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Catalysts for Common Good

To Melinda Schab
From Carolee Colter
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Policy Compliance Report for Moscow Food Co-op's 2019 Employee Survey

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The database for this survey is 88 employees, 93% of the eligible staff, i.e. who had completed 30 days of employment as of August 1, 2017 and were classified as full-time or part-time.

Surveys were taken on line using a survey program designed for CDS Consulting Co-op. The survey program generated key codes to give the participants access, and Heather Nelson, HR manager, assigned them. I never knew which employee had which key code but I was able to tell which key codes had not been used so that Karen could follow up with those employees and ensure that they completed the survey on line. In this way anonymity was preserved while achieving a high level of participation.

When people filled out the survey questionnaire, they had a choice of responses:

5 Strongly agree
4 Agree
3 Partly agree/partly disagree
2 Disagree
1 Strongly disagree
No value No opinion

The survey software calculated average (mean) scores from these responses. Responses of "No Opinion" were not used in the averaging. Employees also had the option to write free-form comments at the end of each topic.

After analyzing the survey scores and reading the written comments, I came to Moscow and conducted interviews with 18 randomly selected employees, about 20% of participants. The purpose of the interviews was to help me understand the reasons behind the average scores and standard deviation on certain questions.

Keep in mind that surveys measure perception, not facts.

WHAT DO THE SCORES MEAN?

Based on my experience with other employee surveys, I consider an average score over 3.50 to indicate relative satisfaction, and an average score of 4.00 or higher to indicate very high satisfaction, an area of strength in the perception of co-op staff. A score of 4.00 requires that most respondents agree or strongly agree with a statement. As scores decline from 3.50 to 3.00, they indicate declining levels of satisfaction, and scores below 3.00 indicate outright dissatisfaction.

Standard deviation is a statistical tool that helps to interpret survey results. High standard deviation (1.10 or more) indicates that there is a wide diversity of opinion among survey participants on a particular question, while low standard deviation (.80 or less) shows that there is general agreement on a response. High and low standard deviation are neither good nor bad in themselves, but they can shed light on a survey score.

HOW DID THE CO-OP DO?

Out of the 66 questions on the survey that asked for agreement or disagreement, 27 (41%) scored 4.00 or more, 34 questions (51.5%) scored between 3.50 and 3.99, and 5 questions (7.5%) scored below 3.50 with none below 3.00. This indicates many areas of strong satisfaction, a few areas of some dissatisfaction, but none of acute dissatisfaction.

While 16 questions showed high standard deviation, 2 showed low standard deviation, indicating that were few areas of broad agreement and some areas of marked disagreement. This is a departure from the previous survey, which showed more commonalities in the responses.

I compared the results for 51 questions in this survey that were also used in 232 surveys of other retail natural food co-ops.

Moscow Food Co-op employees rated 9 of these questions in the top quartile, and 7 in the bottom quartile, while the rest fell relatively close to the median. In a nutshell, Moscow Food Co-op employees are about as satisfied as employees of other co-ops.

Engagement Index

Engagement is a subset of satisfaction. An engaged employee is fully involved in, and enthusiastic about, and committed to his or her work. Research by Gallup on engaged employees shows that they care about the future of their company and are willing to go above and beyond the daily expectations of the job. My colleagues and I in Columinate have selected 15 survey questions that correlate to the factors that Gallup's research identified as important for engagement. We're calling this the Engagement Index. Moscow Food Co-op's survey contains 14 of these 15 questions. The median score for the Engagement Index for the 232 co-op surveys is 3.88. Moscow Food Co-op scores very close this at 3.91. So just as Moscow employees are close to being as satisfied as other co-op staff, they are also about as engaged.

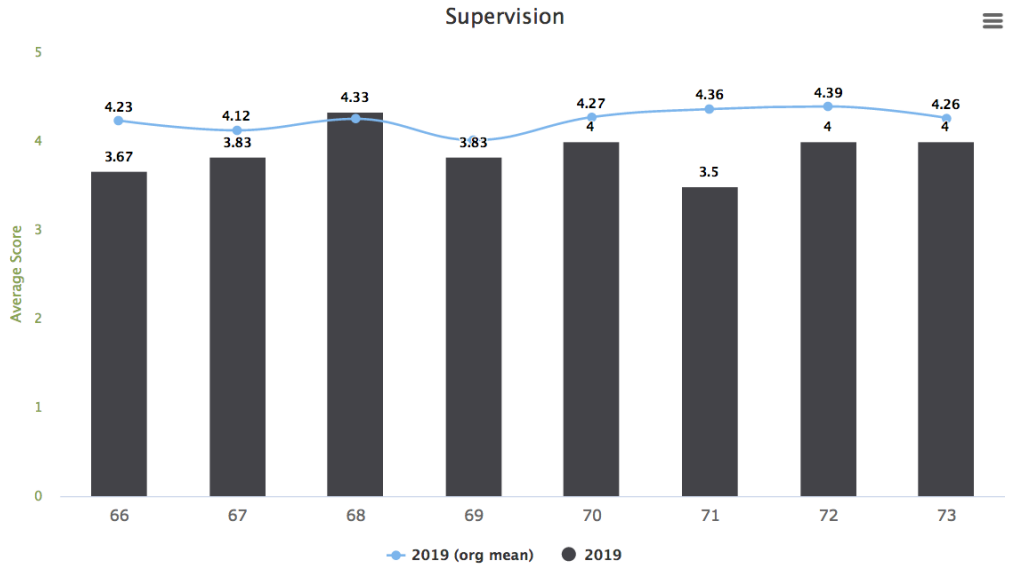
Comparison to Previous Survey

Of the 66 opinion questions, 65 were used in the same or very similar form in the survey of 2917. Most questions scored within 20 points of where they were in 2017. The scores on 6 questions increased by 20 points or more while the scores on 7 questions declined by 20 points or more. Scores on 4 out of the 10 topics went up while 5 went down and one stayed the same. I'd say that overall satisfaction has not changed much since the previous survey but there are specific areas of increased and decreased satisfaction.

GM as Direct Supervisor

From time to time co-op boards tell us that they'd like to conduct a "360 degree evaluation" of the GM in addition to the evaluation process of a monitoring calendar with regularly

scheduled monitoring reports on different policies. When we've engaged in dialog with these boards, what we've found is that they want to know how the GM's direct reports would evaluate the GM. Rather than conduct a separate process to collect upper manager feedback, we recommend using the data already collected through the most recent employee survey. If your board requests this data, I am providing here the graph showing the scores on questions of supervision, and a table under the Global Policy. If your board does not request this information, it is your choice whether to provide it as part of your Staff Treatment monitoring report.



66	My supervisor lets me know what is expected of me.
67	My supervisor's decisions are fair and consistent, even if I don't always agree with them.
68	My supervisor lets me know when I do a good job.
69	I get helpful, timely feedback from my supervisor so that I can improve my performance.
70	My supervisor encourages us to share our ideas, suggestions and concerns.
71	My supervisor maintains a positive attitude in the face of challenges.
72	My supervisor encourages cooperation between my department and other departments.
73	My supervisor acts as part of the management team to continually improve the co-op.

The line shows the average score co-op-wide, while the bar shows the scores given by those reporting to the GM including admin staff. Given the extraordinarily high scores co-opwide on the Supervision questions, these scores can be interpreted as strong

satisfaction with the GM's supervision on the board of her direct reports.

POLICY COMPLIANCE ANALYSIS

On questions related to a particular policy, I consider a score of 3.25 to be the minimum to demonstrate compliance. That score would indicate that more employees agree with the question than disagree.

However, for questions involving discrimination and harassment on the basis of status in a protected group, I consider 3.75 to be a minimum score to demonstrate compliance. This is because it is possible for a minority to feel discrimination of which the majority is unaware. Also I consider standard deviation of no more than 1.00 as one of the recommended standards for questions about discrimination or harassment, because otherwise a high average score could mask the existence of such a minority opinion.

[If you decide to use this:] The leadership team plays a key role in compliance with all B6 policies, and their effectiveness as a team depends on the leadership of the GM. To demonstrate compliance, scores of the managers and staff reporting to the GM on the questions concerning their GM as direct supervisor should be at least 3.50.

For access to the employee handbook, we consider the compliance benchmark to be a 90% Yes response.

The standards for scores demonstrating compliance have been developed in collaboration with the Cooperative Board Leadership Development program.

For each policy, I will list:

- the survey questions that directly relate to the policy
- the recommended standard for compliance
- the score on the question,
- whether the score indicates compliance with the policy (following the recommended standard)

- the score on that question from the previous survey

PEOPLE POLICY B6: EMPLOYEE TREATMENT

The General Manager must not treat staff in any way that is unfair, unsafe, or unclear.

Global policy—unfair

Survey Results:

	Compliance benchmark	**2019 Scores**	Does data indicate compliance? Y/N	2017 Scores
The hiring process is fair and based on work-related qualifications, resulting in good hiring decisions.	Score of 3.25 or above	**3.92**	Y	3.80
Department expectations are upheld in a fair and consistent way for all department staff.	Score of 3.25 or above	**3.51**	Y	3.81
Corrective action in my department is handled fairly and consistently to the best of my knowledge.	Score of 3.25 or above	**3.71**	Y	3.87
My supervisor's decisions are fair and consistent even if I don't always agree with them.	Score of 3.25 or above	**4.12**	Y	4.16
Internal candidates are given fair consideration for job openings.	Score: 3.25 or above	**3.92**	Y	3.83

Global policy—unsafe

Survey Results:

	Compliance benchmark	**2019 Scores**	Does data indicate compliance? Y/N	2017 Scores
The physical working environment of the store is safe.	Score of 3.25 or above	**4.00**	Y	3.65
Safety concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.	Score of 3.25 or above	**3.88**	Y	3.77
In the event of an emergency, I know whom to contact.	Score of 3.25 or above	**4.01**	Y	4.08
To the best of my knowledge store operations support safe food handling and hygiene.	Score of 3.25 or above	**3.97**	Y	3.93

Global policy—unclear

Survey Results:

	Compliance benchmark	**2019 Scores**	Does data indicate compliance? Y/N	2017 scores
I have a job description that clearly outlines my responsibilities.	Score of 3.25 or above	**4.04**	Y	4.06
I received well-planned and useful on-the-job training.	Score of 3.25 or above	**3.71**	Y	3.65
On-the-job training provided for new employees is adequate for staff to successfully perform their job duties within an appropriate time frame.	Score: 3.25 or above	**3.75**	Y	3.79
I am clear on the criteria used to evaluate my performance.	Score of 3.25 or above	**3.94**	Y	4.08
As a result of my evaluation, I am clear on the goals I have to work toward.	Score of 3.25 or above	**3.92**	Y	3.96
My supervisor lets me know what is expected of me.	Score of 3.25 or above	**4.23**	Y	4.33

Survey results for Supervision questions by managers and staff reporting directly to GM:

	Compliance benchmark	**2019 Scores**	Does data indicate compliance? Y/N	2017 Scores
My supervisor lets me know what is expected of me.	Score of 3.50 or above	**3.67**	Y	N/A
My supervisor's decisions are fair and consistent even if I don't always agree with them.	Score of 3.50 or above	**3.83**	Y	N/A
My supervisor lets me know when I do a good job.	Score of 3.50 or above	**4.33**	Y	N/A
I get helpful, timely feedback from my supervisor so that I can improve my performance.	Score of 3.50 or above	**3.83**	Y	N/A
My supervisor encourages us to share our ideas, suggestions and concerns.	Score of 3.50 or above	**4.00**	Y	N/A
My supervisor maintains a positive attitude in the face of challenges.	Score of 3.50 or above	**3.50**	Y	N/A
My supervisor encourages cooperation between my department and other departments.	Score of 3.50 or above	**4.00**	Y	N/A
My supervisor acts as part of the management team to continually improve	Score of 3.50 or above	**4.00**	Y	N/A

the co-op.				

The GM must not:

1. Operate without written personnel policies that:
   a. Clarify rules for staff.
   b. Provide for fair and thorough handling of grievances.
   c. Are accessible to all staff.
   d. Inform staff that employment is neither permanent nor guaranteed. [not covered by the survey]

Survey Results:

	Compliance benchmark	**2019 Scores**	Does data indicate compliance? Y/N	2017 Scores
I received a copy of the Personnel Handbook.	90% Yes	**70%**	N	N/A
I know what to do if I have a disagreement or grievance about a management decision.	Score: 3.25 or above	**3.68**	Y	3.71
I feel I could use the grievance procedure without fear of retaliation.	Score: 3.25 or above	**3.72**	Y	3.44
I feel safe bringing my criticisms and concerns to management.	Score: 3.25 or above	**3.53**	Y	3.64

Supplemental data to support policy compliance for "I received a copy of the Personnel Handbook".

- Although this question scored low on the survey, staff do have access to the Personnel Handbook.
  - All employees can access a digital copy of the handbook through Paycom, the Co-op's Human Resources platform. Prior to Paycom, the handbook was available digitally through Kronos, our previous HR system.
  - All Managers can access the handbook on the server.
  - A physical copy of the handbook is available in the staff break room and in the HR office.
  - At new hire onboarding, HR provides a physical copy of an abbreviated version of the handbook (the most important policies) for each new employee to take.

2. Cause or allow personnel policies to be inconsistently applied.

Survey Results

	Compliance benchmark	**2019 Scores**	Does data indicate compliance? Y/N	2017 Scores
The policies in the Personnel Handbook are applied fairly and consistently.	Score: 3.25 or above	**3.72**	Y	3.83

3. Allow arbitrary discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, political affiliation, or otherwise.
[Survey did not ask about political affiliation]

Survey Results:

	Compliance benchmark	**2019 Scores**	Does data indicate compliance? Y/N	2017 Scores
To the best of my knowledge, co-op employees are treated fairly regardless of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, marital/parental status, veteran's status, or mental or physical disability.	Score of 3.75 or above	**4.36**	Y	4.18
	Standard deviation not higher than 1.00	**.95**	Y	.91
The co-op values diversity of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin and mental and physical ability.	Score of 3.75 or above	**4.47**	Y	4.28
	Standard deviation not higher than 1.00	**.80**	Y	.77
The co-op's work environment is free from discrimination and harassment.	Score of 3.75 or above	**4.12**	Y	3.85
	Standard deviation not higher than 1.00	**.93**	Y	1.02

4. Provide for inadequate documentation, security and retention of personnel records and all personnel related decisions.

Not covered by this survey.

Documentation provided by the GM
GM Interpretation & Operational Definition:

The GM must ensure that all employee information and employment files, including job applications & interview materials, are securely stored & retained.

Paper records will be stored in locked filing cabinets inside an office that also locks. Access to electronic records will be password protected. Only authorized personnel will have access to any employment records.

The Co-op will follow all state and federal requirements for record retention.

Data:

I. The HR Manager keeps all paper records in multiple locked filing cabinets in the GM/HR office. This office is locked when not in use. The filing cabinets are also separately locked when not in use.
II. Electronic records are accessible only by authorized personnel. The HR Manager maintains all passwords and establishes authorization appropriately.
III. There have been no instances of unauthorized use of personnel or employment records.
IV. Paper records are retained for 7 years.
V. There are no known instances of noncompliance with state and federal record retention requirements.

5. Establish compensation and benefits that are internally or externally inequitable.

Survey Results for "externally inequitable"

	Compliance benchmark	**2019 Scores**	Does data indicate compliance? Y/N	2017 Scores
I am fairly paid for the work I do relative to similar opportunities in the area.	Score: 3.25 or above	**3.46**	Y	3.27

Survey Results for "internally inequitable"

	Compliance benchmark	**2019 Scores**	Does data indicate compliance? Y/N	2017 Scores
The pay rate for my position is fair in relation to the pay rate for other positions at the co-op.	Score: 3.25 or above	**3.70**	Y	3.37
I understand the system for determining pay raises.	Score: 3.25 or above	**3.95**	Y	3.70
I am satisfied with the system for determining pay raise.	Score: 3.25 or above	**3.42**	N	3.47

6. Change the GM's own compensation and benefits, except as his or her benefits are consistent with a package for all other employees.

Not covered by this survey.

Documentation provided by the GM:
See attached memo by the Moscow Food Co-op's Finance Manager.

7. Utilize bonuses as part of the staff compensation packages.

Not covered by this survey.

Documentation provided by the GM
GM Interpretation & Operational Definition:
The GM must ensure that compensation packages do not include discretionary, year-end bonuses and that these are not awarded to employees. A bonus is interpretation as being an additional cash payment added to regular payroll at the end of the year. A bonus is different from profit-sharing and/or gainsharing as a part of the Co-op's Open Book management practices, from gifts (like t-shirts, etc.) given to all employees, and from the use of Co-op Bucks to reward going above and beyond.

Data:
No year-end or discretionary bonuses have been paid out to any Co-op employee in 2019.