

William & Mary

2018 Employee Climate Survey Executive Summary

Background

In 2015, the Office of Human Resources in cooperation with the Task Force on Race and Race Relations and other groups conducted the first comprehensive climate survey of all university employees with the survey being independently designed and administered by the Gelfond Group, now part of PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). With a strong response rate of 71%, the survey allowed the university to identify areas of strength or concern across the university or within specific units or subgroups and begin to address specific issues.

In Fall 2018, the university again retained PwC to conduct a comprehensive climate survey including all employment groups. With many of the same questions in both surveys, the university is able to not only evaluate its overall climate for employees at a single point in time but also see what changes, if any, have occurred since 2015. This information, along with comparisons of William & Mary employee responses relative to more than 200 national and international organizations, can guide the university in improving the overall work environment as we strive to be a preferred employer and one of the best universities at which to work.

Survey Approach and Overall Response

The 2018 survey again saw strong employee participation with 76% of all employees responding, an increase of five percentage points above the 2015 level. This significant level of response across all departments, employees groups, genders and ethnicities validates the results as they influence future university action.

PwC used a variety of questions to assess:

- Employee Engagement—How do employees rate their work experience and are they proud to work at William & Mary?
- William & Mary as a Place to work—Are employees treated well and respected in the workplace?

- Employee Views of their Specific Job—Is there a good understanding of the job and does it make good use of an employee’s skills and talents?
- Satisfaction with Pay and Benefits—Are employees fairly compensated for their work?
- Quality of Supervisor—Are employees treated with respect and fairness? Are they able to provide input into the job?
- Quality of Overall Management—Is the university well managed? Are employee concerns considered as decisions are made? Do we have the appropriate organizational structures in place?
- Diversity—Are employees treated fairly relative to race, gender, age or sexual orientation?

PwC received employee responses directly so they remained anonymous as the survey was conducted and results provided. Aggregating responses by department, employee group, gender and ethnicity allows the Office of Human Resources to more precisely target areas for improvement. As a result, over the next few months the Office will be sharing department specific data across campus, highlighting both areas of strength as well areas of focus. This information will also inform the university’s upcoming strategic planning effort.

Some university-level highlights from the 2018 Employee Climate Survey follow.

Overall Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is defined as the level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards his or her organization and its values. Using the results from multiple questions, PwC calculates an engagement index. This index is a critical performance measure because of its relationship to an employer’s capacity to achieve performance levels and superior results. Engaged employees are more motivated, perform better, and tend to stay with the organization longer. They become advocates for the employer and encourage others to join the organization.

William & Mary’s overall favorable engagement score is 75%, a one point increase from 2015. However, this significant level of engagement is not consistent across the university. African Americans, while proud to work for the university (78%), have a lower overall engagement score of 61% with lower ratings than other employee groups regarding W&M as a place to work (48%) and their assessment of respectful treatment (55%). These same issues were flagged in the 2015 survey and shared with the President’s Task Force on Race and Race Relations. At that

time, Facilities Management was identified as a particular area of concern. As a result, 42 supervisors completed a one-year leadership training program in March 2019. While this effort was significant, the 2018 survey results indicate that additional work across the university is required to support these employees (see Opportunities for Improvement).

William & Mary as a Place to Work

Like employee engagement, the university receives strong scores as a good place to work (72%), particularly in regard to being treated with respect (72%) and inspiring employees to do their best work (73%). African-American employees again expressed lower ratings of W&M as a place to work and in assessing respectful treatment. Within this category, all employee groups expressed relatively low ratings (56%) for caring about and fair treatment of employees.

Employee Views of their Specific Job

Employees conveyed good understanding of job responsibilities (92%) and making good use of their skills and abilities (81%). However, employees shared a desire for flexibility to make decisions and provide input into their job. These results are supported by other responses that make clear employees want the university to provide more opportunities for advancement and career development. This need, and related training and resources, were on-going themes during President Rowe's recent listening sessions with staff from across the university.

Pay and Benefits

While employees are generally satisfied with the benefits side of compensation, there is a general concern regarding pay levels. Overall, only 39% of employees responded favorably to the statement "I believe I am fairly compensated for the work I do." Though this response may have been impacted by the lack of pay increases in FY 2019, only 41% of all employees responded favorably in 2015. Given the consistency of responses over time, a detailed market study of salaries is warranted.

Quality of Supervision and Management

Overall, employees rated their supervisor favorably (76%), a modest increase from the 2015 results. Gaps persist among racial groups and employee classifications in

respectful and fair treatment as well as encouragement of training opportunities. Relative to Quality of Management employees are looking to the university to reduce bureaucracy, listen to suggestions, consistently apply policies and procedures, and take employee interests into account when making decisions.

Diversity

The fundamental question in this category is “are employees treated fairly” regardless of gender, race, age, or sexual orientation? Though overall responses are generally favorable, significant gaps were again found in the reported experiences of different groups of employees. These results support the on-going emphasis given Diversity and Inclusion across campus.

Opportunities for Improvement

While the survey results are good, there are clearly areas of improvement, both university-wide and within various departments. These include:

- On-going supervisor training and support, building on the just-concluded one-year training effort in Facilities Management.
- Development of non-supervisory career tracks and improved opportunities and training/cross-training in support of career advancement.
- Completion of a market-based salary study across employment categories and job classification.
- Streamlining business processes in conjunction with cross-training and career path opportunities.
- Improving communication among various employees groups and the administration.
- Incorporating the results of the 2018 Employee Climate Survey into the university’s strategic planning effort.

Conclusion

We will continue to review and share the survey results to help us build on university strengths and improve in areas of weakness. While “top down” direction is important, true change occurs among individual employees, their supervisors and at the department and unit level. It will require a concerted effort from everyone to achieve the workplace excellence to which we aspire at William & Mary.