Creating a Rewarding Environment

ELT Champion: Paul Young, Acting Associate Director, Energy and Minerals

Sponsors: Dan Hippe, Deputy Regional Director, Northeast Region
Pam Agnew, Program Analyst, Office of Human Capital

Issue/Challenges:
How to create a rewarding environment has been the topic of an abundant number of scholarly articles and leadership development books. Leadership and supervisory classes across both the public and private sectors cover the topic. Organizations devote time and attention to creating a rewarding environment for their employees and then measure changes via employee surveys. USGS is no different. A succession of USGS leaders and managers over the last 15 years have undertaken to create a more rewarding environment.

The USGS Best Places to Work Council established a working group to make recommendations and how to create and maintain a rewarding environment in the USGS. One recommendation is to update a summary of existing ideas and best practices. In this case the "wheel does not need to reinvented" as there is a plentitude of ideas, thus the committee merely wants to summarize in a short document 3-4 pages (if possible in that short a document) what can be done. One idea is to list 100 of the best ideas. That document will then be disseminated to all supervisors. We think that is the easy part!

Our fundamental challenge is how to convince first line supervisors to **embrace** the concept of creating a rewarding workplace and generate a **desire** for them to use tools we provide them or come up with what works for their staff.   This, in an era of very limited cash incentives and overworked supervisors who already have a plate full of requirements to do their jobs. Yet, it is vital for USGS to meet its mission.

Background Material/Resources
- Creating A Rewarding USGS Environment. A Handbook. March 2002.
- Creating an Environment for Excellent Science, Best Practices from Across the USGS, updated: August 2004.
- Creating and Maintaining a Rewarding Environment in the USGS. A white paper.

Expectations
Simple, effective ideas to meet the fundamental challenge.