Nurturing the Next Generation in Public Power

Tom Heller
CEO
Missouri River Energy Services
Background on MRES

Missouri River Energy Services Members

North Dakota
43. Cavalier
44. Hillsboro
45. Lakota
46. Northwood
47. Riverdale
48. Valley City

South Dakota
49. Beresford
50. Big Stone City
51. Brookings
52. Burke
53. Faith
54. Flandreau
55. Fort Pierre
56. Pickstown
57. Pierre
58. Vermillion
59. Watertown
60. Winner

Minnesota
19. Adrian
20. Alexandria
21. Barnesville
22. Benson
23. Breckenridge
24. Detroit Lakes
25. Elbow Lake
26. Henning
27. Hutchinson
28. Jackson
29. Lakefield
30. Lake Park
31. Luverne
32. Madison
33. Marshall
34. Melrose
35. Moorhead
36. Ortonville
37. St. James
38. Sauk Centre
39. Staples
40. Wadena
41. Westbrook
42. Worthington

Iowa
1. Alton
2. Atlantic
3. Denison
4. Hartley
5. Hawarden
6. Kimballton
7. Lake Park
8. Mandilla
9. Orange City
10. Paullina
11. Pella
12. Primghar
13. Remsen
14. Rock Rapids
15. Sanborn
16. Shelby
17. Sioux Center
18. Woodbine
Goal 6: Attract and Retain Qualified Staff
(Employee retention ratio for all staff)
MRES Past Recruitment and Retention Activities

• College student internships
• MRES scholarship programs
  • 4-year college for energy-related programs
  • Line worker program
• DEED scholarships / internships
• Employee future leadership group
• Annual compensation surveys
  • Western Management Group Utilities Survey
  • HCI Executive Compensation Survey
  • APPA Joint Action Agency Survey
  • Local and Regional Survey Data
MRES Workforce Age

- 40 & Less: 27%
- Over 60: 11%
- 56-60: 16%
- 51-55: 16%
- 41-50: 30%
Strategic Priority
Retaining and Attracting People

• Employee Survey - Employee Engagement
  • Employee engagement – feel passionate, energetic, and committed
  • Engaged employees 87% less likely to leave organization

• Employee Development and Training

• Succession Planning
Employee Engagement - Process

• No survey conducted for 20 years
• Committee of employee volunteers
• Developed consultant RFP
• Interviewed and recommended consultant
  • DecisionWise – Springville, UT
• Developed survey tool with consultant
Employee Engagement - Process

• Early employee concerns of confidentiality and anonymity
  • What is management going to do with information?
  • Building trust is important
• Employees reviewed and commented on draft survey
• Consultant webinar day before survey available
• Survey completed May 2017
• 95% response rate by MRES employees
  • Benchmark for first survey – 76%
• 76% of employees rated MRES favorably
  • 16% neutral and 8% unfavorable

• Strengths
  • Leadership
  • Meaning and vision

• Opportunities
  • Individual growth
  • Connection
  • Performance and policies
Employee Engagement

- Survey results shared with employees
  - Results sent to employees as soon as possible
  - Consultant webinar for employees
- Employees volunteered for consultant-led focus groups
- Focus on what opportunities existed for MRES
- Three groups formed
  - Individual growth
  - Employee recognition
  - Organizational readiness
Employee Engagement Groups

• Met several times to develop recommendations
• Groups presented recommendations for management approval
• Groups reported on approved recommendations at all-employee meeting
• Implementation of approved recommendations to be completed first quarter 2018
Future Employee Engagement

• Second all-employee survey to be completed in spring 2018
• Employee volunteers to review results
• Compare to 2017 survey and provide recommendations to management
Employee Development

- Identified with engagement survey
- Started after engagement survey completed
- HR developed RFP
- Selected consultant
  - Solve – Omaha, NE
Employee Development – Work Scope

• All-employee testing/training
• Employee focus groups
  • Future leadership traits
• Current leadership identification
  • Potential future leaders
  • Critical positions
• Testing of current and potential future leaders
• Development plans created for current and potential future leaders
• Succession planning map
Employee Development – Recommendations

• Training for employees
  • All employees
  • Supervisors
  • Future leaders

• Communications strategy

• Recruitment and selection strategy

• Succession planning map (kept confidential)
Lessons Learned

• Engagement survey and employee development takes time
• Clarify up front – employee testing results must be shared
• Leadership testing of potential future leaders
  • First group selected by senior management
  • Applications to be accepted for next round
• Individual development plans need guidelines up front
• Employee engagement, development and succession planning are a continual process – not to be done once and done
Thank You