

2022 AZA HR Committee State of Employee Engagement Survey Results

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Since 2014 - Zoo and Aquarium Benchmarking Survey

Employee Engagement Benchmarks

Tracking employee sentiment since 2014



To Date - Over 60 Zoos & Aquariums Have Participated



Over 6,000 Employee Respondents in the Benchmarks



36 Items in 11 Dimensions:

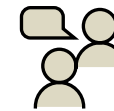
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|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Engagement (5 items) | Mission (2) |
| Guest Satisfaction (3) | Meaningful Work (3) |
| Trust & Respect (3) | Immediate Manager (3) |
| Training & Dvlpt (3) | Diversity & Incl (4) |
| Teamwork (3) | Wellbeing (4) |
| Senior Leaders (3) | Psychological Safety |



12 MINUTES

AVERAGE TIME TO THE COMPLETE ONLINE SURVEY

Open-Ended Comment Themes for Additional Insight



Driver Analysis Determines: Areas that have greatest impact on Engagement & Wellbeing



Taking Action:

- Review results w/ dept
- Determine priorities
- Identify actions (1-2)
- Implement and check back



Sample of Participating Institutions:

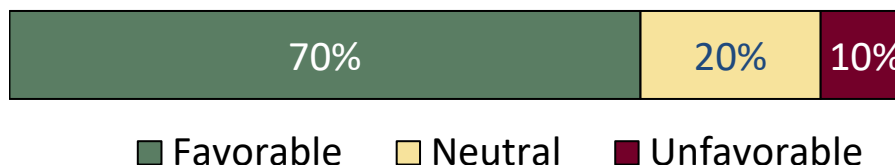
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|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| ✓ Los Angeles Zoo | ✓ Zoo Atlanta | ✓ Fresno Chaffee Zoo |
| ✓ John Ball Zoo | ✓ Brevard Zoo | ✓ Columbus Zoo |
| ✓ Columbus Zoo | ✓ Santa Barbara Zoo | ✓ Lincoln Park Zoo |
| ✓ Museum of L+S | ✓ Zoo Knoxville | ✓ Monterey Aquarium |
| ✓ Zoo Tampa | ✓ Kansas City Zoo | ✓ Shedd Aquarium |
| ✓ Milwaukee Zoo | ✓ Detroit Zoo | ✓ Sacramento Zoo |

Headlines – Opportunities (Pre-COVID v. After COVID)

- **Employee Engagement** – A predictor of turnover, guest satisfaction, and overall wellbeing – has *declined* for all but **Business Services**. Roughly a third could be classified as “quiet quitters”.
- **Teamwork and Meaningful Work** – Both dimensions *down* significantly – and have significant impact on **Employee Engagement**.
- **Greatest group declines** – Seen among **Living Collections** and **Education & Research** employees.
- **Culture differences** – Employees significantly *less* satisfied, show *lower* commitment and “psychological safety” in institutions with poor culture (e.g., toxic, hierarchical, old-school).
- **Leader positives** – **Managers** continue to be *seen favorably*; **Senior Leaders** made significant *gains* in most functions.
- **Growth and development** – Continues to be seen as a priority moving forward. Development remains a *strong driver* of employee engagement and retention.
- Other notable priorities that emerged from a driver analysis and comments:
 - **Meaningful work** (sense of personal accomplishment), belongingness, trust & respect.
 - **Connecting/reconnecting** internally and with external community.
 - Creating **diverse and inclusive workplace**; reflecting the local community.

Interpreting the Results

FAVORABLE		NEUTRAL	UNFAVORABLE	
5	4	3	2	1
<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>



- **Absolute Scores**

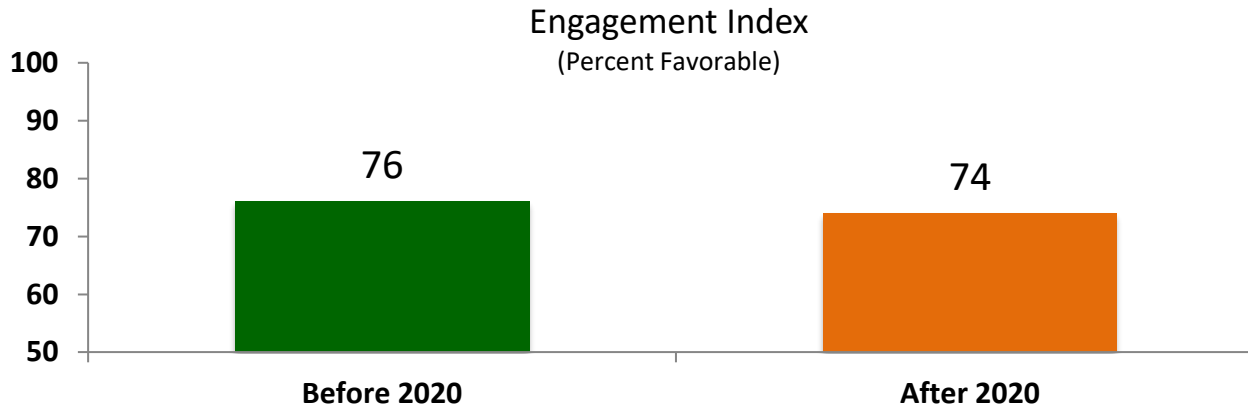
- **Strength** – 70%+ Favorable
- **Opportunity** – Less than 50% Favorable and 20%+ Unfavorable

- **Relative Scores**

- Comparisons to zoo & aquarium norms
- Trends – before COVID vs after COVID

Employee Engagement Comparison

Overall Employee Engagement is down slightly; two items by a significant margin. Proportion of “quiet quitters” roughly unchanged in overall results.



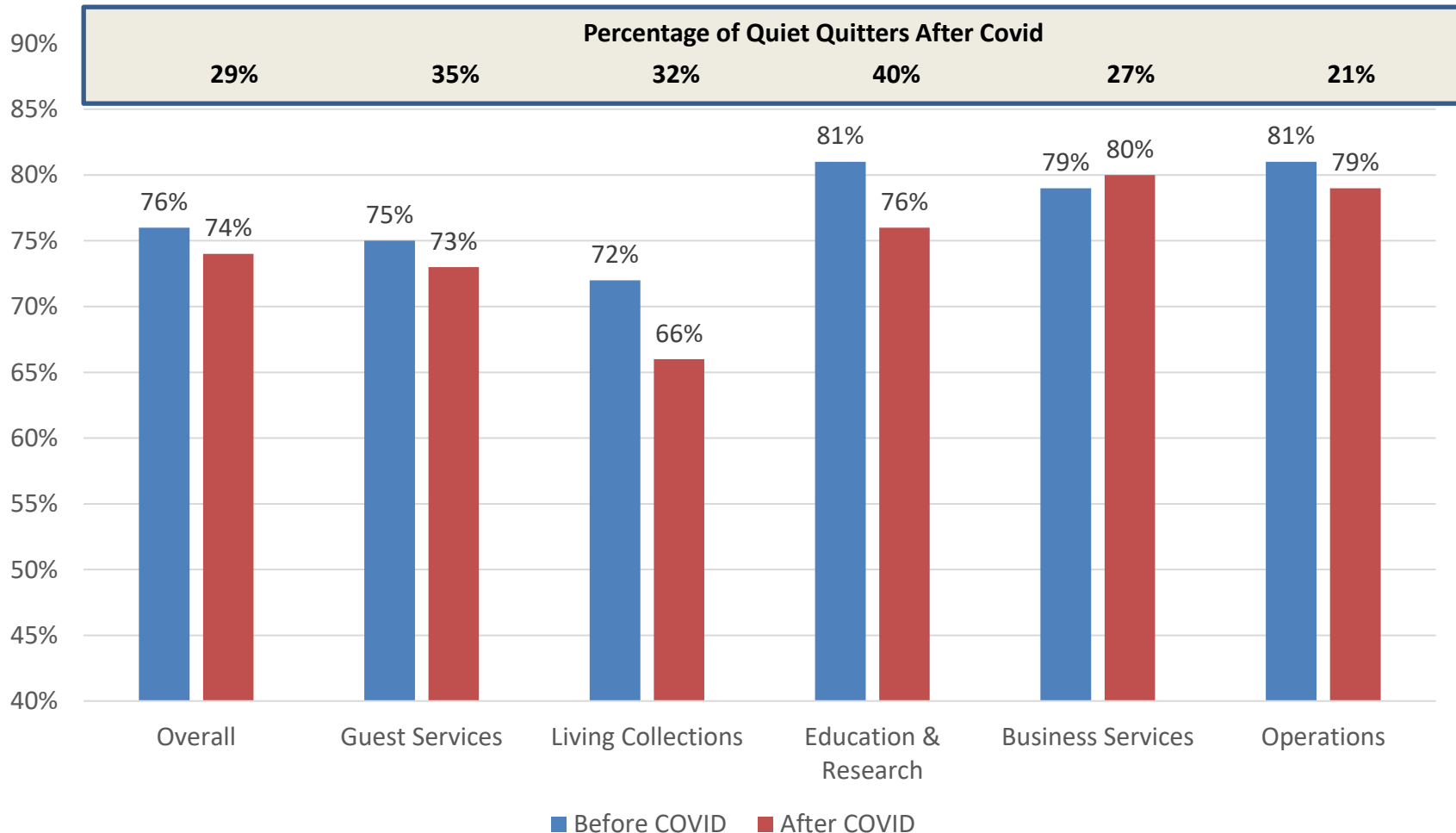
Engagement Index Items	% favorable Before COVID	% favorable After COVID	Difference *
I take pride in working for XYZ Organization.	93	91	-2
I plan to be working at XYZ Organization for a long time.	72 (28% quiet quitting**)	70 (29% quiet quitting)	-2
Overall, I am satisfied with XYZ Organization as a place to work.	76	75	-1
I would recommend XYZ Organization to a friend as a great place to work.	72	67	-5
I feel energized by my job.	69	65	-4

* Green text indicates significantly greater; red text significantly lower

**Quiet quitting defined as percent unfavorable+neutral

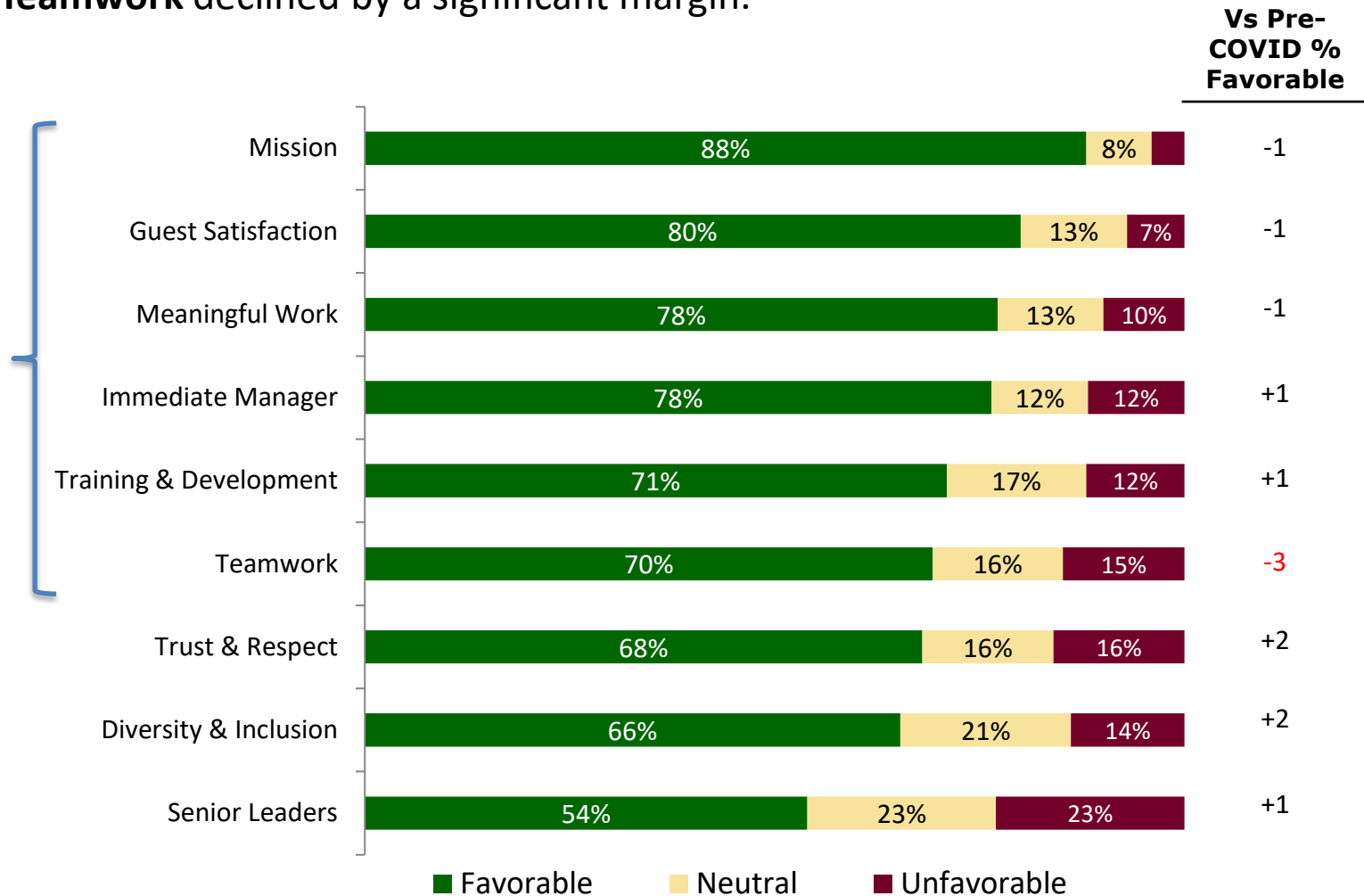
Engagement Trend by Functions

- Employee Engagement % favorable declined in all but Business Services function.
- Proportion of quiet quitters increased in all but Business Services.



Other Survey Dimensions

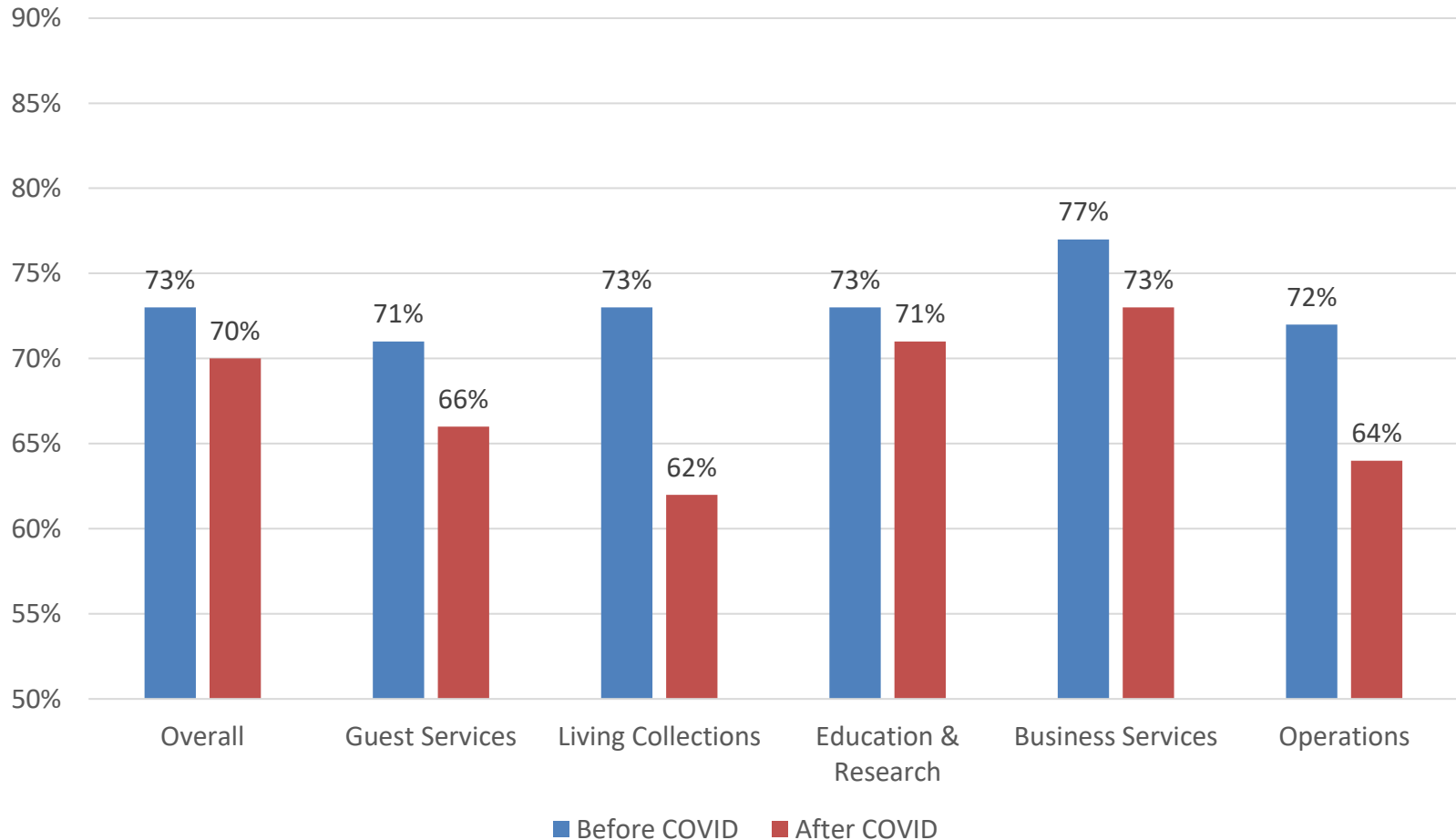
- Six of the dimensions are strengths – led by **Mission** and **Guest Satisfaction**.
- **Teamwork** declined by a significant margin.



* Green text indicates significantly greater; red text significantly lower

Teamwork Declines – Function Comparison

- **Teamwork** declined for all functions, most notably among Guest Services, Living Collections, and Operations.



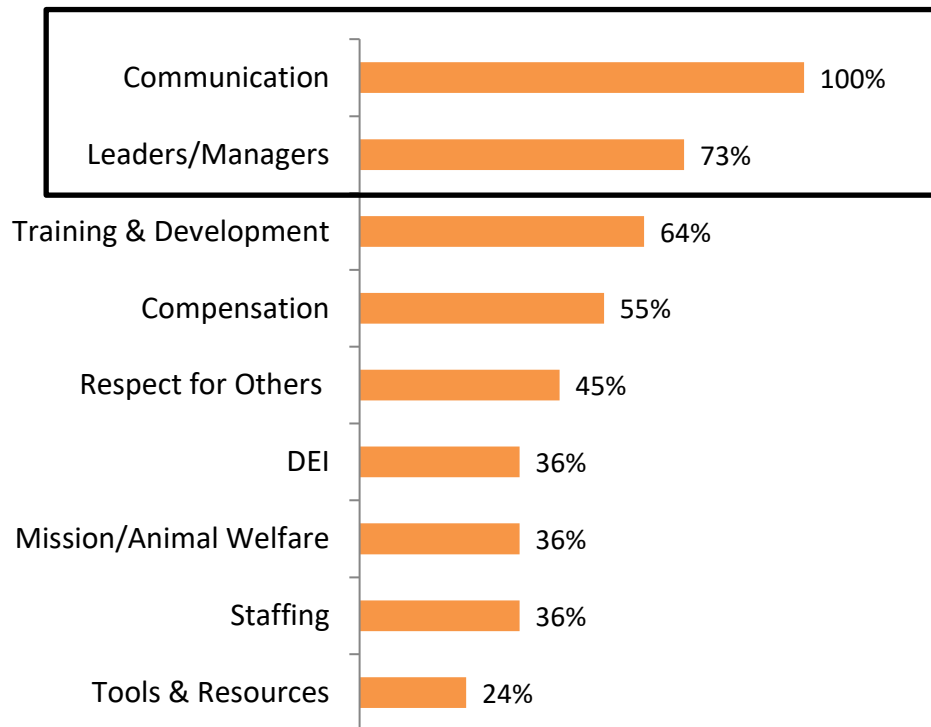
Other Function Trends

- **Meaningful Work** (significant driver of Engagement) *declined* in all but Business Services.
- Living Collections and Education & Research show the greatest overall *declines*.
- Ratings of managers and leaders *improved*; exceptions Living Collections (both declined) and Education & Research (**Manager** dimension declined).

	Guest Services		Living Collections		Educ & Research		Business Services		Operations	
	% Fav After	Change	% Fav After	Change	% Fav After	Change	% Fav After	Change	% Fav After	Change
Engagement	73	-2	66	-6	76	-5	80	+1	79	-2
Mission	90	-1	83	-2	92	-1	94	+1	88	0
Meaningful Work	73	-2	76	-3	76	-6	83	+2	78	-3
Guest Satisfaction	84	-3	75	-1	79	-2	85	+1	81	-5
Immediate Mgr	79	+5	69	-1	80	-3	85	+4	78	+6
Trust & Respect	75	+6	60	-1	73	-2	79	+6	68	+2
Teamwork	70	-3	62	-11	71	-2	73	-4	64	-8
Training & Dvlpt	71	+2	67	0	72	-2	76	+3	72	+3
Senior Leaders	66	+10	43	-5	62	+2	67	+2	58	+7
Diversity	70	+1	61	0	63	-4	75	+5	71	+8
Avg % Favorable Change		+1		-3		-3		+2		+1

What would you improve to make this a better place?

- **Communication** tops the list – mentioned in 100% of the survey programs.
- **Leaders/Managers** – mentioned in 73% of the survey programs.



Communication comments included:

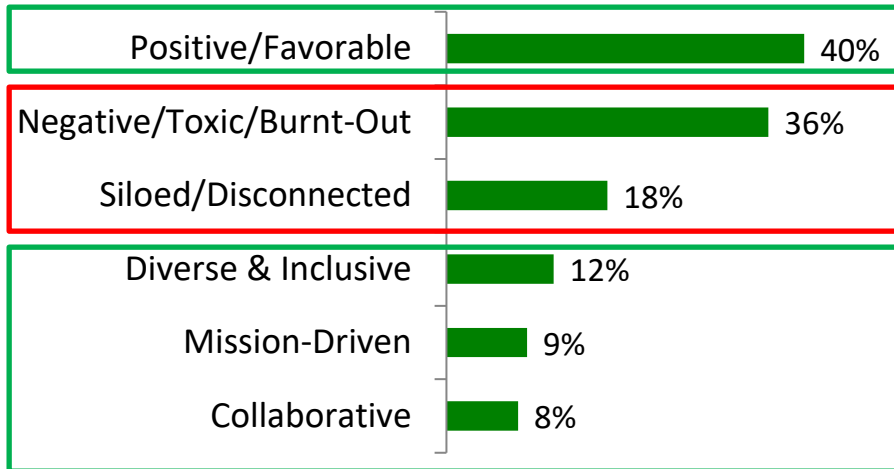
- More transparency
- Particularly from senior leaders
- Information about priorities, how decisions were made
- Cross-institution communication and collaboration
- Details about new programs/animals, etc. to communicate with guests

Leader/Manager comments included:

- Professionalism
- More accountability (for poor leaders, employees not following rules/pulling their weight)
- Fairness and consistency
- Playing favorites

How would you describe the culture here?

- **A wide variety of topics** – not clear to employees what constitutes culture.
- **Positive descriptions** – Those talking about culture in positive light were particularly more favorable on several dimensions.
- **Negative descriptions** – Those using negative terms were much less favorable on the same dimensions and score significantly lower on “Psychological Safety” index.



Positive - Respondents who used positive terms were significantly more favorable on these dimensions:

- Engagement (esp. energy and retention)
- Trust & Respect
- Senior Leaders
- Teamwork/Collaboration
- Diversity and Inclusion

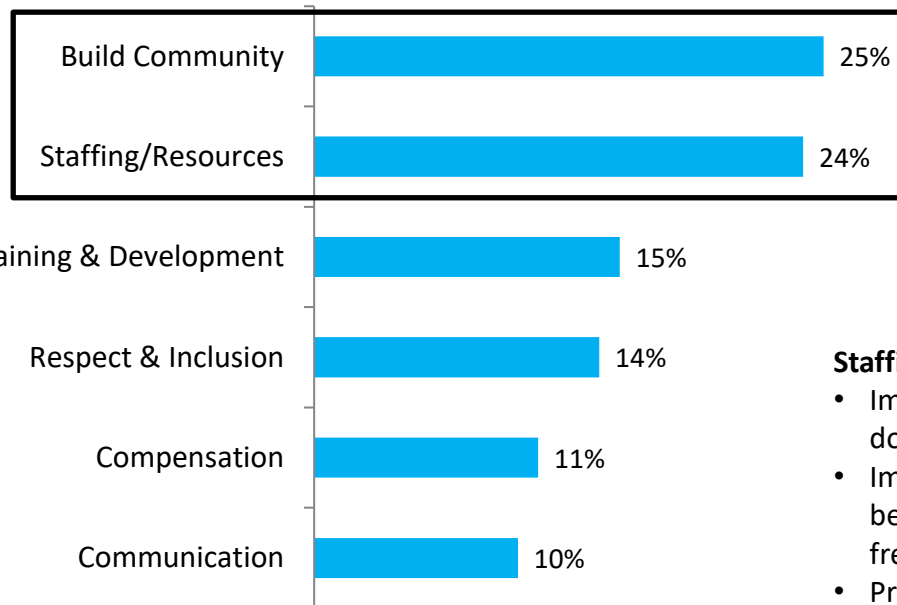
Negative - Those who used negative terms (Toxic, Disconnected) were significantly lower on Psychologically Safety Index.

Psychological Safety Index includes:

- Feeling safe to say what they think is best
- Feeling like they belong
- Work climate where diverse voices are welcomed
- People treat others with trust and mutual respect

What do you recommend as priorities in next 1-2 years

- As institutions move out of Pandemic, employee responses indicate several top priorities moving forward from their perspective.
- Greatest proportion of comments focus on **Rebuilding** (internal and external community) and addressing **Staffing/Resources**.



Community comments included:

- Connecting/reconnecting with surrounding (external) community.
- Finding ways to draw in guests/better reflect diversity of surrounding communities.
- Building connections within the institution (team-building, collaboration, opportunities to reconnect with colleagues)

Staffing/Resources:

- Improve staffing levels to be able to get the work done (in some cases, returning to previous levels).
- Improving physical plant/resources that may have been neglected during the pandemic (e.g., repairs, fresh paint, general appearance).
- Providing new tools and technology/updating old equipment.

Potential Focus Areas

Chart contains top drivers of **Employee Engagement** (in descending order of importance):

- These items represent areas to *reinforce* (if your institution is doing well) or to *improve* (if your institution doing poorly).
- To improve **Employee Engagement**, focusing on these areas is a safe bet.

OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH	AREAS TO CELEBRATE/REINFORCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Leadership Team’s actions demonstrate their commitment to our mission. (Sr Leaders) • In this organization, there is open two-way communication. (Teamwork) • Senior Leaders have communicated a vision of the future that motivates me. (Sr Leaders) • I feel safe at work to do or say what I think is best for XYZ Organization. (Trust & Respect)* • I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills. (Training & Development) • At XYZ Organization, people treat one another with trust and mutual respect. (Trust & Respect)* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel like I belong at XYZ Organization. (Diversity & Inclusion)* • My work gives me a sense of personal accomplishment. (Meaningful Work) • My job makes good use of my skills and abilities. (Meaningful Work) <p>*Indicates Psychological Safety item</p>

* **Green** text indicates significantly greater; **red** text significantly lower

Our General Recommendations

- Given recent changes (COVID, Social Justice, MeToo, Political Strife, Recession, etc.), it is probably a good time to check in your employees.
 - Look at overall sentiment, as well as functional and other segments (there is nuance there).
 - Use key drivers as a start – drivers tend to remain stable over time and by functional area – i.e., we all want meaningful work, trust and respect, opportunities to develop, and a sense of belonging.
- Look for ways to help employees reconnect with colleagues, with the external community, and to rebuild (staffing, resources, development opportunities).
- “*Culture eats strategy*” – Does your culture support/align with the mission? Do employees understand culture and see connection to vision and strategy?
- Make an Impact:
 - Leverage a data-driven sustainable approach to organizational change – e.g., *choosing the right priorities, gaining commitment and buy-in, sustaining energy over time.*
 - Forum for Sharing Ideas - Common strengths and opportunities exist across institutions - consider a consortium (modeled on the [Mayflower Group](#)) for regular sharing of best-practices and data.