



Organizational Development Survey: Valuable Insights

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Today everyone received the results of our organizational development survey. It is a rich and important document—the data offer insights into who we are as an organization, and it also contains clues about the kind of organization we can become. I say “the data,” but what I really mean is that you have given us these insights and clues. Many thanks to everyone who completed the survey.

Let me share a few general impressions from my first reading of the survey. The answers to the specific survey questions suggest that people are reasonably satisfied in terms of organizational issues, but the text responses reveal that we can do a lot better. This is exactly how it should be. You are not complacent about improving our work together, and continuously trying to get better is a strong part of our culture. Thank you. We need to be more intentional and systematic in sharing different kinds of information, for example, and you have given us many specific suggestions for how we might do it. In reading the survey results, I occasionally found myself leafing back through the pages for context to see if a response was from an SPA employee, faculty member, or EPA professional. I could not tell just by reading the comment. Each group has a slightly different perspective on issues, but each approaches them with the same care, thoughtfulness, and creativity. That is another strong feature of our culture. At the same time, however, there is an undercurrent throughout the responses that some people, particularly SPA and EPA professionals, do not always feel valued and respected. This is an area where we must do better. I have benefited so much by having a Dean's Advisory Council that is broadly representative, and I will pay special attention to your suggestions for how we can continue making progress in this area.

This information is a gift to all of us, and I offer special thanks to the Organizational Development Committee for creating and managing the survey. Audrey Williams has done a magnificent job as chair, and she has had strong support from the other members—Frayda Bluestein, Brian Newport, Carl Stenberg, and Bonni Baird. I plan to post comments in the future about some of the issues raised by the survey results. I encourage you to spend time with this information and then share your own reactions. I'd love to hear them.