



Engaging EL Staff

**VCAT Meeting
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Joannie Chin
Acting Deputy Director
Engineering Laboratory



Components of Engagement

(as defined by OPM FEVS)

Leaders Lead:

- In my organization, senior leaders generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce
- My organization's senior leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.
- Managers communicate the goals and priorities of the organization.
- Overall, how good a job do you feel is being done by the manager directly above your immediate supervisor?
- I have a high level of respect for my organization's senior leaders.



Components of Engagement

(as defined by OPM FEVS)

Supervisor:

- Supervisors in my work unit support employee development.
- My supervisor listens to what I have to say.
- My supervisor treats me with respect.
- I have trust and confidence in my supervisor.
- Overall, how good a job do you feel is being done by your immediate supervisor?



Components of Engagement

(as defined by OPM FEVS)

Intrinsic Work Experience:

- I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.
- My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.
- I know what is expected of me on the job.
- My talents are used well in the workplace.
- I know how my work relates to the agency's goals and priorities.



We Strive To...

- Listen and Communicate
- Empower Staff
- Show Gratitude
- Streamline Administrative Requirements



Listen and Communicate

Opportunities for informal discussions:

- Program Manager Lunches with Associate Director
- Yearly forums hosted by OU Director and Deputy Director for staff from ZT, ZS and ZA career paths
- Group Leader Lunches with OU Director
- New Staff Focus Groups with Deputy Director



Listen and Communicate

- Recently rolled out staff forums on EL internal website, categorized by topic.
- Posting of high level summary from EL Leadership meetings
- Announcement of Level V promotions
- Invite ADMR staff on tours of our facilities to engage them in our projects, and to thank them for their contribution in standing up new facilities.



Listen and Communicate

- Staff Personal Milestones presented in annual All-Hands presentation



Listen and Communicate

- Division Deep Dives (3 of 6 in EL)
 - Listening sessions held with 100% of staff; associates invited but not required
 - Asked open ended questions: what's working, what's not working, what would you change?
 - Key findings and recommendations discussed with EL Director and Division Chief
 - Findings and recommendations presented to staff at Division meetings.
 - Additional follow-ups to be scheduled



Listen and Communicate

- Division Deep Dives – examples of findings:

- Confusion regarding desired balance between fundamental research and tech transfer
- Desire for refreshed EL Mission/Vision/Purpose
- Concern about programmatic directions and roles of program personnel.
- Concern about format of program reviews
- Frustration about administrative burden



Empower Staff

- Policy Roll-backs
 - Shifted authority and responsibility back to Divisions in a number of areas, leading to increased autonomy where appropriate
 - EL aligned with NIST policies, no additional requirements above and beyond unless there is a compelling or unique need



Empower Staff

- Exploratory Research Projects
- Employee Development:
 - NIST Leadership Programs
 - Detail assignments (PCO, OSTP, etc)
 - Tuition reimbursement for relevant degree programs



Show Gratitude

- EL Internal Awards Program:
 - Communicator/Communication
 - Mentoring
 - Distinguished Associate
 - Safety
 - Morale Builder
 - Staff Support
 - Special Act



Show Gratitude

“Thanks a Million”



Many thanks to each and every one of you for the successful completion of the 100% chemical and radioactive material inventory in EL! As of this past Friday, all of the offices and divisions have certified that all of their spaces have been inspected, inventories updated, and unwanted chemicals and materials have been disposed of. We greatly appreciated the positive attitudes that you all exhibited through this activity, and how you went the extra mile in accomplishing this task. We know how busy everyone is, and without your efforts, it would have been impossible for us to complete this assignment in such a timely fashion.

It is truly our privilege to work with such dedicated colleagues as yourselves.



Streamline Administrative Processes

“I came to NIST to work on loads of administrative tasks!”



...said no researcher ever



Streamline Administrative Processes

- Tiger Team convened to analyze EL administrative processes
- Development of electronic workflows and automation wherever possible:
 - Initiation of travel
 - Grants management
 - Program /project management
 - Activity hazard reviews
- Going to bat for staff to effect changes in administrative policies/procedures



Division Efforts and Activities

- Brown Bag Lunches – 2/3 social, 1/3 short presentation on research project
- Weekly group lunches
- Annual international potluck lunch
- Annual EOFY picnic
- Staff morale hours
- Chili cook-off
- Holiday breakfasts, hosted at group leader's home



Challenges and Future Plans

- More *effective* communication – finding balance between too much/too little.
- Changes to onboarding practices, based on recommendations from NIST special study group.
- More public recognition and celebration of professional accomplishments

