Engagement boosters that work

BC Public Service 2018 Work Environment Survey (WES) cycle   Released: July 12, 2019

Employee engagement improved from 2015 to 2018. Using employees' own words, we tell you why.

One of the final questions in the BC Public Service Work Environment Survey (WES) cycle asks employees if they had seen any improvements in their workplace since the last cycle. In the 2018 cycle, two in three respondents reported seeing positive changes occur to some extent.[1] They were then asked to describe these improvements. Over 4,000 respondents offered examples ranging from the purchase of new coffee pots to the induction of a new government.

BC Stats coded every example into themes of perceived workplace improvements. These themes are called "engagement boosters" because they connect to engagement in the following ways:

- Each booster reflected one or more drivers from the employee engagement model.
- Engagement among those who saw positive changes (81 pts) was 13 pts higher than the BC Public Service benchmark of 68 pts.
- Perceived improvements also explained 34% of the variation of engagement scores alone.[2]
- Engagement for these employees also improved since the 2015 cycle, with scores increasing by four to 10 points depending on the area where positive changes occurred.[3]

This document dives into ten of these engagement boosters in detail by using 230 of the most informative and representative examples pulled from respondents' positive feedback.

Engagement boosters
1. Top down communications
2. Bottom up communications
3. Silo-busting communications
4. Management practices
5. Teamwork
6. Stress and workload
7. Recognition
8. Professional development
9. Staffing practices
10. Vision, mission and goals

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[1] Combined percentage of respondents who did not report disagreement (i.e., agree + neutral responses). See BC Stats (2018). 2018 Work Environment Results. BC Public Service Overall. Report prepared for the BC Government (https://gww.gov.bc.ca/sites/default/files/article/file/2018/0403/wes2018corporatereportfinal.pdf).

[2] This relationship reached statistical significance based on a linear regression of this topic against engagement, $p \leq 0.05$.
[3] BC Stats (July, 2019). Work Environment Survey: Trends in Brief. Presentation to DMCPSR.

1. Top-down communications

According to employee examples of improvements, two words sum up this communication approach: MORE and BETTER. Leadership at all levels shared and filtered down information in a more cohesive way across the organization. Based on the descriptions provided, there was no single method that stood above the rest. Delivery was considered effective if timely, personable, meaningful, relevant (strategic and operational), sincere and shared in a way that helped strengthen the connection employees have to the organization. Changes appeared to not be treated like a one-off event, but as an ongoing process that was monitored and refined. Some of the best examples provided by employees are listed below.

#1 "Better communication from the executive level on branch plans and topics that impact our work."

#2 "Executives seem to be making a better effort to be proactive in communicating more information with staff."

#3 "A leadership charter was encouraged and developed to ensure a greater cooperative atmosphere among senior leadership."

#4 "The flow of information, changes and updates etc. is faster, with more details and before rumours of said change has circulated. I feel far more informed, in all areas of my job now."

#5 "Executive director began communication sessions to ensure more transparency and access to executives for Q & A."

#6 "Our executive has made an effort to communicate more effectively and have more transparency in decision making—including summaries of management meetings."

#7 "Communication from executive has dramatically improved, which makes us all feel like we are connected to what is happening, and why certain changes are occurring."

#8 "The transition to a new gov't posed challenges, but that was expected. Our leaders have worked as hard as they can to notify the ministry of new initiatives and upcoming changes."

#9 "There appears to be more communication from the top down—key leadership messages are being sent out by management to all staff outlining decisions, changes in staff, etc. This change has allowed for information to be shared to all staff at the same time."

#10 "I have seen improvements with communication. I appreciate that our leadership team shares what they can, when they can. This has created a greater trust amongst staff and leadership. It is great to see our executive director lead a monthly call with updates from her level. This helps the team get an idea for the strategic vision."

Formats that work
Video conference
Stand-ups
Small talk events
Breakfast & learn meetings
ED chatlines/ P & P [*Process & Policy*] calls
"Coffee with executives"
Meeting minutes
Leadership forums

2. Bottom-up communications

This style of communication focuses exclusively on a dialogue about staff concerns and/or ideas, which can be initiated either by leadership or employees. Examples described ways leadership made time to become more open, accessible, approachable and responsive to staff ideas or concerns. Examples also highlighted more inclusivity in decision-making and engaging staff for a discussion on a range of topics. The dialogue, decisions and potential follow-up stemming from these opportunities left employees feeling heard, understood and valued.

#1 "We have undergone sometimes painful but productive exercises to establish vision, values, and goals, as well as some reorganizing. Our executive has not only done extensive planning, but has been consultative and remarkably transparent about it. Staff feel increasingly included and valued as a result."

#2 "Not only are they more visible, our PD [*provincial director*] and DPD's [*deputy provinical director's*] are approachable and honest with us about their own vulnerabilities… As a manager, in a region, I feel supported and am not afraid to express my own concerns and 'fears' about change because I feel listened to and supported."

#3 "An employee advisory committee is now up and running that features our deputy minister as the chair of the group."

#4 "Organizational forum for all staff discussion (Let's Chat)."

#5 "Better implementation of suggestions made during all staff calls and meetings."

#6 "The culture of the organization has changed—there is an openness to examining what is needed and what is not working, and then action to make change. There is noticeable listening and valuing of staff input. So while there are still changes to be made, staff feel free to talk about the changes that they need, and feel that there will be action to start addressing challenges."

#7 "Employees' views are heard, and they are informed about what can be taken into consideration to make changes and what structure needs to stay the same; Therefore, employees seem to be more acceptable of outcomes."

#8 "Streamlined organization structures—removed protracted process in decision making."

#9 "There is more open dialogue and focus groups regarding changes that are to be implemented to front line staff instead of sending an email the day of the implementation."

#10 "Members of the senior management team have visited my office which is not in a location easily accessible from 'headquarters'. I have seen senior management employees listen to employee concerns, work to address them and revisit the office where the concerns were voiced in the first place."

Topics that matter						
Strategic planning	**Policies & programs**	**Org changes**	**New iniatives**	**Staff issues**	**Staff ideas**	**Panel interviews**

3. Silo-busting communications

This area of improvement involves increasing the sense of cohesion between different layers of the organization and everyone in between. Examples highlighted improvements in the flow and frequency of communication, cooperation, collaboration and the sharing of information. Improvements helped people be more effective in performing their day to day roles because they felt more connected and aligned operationally and saw the links between their work and the strategic goals of their work unit.

Groups busting their silos

- Work functions
- Teams
- Service areas/streams
- Regions
- Business units
- Branches
- Departments
- Divisions

#1 "My supervisor started having weekly, short meetings with our entire group where we briefly say what we're working on, if we're having any problems and if we need extra help… I find this very useful as it keeps everyone up to date on the work we're doing within our unit. I find it helps to build camaraderie amongst our group because we're spending time face to face instead of just emailing and messaging each other."

#2 "RMB [*Risk Management Branch*] TV helped give us better communication and information flow between teams in a non-intrusive and 'fun' manner."

#3 "Positive improvements have included branch meetings that incorporate speakers from other branches. This gives us insight into areas that we are less familiar with and gives us a chance to meet new people while learning from them."

#4 "The implantation of pods in our group to ensure better communication among smaller teams. Setting up (and actually following through) with regular weekly meetings to discuss workload and upcoming challenges with team members. Increased use of lync video to engage remote workers."

#5 "Communication: I regularly receive 'newsletters' via e-mail that let employees know what is happening in the ministry."

#6 "I appreciate the increased efforts to share information across the division and within my work unit. I feel a much better sense of connection to the overall bigger picture service delivery through that added effort such as office visits, team meetings both virtually and in person, ADM chatlines, P & P [*Process and Policy*] Calls, newsletters and updates etc."

#7 "Restructuring of the old three team system which promoted silo-ification of work and communication."

#8 "Information sharing—EDS hosts All Staff Calls monthly for our SDA [*Service Delivery Area*]. All staff event once per year, leadership events four times per year. Admin conference, 45 minute learning calls for our admin by our admin, management meeting bullets shared with SDA bi-weekly."

#9 A feedback chain was established to utilize the feedback of the people who actually use the system in improving the design of the software to become a help, rather than a hindrance, to good clinical practice."

#10 "There is more communication and coordination between staff in regional offices and Victoria-based teams. An awareness and appreciation of the work of other teams, branches, divisions within the ministry is slowly developing."

4. Management practices

This next set of examples highlights how connections between leaders and their employees have improved. Generally these changes led to stronger relationships where people felt they could count on their leaders and believed leaders trusted and valued them as an employee. For many the shift began with a change of people in these positions, with new individuals bringing more experienced or collaborative leadership styles to their role. Others saw positive changes in individuals' management practices due to a change in workload, growth in their roles and/or increased commitment to employees' engagement. For lower and middle management, this meant better support, more facetime, more consultation and downloading of information. For upper management this tended to mean shaking off the perception of being a remote entity by showing more presence and interest in employees. Countless supervisors, managers, directors, executive directors and senior leaders made positive changes. The best examples of leadership styles and practices across these reporting levels are featured next.

Supervisors
#1 "Our acting supervisor is really engaged in the work we do and cares about everyone."
#2 "Direct supervisors have responded to input from staff to change behaviours to be more supportive of staff and to provide guidance in a positive manner."
#3 "Changes to the reporting structure in my unit have broken up responsibilities and provided supervisors with more time to support staff when needed."
#4 "Dramatically changing the atmosphere from supervisory-control based to team-based collaborative."
#5 "Performance reviews have been implemented with clearer expectations and more meaningful interaction with supervisor."
#6 "Supervisors more knowledgeable in their role over time and therefore able to provide better support."
#7 "Workplans that clearly identify priorities and expectations, as well as what is no longer being done due to limited capacity; An emphasis on routine one on one check-ins between staff and supervisors."
#8 "Increased responsiveness by supervisor to staff concerns (i.e., quicker email turnaround times, follow-up meetings, encouragement given to staff to participate in organizational initiatives)."
#9 "Within my own work unit I have seen my supervisor make efforts to bring together a team that works well together and is supported in the work they do."
#10 "Our supervisor has made tremendous improvements in our office. She has always done this by being open and honest with an open door policy. She is fair and sincere and always listens to our concerns without judgment. Nothing ever goes on the back burner. She is on it and gets things done. She always uses a positive and fair approach when assigning work. The morale in our office has improved 100% since the last survey."

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Page 5 of 19

Managers

#1   "More support given to managers so that they can manage their workforce more effectively."

#2   "Management works together as a team to support the staff in the work unit."

#3   "The retirement of a previous workplace manager has resulted in a massive positive shift in the workplace. Since the departure of this person, communication, morale, and cooperation between teams has greatly improved. The executive has a crucial role in selecting leaders who have strong and progressive leadership skills. Past tendency is often to focus on job skill and experience when selecting a leader, but I would like to see executive place an increased importance on leadership skills when selecting supervisors, managers, etc."

#4   "Since a change of manager here with a skilled background and people skills, it is easier now to bring work issues forward for discussion and resolution and not be put down as before."

#5   "New manager that is open minded and can make a decision without having to over think a problem and doing nothing because he did not want to make mistake."

#6   "Immediate manager willingly offers to help team, previous management never offered, ever."

#7   "Our current manager is fabulous and really has made the team what it is. It's fabulous to have a manager that is supportive, knows the business inside and out, and just gets things done. It makes for such an inspiring place to work. While the job can be overwhelming at times, her leadership allows me to know that I have the support to get the job done. My work and attitude has changed drastically under her leadership and my overall enjoyment of my job has improved. I actually like my job now because of her."

#8   "The management have made efforts to get to know the staff more by visiting each floor and just saying 'hello'. This has boosted morale and avoids the negative impression of 'patrolling' for bad behaviour by walking around occasionally or rarely."

#9   "I have noticed that there is much more transparency in regards to how information in shared with the frontline staff. There is more management involvement, encouragement and acknowledgement."

#10 "Manager has been less rigid, more easy going, understanding, this works better with the team. Staff are experts in their field. Manager supports the team while providing overall direction."

Directors/Executive Directors

#1 "New director is taking us from a very dark and stagnant workplace to one that values change and innovation."

#2 "We have a new director who is respectful, motivating, and inspiring. She leads by example and provides opportunities to staff that were previously unavailable to us. Morale in the workplace has improved tremendously."

#3 "Having a new director has made a big change with the energy and atmosphere at my workplace. Her positive and happy demeanor has made a real impact. She shows a genuine interest in the work I do, and it's very appreciated."

#4 "We have a new executive director who is very enthusiastic and inclusive. This affects staff in a positive way because we feel much more engaged in our work and want to do a good job for our team."

#5 "This ED is personable and makes time for people and cares to hear what people in the organization say. This new ED is better versed in the program and his ideas show it. I can be honest with the new ED; whereas the old ED was intimidating. This one change has vastly improved my organization. I look forward to seeing where the new ED takes the organization."

#6 "Our ED respects staff's perspectives. She is open to the ideas that different work styles work for different people so she is not imposing one way or another when it comes to different personal types (e.g., introvert vs. extrovert) and different work style preferences (home vs. office)."

#7 "Upper managers appear to have made some effort to connect with frontline workers."

#8 "Quality of senior managers (we are hiring for leadership competencies rather than simply technical skills)."

#9 "Senior managers are having more coaching conversations with employees."

#10 "I believe trust with senior management has increased exponentially. More empowerment has been given to employees in terms of process and decision making."

Senior Leaders

#1 "Leadership retired and new leadership brought fresh ways of doing business, rejuvenated staff and our work environment. It was clear that our past leader was not invested any longer and was riding out their days until retirement."

#2 "Change in leadership has improved processes regarding timeliness and the courage to make decisions. This courage then cascades through the workforce to promote a healthy work environment."

#3 "Better attitudes from new senior leadership—more understanding and employee focussed, without compromising on expectations of professionalism and high-quality products."

#4 "Leadership has been more present creating a feeling that we are at least somewhat valued and recognized for the work we do. Not that rewards are needed to do the job we are paid to do, but recognition and feeling that we have not been forgotten way out here, go a tremendous way to reinvigorating and keeping workers motivated!"

#5 "Leadership also brought in an external facilitator to try and identify the root issues that have plagued this program area for more than two decades. The ED (who left just before the survey) took the time to engage staff directly, listen to what was said and then take action to make our program area a better place to work."

#6 "The recognition from DM and Associate DM at the last culture change session that 'leadership is our job' and we shouldn't just be doing it off the side of our desk. Also that management staff need support and training to be better leaders so we approach leadership with the same language. I know this has inspired me to take a closer look at what my leadership vision is, and how I can help my team achieve their career goals. It's not just about the work we achieve its about growing our staff, and I intend to be a strong advocate for them."

#7 "I enjoy the informal visits from our ADM as it makes me feel valued as an employee."

#8 "We have a new ADM who seems very interested in seeing our division succeed, and this ADM does not shy away from making difficult decisions."

#9 "ADM involvement in workplace initiatives."

#10 "New executive really seems to care about people and in supporting the work we do, helping us with issues that may arise and ensuring we have opportunities for training in order to be our best… It's such a nice change to have people at the helm who are actually invested—not just in the work itself but in the people doing the work!"

5. Teamwork

Respondents also explained how interpersonal team dynamics changed for the better. This shift stemmed from organizational restructuring or initiatives, groups and/or events as well as staffing changes or changes in employees' attitudes and behaviours. Here are examples of how people became more in tune and supportive of one another.

#1 "Reorganization within engineering services led to a significant clarification of roles, responsibilities, goals, priorities and operations. We are functioning much better now."

#2 "People that didn't want to improve their work ethic or adopt new processes have left. We've hired some great people."

#3 "A bully in our workplace was finally dealt with, after many years. Since then, the stress on employees has greatly reduced, and the team has become unified, supportive and more effective."

#4 "With the high staff turnover we have experienced in the last two to three years, we have mostly gotten rid of the negative 'old boys club' kind of attitude. The newer staff are certainly more pleasant to work with."

#5 "Overall morale has improved since last WES due to zero tolerance for workplace gossip and emphasis on professionalism from the top down."

#6 "Telework has removed in many cases those that are perpetually unhappy—they may be good workers but their negativity can be toxic. Working from home they have the ability to work, yet their negativity is not as prevalent, and in many cases is diminished altogether."

#7 "Continued and improved efforts at bringing staff together, face to face."

#8 "Increased teamwork by building trust and gaining understanding of each other through tools such as MBTI [*Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*]."

#9 "More engagement through increased social committee events is making it a much happier place to work. It has been fantastic getting to know more of our coworkers as it is a large office, and it gives us greater cohesion and support."

#10 "Whole division took respectful workplaces training."

Initiatives, groups and/or events
Culture-crafting team
Divisional engagement committees
Social/Wellness committee
Monthly staff lunches
"Culture change" initiative
Monthly social activities
Informal team-building activities
"Our workplace" initiative
TALB [*Tax Appeals and Litigation Branch*] Tribe Tuesdays
Division-wide meetings
Staff retreats
Random acts of kindness program
Employee action committee

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Page 9 of 19

6. Stress and workload

Employees describing improvements in work-related stress or workloads tended to see themselves having more control in their day to day work—mainly in the amount of work they are responsible for and/or where/how they work. Many attributed changes to better staffing levels and/or greater flexibility in work arrangements. Others credited changes to streamlining operations, having better distribution of work, and/or having managers place greater importance on employees' work life balance and doing it in line with current policy and legislation. Another smaller group described changes in how they process and internalize stress and workload demands via self care activities.

#1 "The management in this region, at the direction of our regional ED, have made great efforts and strides in improving flexibility for the staff's hours of work start and end times (including length of lunch)... There has also been a significant shift in the approach in how supervisors respond to people calling in sick. Previously there was a great deal of trepidation for people calling in, due to the grilling/push back they would receive. That has improved greatly for such ill staff members."

#2 "Working one, two or even three days a week from a home office is an immeasurable improvement to work/life balance."

#3 "Our team is at full complement, and we now have admin support assigned to our team which is incredibly helpful and takes pressure of the team."

#4 "Caseloads have lessoned over the year; We are utilizing float teams and staff to support the large caseloads."

#5 "It is now far easier to fill and backfill FTE vacancies compared to three years ago."

#6 "Hiring processes have changed—when there is staff turnover, there is staff inventory to pull from more readily."

#7 "Safer work environment. Lower inmate to officer ratio."

#8 "A new online system was launched for societies enabling them to manage their own reports and changes. This reduced the mass amount of paper filings that were previously sent to our office and had left staff feeling constantly overwhelmed by their workload."

#9 "Our workloads became more manageable. Thanks to knowledgeable co-workers for finding effective and efficient ways to make our job easy."

#10 "Restructured organization chart with sector specific teams, with flexibility to allow cross-team sharing of project staff to meet operational requirements and manage workload more effectively."

Self care activities					
Wellness/ mindfulness sessions	Work-life balance workshops	Meditation	Mental health training	Counselling	Frequent workload conversations

7.Recognition

This set of engagement boosters represent an improved emphasis on valuing employees, which has them feeling more visible, acknowledged and appreciated as a result. Who, what, when, where and how recognition occurred mattered. Based on examples provided, there was no formula that stood out above the rest, and improvements were not always tied to the budget. While some noted changes involved in the implementation or adjustments to formal recognition processes, programs, initiatives or tools, many simply noted that recognition was occurring in a more regular, frequent and meaningful way. Forms of recognition also included informal gestures from management demonstrating trust or wanting their advice.

What has been recognized						
Contri-butions	Hard work	Performance	Professional-ism	Off-the-job-description efforts	Achieve-ments	Milestones

#1 "It's so nice to be acknowledged with a 'Good morning' from executive rather than ignored. Work accomplishments are recognized… Most of us don't want a big fanfare but it's always appreciated when someone from the executive notices your work and mentions it to you. Costs nothing but buys the moon :)."

#2 "They've made an effort to find out what is meaningful recognition to employees."

#4 "We have excellent recognition programs, such as the Oscars, guardian angels at Christmas."

#5 "More individual recognition has been offered from both the LM [*local manager*] and regional manager. Also, personalized recognition, not simply a saying handed out on team day or a Christmas party. It holds more meaning for staff."

#6 "I see a strong focus to staff recognition and appreciation… Our new management are doing the best they can to make staff feel appreciated for their hard work. Small appreciations go a long way."

#7 "Historically our section has low scores on recognition—in the last couple years greater effort has been made to acknowledge the hard work put in by members on key projects, etc."

#8 "Staff appreciation is an important piece for management in my unit. Creation of the employee recognition committee with a more structured and well-planned staff appreciation to be more inclusive and meaningful."

#9 "Management has made a conscious effort to recognize staff and show their appreciation to staff. They have done this with monthly recognition of a nominated staff member Award of Excellence and through frequent, all-staff activities."

#10 "Direct supervisor, with the support of management, has taken numerous actions to improve accountability and performance of staff in our work unit and organization. It's nice to see accountability and recognition (they are related) going in the right direction."

8. Professional development

Employees who saw improvements highlighted the multiple ways in which their training and development was enhanced. This helped keep their knowledge and skills current and provided more fluidity in career advancement.

Mechanisms at work						
Workplace training committee	Training specialist/ Field educator	Business process & training team	Training advisory group	Professional development committee	"Leader in you" initiative	Mentor- ship program
Training			Development			

Training

#1 "Attention given to ensuring staff take the time required for training that they've stated on their My Performance Plans."

#2 "Training and education has been streamlined into a fair and transparent process."

#3 "Adequate training for new software and RAPID changes."

#4 "PSA Training offerings have improved."

#5 "Continued effort to maintain funding and offer opportunities for staff-driven training."

#6 "Cross training between regions was made possible through travel approvals and was very valuable."

#7 "Work done to improve staff training (both general and role-specific) using e-learning modules as well as other modes."

#8 "Each employee within work unit provided with scheduled two hours of time each month for reflection/personal audit of work quality, and related professional development."

#9 "Cross training on job duties."

#10 "The creation of a training advisory type group that consults directly with staff, organizes and implements various training events for hundreds of staff and partner community agencies."

Development

#1 "I have also noticed the creation of the 'hands up' employee development opportunities, which I think are a really great initiative."

#2 "Developmental opportunities regardless of physical location."

#3 "My executive team takes these surveys seriously and enacts what they can—Staff have asked for a mentorship program, and one is now underway."

#4 "Allowing staff the opportunity to teach others."

#5 "Opportunity for movement of employees within departments is an improvement from previous rigid practices."

#6 "Employees are rotated to different areas of the workplace to learn new facets of the business."

#7 "More opportunity to develop people within the units they work in—more voluntary stretch assignments."

#8 "Now 'expression of interest' is used to identify staff who also have the skills but maybe were not as well known. Staff feel they all have a fair shot at these opportunities now whereas in the past you had to be the lucky one to get asked to apply."

#9 "The provincial PICK ME's have expanded, and this has allowed me to apply on opportunities that might not have otherwise been available to me."

#10 "Creating a new structure and positions to allow staff to move upward and try out new roles without losing their base position."

9. Staffing practices

This set of examples focuses exclusively on changes made to one or more phases of the hiring processes, which ultimately meant timelier and better hiring decisions from employees' perspectives. Such changes led to the placement of more qualified, effective and diverse employees in positions.

The process was more…
Streamlined
Efficient
Transparent
Open
Fair
Competitive
Consistent
Professional

#1 "Transparency with hiring and interviews. Panel members are now extended to a more diverse group giving employees the opportunity to be involved and see what it entails."

#2 "STOB 50 restrictions were adjusted to return some autonomy back to hiring managers to make the best hiring decisions for their work unit."

#3 "Some improvements made to job postings, etc. based on Wedlidi Speck recruitment and retention guide."

#4 "A fair and competitive hiring process has contributed to hiring new people with exciting new skills and ideas. This has improved diversity in the workplace."

#5 "Although not personally applicable, I am aware the hiring process has become more consistent and transparent within the region."

#6 "Better informed about positions being filled and new staff hires."

#7 "The ministry finally has approval to hire some new analysts, which is a good thing. This ministry has a horrible habit of hiring management (ADMs, Exec. dirs., chief negotiators) when resources should be expended for those who actually do the work."

#8 "Implementing centralized screening; Having a more transparent hiring process with the provincial wide recruitment."

#9 "Creation of the BC Corrections provincial recruitment team to streamline recruitment process."

#10 "Hiring processes have changed—when there is staff turnover, there is staff inventory to pull from more readily."

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Page 13 of 19

10. Vision, mission and goals

The final set of engagement boosters are complex because it relies on communication and management improvements to be in place as well. This is also the kind of improvement that takes time because it focuses primarily on perceived advances in organizational functioning and performance—anything that covers the articulation, operationalization, implementation and evaluation of organizations' strategic and/or service plan. Although some examples hinged on an increase in funding or a change in government priorities, not all required such an investment. For example, many described a greater awareness of or involvement (either individually or collectively) in how their work fits into the bigger picture (e.g., a clearly defined strategic road map), while others noted operational adjustments and innovations that had a positive impact on them and the services they provide. The best examples are shown below and presented based on the number of comments received, starting with the first two organizations who had the largest number of examples.[4]

Children and Family Development	Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
#1 "Increased budget and more flexibility to meet clients needs."	**#1** "Recent budget restrictions have enabled more opportunity to manage at the local level towards better outcomes."
#2 "Additional monies to support families, such as monies available to be creative around planning and ensuring children stay with their family of origin. Push for children to be out of the care and be with family."	**#2** "This is the second year where we are directly involved in setting region and district priorities, based on the provincial ones. It helps me stay focussed and connected."
#3 "New ways of doing the work and more incorporation of workplace goals such as incorporating the Aboriginal Policy and Practice Framework into practice."	**#3** "Development and implementation of the ministry roadmap."
#4 "Direction my LSA [*Local Service Area*] is going aligns with my values better."	**#4** "Supported to bring regions and headquarters under one umbrella to improve service delivery."
#5 "Mission, vision, strategic planning much clearer. I can easily incorporate it into MyPerformance."	**#5** "Specifically addressing gaps in our policy, meaningful engagement with FNs [*First Nation's*], better understanding our place within BC Public Service and encouragement to engage with offices outside our branch and ministry. Changes in our approach to the public, such as a more visible presence in the province by attending archaeological sites in person."
#6 "We have a new case system that aligns with the legislative changes and is integrated with the majority of our stakeholders."	**#6** "Restructuring of staff."
#7 "More clarity in procedures that all employees in the office can follow effectively."	

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[4] More than 100 respondents each.

Children and Family Development	Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development
#8 "With the influx of new programs and services wait list for the families has gone down significantly. There are more options available."	**#7** "Organizational tweaking and shifts are providing clarity in roles and responsibilities. Improved reporting structures."
#9 "Our service levels have improved."	**#8** "Questioning process to look for more efficient, effective ways to do things and engage with other government agencies, raising our profile and focus on the discipline itself to a more provincial/regulatory perspective, from repatriation to a facet of shared decision making and reconciliation."
#10 "Services to clients have improved vastly with implementation of Service Provider Portals, shifting towards going paperless makes our workplace more efficient."	**#9** "Better processes to ensure we achieve results."
	#10 "The greater focus on client service assists us all working on the frontline directly with clients."

Attorney General	Public Safety and Solicitor General
#1 "A clear BC20/20 strategic plan has been developed with 14 streams, and the messaging is slowly rolling out, giving me confidence that there are leaders in place with a plan and a vision."	**#1** "Strategic plan drafted."
#2 "New organizational structure that better reflections operations."	**#2** "Development of a business plan in my work unit."
#3 "We have experienced improvements in processes and procedures, easily accessible reference material to assist in performing tasks consistently."	**#3** "There is a shift in the approach that is beginning in the work done with our clients. Given that staff are generally in this type of work to make meaningful change with clients, I see this shift as significantly contributing to the how staff their work."
#4 "Many steps have been taken to become paperless—changing processes and eliminating as many paper necessities as possible."	**#4** "Number of inmates went down."
#5 "Proactive in ensuring client satisfaction and improvements in communication with clients."	**#5** "More standardization to the job itself."

Social Development and Poverty Reduction

#1 "There's definitely been a concerted effort to ensure all staff are aware of strategic planning, business goals, mission, vision, and how these are going to be achieved."

#2 "Clients are more supported with changes to programs, exceptions, higher support, and online services. We have improved communication from exec to the work units when it comes to big picture/vision/goals making me feel more connected to the ministry's success."

#3 "We improved the service delivery in the office making it a leaner process for staff and clients."

#4 "Since the shift in service delivery model, we were able to learn and adjust and fine tune processes along the way."

#5 "Staff are aware that their work is looked at for both quantity and quality."

Finance

#1 "We held a one-day strategic planning session that produced a variety of initiatives."

#2 "A common direction has been established to guide our work."

#3 "Developed sensible and effective business plans across the organization."

#4 "Business processes, including associated public information, records management, and operational user interface development and testing, have undergone extensive streamlining and updating with the support of all levels of the branch that I work at."

#5 "Governance review has been undertaken to look at organizational challenges, how our organization is currently organized and what tools could be used to be a modern and effective regulator. The review included a report with recommendations."

Citizens' Services

#1 "Our organization has been in an intense period of growth, with new initiatives, higher profile in government as a whole, and some exciting work being done. It feels like we have an identity and a thriving program, which is exciting."

#2 "Our organization has seen several years of relative stability in our executive and strategic direction. Continuation of this stability continues to contribute to our organizational maturity and service excellence."

#3 "I've seen an improvement on the linkages between the ministry service plans, divisional work plans, and branch work plans."

#4 "Improvements in business process."

Environment and Climate Change Strategy

#1 "New base funding in the past two years has improved service delivery."

#2 "New policy direction."

#3 "More clarity around roles and responsibilities of new sections and staff."

#4 "I feel that there has been more communication with respect to the ministry's goals, vision, priorities, etc."

#5 "Workplans that clearly identify priorities and expectations, as well as what is no longer being done due to limited capacity."

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Page 16 of 19

Health	Transportation and Infrastructure
#1 "There is a clear intention to move towards having timely strategic plans in place for the ministry and the division."	**#1** "Increase in funding. The organization was restructured to better fit our needs."
#2 "The last reorg (Dec 2016) was a step in the right direction as far as consolidating analytics in the ministry. While not perfect it certainly made my life better."	**#2** "Great job in our branch of vision and mission. BMS is the best branch in government."
#3 "Current review of work units and areas of responsibility will hopefully result in more clarity."	**#3** "Working with consultant to develop strong mission and vision in our work unit."
#4 "We have made steps toward defining our mission and how we want to accomplish it within our means. We are currently restructuring, and I am hopeful that this will have an overall positive impact on our ability to streamline certain processes."	**#4** "The new ADM and executive director in my organization have improved the level of strategic planning, information flow, consultation and communications with staff. This has resulted in a more engaged work team."
#5 "Structural change to our organization as a direct result of survey and inputs received from staff in our division."	**#5** "New provincial model generally allows us to provide better service and more knowledge sharing between regions."
Agriculture	**BC Public Service Agency**
#1 "Work has been done to solidify the branches vision and mission statement in a way that included everyone in the thought process."	**#1** "Review of mission and goals."
#2 "The organization addressed employee's issues with the mission and vision of the organization."	**#2** "Continued efforts to look for and implement efficiencies in our day to day work as well as new and/or updated written processes to ensure clear and consistent procedures are available to all staff."
#3 "Focus has moved to results and away from processes."	**#3** "We are always finding means and ways of improving the processes, we have achieved a lot of success in doing so."

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Page 17 of 19

Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

#1 "I feel our leadership team FINALLY has vision and goals with staff in place to start implementation of these goals. We are growing as a ministry and historically we have talked about what needs to be done, but never had the resources to get it done. We are definitely moving in the right direction!"

#2 "Went through organizational effectiveness review which resulted in specific actions to improve workplace functions."

#3 "Introducing projects designed to increase efficiency—i.e., work systems—increasing transparency to the public through projects."

Municipal Affairs and Housing

#1 "Division-wide staff forums have been a huge success."

#2 "The service portal is an improvement for the public we serve."

#3 "Team leads/management are providing clearer, written direction on process and procedures."

Education

#1 "Our work unit has clearer workflow processes and better operational support for staff."

#2 "Work unit always looking for new efficiencies which reduces waste of resources and improves satisfaction with work conditions."

#3 "Considering broad scope of operational efficiencies and working toward positive changes in organization identity."

Government Communications and Public Engagement

#1 "Good, clear direction. It's a huge change and kudos to executive for all the hard work."

#2 "Clearer direction from executive."

#3 "I feel much more informed on organizational goals and more aware of what's going on between teams."

Labour

#1 "Budget increase Jan 2018."

#2 "Leadership has done a great job communicating and implementing a new focus and vision both on a direct and executive management level. Looking forward to what the future holds for our work unit and ministry."

#3 "My workplace is working closer with labour ministries and, implementing huge changes to provide better service to employees and the clients."

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Page 18 of 19

All other organizations*

#1 "Deliberate attention to advancing First Nations reconciliation and pursuit of collaboration have positioned EAO [*Environmental Assessment Office*] as a leader across natural resource agencies, and strongly positioned EAO to continue leadership through revitalization."

#2 "Improvements have primarily been the change in government. There was a lot of engagement two years ago regarding recruitment and retention of indigenous people into government. A key recommendation was rejected, i.e., social-emotional learning around our shared history of colonization of indigenous people. Now with the new government this need is being recognized and supported."

#3 "More structure and further development grounding our organization and pointing it in the right direction. As well, we finally have legislation and regulation, so slowly we are getting more structure."

#4 "New leadership at the executive director role has created an opportunity to have longer term planning instead of reactionary directions."

#5 "Greater focus on and support of Emergency Management that may be related to the unusual Provincial State of Emergency in 2017."

#6 "Since the new government has come in, priorities have shifted, are more in line with what I think priorities should be."

#7 "Clear strategic direction with clear priorities."

#8 "Current executive is more transparent with regard to vision and goals."

#9 "Upgrades on certain programs."

#10 "The executive share more regarding the goals: the path that they are going to take and their approach, what they are looking to achieve, the possible misses or failures that might come, but also the growth moments too. Very positive spin, but makes it feel as though all employees are part of that endeavor and win or lose that it couldn't be done without everyone. Very cool feeling, and brings it home too, as far as wanting to ensure one's personal efforts are 150% to help."

*Note: Organizations with one to seven comments coded under this theme are presented together and include: Advanced Education, Skills and Training, Emergency Management BC, Environmental Assessment Office, Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, Jobs, Trade and Technology, Mental Health and Addictions, Office of the Premier, Public Guardian and Trustee, and Tourism, Arts and Culture.

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