

Workplace Environment at Oregon's Office of Emergency Management

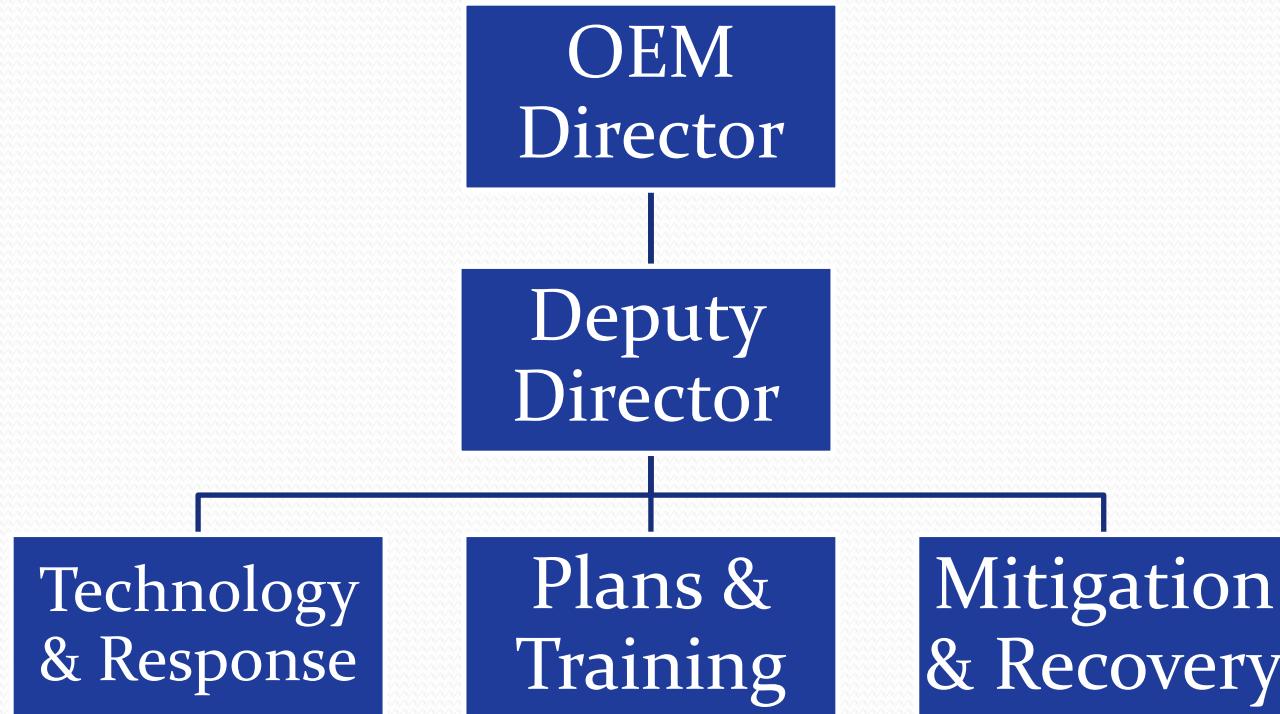
Pacific Northwest Intergovernmental Audit Forum

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Outline

- Background on Oregon Office of Emergency Management
- Hazards
- Audit objective
- Work environment survey results
- Reflections on Survey
- Q & A

Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Organizational Chart



Emergency Management Activities

























But then....

The Oregon Resilience Plan

**Reducing Risk and Improving Recovery for the
Next Cascadia Earthquake and Tsunami**

**Report to the 77th
Legislative Assembly
from
Oregon Seismic
Safety Policy Advisory
Commission
(OSSPAC)**



OEM Audit Topics

- ~~Disaster Recovery~~
- Hazard Mitigation
- Support to Local Emergency Managers

But then...

Internal Issues

- Two section managers quit
- Director (in place for less than a year) placed on leave, then fired
- Unfair labor complaints & tort claims filed
- Lack of key practices (e.g. no strategic plan)

OEM Audit Topics

- ~~Disaster Recovery~~
- ~~Hazard Mitigation~~
- ~~Support to Local Emergency Managers~~
- **Management Practices**

Audit Methodology

- Conducted a survey of employees
- Conducted interviews
- Reviewed:
 - Policies, procedures and plans
 - Meeting minutes
 - Personnel files, position data & employee development documentation
 - Guidance & communication with OEM-led stakeholder groups

Survey Methodology

- Reviewed workplace surveys & developed a tailored one
- Administered using Survey Monkey
- Emailed to non-supervisory employees (35 total)
- Gave one full week to complete
- Anonymous

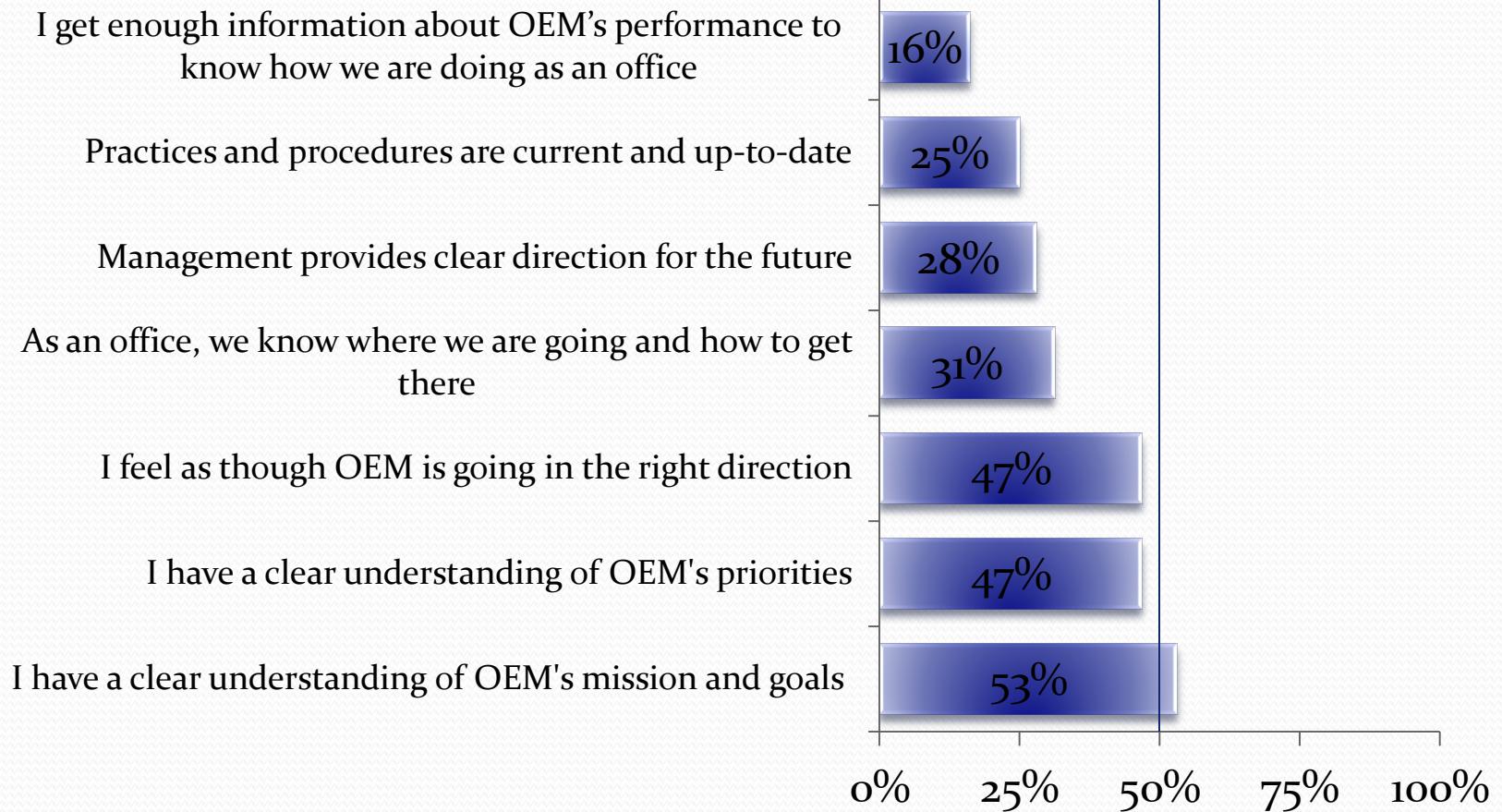
Survey Methodology

- 47 closed-ended questions framed as positive statement about the organization
- Answer options
 - Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree
- Included three general, open-ended questions

Survey results

- 90% return rate
- Low scores overall
 - Only 11 questions cleared 50% agreement
 - Over half below 45% agreement
- Open ended revealed and documented issues

Strategery



Support Among Employees

In my workplace, people do more than is required in order to help other staff

39%

Overall people work together as a team

42%

Staff work together to make processes go smoothly

42%

I feel I can question a policy or practice without being criticized for doing so by other staff

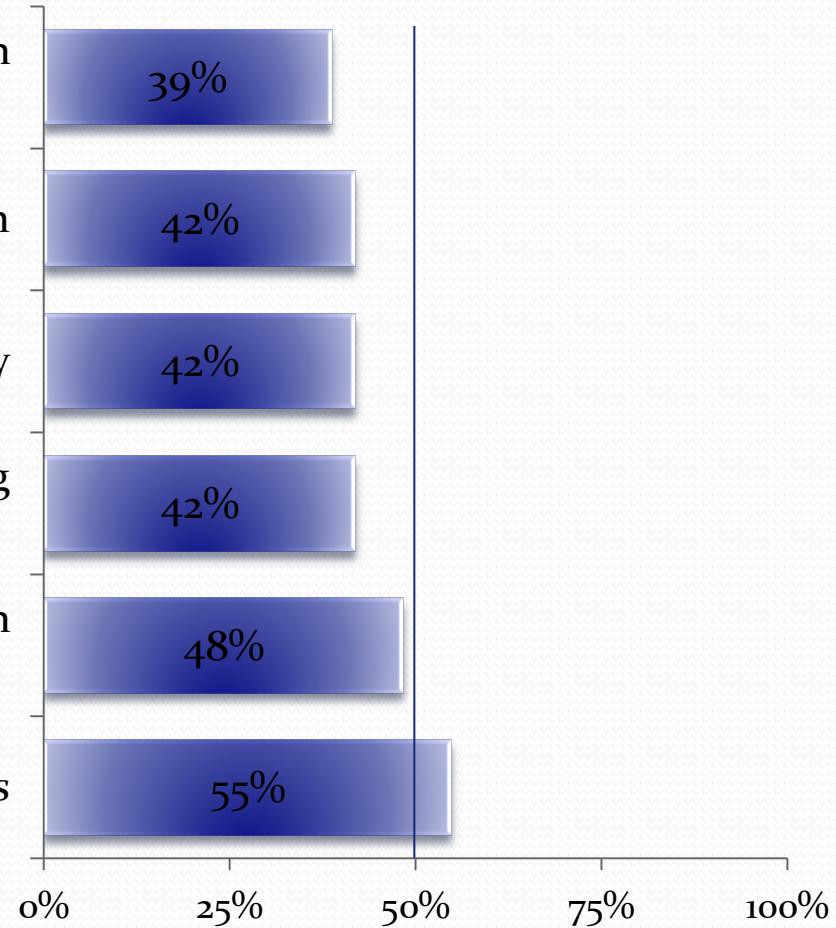
42%

I have the support of my coworkers to provide a high level of service

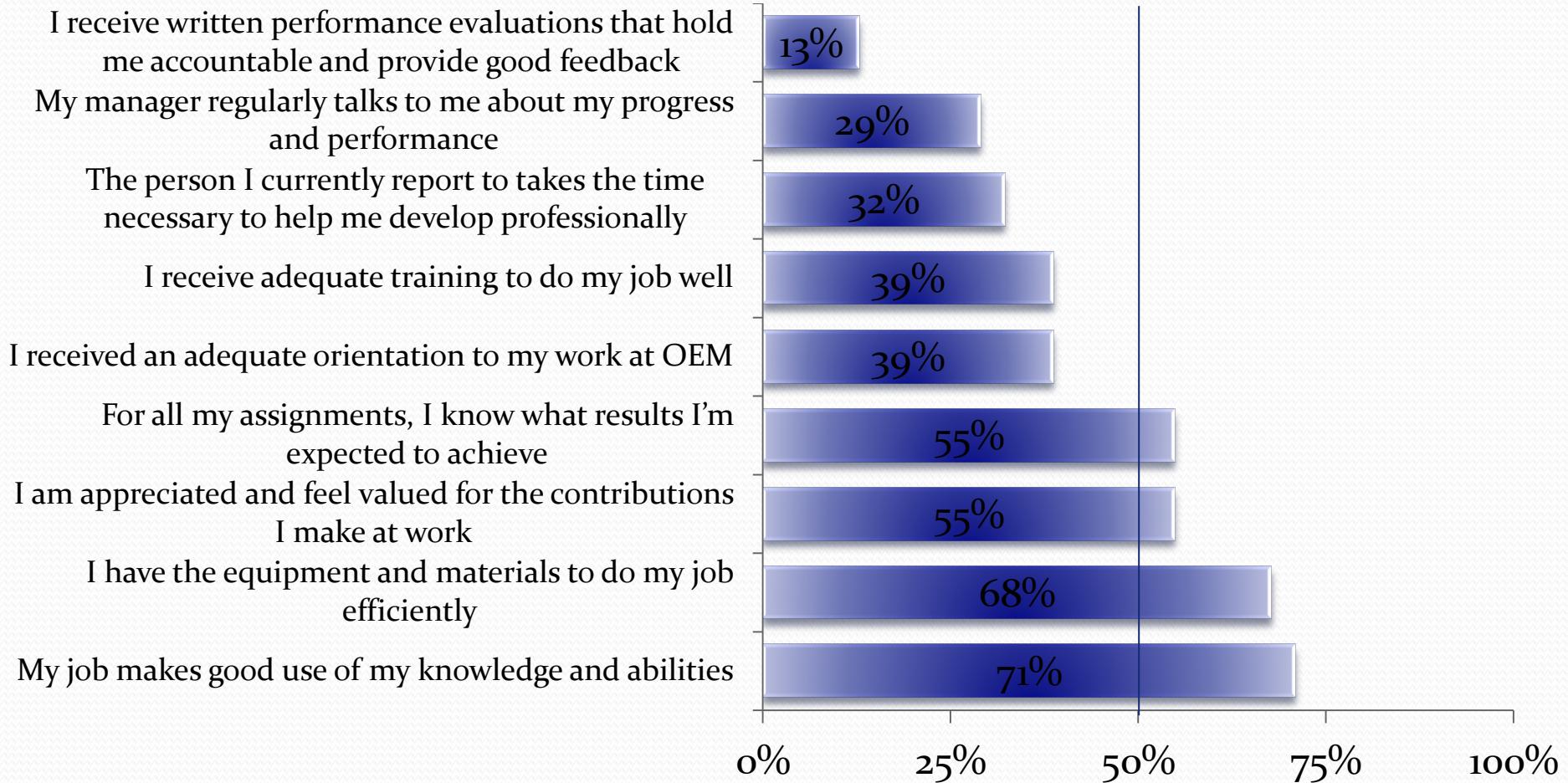
48%

I am treated with respect by my coworkers

55%



Feedback and Employee Development



Quality & Results of Communications

Information flows effectively from section to section

16%

Overall, I'm satisfied with office communications

38%

Management to staff communication is cordial and effective

44%

Essential information flows effectively from management to staff

44%

The person I currently report to gives clear direction

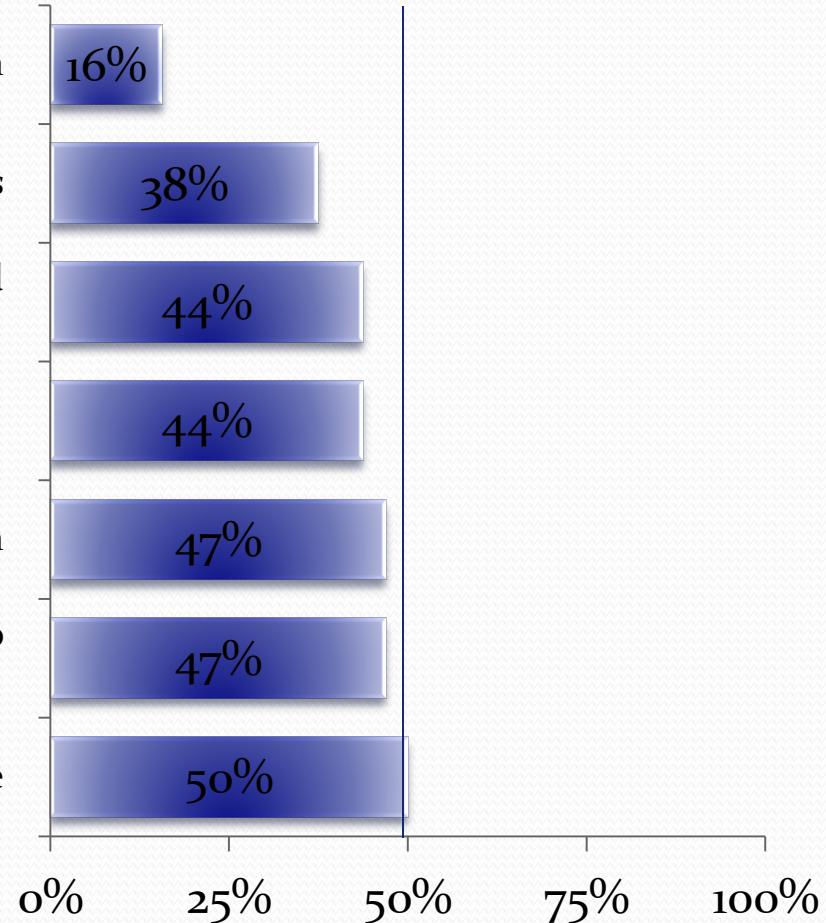
47%

Essential information flows effectively from staff to management

47%

Staff to staff communication is cordial and effective

50%



Resources & Workload

Work is distributed fairly among those I work with

29%

Management allocates staff resources well

29%

I can trust my coworkers to do their job well

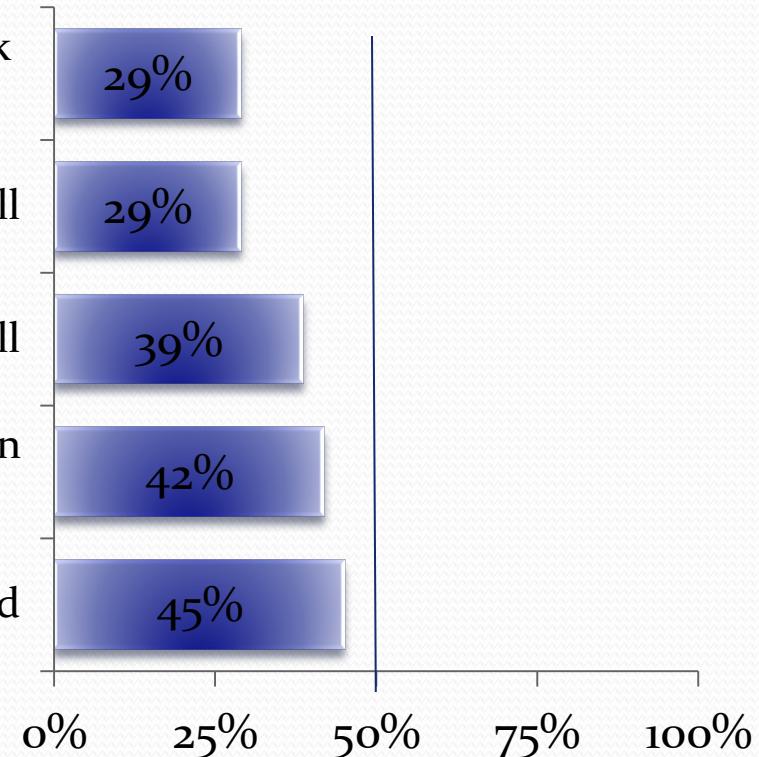
39%

Generally, my work-related stress is at an acceptable level

42%

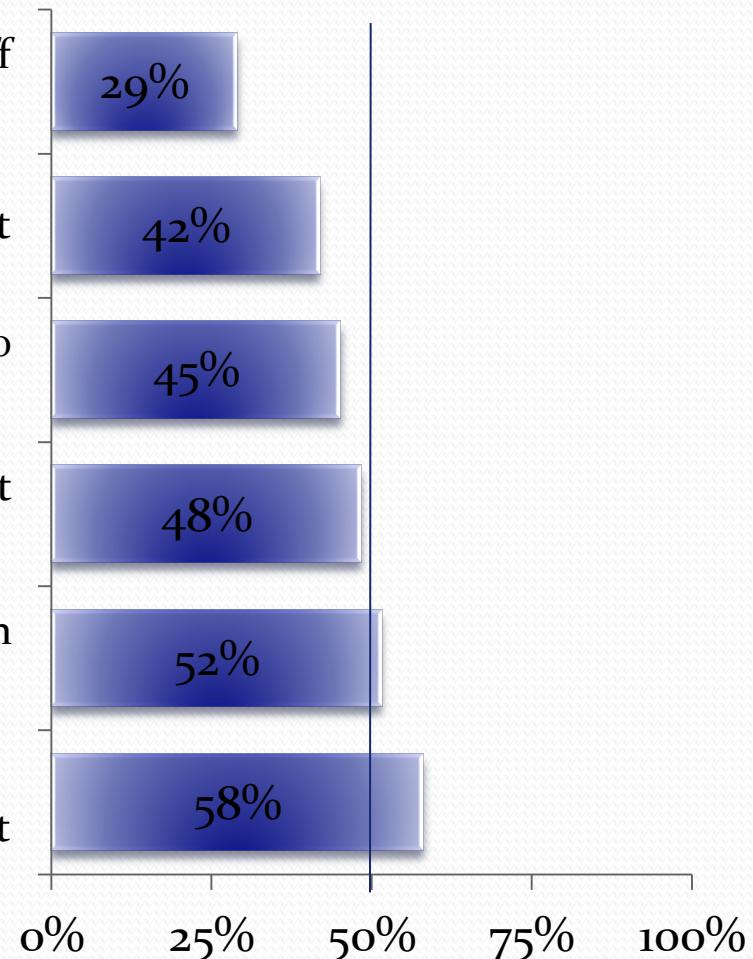
I am able to keep up with my workload

45%



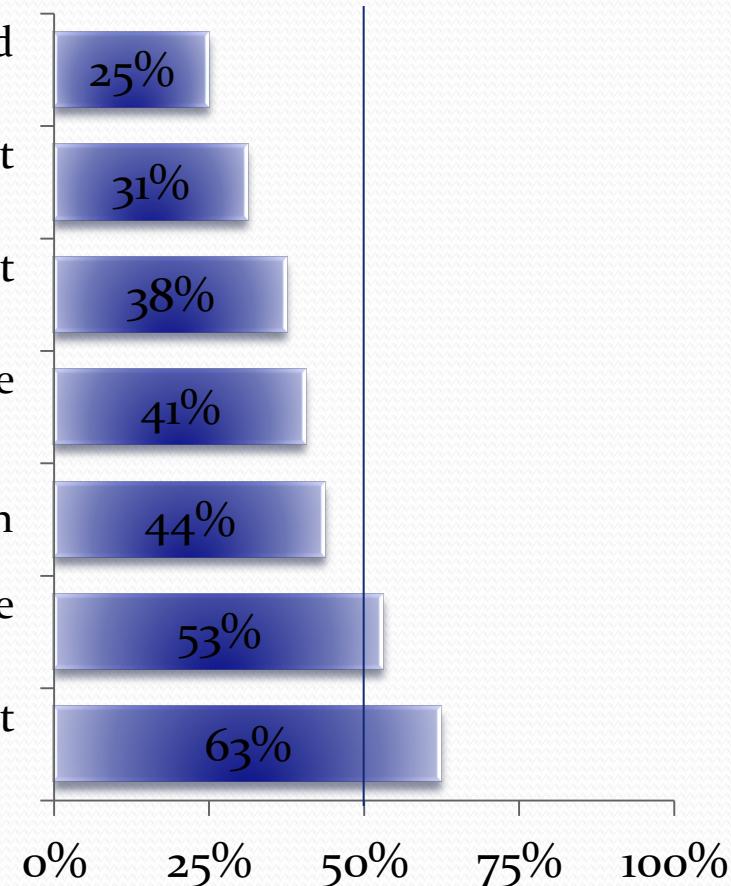
Openness & Involvement

- Management collects information from staff about how well things are going
- At work my opinions seem to count
- Management gives serious consideration to ideas and suggestions for improvement
- I feel I can question a policy or practice without being criticized for doing so by management
- The person I currently report to involves me in decisions that affect my work
- Management encourages employees to communicate suggestions for improvement



Leadership in General

- Management has set clear staff work priorities and expectations
- Management discusses how future changes will affect our work office-wide
- I understand why most things are done a certain way at OEM
- I am satisfied with how management decisions are made
- I receive the guidance I need for the work I perform
- The person I report to has a good understanding of the tasks that take the majority of my time
- I feel changes implemented by management in the past three months have been positive



Audit Results

- Lack of strategic direction
- Poor internal communication
- Policies & procedures outdated or nonexistent
- Performance evaluations long overdue
- Poor cooperation among employees (in many cases)
- Workload distribution and staffing issues
- Incomplete plans
- Stakeholder groups not fully utilized

Summary of Recommendations

- Resolve organizational issues with
 - Clear and specific workplace expectations
 - Improved policies and work processes
 - Better communication strategies
 - Improved feedback mechanisms to improve performance

Reflections on Survey

- Easy to design & implement
- Quantified a lot of information
- Additional source of evidence to corroborate interviews
- Chance to test a hypothesis
- Be sure to beta-test!

Questions?

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