

SECTION 4. MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

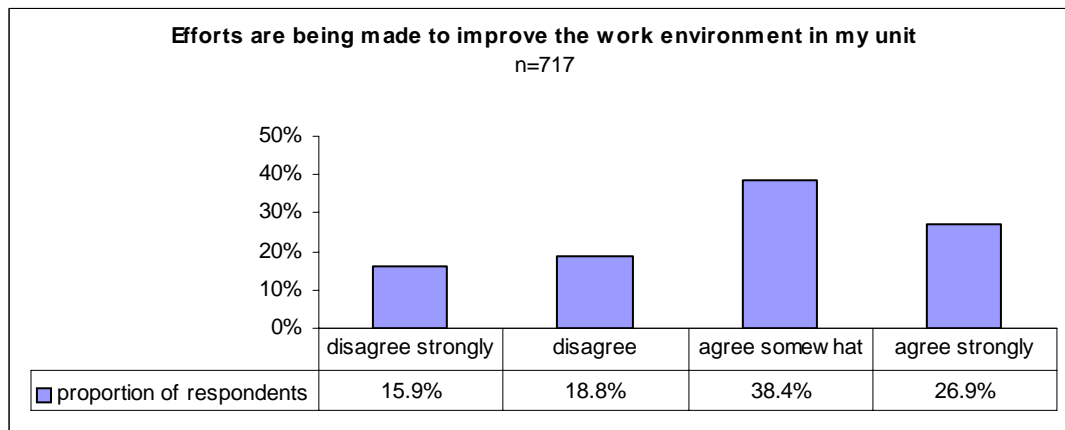
This section examines how leadership and supervisory practices and the university situation in which they are enacted support, and at times undermine, the goals and values of a socially just workplace. Measures of employees' sense of feeling heard and their fears of speaking out about problems are related to management practices.

Leadership

While some staff do report a commitment to social justice efforts is visible in their work area, others report that this commitment is in words only, rather than behavior. Some sense of this concern has been discussed in previous section of this report. Some other specific items are detailed here.

Survey respondents were asked to rate their agreement with the statement "Efforts are being made to improve the work environment in my unit". Over one-third (34.7%) disagreed. See Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1



A theme of focus group participants was that the people they should be able to look to for leadership were often unwilling to take an active role or take positions which might require confronting a problem. As one employee put it:

"Management with regard to diversity is fence sitters"

Another employee said of upper level management :

"There is an attitude of 'let's not rock the boat'"

There were also several stories about managers being unwilling to confront individuals whose behavior was perceived to be a problem. One person said:

“Our prior supervisor was, you know, extreme, where, I mean, people have written him up continuously. And nothing was ever done”
“I think there has been a tendency to try not to confront people who are disruptive....this one guy, who’s in jail now...he would mouth off to his direct supervisor and say ‘I don’t care about something wrong.’ My supervisor would just stand there and put up with him.”

One of the things that people feel they should be able to depend upon from leaders is protection from the inappropriate behavior of others. An employee talked about an experience which did not live up to that expectation.

“This one person, a manager, was allowed to speak offensively to people, nothing was done about it.”

Some of the situations related during focus groups speak both to employees feeling that leaders aren’t addressing their concerns and that workers do not feel that they are heard.

“I have had the experience when I needed something, my supervisor didn’t want to address the issue at that point and I said, ‘if you don’t do this now I’m going to his supervisor’ and he [my supervisor] said, ‘get out of my office’ and I did and I went to his supervisor and shut the door and I explained to him what went by and the man had no response. It was like ‘you are wasting my time, go away, I don’t care about this.’ Some of the upper management in A&F need to realize they have to listen to their staff and that’s a problem, they don’t listen to their staff.”

Another worker talked about a situation which illustrates how an unwillingness to deal with problems can hurt an individual work situation and powerfully undermine both the reality and the perception of fairness.

“My supervisor said ‘I didn’t want to say anything because she was black’”

Supervisor Interactions

Because supervisors are the people who set a tone for diversity in the day-to-day work environment, we explored people's perceptions of their interactions with their supervisors in relation to creating a more socially just environment. Although there were some patterns of response by demographic group, it appears that the individual characteristics of the supervisors have a powerful influence, and not always a positive one.

"My supervisor yelled at me. I get yelled at and don't get paid for the overtime"

One staff member told a very troubling story about a poor example being set by her supervisor regarding people with disabilities. The supervisor

... "pulled me off the elevator and the supervisor said to me, 'You don't want to ride up with him' ... talking about a person in a wheelchair"

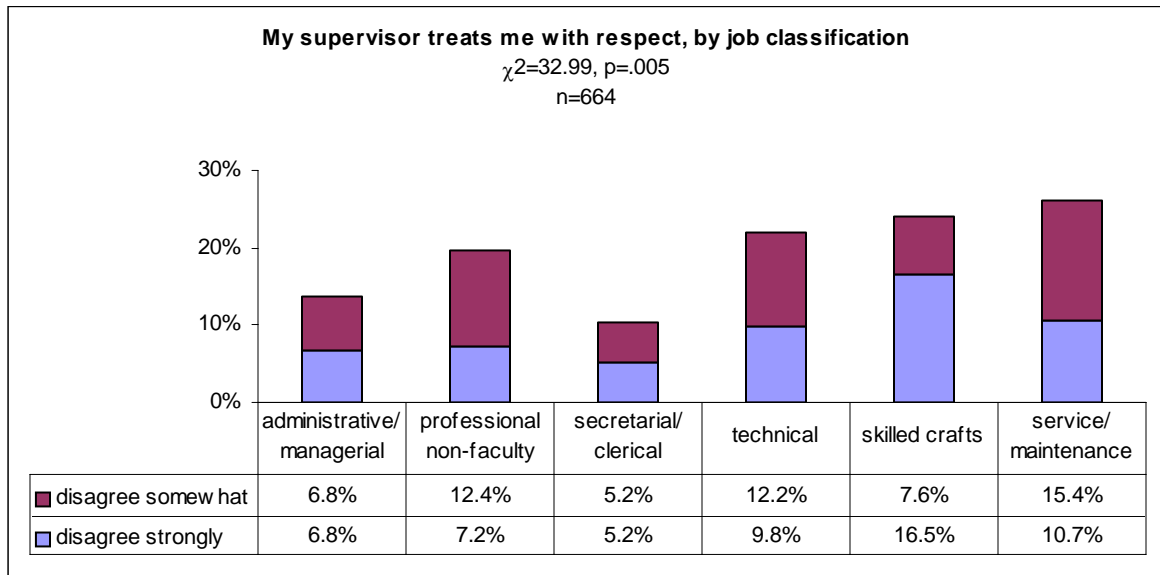
Another person talked about how preconceived generalizations about people effected their work lives.

"People [are] treated differently based on their perceived skills. People who aren't perceived well, get moved around a lot to the more undesirable buildings"

About three-quarters of respondents (77.8%, n=593) agreed "strongly" or "somewhat" that "My supervisor treats me with respect." Professional staff were significantly more likely than classified staff (82.9% v.76.3%) to agree that they were treated with respect by supervisors ($\chi^2=9.22$, $p=.026$).

In breaking down these numbers to more specific classifications we find that secretarial/clerical workers were most likely (89.6%, n=104) and service /maintenance workers least likely (73.9%, n =201) to agree that they are treated with respect by their supervisors. See Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2



It is clear that there are differences in work environment in the different work areas within A&F. However, caring and respectful supervisors can make a difference in any setting. For example, even though the demographic composition of the Budget Office and Physical Plant vary tremendously these divisions have similar responses to the statements “My supervisor cares about me as a person” and “My supervisor treats me with respect.”

In focus group discussions, several informants talked about situations where they felt that respect had been lacking. One employee told a story about trying to deal with a customer misunderstanding and not getting back up from the supervisor:

“You know, but it was humiliating. All because they wouldn’t listen. The more I want to say something, management over power my words. It was clear they were trying to intimidate me....And I told them they didn’t pay me enough to be humiliated like that....He was trying to be this big shot you know.”

Another talked about the disrespectful way in which colleagues were criticized by a supervisor.

“I hear my supervisor telling my colleagues that they haven’t done something correctly, but in my opinion the place to chastise a person is not in a staff meeting. Keep it confidential, keep it quiet...”

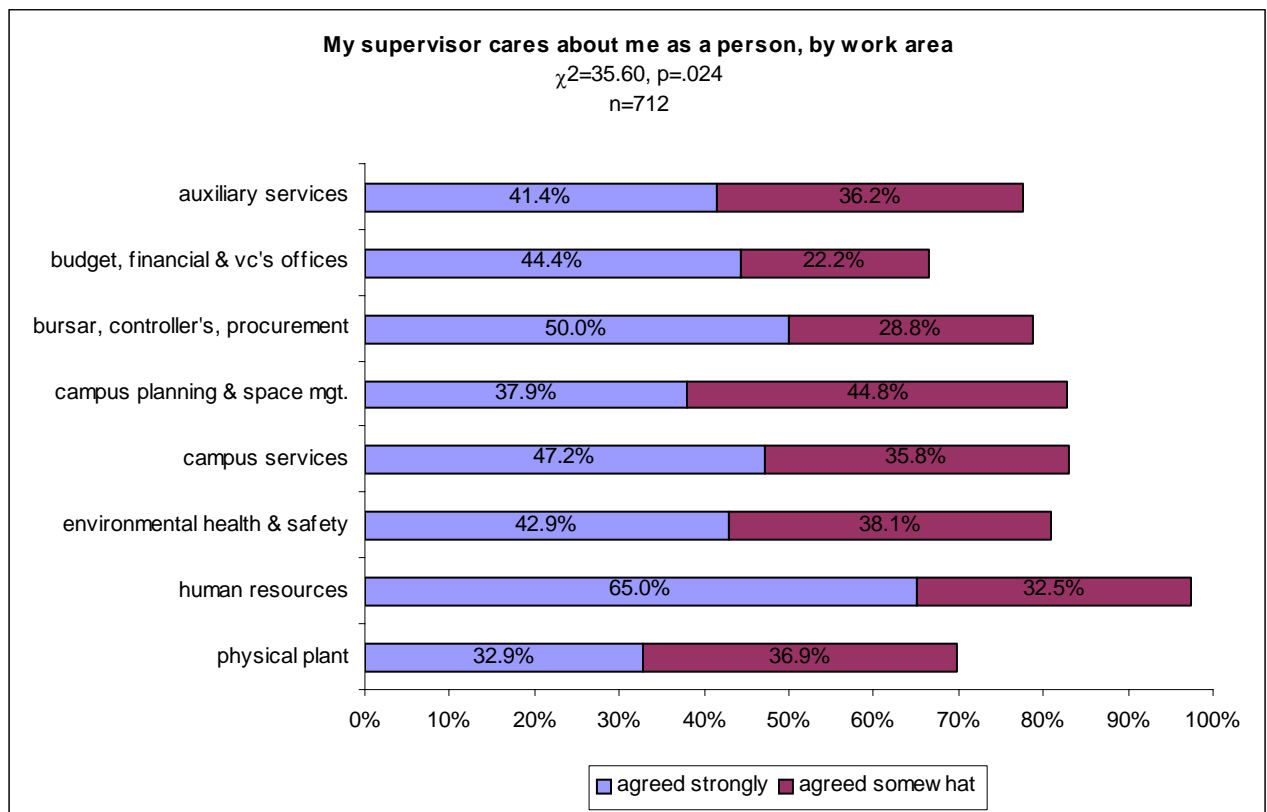
Other employees talked about supervisors treating employees badly, particularly yelling at people:

"I've seen people in tears because someone abused them verbally...no one likes to be screamed at...they [the supervisor] feel it's their inherent right."

"If you have a director who has picked up the phone and screamed at you, not a very motivating way to work"

Three-quarters of all respondents (75.6%, n=562) agreed "strongly" or "somewhat" with the statement "My supervisor cares about me as a person." When responses to this question were examined by work area, they showed that almost all Human Resources respondents (97.5%) agreed that their supervisors cared about them, while those in other work areas were less likely to agree. See Figure 4.3 for a detailed presentation of responses to this question.

Figure 4.3



A staff member who had dealt over a long period of time with a very sick child spoke about her supervisor who was insensitive to the medical issues

"...when I went back to work, it was like back and forth, and [supervisor] would always ask 'why is she always sick?' And finally I quietly went in, shut the door and said 'this is what is going on. I don't need to hear this, I have the time I don't abuse my time,... this is time that I have worked for..."

While it is to be expected that some workers and some supervisors will have personal conflicts, the evidence indicates that a significant minority of A&F employees believe that their supervisors do not care about or respect them. Variation by classification was apparent.

Supervisory practices regarding inappropriate behavior

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“He would rattle on about different things, racist. I told the boss to deal.”

“Staff doesn’t believe gender problems will be solved if they bring it up to supervisors. No accountability at line manager level.”

“We have some offensive behaviors coming from outside the workplace from either staff or the public, but it was dealt with by me.”

“Because of the language barrier, because of how they may have to interpret things, because they are women and because they are minorities...they are very hesitant to speak up for themselves. If there is not a strong manager to support them, they’re going to get eaten alive.”

Several focus group participants stated that the ultimate weapon against inappropriate behavior was not available.

“Termination is never used. Words to cover actual action are used...‘chose to move on’.”

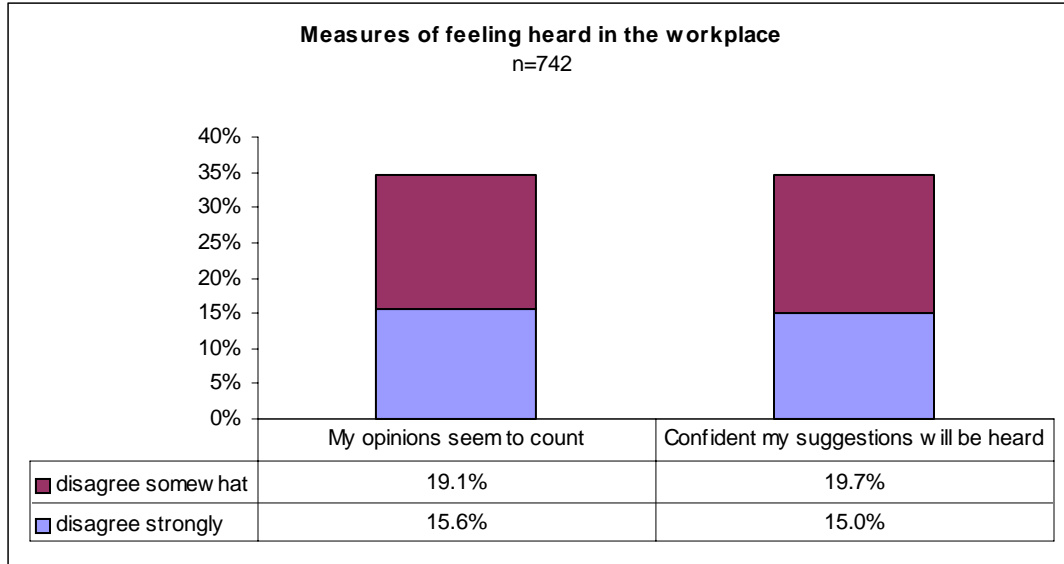
“I just believe that you cannot fire someone...accountability is non-existent.”

Both on the survey and in focus groups, A&F employees talked about supervisors’ failure to or lack of skill in addressing inappropriate workplace behaviors.

Feeling heard

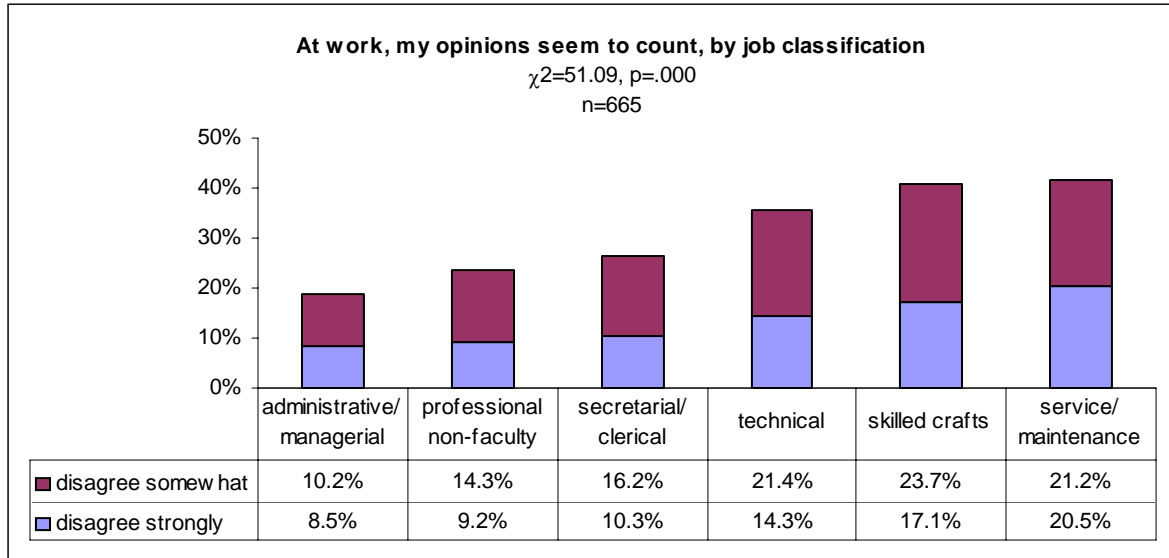
Survey responses suggest that a substantial minority of employees do not feel that they are being listened to. Approximately one-third of survey respondents disagreed “strongly” or “somewhat” that “At work, my opinions seem to count” (34.8%, n=258) and that “If I make suggestions for change at work, I feel confident I will be heard by my supervisor” (34.6%, n=257). See Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4



People in different positions and job classifications seem to feel differently about the extent to which they are heard. Less than two-thirds of classified staff (61.4%) agreed with the statement that their opinions seemed to count, compared with about three-quarters (75.9%) of professional staff ($\chi^2=16.07$, $p=.001$). When responses were analyzed by job classification, administrative/ managerial workers were the most likely and service/ maintenance workers were the least likely to state that their opinions seemed to count. See Figure 4.5 for a more detailed presentation of the responses to this question.

Figure 4.5



Focus group interviews supported survey data showing that there were many concerns amongst A&F staff about being heard:

“We need people to really learn how to listen on this campus. People may hear you but they are not listening.”

“Words just go so far. I mean, we say stuff and there is change, which goes on for 3 to 4 years...”

“It’s hard to explain harassment in the form of your supervisor not listening to your suggestions and not acting on them...and three weeks later coming back and say ‘Oh I guess we should do it’.”

A person with a disability expressed feelings of not being heard:

“...but my supervisor doesn’t want to listen to suggestions. And if anybody else was to suggest it, he’d listen...”

A woman expressed similar sentiments about her workplace:

“The [supervisor] listens to four, five, six men but you want to put your two cents in, it’s get out of my way, I have no time for you...and you almost feel like I am Ms. Nobody.”

Survey and focus group results both showed that a significant minority of A&F employees do not feel that they are listened to and their ideas valued in their workplace.

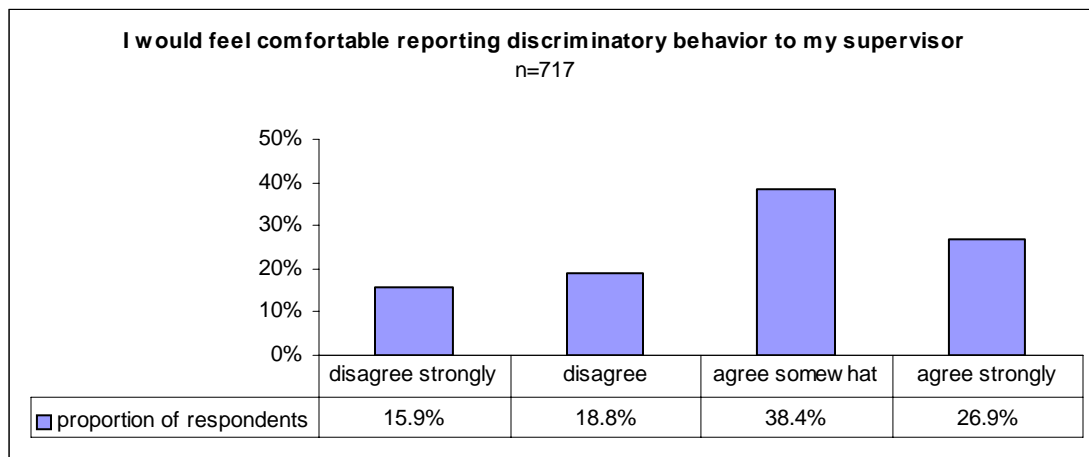
Fear of speaking up

“It was my supervisor, who sat down with me and explained the importance of diversity on this campus. He has maintained that excellent level, I have to say it in recognizing diversity on campus. They made me and other associates aware of what is expected, what is right, what is not right, what is appropriate to say. Things that were accepted in the past that are no longer acceptable today...”

The previous comment from a focus group member demonstrates the kind of leadership behavior that teaches employees and encourages an open atmosphere of constructive critique. Survey and focus group responses from other workers suggest that this kind of positive leadership has not been everyone’s experience.

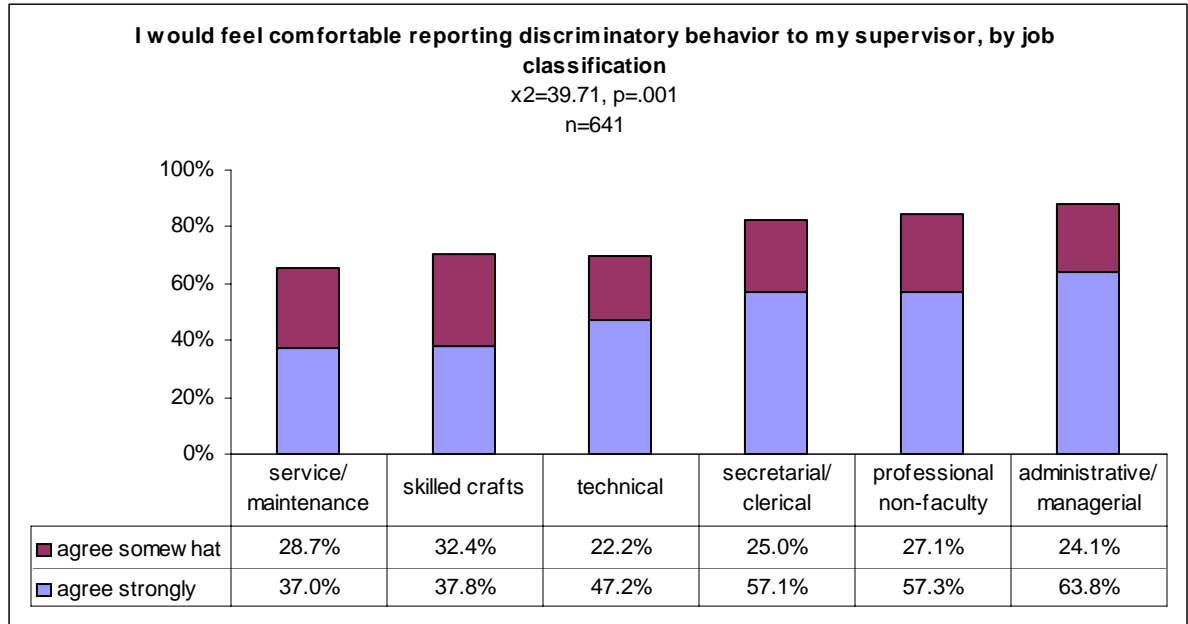
Survey respondents were asked to rate their agreement with the statement “I would feel comfortable reporting discriminatory behavior to my supervisor. Over one-quarter of respondents (26.7%, n=191) disagreed with the statement. (See Figure 4.6)

Figure 4.6



Classified staff reported feeling less comfort with reporting discriminatory behavior than did professional staff. 29.5% of classified staff (n=150) and 18.9% of professional staff (n=35) disagreed “strongly” or “somewhat” that they would feel comfortable reporting discriminatory behavior to their supervisors. Further analysis by job classification also showed significant differences, with administrative/ managerial workers most comfortable reporting discrimination. (See Figure 4.7)

Figure 4.7



When perceptions of comfort reporting discriminatory behavior were analyzed by race, the Black respondents were the most comfortable reporting discriminatory behavior.¹ 3 of 18 Blacks (16.7%), 9 of 43 Asians (21.0%), 150 of 578 Whites (25.9%), and 5 of 11 Latinos (45.5%) said they would not feel comfortable reporting discriminatory behavior.

Comments from focus groups highlighted the importance of a power differential when it came to reporting discriminatory behavior. One employee described the complexity of an incident.

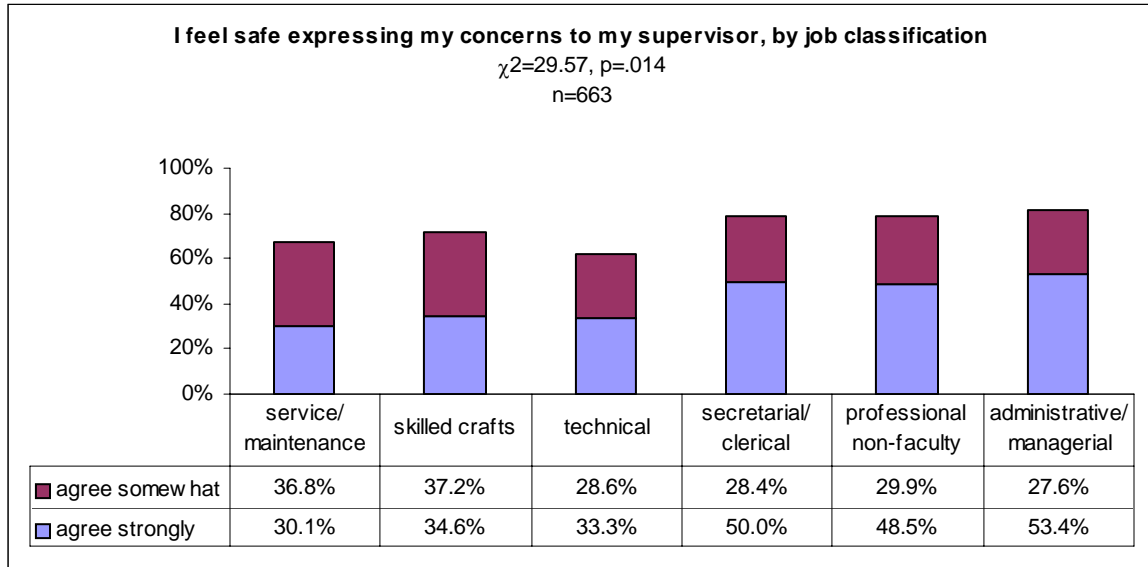
"...but people are afraid of repercussions sometimes.... You know, had she brought this to a director or a supervisor's attention and the supervisor, being a clerical staff person, I'm sure, had to approach this professional or reprimand a professional. Now, that can cause a chain of events...the professional can feel like... 'this clerical or this classified supervisor, ...what a nerve she has coming to me and reprimanding me simply for another classified staff person's feelings'."

A related survey question asked A&F employees to rate their agreement with the statement "I feel safe expressing my concerns to my supervisor." Over one quarter of respondents (29.1%) said they do not feel safe in this situation.

Once again, when these responses were examined by job classification, there were significant differences in employees' feelings of safety when expressing concerns. See Figure 4.8.

¹ Although not statistically significant, perhaps due to the small sample size of most racial groups other than White, the pattern of difference across racial groups is deemed too important to exclude from mention.

Figure 4.8



An A&F employee talked about some of the ways that feelings of safety can be undermined.

"A lot of people don't speak up there are supervisors around, they are scared and they are just sitting there, they want to say something because the boss is there or you have a maintainer, who's got their radio keyed up, so everybody hears their radio so everybody can know your business that's going on, because the one person is like a little informer going on. When you go back they already know who said what and where. It's going through the physical plant right over the air. We have caught them....So if they know your voices, they know what you said."

One mid level manager reported regarding the way he can be treated because he does not have 'that piece of paper'.

"I don't belong...nothing is said, it is just clear"

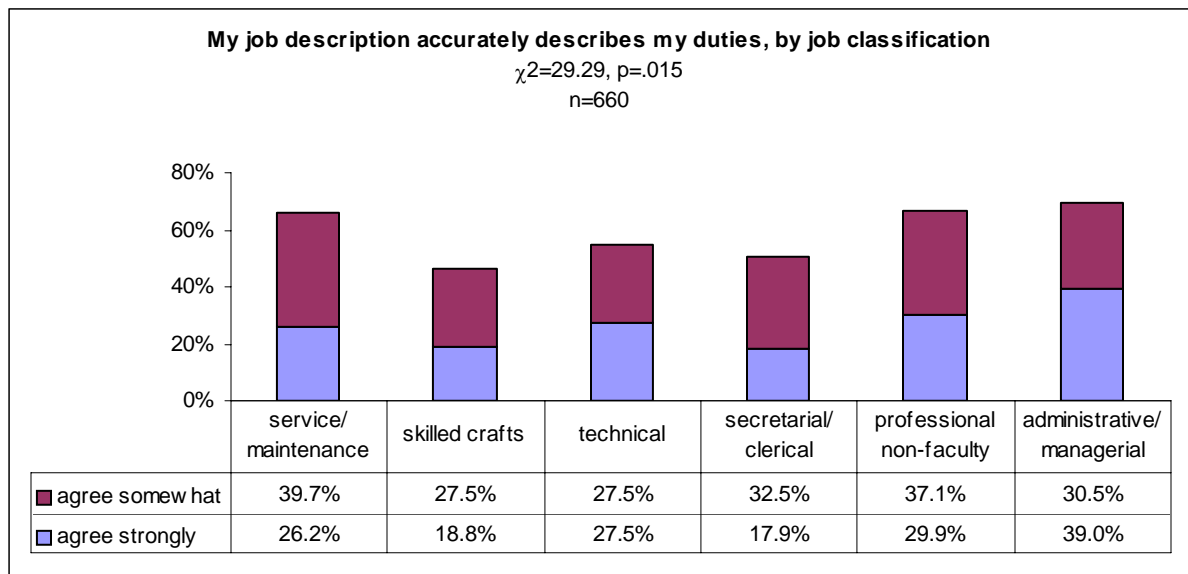
Environmental challenges

Management practices do not exist in a vacuum. It is important that they be seen in the context of the challenges and impact of the overall institutional environment. This section examines some of the many systemic or structural issues that color how an employee experiences his or her job, and how those issues relate to fairness and social justice.

In response to the statement “My job description accurately describes my duties,” less than two-thirds of A&F survey respondents (61.0%) agreed “strongly” or “somewhat.”

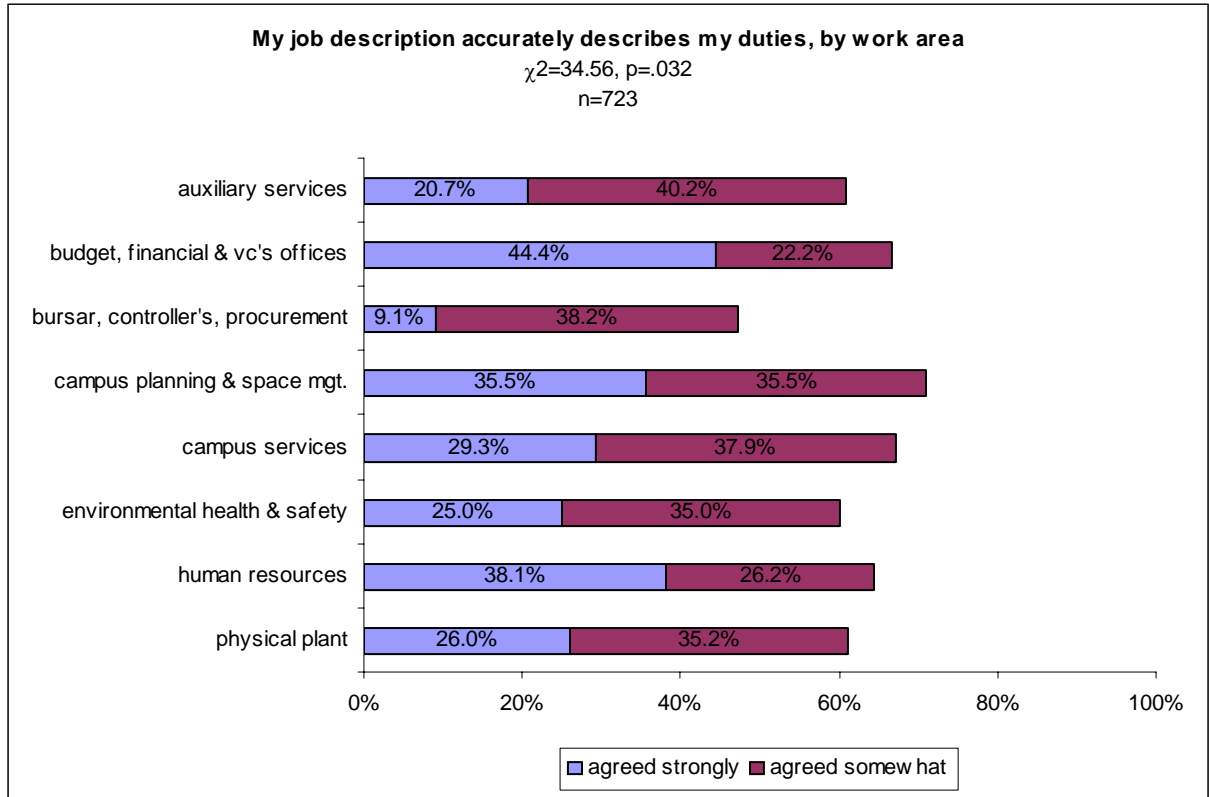
When these responses are analyzed by job classification, significant differences were noted. Over two-thirds of administrative/ managerial, professional non-faculty, and service/maintenance employees agreed that their job descriptions match their duties. Smaller proportions of employees in other job classifications agreed ($\chi^2=29.29, p=.015$). See Figure 4.9.

Figure 4.9



There were also significant differences among work areas in how employees responded to this item. The Bursar’s/ Controller’s office workers were the least likely (47.5%, n=26), and the Campus Planning and Space Management workers the most likely (71.0%, n=22) to agree that their job descriptions accurately reflect of their duties. See Figure 4.10 for a more detailed illustration of the responses.

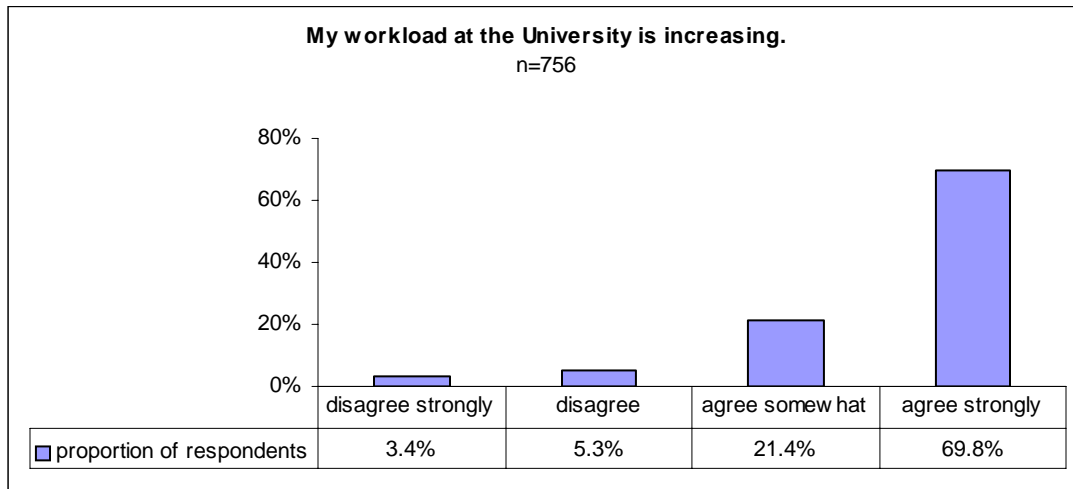
Figure 4.10



Although many employees felt that their job descriptions and duties were not clearly aligned, few experienced a lack of clarity about what was actually expected of them. Most respondents (90.6%, n=697) agreed “strongly” or “somewhat” with the statement “I know what is expected of me at work.”

It was also evident that a high proportion of respondents feel that what is expected of them is more and more. Most A&F employees who responded to the survey (91.2%, n=690) agreed that “My workload at the University is increasing”. (See Figure 4.11.) Whites were more likely than people of color (73.7% v.53.8%) to agree “strongly” that they were facing more work ($\chi^2 =19.23, p=.000$).

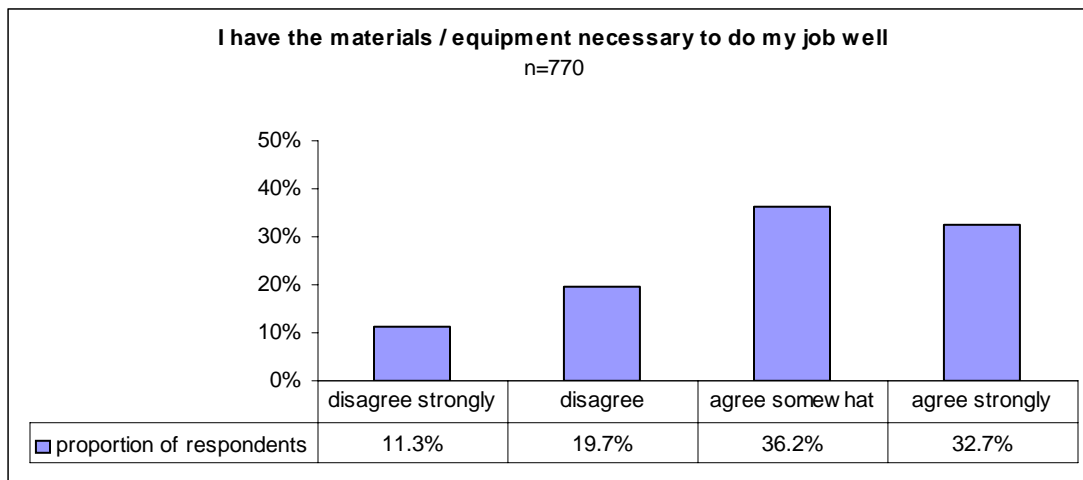
Figure 4.11



When this question was further examined by race ¹, it was found that 19 of 20 Blacks (95.0%), 565 of 608 Whites (92.9%), 31 of 40 Asians (87.5%) and 9 of 11 Latinos (81.8%) agreed that their workload was increasing.

About two-thirds of respondents (68.9%, n=531) agreed that “I have the materials/ equipment necessary to do my job well.” (See Figure 4.12)

Figure 4.12



Black respondents included the highest proportion of people who agreed with the statement.¹ 18 of 19 Blacks (94.7%), 423 of 615 Whites (68.7%), 31 of 46 Asians

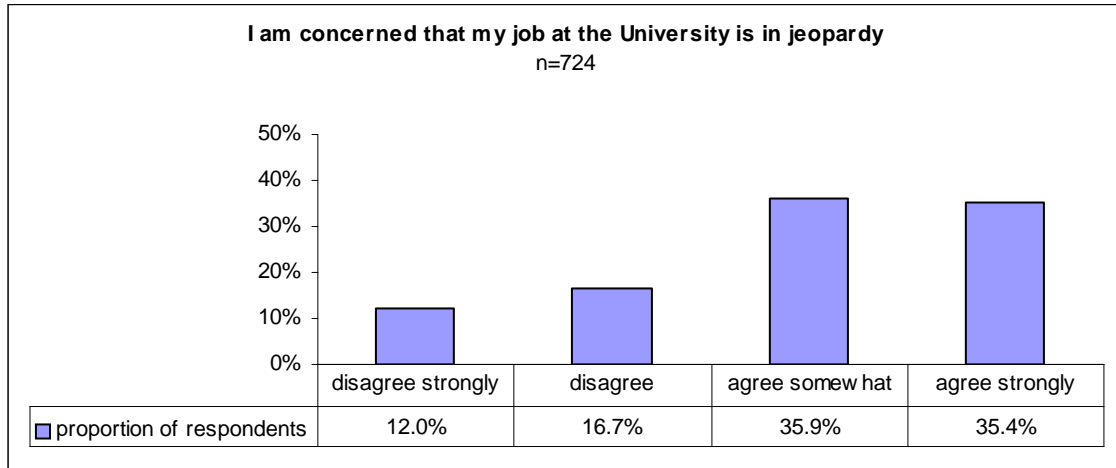
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(67.4%) and 7 of 12 Latinos (58.3%) agreed that they have the necessary materials to accomplish their jobs.

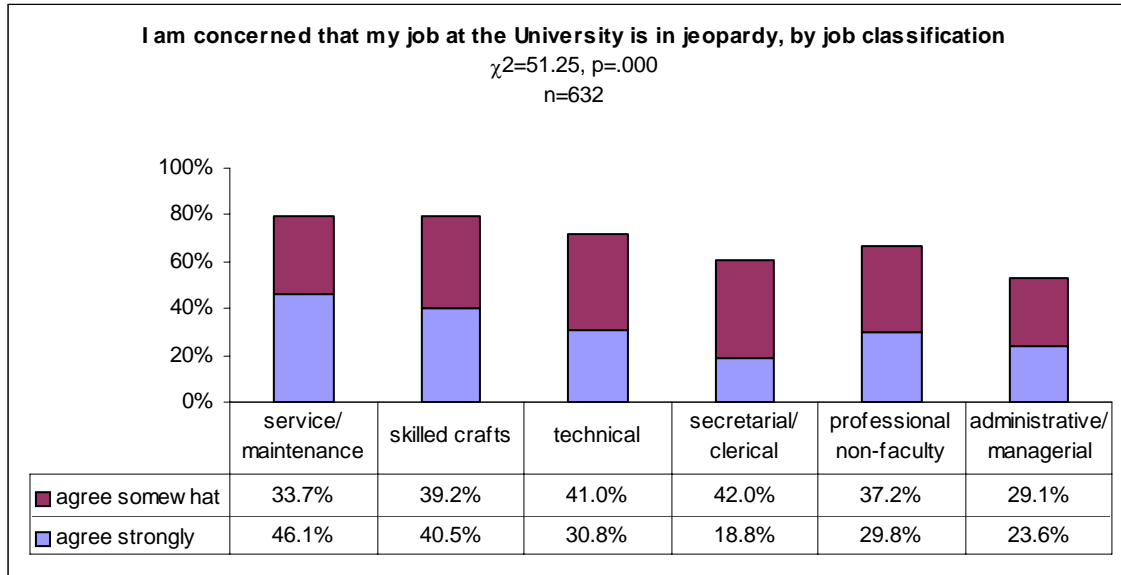
Almost three-quarters of employees who responded to the survey (71.3%, n=516) agreed “strongly” or “somewhat” with the statement “I am concerned that my job at the University is in jeopardy.” (See Figure 4.13)

Figure 4.13



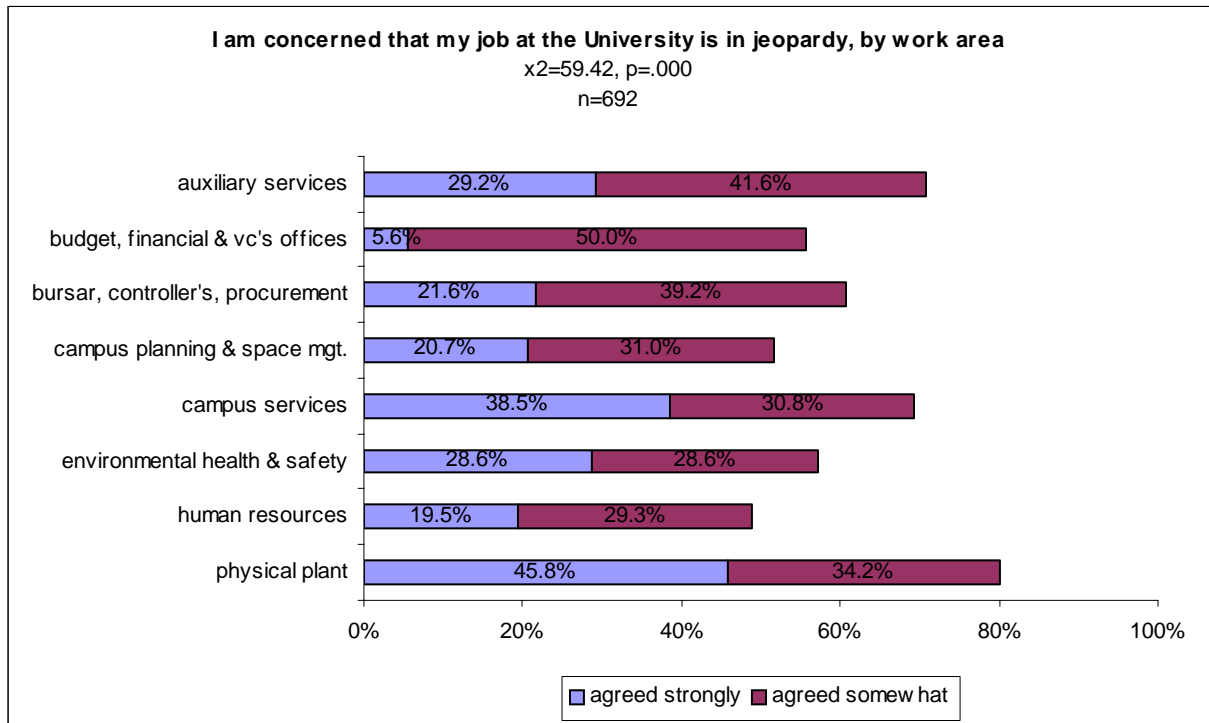
Concern about the potential for job loss varied significantly both by work area and by job classification. Skilled crafts (79.7%, n=59) and service/maintenance employees (79.8%, n=206) were the most likely and administrative/ managerial employees the least likely (52.7% n=29) to agree that job loss was a concern. See Figure 4.14 for a more detailed breakdown of responses to this item.

Figure 4.14



When looked at by work area, employees in the Physical Plant were the most likely (80.0%, n=255), and those in Human Resources the least likely (48.8%, n=20) to express concern about losing their jobs. (See Figure 4.15)

Figure 4.15



A higher proportion of Latino respondents than those from other racial groups expressed concern about losing their jobs.¹ 9 of 11 Latinos (81.8%), 418 of 582 Whites (71.8%), 25 of 39 Asians (64.1%), and 11 of 18 Blacks (61.1%) agreed that their jobs are in jeopardy.

Three-quarters of respondents (75.8%, n=585) agreed “strongly” or “somewhat” that “Overall, I am satisfied with my job.” Asian respondents included the highest proportion of people who agreed that they were satisfied with their jobs.¹ 36 of 43 Asians (83.8%), 464 of 617 Whites (75.2%), 9 of 12 Latinos (75.0%), and 14 of 20 Blacks (70.0%) expressed overall job satisfaction.

Many of the results from this section are of concern. Although most employees have a sense of overall job satisfaction, they are worried about job security. There is an overwhelming sense that workload is increasing. Although they know what is really expected of them, they are concerned that these expectations are not reflected in their job descriptions.

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Recommendations

Leadership

- Leadership can help make their commitment to CDSJ more visible in the organization.
 - Establish visible goals and values for the executive area of CDSJ.
 - Reflect diversity in the ranks of the leadership.
 - "Walk the Talk" by addressing CDSJ issues that arise in their area.
 - Regularly review personnel practices, over which they have purview to determine if they best support CDSJ efforts.
 - Recognize and reward staff who make noticeable efforts to advance the values and goals of CDSJ.
 - Establish an ongoing executive area team, representative of the staff in the area, which will support and monitor our progress toward CDSJ goals.

Supervisors

- Support supervisors in creating workplaces that are respectful and free of discrimination by establishing a "Supervisory Coaching Hotline" within each division. Supervisors would be encouraged to talk with coaches about situations they are addressing.
- Better integrate supervisory competencies regarding CDSJ issues into the Performance Management Programs (APRs) and annually evaluate supervisors and managers on improvement goals related to CDSJ.
- Clearly address inappropriate behavior by supervisors.
- When a manager is aware of a situation that is not being dealt with by a supervisor, the manager should support the supervisor to address the situation.

Addressing Inappropriate Behavior and Feedback

- Supervisors and managers would benefit from improving significantly their ability to provide day-to-day feedback to staff.
 - Feedback needs to be ongoing and consistent.
 - Feedback needs to be honest and well earned.
 - Feedback needs to be more positive than negative.

- Many supervisors and managers would benefit from additional training in addressing inappropriate behavior in the workplace.
 - Supervisors first need to be able to recognize when behavior is inappropriate, particularly around issues of social identity.
 - Supervisors need to learn effective processes for discipline when the situation merits.
 - Supervisors need to be aware of resources that are available to help them deal with difficult situations.

Feeling Heard

- Clarify the expectation that employee suggestions are both welcome and will be heard. Improve the climate in which people who know the job best can be listened to.
- Consider renewing CQI efforts that promoted inclusion of staff in improving the work they do.
- Begin a reward system which allows people to make suggestions for improvement that would save the university time and/or money.

Fear of Speaking Up

- Clarify expectations that employee complaints and concerns will be listened to with an open mind. Some ways of creating "safety" for employees to speak up include:
 - When possible, managers might mediate between a staff member and an immediate supervisor to try to resolve a problem.
 - When appropriate, the employee can be referred to resources on campus to assist them, particularly when they are too intimidated to speak to their supervisor or manager.
 - When appropriate, a manager (or administrator) needs to be willing to discipline a supervisor (or manager) for inappropriate behavior, including taking appropriate disciplinary action should there be retaliation after a complaint or concern has been raised.

Environmental Challenges

- Review employees' job descriptions on a regular basis to insure consistency.
 - When an employee's responsibilities change on a temporary basis, note the changes in writing.
 - Conduct a formal position review after a reasonable time limit for temporary position changes.

- When possible, provide up-to-date information to employees at all levels about the status and security of their jobs.
 - Share information as consistently as possible at all levels.
 - When staff do not have access to internet information of the type shared by the Chancellor last spring, print and post the information in a visible location for staff to read.
- Acknowledge the stress and strain that changing times are causing for all workers (including supervisors and managers).
 - Acknowledge that people are working harder and that people adjust to change at different paces.
 - Supervisors and managers need to attend to their own stress levels to insure that they are dealing with it appropriately.