



The County of San Luis Obispo

2017 Employee Engagement Survey



Organization Report

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Assessment Overview

In September 2017, the County of San Luis Obispo conducted an employee engagement survey to gain insights on how to best support employees in achieving the goals of their departments and ensure a positive and engaged workplace. The Centre for Organization Effectiveness met with an internal survey committee prior to the launch of the survey to refine and adjust survey questions and to improve the survey process based on feedback and experience with the 2014 survey.

All employees, including temporary employees, interns, and substitutes, were invited to respond to the survey over a three week period of time. Of the 2,970 employees, 2025 responses were received, thus representing 68% of The County's workforce.

The response rates for each department are as follows:

Department/Unit	Number in Department/ Unit	Number of Responses	Response Rate
Administrative Office/Emergency Services	21	19	90%
Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures	69	36	52%
Airports	18	17	94%
Assessor's Office	78	74	95%
Auditor-Controller – Treasurer-Tax Collector – Public Administrator	71	46	65%
Central Services	28	24	86%
Child Support Services	31	28	90%
Clerk-Recorder	39	23	59%
County Counsel	21	16	76%
District Attorney	104	57	55%
Health Agency	626	347	55%
Human Resources	31	29	94%
Information Technology	84	45	54%
Libraries	80	67	84%
Parks and Recreation	172	31	18%
Planning and Building	94	66	70%
Probation	163	65	40%
Public Works	297	183	62%
Sheriff- Coroner	407	195	48%
Social Services	509	344	68%
The University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) in San Luis Obispo County	6	7*	117%
Veterans Services	8	8	100%
Other	--	51	--
Unidentified	--	247	--
Total	2970	2025	68%

*Employee responses included University of California as well as County employees.

Reading the Report

The Categories

The survey consisted of 10 categories:

- My Job
- Overall Satisfaction
- Training, Resources & Support
- My Supervisor
- My Dept.'s Leadership Team
- Collaboration Between Teams/Depts.
- The County
- Work Environment
- Benefits
- My Team

Ratings

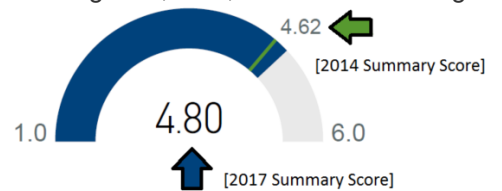
The rating scale for each question was as follows:

6	5	4	3	2	1	
Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A

Category Averages

There are between two and eleven questions within each category. Data for each question is reported in MEAN scores – which is the average of all ratings received for the question. Each of the above 10 categories, then, received an average (MEAN) rating based on the average ratings for each of the questions within.

The **summary chart** on page 7 showcases the average ratings for each category and provides a high level overview of where the higher and lower ratings occur. Additionally, there is a **summary dial** (see graphic on right) at the beginning of each category page which displays the category mean score for both 2017 (blue bar) as well as for 2014 (green line).



Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is intended to provide overall highlights that may be helpful in terms of where to focus for action planning and gaining additional insights.

Open-ended Questions

For each category that contained open-ended questions, responses were summarized into key themes. In order to condense comments into meaningful themes, all comments were categorized by topic and then topics which occurred most frequently were summarized to capture meaningful insights while maintaining anonymity. It is important to keep in mind that only a percentage of all respondents leave a comment and there is a higher likelihood for those with constructive feedback to leave the most commentary. In turn, a particular survey item may receive high rating scores, however, feedback commentary regarding the same topic may reflect sentiments from those who rated the item negatively.

Comparative Data

Data from the 2014 County of San Luis Obispo Employee Engagement Survey is represented alongside 2017 data so that the County can easily compare results over time. Additionally, normative data from The Centre for Organization Effectiveness' normative database is included as an extra source of comparison. The normative data (norm group) represents the average ratings from similar organizations and allows the County to easily compare their ratings to other neighboring government agencies. Please be aware that because The Centre for Organization Effectiveness customizes Employee Surveys for each client, normative data is not provided for every question. Additionally, categories themselves and the questions utilized within each category vary across organizations and thus normative data for category averages are not provided.

Suggestions

In reading survey results, it is a human tendency to look for areas to improve and gain insight on what is not going well. It is strongly advised to first look to the areas of strength – where there are the highest ratings and most positive feedback. It is critical to build on strengths and celebrate accomplishments. The areas of opportunity should be read with an eye for inclusivity with the key question being “how can we involve everyone in the solution.”

Executive Summary

The 2017 employee engagement survey administered to all employees at the County of San Luis Obispo presents a very positive picture. Overall job satisfaction is high and, recognizing a few exceptions, the individual job element categories received good endorsements. At the same time, there has been a notable decline in a few areas when measured against the 2014 survey results. These will be discussed in detail below.

Overall survey participation represents 68% of all County employees. However, it is important to note that participation varied considerably across the departments.

The following sections highlight the survey categories which received the three highest mean (average) responses and three lowest, respectively. The categories which received the highest and lowest ratings in the 2014 survey are noted as well for comparison. In addition to recognizing the highest scoring areas, it is also important to acknowledge the most improved overall category was Training, Resources, and Support.

Areas of Strength

Overall Satisfaction

2017: Overall Satisfaction (2014: Overall Satisfaction)

Survey respondents remain satisfied overall with their roles in the County regardless of any concerns revealed in the more specific survey questions. This is commendable as it suggests that no element of dissatisfaction is sufficient to undermine a generally very positive view of employment with the County. It is worth noting, however, that this rating is lower in the 2017 survey than it was in 2014. This is reflected in the job satisfaction indicators where we see higher percentages of employees would not remain in their current employment if offered a comparable alternative. At the same time, fewer employees would recommend working for the County to a friend than would have in 2014. Efforts to address specific workplace concerns should be made a priority to prevent this trend continuing.

My Supervisor

2017: My Supervisor (2014: Your Work Environment)

Employees report very positive relationships with their immediate supervisors, and did so as well in the 2014 survey. They are particularly inclined to respond favorably when asked about respectful treatment, communication of job expectations and support for career development. Open-ended comments indicate that some supervisors could benefit from additional management training which, when viewed alongside the general approval of their supervisors, suggests these respondents view themselves as part of a team where opportunities for supervisor improvement will be of benefit to everyone.

Work Environment

2017: Work Environment (2014: The County)

Safety and a healthy workspace are considerably important to an employee's overall job satisfaction, and County employees report positively on these factors. Fire and safety protocols appear to be especially well communicated to all. Some respondents do express a desire for additional workspaces, where possible, such as conference rooms or other places that allow undisturbed concentration. This may represent an opportunity to increase employee engagement by sponsoring discussions of how best to optimize existing space.

Most Improved

Notable Improvement

Training, Resources and Support

The questions in the category of Training, Resources and Support improved more than any other category between 2014 and 2017. Clearly the focus on expanding the Learning and Development Center and high-quality training programs has had a positive impact on the entire organization. The Open-ended responses also support this finding suggesting that respondents generally have positive experiences and feelings about the training and development options provided. The comments provided more insight into current training needs, which include more trainings focused on individuals in non-supervisory roles (which are currently being offered beginning this fall!) and more training targeted to role-specific technical skills.

Executive Summary

Areas of Opportunity

Benefits

2017: Benefits (2014: My Department's Leadership Team)

It is important to note that benefits frequently receive the lowest ratings in employee satisfaction surveys and considerably more dissatisfaction in 2017 than in 2014. It should be acknowledged that the County of San Luis Obispo is currently undergoing extensive changes to its benefits system, many of which have not been fully rolled out to employees at this time. It is important to consider that large scale systemic changes such as this often require an extensive adjustment period and can be characterized by confusion and frustration during the change cycle. In order to boost employees' view of their overall compensation it is recommended that the County actively solicit employee input throughout the change process while honestly disclosing hard limitations, and continue to engage all employees throughout the process to ensure understanding of their benefits as well as the rationale behind the process and options. Whenever possible the County should work with employees to consider creative solutions to benefits, such as non-monetary solutions. For example, many employees expressed the desire for more flexible schedules and/or the chance to occasionally work remotely.

Leadership Team

2017: My Department's Leadership Team (2014: Training, Resources and Support)

Survey respondents report that while their departments are focused on delivering quality service, departmental leadership is not especially strong. They further indicate feeling that their opinions are not considered with respect to proposed changes. Department-level leadership in general is not viewed as favorably, a trend which has unfortunately continued since the survey in 2014. The best explanation seems to be a gap, real or perceived, between decisions made at the department-level and the work experience of individual employees. This in turn likely plays a primary role in reports of low morale. Questions regarding departmental morale receive some of the lowest ratings of all questions put to the respondents.

My Team

2017: My Team (2014: Collaboration between Teams/Departments)

Negative views of morale are also exhibited when employees are asked about their teams. This result is relatively unchanged from that revealed in the 2014 survey, suggesting that existing efforts to boost team morale may need to be reevaluated. Open-ended comments indicate concerns regarding difficult workload expectations, as well as a perception that staffing levels are inadequate to complete the work. As is the case with benefits, these are challenging issues to resolve. Transparency and a commitment to honestly discussing department challenges with line employees may be helpful in mitigating some of these concerns.

Top and Bottom Rated Questions

Top Rated

Employees respond very favorably when asked about their own understanding of their jobs and how they contribute to the missions of their respective departments. This is likely the case because they are both treated respectfully by their supervisors and at the same time held accountable to what's expected of them. Supervisory-level leadership is a strong theme throughout and likely contributes significantly to overall employee job satisfaction. Moreover, this theme appeared just as robustly in 2014, and the County should recognize its successful efforts to create and maintain successful employee-supervisor relations.

Bottom Rated

Department-level leadership in general is not viewed as favorably, a trend which has unfortunately continued since the survey in 2014. The best explanation seems to be a gap, real or perceived, between decisions made at the department-level and the work experience of individual employees. This in turn likely plays a primary role in reports of low morale. Questions regarding departmental morale receive some of the lowest ratings of all questions put to the respondents.

Executive Summary

Recommendations

Visibility into Department Policy Making

Several areas of dissatisfaction are difficult if not impossible to address in the near-term, e.g., benefits and staffing levels. However, employee responses suggest that at least some of their concern is due to a lack of understanding of the reasons behind some department-wide decisions. As a result, these decisions can appear to the employees to be arbitrary, or otherwise insufficiently informed by the daily realities of their workload. Ultimately, this perception manifests in reports of low department morale.

Difficult decisions are unavoidable, and some of these will impact individual employees in ways that diminish their job satisfaction. But understanding the logic or even the necessity behind such decisions can go a long way in mitigating bad feelings. This can be reinforced by allowing and encouraging employee suggestions, where possible. Monetary compensation, for example, is not typically or easily improved. Surveying employees for alternative benefits that would improve their work experience may elicit surprisingly realizable opportunities. And where suggestions are unworkable or otherwise incompatible with department and County goals, employees should be presented with clear and straightforward explanations to that effect.

Paths of Advancement

Survey respondents consistently voice their unhappiness with their career opportunities in open-ended comments. Questionnaire responses similarly indicate that they “somewhat agree”, but just barely, that there is a possibility for growth in their jobs. Some employees also report that career advancement decisions are not always made fairly. The perception alone is enough to harm morale. Existing policies regarding advancement should be made explicit if they are not already, and should be readily available to all employees. More emphasis on explaining why someone may not have received a promotional or new job opportunity so they can continue to grow and prepare for the next opportunity.

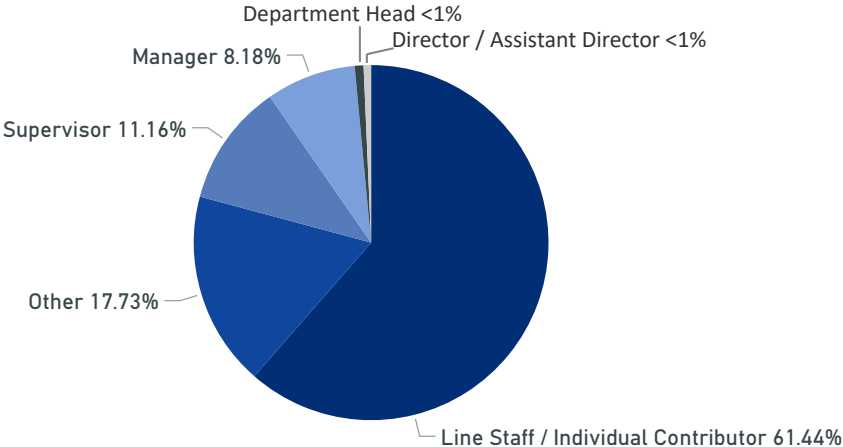
Limits on the possibility of advancement may exist for any given employee, but there may be reason to review existing procedures or communication. Some employees report overly burdensome degree and/or certification requirements to move into new roles. Take steps to ensure that existing requirements are relevant and appropriate, and be sure that the justification for these requirements is communicated to all employees.

Team Development

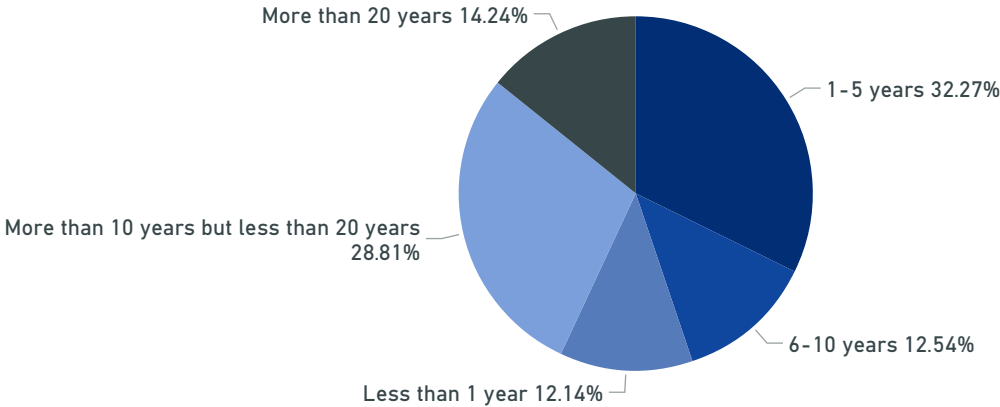
Negative employee perception of their own teams is an issue of concern. Unfortunately, the reasons for this result are likely as varied as the work and composition of the teams themselves. Attempts to improve morale will therefore need to take different shapes, but in all cases should be driven by the respective team supervisors. Employees report exceptional respect for their supervisors and appear to have great one-on-one relationships. If team cohesion is lacking, it is unlikely due to a deficit in supervisor engagement. Instead, and as suggested in open-ended comments, some supervisors may lack the training necessary to bring their team together effectively. Opportunities to improve in this arena should be explored quickly in order to better leverage the already very positive leadership attributes exhibited at the supervisor level.

Survey Demographics

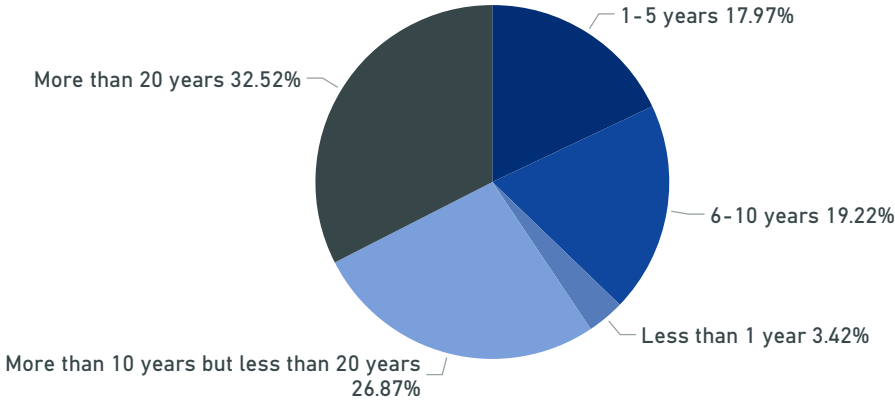
Position



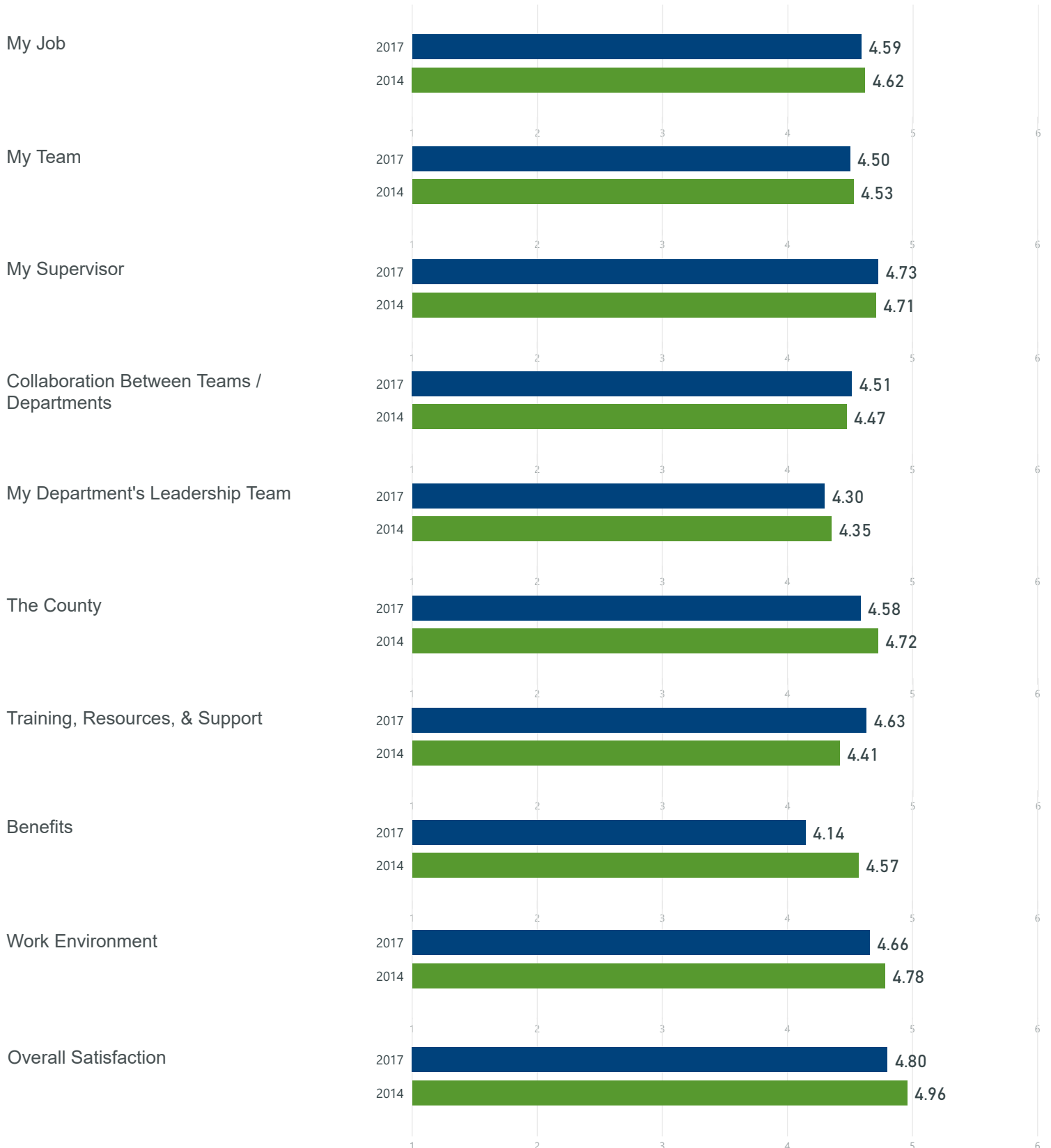
Tenure

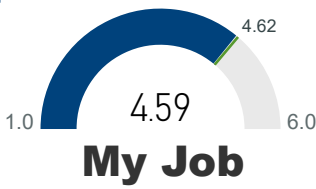


Likelihood to Retire

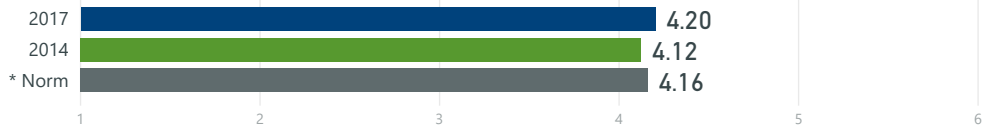


Overall Category Averages

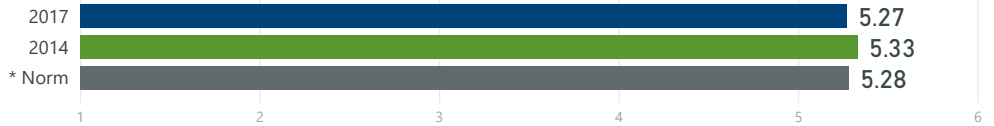




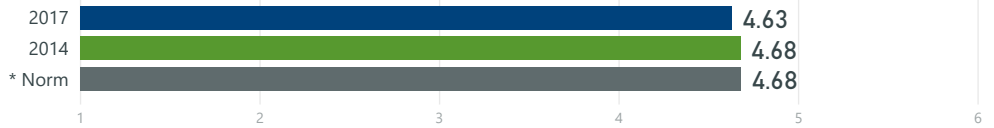
I feel there are opportunities for growth in my job.



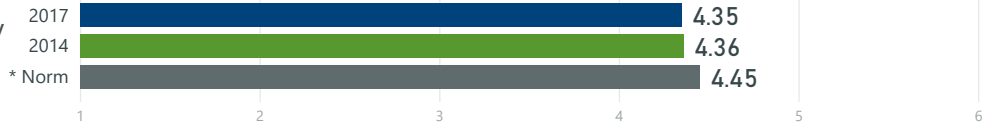
I understand how my job contributes to the department's goals in serving the community members of the County of San Luis Obispo.



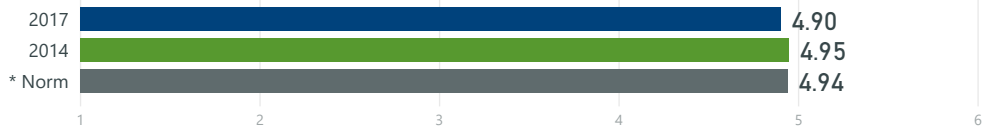
My job allows me to do what I do best (leverage my strengths).



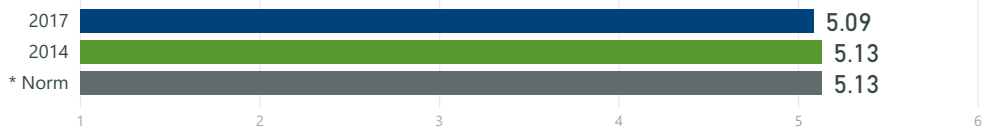
My skills and abilities are fully utilized in my current job.



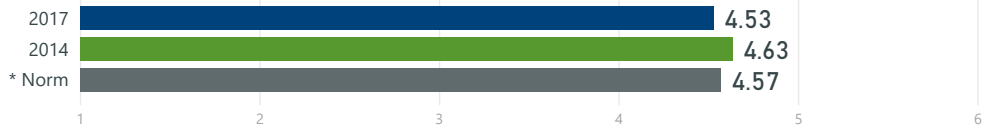
I have a clear understanding of what is expected of me (in my job).



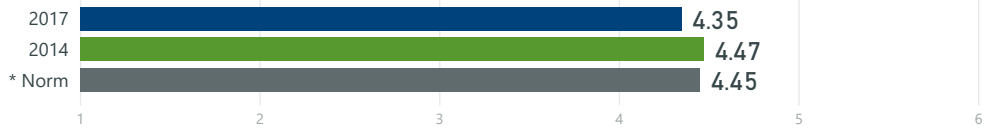
I am held accountable to what is expected of me.



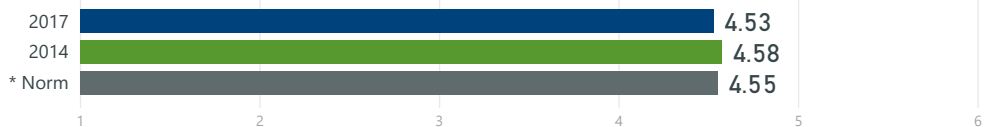
What is expected of me is realistic.



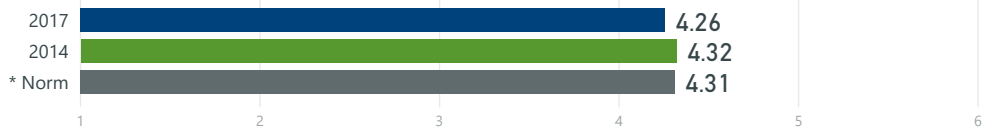
This organization provides me with adequate resources to do my job well.



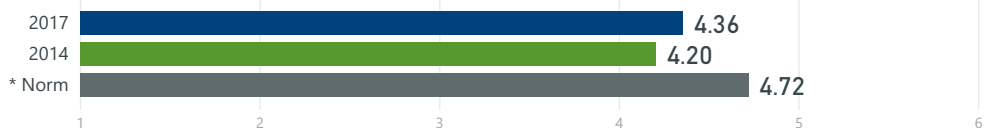
I receive the information I need to be successful in my job.



I can influence decisions that directly affect my work.



I am satisfied with the professional development opportunities the County of San Luis Obispo provides me.



My Job

Open-ended Comment Themes

What additional resources would help you be more effective in your job?

(Responses = 902, 45% of respondents left a comment)

- 🔄 **Staffing.** Employees consistently report staffing as being a major resource that is not adequately available. Staffing issues cause unbalanced workloads and unreasonable expectations. Employees are discouraged and suggest that staffing issues have been present for a long time and are consistently not addressed or take an excessive amount of time to address.
- 🔄 **Resources.** Increased awareness of the physical resources that are available to them. Appropriate sharing of resources between teams and departments rather than an ownership mentality. Updated technology and/or the ability for each employee to access all of the technology that the county has. Electronic resources such as updated computers, work cell phones, and car phone chargers are requested. Employees suggest that policy strictly prevents them from using their cell phone in the field, but they don't have work phones, which puts them in an uncomfortable situation of having to either break policy or not stay in contact with clients for the entire day. Physical resources such as private office rooms, work stations (for those who work remotely), and more vehicles are requested. Field workers requested the ability to check in and out of work remotely, as to limit extra driving hours and wear and tear on vehicles.
- 🔄 **Work Environment.** Physical environment: more conference rooms with computers/monitors/projectors; enough working space for the tasks required of each positions; ergonomic assessments; appropriate temperature control; more storage space and natural light. Employees would like to be able to have input in the organization of their space and storage. Atmosphere: a more relaxed and calm atmosphere; access to quiet and private space to concentrate, free from interruptions; a positive environment that encourages and supports them in the work they do. Work Schedule: a more flexible schedule that allows employees to work from home a few days a week (when appropriate).

Any additional thoughts on how you can be supported in your career at the County of San Luis Obispo.

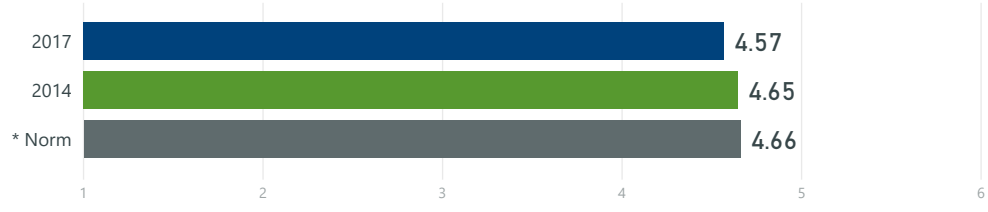
(Responses = 535, 26% of respondents left a comment)

- 🔄 **Training.** Better advertisement of available training + advance notice; more functional skills training that is specific to the position; interview skills training; comprehensive onboarding training for new employees; a workload balance which supports the ability to take time off for training (allocation of training time for all employees); overall support and encouragement from management for employees to attend training; financial assistance for pursuit of higher education goals (tuition assistance); better knowledge management practices that effectively manage retirements/transfers and the subsequent need for training/mentoring/shadowing (proactive training versus reactive training); an effective system for managing changing job roles and technology changes, and implementing training as needed.
- 🔄 **Career Development/Advancement.**
 - Employees consistently express frustration with the inability to advance in their careers due to lack of promotional opportunities, stringent educational/degree title requirements that limit movement, lack of lateral transfer options with comparable compensation, inability to bring in new staff to fill current support roles, and the job classification system, which is considered inflexible and limiting. Additionally, a number of employees suggest that job descriptions are inaccurate, and they are often working in one role, but are not able to promote in that role because it is not in alignment with their job title.
 - Employees request the ability to explore potential career/position changes and requested increased mentoring/shadowing opportunities. Additionally, employees request career mapping guidance and career counseling opportunities.
 - Employees suggest that management does not always assign development/advancement opportunities equitably, and that sometimes personal relationships within the agency lead to impartial treatment. Additionally, many employees feel that interview skills are given an unfair weight in the promotional process.
- 🔄 **Effective Staffing System.** Employees suggest that staffing issues negatively impact career advancement/promotional opportunities, the ability to attend/utilize training and development opportunities, overall well-being, and organizational effectiveness. Employees suggest that part of the problem is the extensive amount of time that is required to hire staff, suggesting that many applicants cannot wait that long for employment, and it requires the existing staff to carry the unit's entire workload until replacements can be secured.

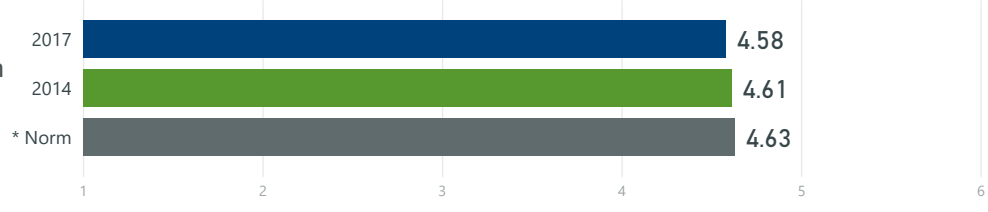
*The themes and summaries below were determined based on the comments that were made the most frequently. Please note, most comments are provided by those who had constructive feedback. The theme descriptions summarize the verbatim comments in an effort to protect anonymity. Summaries are not recommendations, rather reflections of the sentiments of those who responded.



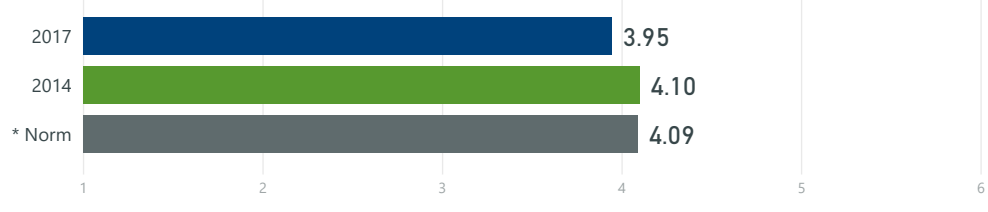
Roles and responsibilities within my team are clearly defined.



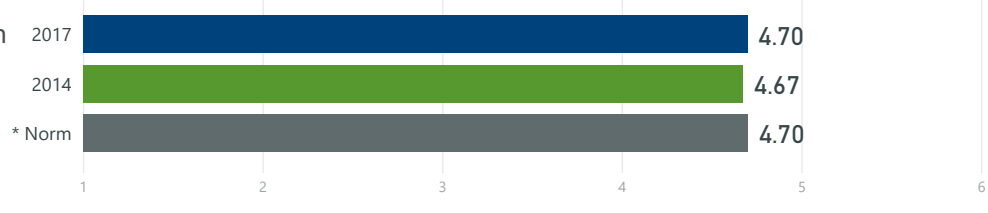
Knowledge and information are regularly shared among my team to help accomplish our tasks and goals.



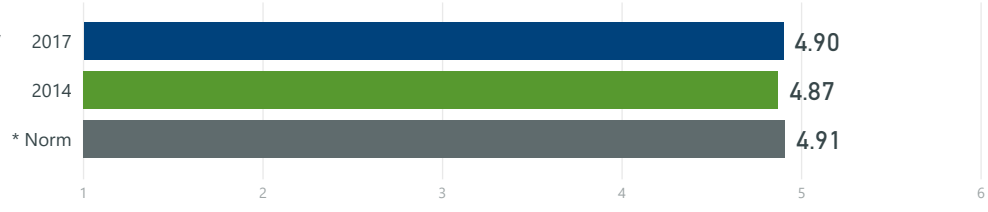
Morale is high on my team.



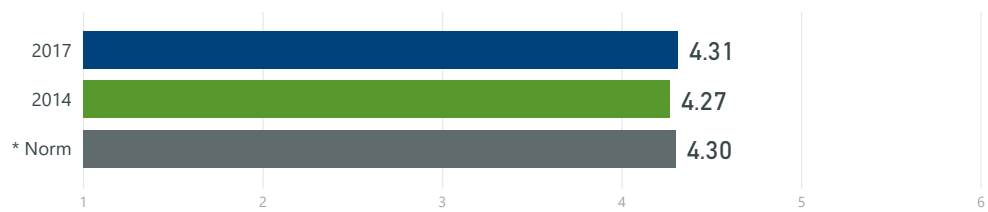
On my team, we all respect and value each other.



On my team, I can rely on support from my colleagues when I need it.



On my team, we are all held equally accountable for completing our tasks and goals.



My Team


Open-ended Comment Themes


Any additional thoughts on how your team could best be supported for success?


(Responses = 508, 25% of respondents left a comment)


Effective Management Practices


- A better understanding from managers of exactly what the employees they manage do, for the purpose of case management; performance evaluation; and overall support.
- Currently, information is not evenly or effectively distributed; clear communication is needed between teams and management; information needs to be shared through emails, so that the whole team is informed
- Better meeting schedule, shared resources, and actual acknowledgement for a job well done.
- Ability and willingness to effectively address interpersonal conflict and performance issue

 **Adequate Staffing.** There are not enough staff members/support to meet the demands of the workload. The lack of staffing/support frequently disrupts and/or prevents meetings, training, taking time off, and the overall ability of the team to be proactive and effective. Renewed commitment to hiring adequately skilled staff and supporting their advancement.

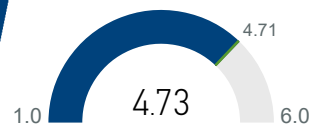
 **Accountability.** Employees request that management better enforce accountability and follow through by all team members. Currently, underperformance is not addressed, and those who work hard are rewarded with additional work without recognition. The lack of accountability creates animosity from those who work hard to meet expectations.

 **Consistent Standards.** Employees express a desire for rules, policies, and expectations to be clearly communicated and to be consistent across individuals, teams, and departments. In other words, employees would like to see all employees be “held to the same standard”. Additionally, employees request that policies and procedures be written in a uniform standard and continually updated.

 **Fair Procedures.** Employees suggest that they feel opportunities for development are not always fairly distributed and that some employees are given privileges and/or impartial treatment based on personal relationships with the agency.

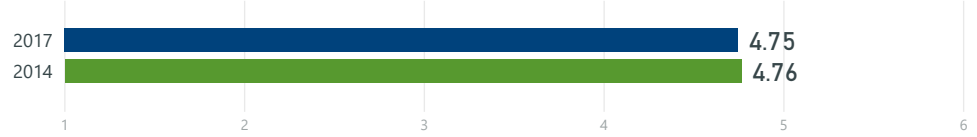
 **Workload.** Employee suggest that the current workload and resulting expectations are not reasonable given the amount of time and staff available. Overtime is strongly discouraged, but necessary to meet the demands of the workload, which is a confusing and demotivating situation for staff. Employees request more effective caseload management and project management from managers/supervisors, as well as daily updates on all employees' projects and workload as a way to more evenly distribute the workload. As mentioned, additional staff is strongly requested.

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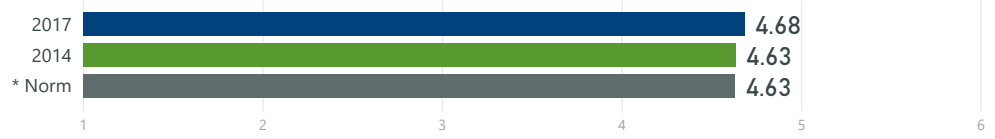


My Supervisor

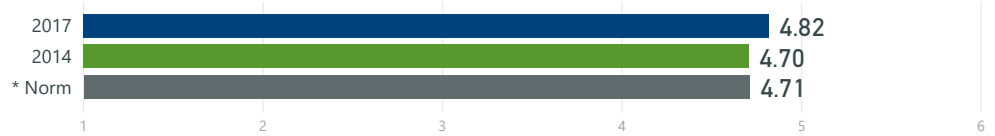
My supervisor effectively communicates the expectations of my job to me.



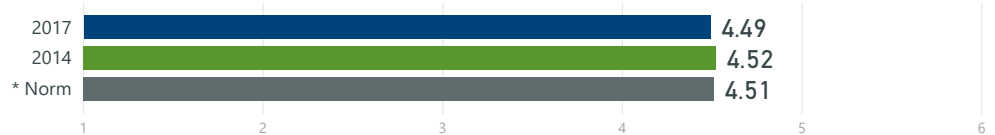
My supervisor effectively communicates changes that affect me.



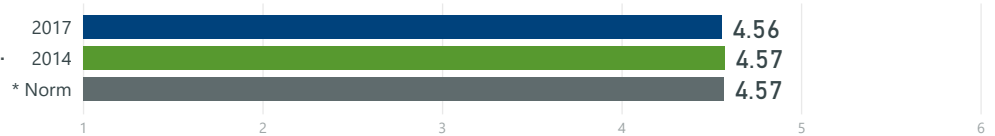
My supervisor supports my career development.



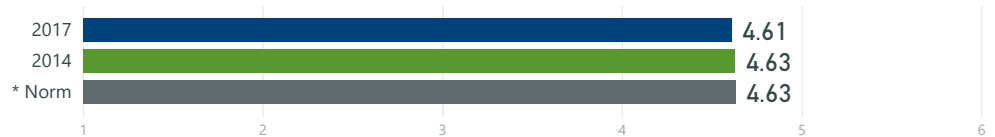
My supervisor resolves conflict appropriately.



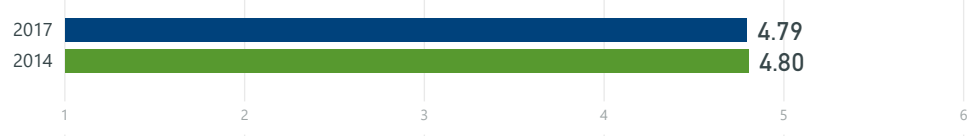
My supervisor regularly gives me helpful performance feedback on my performance.



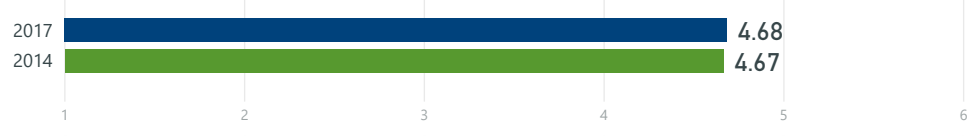
I receive recognition from my supervisor.



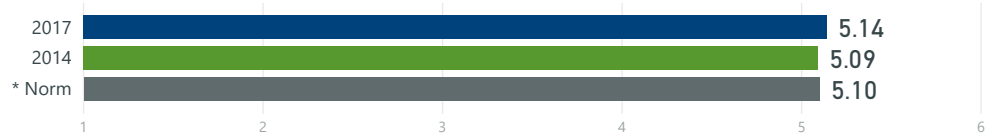
My supervisor listens to my ideas.



My supervisor addresses my concerns.



My supervisor treats me with respect.








My Supervisor

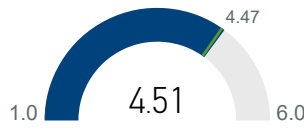
Open-ended Comment Themes

Additional comments that can assist in determining how to best support your supervisor (it may be helpful for you to consider what you think makes a great supervisor):

(Responses = 480, 24% of respondents left a comment)

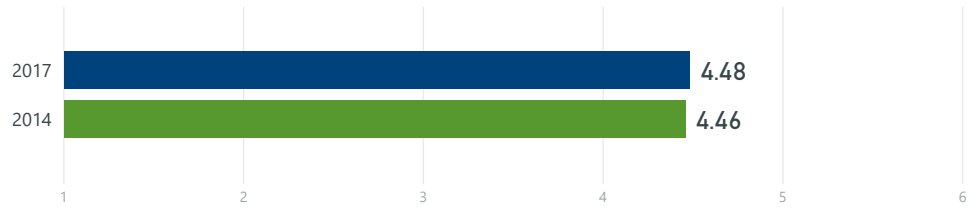
-  Many employees suggest that they are currently satisfied with and appreciate their supervisor/manager, their management style, and the support and encouragement they provide. [“My supervisor does a great job at meeting my needs as well as encouraging me to develop and pursue my interests.” “I am currently blessed with a manager who really cares about her staff. It is a joy working for her.” “I am lucky to have the supervisor that I have. She pushes to address the challenges we face, listens to ideas, trusts us to problem solve for good solutions, and gives constructive criticism if needed.”]
-  **Management Style.** Employees suggest that a great supervisor/manager utilizes effective management practices. Specifically, they empower employees and allow for autonomy when appropriate; do not micromanage work; hold all employees and themselves accountable; follow through on commitments; are consistent in their treatment of staff; are flexible when appropriate; are approachable and regularly available to staff; help find solutions and discuss potential courses of action; acknowledge staff and provide positive reinforcement when appropriate; are receptive to feedback and carry information up to higher management when appropriate.
-  **Communication.** Employees suggest that a great supervisor/manager has effective communication skills. Specifically, they communicate with staff directly and do so in a respectful manner; they do not use intimidation or hostility in their communications; they clearly communicate goals, expectations, successes and failures as a means to promote accountability and follow-through; they consistently share information with staff; they communicate the reasons behind decisions/actions whenever possible; they engage in active listening, processing what has been said, and providing constructive feedback rather than criticism. Additionally, staff requested that all policy changes be communicated via email or in writing so that employees have a record to refer to.
-  **Leadership.** Employees suggest that a great supervisor/manager has leadership skills. Specifically, they help promote a clear and compelling direction and a sense of purpose to staff; they connect the work employees do to the impact it has whenever possible; they lead by example and show pride in and commitment to their work; they support staff and advocate for their needs when appropriate; they ensure that expectations are reasonable.
-  **Training.** Additionally, employees suggest that supervisors would benefit from additional training in the following areas: general management skills; time and resources management; team building; conflict management; addressing accountability and performance issues; and training to assist supervisors in having a more thorough understanding of exactly what the employees they manage do.

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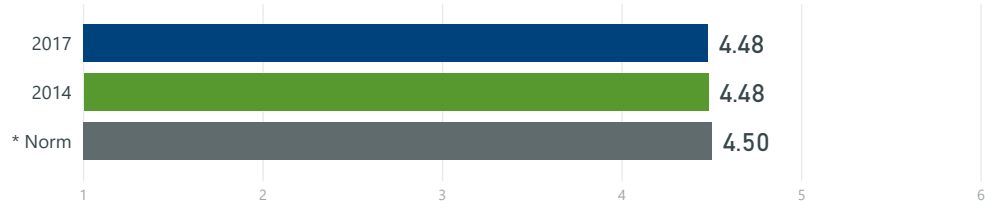


Collaboration Between Teams / Departments

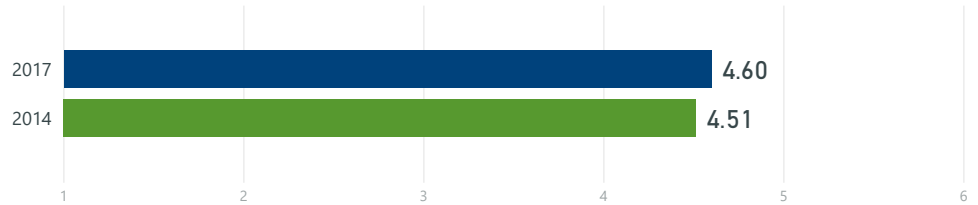
My department supports collaboration as a means to solve problems within my department.



I feel my team is able to easily collaborate with other teams or departments when necessary.



My work team is encouraged to collaborate with other departments, teams, and/or community partners to find effective ways to provide County services.



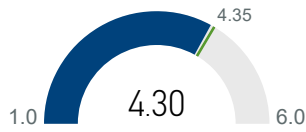
Collaboration Between Teams / Departments

Open-ended Comment Themes

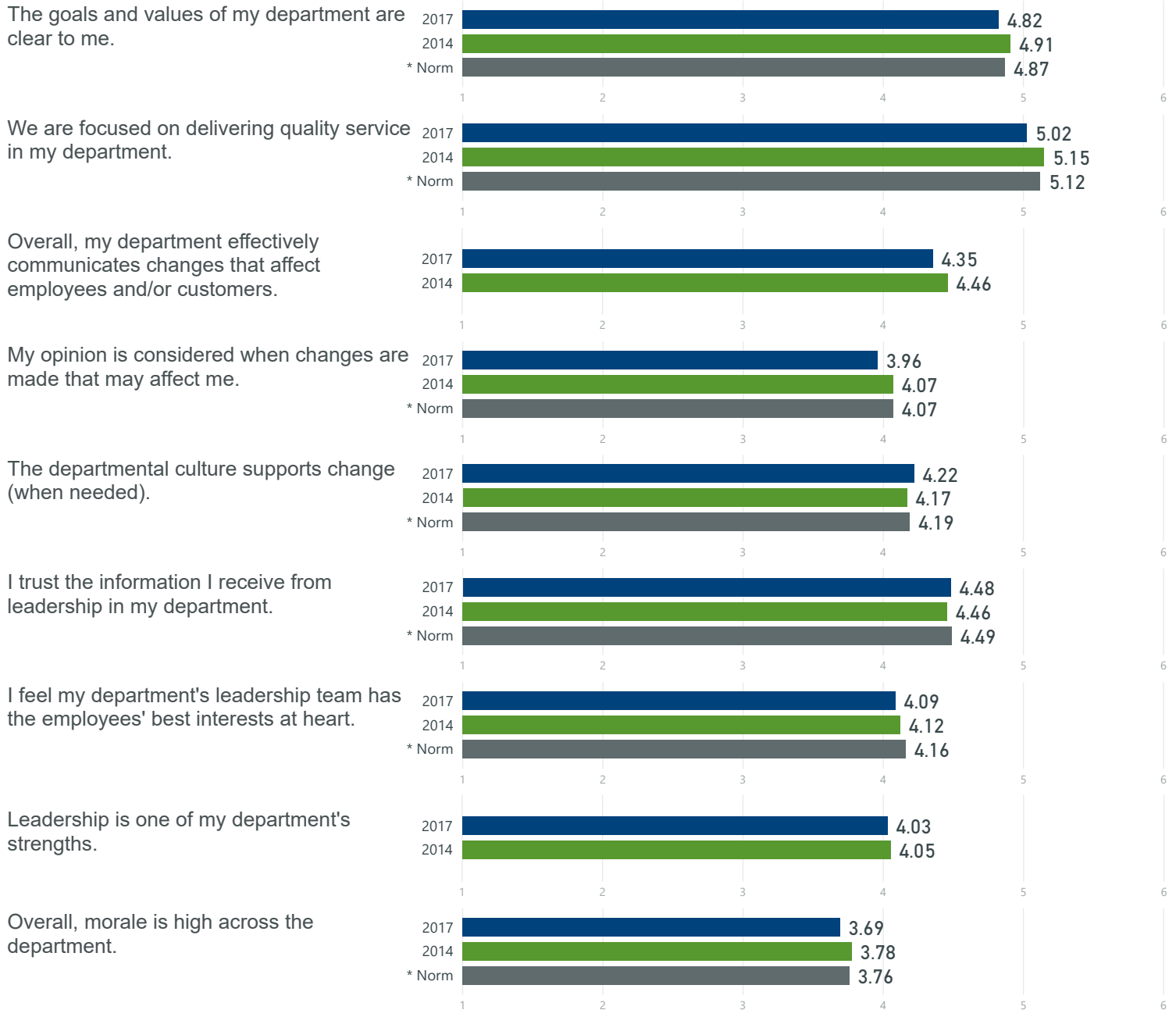
How could collaboration be more supported or encouraged within the County of San Luis Obispo?
(Responses = 376, 19% of respondents left a comment)

- Collaborative Practices.** Employees suggest that an overall culture of collaboration could be promoted by creating a system that requires staff/management to regularly consider and act upon opportunities to collaborate. Specifically, anytime staff are working on a process, procedure, or change, they should be required to consider who will be impacted. Once they have identified who will be impacted, they should invite those people to the table to collaborate. If this practice is required regularly, it will become second nature and part of the culture at the County. This practice will also help ensure that the decisions and processes that are made work well for all involved rather than just specific stakeholders.
- Community Building.** Employees suggest that creating specific opportunities for departments to come together to better understand each other's cultures and processes would help promote an overall culture of collaboration. Some specific examples are regular (all-staff) meetings, as well as opportunities for shadowing/cross-training when appropriate. It is suggested that allowing employees the opportunity to learn about other departments/units that may not directly or immediately relate to their job allows for employees to see how the County works as a whole, as well as to understand the specific jobs and limitations of other departments/units.
- Joint Goals.** Employees suggest that aligning goals to promote inter-departmental dependencies and necessary coordination would help promote a culture of collaboration. Employees suggest that because department/team goals are often independent, different groups do not hold the same priorities and may be focused on their own goals rather than working together effectively to help achieve each other's goals.
- Scheduling/Physical Space.** Employees suggest that allotting time specifically for the purpose of collaboration would be helpful and help teams/departments utilize collaboration as a means of brainstorming/problem solving. One way this could be accomplished would be to specifically build time for collaboration into meetings, schedules, and overall workloads. Additionally, employees suggest that having physical space available for the purpose of collaboration would help encourage the practice of collaboration. Specifically, easy access to conference rooms with computer display technology and video conferencing would be helpful. Additionally, employees suggest that locating units/departments that have a high need for collaboration close together would allow staff to work together more easily.
- Technology.** Employees suggest that a number of specific technological resources could help promote collaborations. Specifically, County cell phones for those employees who are not at their desk consistently, as well as instant messaging platforms. Additionally, employees suggest that training employees to utilize document sharing applications (ex. Google Docs) could help promote collaboration.

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My Department's Leadership Team



My Department's Leadership Team

Open-ended Comment Themes

Please explain why you feel morale is high.

(Responses = 728, 34% of respondents left a comment)

Employees suggest that they feel morale is high within the department due to the following reasons. Employees really enjoy the work they do and are committed to providing good service; expectations are realistic and management supports employees in meeting expectations; the atmosphere is positive within their departments, respect is given to all and there is a feeling that changes can be made to improve the department; people feel listened to and supported by management; supervisors communicate in a respectful and positive manner; the leadership team works hard to ensure that there is communication with all levels about the changes that impact the department; efforts are made to build strong working relationships and address any conflict; teams express appreciation for each other and give kudos on a regular basis; morale is positively impacted by feelings of inclusion and consistent growth opportunities; employees are provided with all the needed resources to complete their jobs effectively.

Please explain why you feel morale is low.

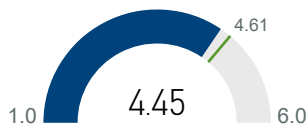
(Responses = 638, 32% of respondents left a comment)

Employees suggest that they feel morale is low within the department due to the following reasons. There is an overall feeling among staff of being overworked, underpaid and unappreciated; years of continued staffing shortages in some areas has led to the inability to take time off for personal use or training and a practice of mandatory overtime or unreasonable schedule adjustments; there is not enough support staff to truly support the workload, which leads to unreasonable workload expectations that negatively impact performance reviews, promotional opportunities, and pay; the consistent pressure to do more with less is unbarring and not always reasonable or practical; hard workers are expected to work harder to compensate for others, while underperformance is not addressed; wages and benefits continue to be cut and are not sufficient for the times; decisions/changes are not appropriately communicated and staff feel their input is not listened to; reward/reprimand are not given equally; overall lack of positive reinforcement from management; promotional opportunities are limited for many positions and employees feel “stuck.”

How could your Department Leadership Team better support you?

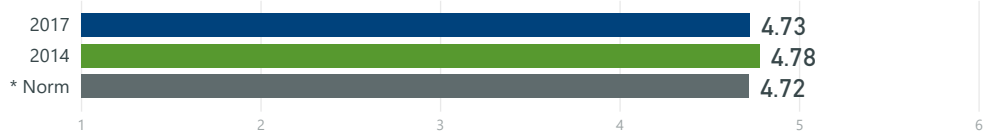
(Responses = 1090, 54% of respondents left a comment)

- 🔄 **Accountability.** Hold all employees accountable to consistent standards. Address conflict and performance issues. Follow through on commitments made to staff.
- 🔄 **Acknowledgement.** Acknowledge hard work and substantial contributions. Use positive reinforcement.
- 🔄 **Open communication.** Keep employees informed about changes that impact them, their jobs, their teams, or their departments.
- 🔄 **Input.** Seek input from relevant employees and stakeholders when considering decisions/changes and truly listen to their input. Follow through by communicating outcomes back to staff and the reasons why decisions are made whenever possible.
- 🔄 **Goals.** Leadership to set reasonable goals and expectations given available staff and resources. Work with management and staff to determine what reasonable expectations and goals are.
- 🔄 **Promotions.** Consider job experience and productivity in the promotional process.
- 🔄 **Staffing.** Hire additional employees to maintain a manageable workload. Consider additional sources of support (ex. part time employees, temp employees, interns).
- 🔄 **Knowledge Management.** Proactive onboarding, training, and shadowing to insure departments maintain the staff and knowledge needed to accomplish the workload as employees retire, transfer to other positions, or take extended time off. Plan for and provide the support needed for the upcoming change.
- 🔄 **Empowerment.** Provide employees with autonomy and decision-making power where appropriate. Trust employees to make good decisions and handle details while offering guidance when needed.

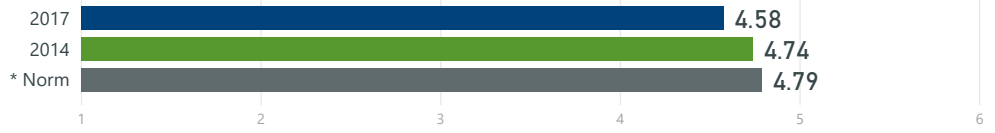


The County (as an organization)

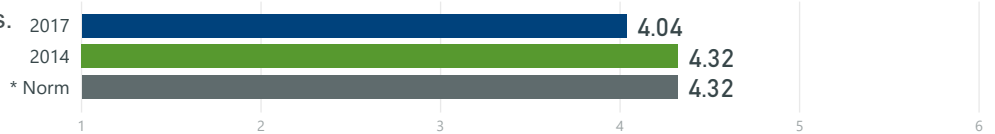
The goals and values of the County of San Luis Obispo are clear to me.



The County is focused on the residents' needs.



Leadership is one of the County's strengths.



The organizational values of the County of San Luis Obispo are regularly practiced in our work activities:



Accountability



Collaboration



Integrity



Professionalism



Responsiveness



The County (as an organization)

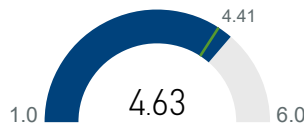
Open-ended Comment Themes

What could County Leadership do to best support the organization in serving the community?

(Responses = 570, 28% of respondents left a comment)

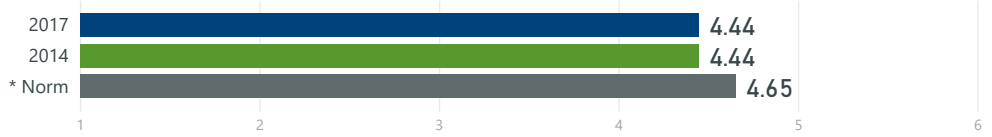
- Communication.** Employees feel there is a need for improved communication channels between residents and the County that enable the County to remain up to date regarding resident concerns/perceptions and for residents to feel like they have a channel for help; employees would like leadership to communicate community needs/projects to all departments as to foster collaboration and get everyone on the same page; employees would like to see better communication to the community as to the benefits the County works to bring them; employees feel that an increase County presence at local community events would help foster better relationship with community members.
- Staffing.** Employees feel that the staffing levels have remained consistent with what was utilized decades ago, while the population of San Luis Obispo County has grown rapidly. Employees would like to see the County provide an appropriate amount of staff to meet currently community needs and expectation.
- Funding.** Employees suggest that there is a need to increased funding. Specifically increase funding to address housing, homelessness, and recreation projects.
- Collaboration.** Employees suggest that the County could better promote collaboration by connecting departments and staff with the impact their work has on the community to foster a sense of purpose; encourage a “team” identity all the way from leadership down to line staff; seek input from appropriate stakeholders and include employees in decision making whenever possible; seek input from employees that work directly with community members about community needs; encourage cross-training and inter-departmental team building and collaboration so that departments can work together more fluidly and effectively; require departments to assist other departments at no charge, because they are all working towards a common goal – providing services for the residents of the County.
- Motivating Employees.** Employees suggest that taking care of employees inspires hard work and loyalty. Specifically, employees suggest that the County could better motivate employees by providing positive reinforcement and acknowledging employee contributions; providing increase opportunities for growth and development; tangible career paths; and pay and benefits that are appropriate for the current cost of living in the area.
- Progressive Systems.** Employees would like to see the County encourage a system of thinking that is open to adopting new processes/technology and that encourages employees to consistently consider better ways of operating. Such systems should involve all stakeholders in seeking out possible innovation and determining appropriate changes.

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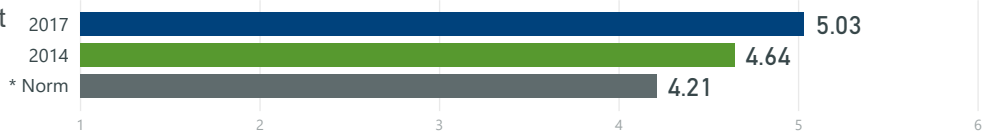


Training, Resources & Support

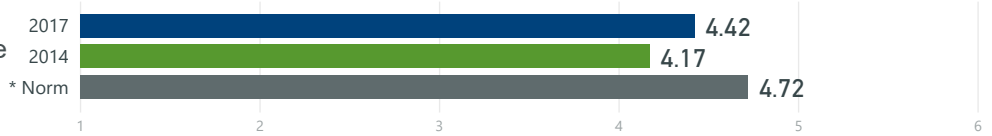
I am provided with a sufficient amount of training to do my job well.



I am aware of the training and development options available to me from the County Learning and Development Center.



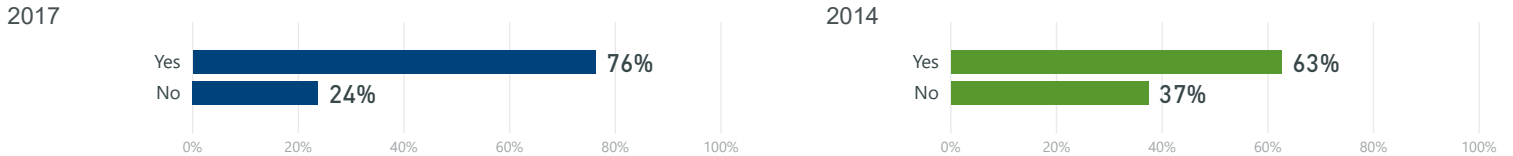
I am satisfied with the training and development options that are offered by the County Learning and Development Center.



I have received opportunities for professional development (aside from mandatory trainings) from my department.



I have received opportunities for professional development (aside from mandatory trainings) from the County Learning and Development Center.

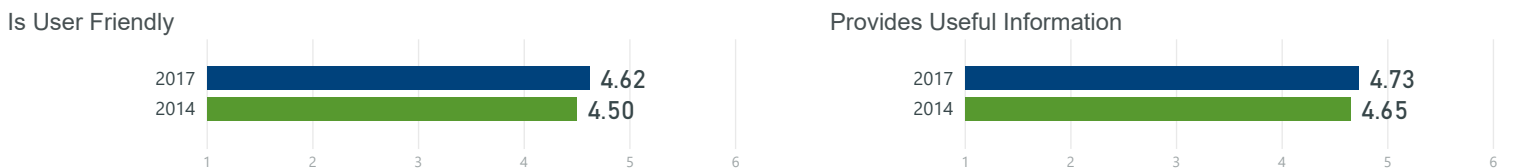


Website

I have visited the Learning and Development Center Website.



Please rate the Learning and Development website on the following:



Training, Resources & Support

Open-ended Comment Themes

Of the professional development opportunities you have taken advantage of, which were the most impactful to you that others may also benefit from?

(Responses = 688, 34% of respondents left a comment)

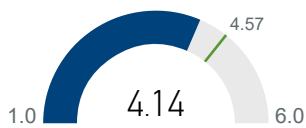
- Training.** DISC training; conflict resolution and constructive conflict; technical training; computer/software courses (Word, Excel, PowerPoint); courses with Derek Crawford; customer service; verbal judo; effective communication; mental health/first aid/CPR; trauma-informed care; course on law; interviewing; project management; job-specific specialized training; in-house training.
- Conferences.** Professional conferences; industry conferences; state conferences.
- Academy Programs and Related Events.** Supervisor Academy; Manager Academy; START; post-academy alumni events; Vertical Integration day.
- Training Resources.** Learning and Development Center is really helpful in connecting employees to relevant trainings.

What additional opportunities for your professional development do you feel would help you to be successful?

(Responses = 542, 27% of respondents left a comment)

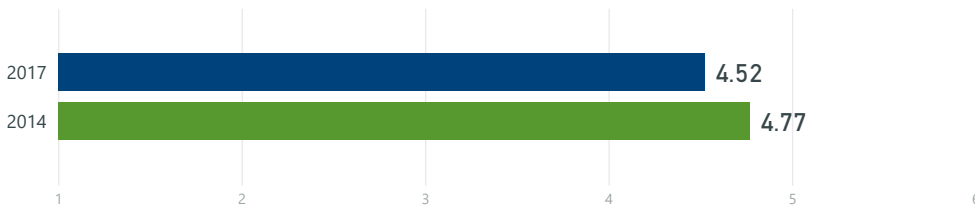
- Attendance.** Employees suggest that balanced workloads and available staffing support would allow them to attend professional development opportunities. Currently, employees suggest that due to low staffing and high workloads, employees find it difficult to take advantage of the existing development opportunities. Additionally, some employees suggest that the ability to switch/adjust shifts or work overtime would aid them in taking advantage of professional development opportunities.
- Training.** Employees would like to see more leadership and management training; job-specific training; technical training; computer/software courses (Word, Excel, PowerPoint); public speaking and presenting; more customer service training; interpersonal communication; conflict; clinical training; mental health training; SAP training; and team building.
- Conferences.** Employees suggest that they would like to have more opportunity to attend conferences/workshops and job related events.
- Academy Programs.** Employees suggest that the existing academies are frequently full and hard to get into. Many employees report being turned down multiple times when requesting to attend specific academies. Overall, employees request more opportunities to participate in the academies.
- Mentoring/cross-training.** Employees request more opportunities for mentoring/shadowing and increase opportunities for cross-training.
- Training Resources.** Employees would like the County to provide more educational reimbursements for continuing education outside the LDC.

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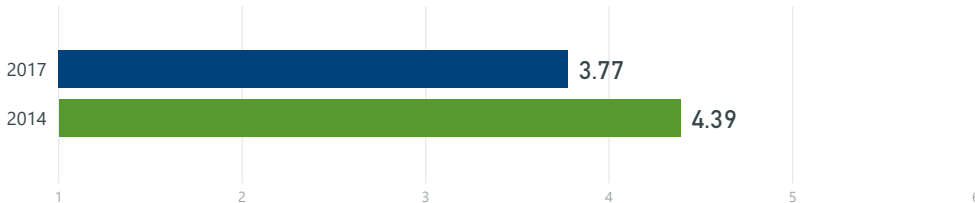


Benefits

I understand the benefits I am receiving as an employee of the County of San Luis Obispo.



I am satisfied with the benefits I am receiving as an employee of the County of San Luis Obispo.



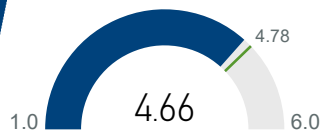
Benefits

Open-ended Comment Themes

If any, what benefits that are not currently offered are you interested in receiving?

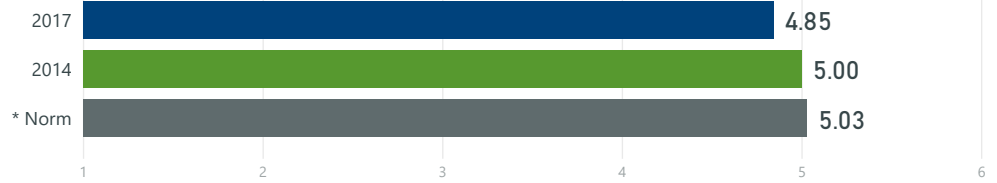
(Responses = 723, 36% of respondents left a comment)

- 🔄 **Affordability of Benefits.** Employees feel that current benefits are substantial, but not affordable; specifically, employees feel that the health care premiums are not affordable; additionally some employees suggest that benefits are very expensive for families.
- 🔄 **Understanding of Benefits.** Employees would like to have a better understanding about the benefits that are offered to them; specifically, employees request a consolidated listing of all county benefits with directions for utilizing such benefits.
- 🔄 **Retirement.** Employees request better retirement benefits including health care and cost matching for deferred compensation accounts.
- 🔄 **Wellness.** Employees request a better wellness program and wellness benefits that are appropriate for the cost of living in the area; employees would like to see the County partner with more fitness studios in the area.
- 🔄 **Child Care.** Employees request on-site child care (County-subsidized).
- 🔄 **Vacation.** Employees request more vacation time; the ability to buy more vacation days; an increase in the maximum number of vacation hours accruable; an increased in vacation benefits with years of service.
- 🔄 **Education.** Employees request annual stipends for continuing education; incentives for Master's programs; County collaboration with local colleges/universities to help further educational goals; and for the County to help employees pay off existing student loans.
- 🔄 **Life Insurance.** Employees request life insurance policies for all positions.
- 🔄 **Flexible Schedules.** Employees request increase opportunities for telecommuting and flex-schedules (ability to create own schedules, as appropriate).

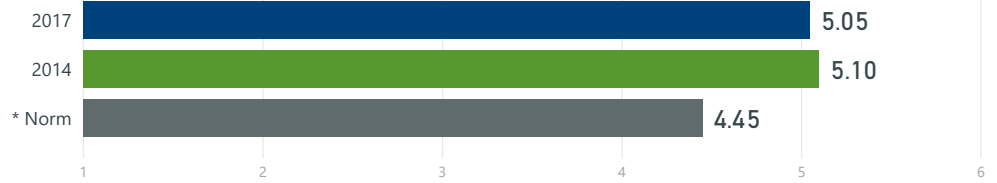


Work Environment

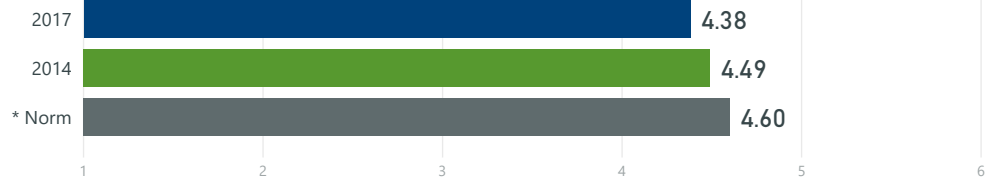
I feel safe and secure performing my work duties.



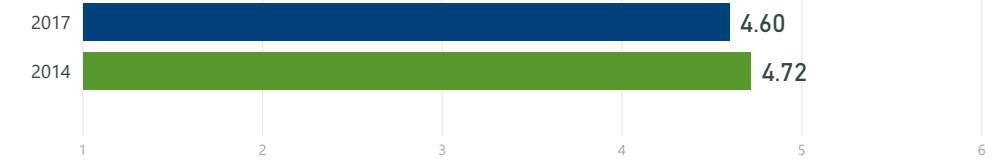
I am aware of our fire and safety procedures.



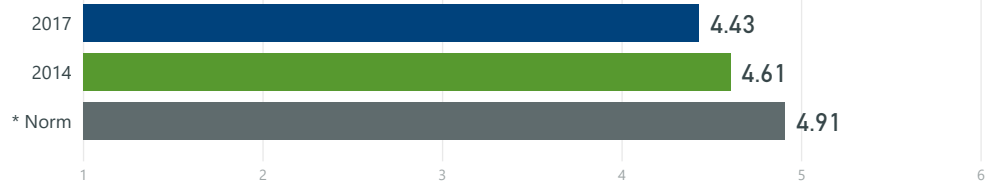
My workspace is ergonomically correct.



My workspace enables me to effectively deliver customer service.



I am satisfied with my work environment.



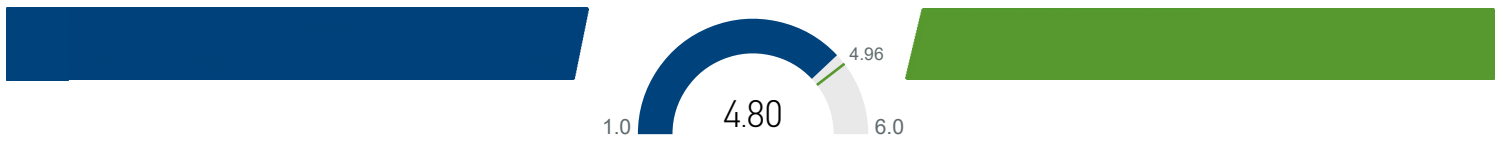
Work Environment

Open-ended Comment Themes

Please explain anything that could improve your work environment.

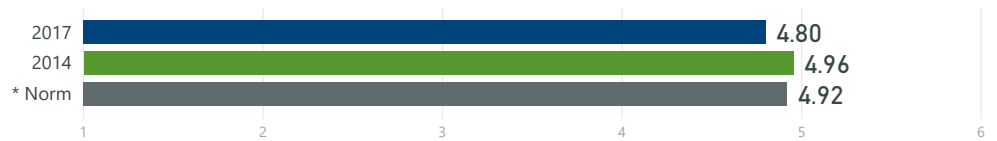
(Responses = 696, 34% of respondents left a comment)

- 🔄 **Working Space.** Employees would like the County to provide working spaces that are appropriate for the number of staff that occupy the given space; more working space at their desks/offices; adjustable desks for sitting/standing during the day; available conference rooms/group workspace areas for collaborative efforts; private working space and/or effort to minimize noise in daily workspace; better work chairs; better lighting.
- 🔄 **Ergonomic Assessments.** Employees suggest that their working environments could be more ergonomic in nature and would like all employees to have access to ergonomic assessments/assistance; employees report excessive wait periods for getting assistance with ergonomic issues and discouragement from management for requesting ergonomic support.
- 🔄 **Safety.** Employees request proper safety equipment; protection for front desk employees who work with clientele under difficult circumstances; more safety training and review of emergency plans; onboarding of new staff to safety/emergency protocol; appropriate emergency exits for each building.
- 🔄 **Windows.** Employees would like to have access to windows in all working environments for natural light, fresh air/ventilation, and aesthetics; employees strongly dislike fluorescent lighting and would like to more natural light.
- 🔄 **Cleaning.** Employees would like cleaner working environment; more deep cleaning; carpet cleaning; dusting; vent cleaning; and increased efforts to eliminate pests (mice, rats, ants, termites).
- 🔄 **Better Break Rooms.** Employees request better break rooms with basic supplies like microwaves, plates, napkins, and refrigerators for all departments.
- 🔄 **Climate Controlled Environment.** Employees request better air conditioning and heating systems and access to the controls for air conditioning and heating systems.



Overall Satisfaction

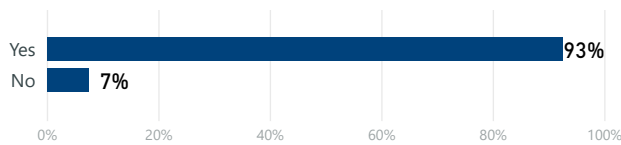
Overall, I am satisfied with my job at the County of San Luis Obispo.



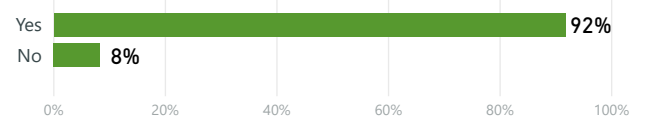
Job Satisfaction Indicators

There is someone I work with whom I consider to be a friend.

2017

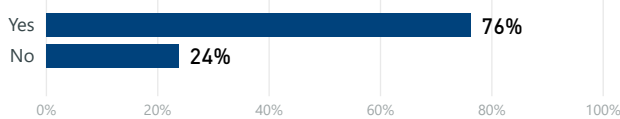


2014

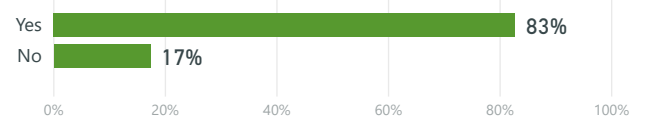


I would prefer to remain with the organization even if I received a comparable job offer elsewhere.

2017

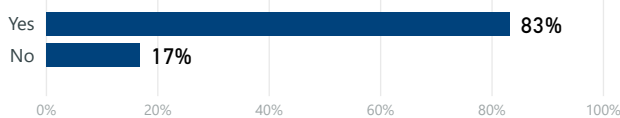


2014

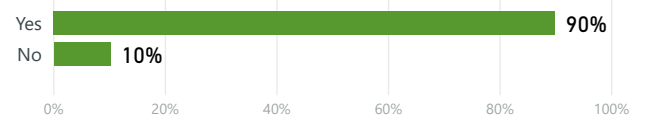


I would recommend working at the County of San Luis Obispo to a friend.

2017

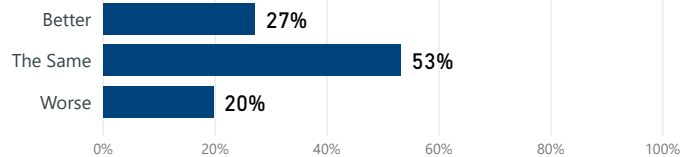


2014

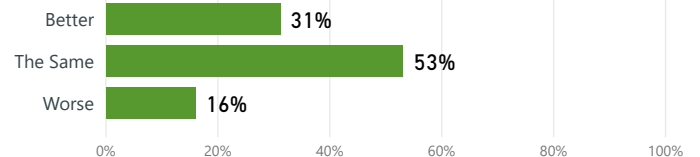


My job satisfaction is better, the same, or worse than it was 6 months ago.

2017



2014



Top 5

Highest Rated Questions Overall

2017

I understand how my job contributes to the department's goals in serving the community members of the County of San Luis Obispo.



My supervisor treats me with respect.



I am held accountable to what is expected of me.



I am aware of our fire and safety procedures.



I am aware of the training and development options available to me from the County Learning and Development Center.



2014

I understand how my job contributes to the department's goals.



We are focused on delivering quality service in my department.



I am held accountable to what is expected of me.



I am aware of our fire and safety procedures.



My supervisor treats me with respect.

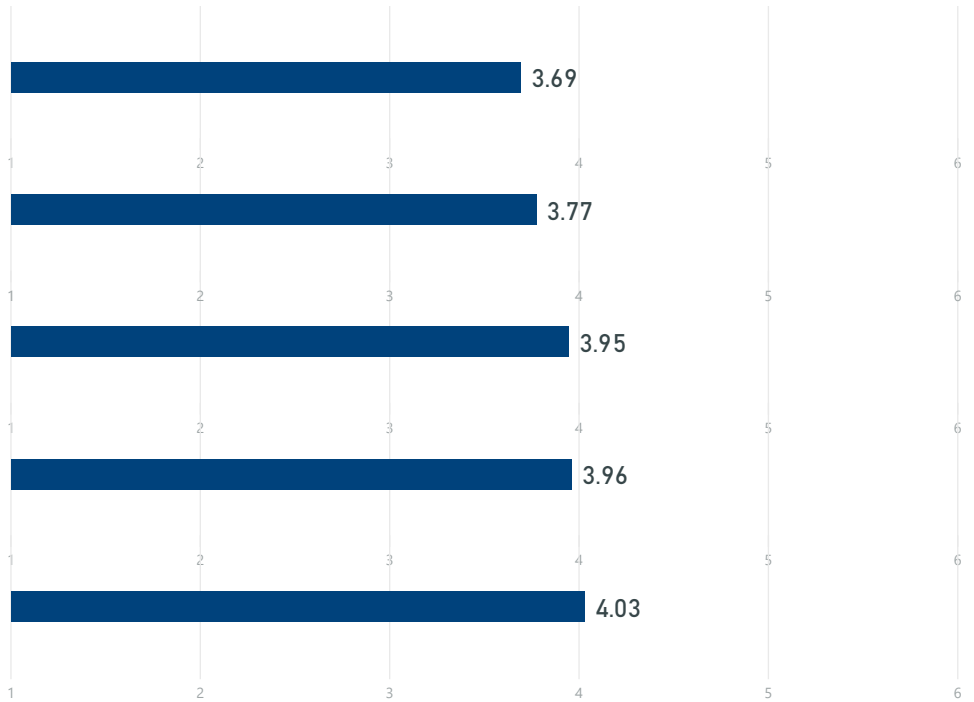


Bottom 5

Lowest Rated Questions Overall

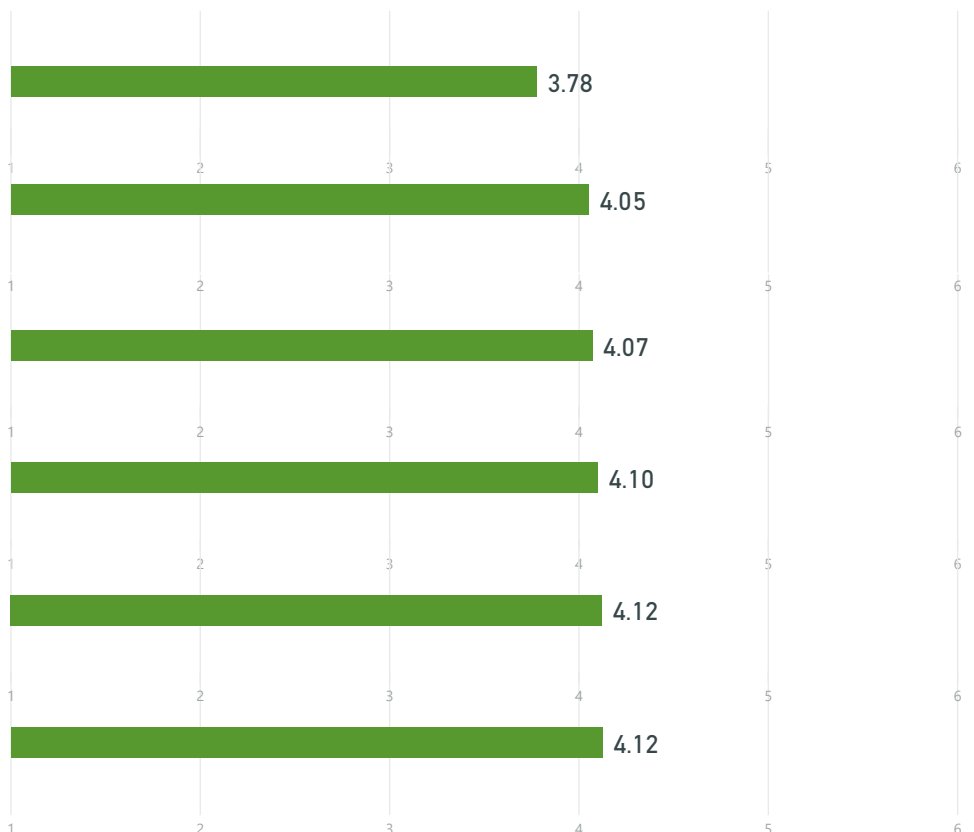
2017

Overall, morale is high across the department.



2014

Overall, morale is high across the department.



Category Ratings by Department

In which department do you work? 2017	My Job	My Team	My Supervisor	Collaboration Between Teams / Departments	My Department's Leadership Team	The County	Training, Resources & Support	Benefits	Work Environment	Overall Satisfaction
Admin office/Emerg Svcs	5.02	4.85	5.04	4.91	4.78	4.97	4.74	4.79	5.07	5.06
Airports	4.29	4.00	4.36	4.63	4.49	4.80	4.69	4.09	4.38	4.81
ACTTC	4.88	4.97	5.02	5.20	4.91	4.93	4.95	4.53	5.18	5.05
Agricultural Commissioner	4.94	4.89	4.97	4.65	4.83	4.85	5.02	4.11	4.89	5.06
Assessor's Office	4.85	4.82	5.00	4.71	4.64	4.64	4.92	4.33	4.91	5.15
Central Services	4.82	4.75	4.49	4.90	4.59	4.80	4.64	4.06	4.92	5.14
Child Support Services	4.71	4.44	4.67	4.14	4.05	4.51	4.94	4.59	5.03	4.77
Clerk-Recorder	4.38	3.93	4.05	4.52	3.92	4.58	4.60	3.96	4.91	4.60
County Counsel	5.20	5.18	5.39	5.27	5.21	5.07	5.28	4.31	5.29	5.60
District Attorney	4.33	3.90	4.15	3.92	3.53	4.07	4.68	3.86	4.40	4.28
Health Agency	4.57	4.59	4.77	4.56	4.45	4.68	4.54	4.13	4.52	4.84
Human Resources	5.07	5.07	5.39	5.22	5.13	4.98	5.17	4.90	5.38	5.31
Information Technology	4.31	4.16	4.46	4.43	4.28	4.48	4.36	4.26	4.56	4.50
Libraries	4.74	4.60	4.81	4.47	4.34	4.63	4.82	4.54	4.44	5.06
Parks and Recreation	4.81	4.68	4.94	4.53	4.64	4.74	4.82	4.40	4.99	5.14
Planning and Building	4.34	4.42	4.54	4.45	3.88	4.43	4.41	4.00	4.59	4.53
Probation	4.81	4.64	4.90	4.61	4.36	4.83	4.70	4.36	4.54	4.98
Public Works	4.71	4.66	4.90	4.61	4.58	4.76	4.69	4.24	4.88	5.03
Sheriff – Coroner	4.40	4.19	4.54	4.26	4.00	4.24	4.19	3.57	4.26	4.46
Social Services	4.58	4.52	4.74	4.50	4.07	4.57	4.73	4.08	4.72	4.74
The University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) in San Luis Obispo County	4.65	4.68	4.73	4.71	4.68	4.88	4.76	4.00	4.89	5.00
Veterans Services	4.94	4.13	4.83	5.38	4.63	4.92	4.67	4.69	4.60	5.25

In which department do you work? 2014	My Job	My Team	My Supervisor	Collaboration Between Teams / Departments	My Department's Leadership Team	The County	Training, Resources & Support	Benefits	Work Environment	Overall Satisfaction
Admin office/Emerg Svcs	5.21	4.64	4.69	4.81	4.81	5.04	4.48	5.36	5.51	5.29
ACTTC	4.90	5.04	5.04	5.06	4.98	5.22	4.69	4.95	5.16	5.24
Agricultural Commissioner	4.91	4.69	4.80	4.57	4.77	4.98	4.78	4.83	5.13	5.14
Assessor's Office	4.66	4.38	4.57	4.49	4.30	4.67	4.44	4.56	4.84	4.94
Child Support Services	4.97	4.81	4.71	4.72	4.69	4.99	4.85	4.85	5.19	4.89
Clerk-Recorder	4.65	4.58	4.40	4.68	4.89	4.95	4.43	4.31	4.94	4.89
County Counsel	5.06	4.99	5.25	5.03	4.91	5.13	5.19	4.92	5.28	5.33
District Attorney	4.75	4.76	4.95	4.48	4.15	4.60	4.59	4.40	4.93	5.07
General Services Agency	4.40	4.44	4.68	4.31	4.11	4.61	4.24	4.36	4.67	4.80
Health Agency	4.56	4.51	4.78	4.40	4.42	4.72	4.33	4.54	5.72	4.96
HR & Risk Management	4.99	5.07	5.04	4.86	4.91	5.13	4.58	4.85	5.30	5.26
Library Services	4.49	4.76	5.00	4.16	4.36	4.71	4.19	4.59	4.47	5.07
Planning and Building	4.46	4.57	4.39	4.55	4.14	4.73	4.17	4.39	4.61	4.88
Probation	4.75	4.57	4.80	4.57	4.48	4.69	4.73	4.46	4.76	4.99
Public Works	4.69	4.43	4.72	4.53	4.49	4.79	4.48	4.71	4.88	4.90
Sheriff – Coroner	4.56	4.35	4.45	4.29	4.33	4.73	4.07	4.41	4.52	4.95
Social Services	4.65	4.56	4.82	4.55	4.15	4.58	4.60	4.61	4.79	4.97
The University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) in San Luis Obispo County	4.84	4.77	5.06	5.20	5.04	5.00	4.33	5.00	4.91	4.00

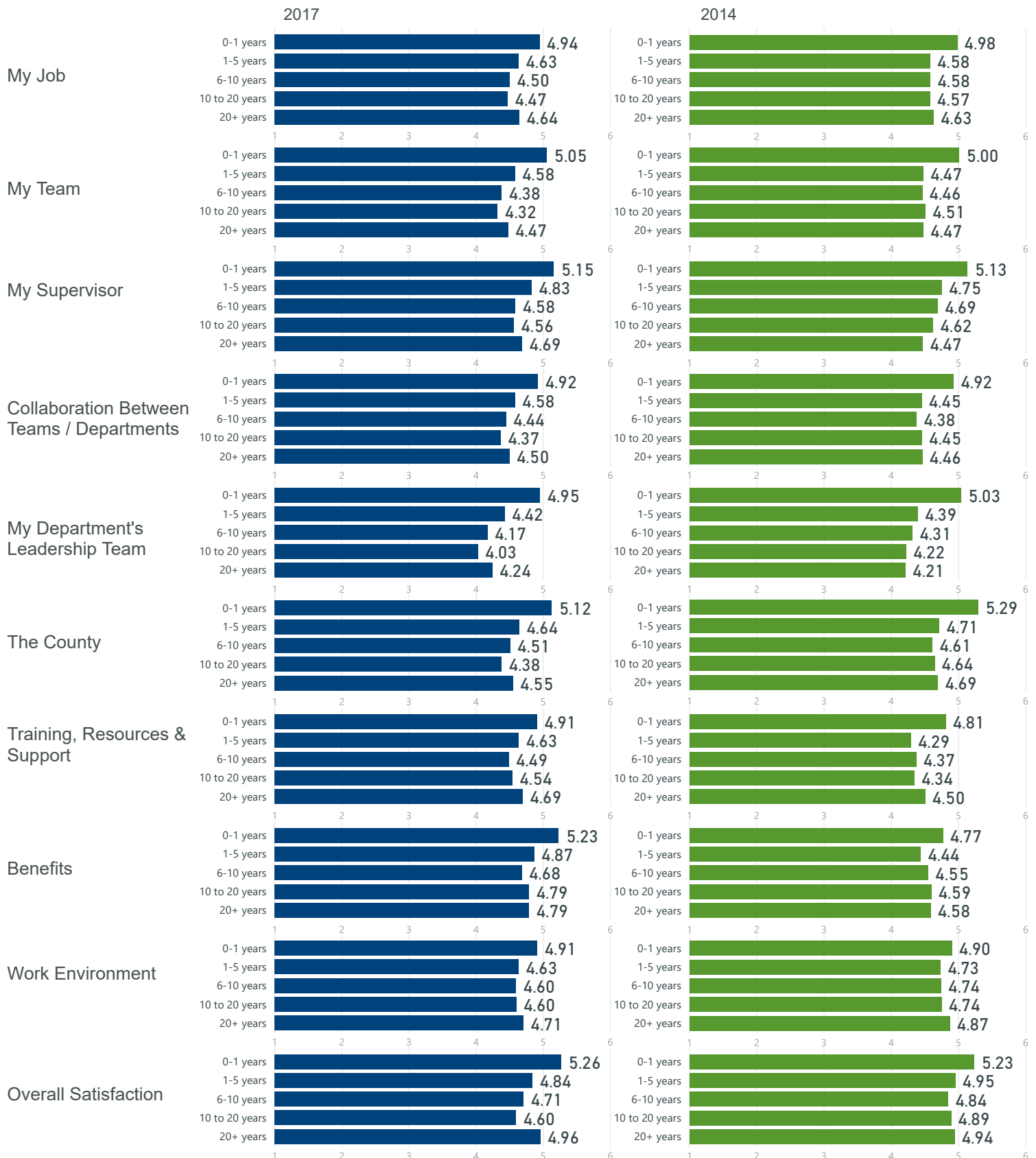
*In order to protect anonymity, 2014 department data for the Veteran Services departments is not available because less than 5 employees responded to the survey.

Category Ratings by Position

Please describe your position: 2017	My Job	My Team	My Supervisor	Collaboration Between Teams/ Departments	My Department's Leadership Team	The County	Training, Resources & Support	Benefits	Work Environment	Overall Satisfaction
1. Assistant Director / Deputy Director	5.38	5.25	5.44	5.40	5.44	4.90	5.26	4.50	4.99	5.46
2. Department Head	5.56	5.38	5.38	5.64	5.66	5.16	5.50	4.96	5.43	5.82
3. Manager	4.85	4.81	4.88	4.83	4.57	4.76	4.87	4.51	4.96	5.09
4. Supervisor	4.71	4.64	4.74	4.71	4.39	4.60	4.79	4.14	4.85	4.89
5. Line Staff / Individual Contributor	4.53	4.44	4.70	4.42	4.19	4.54	4.55	4.06	4.57	4.73
6. Other	4.62	4.55	4.76	4.64	4.48	4.68	4.63	4.23	4.71	4.86

Please describe your position: 2014	My Job	My Team	My Supervisor	Collaboration Between Teams/ Departments	My Department's Leadership Team	The County	Training, Resources & Support	Benefits	Work Environment	Overall Satisfaction
1. Director	5.33	5.25	5.10	5.17	5.38	5.10	4.48	4.68	5.31	5.45
2. Manager	4.93	4.76	4.85	4.89	4.65	4.80	4.49	4.69	5.02	5.19
3. Supervisor	4.63	4.66	4.76	4.54	4.39	4.70	4.45	4.62	4.87	4.97
4. Line Staff / Individual Contributor	4.56	4.47	4.69	4.40	4.29	4.70	4.42	4.54	4.71	4.90
5. Other	4.66	4.55	4.69	4.52	4.42	4.80	4.35	4.53	4.79	5.04

Category Ratings by Tenure



Category Ratings by Likelihood to Retire

