

DIAGNOSING AGENCY CULTURE

Assessing Your Agency's Internal Culture

Use the scale below to rate the following statements. Base your ratings on the current reality of your organization, in YOUR opinion – NOT where you hope your organization might be at some future time. Add up the scores in each category and record them in the space provided.

Ratings

- 0 = Not sure (but I intend to find out)!
- 1 = Definitely needs work – not at all where we should be on this
- 2 = Could use some work – not quite where we should be on this
- 3 = Generally OK – we can live with where we are on this
- 4 = Definitely OK – we're right where we should be on this

Leadership	Score:
We have a clearly articulated organizational mission.	
Our actions and activities are generally proactive rather than reactive.	
Our organizational values are positive and well-known by stakeholders.	
Our organization's values are embraced by most employees.	
We have a clearly defined code of conduct.	
Power is shared in the organization.	
There is a long-term perspective that goes beyond day-to-day operations.	
We value our employees and our actions demonstrate this.	
Employees generally trust the leadership team.	
Score for Leadership:	

Professionalism	Score:
Our organization has a positive reputation in the community.	
Employees accept and embrace workplace diversity.	
We are generally proud of the conduct of our employees – on and off duty.	
Employees are respectful of one another.	
Employees appear to be genuinely committed to the mission of this organization.	
Employees are empowered to fulfill their job duties.	
Employees are proud to be associated with this organization.	
Other agencies look to us as leaders in the field.	
Value is placed on enhancing job skills and knowledge.	
Score for Professionalism:	

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Quality of Work Life	Score:
Employees can get time off without a lot of hassle.	
Employees don't abuse sick leave.	
Employees are formally recognized for positive accomplishments.	
Employees know where to turn for help and support for personal problems.	
Any need for organizational change is openly discussed in a positive manner.	
Employees' behavior is consistent with the code of conduct.	
Employees feel that they can safely report any misconduct of their peers.	
This is a good place for single parents and other employees with family responsibilities to work.	
Employees support each other in getting the agency's mission accomplished.	
Score for Work Life:	

Daily Operations	Score:
Daily work is consistent with written procedures.	
Employees are hard working and committed to doing their jobs right.	
Employees demonstrate professionalism every day in their interactions with both the community and their clients.	
Employees show few signs of stress-related burnout.	
Employees have an opportunity to work on diverse and changing assignments.	
Employees have autonomy and aren't second-guessed by supervisors.	
Citizen and client complaints are taken seriously.	
Employees have the tools and resources to do their jobs properly.	
Employees trust the internal investigation process as fair and impartial.	
Score for Daily Operations:	

Personnel Selection, Promotion and Development	Score:
Our organization has little trouble attracting qualified applicants.	
Well-qualified employees are being hired.	
New employees represent the diversity of our clients and the community.	
Current employees are our best recruiters.	
Our salary and benefit package is competitive in our community.	
The promotional process is objective and viewed as fair by most employees.	
Employees receive the training they need to perform their jobs.	
Managers act as formal or informal mentors to subordinate employees.	
The performance appraisal system objectively evaluates employee skills and competencies.	
Score for Personnel Selection, Promotion and Development:	

Communications	Score:
The leader's message is getting across to most all employees.	
Employees feel that their voice is heard and their feedback is valuable.	
Information flows effectively, up and down the chain of command.	
Employees look forward to reading the organization's newsletter.	
Employees believe that their grievances will be heard in a timely manner and settled fairly.	
There is little gossip and few rumors in the workplace.	
Supervisors regularly schedule meetings to share information.	
Employees are generally consulted before major decisions affecting them are made.	
Supervisors and managers listen more and talk less.	
Score for Communications:	

Add your scores here:

Leadership	=	_____
Professionalism	=	_____
Quality of Work Life	=	_____
Daily Operations	=	_____
Personnel Development	=	_____
Communications	=	_____
Total	=	_____

Interpreting results:

Because every organization is unique, there is no "magic score" indicating that your organization's culture is functioning more positively than negatively. You should examine the lowest-scoring and highest-scoring categories and make your own assessment of where improvements can be made. You may also wish to consider how other employees, at different levels of the organization would respond.

THE DAILY DOZEN

If you answer yes to one or more of these questions, you are at risk for developing an inappropriate relationship with an offender. You should discuss these issues with a supervisor as soon as possible.

1. Do you look forward to seeing a particular offender when you come to work?
2. Have you done anything with an offender you would not want your family or supervisor to know about?
3. Would you be reluctant to have a co-worker observe your behavior for a whole day?
4. Do you talk about personal matters with offenders?
5. Do you believe you can ask an offender to do personal favors for you?
6. Have you ever received personal advice from an offender?
7. Have you ever said anything to an offender that you would not want tape recorded?
8. Do you have thoughts or fantasies about touching a particular offender? Does this extend to planning how you can be alone with the offender?
9. Do you think you have the right to touch an inmate wherever and whenever you want to?
10. Do you have a feeling of not being able to wait to share good/ bad news with a particular offender?
11. Do you think offenders are not allowed to say no to you, no matter what you ask?
12. Have you ever allowed offenders to talk about sexual experiences or sexual fantasies, or tell sexual jokes in your presence?

Is it Ethical or Unethical?

Place an “E” in the space provided if you believe the behavior is ethical for criminal justice professionals. Place a “U” in the space provided if you believe the behavior is unethical.

- ___ 1. Accepting a reduced price meal from a local diner.
- ___ 2. Accepting a ride from a member of an offender’s family when your car is in for service.
- ___ 3. Covering with his supervisor for a colleague who is experiencing some personal problems at home.
- ___ 4. Overlooking a close friend’s violation of a petty department rule.
- ___ 5. Periodically taking a mental health day.
- ___ 6. Telling a colleague about an offender’s sexual history.
- ___ 7. Having your car serviced at a garage where an offender works.
- ___ 8. Curtailing field visits when you know there is a budget crunch, especially in reimbursement for gas.
- ___ 9. Asking to use the bathroom at an offender’s home.
- ___ 10. Failing to tell the supervisor when you think you see a colleague having dinner with an offender on your caseload.
- ___ 11. Telling a “little white lie” to protect a peer or colleague.
- ___ 12. Treating offenders differently than the general public.
- ___ 13. You ask a court clerk whom you work with all the time to reschedule a hearing that interferes with personal plans.
- ___ 14. Finding ways around departmental policy and procedures that get in the way of your doing your job.

Every day we make choices about how to behave or how to respond to a situation. The basic process for making ethical decisions can be summarized in the following steps:

	Strategy	Questions to Ask	Ethical or Not?
1	Define the precise dilemma you face. Do not globalize or generalize.	For example, rather than “is the officer acting ethically?”, consider the exact situation, “is it ethical or acceptable when this officer has dinner with the family of an offender on his caseload?”	
2	Gather all of the information about the dilemma.	This includes interviewing the offender, the officer, reviewing case files, finding out how the officer behaves with other offenders, how the officer acts towards this particular offender, etc.	
3	List the pros and cons.	Literally list the pros and cons of the situation on a sheet of paper.	
4	Is it legal?	What are the laws, policies, and procedures about the situation? Does it align with collective bargaining agreements, personnel rules, and other human resource requirements?	
5	Is it aligned with the agency’s mission?	Does the situation support the mission of the agency, and is it necessary to achieve the mission?	
6	What are the consequences of taking the action you are considering?	What are the possible ramifications of this situation- for the officer, the offender, the agency, public perception, etc.	
7	Decide if it is ethical.	Take all of the information and results of each of the above steps, and decide if the situation is ethical according to the definition of ethics.	
8	Act on your decision.	Take whatever steps are necessary to correct the situation. This could include educating the officer and the offender and family; disciplining the officer, changing policy and procedure, etc.	
9	Live your decision.	Now you must model the ethical behavior you are expecting, and demonstrate the agency policy of zero tolerance and its support for ethical behavior.	