SDDOT 2006 Organizational Health Assessment

Study SD2006-02
Executive Summary

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DISCLAIMER

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16. Abstract  
This is a report of an organizational health assessment for the South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT) in 2006. Organizational health is one of the four pillars of the SDDOT strategic plan, so the results of this project are a key measure of performance against the strategic goal to “make the Department of Transportation a desirable place to work” in order to “attract and retain the best possible employees.”

The five objectives of this study were: to 1) measure the Department of Transportation’s employees’ perceptions and level of satisfaction regarding organizational health; 2) identify the Department of Transportation’s organizational strengths and weaknesses; 3) evaluate progress in improving the Department’s culture, through comparison between the current assessment and baseline measurements of earlier assessments; 4) recommend specific actions that the Department can take to achieve its strategic goals and improve its organizational health; and 5) refine a survey instrument and process that can be used to periodically assess the Department’s organizational health.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of the Organizational Health Assessment (OHA) is to assist the South Dakota Department of Transportation in achieving one of the four pillars of its strategic plan, which is the goal to “make the Department of Transportation a desirable place to work” in order to “attract and retain the best possible employees.” An OHA has been conducted every two years since 1998 and the results have been used by SDDOT’s management to guide priorities and actions for increasing organizational health.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the 2006 study were to:

- Measure the Department of Transportation’s employees’ perceptions and level of satisfaction regarding organizational health.
- Identify the Department of Transportation’s organizational strengths and weaknesses.
- Evaluate progress in improving the Department’s culture, through comparison between the current assessment and baseline measurements of earlier assessments.
- Recommend specific actions that the Department can take to achieve its strategic goals and improve its organizational health.
- Refine a survey instrument and process that can be used to periodically assess the Department’s organizational health.

RESEARCH APPROACH

The 2006 OHA had the same basic components as the prior assessments, including: 1) focus group sessions with a random sample of SDDOT employees representing all locations and functions to identify issues and concerns about organizational health to be assessed through a Department-wide survey; 2) administration of a Department-wide survey and analysis of results; and 3) focus groups sessions with employees following the survey to further explore issues of interest indicated by the survey results.

In 2004, several changes were made to the survey instrument and administration methods, and a new approach to analyzing the results was added to those used previously. These changes proved successful and so were retained for 2006. The changes included: 1) making the survey more “user friendly” by shortening it considerably and making it available to complete online rather than only in paper and pencil form; and 2) preparing a report of the survey results for each SDDOT supervisor that aggregated the responses of employees in the specific work unit for which he or she was responsible. The reasons for making these changes were to reverse the steady decline in response rate that had occurred since 1998, and to give every supervisor a “roadmap” for deciding how their practices could increase organizational health in their particular part of SDDOT. As a result of these changes, only a few refinements needed to be made to the survey instrument for 2006.
**KEY FINDINGS**

The findings most relevant to the objectives of the OHA were that:

1. The survey response rate increased from 75.6 percent in 2004 to 78.4 percent in 2006
2. The responses of SDDOT employees pointed to five themes that represent organizational strengths and eight themes that represent improvement opportunities
3. The large majority of survey scores did not change a statistically significant amount from 2004 levels, but several items declined significantly
4. The level of organizational health varies considerably across work units in SDDOT

**INCREASE IN SURVEY RESPONSE RATE**

A total of 755 employees responded to the survey which represents 78.4 percent of the total employee population. This response rate continues the reversal of a decline to a low of 70.4 percent in 2002. The increases in 2004 and again this year were largely due to greater participation by employees in office-based jobs, suggesting that the ability to complete the survey online and the greater accessibility to the Internet for those in offices contributed greatly the increases. Although the response rate of Maintenance employees was again substantially less than other job groups at 67.9 percent, this level of participation is more than adequate for identifying strengths and improvement opportunities in organizational health.

**STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

In response to the scored questions, the employees’ responses were the most positive on 20 individual questions that can be grouped under five themes that reflect SDDOT’s greatest strengths relative to organizational health. The responses to 59 other questions were less positive, pointing to eight themes that represent opportunities for improvement. The responses to another 22 questions fell in the moderate range.

**CHANGES IN SURVEY SCORES**

The 1998 through 2004 assessments demonstrated continuous and statistically significant improvement in the large majority of items and domains measured by the survey. Greatest gains were made in areas where investments were made in organizational health, such as safety and training. These gains were largely maintained in 2006 as 82 of the 102 scored items did not increase nor decrease significantly. One item increased significantly while 19 items decreased significantly. Overall job satisfaction was among the items that did not change on a Department-wide basis.

**ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH VARIES CONSIDERABLY ACROSS WORK UNITS IN SDDOT**

The “Best Practices Profile,” a method of analysis introduce to the OHA in 2004, again revealed an exceptionally large variation in organizational health across SDDOT. Survey responses were combined by work unit to create a total survey score for each unit. A “work unit” was defined as the employees who report directly to a particular supervisor. The highest scoring 23 units, representing one-fourth of all the units with four (4) or more respondents, were averaged together to create a single profile of the high quartile work units. The same procedure was applied to the 23 work units with the lowest total survey scores.
score. The item scores of the low quartile group were then subtracted from the item scores of the high quartile group.

The 41 items that showed exceptionally large differences portray the characteristics of the work environment that most distinguish the highest and lowest scoring work units in SDDOT. These items were separated into the ones that describe how the work unit operates and is managed, designated as “Cause” items, and those that indicate employees’ views about the impacts of the Cause items, designated as “Effect” items. They were further organized into themes to create the diagram on the following page. In the diagram, the items are abbreviated and presented with their item number. The complete text of each item is presented in Appendix A.

Employees of the high scoring units responded to the 26 items in the Causes column at a significantly more favorable level than employees of low scoring units. As an apparent result of working in an environment characterized by these practices, they were also significantly more favorable in response to the items in the Effects column, which include the most fundamental organizational health items pertaining to morale, job satisfaction, teamwork, trust in management, and career advancement opportunities. The Cause items are, therefore, a “roadmap” for all supervisors and managers to follow in order to increase organizational health.

CONCLUSIONS

This section presents and explains the following five conclusions based on the results of the 2006 Organizational Health Assessment:

1. Past improvements in Organizational Health were largely maintained.
2. Many important opportunities for further improvement remain.
3. The ability of SDDOT to attract and retain its desired workforce appears to be declining.
4. Lack of consistency in the quality of management practices is a major obstacle to further improvement.
5. A gateway to further improvement is clarifying organizational direction and priorities

CONCLUSION #1: PAST IMPROVEMENTS IN ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH WERE LARGELY MAINTAINED

The 1998 through 2004 assessments demonstrated continuous and significant improvement in the large majority of domains measured by the survey. Specifically, statistically significant improvement in scores was documented for 17 of the 19 domains (p<.05). The 2006 results showed that 13 of the 19 domains maintained their previous gains, neither gaining nor declining a significant amount. Similarly, of the 62 core items that comprise the domains, there were 47 that did not change significantly and one that increased significantly. There were 20 items designated as organizational Strengths, which means that they scored above 3.0 on the 4-point scale. This remainder of this section summarizes the Strengths that have been attained and sustained.
Cause-Effect Diagram
(Based on 748 Employees from 93 Work Units)

**CAUSES**

Open Communication
- 34 I am kept informed
- 28 Get Information I need from my supervisor
- 59 Encouraged to speak mind, even if disagree
- 53 Free to state opinions to supervisor
- 31 Adequate 2-way info with top management
- 39 Supervisor discussed my pay concerns & questions with me
- 66 Employees can express opinions freely

Employee Involvement
- 32 Supervisor asks for our ideas
- 37 My opinion counts
- 81 Our problem solving group is empowered
- 33 I am involved in decisions that affect my area

Recognition & Feedback
- 13 Adequate recognition for good work
- 18 In last 7 days, I received recognition
- 47 SDDOT recognizes extraordinary work
- 15 Rewards based on job performance
- 74 Timely, helpful feedback
- 78 Someone talked to me about my progress

Training & Development
- 40 Someone encourages my development
- 19 In last year, opportunities to learn & grow
- 38 Supervisor discussed my career goals
- 64 Training I received will help me advance

Focus on Results & Improvement
- 2 Red tape is kept to a minimum
- 79 Group meets to review performance, solve problems
- 20 SDDOT is willing to take a chance on a good idea

Policies Fairly Applied
- 91 Overtime is fairly applied
- 95 Flexible scheduling policy is fair

**EFFECTS**

Satisfaction & Pride
- 51 Morale is high in my unit
- 9 Proud to be a part of SDDOT
- 24 Would encourage best friend to work at SDDOT
- 57 Actions reflect good ethical, professional standards

Teamwork
- 10 I am member of well-functioning team

Trust & Regard for Management
- 68 Top management respects employees
- 67 Trust supervisor to represent my interests
- 69 Changes will happen as result of survey
- 55 Past OHAs have led to valuable changes

Relationships
- 50 Supervisor cares about me as a person
- 23 Relationships warm between managers & employees
- 22 Friendly atmosphere in SDDOT

Rewards
- 42 SDDOT meets my needs as an individual
- 14 Promotion system helps best people to rise
- 17 Satisfied with career opportunities

* All items in the diagram showed a statistically significant difference score of more than .60 between the high and low quartile groups. They are presented with their item number and abbreviated. Please see Appendix A for complete text of survey items.

Figure 1: Cause-Effect Diagram of Items that Significantly Distinguish High & Low Quartile Work Units
**Sense of Purpose.** Five items revealed the very prevalent perception of employees that they and their fellow employees are committed to doing quality work and that their work meaningfully serves South Dakotans, results from listening to customers, and contributes to an important mission. (Items 4, 48, 49, 98, 100)

**Clear Job Expectations.** Four items pertaining to performance expectations showed that employees are, overall, clear about the specific requirements of their jobs and what is expected of them in performing their work. (Items 1, 25, 36, 90)

**Working Conditions.** Several items describe employees’ views of how the conditions within which they work enable them to do good work and place priority on their safety. They also report that they have the materials and equipment they need to do their work right, and that equipment is properly maintained. Their work environment is supportive of their desire and efforts to do good work in that they can count on assistance to accomplish a difficult assignment and that they are satisfied with their work hours and schedules. (Items 41, 45, 86, 88, 89, 92)

**Work Relationships.** Three items conveyed different ways that employees perceive healthy relations in their workplace, with a high percentage on each saying that their co-workers treat them with respect, that their supervisor or someone at work cares about them as a person, and that they can openly state their opinions to their supervisor. (Items 50, 53, 72)

**Training.** Two items indicated a high regard among the large majority of employees for the quality of the training they receive and that it is job-related. (Items 62, 63)

Many of the items now designated as Strengths did not meet the criterion of a 3.0 score in one or more of the past OHAs. In fact, the items that have progressed the most since 1998, regardless of whether they are now Strengths, are largely ones that received priority attention of SDDOT’s executive group following the previous assessments. This is important to emphasize because it means that organizational health is primarily a product of management choice and skill, rather than driven by the external environment, an entrenched work culture, or other factors beyond the influence of SDDOT’s leadership and management cadre.

**CONCLUSION #2: MANY IMPORTANT IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES REMAIN**

Despite the fact that the gains from previous assessments were largely sustained, and about a fifth of the items were designated as Strengths, more than half scored as Improvement Opportunities, meaning that between 30 and 77 percent of respondents answered unfavorably. These lowest scoring items were summarized into the following themes, which represent serious threats to SDDOT’s strategic goals, particularly in the areas of Organizational Health and Business Improvement.

**Performance Management and Performance Improvement Practices.** Nine items reveal ways that employees perceive deficiencies in performance management practices. A large percentage said that poor performance is tolerated and that people are not held accountable for the quality of their work. Many also see a lack of adequate attention paid to programs and practices intended to produce continuous improvement, one of the cornerstones of SDDOT’s Strategic Plan, saying that the performance measures initiative is not worth the time it takes and does not serve to improve performance. Half of respondents said that their work group does not have regular meetings to discuss ways to solve problems and plan improvements, and 40 percent said that their
unit has not worked to identify good performance measures. Large percentages of survey respondents also said that there had not been follow-through on the items discussed in their performance appraisal and that red tape is not kept to a minimum. (Items 2, 5, 8, 77, 79, 82, 83, 84)

- **Resource Management.** More than one-third of respondents said that staffing levels do not enable quality work and that part-time and seasonal workers are not a good way to manage workload. There is also a strong view that staffing policies and methods, including flexible scheduling and overtime, are not fairly administered. (Items 91, 93, 94, 95)

- **Teamwork.** Four items indicate that people do not feel they are part of an effective team and that trust levels between people and teams are low. (Items 10, 65, 70, 73)

- **Empowerment.** A large percentage of respondents said that their opinions do not seem to count, their problem-solving group is not empowered to make decisions, and their supervisor does not ask for their ideas. Further, they do not feel free to speak their minds with their supervisors or to state their opinions in meetings with the Secretary. (Items 29, 32, 33, 37, 53, 59, 81)

- **Recognition, Feedback and Developmental Practices.** Six items indicated the view held by many employees that good work is not adequately recognized, that they do not get timely, helpful feedback on their performance, that no one has talked with them about their progress in the last six months, and that there is not someone at work who encourages their development. (Items 13, 18, 40, 47, 74, 78)

- **Compensation Practices.** More than two-thirds of respondents said that their wages are not sufficient to keep them from looking for another job and that their supervisor has not discussed their pay questions and concerns with them in the past year. Even more said that people are not rewarded based on their job performance. (Items 15, 16, 39)

- **Advancement Opportunity.** More than two-thirds of respondents said that they are not satisfied with opportunities for advancement and more than three-fourths said that the promotion system does not help the best person to advance. (Items 14, 17)

- **Communications and Relationships with Management.** Two-thirds of respondents said that communications between subordinates and top management are inadequate, one-third said they do not trust their supervisor to represent their interests at higher levels, 40 percent said that they are not kept well informed about what is happening in SDDOT, and 33 percent said that regularly scheduled staff meetings are not held. These and many of the foregoing improvement opportunities contribute to the view that top management lacks respect for employees and for their jobs. (Items 26, 31, 34, 67, 68)

Analysis of the results for each demographic subgroup within SDDOT revealed that these Improvement Opportunities are prevalent across them all, so that strategies for improvement can generally be widely applied in the Department, rather than focusing solely on a particular location, job group or other specific subgroup. However, these Improvement Opportunities are significantly more prevalent among employees in the Maintenance and Equipment job groups. Their less favorable responses clearly indicate the need to place greater attention to improvement strategies with these subgroups. The fact that these groups also represent a large proportion of the total workforce accentuates this conclusion.
In summary, these improvement opportunities indicate a lack of both performance management and employee retention factors, which undermines achievement of the Business Improvement strategic goal to “continuously improve the Department’s business and operations,” and the Organizational Health strategic goal to “make the Department of Transportation a desirable place to work” in order to “attract and retain the best possible employees.” The latter of these goals is discussed further in the following paragraphs.

**CONCLUSION #3: SDDOT’S ABILITY TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN ITS DESIRED WORKFORCE APPEARS TO BE DECLINING**

Survey respondents were significantly less inclined to say that “there is little desired turnover” in SDDOT (Item 99). This item declined more than any other, from 2.54 in 2004 to 2.11 in 2006, a decline of 17 percent. This increased perception of undesired turnover was substantiated by both focus group comments and comments in response to open-ended survey items. In both venues, the prevalence of comments about turnover was notably greater than in 2004. Comments about difficulties filling vacant positions with well-qualified people also increased this year.

Several survey items speak directly to the problem of retention and the consequences for SDDOT. Between 42 and 68 percent of respondents (depending on the item) said that SDDOT does not do a good job of meeting their needs as individuals, their morale is not high, and they would not encourage their best friend to work for SDDOT (Items 24, 39, 51). Employees were also significantly less inclined to say that their wages are sufficient to keep them from looking for another job, or that they have plans and aspirations to advance in SDDOT (Items 11, 16). Further, seven of the 11 survey items that Gallup research has established as highly correlated with retention, declined.

In addition, the results signal a particular threat to retention for employees as they move immediately beyond their first two years of service. For the overall satisfaction item and also for 83 of the other 101 scored items, employees with less than two years of service gave significantly higher responses than the group of all respondents. The group of employees with 2 through 6 years of service scored dramatically lower than the group in their first two years of service.

**CONCLUSION #4: LACK OF CONSISTENCY IN THE QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IS A MAJOR OBSTACLE TO FURTHER PROGRESS**

The “Best Practices Profile” analysis showed an exceptionally large gap between the 23 highest scoring SDDOT work units (high quartile) and the 23 lowest scoring work units (low quartile). Organizational health varies considerably, therefore, across work units in SDDOT. The specific management practices that strongly differentiated the high and low groups were summarized into the following six categories:

- Open Communication
- Employee Involvement
- Recognition and Feedback
- Training and Development
- Focus on Results and Improvement
- Policies Fairly Applied
Employees of the high scoring units responded to the 26 items that comprise the above categories at a significantly more favorable level than employees of low scoring units. As an apparent result of working in an environment characterized by these practices, they were also significantly more favorable in response to 15 of the most fundamental organizational health items pertaining to morale, job satisfaction, teamwork, trust in management, compensation and career advancement opportunities.

These 41 items most distinguished the highest and lowest scoring work units, demonstrating the enormous impact that the practices of individual supervisors and managers have on organizational health. In fact, 33 of these 41 items (80 percent) that scored significantly higher in the high quartile units are also among the 59 items that were found to be Improvement Opportunities for the Department as a whole, a 56 percent overlap.

**Proliferating the practices of the high quartile, therefore, will have a direct, favorable impact on organizational health in the areas that are currently indicated as priorities for improvement. This is one of the foremost conclusions and recommendations of this study.**

Conversely, failing to invest in strategies designed to elevate these key practices will leave in place a major obstacle to SDDOT’s progress in organizational health.

**CONCLUSION #5: A GATEWAY TO FURTHER IMPROVEMENT IS CLARIFYING ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTION AND PRIORITIES**

Three items declined significantly since 2004 that indicate employees are less clear about SDDOT’s organizational priorities (Items 35, 96, 97). Respondents were also significantly less inclined to say that they are kept well informed about what is happening in their part of SDDOT (Item 34). These findings were confirmed in the survey’s written comments and the focus groups, which also described how the lack of clarity and information translates into overly cautious decision making and quells initiative. Accordingly, survey respondents were also significantly less inclined to say this year that the SDDOT philosophy emphasizes that people should take initiative (Item 21).

In response to the survey question, “What types of information do you feel you need more of?,” there was a statistically significant increase in the percentage of respondents who marked “Top management decisions and actions” (59.2 percent), “What’s going on in other parts of SDDOT” (50.2 percent), and “SDDOT’s direction and goals” (49.4 percent). In each of the focus group discussions of these results participants commented on both the discontinuation of publishing minutes of executive staff meetings and that the most recent employee meetings with executive staff were led in ways that discouraged raising issues or questions. These views are substantiated by the fact that survey respondents were significantly less inclined than in 2004 to say that there is adequate two-way information between employees and the executive staff (Item 31).

It is likely that the greater uncertainty about priorities and the tentativeness about decision making accounts for the significant decline in the employees’ views that there is a desire to continually improve performance at SDDOT or a willingness to take a chance on a good idea (Items 20, 54).

Several of the comments made by executive staff members in the interviews and discussions with them at the outset of this project anticipated some of these results. For example, the substantial change in the composition of the executive staff since the last OHA was noted and that, while there had been
discussions among the executive staff regarding update of strategic goals and priorities, this information was still in the draft stage.

The updating of the strategic goals was completed while the OHA survey was being developed. Consequently, the updated goals were incorporated into the section of the survey pertaining to progress against strategic goals and the disseminating of them to SDDOT employees occurred almost simultaneous to the administration of the OHA survey. Disseminating the updated goals may serve to increase clarity about organizational goals and priorities some, but more investment in communication will be necessary to enable employees to translate this information into clear guidance for their work.

Fortunately, a further investment in internal communications can have many benefits beyond clarifying direction and priorities. Done effectively, it can also strengthen the relationship between employees and management. As noted in Conclusion #4, there is a clear opportunity to build confidence and trust in management, which can be an extremely valuable byproduct of dialogue about direction and priorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the researchers recommend the following to the South Dakota Department of Transportation:

1. Respond to the Communication Needs Voiced by Survey Respondents
2. Invest in Strategies to Proliferate the “Best Practices” That Are Characteristic of SDDOT’s High Quartile Work Units
3. Institute a Systematic Process for Evaluating Turnover
4. Address the Pay and Career Opportunity Concerns Raised by Survey Respondents
5. Continue the Organizational Health Assessment

These recommendations are consistent with the priorities identified by SDDOT executives after their review of the preliminary results of the OHA at the December executive staff meeting, though a few of our recommendations go beyond the executives’ four priorities. Specifically, the following summarizes the flipcharts created by the executives who reviewed the results and agreed on action priorities:

1. Executive Communication
   a. Incorporate all levels
   b. Get out and talk
   c. Two-way, open
   d. Promote initiatives
   e. Care about Organizational Health
2. Supervisory and Leadership Development
   a. Strengthen the pipeline
   b. More than just training
   c. Step up to ineffective supervisors and managers
3. Employee Recognition
4. Recruitment and Retention
   a. Focus on “Who is turning over?”
   b. Educate people on turnover
RECOMMENDATION #1: SEEK TO FULFILL COMMUNICATION NEEDS VOICED BY SURVEY RESPONDENTS

A large number of survey respondents indicated the need for more and/or better communication and information in the following areas:

1. The “how” and “why” behind management decisions, especially those made at higher levels (59.2 percent)
2. “What’s going on” information from the extended environment that includes other regions, other state DOT’s, other parts of South Dakota government that affect DOT (50.2 percent)
3. SDDOT’s direction and priorities (49.4 percent)
4. Training opportunities (33.9 percent)
5. Career advancement opportunities and related information about the process and requirements (31.9 percent)

Seeking to fulfill these needs is put forth as a recommendation in part because of the prevalence of survey responses, but also because investments in communication made as a result of prior assessments have led to significant improvements in the related organizational health items. An effective investment in communications will also have a beneficial ripple effect to other aspects of organizational health beyond just the substance of the communications. The example previously given was that clarifying SDDOT’s direction and priorities can serve to build the confidence and trust that employees have in top management. Another example is that assuring better communications about training and career advancement is likely to go beyond the basic purpose of enabling employees to become greater contributors to the Department through their work. It can lead to less undesired turnover and also strengthen the relationship with top management by conveying concern and interest in meeting employee needs. Addressing these communication needs can also contribute to boosting the perception many expressed that changes will not happen as a result of the survey.

Our recommendation regarding the nature of the investment in communication is that it be primarily systemic, rather than episodic. The one-time event of announcing and distributing the new set of strategic goals has good value, but meeting communication needs requires an ongoing effort and a mix of one-way and two-way methods.

RECOMMENDATION #2: STRATEGIES TO PROLIFERATE “BEST PRACTICES”

The reasons for strongly recommending this are twofold. The first is the strength of the findings, which underscore the potential power of this approach to achieving the Organizational Health strategic goal. The second reason is the practicality of implementing this recommendation, which is at least as compelling as the first. One-fourth of SDDOT’s work units are already demonstrating superior results, so it cannot be argued that these levels of organizational health are unachievable in SDDOT’s environment. In addition, there are many proven ways to establish the best practices as expectations of supervisors and managers, and to develop their ability to demonstrate these practices.

The following paragraphs give examples of various strategies in this regard. Because of the finding that organizational health improvement opportunities are more prevalent among employees in the Maintenance and Equipment job groups, greater consideration of how these strategies could be
implemented for optimal impact with employees of these groups is recommended. Many of these strategies were also recommended in the 2004 OHA report.

**Workshops for Supervisors and Managers to Review the OHA Results of the Specific Units They Manage**

One of the tasks of this project was to conduct workshops for SDDOT managers and supervisors in which they each receive a report that aggregates the survey responses for the employees that report directly to them. The workshop also enables them to learn the best practices so that they can plan steps to improve organizational health in the work units for which they are specifically responsible.

**Training**

Updating current supervisory and management training programs to incorporate the management competencies reflected in the best practices identified in the OHA is also recommended. Organize these programs into a multifaceted, systemic progression of development for supervisors and managers, rather than simply a collection of available courses. In addition to classroom learning, create new learning experiences for supervisors and managers that clearly illustrate how those who achieve the highest survey scores demonstrate the desired practices. These might involve, for example, visits to other regions to observe staff meetings, peer group discussions led by managers that have mastered the best practices, or case study descriptions of the best practices in action.

In addition to those who have a manager or supervisor title, investment in training should extend to Lead Workers for those aspects of their role that are akin to supervisory skills. There were more than a few comments on both the survey and in the focus groups recommending supervisory skill training for Lead Workers, pointing to disparity in the quality of Lead Workers, and/or giving specific examples of poor practices on the part of Lead Workers.

This part of the recommendation is supported by our understanding that, apart from the annual Managers Conference, most supervisors and managers participate in little formal management development beyond their initial training as a new supervisor. However, the need goes beyond assuring that supervisors and managers have more training resources available to develop their managerial competence. A fundamental premise is that the managers of supervisors and managers must play a specific role in supporting the management development efforts of the people who report to them.

In many organizations, supervisors and managers are not expected to invest in employee development beyond what is required to assure that their employees meet the fundamental job requirements and that current performance goals are met. But if the managers of SDDOT’s supervisors and managers demonstrate more developmental practices the benefits will cascade and multiply. In addition to building the management skills of their direct reports they are serving as models for developing others that will translate into more developmental practices demonstrated by first-line supervisors with the front-line employees who report to them. Further, a more “developmental culture” contributes directly to the strategic goal to “attract and retain the best possible employees,” and will serve to maintain competency levels within the workforce in the wake of retirements and other turnover.

Without expanding their developmental role and responsibility to include “stretch” assignments and other forms of growth opportunities, supervisors and managers undermine a key goal of workforce planning and development, which is to attract and retain talented people. Research by the Gallup organization of its data base of over one million employees who have responded to job satisfaction and work climate surveys over
the past two decades has produced a compelling profile of the high performance and high retention work environment, and the practices of the managers who create these environments. Not surprisingly, a distinguishing characteristic of these managers is that, once employees are fully competent in their positions, the manager seeks to meet their growth needs and interests.

Gallup’s findings are substantiated by the 2006 OHA results. Employees in high quartile work units were significantly more inclined than others to say that someone at work encourages their development, they have had opportunities to learn and grow in the past year, their supervisor had discussed their career goals with them, and the training they received will help them advance in their careers (Items 40, 19, 38, 64).

Motivating and enabling supervisors and managers to expand their role in this way requires a deliberate investment in their acquiring the competency of “developing employees.” In addition, it requires deliberate actions on the part of those in leadership positions to communicate their expectations for supervisors and managers to demonstrate this competency and to strongly reinforce the efforts of those who do.

**Performance Management System**

Another avenue for proliferating best practices is to revise the existing management job descriptions or other formal statements of responsibilities and expectations to clearly reflect the desired practices. Performance appraisals for supervisors and managers would then include meeting at least minimal competencies in demonstrating these benchmark practices. Since organizational health is a cornerstone of SDDOT’s strategic plan, it is recommended that supervisors and managers be expected to include one or more goals in their annual performance plans for making workplace improvements based on their survey results or other indicators of the need for improving organizational health. Award programs and rewards for superior performance can also be based on demonstrating the benchmark practices.

The performance management system should also guide supervisors and managers in their efforts to develop these competencies. A developmental assessment and planning guide for supervisors and managers, based on the best practices profile, would be helpful for them to use in directing their own development and in reaching agreement with their manager about their development plans.

Related to this recommendation is to establish a requirement that supervisors and managers prepare an action plan based on their OHA results that is reviewed and approved by their immediate supervisor. A Florida DOT project similar to the OHA revealed the importance of supervisors and managers preparing action plans based on their unit’s survey results. In the first years of their annual employee survey, such action plans were encouraged but not required. In follow-up research with the high quartile units, however, it was learned that preparing these action plans was almost uniformly characteristic of the high quartile work units. As a result, the action planning came to be required. This was one of the reasons that Florida DOT began to see an increased rate of improvement among low quartile work units.

**Selection and Recruitment**

For many organizations technical qualifications are more formally and carefully reviewed as part of candidate screenings than are the type of competencies in the best practices profile. Consequently, most selections that are subsequently regretted are due to a lack of these competencies rather than a lack of technical ability. Reflect the best practices in job postings for supervisory positions. Update interview methods to qualify candidates on these practices and, in announcing promotions and selections, highlight the qualifications of successful candidates that reflect the best practices.
Focus on to Ineffective Managerial Performance

It is very important that the survey results not be used as a basis for evaluating the performance or abilities of managers. The managers of SDDOT’s supervisors and managers are responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of their employees based on observations of job performance. They are also responsible for assuring that the development needs of the supervisors and managers who report to them are addressed, rather than allowed to continue in ways that undermine organizational health. The concern is that a major reason such a large gap exists between the high quartile and low quartile work units is that managers of supervisors and managers have not made the development of management skills a priority.

This part of our recommendation, therefore, involves expecting managers of SDDOT’s managers and supervisors to review the current managerial effectiveness of those who report to them and decide which, if any, of the best practices represent development needs. The higher level managers would then be expected to collaborate with their subordinate supervisors and managers in designing focused learning experiences and coaching interventions. Our understanding is that, while there may have been numerous individual efforts to step up to specific cases of poor managerial performance, there has been no formal program or expectation to focus attention in this way.

Summary

There are few barriers to implementing strategies like the foregoing. They are similar to most of the initiatives taken in response to prior assessments in that they simply require the choice to place priority on management development and to focus management attention accordingly.

Recommendation #3: Institute a Systematic Process for Evaluating Turnover

From both the survey and the focus group results, employees’ concerns about undesired turnover were significantly greater than in 2004. The perceptions were that turnover is generally greater, representing a variety of positions, and largely including the quality of personnel that are not desirable to lose. The increased turnover is not seen as resulting from a wave of retirements but rather from lack of career opportunity, low pay, and other organizational health factors.

While the perceptions of employees are valuable as a general barometer of turnover, they do not provide the precise data necessary to analyze the extent and causes of turnover by job category and other key characteristics of those who leave. Without systematic assessment of this information basic questions about whether turnover is excessive, the nature of it, and the reasons for it cannot be answered. As a result, there cannot be adequate consideration of the question of what, if anything, to do about it.

A systematic process for evaluating turnover can provide earlier warning than would otherwise be the case and enhance other aspects of workforce planning. In addition, it will enable factual responses to what may be inaccurate perceptions and concerns that have been raised about turnover.

There are three other strong reasons for this recommendation. The first is that several retention indicators incorporated in the OHA have been declining. The second is that SDDOT may not be able to make major changes, especially in the pay or personnel systems, which would address the currently perceived reasons for turnover. It is especially important, therefore, to have the kind of information that can serve to either justify major changes or point to alternative solutions when turnover problems emerge. The third reason is that it is not very costly to implement this recommendation.
Some of the findings highlighted the group of employees with 2 through 6 years of service as particularly at risk in terms of turnover. Satisfaction was lowest for this group, and in past years it has generally not shown the improvements in satisfaction characteristic of the other tenure groups. Retaining this group is especially important to assuring the continuity of a well-qualified workforce, so special attention should be given to evaluating turnover within this group.

**RECOMMENDATION #4: ADDRESS THE PAY AND CAREER OPPORTUNITY CONCERNS OF EMPLOYEES**

The focus groups revealed that many employees recognize SDDOT’s leadership is limited in its ability to increase pay and expand career opportunities. However, the prevalence of the continuing frustration of employees in these areas represents a leadership challenge that should not be dismissed because the prospects of increasing pay and promotion opportunities are low. To the contrary, these circumstances make it even more important to acknowledge employees’ concerns, openly discuss them, and demonstrate a reasonable exploration of ideas for stimulating favorable changes.

Two of the items that distinguish high quartile and low quartile work units are whether the supervisor has “talked with me about my career goals” and whether the supervisor has “discussed my pay concerns and answered my questions about pay” (Items 39, 40). Responses of employees in high quartile units were significantly more favorable than employees in low quartile units. It is probably not coincidental that high quartile employees were also significantly more inclined than others to say that their wages are sufficient and they are satisfied with career advancement opportunities (Items 17, 18). A similar project in Florida DOT found that the greatest gains from a prior assessment were achieved by the work units in which the managers had followed the encouragement of the Department Secretary to formally ask their employees what questions or concerns they had about their pay.

Georgia DOT offers other thoughts about how to address pay and career advancement concerns. GDOT asked this project’s principal researchers to benchmark the full range of human resource practices and policies in 10 organizations, including eight other Departments of Transportation. The organizations were compared in terms of pay and benefits, training, recruitment and selection methods, and career advancement policies and programs. The study gave GDOT’s senior managers hard data about the areas in which their human resource practices were in line or out of step with similar agencies. In addition, the research brought to their attention several successful programs and practices that stimulated new thinking about how to address the human resource challenges that they faced.

For example, North Carolina DOT implemented a “skill-based pay” program as a way of differentiating compensation within the same job classification based on the number and types of skills an employee is able to demonstrate. So, an employee who has learned to operate a particular type of equipment qualifies for more compensation than those who have not gained this competency.

North Carolina is an example of how other states have searched for, and to some extent found, fresh ways to approach the difficult challenges associated with pay and career advancement. It is recommended that SDDOT invest in such a search.

**RECOMMENDATION #5: CONTINUE THE ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT**

The OHA is a proven vehicle for stimulating organizational improvements. We cannot offer a more effective means for measuring progress toward the Organizational Health strategic goal. SDDOT’s
approach is consistent with that of many other state agencies that have similarly benefited from listening to the views of employees.

A recommendation for strengthening the assessment is to consider administration methods that encourage greater participation of the Maintenance job group. The increase in response rate this year appeared to result, in part, by the increase in the number of employees with access to the Internet. Administration methods for the next OHA should again make optimal use of online survey completion, perhaps by requesting supervisors of field personnel to arrange specific times for employees who do not have their own computer work stations to respond to the survey.
APPENDIX A—SURVEY USED IN 2006 ASSESSMENT

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT 2006

Purpose: This survey’s purpose is to assist SDDOT in assuring that the work environment is as productive and satisfying as possible. Your responses, together with those of your fellow employees, will identify areas that are working well and also opportunities for improvement. The results will be reported to all SDDOT employees by the end of this year. The responses to previous surveys have led to favorable changes in safety, equipment, training and many other areas, so your answers will help to make SDDOT a better place to work.

Confidentiality: Survey responses are being collected and compiled by Oasis Consulting Services, an independent organization that helps government agencies create productive and satisfying workplaces. No one outside Oasis will have access to individual responses.

Your survey has an assigned number that allows Oasis to send reminders to those who forget to respond to the survey. However, no one in SDDOT will know who did or did not respond. The number also allows Oasis to match your demographic information, such as years of service and classification, to your responses for the purpose of analysis. However, your responses will be combined with those of other employees and analyzed in a manner that ensures no one outside Oasis ever knows your individual responses. Your written responses will be typed and grouped by category with others. No information will be released that would make it possible to identify your individual response. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Oasis at 702-562-3695, or via email, consultoasis@earthlink.net.

Completing the Survey: Please complete the survey by yourself. It will take about 30 to 45 minutes to complete.

You may choose to complete the survey on work time or at home.

If you choose to respond on the Internet enter the following Oasis web address:

Please keep in mind that once you begin the online survey you must complete and submit it without leaving the site. You can take as much time as you need, but if you leave the site without finishing your responses will be lost.

Responding on the Internet is more convenient for most people and it allows the survey results to be compiled faster.

If you choose to complete this form use the enclosed self-addressed envelope to return it. If the envelope is not enclosed, mail the completed survey to Oasis Consulting Services, 1008 Sable Mist Court, Las Vegas, NV 89144. DO NOT give your completed survey to your supervisor or anyone else at SDDOT.

Return Date: Please mail the completed survey by October 14. Thank you for responding promptly!

Mark the answer that best matches your opinion regarding each statement.

Please fill in marks like this: [Strongly Agree] [Inclined to Agree] [Inclined to Disagree] [Strongly Disagree]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Inclined to Agree</th>
<th>Inclined to Disagree</th>
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</table>

1. When I have a question about work assignments, I know whom to ask.
2. Red tape is kept to a minimum in the SDDOT.
3. Work is well planned in our work group.
4. My associates (fellow employees) are committed to doing quality work.
5. People are held accountable for the quality of their work.
6. I am only held responsible for things I can influence.
7. People in my work group do not wait to be told when something needs to be done; they can usually decide on their own how to produce the best results.
Mark the answer that best matches your opinion regarding each statement.

Please fill in marks like this: [ ] Not like this: [X]

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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Inclined to Agree</th>
<th>Inclined to Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Poor performance is not tolerated in our work group.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>My co-workers and I are proud to be a part of the SDDOT.</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>I feel that I am a member of a well functioning SDDOT team.</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>I have plans and aspirations to advance in SDDOT.</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Adequate recognition and praise are given for a job well done.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The SDDOT has a promotion system that helps the best person to rise in the organization.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>In the SDDOT, people are rewarded based on their job performance.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>My wages are sufficient to keep me from looking for another job.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I am satisfied with the opportunities for future career advancement in the SDDOT.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for good work.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>The SDDOT is willing to take a chance on a good idea.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>The SDDOT philosophy emphasizes that people should take initiative to solve problems.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>A friendly atmosphere prevails among people in the SDDOT.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>There is a lot of warmth in the relationships between management and workers in the SDDOT.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>I would encourage my best friend to work for the SDDOT.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>I know what is expected of me at work.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>My immediate supervisor holds regularly scheduled staff meetings.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Staff meetings are a source of reliable information.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>I get the information I need to know from my immediate supervisor.</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>I feel free to openly state my opinion during the employee meetings with the Secretary of Transportation.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>I understand clearly how I can contribute to the overall goals of the SDDOT.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>There is adequate two-way information between employees and top management (executive staff level).</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Our immediate supervisor frequently asks for our ideas about the problems we face.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>When a decision is made involving my area of responsibility, I am involved in the decision.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>I am kept well informed about what is happening in my part of the SDDOT.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>I understand what the SDDOT’s top priorities are.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>I understand why and how work assignments are to be done.</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>At the SDDOT, my opinion seems to count.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>My immediate supervisor makes an effort to talk with me about my career goals within the SDDOT.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>In the past year, my immediate supervisor has discussed my pay concerns and answered my questions about pay.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>There is someone at work who encourages my development.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>When I am on a difficult assignment, I can usually count on getting assistance from my supervisor and co-workers.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>The SDDOT does a good job of meeting my needs as an individual.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Inclined to Agree</td>
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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td>43 My workload is reasonable.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>44 I receive the administrative and staff support necessary to do my job.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>45 I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>46 I get the information, assistance, and approvals I need quickly.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>47 The SDDOT goes out of its way to recognize employees for extraordinary service.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>48 My job, directly or indirectly, serves the citizens of South Dakota.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>49 The results of my work significantly affect many other people.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 My supervisor or someone at work seems to care about me as a person.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>51 Morale is high within my work group in SDDOT.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>52 My personal morale is high.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>53 I feel free to openly state my opinions to my immediate supervisor.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>54 At the SDDOT there is a desire to continually improve our personal and group performance.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>55 The results of previous Organization Health Assessments have led to some important and valuable changes in SDDOT.</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>56 At the SDDOT, people work hard to achieve quality results and take a great deal of pride in their performance.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>57 Action and behavior in SDDOT reflect good ethical and professional standards.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58 In our work group we spend time finding ways to make lasting improvements, rather than &quot;quick fixes.&quot;</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59 At the SDDOT we are encouraged to speak our minds, even if it means disagreeing with our supervisors.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 When we work in groups we feel free to disagree with each other openly and usually reach decisions without much difficulty or delay.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 I receive all the training I need to do a good job.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62 The quality of the job-related training I have received has been good.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63 The training available to me is job-related.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64 I believe the training I receive will help me advance professionally.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 The people I work with at the SDDOT really trust one another.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66 Employees in my work group can voice their opinions freely.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67 I can trust my immediate supervisor to represent my interests at higher levels.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68 SDDOT top management (executive staff level) respects employees.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69 Changes will happen as a result of this survey.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 People in SDDOT feel they are part of an effective team.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71 My work group has all the resources it needs to do its job.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72 My co-workers treat me with respect.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73 Trust levels are high between work teams.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74 I receive helpful and timely feedback on my work performance.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 My performance appraisal is a fair evaluation of my work.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76 My immediate supervisor and I agree on the goals listed in my performance appraisal.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77 There is follow-through on the items discussed during my performance appraisal.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78 In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mark the answer that best matches your opinion regarding each statement.

Please fill in marks like this:  
Not like this: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Inclined to Agree</th>
<th>Inclined to Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In my work group, we have identified our customers and discussed how to meet their expectations.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The members of my problem solving group feel empowered to make decisions that affect our work.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My work group has identified good performance measures to help establish goals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The performance measurement initiative improves performance over time.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The performance measures initiative is worth the time that it takes.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand the performance measurement initiative.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety is an important issue at the SDDOT.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Policies at the SDDOT enable employees to do their jobs better.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety at the SDDOT has improved in the past two years.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment assigned to the SDDOT is properly maintained.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know where I can find standard operating procedures and policies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overtime is fairly applied in the SDDOT.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with my hours and schedule of work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing levels allow us to do quality work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time and seasonal workers are a good way to manage workload.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The policy on flexible scheduling is fair.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The SDDOT has priorities that are both clear-cut and reasonable.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I clearly understand the direction in which the SDDOT is heading.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The SDDOT listens to its customers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is little undesired turnover at the SDDOT.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My job is essential to the South Dakota transportation system.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mission of the SDDOT makes me feel my job is important.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

102 Overall Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Extremely Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall, how satisfied are you with the SDDOT as a place to work?</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
<td>☒</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How well is SDDOT progressing in achieving our Strategic Goals?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer Satisfaction</th>
<th>Strategic Goals</th>
<th>Significant Progress</th>
<th>Some Progress</th>
<th>Little or No Progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Maximize the public’s transportation experience by continually improving operation of the state’s transportation system, while respecting safety, mobility needs, and environmental concerns.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Improve customer satisfaction for SDDOT products and services.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Provide and maintain a safe and cost effective transportation system.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Inform, educate, and gather input from external customers.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Make SDDOT a desirable place to work.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Attract and retain the best possible employees.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Maximize employee skills through career planning and training.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Enhance customer service skills.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Perform formal and informal feedback to employees.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Promote innovative rewards and recognition that demonstrate how management values employees’ contributions.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Improve and promote workforce safety.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Improvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Continuously improve the department’s business and operations activities to ensure they serve our mission effectively and economically.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Continuously improve planning, design, and contract procedures.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Continuously improve operating and maintenance procedures.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Target support processes to improve cost, timeliness, and quality.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Improve cooperation with stakeholders.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Target construction engineering processes to improve cost, timeliness, and quality.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Manage our financial resources to optimize delivery of services.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Manage cash to ensure adequate cash balances to meet operating requirements.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Create and maintain performance management system.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Manage SDDOT highways, bridges, airports, and rail facilities in a safe and sound condition.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Manage the SDDOT’s inventory, equipment, and buildings in a cost effective manner.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What types of information do you feel you need more of? *(Mark all that apply)*

- 1 Information about my personal job performance
- 2 Information about SDDOT policies
- 3 Information about job opportunities within SDDOT
- 4 Information about training opportunities
- 5 Technical information about my job duties
- 6 Information about top management decisions and actions
- 7 Information about SDDOT’s direction and goals
- 8 Information about what’s going on in other parts of SDDOT
- 9 Other (please specify): ________________________________

As a means of communicating information to you, how effective are each of the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Effective</th>
<th>Moderately Effective</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 E-mail</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Web sites</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Written updates</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Work unit staff meetings</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 One page flyers or Newsletters</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Area or Program meetings</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Region or Division meetings</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Secretary of Transportation Employee meetings</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Supervisor</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Other (please specify): ___________________</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Open response questions *(Attach additional pages if needed)*:

1. What is the most important issue facing the SDDOT in the next six months?

_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

2. If you could change some things in the SDDOT, what would they be?

_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

3. What is the most positive thing happening in the SDDOT?

_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

4. Please make any other comments you believe will be helpful.

_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your time and effort.
Your answers help make SDDOT a better place to work.