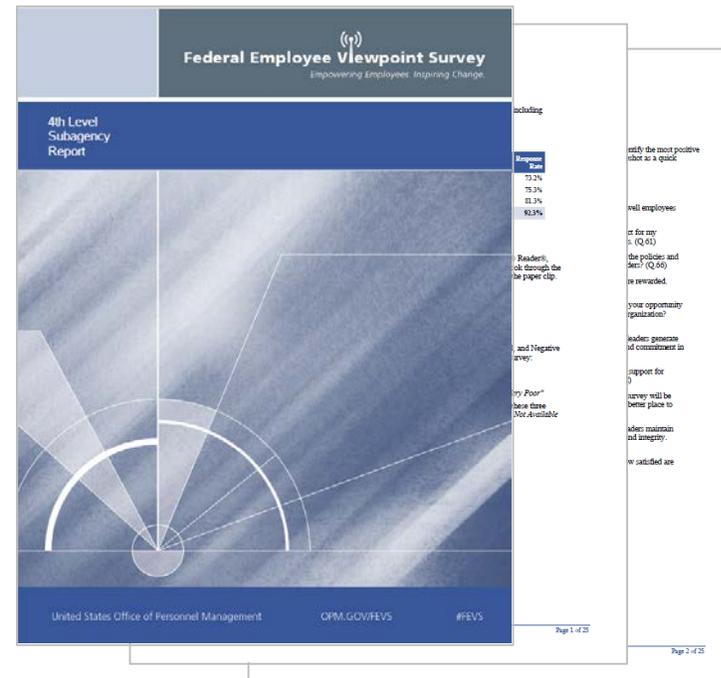


# Review Survey Results to Gain Insights

The purpose of this guide is to offer a process and some tools to help you develop a solid understanding of your organization's OPM Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results. Surveys often yield a wealth of information. Survey results present multiple data points, comparisons, and item types. The bottom line is no single piece of information will tell you the full story of your survey results. Rather, it requires looking at your data holistically to identify patterns, which lead to an understanding of your organization's strengths and opportunities for growth. And, once you understand the data, it is important to gather additional information to gain insight on the underlying reasons for the survey results.

## Review Survey Results to Gain Insights in 5 Steps

- 1 Get your Data into a Format You can Work With**  
Use a spreadsheet-based tool
- 2 Review Your Survey Results and Flag Noteworthy Findings**  
Flag notable responses, trends, and comparisons
- 3 Identify Patterns in the Survey Results**  
Focus on engagement 'drivers' to identify themes
- 4 Consider the Contextual Factors within Your Organization**  
Consider how external factors affect your results
- 5 Identify Strengths and Opportunities for Growth**  
Consider how existing strengths can leverage opportunities for growth



# Get your Data into a Format You Can Work With

- ❑ Check with your OPM FEVS agency contact or your Office of Human Capital to gain access to your FEVS results.
- ❑ Working with your OPM FEVS results in a spreadsheet will make it easier to holistically consider multiple pieces of information.
- ❑ A spreadsheet will facilitate the processes of analyzing your data, flagging noteworthy findings, and sorting items to identify patterns. Ideally the spreadsheet should include:
  - **Item Results:** Percent of positive, neutral, negative responses for each item
  - **Trend Data:** Percent of positive responses for each item from the prior year
  - **Comparison Data:** Percent of positive responses for each item for the closest parent organization
  - **Alignment:** Items aligned to key drivers to help identify patterns
- ❑ There are a few spreadsheet-based tools:
  - **OPM FEVS Online Reporting and Analysis Tool:** This tool is a query and analysis system that allows you to access your FEVS reports, create custom reports, conduct analyses on your FEVS data, and export results in various formats, including Excel.
    - URL: [www.dataexplorer.com/FEVS](http://www.dataexplorer.com/FEVS)
    - Video Tutorial: <https://www.dataexplorer.com/Public/Tutorial.aspx>
  - **The Results Analysis Tool:** This simple Excel-based tool makes it easy to capture and consider multiple data points, flag noteworthy results, and sort items to identify patterns. (Provided as an external resource).
  - **OPM FEVS Annual Employee Survey Report:** This Excel-based report has a *Core Survey Tab* with survey data that is formatted to easily flag noteworthy results, and sort items to identify patterns.

## OPM FEVS Online Reporting and Analysis Tool

2017 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

Data in table for:  
Year of survey administration: 2017

		Unweighted Number of Responses	Cell Pct
Pos Q24) In my work unit, differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way. (Q24_pos)	Positive	177,593.0	36.1%
	Total	454,415.0	100.0%
3 pt Q29) The workforce has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals. (3pt)	Positive	338,853.0	70.9%
	Neutral	74,839.0	16.8%
	Negative	55,616.0	12.4%
	Total	469,308.0	100.0%

## Results Analysis Tool

FEVS Item	YOUR RESULTS: % Favorable	YOUR RESULTS: % Unfavorable	PRIOR YEAR: % Favorable	PARENT ORGANIZATION: % Favorable	TREND: % Favorable difference between Current and Prior Year
1. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my organization.	75%	26%	90%	80%	-15%
2. I have enough information to do my job well.	90%	0%	100%	80%	-10%
3. I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.	60%	25%	60%	77%	-1%
4. My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.	49%	26%	69%	82%	-21%
5. I like the kind of work I do.	45%	28%	69%	85%	-25%
6. I know what is expected of me on the job.	83%	17%	100%	83%	-17%
7. When needed I am willing to put in the extra effort to get a job done.	77%	0%	100%	97%	-23%
9. I am constantly looking for ways to do my job better.	59%	8%	80%	90%	-21%
10. I have sufficient resources (for example, people, equipment, information) to do my job well.	55%	22%	70%	77%	-22%

## Review Your Survey Results and Flag Noteworthy Findings

Reviewing your data involves analyzing the response percentages, trends, and comparisons, and flagging noteworthy findings to help you identify patterns in the results. Determining what is truly meaningful varies by question and is impacted by response rate and other factors; however, the following guidelines offer some general rules of thumb for identifying and flagging noteworthy results for further consideration.

### Item Frequencies

- Start by looking at the favorable (agree + strongly agree), neutral, and unfavorable (disagree + strongly disagree) responses. This information can give you an overall sense for how employees feel.
- Highlight percentages in green where 65% or more of the employees answered favorably and highlight percentages in red where 35% or more of the employees answered unfavorably for further consideration.

### Trends

- Looking at how your results changed from the prior year gives you a pulse on the direction your organization is going. Do employees see things as better, worse, or the same?
- If an item changed by 5 percentage points or more from the prior year, it may be worth investigating; the greater the change, the more noteworthy.
- Highlight percentages in green that increased by 5 or more percentage points, and highlight percentages in red that decreased by 5 or more percentage points.

### Comparison to Parent Organization

- Comparisons to parent organizations provide a rich source of context for your overall results.
- If an item is 5 percentage points or more above or below the parent organization, it may be worth investigating.
- Highlight percentages in green that are 5 or more percentage points above your parent organization, and highlight percentages in red that are 5 or more percentage points below your parent organization.

Highlighting positive findings in green and negative findings in red is an effective way to flag noteworthy results. Items with mostly green highlighting are likely strengths. Items with mostly red highlighting, or a mix of red and green, are likely areas of opportunity.

FEVS Item	Favorable	Neutral	Unfavorable	Trend	Co.
7. How satisfied are you with your opportunity to get a better job in your organization?	38%	30%	31%	-11	1
3. Pay raises depend on how well employees perform their jobs.	41%	22%	37%	6	6
3. In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.	45%	27%	28%	-2	5
1. I have sufficient resources (for example, people, materials, budget) to get my job done.	47%	17%	37%	-16	8
4. In my work unit, differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way.	47%	21%	32%	-1	5
3. My training needs are assessed.	50%	19%	31%	1	-3
1. I believe the results of this survey will be used to make my agency a better place to work.	69%	15%	17%	19	19
3. Managers support collaboration across work units to accomplish work objectives.	70%	16%	14%	3	10
7. I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule or regulation without fear of reprisal.	70%	19%	11%	-2	4
The workforce has the job-related knowledge and skills to accomplish its goals.	70%	19%	11%	-2	8



Using a spreadsheet tool will facilitate this analysis.

## Identify Patterns in the Survey Results

The items on the OPM FEVS provide different types of insight. Some items reflect **Drivers**, some items reflect **Employee Attitudes and Behaviors**, and other items reflect **Outcomes**.

### Focus on Drivers

- Drivers are the aspects of the organization that create conditions for employee engagement and a positive workplace experience.
- The OPM FEVS measures several drivers. Considering the full range of drivers provides a more complete picture of the full employee experience.
- Drivers are most useful for looking at patterns to understand your organization's strengths and opportunities for growth.
- Drivers also have the most utility to inform action planning.
- Sort your OPM FEVS items based on the Driver categories shown to the right and on the next page.
- The red and green highlighting you added when you analyzed the response percentages, trends, and comparisons may quickly reveal patterns.
- Drivers with mostly green highlighting are strengths, drivers with mostly red highlighting or a mix of red and green are likely areas of opportunity.

### Drivers of Employee Engagement, Employee Experience, and Other Outcomes

**Performance Feedback:** Emphasizes the need for ongoing employee feedback to support and sustain progress toward achieving work goals.

**Training and Development:** Focuses on the need to increase employee capacity to perform (e.g., by providing training opportunities). Development encourages and strengthens good performance.

**Performance Rating:** Emphasizes the role of evaluating employee performance to achieve results.

**Performance Recognition and Reward:** Outlines the importance of providing incentives to, and recognition of, employees for their performance, and acknowledging employee contributions to the agency's mission.

**Collaborative Management / Empowerment / Communication:** Illustrates the importance of a management style that promotes and supports collaborative communication and teamwork in completing projects and accomplishing goals/objectives.

**Job Resources:** Emphasizes the importance of removing barriers to engagement, including providing the resources, information, and workload to enable employees to engage in persistent and dedicated effort at work.

**Work/Life Balance & Support:** Highlights the importance of supervisor support of employees' needs and well-being by providing a physically safe and family-friendly workplace.

**Merit System Principles:** Serves to ensure that Federal personnel management practices support fairness and protect employees from arbitrary actions, personnel favoritism, political coercion and reprisal.

**Teamwork:** Highlights the importance of employees feeling like they are part of a team and communicating effectively with each other to get the job done.

**Results Driven:** Emphasizes the importance of working toward common goals, articulating the organization's mission, vision, values, and supporting the mission.

# Drivers with OPM FEVS Items

## Performance Feedback

- 6. I know what is expected of me on the job.
- 44. Discussions with my supervisor about my performance are worthwhile.
- 46. My supervisor provides me with constructive suggestions to improve my job performance.
- 50. In the last six months, my supervisor has talked with me about my performance.

## Training and Development

- 1. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my organization.
- 18. My training needs are assessed.
- 43. My supervisor provides me with opportunities to demonstrate my leadership skills.
- 47. Supervisors in my work unit support employee development.

## Performance Rating

- 15. My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my performance.
- 16. I am held accountable for achieving results.
- 19. In my most recent performance appraisal, I understood what I had to do to be rated at different performance levels (for example, Fully Successful, Outstanding).

## Collaborative Management / Empowerment /Communication

- 2. I have enough information to do my job well.
- 3. I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.
- 32. Creativity and innovation are rewarded.
- 30. Employees have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to work processes.
- 48. My supervisor listens to what I have to say.
- 58. Managers promote communication among different work units (for example, about projects, goals, needed resources).
- 59. Managers support collaboration across work units to accomplish work objectives.
- 63. How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work?

## Merit System Principles

- 17. I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule or regulation without fear of reprisal.
- 34. Policies and programs promote diversity in the workplace (for example, recruiting minorities and women, training in awareness of diversity issues, mentoring).
- 37. Arbitrary action, personal favoritism and coercion for partisan political purposes are not tolerated.
- 38. Prohibited Personnel Practices (for example, illegally discriminating for or against any employee/applicant, obstructing a person's right to compete for employment, knowingly violating veterans' preference requirements) are not tolerated.
- 45. My supervisor is committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society.
- 55. Supervisors work well with employees of different backgrounds.

## Performance Recognition and Rewards

- 22. Promotions in my work unit are based on merit.
- 23. In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.
- 24. In my work unit, differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way.
- 25. Awards in my work unit depend on how well employees perform their jobs.
- 31. Employees are recognized for providing high quality products and services.
- 33. Pay raises depend on how well employees perform their jobs.
- 65. How satisfied are you with the recognition you receive for doing a good job?

## Job Resources

- 9. I have sufficient resources (for example, people, materials, budget) to get my job done.
- 10. My workload is reasonable.
- 14. Physical conditions (for example, noise level, temperature, lighting, cleanliness in the workplace) allow employees to perform their jobs well.
- 21. My work unit is able to recruit people with the right skills.
- 27. The skill level in my work unit has improved in the past year.
- 29. My work unit has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.
- 64. How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management on what's going on in your organization?

## Work/Life Balance & Support

- 49. My supervisor treats me with respect.
- 51. I have trust and confidence in my supervisor.
- 42. My supervisor supports my need to balance work and other life issues.
- 62. Senior leaders demonstrate support for Work/Life programs.
- 35. Employees are protected from health and safety hazards on the job.
- 36. My organization has prepared employees for potential security threats.

## Results Driven

- 12. I know how my work relates to the agency's goals.
- 56. Managers communicate the goals of the organization.
- 57. Managers review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.

## Teamwork

- 20. The people I work with cooperate to get the job done.
- 26. Employees in my work unit share job knowledge with each other.

## Consider the Contextual Factors within Your Organization

As you look at patterns in your survey results, it is important to consider the contextual factors within your organization that may help to explain the root causes for your results. Answering the questions below will help you think about these contextual factors and gain deeper insights into your results.

### Recent Changes

What recent changes occurred that might impact your team's engagement, overall experience at work, satisfaction, and ability to meet the mission?

### Unique Factors

What are the possible reasons why your survey results are higher or lower than your parent organization?

### Your Observations

Based on your observations, what are your team's strengths? Why are these strengths?  
Based on your observations, what are your team's challenges? Why are these challenges?

### Your Role

As a leader, you have a great impact on the climate of your work unit and your employees' engagement.  
How have you contributed to your team's strengths? What role have you played in your team's challenges?

### Span of Control

What drivers are within your control? What drivers are outside your control?

**How do the answers to these questions explain your survey results?**



## Focus on What You Can Influence

Your survey results may be unfavorable in areas that are outside of your control. For example, you may not have access to performance bonuses to reward employees or the funds to send your employees to training. What can you influence that is within your control? There are many things supervisors can do to recognize their employees, make employees feel appreciated for their work, plan for individual development, and provide solid performance feedback to help them perform their jobs. Remember that there is room to influence strengths. How can you enhance what is working well? Get creative and don't censor an idea because it seems too easy. What small or simple tactic can you deploy?

# Identify Strengths and Opportunities for Growth

After you identify patterns in your survey results and consider contextual factors, the next step is to identify strengths and opportunities for growth. This step could be relatively easy or fairly difficult, depending on how easy it is to understand your survey results and your current knowledge of your organization. Below are four common patterns that occur in survey results. Each scenario has different considerations for how to proceed with identifying key strengths and opportunities.

## Scenario 1

### Favorable Results Across All Indicators: Favorable Responses, Trends, & Comparisons

Your organization's strengths are evident and you don't have any organization-wide challenges.

- Focus on defining and refining your strengths.
- Solicit input from your team on how to refine what you are already doing well.

## Scenario 2

### Moderate Favorability with No Change and Comparable to the Parent Organization

It is hard to gain insights into your organization based on your survey results alone.

- Focus on your understanding of contextual factors.
- Solicit input from your team on your organization's strengths and opportunities to improve.

## Scenario 3

### A Mix of Favorable and Unfavorable Results

It is evident that your organization has some strengths and some opportunities to improve.

- Focus on survey results and contextual factors to identify strengths and opportunities.
- Solicit input from your team to validate your understanding.

## Scenario 4

### Unfavorable Results Across All Indicators: Unfavorable Responses Trends, & Comparisons

Your organization has multiple challenges.

- Focus on contextual factors to consider root causes.
- Solicit input from your team to narrow in on what opportunities for growth will have the greatest impact.

## Narrow in on Key Strengths and Opportunities

It is a good practice to narrow in on a subset of the 3-5 most relevant strengths and opportunities for further consideration. The following may be useful to consider in determining what is most relevant:

- In what areas did your organization score especially well and/or especially poorly?
- Where were the greatest differences between your organization and your parent organization?
- What changed the most from the last survey cycle?
- What is most important to your organization's goals, values, and priorities?
- What strengths and opportunities do you believe are most important to your employees?
- What is most concerning to you about the results? Did the results reveal a problem that needs to be addressed?

The next step is to share your results with your team and solicit input. Soliciting input from your team will give you an opportunity to confirm your understanding of your organization's key strengths and opportunities and gather additional information. The guide titled *Share Results and Solicit Input* provides guidance on this process.