Maintaining a Rewarding USGS Environment in Challenging Times presented by the Leadership 201 Class Learning Action Project Team

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By the end of our presentation we hope to have convinced you of these things about a rewarding environment:

1) It's worth the time.
2) It's simple.
3) It's up to you.
4) It's not just the money.
5) It's about promoting science excellence.

The original questions posed to us by the ELT Champions were:

1) What can and should USGS managers and supervisors do to maintain a rewarding work environment in challenging times?
2) What can and should the ELT be doing?
3) What are the barriers that managers and supervisors face in creating a rewarding work environment?   How can these be overcome?

Background information:
There are many ideas.
There are many experts.
Nothing so far has worked Bureau-wide.

The Problem:
Implementation
Making it stick

Why?
Because a rewarding work environment isn't valued.

How do we get people to recognize the value of a rewarding work environment?
Show the value.
All are responsible.

Supervisor-driven vs. Employee-driven Rewarding Work Environment

Supervisor-driven	Employee-driven
+	**+**
• Consistent environment and distribution, fair • More control over resources • Single initiator • Used to motivate	• Shared responsibility • Increased support • Ownership • More control over situation • Customized • Higher success rate
–	**–**
• Lack of time to personalize • More mechanical, less personal • Oner person's perspective • One more thing to do	• Lack of fairness, jealousy • Out of control • Less consistent • No single leader, who's accountable?

The object is to manage this dilemma such that the positives are maximize, and the negatives are minimized. This requires both supervisors and employees to take responsibility for creating a rewarding environment, and long-term management and awareness of the balance.

What is the value of a rewarding work environment?
Meaningful and valued work
Attracts/retains employees
Enhances professional development
Increased productivity
Fosters accountability
Improves supervisor/employee communication

How do we educate our USGS staff and communicate these values?
Define rewarding environment
Clearly define benefits
Data, data, and more data

Tools for Educating the Value of a Rewarding Work Environment
Share stories
Visual reminders:
  wristbands
  coins
  t-shirts
  bumper stickers
Website:
  Interactive

Idea forum
Success stories
Tools
Pop-up messages with reminders
Local Champions
Informal/formal communication – power of the Performance Review

Guidelines for creating a rewarding work environment:
NOT mandatory
Help supervisors make time
Make it visible
Personalize it
Phased approach
Celebrate all achievements – simple daily rewards
Keep it simple – have fun!

Ideas for creating a rewarding work environment:
Reward the rewarders
Rewarding workplace "holiday"
Have a contest
Have a talent show
Door prizes
BBQ/potluck onsite
More toys
Retreats for supervisors
Wine tasting
Roving rewards people
Recognition of outside achievements
Random acts of kindness