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Your voice has been heard, thank you

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Your voice has been heard, thank you

Dear Colleagues:

In March, I asked you to take part in the first employee engagement survey Western Michigan University has pursued in years. We had hoped for a strong response, and you delivered one! The WMYou Employee Engagement Survey's 50% response rate was noted as "excellent" by ModernThink, the national firm that conducted the survey, and demonstrates, once again, how committed employees are to this University. Thank you!

Because so many participated, we can be confident that the overall results meaningfully reflect the perspectives of employees on a range of key issues. This is tremendously important, as we will use the survey findings to improve University operations, target enhancements to the work environment, advance WMU as a school of choice and together, with you, establish a culture in which continuous improvement becomes the Western way.

We promised to share and openly respond to the survey's findings. This communication is a first step; there will be more to come early this fall. Although we are just beginning to absorb the data, there are some initial results that I would like to share.

I am heartened by the fact that most employees reported having a positive workplace experience overall. More specifically, findings show some of our greatest areas of strength. Those categories, followed by example statements that participants were asked to agree or disagree with in that category, include:

Job fit and connection to mission

Example: "I understand how my job contributes to this university's mission."

Benefits, work-life balance and autonomy

Example: "I am given the responsibility and freedom to do my job."

Supervisor or department chair competencies

Example: "I have a good relationship with my supervisor or department chair."

Diversity, equity and inclusion

Example: "This university has clear and effective procedures for dealing with discrimination."

Participants also noted areas where we need additional focus and work. Those include:

Resource constraints

Example: "The facilities adequately meet my needs."

Performance management

Example: "I am given the opportunity to develop my skills at this university."

Communication and collaboration

Example: "In my department, we communicate openly about issues that impact each other's work."

Shared governance

Example: “There is regular and open communication among faculty, administration and staff.”

Senior leadership

Example: “Senior leadership communicates openly about important matters.”

So, without a doubt, the University has room to improve, but we have much to be proud of today as we work together toward a better version of WMU for the future.

Let me assure you that the University's senior leaders and I—informed by your responses—are committed to fostering and maintaining an environment in which all employees are supported, engaged and respected for their work and are well-informed about how the University is evolving as a school of choice for all of us.

This fall, we plan to offer a more formal presentation of survey results and engage you in discussions about the findings with the goal of using them to take the next meaningful steps. Look for more communications about this in coming months.

Each day you come to work to serve our students and advance the frontiers of knowledge. On behalf of our students and all who benefit from your work, thank you.

Sincerely,

Edward Montgomery
President

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