NCSL 2014 Legislative Summit: Managing Legislative Staff

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Washington’s Political and Legislative Staff Structure

- House (Democrats=55, Republicans=43)

- Senate (Majority Coalition Caucus=26, Democrats=23)

- Separate partisan and nonpartisan staff for each chamber

- Shared support services including information technology, facilities, supply, legislative information center and hotline, printing, graphics, and audio/video/photo services.
Staff Structure Continued

House Executive Rules Committee

Chief Clerk

Republican Caucus
- Policy Staff
- Communications staff
- Member Leg. Assistants (LAs)

Democratic Caucus
- Policy Staff
- Communications staff
- Member Leg. Assistants (LAs)

Administration
- Security
- Accounting
- Workroom

Support Services
(joint w/Senate)
- Facilities
- Photo
- Video
- Supply
- Info Center
- Gift Shop
- Prod Services
- Graphics

Office of Program Research
(Cmte. Svcs.)
- Fiscal Analysts
- Research Analysts
- Counsel Staff
- Intern Program

8/20/2014
The House of Representatives employs 224 permanent staff*

- House Administration (Chief Clerk's Office, Accounting, Workroom, and Security) 37%
- House Republican Caucus (Policy, Communications, Member Assistants) 29%
- House Democratic Caucus (Policy, Communications, Member Assistants) 28%
- Office of Program Research (Nonpartisan Fiscal, Research, Counsel, Committee Assistants) 6%

* Data as of May 23, 2014.
How did the House of Representatives respond to the “Great Recession”? 

Examples of other reductions:

- Instituted layoffs and reduced session staffing
- Banned out-of-state travel
- Curtailed professional development
- Suspended tuition reimbursements
- Eliminated bus pass and van pool subsidies
- Cut certain per diem payments
- Consolidaed various operations with Senate
- Reduced goods, services, paper use
Current Economic Environment

- Washington’s economy is improving and expected to out-perform the nation over the long term, despite a slow recovery.

- State revenue collections are rebounding, but at a much slower pace than after previous recessions.

- Significant future increases required in K-12 education funding will pose out year budget challenges (McCleary vs. State of Washington).

- Another sizable budget shortfall is expected for the 2015-17 fiscal biennium.
Basic Elements of House “Temperature Check”

- Survey House employees and legislators to establish baseline data that will serve as the foundation for ongoing improvement efforts.

- Use a systematic, repeatable approach that allows for the comparison of results over time.

- Focus on common goals across House work groups.

- Identify successes and opportunities for improvement, communicate results, develop action plans, and focus resources.
Phase 1: House Employee Survey
79% Overall Response Rate

- Demographics

- Employee satisfaction with specific morale and compensation factors.

- Interaction with other work groups that are depended on to get work done.

- Organizational assessment in specific performance areas.

- Overall satisfaction.
Demographics - Years of Service

- 0 - 2 years: 69
- 3 - 5 years: 58
- 6 - 10 years: 31
- Over 10 years: 34

Breakdown:
- 36%: 0 - 2 years
- 30%: 3 - 5 years
- 18%: 6 - 10 years
- 16%: Over 10 years

Legend:
- Green: 0 - 2 years
- Orange: 3 - 5 years
- Gray: 6 - 10 years
- Blue: Over 10 years
89% of respondents are satisfied or strongly satisfied with their job.

House - All Workgroups Combined - Average Rating 4.28

- Strongly Agree: 41%
- Agree: 48%
- Neither Agree or Disagree: 9%
- Disagree: 2%
- Strongly Disagree: 0%

Legend:
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
Employee Satisfaction Factors

1. Compressed and flex scheduling
2. Flexibility in my work
3. Challenging work
4. Trust and respect among people
5. Safety and health at work
6. Appropriate decision-making ability
7. Ability to make a difference at work
8. Granted leave
9. Parking and other transportation options
10. House workout room
11. Job security
12. Telecommuting option
13. Internal staff development opportunities
14. Compensation
15. External staff development opportunities
16. Promotional opportunities
17. Cafeteria

1-Strongly Dissatisfied   2-Dissatisfied   3-Neither Dissatisfied or Satisfied   4-Satisfied   5-Strongly Satisfied
Examples of Survey Themes

- Feedback
- Professional development opportunities
- Compensation
- Comp time policy
- Laptops and other technology issues and policies
- Flexible work stations (ergonomics)
- Telecommuting options
Providing feedback to employees about their performance is the largest gap area identified across all organizational assessment questions.

House - All Workgroups Combined - Average Rating 3.44

- Strongly Agree: 30%
- Agree: 20%
- Neither Agree or Disagree: 31%
- Disagree: 14%
- Strongly Disagree: 5%
Next Steps

- Communicate survey results.
- Seek additional feedback on certain questions, with additional surveying or work group/focus group discussions.
- Develop and implement short- and long-term action plans.
- Develop member survey.
- Determine frequency of ongoing self-assessment.