2014 Smithsonian Employee Perspective Survey Highlights

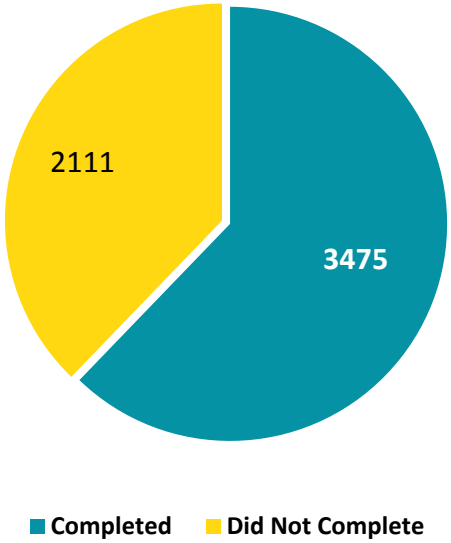
Smithsonian Institution

Background

- The Smithsonian has been conducting annual Smithsonian Employee Perspective Surveys (SEPS) since 2007
- Survey was administered by Office of Planning & Analysis
- Online questionnaire was distributed via email
- Survey period was June 5 through July 18, 2014

- All Smithsonian employees (full and part time) across four workforces were invited to respond:
  - Federal
  - Trust
  - Smithsonian Enterprises
  - Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) employees employed under local Panamanian law

Employee Participation



Of the 5,586 employees invited to respond, **62%** completed the survey. This response rate was lower than the 64% in 2013, but substantially higher than previous years.

Benchmark:
The 2013 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey was administered to full-time and part-time permanent executive branch employees and completed by more than 376,000 federal workers, for a response rate of **48** percent.

Survey Items

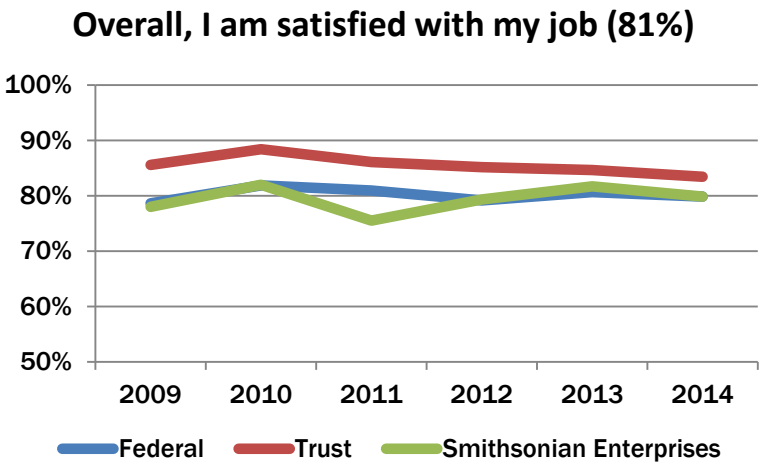
- The survey consisted of 72 items, including many questions from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS) administered by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for executive agencies.
- Respondents were provided a five-point scale to rate the items:
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Uncertain whether to agree or disagree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
- Favorable Score = combined responses of "Strongly Agree" and "Agree"
- Questions were organized into 14 thematic clusters (See Appendix for questions in each cluster)
- Cluster scores were calculated by averaging the favorable scores for all questions in the cluster

Best Places to Work

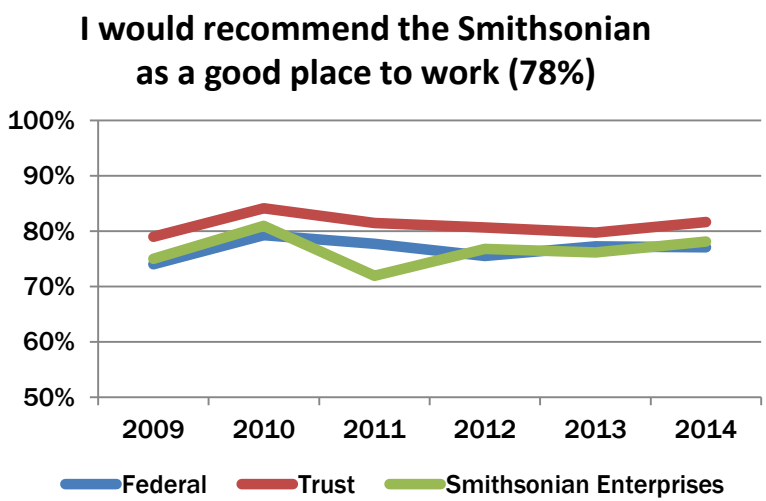
- The Partnership for Public Service uses data from the EVS to rank agencies and their subcomponents according to a Best Places to Work index score. Agencies and subcomponents are measured on overall employee satisfaction and scored on 10 workplace categories, such as effective leadership, employee skills–mission match, pay, teamwork and work–life balance.
- Smithsonian includes specific questions from the EVS that enables SI to be ranked for the Best Places to Work designation.
- In 2013, Smithsonian was ranked #2 among mid-size agencies.
- 2014 rankings have not been announced as of the date of this report.

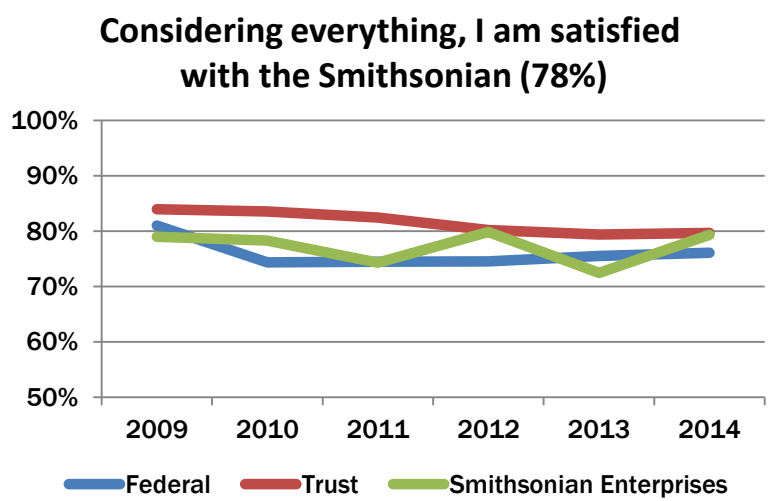
PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

Employee Satisfaction



Four out of five respondents gave favorable scores for satisfaction with their job and the Smithsonian.





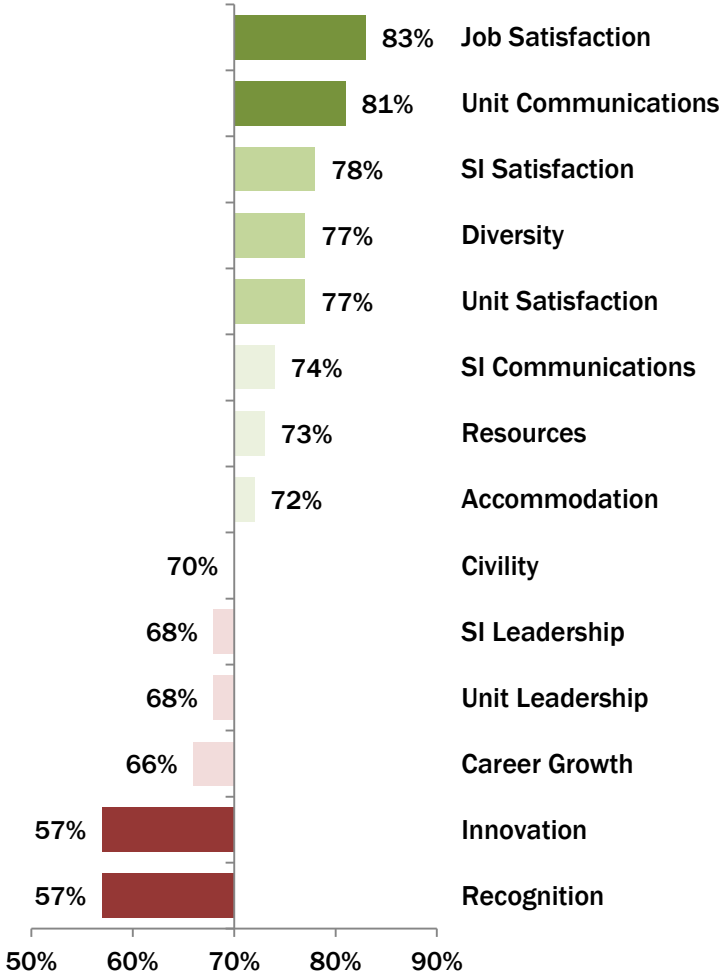
SEPS Results by Cluster

Most favorable clusters:

- Job satisfaction
- Unit communications
- Satisfaction with the Smithsonian
- Workforce diversity
- Unit Satisfaction

Least favorable clusters:

- Recognition and rewards
- Innovation



Note: Across all questions, the Smithsonian average was 70% favorable

Most Favorable Clusters

83% Job Satisfaction

Overall, I am satisfied with my job.	81%
I like the kind of work I do.	90%
My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.	82%
My job makes good use of my knowledge and abilities.	78%

81% Unit Communications

The people in my immediate work unit cooperate to get the job done.	86%
Employees in my immediate work unit share job knowledge with each other.	84%
In my most recent performance appraisal, I understood what I had to do to be rated at different performance levels.	84%
My Unit's Director communicates my Unit's goals and priorities.	70%

78% Satisfaction with SI

Considering everything, I am satisfied with the Smithsonian.	78%
I would recommend the Smithsonian as a good place to work.	78%

77% Workforce Diversity

Smithsonian policies and programs promote diversity in the workplace.	73%
Differences among individuals are respected and valued by employees within my Unit.	81%
My supervisor is committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society.	78%
Within the past twelve months, I have heard language, or witnessed behavior, in my workplace that I considered insensitive to my identity. *[Note: Favorable = Disagree + Strongly disagree]*	77% Disagree

77% Unit Satisfaction

Considering everything, I am satisfied with my Unit.	69%
I would recommend my Unit as a good place to work.	69%
My Unit successfully accomplishes its mission.	80%
The overall quality of work done by my immediate work unit is very good.	89%

Least Favorable Clusters

57% Recognition

Individual pay raises (excluding cost of living adjustments (COLA)) depend on how well individual employees perform their jobs.	41%
Grade promotions in my Unit are based on merit.	39%
Recognition and awards (monetary or non-monetary) in my Unit depend on how well employees perform their jobs.	54%
In my Unit, positive and negative individual performances are recognized in a meaningful way.	45%
My supervisor takes steps to address a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.	59%
My supervisor recognizes and acknowledges my positive work contributions.	81%
My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my performance.	77%

57% Innovation

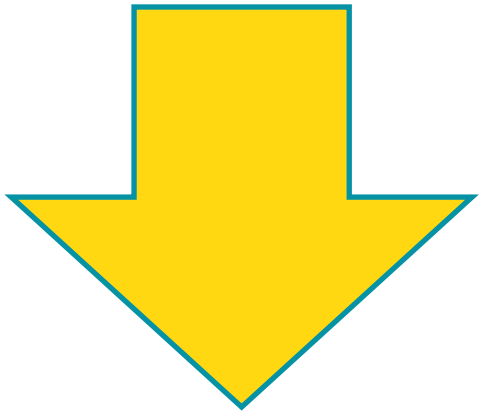
Smithsonian leaders and managers support implementation of new ideas and approaches.	55%
In my Unit, people value new ideas.	64%
My Unit has a process for conducting and evaluating new ideas.	52%

Note:
Employees and managers were least aligned on items regarding Recognition and Innovation. Managers gave more favorable responses than employees.

Next Steps

Unit Reports

Unit-level results are being provided to museum/unit directors for their analysis and consideration.



Action Planning

Smithsonian and unit leadership will be identifying and implementing possible solutions to address areas of opportunity.

Appendix: Survey Questions by Cluster

SI SATISFACTION (attitude towards SI)
Considering everything, I am satisfied with the Smithsonian.
I would recommend the Smithsonian as a good place to work.

SI COMMUNICATIONS (communications from SI leaders and other units and employees, including collaborations)
I am satisfied that I have received appropriate information, or can access appropriate information, about new policies and procedures of the Smithsonian.
Smithsonian leaders and managers promote communication and collaboration across units in the Smithsonian.
I know how my work relates to the Smithsonian's goals and priorities.

SI LEADERSHIP ((SI leaders and managers setting tone and values)
I am satisfied with the policies and practices enacted by the Smithsonian's senior leaders.
I feel that I can bring up issues of incivility and disrespect to my supervisor or superiors with the expectation that those issues will be addressed.
The Smithsonian's Secretary generates high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.
I have a high level of respect for the Smithsonian's Secretary (G. Wayne Clough)
The Assistant Secretary for Education and Access generates high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.
The Under Secretary for History, Art, and Culture generates high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.
The Under Secretary for Science generates high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.
The Deputy Under Secretary for Collections and Interdisciplinary Support generates high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.
The Under Secretary for Finance and Administration generates high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.
The President of Smithsonian Enterprises generates high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.
The Director of OFEO generates high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.
The Director of Communications generates high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.

Appendix: Survey Questions by Cluster (cont.)

UNIT SATISFACTION (attitude towards Unit)
Considering everything, I am satisfied with my Unit.
I would recommend my Unit as a good place to work.
My Unit successfully accomplishes its mission.
The overall quality of work done by my immediate work unit is very good.

UNIT COMMUNICATIONS (communications from Unit leaders and other units and employees, including collaborations)
The people in my immediate work unit cooperate to get the job done.
Employees in my immediate work unit share job knowledge with each other.
In my most recent performance appraisal, I understood what I had to do to be rated at different performance levels.
My Unit's Director communicates my Unit's goals and priorities.

UNIT LEADERSHIP (Unit leaders and managers setting tone and values)
Arbitrary action and personal favoritism are not tolerated.
I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule or regulation without fear of reprisal.
My Unit's Director reviews and evaluates my Unit's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.
Managers in my Unit support collaboration across work units to accomplish work objectives.
I am fully satisfied with my opportunity to participate in preparing my annual performance plan.
My Unit's Director generates high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.
My Unit's Director maintains high standards of honesty and integrity.
I have a high level of respect for my Unit's Director.
I have trust and confidence in my supervisor.
Overall, my immediate supervisor is an effective supervisor.

Appendix: Survey Questions by Cluster (cont.)

JOB SATISFACTION (output and use of skills)
Overall, I am satisfied with my job.
I like the kind of work I do.
My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.
My job makes good use of my knowledge and abilities.

CAREER GROWTH (availability and support for career growth and development opportunities)
In my Unit, time is made available for education and training activities.
My supervisor regularly evaluates my training needs for my present job.
My supervisor provides employees with opportunities to demonstrate their leadership skills.
I have adequate access to career planning and career growth tools and opportunities.
I am satisfied with my choices, and the quality, of Smithsonian provided training to improve my performance in my present job.
My supervisor supports career development.

RECOGNITION (equitable (fair) recognition and reward for performance)
Individual pay raises (excluding cost of living adjustments (COLA)) depend on how well individual employees perform their jobs.
Grade promotions in my Unit are based on merit.
Recognition and awards (monetary or non-monetary) in my Unit depend on how well employees perform their jobs.
In my Unit, positive and negative individual performances are recognized in a meaningful way.
My supervisor takes steps to address a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.
My supervisor recognizes and acknowledges my positive work contributions.
My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my performance.

RESOURCES (resources for performance)
I have sufficient resources to get my job done.
My immediate work unit has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.

Appendix: Survey Questions by Cluster (cont.)

INNOVATION (openness and acceptance of new ideas)

Smithsonian leaders and managers support implementation of new ideas and approaches.
In my Unit, people value new ideas.
My Unit has a process for conducting and evaluating new ideas.

ACCOMMODATION (managers and supervisors listening to and accommodating employee workplace needs and requests)

I am satisfied with work-life programs.
In my Unit, employees are protected from health and safety hazards on the job.
My unit's management is aware of the areas that can make my job difficult to accomplish.
My supervisor supports my need to balance work and other life issues.
My supervisor is flexible in how I get my job done.
My level of work-related stress has a negative impact on my work output. [Note: Favorable = Disagree + Strongly disagree]
My supervisor provides constructive suggestions to improve my job performance.
My workload is reasonable.

DIVERSITY (workforce diversity)

Smithsonian policies and programs promote diversity in the workplace.
Differences among individuals are respected and valued by employees within my Unit.
My supervisor is committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society.
Within the past twelve months, I have heard language, or witnessed behavior, in my workplace that I considered insensitive to my identity. [Note: Favorable = Disagree + Strongly disagree]

CIVILITY (civility within the workforce)

Generally, employees, supervisors, and managers in my Unit are civil, respectful, and courteous in dealing with each other.
In our work culture, people feel free to raise dissenting opinions without it having a negative impact on their career.
I feel that I can bring up issues of incivility and disrespect to my supervisor or superiors with the expectation that those issues will be addressed.
My work environment is civil and respectful.