helping me with my research project. I have received a suggestion from my assigned advisor that I want to pass along.

On questions # 3 & 4 if you don't see your answer please write it in beside the other answers.

In addition if you feel that any of the questions might identify you please feel free to skip that question. I'm not trying to identify anyone. The answers will be put in a database and reports generated from the database. Individual surveys will not be seen or used except by me.

Thanks.

From: Kip Rodda
To: Rodda, Kip
Date: Fri, Sep 15, 2000 9:41 AM
Subject: Employee survey

To those of you that have responded (72 as of this morning) thanks for helping me with my project. To those who haven't responded please take some time and respond today or Monday. I do want and need everyone's opinions, reasons, thoughts, & comments.

Again - no one is trying to identify anybody. I am the only one in the court who will see your form. The answers to the questions will be entered into a database and distributed in reports. **If you feel that any question might identify you please skip the question. The goal is to improve the court - by finding out how each of us views the court as an employer. If you don't see your answer to one of the multiple choice questions please write it in. All answers will become part of the survey results.**

If you can't find your copy to fill out a copy of the cover letter & survey are attached. Copies are also available on top of the bookshelf in my office and from Sandy Torrence. I think this is important to you and the court and deserves to have a high response rate.

Thanks for your help.
Kip Rodda

<p align="center">What do you like LEAST about working for the court? <i>(Responses to Survey Question #10)</i></p>

The quiet, sterile environment of the courtroom and the dress code and not having my own desk and space.

Moving & switching staff around

Lack of focus and direction No accountability

I'm required to work until 5 p.m. instead of 4:30. The buses are always crowded at 5 p.m. and I have to stand or wait until the next bus.

Not enough recognition for doing a good job

The lack of "adequate" leadership. The "sometimes 8th grade mentality" that is too widespread. "Leaders" that are too busy pointing fingers instead of working on solutions. The lack of Definition in Roles.

Working with some individuals who feel that everything should be handed to them. Not willing to make the personal effort and sacrifices necessary to attain a goal.

Not being compensated for the work that I perform

Poor understanding and working relationship with management. Need more communication/understanding with Judges, more resources for staff & clients - people on probation.

Pension plan, sick leave policy, SMC should hire from within first before seeking employees from outside the court.

I do not like the favoritism and nepotism be shown at the court.

The unqualified workers

All new employees should receive thorough (same) initial orientation both in work practice and benefit knowledge. Hiring practice should not be limited to family, friends, acquaintances.

None

None

Nothing

No answer

Hierarchical thinking & ruling when it comes to labor/management relations. Also the dishonesty, the behind the scenes manipulation.

Lack of leadership (I.e.. Director, Manager, front-line supervisor)

Lack of professionalism (same as above)

Lack of effective communication (same as above)

Jobs given to "friends" or spouses of leadership employees (nepotism)

Politics in the work place Double standards in each Unit

Unqualified Managers Preferential Treatment of certain employees

Too many Managers Too many Directors

Corrective action is not applied to all employees Personal use of City equipment

Lack of communication from higher ups to employees

Unfriendly Judges Snobbish [position title]

Some times the People

Inconsistencies

Frontline employees are not included in decisions/changes made by management or only the same select few are included which has resulted in problems because decisions are based on very limited/incomplete information. Inconsistent treatment regarding acceptable policy, procedure, behavior, job performance, etc. Lack of training/written procedures for employees. Only supervisors and managers are allowed training. Some training is for functions that employees use frequently but very limited information if any is passed on to the employees, which hampers job performance. Very few procedures are written although many are detailed and come up infrequently so not easy to remember with constant changes happening. Constantly working in chaos due to lack of organization and unity in my work area. Being treated and referred to as a "body" to fill a position that can be disposed of at any time instead as a "worthwhile, contributing member of the team".

Not knowing my work schedule until the minute I am assigned which causes planning problems for my personal life.

(Staff person A) & (Supervisor A) - mean people

Distrust & the micro management I feel is not necessary for responsible adults. All employees should not be categorized for all others that are complacent and have bad attitudes regarding their work/job ethics.

Force you of doing someone's position without consulting you and not getting paid for. Taking you away from your station to different station

Too many training and classes that I don't like

Manager & supervisor decides for you. . . no questions asked. . . Move from work assignment every 4 hours . . . No home commut given to employees regardless of illness

Being part of things that I feel the court does wrong: 1-Charging interest on unpaid fines. Late fees are OK. Interest, no. 2-Prosecuting extremely minimal domestic violence cases and then approaching the defendants as if they were potential serial killers. 3-Judges in minimal DV cases casually issuing no contact orders against defendants requiring them to avoid a spouse for as much as a year. The judges seem bent on precluding any reconciliation of the parties or perhaps forcing a divorce. 4-Judges setting probation periods that are much too long. 5-Judges issuing extreme sentence conditions such as requiring 5 to 7 AA meetings per week! How much of a life would a person have with such a time burden hanging over their heads? 6-Etc. Etc. . . . I could go on but you get the picture.

I enjoy working here. I have a great unit but I do hear horror stories about supervisors in other units. Supervisors need to treat employees with respect.

Hazardous environment. Old building / heating - cooling / ventilation. Flies & knats - cleanliness. Janitors do not empty trash cans and vacuum frequently enough. No trash cans at working stations. Consistent dust & pollutants. No kitchen utensils or coffee maker etc.

I am not thanked enough for the good job that I do and the things that I get done during my shift. My first job evaluation I felt was very negative on the part of my supervisors and the management of my unit. They said that I get too easily frustrated, emotional, and angry when things don't work out well for me. The bosses are not helpful enough when you ask for their help. And the other thing is that I don't feel like I can be myself at work which is not fair to me because then I get in trouble. I have heard my bosses and my manager say things about me like I am to emotional, and that I seek too much attention from them when I am mad or when the day doesn't go my way.

Manager not respectful doesn't encourage employee advancement

Dishonesty, Inequity, Favoritism

Directors, managers, supervisors (also administration / human resources / personnel) not taking action against their buddies / friends when they do something wrong.

Too many uninterested, lazy workers. Too many new projects with fast timelines

Sometimes information is not shared as quickly & efficiently as it should

Getting underpaid & no room for advancement

Not at all, bad environment

No flexibility in hours

The feeling of being treated like a child - being told when to come - when to go - not to use sick leave - no freedom to be able to express problems with supervisors without recrimination, too much work - not enough staff, no recognition for the work you do.

the complaining and whining of senior co-workers about everything. Disparity in job duties among some workers.

Building air

No Team Environment - Appears to almost always be understaffed. Organization is working in a time zone. They just received PC's 2 yrs. ago. Email is fairly new - most employees are computer illiterate. I find myself most times trying to help someone who freezes up their computer - They don't know how to reboot.

Standards for performance & accountability are not evenly applied. There are no incentives for quality. Too much depends on favoritism: "the in crowd" syndrome.

Lack of direction

Outdated facilities

1 - Lack of training, 2 - poor managers, 3 - No career development, 4 - No professional development, 5 - Poor tools, 6 - No one cares, 7 - Self interest, 8 - Promote from within, 9 - Support

No teamwork, management doesn't listen, rotation - if people like an assignment and are doing a good job - leave them there, correcting the pay inequity.

The traditional management style of carelessness towards employees.

Childish middle school supervisors

My star rose with the political winds - now they've shifted - I'm out of favor finished.

Dead in. Just waiting to retire.

Civil service or union based workforce - this has engendered an atmosphere of entitlement & fear

Not the courts fault - but some employees (peers) are so negative and moan about anything they are asked to do outside of their required job - no team work.

Inconsistency in training

Bad attitudes, unhappy people who stay here & complain

No Answer

Sometimes changes happen and it takes time to adjust

Constantly being behind on task

The lack of personal ownership for making our Court more effective and responsive to the public.

Constant reactive environment. If the Court took the time to be more Proactive & Plan, better decisions would be made

Too many mixed signals in decision making

Money is below standard in present economy for work expected
No Answer

No Answer

The disparity in the level of leadership

Too much politics

No Answer

Other employees lack of responsibility

Favortism, certain people getting special treatment. Unprofessional manner that some higher-ups use.

Lack of growth potential

Poor management, lack of leadership, lack of training

The negative environment produced by unhappy co-workers

Disrespectful co-workers uneasy with positive & efficient changes

No open communication between management & staff. Poor morale!

N/A

There seems to be some negative attitudes, and this prevents a smooth flow when trying to get things done.

Dark, ugly environment

No Answer

Not having enough work

Poor communication between management & staff; lack of training; lack of equal distribution of work.

There are written manuals that specify policies and procedures for day to day court activities. Along those same lines rules change almost daily without notice and depending on who makes the decision. No consistency! This is very unfair to the public and to court employees as well.

The defendants

Bad attitude of most court employees towards change. Too many people don't want to make an effort because they "can't get fired" or only have a few years till they can retire.

No Answer

Lack of clarity on projects

The politics - bad workers aren't fired and good workers aren't supported

Need for improved communications

Lack of employee involvement in refining court procedure. Lack of effective communication on new court procedure. Lack of effective communication on new procedure implementation. Division of departments - not acting together.

See 12 + info overload. Too much expected to retain. Feels overwhelming also.

Management style in used in Customer Service Dept. Authoritarian management style is dated.

Salary

Workload

Our department is very unorganized. Training is almost non-existent

The negative attitude of so many co-workers & supervisors.

The lack of employee performance evaluation based on merit

No sense of pride or commitment, as an organization, to the work we do and the people we work with

The way people must be picked for training, Flexibility in the work hours.

Co-workers negative attitudes - "we did that before, it did not work then, why try it again"?

?

Training for another job within the courts

Rigidity

The politics of working for a court and how the court system is perceived negatively from the outside

Too much paper, too many emails & too frequently changing procedures. And still, very poor concrete procedures - different responses per whomever you ask

Low morale

Not enough challenges

When I encounter a customer who tries to make thing look bad on me.

Nepotism and the fact that there is too much of it.

Being treated unfairly; passed on trainings, higher responsibilities or opportunities as they arise.

There are too many things that need to be done in the allotted time. Expectations are too great & overtime hours are not compensated in any way.

The work environment

No Answer

1 - There is a lot of excess pressure on employees because we are short-staffed. 2 - I don't like the fact that there are only 4 levels to the pay scale - would rather it be merit based.

Repetition

Inconsistent policies

The building itself

Difficulty of implementing change

Top down management style and Judicial whim.

Lack of professionalism on part of people. Negative work environment.

Long commute

Morale among some staff, resistance to change, & management doesn't always follow up on things.

<p>What do you like MOST about working for the court <i>(Responses to Survey Question #11)</i></p>

I like my fellow staff and court crew - somehow among the strict rules and grim work matter we have a way of making the best of it - the people I work with are fun and that makes a difference.

Flexible hours

Working with people

I work independently without a lot of rules or restrictions. My best friends also work for the court.

The interesting nature of working with the public

The satisfaction of helping someone through the employment process. Sharing the excitement when they get a job offer. Hopefully giving a positive experience to a new employee or a veteran.

The diversity of the work and the opportunity it presents for career growth.

Interaction with employees

Contact with clients and seeing wonderful changes that are made in their lives.
Lots of public contact, not stressful

I like the friendly people I work with

My supervisor works as hard as me

The good (high) morale this unit practices

Using MCIS to do my job

My work & those I work with

Nothing

No answer

I'm in a unit that does work that's important to me & society in general, we can make a difference even if not supported well by management.

Level of job responsibility

Level of independence

Variety of work

My direct supervisor listening to my concerns/questions.

Court experience

Training programs

Benefits

Some times the People

Experience – challenge

When I have a sense of control over my work. I know where I will be and can plan around this.
When I have time to work on and experiment with better ways to do my job (rare).

Location

The benefits are good. The money is fair. The job isn't hard, mostly mindless work - which is repetitive.

Re-licensing program gives me an opportunity to give back to the community. Do believe the new court administrator is trying to make a change.

I like what I do and I don't mind doing other job as well. But, they don't train you at all.

I had nice team-workers in my unit as a big family

Computers

Job security. Teamwork with good people.

I have control over my job & am left to determine how I want to structure it. Minimal supervision. My opinion is valued in my unit.

Makes a difference / assist the public. Fun & friendly staff.

The one thing that I like most about my job is that I am only working part time from 9:00 to 1:00 p.m. in the afternoon because then I have the whole afternoon to rest, clear my mind of that day's problems, relax by doing something special or fun for myself and get ready for the next business day. I like the fact that my bosses and the manager have tried to be honest to me for the most part when we are getting along.

Co-workers

Working with the legal system (becoming more knowledgeable about the law(s), procedures, etc.)
Working with the clientele (very rewarding)

Knowing that I helped my community

Great Boss, opportunity, overall interest by management to make improvements

The court's effort to make our working environment better by changing our focus to more customer service

Job security

Help people

Helping people

The customers

Supervisors and manager very good. Little stress (most of the time). Supervisor easy to talk to.

Nothing

Good benefits & helping others

Feeling that it serves a vital function to the community

Co-workers

Working with people

Regular pay check

Knowing that what I do could be helping many people most of society has written off.

It is never dull. I know everything about 90% of all court functions. I could work anywhere in here. I like the loose - silly - semiprofessional aire, it's so Seattle and me. I love my co-workers - even the ones that don't like me.

Opportunity to make a difference in our community

I am excited to be a part of the legal system

Downtown location

Diversity of employees / clientele

No Answer

It's stable

Talking / working with clients

The opportunity to creatively explore new ideas & concepts; the judges willingness to seek direction / input from staff.

No Repetition. Every day is something new

Challenges on a daily basis

Sense of providing service to legal community

No Answer

No Answer

The feeling that I'm doing something for the community - not just earning a paycheck

Helping customers

No Answer

Respect

My co-workers

Variety. Never a dull moment

The individual work I do with defendants

The work I do and people I help. The independence and challenge provided by my work.

Ability to work without too much supervision

I enjoy working with the clients that I case manage. (I like my profession!)

Career growth, learning and development, Good leadership

I have a great supervisor

Flexible work hours

No Answer

I like my coworkers. The work is fun & exciting. It's my favorite job of all.

I'm doing what I want to do & I do it well.

That I am able to perform my job with little disruption.

Employees

Autonomy

No Answer

Projects, Community interaction

Flexible hours

I love the field I'm in.

A certain level of independence

Variety of functions within the position. Work with good people, enjoy feeling useful.
Appreciate good benefits & fair to good pay.

Nothing – SMC offers kiss butt customer service to the public and nothing to its employees.
This court is only interested in collecting money.

Challenges

Very challenging; keeps me on my toes.

I have learned a lot and hope to continue to.

It is interesting & ever changing.

Working with different people and facing the daily challenge

Problem-solving, both at operational & policy level

Most of the people seem to be real team players and very kind.

Meaningful work, making a difference and a contribution and work challenges.

Working 9 - 80 hrs. shift. (My shift)

?

Rotation

The people I work with

I've been here a long time. . . It's home to me. I know what I'm doing & have long-standing friendships.

Challenge & variety

The employees, they are like a family to me.

Variety

That I work primary with one Judge who make it easy to come to work and have a great understanding if you do your job correct the first time.

Job security

It is challenging & exciting work. I am learning a lot.

It pays my bills

No Answer

The benefits / pay.

Interaction w/other people / employees / defendants

Autonomy

People - I am not bored. I learn different things everyday.

Helping offenders change

Job independence

Making a change in others lives - helping people through system

Challenges - helping people

Great team that I work with

<p>If you could change one thing about your job? <i>(Responses to Survey Question #12)</i></p>

In court services, we get bounced around for different courts, different terminals, different spaces every day - It would be nicer to have a set place for yourself - a set desk, a place you can call your own, something familiar.

No Answer

The way work is organized and assigned

Work 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

A nicer facility in which to work, but that is on the way

Staffing

I think it is ridiculous for managers & directors to complete & sign timesheets that they worked eight hours that day. All work more than eight hours whenever necessary to get the work done (which is more often than not). Managers & directors should need time sheets only for exceptions such as sick leave, vacation leave, exec leave, etc.

I would like to be able to have input into unit workplan and not be told this is what you need to accomplish for the managers merit increase

GET RID OF TRACKER COMPUTER PROGRAM

Higher income

better communication

I would encourage a class for everyone on "How to be calm under pressure".

More communication amongst the different units

Simplify some job tasks to eliminate unnecessary steps

I would have higher pay so people wouldn't leave because we get paid less for hard work.

Move

No answer

I'd like the courts to become based in reality when it comes to the "power" we really do & don't have. Then be honest about that to the media.

The leadership beginning with the director (XXXXXXX)

Employee (Managers, Directors), be held accountable and be expected to put in a full days work.

Some of the things that get in the way of doing a good job should not be there.

Nothing

I would change management style to “Organized, consistent, equitable, knowledge sharing, etc.

Have a work schedule 1 week in advance

My job-Cross train all c.s. employees to be back-up coverage to clerks, or other departments. Don’t allow “special” workers to work in other units & not offer to all employees ie. Court technology or master calendar where 1 person has been in the job for 8 months and not assigned to jail or other more difficult tasks while co-workers are pushed constantly to complete all work all the time.

Politics. Too much depends on who you are and who you are friends with for certain things good to happen. Work performance should be the reason. Promotions or tuition should not be based on being a friend of the boss.

Reduce management

No Answer

Decreasing the amount of supv.. & increasing more training on the job for employee’s.

I’d like the ability to influence people and procedures to make them simpler, less bureaucratic and more in line with my own reasoning and the ethical values I hold.

More \$

Make it a clean place convenient for employees to work. Provide adequate supplies & kitchen accessories. Pursue to make it less hazardous

I think the one thing I would change if I could would first of all be able to get along with my team so that I would be liked more than I am. The second thing I would like to change is the way the management works so that it meets the needs of the employees disabled or otherwise so that all people can be happy in the workplace. I also feel as though we and the management should communicate in a clear and consistent manner without anyone walking away with hurt feelings or feeling that they don’t want to come to work. The third thing that I would like to see happen is for the management to hire more people my age so that I too can have friends at work.

I would like more empowerment & respect

See #10

Different promotion policy

To have a 4/10 schedule

Employees attitude and co-workers attitudes on taking pride in their work.

Management

Attitude of supervisor / management

Flex time available to parents (employees)

The location

More flexibility in work hours -- more money

Need better location and more privacy

No Answer

Too much cross training which results in information overload & a lot of mediocrity because there is never enough time to train completely or thoroughly. We end up knowing a little bit about a lot of things.

More input from staff

Better, more up to date, facilities

My poor tools because they do not help me do my job.

Create teams of current staff for permanent assignment with each other.

The demise of Revenue Recovery and the focus on the court being serious about collecting lawful fines owed to it. Change----The court traditional and present focus on the public; and back to the employees.

No Answer

Restructure the department - slightly - some people (peers) seem overworked and some seem to bide their time until 5

Dress code

No Answer

Some of the attitudes in general

Spending so much time correcting others mistakes

More cooperation and support among staff and less "pointing fingers" and finding fault with each other.

Location - Being able to telecommute a few days a week

Stress level is too high

Salary, working conditions, eliminate middle managers, pettiness

No Answer

No Answer

Level of compensation

Rotation shift

No Answer

More \$\$

Not rewarding good employees for their efforts

Environmental issues. Heating / cooling. Improve water systems.

Better management

Better pay

Some of the clerical job functions

Smaller caseloads, more positive people to work with – tie

N/A

The hours. I would like to work part-time

Get better office supplies

No Answer

Absolutely nothing.

The micromanagement & expectations from management that are unreal.

That I be given the tools to truly help the public instead of just passing them through the system.

No Answer

I would like to see telecommuting offered.

No Answer

Developing process for people to have ownership of projects / tasks / functions

Workers who don't pull their weight

Improved communications

Management philosophy

The attitude of my two supervisors. One seems heavy-handed, intent on lecturing on subject he feels knowledgeable about. Thinks he should be a watchdog not a worker firstly. In the past, reverse was true. Don't feel valued. The 2nd one questions my decisions if they are not the same as she would arrive at. Could be more supportive & less critical or use a different approach. Feel put down by this person at times.

Management team in (Deleted) Dept. Replace! Manager & director and one supervisor.
Extensive supervisor training: for other supervisors.

None

Salary shld be higher

More structure. Permanent assignments.

My co-workers attitudes!

For the court to implement fully computerized multi user accounting system.

In a structured way, I would like to be more hands-on with defendants - more time for courtroom observation, speaking to defendants, etc.

No Answer

Lighter workload

?

?

Some flexibility, upward mobility

Our work environment

Just one?? How about two . . . You chose: 1) Supervisors who expect subordinates to work harder than they do. 2) A sick leave policy that should be considered harassment!

More incentives for all city employees

More and better communication

more pay

A. HR and their lack of knowledge. B. Management / Supervisors

Change mgmt that has bias and dictatorial attitude and style

Either give compensation for overtime hours, or lower expectations so that only a 40 hour workload is expected.

The locate of my work space

No Answer

We would have more staff (both employees & supervisors). Also: pay raises by merit - not necessarily by "time".

No Answer

I'd like to see more reward for those willing to take calculated risks. Best way to succeed here is to blend in & not take chances.

No Answer

More realistic expectations

Stress level in the courtroom. Wanting to get done fast instead of getting the work done best.

More help

Re-work city ordinances to reflect business needs regarding HR ????

Smaller caseload

What is your career goal?	What can the court do to help you attain your goal?
<i>(Responses to Survey Question #13)</i>	
Yes - To work for a different department in the city - Dept of Neighborhoods or Aging & Disability Unit.	Give us an idea how to go about getting a job in a different department - it's not easy.
No Answer	No Answer
Yes	Education and opportunity for advancement
No	No Answer
I am pretty happy with the position I hold now.	I would like more computer classes and knowledge
I'd like to work on getting my degree but can't afford the cost at this time.	I could use financial assistance for my education. I believe this would serve a dual purpose as the court would benefit from it also.
Yes - a higher position in court administration.	Provide training opportunities in different court areas
I would like to become more proficient in job	which requires training that may not be located in Seattle. Allow me to travel to job specific training
Yes - I would like to move up into middle management	and then be given the chance to be in a new position. Pass experience on to new staff.
No answer	Increase my computer knowledge
No	No Answer
Business management	The court can get me ready for promptness and organization
No	No answer
No	No Answer
I enjoy the job I currently hold	I would want more computer skills which I am currently receiving to be more efficient at my job.
No answer	More education for people or employees who wants career growth
No answer	No answer
It's a little late now	but as a single Mother of 2, working full time, they could have made it easier to further my education...
To work in a leadership position	Allocate funds for continuing education at this level and make a commitment to court employees that these funds will only be used for that purpose.

Not at this time
Grow with the job
No Answer
Paralegal
Yes
Yes - Plan to attend college, obtain masters & move on to other city department
Finish my college degree.
No Answer
Accountant
Yes
No
No
Coordinator
I hope to work very hard toward staying here at the court be doing what I am told to do when I am told to do it.
Would like a leadership position
No Answer
Yes
No Answer
Yes, Manager
Yes

Appendix F2
No Answer
No Answer
Provide experience
Provide education/training that would help in present position.
Provide consistent structured training
No Answer
Could use financial help/scholarship toward my education
More training / writing / computer / customer service
No Answer
Be positive to all employees & train everyone
No Answer
only more computer training. And, yes, I am getting the training I request.
Coordinate additional services & programs. Have meetings that inquire on the employees goals & ambition.
I want to work toward being honest, and to stay out of trouble by being on my best behavior but know if I don't do what I am told to do that I will be talked too about it by my supervisors or by the manager if corrective action has to be taken. I want to also work on being as independent as I can and to fit in as a part of my team. I don't think that the court can help me reach my goals other than telling me if I do something wrong and giving me advise on how to maintain the appropriate behavior and do better in the future,
No Answer
No Answer
Sharing training / school opportunities with all staff & not just supervisors or people they plan to promote.
No Answer
Provide mentoring opportunities
Provide more training & pay for more outside training

	Appendix F3
Yes. Being a bottom line, so my chance is	No Answer
Not yet	No Answer
No Answer	Give more computer training on the different computer programs
Would like to move up to more responsible position -- more autonomy.	No Answer
No Answer	Improve computer skills
To become a bailiff	The court could offer training and a support group or contacts.
No Answer	No Answer
No Answer	Improved Tech Skills
None	No Answer
No Answer	Meet my needs identified in #10
Yes	Provide me the flexibility in my schedule to finish my degree
Work in computer technology in 4 years. Learn Spanish	I already asked for financial support for this the court said - 'No' - what do you expect - no foresight
No Answer	No Answer
Work inside the court	I need to pursue this on my own - be sure I'm the top candidate when there is an opening.
Yes	Unfortunately - Raise the pay scales
No Answer	No Answer
Not yet	No Answer
Retirement	No Answer
No Answer	No Answer
No Answer	Have enough staff on hand to provide employees with the opportunity to go to training.
Not really.	Just do the best job I can until I retire in six years.
Retirement in 4+ years	No Answer
No Answer	No Answer
No Answer	No Answer
Increased leadership responsibility	They are currently doing it with additional training
Not any at this time	No Answer
No Answer	No Answer

	Appendix F4
Same as #12 above - more pay for position	No Answer
T rise to a supervisory position & attend college	The court can offer opportunity i.e.. Crosstraining
Promote me	No Answer
No	No Answer
My career goal is to work as a lawyer.	The organization (court) can provide scholarships & funding for higher education for work studies or full time enrolled students
Yes	Provide more training monies for staff to enhance current skills.
I may want to promote to a higher position	More cross-training (mentoring) would be helpful!
Yes, attain a director level position	The courts provide a great opportunity for advancement
I would like to gain some experience in the court technology division	No Answer
Yes	Support me like career quest does - seems to be known that the court has little money to support further education for employees.
No Answer	No Answer
No	No Answer
Yes	Keep me challenged and acknowledge my good (& bad) qualities so I can improve on a daily basis.
No Answer	Provide more cross-training opportunities and a clear procedure to follow for tuition
No Answer	No Answer
No Answer	No Answer
No Answer	No Answer
Learn Access, Learn Spanish	No Answer
No Answer	Training
Yes	Continue growth opportunities
No Answer	Different job in line with career goals
No	No Answer
Yes	1) Allow me to have input in the goal setting on my evaluation. 2) Make the attending University reimbursement available to all employees - base it on GPA not friendship.
To get certification	Training
Yes, not court related.	No Answer

	Appendix F5
No Answer	No Answer
No.	Remain here if the rate of pay was more comparable to other organizations.
Yes	Provide on site or off site training
Yes	Continue to provide OJT opportunities
Accounting / Probation	I like working with the public. Make the cross training open to others who might need it.
Possible management	No Answer
No Answer	I want to take some courses, that will help me to move on.
Yes I do have a career goal in mind	Flexible to attend evening or day classes
To move on upward	No Answer
No Answer	Be more progressive in terms of how we can better use our limited resources
No. I'm old enough to just keep doing the best I can.	No Answer
No Answer	No Answer
No Answer	No Answer
Not really	No Answer
No Answer	Money for education / training
Mgmt goals.	Fairly give opportunity for advancement and retrain for other higher assignment positions.
To utilize my education & experience & become proficient as a supervisor / manager.	The court can provide training & then provide tools & backing & expectations that enhance supervisory proficiencies.
No Answer	Pay for my schooling
No Answer	No Answer
Yes	Career counseling? / College grants? / more flex schedules.
No Answer	I would like to take more classes
Not anymore	No Answer
Undecided	No Answer
Transition into technology field. I am in career quest now.	No Answer
No	No Answer
No Answer	No Answer

Provide good customer service. Have had a successful career and own a profitable business - This is my way of returning something for all the blessings I have received.
Not sure yet what my goals are.

Appendix F6
No Answer
No Answer

<p>Why are you planning on leaving the court? What would it take to change your mind? <i>(Responses to Survey Question #15)</i></p>
--

I've had it. A lot of changes with management practices & more money

Give outside clerks an assigned courtroom and some actual responsibility for once. I feel like I am treated like a child in our dept. We are not listened to, not respected. The management has taken all control from us...even the liberty of knowing where we will be working on a daily basis...we don't have anywhere to keep our personal belongings daily. We show up every day and get told where to go and what to do and we go and do it...and then 2 hours later they might tell you to go somewhere else and do something else.

No growth opportunity. I have worked very hard to prove myself for the last 10+ years. I have never been considered for promotion (job change), but have always been cooperative & finished all assign spec. projects. Moral is very low and I am very disappointed that these years seem to have been wasted (stop by mgm.-progress stunned) ---There is enormous amount of disrespect displayed throughout this organization alone with other unfair treatment. Supv.. Need people skills training. ----Won't change my mind, too much have happen, no trust in management/system.

Management is sucks. To change my mind is to leave me alone. It would beneficial to all of us to inform us what's going on. Sometimes.

Too much stress, pressure on. Too tired for working.

Promotions - Have more staff meetings

Actually, I'm going on to other things in 1-2 years. If # 12 happened it might delay my leaving somewhat but not indefinitely.

No room for advancement & being recognized for work & being recognized by pay or other means ----

Too much politic, I will looking for high tech job.

It's time. A \$5.00 an hour pay raise.

after 30 yrs. I think it time to retire. If I could put my retirement into deferred comp I would maybe consider staying.

Because I have to look for job opportunities, the court do not give you any.

Change in leadership position. Support from leaders in seeking job reclassification, appreciation and significant wage adjustment. Counseling of problem employees who create unhealthy stressful situations for other team members along w/ documentation of problems and eventually

the dismissal of such employees. Support and understanding from some of the SMC Judges such as Judge A, Judge B, Judge C, Judge D.

Dysfunctional work environment, I don't see this changing in the near future.

No Answer

Sometime internal customers are not helpful trying to resolve for problem external customers. Court needs to have a program that entice employee

I'm stuck in my position with no opportunity for advancement. I'm not rewarded / recognized for my efforts. Too late to change it.

Promote me

if possible. Career advancement, more opportunity w/ training

I am looking to change careers. I want to go into the information technology field. The private sector pays better than the public sector.

I am planning on leaving because I have not been able to utilize the many skills that I possess in performing any of the positions that I have held at the court. I discussed these skills during my interviews and thought that I was hired based on those skills. I also do not like the way our customers are treated. I have seen customers treated unfairly and sometimes with disrespect partly due to the non-consistent rules & regulations of the court. At this time I don't see anything that the court could do to change my mind but maybe it will happen from something I can't foresee at this time.

If no opportunity found here. Change in management philosophy, investment in training, career opportunity in chosen field.

1) I want to work in an employee friendly environment ie employee's are respected and treated like adults. 2) Employee's receive fair and equal treatment. 3) Management is required to follow the rules / policies that they enforce. No double standards.

Serious change in management style

Need new challenges in a different field; want to exercise more of the right side / creative side of the brain. No job opportunity found outside the court.

No upward mobility

Maybe. Career enhancement

I am leaving the court to work in a place that works with you as a team and not work against you.

Nothing would change my mind.

1st opportunity. There seems to be no career advancement for some people with different background in this court. Mgmt - to open its eyes to this reality. Mgmt should built career ladder in the Court or do a constructive evaluation of all positions to bring parity in comparison to courts in other big metropolitan cities. Should treat fairly to foreign born citizens / employees in terms of career advancement.

Tired of the politics. Feel jaded after so many years. Doubt there will be any substantial changes. The court needs an overhaul from the ground up. Needs to take a hard look at business practices & policies. Too many are driven by history rather than logic. If I'm really doing something meaningful next year, I might extend.

Temp. 6 months. I am temporary till January. I wish I could stay.

Transfer to technology division

The Municipal Court of Seattle



To: Executive Leadership Team

From: Yolande E. Williams, Court Administrator

Date: October 6, 2000

Re: Exit Interview Information

The following information was extracted from the Employee Exit Interview Questionnaire implemented earlier this year. The comments quoted from departing employees are samplings of positive and negative comments. The information is taken from 17 exit interviews beginning in March. One employee declined to fill out the questionnaire. The six exit interviews previous to March are not included because the format was not detailed enough to gain sufficient employee input. The comments are laid out in the same order as they appear on the questionnaire.

1. Job Satisfaction:

- **What did you like best about your job?**

“Work hours.”

“People I worked with.”

“Cross training opportunities.”

“Flexibility my boss gave me.”

“Work unit great with aiding an employee.”

“Autonomy, variety, flexibility in shift work.”

“Personal satisfaction, accomplishment.”

“Friendly staff.”

“Learning finite details of SMC and legal system.”

“Independence and variety of responsibility.”

“Interviewing, probationer contact.”

“Job security.”

“Working with the public, sense of service, reasonable pay.”

“Almost a different challenge everyday.”

- **What did you least like about your job?**

“Lack of communication, lack of respect, little or no recognition.”
“Lack of clarity with rules and policies, favoritism.”
“Lack of promotional opportunities.”
“Lack of funding for continuing education.”
“Inadequate compensation.”
“Director. Unable to offer input without severe criticism.”
“Environment/work conditions.”
“Repetitiveness, negative attitudes (both customers and co-workers).”
“Not very challenging, dissatisfied co-workers.”
“Treatment of line staff by management, lack of leadership, duplicity and incompetence.”
“Inappropriate management style (director and supervisor).”
“Supervision – unprofessional, inappropriate.”
“Management style.”

2. With respect to getting your job done: Marks ranged from “Excellent to Poor” with most in the “Good to Poor” range.

“Work environment is very poor; chairs, equipment.”
“Communication needs to be more effective.”
“No cohesion within the unit, information limited and incomplete.”
“Changes that occurred affected our division without input from our division.”
“Cooperation within the department is poor generally with a few specific people being helpful; tension and animosity between co-workers is high.”
“Lack of opportunity to voice job improvements to manager, lack of concern on his part.”
“Supervisor did not go over each change with group, handled one-on-one, no input from the people who did the work.”
“Supervisor does not listen, constantly interrupts, supervisor not clear on how to do things. Complaints on physical setup of desk/computer to supervisor – told, oh well, that’s the way it is.”
“None of the equipment until recently has been ergonomically correct.”

3. What did you think of your supervision: Most marks are in the “Good to Poor” range. Though there are negative comments some rate the supervision excellent.

“The Court Administrator needs to take a look at the overall operations within the Court. Management is not concerned with morale and I feel it is a major problem.”
“Application of policies is not clear and consistent.”
“Court (Unit name withheld) employees do not appear to have a common bond, hence teamwork is poor in some areas.”
“Odd, poor communication and social skills in each manager’s makeup resulted in their defensiveness, and fear, and had the above results (poor marks).”
“Fair treatment was given to those who would not challenge the supervisor. Teamwork was created out of fear and unhappiness.”
“This supervisor does not listen to what is said; treatment of employees dependent on supervisor’s mood or who she is mad at.”

“Teamwork was only with a select few. Again out-of-control court clerk ruined daily teamwork, policy did not apply to her.”

4. Department Information; This section covers employee orientation, providing job training, career development assistance, training opportunities, recruiting and interview process and providing a safe work environment. Most of ratings are in the “Good to Fair” range. There are very few “Excellent” markings.

“Training and career development almost nonexistent within the Court, especially for night shift employees.”

“Training is insufficient in my work unit. Career development does not exist in the unit.”

“Out of three different seminars I applied for, I was declined twice due to lack of funds.”

“Very slow process.” (Recruiting and interview process)

“We just need a new building.”

“There has been no employee assistance to help develop our career, achieving greater proficiency on various computer applications on company time – not our lunch hours (Cheap!).”

“Moving heavy boxes in small quarters and in so many different areas seemed dangerous.”

“The work environment in the unit is definitely not safe. Desk/chair/computer set up uncomfortable. Caused pain in right shoulder and neck constantly. Told, that’s the way it is.”

“Boxes stacked everywhere, constantly running into and bruising my leg.”

“We had one shift for day, swing and evening then thrown to the wolves. The environment when new can be very intimidating and to be expected to work alone on a holiday after getting minimal training is scary. Some new hires have quit their jobs based on that fact.”

“Training opportunities and career development – minimal to none.”

“Equipment too old, not ergonomic. We sat incorrectly for too long – fatigue related illness.”

“No real help in career development.”

5. Work Environment: This is a “Agree or Disagree” rating.

“ I was overlooked for a court clerk position with over 15 years judicial experience. No, I would not recommend anyone here with the current staff.”

“Poor recognition. No equity in work expectations. At my age I don’t plan to come back.”

“The work itself is fun to do. But the pressures made it often an unbearable situation.”

“I would consider working here again and would recommend SMC as a place to work without current supervisor.”

“I would consider working here again only in a different area. The first time in my life I hated coming to work because of my supervisor, although I enjoyed my actual job tasks.”

“I dreaded coming to work because of the management, not the position.”

“Upper management has never considered the needs of the court clerk or recognized the stress, volume and leadership it takes to perform that position.”

“I did not feel comfortable to explore career opportunities. As I saw, some people struggle with their work schedule changing frequently when they were in school.”

“This division remains the most hostile, chaotic and inefficient of all work environments.”

“The work at times was not a challenge as described in the interview.”

"Its a tough place to work at my age (23), lacks the social connection/stimuli."

"Terrible work environment. The staff could use some sensitivity training, undoing racism training and communication skills training. This should began with directors and managers."

6. Additional Comments Section:

"It was very interesting learning the Court process, and a gift to serve the public. Also it has been encouraging to work in a diverse work atmosphere."

"I think we/you have the resources to make this place an exciting place to work." Employees feel valued when the company commits it's resources to build an awesome work environment."

"I would definitely consider returning to SMC or City of Seattle for employment in the future, but in a more challenging and rewarding capacity."

"While no situations always were ideal this Seattle work environment was a hopeless "Killer"."

"I think I was too young and career driven for what I was doing. Overall I enjoyed working for the Court, but it was time to get out."

"I was always struggling to find time to devote concerns (training, meetings, committees, quality control, etc) that should be addressed."

Summary: The exit interviews reflect some of the same concerns the Court has. Since the first of the year, the Court is working on improving training and career development, performance appraisals, leadership, morale, and streamlining the recruiting process. To accomplish this the Court is scheduling focus groups to discuss these issues and look for solutions. A process improvement team consisting of managers/supervisors is meeting with the Senior Personnel Specialist to discuss the recruiting process and suggestions to improve it. A new employee orientation program is now in effect along with a New Employee Handbook that is being issued to new employees. The Handbook will also be distributed to current employees. During the last week of October an employee focus group will meet to discuss job enrichment, which includes job training to meet employee needs, two-way channels for communications with management and employees, and fostering employee relations. The Training Steering Committee has chartered a sub-committee to discuss and recommend training and development goals based on the Court's current work force and labor market conditions, identification of training needs common to all employees and suggested internal/external Court classes to increase job skills. All this information/data will help define the Court's direction in 2001. There is an ongoing leadership development and training program for all employees who supervise employees from the Court Administrator to leads.

The Municipal Court of Seattle



To: Yolande E. Williams, Court Administrator
Via: Ed Meyer, Human Resources Manager
From: Carl O. Stucker
Date: November 16, 2000
Re: Employee Focus Group Summary

This document summarizes the results of the employee focus groups I conducted on October 24, 25 and 26. This summary reviews the most significant themes and findings without reference to individual participants. All the participants are in non-supervisory roles. The participants were assigned numbers to indicate their division/unit in order to maintain anonymity. The number identifications are:

- #1 Court Administration, Finance, Technology, Human Resources and Policy & Programs
- #2 Court Security
- #3 Court Services
- #4 Customer Services
- #5 Probation

The purpose of the focus group was to gather information on how employees perceive the Court's current programs regarding employee motivation and job satisfaction.

The general issue is Job Enrichment and specifically addressed the following:

1. Does the Court provide adequate two-way channels for communication with Court management and employees?
2. Do current training opportunities meet employee needs to be effective in their job?
3. Does the Court work consistently towards fostering better employee relations within the organization?

The goal was to collect information and suggestions on improving employee job satisfaction and increasing performance. I recommend the focus group results, employee training subcommittee

results and exit interview surveys be used by the Executive Leadership Team and management in reviewing current practices and improving services.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Court management for their support. The participants were professional, provided valuable insight and were a pleasure to work with.

Summary of Results:

Question #1: Does the Court provide adequate two-way channels for communication with Court management and employees?

✓ Is management communication to staff effective and informative?

#3-My manager treats me fairly and honestly.

#3-Inner unit communications is strong.

#4-Supervisor is strong on follow-up.

#4-Supervisor level and e-mail communications good.

#4-Open communications in the unit and have regular staff meetings.

#5-Staff meetings informative.

#1-We have open communications.

#5-Good use of e-mail

#2-Inner office communication is good.

#1-Court-wide staff meetings.

#1-Open door policy.

#3-Good unit cooperation in communicating.

#4-Good unit meetings.

#4-Shop steward available.

#3-Communications between employees good.

#1-Newsletter

#1-Web page.

All-Communicate and provide support during difficult times. (Death in the family, serious illness, etc.)

#4-Supervisor keeps me informed.

#1-Organized meetings.

#4-Open door policy.

#2-Good chain of command.

#5-We use team concept of management and have regular meetings.

#5-Posting of flyers a good tool.

Discussion: Though the question addressed management communications to staff being effective, the group broadened the subject to communications in general. The focus group members talked about the good things happening, but their comments reflect more what is happening in their small units not the division. Other than the newsletter, web page and flyers, they focused more on the small unit communications.

✓ Are employees able to communicate upward?

- #1-Lack of communication from the top down (all levels down).
- #1-Information to employees is retracted.
- #5-Using e-mail is impersonal.
- #5-No one-on-one communication on performance on how I am doing.
- #4-Top level communication not genuine.
- #4-Management does not communicate to employees in a respectful and professional manner.
- #3-Communication between departments is poor.
- #3-Department communications is weak, don't address relevant issues.
- #3-Communication is one-way, down, "I don't feel I can approach my supervisor/manager."
- #5-We get garbled messages.
- #5-Selective messages. They will say different things to different people.
- #2-Court-wide information doesn't always get down to employees.
- #1-We get unclear information on procedures.
- #3-We don't get any feedback on performance.
- #3-Management does not update employee on what's going on.
- #4-We don't hold team meetings.
- #4-Only certain people get the information, others are left out.
- #1-Information sent by e-mail is filtered to select people.
- #1-Employees without e-mail are left out.
- #2-Operational information not shared.
- #5-Supervisors only communicate the negatives, no recognition.
- #3-Don't communicate that the rules apply to all of us.

Discussion: One of the big concerns for some group members is performance feedback and performance appraisal. Very little communication is given to the employee on how they are doing. If the manager/supervisor does address the employee's performance, the employee receives negative feedback and not the positive. There are members of the group who have not received an appraisal in over a year or longer. Employees are not aware of what the policy on performance appraisals says, and others did not know there is a policy. Some felt they could not approach their supervisor because of the supervisor's demeanor. Focus group members felt communications between divisions are weak and information on changes between divisions is not passed along. Also, communication within the division is weak and doesn't get information to employees relevant to their job. One employee felt the supervisor talked down because the employee is not at the same level as the supervisor. Some information by e-mail is filtered down to select employees, but affects all of them. Messages by e-mail or other means on procedures are sometimes garbled or unclear on new procedures or changes to procedures.

✓ What can all of us do to better communications?

- #1-We should get regular performance appraisals.
- #4-Supervisors on up should communicate to employees when they are doing a good job.
- #1-Schedule meetings on a regular basis. They should be quality meetings to address Court changes and improvements.

- #1-Notify us of operational changes in a timely manner.
- #3-When communicating, treat people the way you want to be treated.
- #3-Make sure information is more readily available.
- #4-Practice what you preach.
- #5-Get rid of negative meetings.
- #1-Schedule monthly staff meetings for all employees in the unit.
- #1, #4-Management should attend class on creating a respectful workplace to improve on how they communicate and with employees.
- #4-Employees should receive more one-on-one training.
- #1-Employees should receive timely and meaningful performance evaluations.
- #4-Should bring people from the outside to give presentations at meetings.
- #4-When you give us feedback give us positive feedback too, not just the negative.
- #5-Use newsletter as a communication tool to describe other units and what their functions are.
- #5-Manager/supervisor should have a positive demeanor when conducting a performance evaluation.
- #4-Performance feedback should be interactive, feedback not only to the employee but feedback to the manager.

Discussion: In recommendations for improvement, performance appraisals are an important issue to the employee. Employees want feedback on performance as well as the opportunity to give feedback on the manager/supervisor's performance. Members feel communication from the management should be respectful. The employee can accept negative feedback, but the positive should be addressed too. Unit meetings should be regularly scheduled, open forum for discussion, address improvements and changes in the Court. Information on new programs is not getting down to the employee, they find out about it second hand. One employee said we know change is going to happen, tell us what it is. The group felt the information was not being disseminated in a timely manner.

Question #2: Does current training opportunities meet employee needs to be effective in their job?

- ✓ What is available now internal/external?

- #3-Getting more training to do our job.
- #3-Internal job training for different jobs.
- #5-Training on policies and procedures.
- #1-City of Seattle offers and advocates training.
- #1-Got the training I asked for.
- #1-Cross training opportunities.
- #1-SPU training available (free).
- #1-New employee training.
- #4-Experience available.
- #5-One-on-one training.
- #4-More time given to train new employees.

- #2-Our leaders are pushing for more training.
- #5-Collegial effort to share information.
- #5-At staff meetings outside presenters are brought in.
- #4-My unit is open to bringing in training.
- #4-Unit listens to new ideas.

Discussion: The comments made on training available reflects more in how some units support training and some individual were able to get the training they asked for. It appears employees are good about sharing information such as shortcuts on Excel or helping each other learn a procedure. Some employees see more one-on-one and new employee training than in years past.

✓ What are we not getting?

- All-We are not sure what is available.
- #1-Training on how to use software (Excel, Access, etc.)
- #1-Not sure if Court Technology is a resource. Where do I go to get help?
- #1-Lack of funds.
- #3-Training inconsistent and incorrect. (MCIS for example)
- #5-Court does not have professional development. There is no oversight on development.
- #5-No support or funding from the City.
- #1-No opportunity to do any training in each department (cross training).
- #4-I don't get to use the training I receive.
- #5-No resource library, for example, no MCIS manual.
- #4-No internal unit training.
- #4-No cross training.
- #4-No computer training, limits upward mobility.
- #4-Training very selective as to who will attend.
- #4-Can't go because of short staffing.
- #3-No GroupWise training available.
- #3-No training information available.
- #3-Lacking new employee training on such things as MCIS and Counter help.
- #1-No training manual on MCIS.
- #1-Court does not have a proactive training coordinator.
- #5-Court does not have structured training.

Discussion: During the course of the discussion it was evident that the group, though there were some positives, believed strongly that much is lacking in training opportunities. One employee wanted to go to a free class, but the was told, "no" and never given a reason why. Members wonder why there is a lack of training funds and would like to know how much is available. Others felt training was approved for some, but not others and that favoritism was factor in selection. There is no career path or development program for employees who are interested in promotion or other job opportunities in the City. Because of staffing shortages in some units, employees cannot go to training. One employee felt cross training should be pushed so the employee is not constantly doing the same job. New employee training is good, but they and

most employees don't know what the functions of other units are and how it ties into their job. They feel there should be some type of orientation/training on other divisions/units.

✓ What can we do to make training more effective for you in your job?

All-Publish a Court training bulletin.

Training at staff meetings.

Let us know what funding is available.

Publish a training plan.

Provide us time to train.

#4-If I apply for training, I should be approved.

#3-Training Coordinator could work with departments on training. Make training information available.

#1-Look at broader training opportunities.

#3-Post training information on the web and provide training catalogue on what is available.

#1, #4-Encourage cross training.

#1-Work with employee to develop an individual training plan.

#5-Hold supervisors accountable for training.

#4-Have job orientation training. Shadow others to see what there job entails.

#4-Should have training to broaden the mind.

All-We should have a resource library.

#1-Should have training on Court procedures not tied to just MCIS.

#2-Should have a train-the-trainer. They would attend training and come back to train the group.

#5-Supervisor and Training Coordinator should provide feedback to the employee to identify training to benefit the employee in their job and future opportunities.

#5-Develop management training for employees not in management positions.

Discussion: Finding what training is available seems to be a problem. One attendee was not aware you could find PRG classes on the inweb or that there is a PRG training catalogue. The employees would like a resource library in their departments with information on procedures, reference manuals for MCIS, Excel, etc. The supervisor and training coordinator should be proactive in helping the employee to identify training needs for their job and for career development. Career development should include classes on management to prepare them for future leadership assignments. The supervisor can do this during performance appraisals. Employees feel cross training would teach them other jobs and break the same-old-job syndrome. It would also provide back up for the unit. Members wanted training to broaden the mind, not just job training. PRG offers classes not job-related to fill that need.

Question #3: Does the Court work consistently towards fostering better employee relations within the organization?

✓ What programs does the Court have that are working?

- #1-Court newsletter article on recognizing employees.
- #1-Training on “Respectful Workplace” helpful.
- #5-Supervisor spoke up and supported the staff.
- #4-We are starting to have celebrations such as birthdays.
- #3-We have a “get-together” every now and then.
- #3-I feel the Court Administrator is working to make things better.
- #4-We support each other.
- #5-We have lunches once in a while.
- #4-Employees have received handwritten notes of thanks.
- #4-At our group meeting the group was toasted for their good work.
- #2-Recognize volunteers.
- #5-Supervisor bought pizza to thank the group for their work.
- #5-Our supervisor will get down with us to get the work done.
- #5-Keeps us all informed, uses the team concept, supports the people.
- #1-Focus group helps to foster better relations.

Discussion: Members said employee relations at the small unit level are good. Employees are supportive of each other and those supervisors fostered employee relations by working with them to get the job done, recognizing the groups work or standing up for and supporting the staff. Forms of recognition varied. Some members feel the Court Administrator is working to improve employee relations.

✓ What are you not getting?

- All-Too much micro-management.
- #3-Lack of respect for employees from management.
- #1, #3-Manager/supervisor emphasizes the negative rather than reinforcing the positive.
- #5-Management shows lack of empathy to change.
- #4-Enforcement of sick leave policy.
- #4-Employees are not empowered to do their job.
- #4-Manager/supervisor displays a lack of professional courtesy towards employees.
- #1-No type of “Applause” award. Don’t always recognize the employee.
- #4-Manager/supervisor does not work to foster better employee relations.
- #5-Sincere, honest communications from management is lacking.
- #5-Judges do not recognize units for their work and efforts.
- #5-Employees not treated equally.
- #4-Gossip hurts employee morale.
- #1-Failure of manager/supervisor to respond to employee problems in a timely manner.
- #1-Management ignores problem employees.
- #4-Executive Committee is not unified on policies.

Discussion: Though the groups saw support from the supervisor, they also think management focuses on the negative, don’t empathize with employees dealing with change. When communications are not honest, sincere or respectful that it creates a lack of trust. “Blanket” recognition has a negative effect on the unit when employee(s) received recognition for

something that occurred when they weren't there. The recognition loses its meaning. Some managers/supervisors and judges have done nothing to recognize employees or the unit for their hard work. Ignoring employee problems or treating employees differently adversely affects the moral and employee relations in the unit.

✓ What are we missing?

#1-Look at other companies programs and cultures to see what they do better employee relations.

#1-Don't treat employees like defendants.

#5-Small unit appreciation.

#4-Treat employees with respect.

#4-Establish wellness programs for the mind and body.

#4-Employee appreciation dinner (holiday period).

#3-Management needs to get out of the "box". Be more creative look for new ideas.

#3-Provide employees with the opportunity to do cross training.

#3-Consider doing more focus groups.

#4-Staff meetings will help better relations.

#3-Take time to recognize employees.

#1-Treat employees fairly.

#4-Management should set the example.

#3-Show consideration for the employees.

#4-Open communications between management and employees.

#5-Manager/supervisor should work to foster better employee relations.

#4-Manager/supervisor needs to display a level of trust between the employee and management.

#3-Communications need to be sincere.

#4-Fill the job vacancies.

#4-Work to retain employees.

Discussion: The member's suggestions indicate that management needs to be proactive in fostering employee relations and recognizing employee dedication and work. None of the participants looked for material things such as plaques, etc., rather hand written notes, recognition at staff meetings or Executive leaders taking time to thank them personally. Good employee relations mean fair and equal treatment for all and exhibiting trust.

Researcher' note: The following is a recent new hire's experience with the recruiting and interview process at The Municipal Court of Seattle

12/28/2000

I applied for two different jobs at the City of Seattle and when you apply for a position with the City the City then retains your resume for one year electronically in their "talent bank" for future openings. I did not receive interviews for the first two positions I applied for, but I received a telephone call to set up an interview for [. . .] Manager position for the Municipal Court of Seattle. They informed me of the date, time, and place of the interview however they never forwarded any information about the position I was interviewing for. After a few days of not being able to retrieve any information from their internet website on the position, I called the Human Resource department and asked if they could e-mail for fax the job description to me. I received the job description via e-mail the following day.

When I arrived for the interview, I was pleasantly surprised to receive the interview questions prior to starting the formal interview. Their questions were lengthy and I thought this practice was very helpful in reducing the interviewee's nervousness. During the interview they kept informing me of the importance of the position and finding the right candidate for the job. The interview was on Monday and after the interview they informed me that the finalists would be contacted by Friday. When I did not hear anything by Friday I assumed that I would be receiving a letter in the mail informing me I was not the selected candidate for the position.

However, the next Tuesday I did receive a telephone call offering the position to me. The representative from the Human Resource department informed me of the salary and the goals set for me for the next six months. They didn't explain any of the City's benefits ,i.e. the retirement plan, the 457 deferred compensation plan, the medical plans. These are all questions I had to ask and many I did not receive answers for. I informed her that at the City of Auburn, that I was receiving \$3,000 more a year than the City of Seattle's offer and as I January 1 all unaffiliated employees at Auburn were receiving a 3.5% cost of living increase. Not only was there a difference in pay but now I would have to commute into Seattle and additional 25 miles when my current job was only 4 miles from my house. Beside the additional time I would have to give up each day in the commute there was also the additional cost I would incur in fuel and parking if I drove or in the cost for public transportation.

After receiving the offer I asked her to explain the benefits the City offered and they only information I was given was that the City had three medical plans to chose from and two dental plans, but I received no information of the type of plans. When I asked if I would receive a step increase on my anniversary date, which is common in most other local governments, she informed me I would not. She did inform me that this position was part of the executive/management program the City started, but she was not sure how it worked. When I asked if I would receive a cost a living increase each year she said they couldn't call it a cost of living but they executives/managers sometimes receive an increase.

When I informed her that by accepting this position with this offer I would take a pay cut, not only initially but if the City doesn't have a cost of living adjustment and step increases within a year I have now taken a step back approximately \$8,000 per year in salary alone, not to mention the additional time I am giving up to commute and the additional cost. She said that they weren't sure what salary I was at, which I find hard to believe because I filled out paperwork that had my work history including my salary for the last 7 years. At this point I was somewhat frustrated. I had done my research on the City of Seattle and the court, however for a position that was supposedly so important to the court I felt that they didn't even review my information to make a reasonable offer and if they felt it was a reasonable offer then they should have sold the other benefits.

After this conversation she said she would get back to me. After receiving this offer I spent some time talking to my boss at the City of Auburn discussing the offer and the pros and cons. She gave me the name and phone number of her colleague in a different department at the City of Seattle. I contacted him and he was very helpful in informing me of the other benefits the City had to offer

- ◆ The City of Seattle has their own retirement plan in which the employee contributes 8.03% and the employer matches that. The City of Seattle's plan is compatible with the state's retirement plan in what they call portability so that I receive credit for the time I have in the state's retirement plan (PERS). This is an important selling point because that means I will receive credit for 8 years of service and after thirty years of total service I am eligible for retirement. For the state's plan I can't receive a pension until I am 65. With the portability of this plan I am eligible after 30 years of service and I could receive a pension at the age of 57.
- ◆ He also informed me that the City of Seattle pays for the entire premium on medical, dental for myself and my husband, and long-term disability for myself.
- ◆ The City has a 457 plan through Fidelity, and offers many different investment plans.
- ◆ He also explained the City's Executive and Management plan for salary pay and bonuses, where the executive and management staff is eligible for up to 8% performance pay and up to an additional 6 days of leave. Aside from the performance pay and leave the executive and management staff also receives 4 bonus days the beginning of the year. Every two years the class may receive a market adjustment, but they don't receive a cost of living increase like the represented employees.
- ◆ The City also pays \$15 toward your monthly public transportation pass.

The following day I received a telephone call from a higher representative from the Human Resource department and he offered a slightly higher salary and informed me that the executives and managers were going to receive a 3.1% increase for a market adjustment effective January 3, 2001. He then added that I needed to think of where my career advancement opportunities would be better in Auburn or Seattle. Which at this point I realized they finally looked at who I was and made the best offer they could. I stressed in both interviews that I loved my job, which was the Budget Manager for the entire City at Auburn, but that I was looking for a larger organization with career advancement opportunities. At this point I accepted the position.

Appendix J3

Now that I am working there I am happy that I accepted the position, however, I believe that most government agencies are at a disadvantage against private industry so in order to attract qualified individuals they must sell their other benefits. If I had not done all of the research I did about the City Seattle and the benefits it had to offer on my own I would not have accepted the position based on the information I received from the Human Resource department, which is sad. The City has put in place a lot of new and exciting programs compared to other local governments and someone who is representing the City should be selling them.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE NINETEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT



Lake County, Illinois

JAMES M. STRONG III

Manager

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HENRY C. TONIGAN III
Chief Judge

ROBERT A. ZASTANY
Executive Director

To: Kip Rodda, Manager of Revenue & Internal Control, Municipal Court of Seattle

From: Jack Strong, Manager of Judicial Human Resources

Re: Your Phase III Project

Date: August 24, 2000

In response to your request for information the following is provided.

The Nineteenth Judicial Circuit is a court of original jurisdiction (unified court system) serving a County of approximately 750,000. The Nineteenth serves two counties: Lake and McHenry but is divided by county for employees. Each county in the state sets its own rates of compensation (pay and benefits) by state law. Lake County is the highest per-capita in the state and is contiguous to Chicago (Cook County); it is a mixture of rural and urban—farms, cities, and villages. The labor market is tightening rapidly and turnover rates were increasing dramatically. The Administrative Office of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit—Lake County has 232 positions for a wide range of employees: Adult and Juvenile Probation Officers (PO), Juvenile Counselors (JC)(48 bed juvenile detention center with a 12 bed treatment program), support and administrative staff, and management staff. Other staff include cooks, clerks, public service clerks, data entry clerks, secretaries, teachers, teacher assistants, informational services, H.R., training and planning manager, budget manager, administrators, etc. We also have 21 court reporters (state employees), 3 state employees (arbitration center), and 32 judges. Services are divided into Support Services with 15 employees, Judicial Operations with

27 employees, Adult Probation Services with 79 employees, Psychological Services with 8 employees, and Juvenile Probation and Detention Services with 103 employees.

In no particular order, the following have been implemented and/or improved upon over the past few years. Most programs were implemented or greatly improved in the past 2 ½ years since my hiring:

- The most recent is the elimination of our lowest grade of Officer (PO and JC) leaving the highest three ranks and thus higher pay at the starting level. Of the counties outside of Chicago—we will have the highest pay in the state.
- We have also just added a shift differential plan for all employees working the evening, night, and weekend shifts.
- We have increased pay to several groups of employees lately in accordance to market studies—cooks and cook supervisor, special education teachers at the Juvenile Detention Center's school program, and four individual job descriptions.
- We aggressively recruit interns to several job descriptions, which provide the interns with apprenticeships, and in many cases fulltime employment follows.
- We developed and improved our Career Path promotional system for the sworn officers (PO and JC) and have in place a County system for most all jobs. This allows structured promotions (and raises) based on time in grade, evaluation scores, and interviews based on written packages submitted by the employee.
- A formalized, tailored computer driven evaluation system which is tied both to a separate raise once a year, provides a 'yes' or 'no' to annual raises, and ties to the Career Path program.
- Electronic posting with colleges and universities, posting to the National Center for major positions, and on the County's Web Site.
- A top flight Court's Web site with job postings for fulltime, part-time, and interns.
- Developed relationships with the military (largest naval training base located in county along with all other services)—targeted toward leaving active duty personnel, reservists, retirees, and spouses.
- Updated tenure award program with meaningful awards.
- On-the-Spot awards program for immediate recognition of exceptional actions-- \$100, \$300, and \$500 with retirement and taxes pre-paid.
- Employee of the Month and Employee of the Year programs with gifts, awards, pictures, plaques in three buildings, and monetary awards based on the On-the-Spot program.
- Flex scheduling when it benefits the taxpayers and the courts—thus the employees.
- Job-sharing when it benefits the taxpayers and the courts—thus the employees.
- Aggressively pursuing equity with the County's positions and the local area—both private and public.
- Recruiting teams to colleges and university emphasizing peer contacts.
- Aggressively pursuing the best reputation in the state and U.S. as a Court and as an employer. Leader in innovations and automation within the state. Reputation provides for pride in employment and thus good employee relations.

- A history of aggressive actions to be employee friendly—to have good relations with all employees. (We are non-union.) H. R. Manager's main function is to be the employees' advocate and to ensure both the legality and fairness of our treatment and dealings with employees.

I hope that this list is helpful. We are still struggling along with the same problems that you and others have—but, we think the latest two actions (elimination of lowest grade and shift differential) will make a difference. Most of our new hire officers are just out of college and this is their first job. Most are hired into the detention center with rotating shifts and days off. This is a culture shock--working Friday nights and holidays! The shift differential will freeze shifts for a fixed period of time, but we will still have rotating days off (work four days, two days off, and start over working four more days). Call if I can be of more help.

**Two Year Plan
to
Improve Recruitment and Retention
at
The Municipal Court of Seattle**

- I. 2001 – 1st Quarter
 - A. Contract for compensation study with a due date of June 30, 2001. Prior to this scope of work will have to be negotiated and City Personnel, the City Budget Office, and the bargaining units of the employees should be involved.
 - B. Begin including individual training plans as part of each employee's annual evaluation.
 - C. Begin creating reference sheets for HR staff to have when making job offers. Make sure they either have the necessary information or a contact to give the prospective employees.
 - D. Begin monitoring the recruiting process. Create report for HR Manager showing number of days since HR was notified of vacancy and causes for delays.

- I. 2001 – 2nd Quarter
 - A. HR to begin follow-up with each supervisor, manager, and director to see how they are implementing skills learned in the training sessions. I envision these sessions as 30-minute discussions of problems encountered in day-to-day activities of the unit. To emphasize the importance placed on implementing the training I think the sessions should be scheduled every six months for a period of years.
 - B. Explore alternatives to keeping staff informed. Printed newsletter vs. email vs. on line newsletter on the court's inweb. Explore timing and where untraceable questions can be asked. Can these questions go to an employee group that would pass them through to management if appropriate?
 - C. Contact local colleges and universities regarding job fairs. Make the community colleges and others with paralegal degrees or certificates a priority. Also include military bases in the area.
 - D. Start including some existing employees in each new-hire orientation group. Discuss the goals of improved communication, keeping them informed about what other court divisions are doing, and their participation in the orientation process.
 - E. Investigate ways to sell the organization. If we are unable to add selling points to the City's Opportunity for Advancement sheets we should be able to add a line to refer individuals to the courts website where we can add items that make us unique. Our ads outside the City should tell the reader that the court is one of the leaders and that they can come to work and make a difference. These selling points should be listed and discussed with candidates during the interviews.

- F. Continue work with City Personnel on new reward and recognition program. Prepare for 3rd quarter implementation.
 - G. Complete reference sheets for HR staff to have when making job offers.
- II. 2001 – 3rd Quarter
- A. Present compensation study findings to City's Labor-Management Council for inclusion into new bargaining agreement for 2002. Keep the City Budget Office informed of proposed costs.
 - B. Begin internal planning for implementation of new compensation plan. Develop a communication tool to keep staff in the know about what is proposed. Make sure staff and the bargaining units are partners in the procedure.
 - C. Management of each court operating area should create a plan to re-recruit their existing personnel. Employees need to be told and shown that they are valued and that they are counted upon in the day-to-day operations of the court. This reinforcement needs to go beyond the fact that they are a body to fill a convenient slot. They need to know that they are valued for their knowledge and abilities.
 - D. There also needs to be a plan at the court level to re-recruit current employees. I would like to see the groups that went through orientation together brought together once a year with a moderator from HR to discuss goals and how they are doing. A couple of groups could be combined if they are not too big. One of the goals of these meetings would be to recognize how valuable the employees are and let them know that the court values and relies on their contributions.
 - E. Implement new reward and recognition plan for court employees.
 - F. Create survey to gauge employee satisfaction. Build on September 2000 survey with goal of seeing any improvement in responses. Make survey an annual event until results are positive enough to make it every other year. It should be continued at least every other year because of the importance to the court.
- III. 2001 – 4th Quarter
- A. Analyze survey results and revise this plan to include areas still needing additional attention.
 - B. Continue internal planning for implementation of compensation plan. Assess chances of success and keep staff informed.
 - C. HR to notify managers and directors of any employee without an evaluation and individual training plan during the year. Ascertain date for compliance.
 - D. Second round of 30-minute follow-up discussions with each supervisor, manager, and director to reinforce skills learned in the training sessions and inquire about personnel problems.
 - E. Work on skill assessments that will be required to advance under new court structure proposed in the new compensation plan.
 - F. Design training plan to allow staff to acquire skills and competencies necessary to move ahead in the new compensation plan.
- IV. 2002 – 1st Quarter

- A. Continue work on compensation plan. If it has been implemented monitor for any remaining inequalities. If it has not been approved yet continue planning. Assist in preparations for 2003 and 2004 budgets to include additional compensation and training funds
 - B. Begin implementation of new staff training plan in preparation for new compensation plan.
 - C. Review effectiveness of including some existing employees in the new employee orientation sessions. Is it having the desired effect? How does court staff leading the sessions feel about the program?
 - D. Refine skills assessment and training plan for new job titles under the new compensation plan. Introduce it to court staff in small sessions. Should be at least two sessions for each staff person. First session to present and second for follow-up questions after they have thought about it.
- V. 2002 – 2nd Quarter
- A. Continue revising and updating compensation and training amounts for 2003 and 2004. Assist in preparation of budget issue papers.
 - B. Ask for additional training funds to meet established needs.
 - C. Continue work on compensation plan. If it has been implemented monitor for any remaining inequalities. If it has not been approved yet continue planning.
 - D. Have a presence at college job fairs again and military bases.
 - E. Identify employees who are not following established training plan and ascertain reason(s). Reevaluate plans for any necessary changes.
 - F. Third round of 30-minute follow-up discussions with each supervisor, manager, and director to reinforce skills learned in the training sessions and inquire about personnel problems.
- VI. 2002 – 3rd Quarter
- A. Create third annual survey to gauge employee satisfaction. Build on 2000 and 2001 surveys with goal of seeing any improvement in responses. Make survey an annual event until results are positive enough to make it every other year. It should be continued at least every other year because of the importance to the court.
 - B. Review recognition and reward program. Is it achieving desired result? Are all areas of the court participating.
 - C. Continue work on compensation plan. If it has been implemented monitor for any remaining inequalities. If it has not been approved yet continue planning.
 - D. Begin planning refresher training on the Leadership Skills covered during the last half of 2000. Perhaps two half-day sessions to go over basics. If management group was split in half there could be one day of Interactive Management (half-day for each group) and one day of Personnel Resource Group (PRG) (half-day for each group).
- VII. 2002 – 4th Quarter

- A. Analyze survey results and revise this plan to include areas still needing additional attention. Pay particular attention to any individual area of the court needing specific attention.
- B. Continue internal planning for implementation of compensation plan or monitor if implemented. If implementing at the beginning of 2003 keep all court staff informed of details.
- C. HR to notify managers and directors of any employee without an evaluation and individual training plan during the year. Ascertain date for compliance.
- D. Fourth round of 30-minute follow-up discussions with each supervisor, manager, and director to reinforce skills learned in the training sessions and inquire about personnel problems.
- E. Review success of new training plan implemented to help staff move within new compensation plan. Is it achieving the desired results?

VIII. 2003 – 1st Quarter

- A. Final date for implementation of new job titles and compensation plan.
- B. Review individual training plans to see if any individuals are consistently behind or declining participation. Emphasize to these individuals that new compensation plan will reward those who increase skills.
- C. Re-evaluate the programs and changes to programs implemented over the past two years. Eliminate redundancies and concentrate efforts on programs that are contributing to the success of the court. Prepare a comprehensive report for the court administrator and the executive committee on the results of the efforts to improve recruitment and retention. Include things such as average number of vacancies, length of time to fill openings, change (hopefully improvement) in employee satisfaction, and anything else that will assist in the evaluation of the program.