5.0 Human Resource Focus

5.1 Work Systems

5.1a(1) Work and job design and management

Unique within the Corps of Engineers, our overall work design (fig. 5, page v) aligns elements along internal and external customers instead of functional stovepipes. Elements serving external customers report to our deputy for programs and technical management; elements serving internal customers report to our military deputy. That structure offers many advantages: (1) easy process integration for specific customer requirements, (2) boundary reduction between functional stovepipes, (3) flexibility for changing market and customer needs, and (4) responsiveness and dedication to each customer.

Within that structure, our basic work unit is the integrated process team (IPT). IPT's are cross-functional teams merging the required mix of resources and skills for a specific product or service.

Requiring a flatter management structure, teaming helps drive decision making and responsibility to the lowest level possible, thereby increasing productivity, freeing innovation, and enhancing collaboration and initiative. To encourage team cohesion and responsibility, team members evaluate each other's performance through 360 review (5.1a(3)). In addition, team performance is evaluated through team performance metrics.

We adopted our teaming design in 1995. Major improvements since include establishment of 360 in 1996, 360 improvements in 1997-99, and team performance awards in 1998.

In addition, process action teams (PAT's) and various cross-functional employee teams offer employees other opportunities to contribute to Center-wide improvements. For example, a cross-functional employee team developed the process for our team awards performance system (5.1a(4)).

Table 5.1-1. Measuring work design effectiveness

Metric	Figure Reference	Trend
Overall Customer Satisfaction & Loyalty	7.1-1, -2, -9, -10; 7.2-17, -18, -19	Improved
Productivity	7.2-3, -4, -6, -7a, -7b, table 7.2-1	Improved
Flexibility/Responsiveness	7.1-1 #8; 7.1-2	Improved
Cost	7.1-1 #7; 7.1-2, -3; 7.2-1, -8, -9, 10, -11, -12	Improved
Quality	7.1-1 #'s 6 & 13; 7.1-2, -4; 7.5-50	Improved
Cycle Time	7.5-1, -3, -36, -37, -47	Improved
Employee-Supervisor Ratio	7.3-15	Improved
Innovation	Table 7.5-1 awards	Improved

5.1a(2) Motivation We reinforce good performance and encourage employees to grow as shown in table 5.1-2. We measure the effectiveness of our motivation policies though our climate survey category 7, "visible commitment to goals," and category 12, "attitude/morale." Both trends are positive (fig. 7.3-1). Furthermore, we attribute our significant productivity increases, in part, to high employee motivation (figs. 7.2-3, -4, -6, -7a, -7b).

Table 5.1-2. Mechanisms for employee motivation

Method	HNC Policy for Supporting Method
management selection process	Applicants for supervisory positions take a leadership Gallup Survey, which becomes part of their rating criteria.
management development	All new supervisors take three high-level leadership courses focusing on motivation.
management example	Guiding principle 'play by the rules': on a ten-point scale, supervisors as a group average 9.51 in ethics and integrity on 360.
	Supervisors serve as speakers or officers for professional groups, thereby encouraging professional development and service (table 1.2-1).
employee development	Guided by supervisors, employees plan career paths and training through IDP's (5.2a).
	Job rotation through 52 developmental assignments since October 1998 builds experience and confidence.
	Our video-based college program makes it easier for employees to seek higher education.
	Our innovative ASG (5.2a(7)) encourages support staff to improve skills.
mentoring	Our LDP as explained in 5.2a builds leadership potential, experience, and confidence.
	Supervisors counsel troubled employees to overcome problems through formal processes outlined in our HNDR 690-1-11 and -38.
recognition	On-the-spot cash and honorary awards, "day-off" awards, and team performance awards build esprit de corps (5.1a(4)).
	Our Command Bulletin and Huntsville Times Federal Page includes stories and photos of our employees at work and play.
	Our permanent team poster in the lobby features a new team effort each month.
empowerment	One purpose of our team structure (5.1a(1) is to flatten the organization, thereby driving decision making and innovation to lowest level possible.

5.1a(3) Performance management The Total Army Personnel Evaluation System (TAPES) is our primary process for evaluating individual performance, promoting team behavior and customer service, and reinforcing our values. To capture broader evaluation feedback for performance improvement, we began tying TAPES to a "360" performance review for the 1995 rating

cycle. We are the only organization in the Army to execute a "360" peer review through TAPES for evaluating employee performance.

Through 360, each employee selects raters from internal and external customers, co-workers, and subordinates. In addition, immediate supervisors rate their employees, and employees rate themselves for comparison. Employees receive anonymous feedback from their raters. To promote high performance and continuous improvement, all employees develop annual improvement plans in their three lowest-rated areas based on 360 feedback. Feedback and performance improvement is the focus.

360 evaluation factors include team work, customer focus, job knowledge and skills, ethical behavior and values, and communication.

Continuous improvement of 360 is a strategic initiative (table 2.2-1). Cycles of refinement include internet/intranet access, external customer ratings, and criteria refinement. After our initial trial period, we surveyed employees. Sixty-two percent favored 360 over our traditional system.

5.1a(4) Compensation and recognition

- *Team performance awards.* To supplement the federal compensation system, provide greater motivation for performance excellence, and align team and strategic goals, we implemented a team performance award system in October 1998. Specific team award measures and goals are based on the goals established during strategic/business planning and our five key requirements. If goals are met, all team members receive a monetary award.
- *On-the-spot awards.* Supervisors can award individuals or teams up to $250 for outstanding on-the-job excellence.
- *Special act or service award* ranging from $25 to $25,000 can be given to individuals or teams for a meritorious act, service, or scientific or other achievement.
- *Honorary awards.* Supervisors and/or employees may nominate workers for any of our annual honorary awards presented by our Commander at Business Meetings or our annual awards picnic.

5.1a(5) Communication, cooperation, sharing Our primary systems for enhancing cooperation, communication, and knowledge sharing within and between programs are teaming and our PRB's.

- Our team structure enhances information sharing and communication *within* IPT's by reducing boundaries between the functional stovepipes. Cooperation is reinforced through team performance awards, since everyone on a team is striving to meet the same goals.
- Quarterly PRB's (1.1b(1)), on the other hand, foster the sharing of lessons learned and best practices *between* teams. PRB measures, actions, lessons learned, and best practices are also posted on our website for permanent reference. Sharing between teams includes transferring, improvement, and modification of innovative processes, and gaining of experience and understanding from problems and difficult customers. Through such knowledge sharing, for example, our streamlined maintenance, repair, and renewal (MR&R) process developed by our Energy IPT has been adopted and modified by our Operations and Maintenance Engineering Enhancement (OMEE) team, Medical team, and, most recently, our OE team. This innovative process has become standard practice in-house and throughout the Corps.
- In addition, we continually enhance communication by expanded use of electronic equipment, i.e., e-mail, teleconferencing, intranet, internet, etc. Through video teleconferencing (VTC), we hold weekly staff meetings between Chem Demil offices and BMD teams. We use our intranet to post team measures for employees, Business Meeting charts, PRB actions, and other data.

We measure the effectiveness of our knowledge-sharing, communication, and cooperation mechanisms through the productivity and innovation measures listed in table 5.1-1.

5.1a(6) Effective personnel recruitment For filling temporary and permanent vacancies, we enhance our highly regulated personnel selection process with supplemental procedures that include selection panels, Gallup leadership surveys for high grades, and standard question format. Such supplemental procedures help us arrive at consensus on the most highly qualified personnel.

We use a selection panel for supervisory positions and other select recruitment at lower levels. We even use panels for temporary promotions. Panel members include in-house employees at the same or higher level than the recruited position and one HQUSACE member. On each panel, all interviewees are asked the same set of questions based on specific job requirements, ethics, and values. Our equal employment opportunity (EEO) officer reviews every panel recommendation.

To increase new employee success on the job, we evaluate the applicants' knowledge, skills, and abilities for a particular job description. To build effective job descriptions that align with customer and market requirements, during annual strategic planning we identify technical and management capabilities that we must maintain or develop to support changing product line needs, training, and professional development. To align process capabilities with customer requirements, specific IPT business action plans identify human resource needs.

Besides our "play by the rules" policy (fig. 1.1-2) and the EEO officer review of selections, workforce diversity is addressed through our strategic plan item team 14 on table 2.2-1.

5.2 Employee education, training, development

5.2a(1), (2), (3) Training needs analysis Training needs are developed and planned for through two interactive mechanisms: individual development plans (IDP's) and business action plans. That information is rolled into our annual Training Plan.

- To meet short- and long-term goals, we use the five-year IDP process. Together, employees and supervisors develop plans to meet mission-related, Center support, and professional development goals. IDP's then provide information for our annual Training Needs Survey, which our training committee uses to prioritize and budget training and ensure that we are training in accordance with our strategic plan. IDP's are updated annually.
- During annual business planning, teams identify training needs based on customer needs (2.2a(1)), adjusting plans during LIR's/PRB's and coordinating with the Training Committee as needed (1.1a(2)).
- High performance often depends on the ability to redirect training and enhance in-house capabilities quickly. Therefore, to supplement IDP's and to enhance flexibility and responsiveness, we use "just-in-time" training to meet unexpected training requirements.

5.2a(4) Training delivery and evaluation We apply training delivery approaches as follows:

- *Club membership*. For software training, we purchase "club" memberships for employees needing several training courses within a certain period. Employees then can choose a variety of classes for a set fee.
- *PC- or video-based self-instruction.* Self-instruction software tutorials and videos enable individuals to set their own pace and time.
- *Video-based college courses*. To facilitate and encourage the pursuit of advanced degrees, we support a video-based college program in conjunction with various universities.
- *Traditional classroom training* is used for employees pursuing degrees in a traditional setting. We provide tuition assistance to help with advanced degrees in engineering, management, etc.
- *Seminars and workshops* are well-suited to meeting professional certification requirements or focusing on specific subject matter.
- *On-the-job training* is used for learning processes specific to Corps of Engineers operations and sharing process improvements.
- *Developmental assignments* are temporary duty assignments whereby employees build skills and prepare for greater responsibilities. For FY99, we implemented 52 developmental assignments in public relations, contracting, engineering, management, EEO counseling, and admin support.

We evaluate training for appropriateness and effectiveness in the following ways:

- *On-the-spot evaluation.* After training is finished, employees complete DD Form 1556 where different aspects of the training, such as instructors, materials, appropriateness, etc., are rated. Employees provide comments on their reaction to course strengths and weaknesses.
- *Behavior changes.* Managers can correlate changes in behavior with 360, climate survey, and team performance measurement trends to evaluate not only the effectiveness of training but the need for training.
- *Training results*. We also judge training effectiveness through professional certification and registration or degrees conferred by the authorizing institute, since they are earned by meeting standards or passing examinations.
- *Feedback improvement.* We are negotiating an MOA with our Army personnel supplier to build a database of evaluations conducted six months after course completion to assess training value in relation to performance improvement.

5.2a(5) Developmental training needs Table 5.2-1 shows standard key training for maintaining mission-related and Center support areas. We supplement that with professional development. Our IDP process explained in 5.2a (1), (2), (3) is the main mechanism for coordinating individual professional development with corporate needs.

Table 5.2-1. Maintaining standard key training

Training	Audience	Length	Attendance
L.E.A.D.	Supervisors	40 hrs.	All new
OLE	Supervisors	40 hrs.	All new
PME	Supervisors	40 hrs.	All new
Basic Fiscal Law	Funds managers	40 hrs.	All new
Fiscal Law refresher	Funds managers	8 hrs.	All
Annual Ethics	Funds managers	4 hrs.	All
Sexual Harassment	Center-wide	1 hrs.	All
Annual EEO refresher	Supervisors	2 hrs.	All
Biannual EEO	Center-wide	2 hrs.	All
HAZWOPER Safety	Environmental site investigators	40 hrs.	All safety specialists
Annual HAZWOPER refresher	Same	8 hrs.	All safety specialists
Site safety	OE/construction site investigators	Varies	All required
Security	Center-wide	2 hrs.	All
New employee orientation	New employees	8 hrs.	All
Annual OE standdown	OE IPT members	8 hrs.	All
Annual Contracting standdown	CT and related staff	8 hrs.	All
Commercial items training	Credit card holders	8 hrs.	All
PROMIS	PM's	40 hrs.	All
Medical facilities NFPA	UPH team	40 hrs.	All

5.2a(6) Performance excellence through training To reinforce progress in our quality initiatives, we provided the following quality training:

Table 5.2-2 Maintaining quality training

Training	Audience	Length	Attendance
APIC (Baldrige) for executives	Senior leaders	8 hrs.	All
Performance measurements	IPT's	32 hrs.	80
ISO 9000 lead auditor training	IPT members	40 hrs.	30
Performance-based contracting	IPT members	40 hrs.	55

On a continual basis, our in-house quality assessment team provides training to employees on quality control methods and standards. Quality audits are used to monitor design processes. We measure the overall effectiveness of our Training Plan by increased productivity (figs. 7.2-1, -3, -4, -6, -7a, -7b) and higher customer satisfaction scores (figs. 7.1-1, -2).

5.2a(7) On-the-job skills reinforcement

• Our *Leadership Development Program (LDP),* established in 1996, helps employees at all grade levels reach their leadership potential. Participation is voluntary; progression is self-paced and is facilitated by mentors. Phase I of the two-phase program requires 124 hours of self-study and 76 hours of formal training. Phase II offers college-level courses in leadership.

• *Administrative Support Group (ASG).* Chartered in 1993, ASG offers a forum whereby 90 employees in non-career program job series can (1) identify required skills and abilities, (2) select training and developmental activities, (3) plan career development, (4) monitor development, (5) determine competency levels, and (6) strengthen skills. Under the ASG Certification Program, employees develop skills and pursue career goals through three certification levels (fig. 7-3.12).

• *Knowledge sharing.* An intranet website posts standard operating procedures (SOP's) on branch-level tasks. SOP's are especially helpful for engineer trainees and new employees. We also have a corporate-level websites for sharing information on corporate policies such as summer employment, customer satisfaction, gap analysis, outreach programs, and quality control. To share knowledge across functions and between teams, we use internal seminars held by employees, our command bulletin, PRB best practices, and e-mail.

5.3 Employee Well-Being and Satisfaction

5.3a Work environment

• *Safety focus.* Our safety record is among the industry's best (figs. 7.3-11, 7.4-14), a record achieved through the preventative procedures in table 5.3-1.

Table 5.3-1. Maintaining high safety standards

Method	Description
Field guidance	Our own safety guidance tailors Corps and Army regulations to our unique requirements. Guidance distributed to all field agents
Work plan approval	All work plans require in-house review and approval before site work can begin.
Site work surveillance	Certified safety specialists provide on-site QA to enforce adherence to our safety guidance and work plan procedures.
Safety alerts	Any safety problem or accident occurring at one site is immediately reported to other sites to prevent further mishaps
In-house guidance	Safety awareness bulletins on accident and injury prevention are distributed via e-mail and videos.
Detection	Safety Officer annual safety surveys of our work areas and field sites for follow up and compliance.

• *Flexible work conditions.* Through flextime, employees develop flexible work schedules.

Through our credit hour program, employees may work up to one hour extra per day and use the hours at a later date. Through flexiplace employees may work at alternate duty stations.

• *First-aid training*. We contract with the American Red Cross to train key people in cardiac-pulmonary resuscitation and other first aid.

• *Ergonomics*. Before moving to our new building, we conducted a "chair and cubicle fair" where employees could ergonomically test the systems furniture configuration best suited to their needs.

• *Air-quality surveys*. Because of our indoor air-quality survey, we retrofitted our HVAC system.

• *Wellness*. Through our Health Augmentation Program, employees may use up to 3 hours of duty time per week for 26 weeks to participate in an approved fitness program in our LIFE Center.

5.3b Employee Support climate

5.3b(1) Enhancement benefits, policies, services

Table 5.3-2 shows our main support services for morale, well being, and assistance.

Table 5.3-2 Employee support services

Service	Activity/Scope
Wellness	LIFE Center, health screenings, exercise physiologist onsite, weight control programs, nutrition classes, motivational videos and speakers, exercise programs
Diversity Emphasis	Black and Women's History Month, Take Our Sons/Daughters to Work Day
Career Enhancement and Professional Growth	LDP, Emerging Leaders Program, video-based college courses, ASG, developmental assignments, tuition assistance, IDP.
Community Services and Recreation/Cultural Activities	HNC Activities Association, recreation leagues, discount tickets to community events, onsite book fairs, arts and crafts fair, blood donation leave
Employee Assistance	Legal, drug/alcohol abuse, emotional, marital counseling.
Leave donation program	Our employees donate annual leave so that co-workers who become seriously ill do not have to take leave without pay.
Safety Assurance	Air-quality surveys, safety surveys, weather alert/drills, first-aid stations

5.3b(2) Diversity climate Besides our Special Emphasis programs and our annual EEO training, we have two unique ways for promoting diversity:

• To increase minority engineers in our hiring pool, we went to our local schools to "grow" our own future workforce. Through strategic planning (table 2.2-1, team 14), we target the hiring of minority high school summer and co-op students and partner with local schools to support technical learning, thereby encouraging minorities to enter technical careers.

• One of our annual honorary awards is our EEO award recognizing those who excel in supporting this area.

5.3c Employee satisfaction We use climate surveys to assess our work environment (figs. 7.3-1, -2). Survey results are analyzed to understand the internal level of employee satisfaction. As a result, major changes were instituted in three of our four lowest rated organizations. In one, a new chief was installed. In another, employees were collocated with the teams they were supporting. In another, one of the internal teams was incorporated into another directorate. The result is that scores are up in all four organizations (fig. 7.3-2).

Other methods of addressing employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction include grievances and EEO complaints (fig. 7.3-6). Also, our Commander gains informal insight into employees' perceptions through his open door policy and town halls. We also monitor sick leave usage and counsel those employees who overuse leave.

Through our climate survey, "360" evaluations, and the internal customer survey, we can determine employee satisfaction for specific factors. We also measure factors, such as productivity, grievances, EEO complaints, and individual and team accomplishments to evaluate satisfaction. We implement action through analysis and review. We analyze the current year's survey results to determine employee satisfaction with previous years' initiatives.

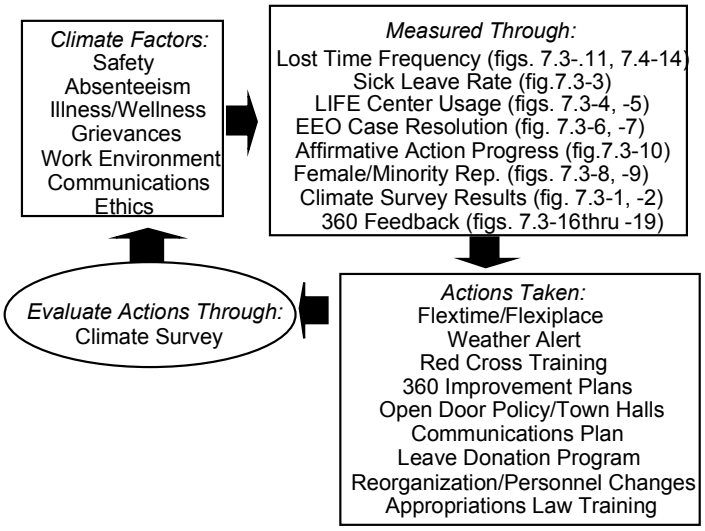

Figure 5.3-1. Determining employee satisfaction through our climate survey