How to Unleash Workforce Performance

Special Report:

Discover the key to unlocking the performance potential of your employees

BEST PLACES TO WORK IN **IDAHO** ™

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About the Author

Paul Butcher may be the world's foremost authority on getting the most out of a "Best Places to Work" program.

Since 1996 Paul has been involved in conducting survey-based research, analyzing the results, and developing and delivering data-driven recommendations to senior management teams. For the last eleven years Paul has been engaged as President and Research Director for POPULUS, a full-service marketing and human resource research firm headquartered in Meridian, Idaho.

In 2007 Paul created the Best Places to Work in Idaho in conjunction with the Idaho Business Review which launched its first survey in 2008. What makes the Best Places to Work in Idaho program unique is its one of a kind combination of research and analysis expertise, best in class media exposure, and highly skilled management consulting. This combination has yielded a wealth of insights and best practices that can't be found any where else.

If you would like to schedule a personal conference or leader seminar with Paul to help your organization unleash the full power of a Best Places to Work program, you may reach him at:

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About this Report

This report will help you unleash your organization's performance by uncovering, for the first time, the insights and best practices discovered through operating a Best Places to Work program, analyzing the combined data from over one hundred organizations and 12,000 employee surveys, and speaking with dozens of management teams from participating organizations, including those that scored well and those that scored poorly.

In addition to the insights and best practices discovered, this report reveals one action any organization can take that will have dramatic positive effects on it overall performance.

Before you read any further, consider this one question. If there were one thing your organization could do to improve its outcomes (profits, performance, quality, etc.), improve the loyalty of its customers, and improve the satisfaction of its workforce, would it be worth your time to investigate it?

If the answer is 'no', then this report is not for you. But if the answer is 'no', I would like you to look inside yourself and ask yourself why?

If the answer is 'yes', then you should read this report.

The Best Places to Work in Idaho program and this report are based on the premise that more facts lead to better information which lead to better decisions which lead to better results. At POPULUS, our goal is to generate and communicate data and facts through programs like the Best Places to Work in Idaho in order to help organizations achieve better results.
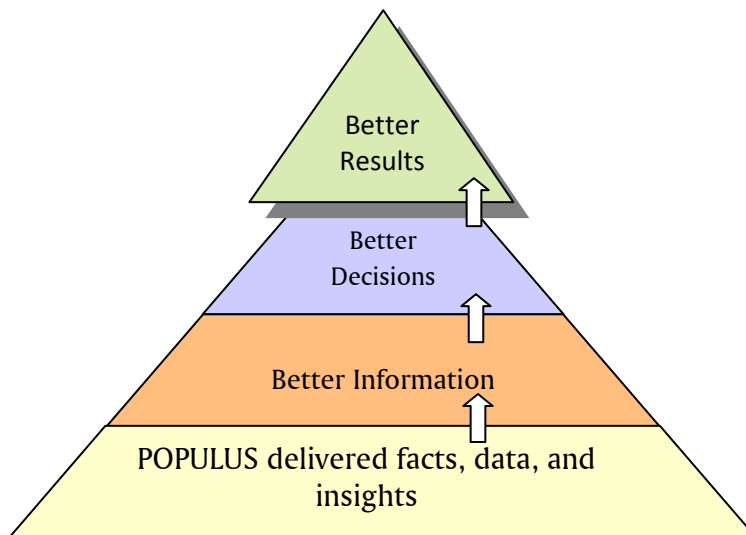
> *This report reveals the one action any organization can take that will have dramatic positive effects on its performance.*

About the Best Places to Work in Idaho Program

The purpose of the Program is to help Idaho organizations improve organizational performance through the optimization of workforce performance. The Program delivers employer brand-building publicity; data-driven insights, best practices, and recommendations in order to effectively and efficiently control workforce engagement; personal coaching and educational materials on proper program utilization; and hands-on consulting to help implement positive workplace programs.

The Program consists of five elements.
1. Confidential, detailed workforce survey
2. Positive publicity and recognition
3. Data and metrics for intelligent decision making
4. Learning opportunities through personal coaching, seminars, and educational materials
5. Hands on help when needed

What makes the Best Places to Work in Idaho program unique is its one of a kind combination of expert research and analysis, best in class media exposure, and highly skilled management consulting. This combination has yielded a wealth of insights and best practices that can't be found any where else. Another aspect that makes this program unique is the opportunity for organizations with a commitment to workforce engagement to receive positive media exposure. Publicity isn't just for the winners.

The Program is operated in Idaho by a partnership between the *Idaho Business Review* (IBR), the state's preeminent business publication, Price Associates, a top business consulting firm, and POPULUS, a nationally recognized HR and marketing research firm founded in 1984.

> *The Best Places to Work in Idaho program delivers the data and facts you need to intelligently drive your workforce decisions.*

The Program has been operating since 2008 and has collected more than 12,000 workforce surveys and has helped over 100 Idaho organizations improve workforce performance. A wide variety of organizations have participated including colleges, non-profits, governmental agencies, manufacturing firms, engineering firms, hospitals, software firms, legal firms, banks, credit unions and many others. Please refer to Appendix A for specific program participation statistics to date.

Confidential, Detailed Workforce Survey

The Program is built upon a confidential, in-depth workforce survey created by POPULUS which measures several aspects of each participating employer's workplace from both the employer's view and the workforce's view. The survey was created and conducted independently by POPULUS who ensures the confidentiality of respondent identities so respondents can be candid in their responses.

Using the results of the workforce surveys, POPULUS compares the workforce satisfaction of the participants across five key workplace dimensions in order to identify winners. These dimensions are: Compensation and Benefits; Work Environment; Company Management; Employee Growth and Development; and, Work-Life Balance. The organizations with the highest scores are chosen as the winners for the current year's contest. The only factor that counts toward an organization winning an award is the overall workforce satisfaction scores computed from the surveys completed by each organization's workforce. This is NOT a popularity contest. Winners are chosen based on hard data.

Positive Publicity and Recognition

Winners receive public recognition from the *Idaho Business Review* who:
- Reports the names of the winners in both their online and print publications;
- Produces a special print publication highlighting each of the winners;
- Hosts an awards banquet where each winner is presented with a commemorative trophy recognizing them as one of the best places to work in Idaho.

In addition, the names of the winners appear throughout the year of their reign on the Best Places to Work in Idaho website (www.bestplacestoworkinidaho.com) which is the number one rated Google result when searching for the "best place to work in Idaho". In the last twelve months, the website has received over 5,000 hits displaying the winners list to thousands of prospective employees. Winners that display their winner icon linked to the Best Places to Work in Idaho website send many viewers which indicates that the icons are resonating with prospective employees.

Obviously those organizations demonstrating high levels of workplace satisfaction are designated Winners and are recognized for their stellar accomplishments. However, publicity in this program isn't just for the winners. Through this Program's one-of-a-kind Choice Employer Network ™ and its Certified Choice Employer ™ designation, every organization that demonstrates its commitment to workforce engagement will receive positive media exposure regardless of whether their raw scores put them in the winners category or not.

> *Both Winners AND Certified Choice Employers receive recognition as being a Best Place to Work in Idaho.*

For more information on the Choice Employer Network ™ and the Certified Choice Employer ™ distinction, refer to Appendix B: Program enhancements for added value or visit our website at www.bestplacestoworkinidaho.com and click on the Choice Employer Network link.

The charts below illustrate the robust growth in the visibility of the winners list as a result of its display on the Program's website (www.bestplacestoworkinidaho.com).

Visits to www.bestplacestoworkinidaho.com
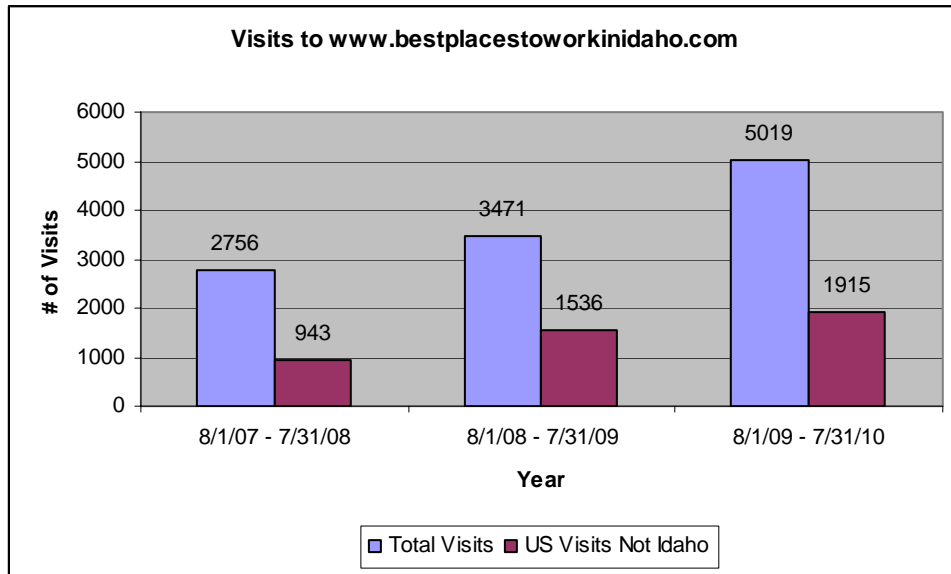
The winner's list has been viewed online over 5,000 times since August 1, 2009.

Percent Increase in Visits to www.bestplacestoworkinidaho.com
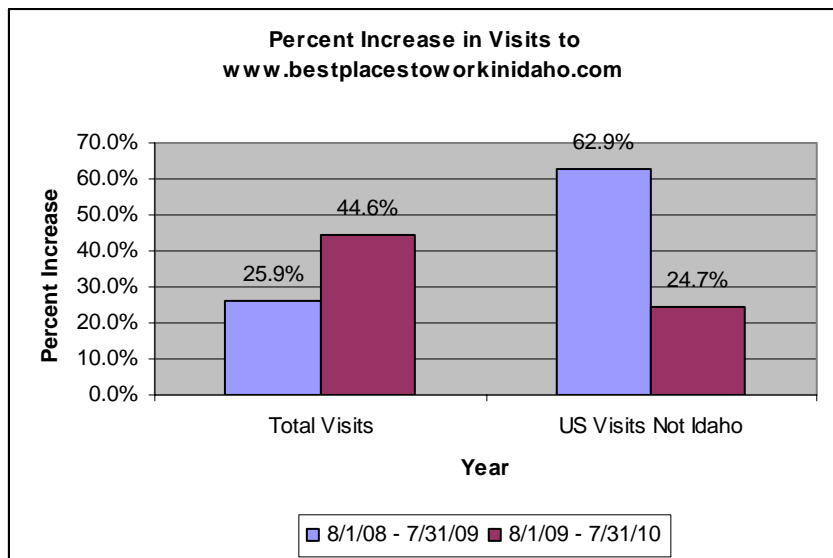
Data and Metrics for Intelligent Decision Making

The Program also generates detailed metrics that provide each participating organization the information it needs to control and manage workforce engagement in order to effectively and efficiently control the wealth of positive outcomes tied to workforce engagement. Each organization's reports are benchmarked, confidentially, to the scores of other participating organizations. Benchmarking is a very important attribute of this Program because it delivers a rich and unparalleled context to an organization's scores. Without the benchmarking, human nature drives readers to focus on the absolute large and small numbers. However, with the insight provided by benchmarking, participating organizations are able to focus on the *relatively* large and small numbers, which is what really matters.

The Best Places to Work in Idaho program recognizes four realities:

1. For most organizations, their investment in human capital is their largest single annual cash outlay;
2. The human element is the single most significant determinant of organizational performance;
3. Most organizations do not operate at peak human efficiency; and,
4. An organization can't manage something unless they measure it.

> - ***Build your employer brand***
> - ***Build your workforce engagement***
> - ***Build your profits***

Personal Speaking and Seminars

Paul Butcher, the founder of the Best Places to Work in Idaho program, is always available to personally help your organization understand how to take advantage of all the benefits available from a "best places to work program", avoid the inherent pitfalls, and understand what your numbers mean.

Hands-on Help When Needed

Through the relationship with Price Associates, the Program is able to offer highly skilled and in-depth services in areas that may require a level of HR expertise beyond your organization's capabilities. The experienced staff at Price Associates can help with services such as:

Legal and regulatory compliance

Candidate recruiting and prescreening

Performance management systems

Salary programs and administration

Employee communication programs

Conflict resolution

Crisis management support

Training and employee development programs

Organizational review, assessment and implementation

Whether you are looking for help setting up your basic HR functions, or you choose to outsource specific HR needs, the HR experts at Price Associates can make it happen.

Participant Feedback

"*The enrollment process for the Best Places to Work in Idaho program was quick and simple. The feedback and reports we received have been incredibly powerful in many ways. The feedback reaffirmed areas we are doing very well in, as well as identifying other areas for improvement in order to retain our most valuable employees". - Pioneer Federal Credit Union*

"*POPULUS did a great job capturing third party objective survey results from our employees. The information helped us to see where our employees were satisfied and where we might improve as a company..." - Josh Paul, Director of Communication, Thornton Oliver Keller*

Executive Summary

The greatest workforce performance lesson of the last decade is the importance of workforce engagement. This one concept is as important as any other aspect of the workforce in terms of achieving positive outcomes.

In order to describe the profound impact workforce engagement has on an organization's performance, the **POPULUS Workforce Performance Conceptual Model (PWPCM)** was created. It diagrams the concept in *Diagram 1* below.

POPULUS Workforce Performance Conceptual Model

Publicity

Outside of Scope

Recruiting process

Employer Brand Image

Applicant quality & quantity

Workforce Quality

Perceived Leader Engagement

Workforce Engagement

Customer Loyalty

Workforce Performance (productivity, accidents, etc.)

Organization Performance

Workforce Retention

Hiring process

External factors (e.g. economy, competitors, etc.)

Internal factors

Job Fit

Org Fit

Train/Dev

Workforce Advocacy

Legend

Arrows = Influence

Boxes = Processes, conditions, and outcomes

Diagram 1

The PWPCM illustrates the interrelationships of various processes, conditions, and their influences on positive organizational outcomes, as filtered by workforce engagement. This model contains 2 distinct elements, arrows and boxes. Arrows represent influence and boxes represent processes, conditions, or outcomes.

> *The POPULUS Workforce Performance Conceptual Model explains the relationship between workforce processes and conditions and their impact on organizational performance.*

Observation #1:
Workforce composition is changing

Three trends relative to Idaho workforce composition have been identified in the Best Places to Work in Idaho data.

First, Idaho organizations are flattening. That is, the workforce is comprised of fewer managers and more non-managers.

Second, it appears that in 2010 Idaho organizations relied more on lower salary people than they did in 2009.

Finally, although the workforce composition is changing, there is one workforce segment that has remained amazingly constant. This one segment is the highly paid non-managers which has held constant at approximately 4.5% of the workforce for each of the three years of the Program. Perhaps the 4.5% of the workforce that are highly paid non-managers is as low as this category can get and still get the vital work done at Idaho organizations.

> *Idaho workforces appear to be flattening and Idaho organizations are being more thrifty with their workforce investments.*

Observation #2:
Workforce engagement is the key to organizational performance

Workforce engagement is the key to unlocking the performance potential of your organization. Increases in workforce engagement have been shown to have positive effects on a wide array of critical organizational outcomes including customer loyalty, workforce performance, workforce retention, and workforce advocacy.[1]

Observation #3:
Five distinct and controllable organizational conditions drive workforce engagement

This program has identified five manageable and controllable drivers that are significant influencers of workforce engagement. These drivers are:

The five drivers are:
- Publicity
- Leadership Engagement
- Internal Factors
  - Job fit
  - Organization fit
  - Training and development

> *To control your organization's workforce engagement, control these five workforce elements:*
> 1. *Publicity*
> 2. *Leadership Engagement*
> 3. *Job Fit*
> 4. *Organization Fit*
> 5. *Training and Development*

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[1] http://www.keepem.com/doc_files/clc_articl_on_productivity.pdf - This link points to a great publication created by the Corporate Leadership Council, an HR best practices research organization headquartered in Virginia that summarizes an amazing amount of the best research on this topic. This article was published in 2003. Wikipedia also synthesizes a great deal of research on the subject at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Employee_engagement.

Observation #4:
The worst thing an organization can do

In 2009, POPULUS identified a situation called the Partial Execution Paradox related to the Best Places to Work in Idaho survey. It's a paradox because of the natural presumption that by partially executing the survey and suggested follow up activities an organization would receive partial benefit. However, the opposite is true. That is, by partially executing the follow up process an organization is actually worse off than had they done nothing.

The lesson here is that unless an organization is ready, willing, and able to act upon the feedback given by their workforce in a survey such as the Best Places to Work in Idaho, they're better off not conducting the survey at all.

> *"There are fewer things worse than asking your employees for their opinions and then ignoring them."*

"There are fewer things worse than asking your employees for their opinions and then ignoring them."[2]

Observation #5:
The best thing an organization can do

If the worst thing an organization can do is fail to perceptibly act upon the feedback given to them by their workforce, then it makes sense that the best thing an organization can do is to take perceptible action based upon the feedback given to them by their workforce.

Based on a decade of experience, coupled with the dozens of conversations POPULUS has had with the management teams of Idaho organizations, a best and worst practices short list of activities has been made. If formalized and executed on a regular basis, it will achieve significant improvements in the level of workforce satisfaction and engagement.

The process consists of the following steps.

1. SURVEY – Participate in the Best Places to Work in Idaho program every year
2. LEARN – Review the 7 metrics for each of the 6 segments in order to prioritize your actions & develop your action plan
   Assign measurable actions to individuals
   Create your communication
3. COMMUNICATE – Broadcast your communication
4. ACT – Visibly implement your action plan
5. FOLLOW THROUGH – Review action plan progress & communicate findings periodically throughout the year (monthly / bi-monthly / quarterly)
6. REPEAT

> *The best thing an organization can do is to take perceptible action based upon the feedback given to them by their workforce.*

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[2] http://www.allaboutperformance.biz/pdfs/hrattitude.pdf

Observation #6:
Latent defection bubble

2009 and 2010 have been challenging years for both Idaho employers and employees. Unemployment remains at very high levels. Based on Program data analyzed, POPULUS believes strongly that there is a building latent defection bubble that will correct itself as the economy turns around and unemployment rates return to healthier levels. This will have serious implications for employers that have not taken proper steps to prepare for this threat.

What has been observed in the data from the last two years of the Program's operation is that the defection intentions (the inverse of retention intentions) are growing

> *Idaho employers should begin preparing themselves for higher than usual turnover once the unemployment rate begins to fall, especially in the higher value employee segments. This includes implementing preventative measures like the Best Places to Work in Idaho program.*

Tying it all together

In order to tie all the elements described previously into one easy to follow, powerful, and integrated process that will help any organization drive its workforce engagement, and consequently its organizational performance to dramatic new heights is the 1-6-7-1 plan.

This 1-6-7-1 plan consists of the following elements.
1. One annual survey
2. Six workforce segments
3. Seven workforce metrics
4. One easy to follow process

> *The 1-6-7-1 plan will boost workforce engagement.*

Conclusion

Addressing, managing, and optimizing workforce engagement is good business. It's not just a nice thing to do.

One Action Any Organization Can Take to Improve Performance

Earlier in this report POPULUS promised to reveal the one action that any organization could take to have dramatic effects on its performance.

> *The one action any organization can take to immediately and sustainably boost workforce engagement is to implement an ongoing, legitimate feedback mechanism, similar to the Best Places to Work in Idaho program.*

The beauty of such an implementation is that the Program itself delivers the data and facts necessary to sustain the mechanism by creating a meaningful, ongoing dialogue with the workforce related to their welfare.

Chapters

Chapter 1 - Workforce Composition is Changing

This report looks at workforce composition from three different perspectives. First, it looks at managers versus non-managers. Second, it looks at Low, versus, medium, versus high salary individuals. Finally, it combines the two into the 6 employee segments used throughout this report:

- Manager low salary (under $35,000 per year)
- Manager medium salary (between $35,000 and $75,000 per year)
- Manager high salary ($75,000 and more per year)
- Non-manager low salary (under $35,000 per year)
- Non-manager medium salary (between $35,000 and $75,000 per year)
- Non-manager high salary ($75,000 and more per year).

As you can see from *Chart 1* below, it appears that Idaho organizations are flattening. That is, the workforce is comprised of fewer managers and more non-managers.

Chart 1
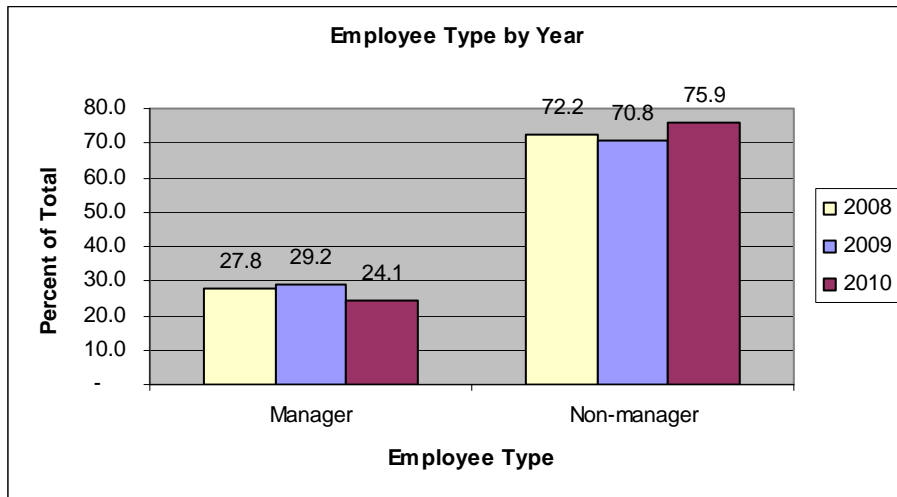
Chart 2 below illustrates where the gains and losses in the workforce come from. It appears that Idaho organizations are relying more on lower salary individuals than higher salary ones.

Chart 2

Employee Pay by Year
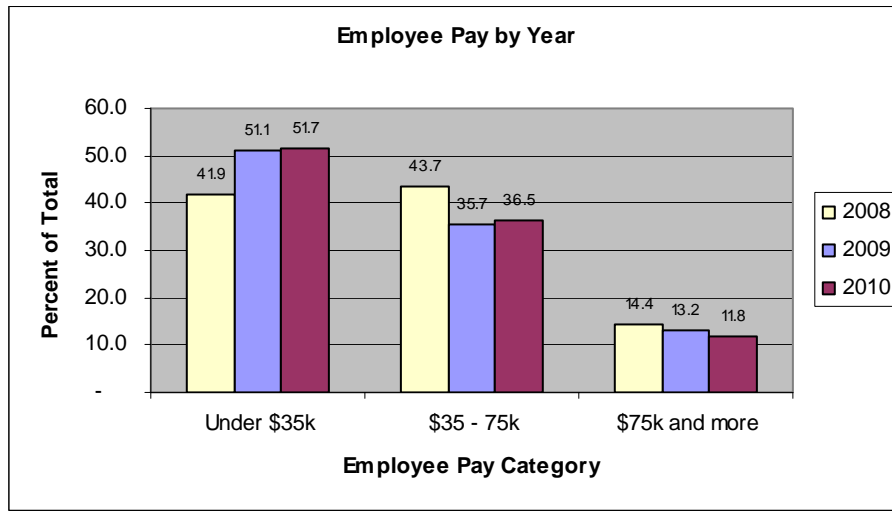
Finally, *Chart 3* below shows that certain workforce segments have been hit harder than others. Manager categories across the board have decreased in percent of workforce composition, being replaced by low and medium salary non-managers. The Non-manager High pay category has remained surprisingly constant as a percent of the Idaho workforce across the three year measured.

Chart 3
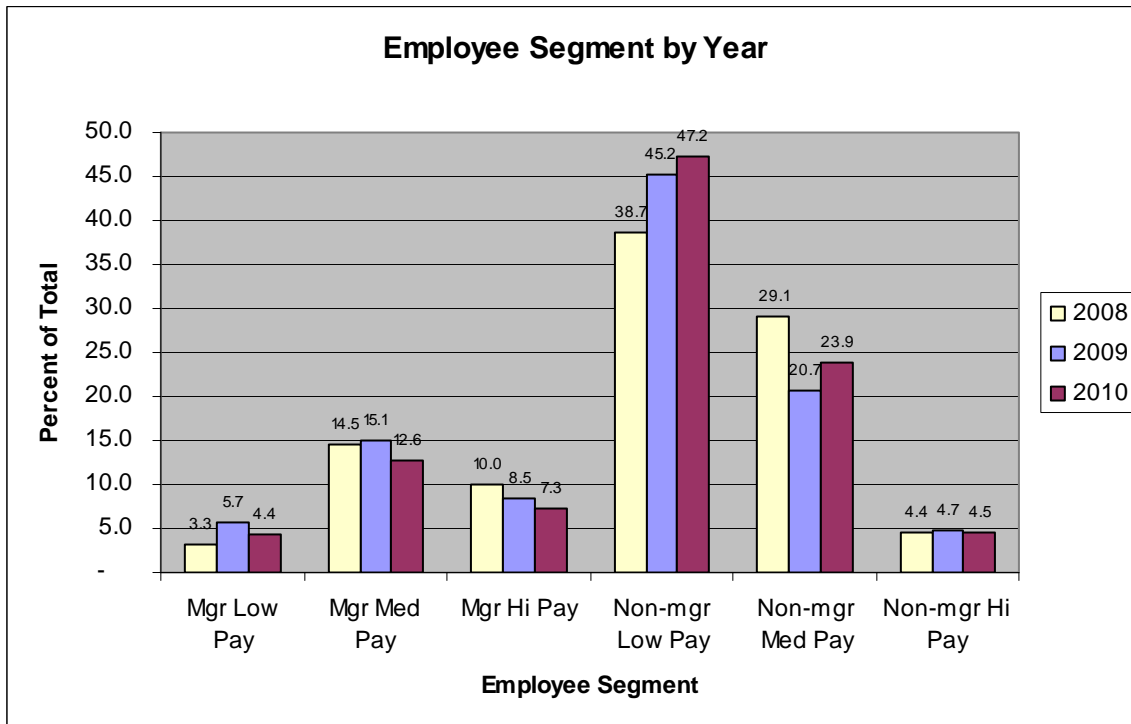
Employee Segment by Year

Idaho workforces appear to be flattening and Idaho organizations are being more thrifty with their workforce investments.

Chapter 2 - Workforce engagement is the key to organizational performance

Workforce engagement is the key to unlocking the performance potential of your organization, illustrated in *Diagram 2* below.

POPULUS Workforce Performance Conceptual Model

Diagram 2

This Program defines workforce engagement as the extent to which employees put forth discretionary effort into their work, both rationally and emotionally, acting in a way that furthers their organization's interests. As such, workforce engagement is a more complete measurement than is workforce satisfaction as it incorporates job satisfaction, commitment, discretionary effort, and intention to stay into one metric.

Increases in workforce engagement have been shown to have positive effects on an organization's customer loyalty, workforce performance, workforce retention, and workforce advocacy.[3]

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[3] http://www.keepem.com/doc_files/clc_articl_on_productivity.pdf - This link points to a great publication created by the Corporate Leadership Council, an HR best practices research organization headquartered in Virginia that summarizes an amazing amount of the best research on this topic. This article was published in 2003. Wikipedia also synthesizes a great deal of research on the subject at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Employee_engagement.

What is workforce engagement? If you ask a dozen different consultants or look up the term in a dozen different textbooks, you're likely to get as many definitions as you had sources.
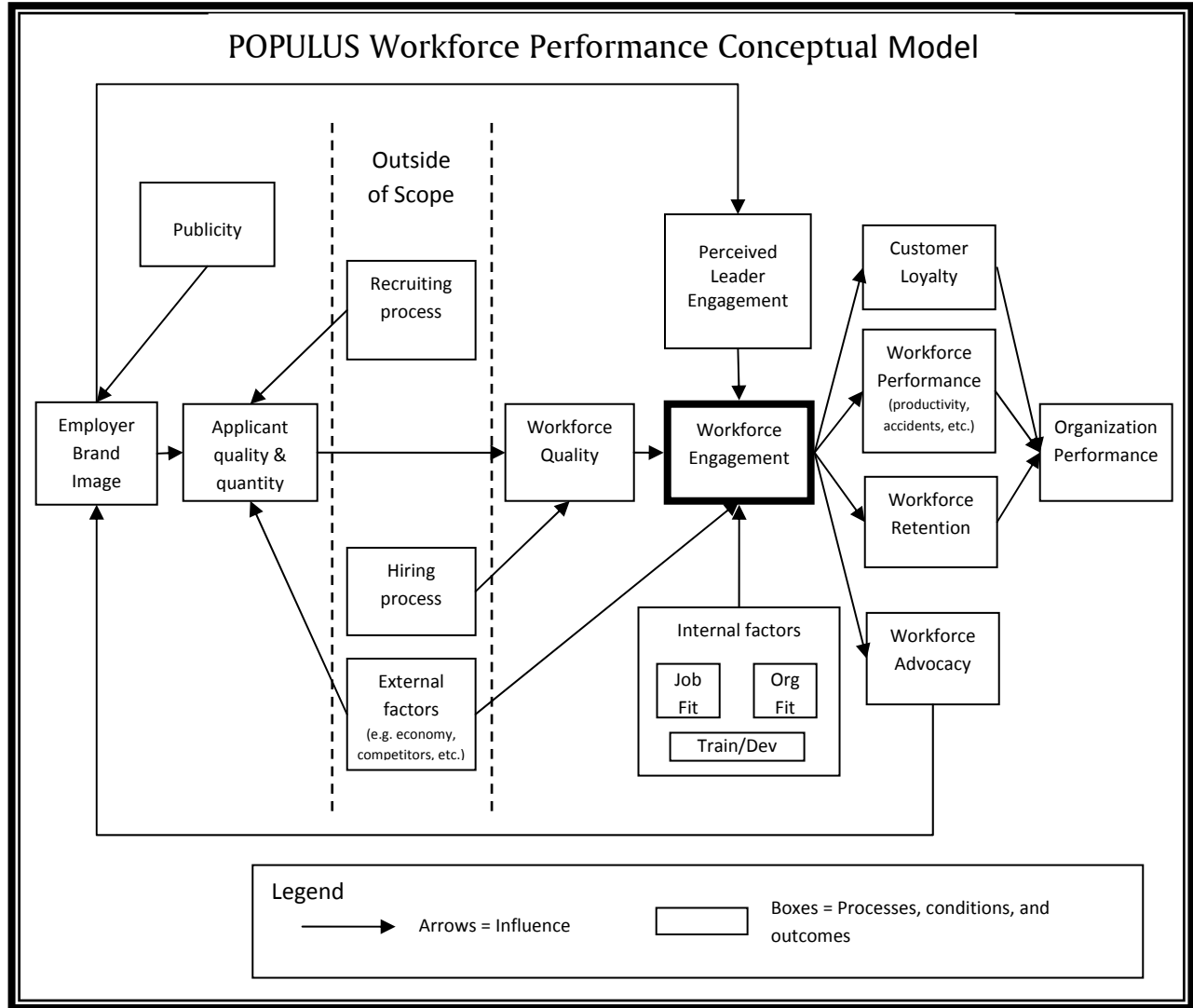
POPULUS defines workforce engagement as the extent to which employees put forth discretionary effort into their work, both rationally and emotionally, acting in a way that furthers their organization's interests. As such, workforce engagement is a more complete measurement than is workforce satisfaction as it incorporates job satisfaction, commitment, discretionary effort, and intention to stay into one metric.

A significant amount of research has been done over the last decade that has unequivocally demonstrated the causal links between workforce engagement and customer loyalty, workforce performance, workforce retention, and workforce advocacy.[4] This report doesn't intend to rehash these reports, only to build upon them.

Workforce engagement is similar, but distinct from workforce satisfaction. Workforce engagement is more active and has a stronger link to behaviors than satisfaction alone. [ibid]

Addressing, managing, and optimizing workforce engagement are good business investments, they're not just nice things to do. "Jim Sinegal (CEO at Costco) does not pretend that his policies are intended solely for the good of his employees, he contends (and proves) that his policies are a good business investment – that they pay off financially."[5]

"…Gallup has proven that companies with world-class engagement have 3.9 times the EPS growth rate compared with organizations with lower engagement in their same industry."[6] In addition, "Comparing top-quartile to bottom-quartile engagement business units resulted in median percentage differences of:…49% in safety incidents…37% in absenteeism…60% in quality (defects)…"[7] which has the potential to yield many thousands of dollars in improved bottom-line results by managing your workforce engagement to better levels.

> *Increases in workforce engagement have been shown to have positive effects on an organization's EPS loyalty, workforce performance, workforce retention, and workforce advocacy.*

The list below summarizes the critical elements of workforce engagement.

1. At any point in time, every organization's level of performance is dependent upon the level of engagement of their workforce.
2. Within every organization, the engagement of their workforce directly influences workforce performance, workforce retention, workforce advocacy, error rates, accident rates, accident costs, service and product quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and customer retention.
3. Employee engagement has a significant impact on an organization's performance. It's not a minor influence.
4. The impact from the level of employee engagement on an organization's performance can range from significantly negative to significantly positive. It isn't merely a neutral to positive scale.
5. Employee engagement is a manageable outcome.
6. In order to manage anything you must first measure it.

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[4] http://www.keepem.com/doc_files/clc_articl_on_productivity.pdf - This link points to a great publication created by the Corporate Leadership Council, an HR best practices research organization headquartered in Virginia that summarizes an amazing amount of the best research on this topic. This article was published in 2003. Wikipedia also synthesizes a great deal of research on the subject at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Employee_engagement.

[5] Human Capital Institute while referring to HR policies at Costco.

[6] http://www.gallup.com/consulting/File/121535/Employee_Engagement_Overview_Brochure.pdf, p. 5.

[7] http://www.gallup.com/consulting/File/126806/MetaAnalysis_Q12_WhitePaper_2009.pdf, p. 26.

A number of attempts have been made to quantify the impact of workforce engagement. POPULUS believes in the impact of workforce engagement on the bottom line but realizes that any attempt to generically quantify its impact must be taken as an estimate. That being said, POPULUS believes there is still great value in considering these estimates in determining relative impact of remedial interventions.

The following Workforce Engagement Financial Impact Simulator is based on a significant amount of research done by the Center for Talent Solutions[8]. The results are estimates only and any individual organization's results most likely will not match the results of the Simulator exactly.

Workforce Engagement Financial Impact Simulator

Engagement Level (WEM)	Performance Delivered (from CTS)	Per Employee Annual Impact	% of organization (BPTW, 2010 – *example organization*)	Financial Impact
Level 4 Fully Engaged	125%	$12,500	23%	$287,500
Level 3 Engaged	100%	$0	50%	$0
Level 2 Somewhat Engaged	75%	($12,500)	20%	($250,000)
Level 1 Disengaged	50%	($25,000)	7%	($175,000)
Total				($137,500)

The above simulator is based on an employee base of 100 with a weighted average salary and benefit cost of $50,000. The Financial Impact is a combination of the impact on an organization's financial results due to changes in workforce performance, workforce retention, workforce advocacy, error rates, accident rates, accident costs, service and product quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and customer retention.

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[8] As described in "The Economics of Engagement" which can be found at:
http://www.enterpriseengagement.org/direct/user/file/pdf/Final_Economics_of_Engagement.pdf.

Key Finding 1: Manage up to improve workforce performance. By "managing up" 2% of the workforce through strategic leadership interventions as delivered by the Best Places to Work in Idaho program, in other words moving 2 employees from Level 1 to Level 2, 2 employees from Level 2 to Level 3, and 2 employees move from level 3 to level 4, the example organization shown above would receive a boost in their Financial Impact of $75,000 per year. This return dwarfs the cost of participation in the Program. See the table below.

Workforce Engagement Financial Impact Simulator				
Engagement Level (WEM)	Performance Delivered (from CTS)	Per Employee Annual Impact	% of organization (BPTW, 2010 – *example organization*)	Financial Impact
Level 4 Fully Engaged	125%	$12,500	25%	$312,500
Level 3 Engaged	100%	$0	50%	$0
Level 2 Somewhat Engaged	75%	($12,500)	20%	($250,000)
Level 1 Disengaged	50%	($25,000)	5%	($125,000)
Total				($62,500)

Key Finding 2: Workforce engagement tends to increase as annual income increases and managers tend to be more engaged than do non-managers. By examining Charts 2 and 3 on the next page, the reader will observe this finding in the data from the last two years of the Best Places to Work in Idaho. The questions to compute the Workforce Engagement Metric were added in 2009 preventing the computation of this metric for the 2008 data.

Care should be taken to not jump to the conclusion that giving someone a raise or perhaps a promotion from a non-manager to a manager role will increase engagement. It may very well be that more engaged people tend to make more money and find themselves in manager roles. It's a chicken and egg dilemma. The point being there is a correlation, not necessarily a causation.

> *Huge financial gains are possible.*

Chart 2

2009 Workforce Engagement (N=2,746)

Chart 3

2010 Workforce Engagement (N=4,507)
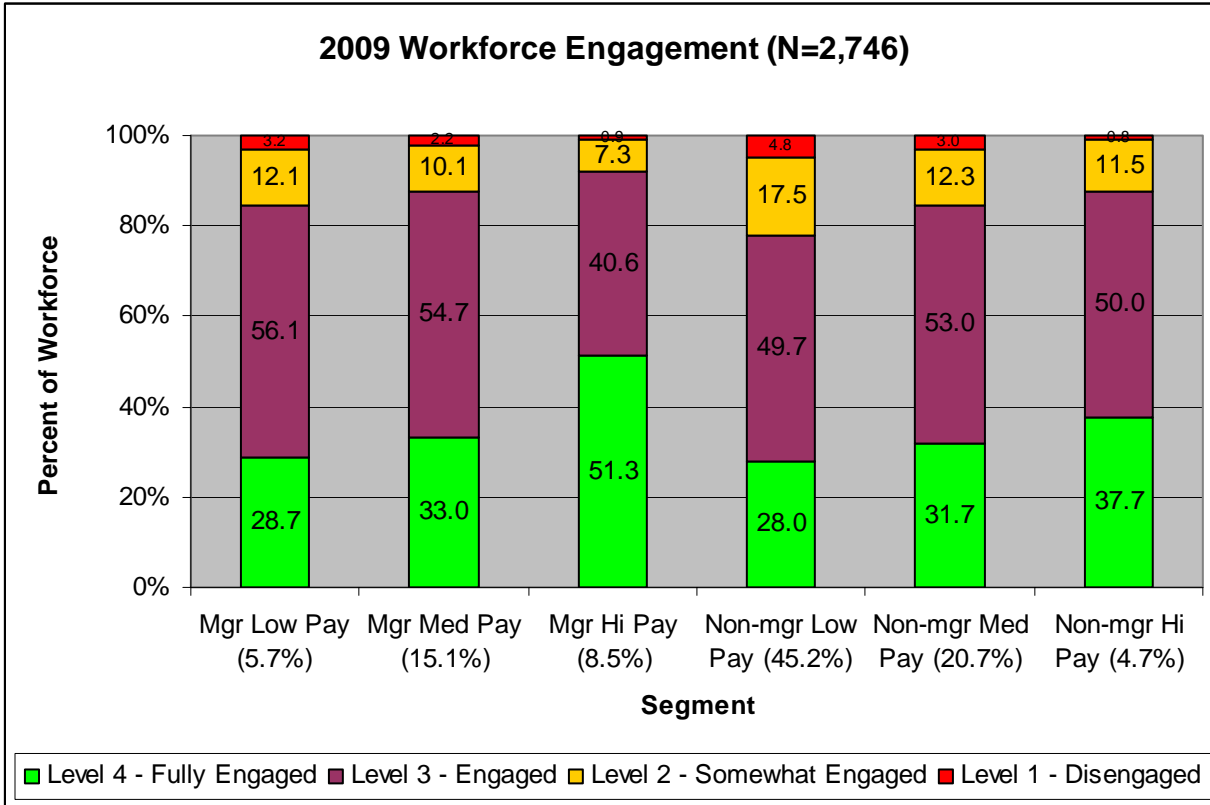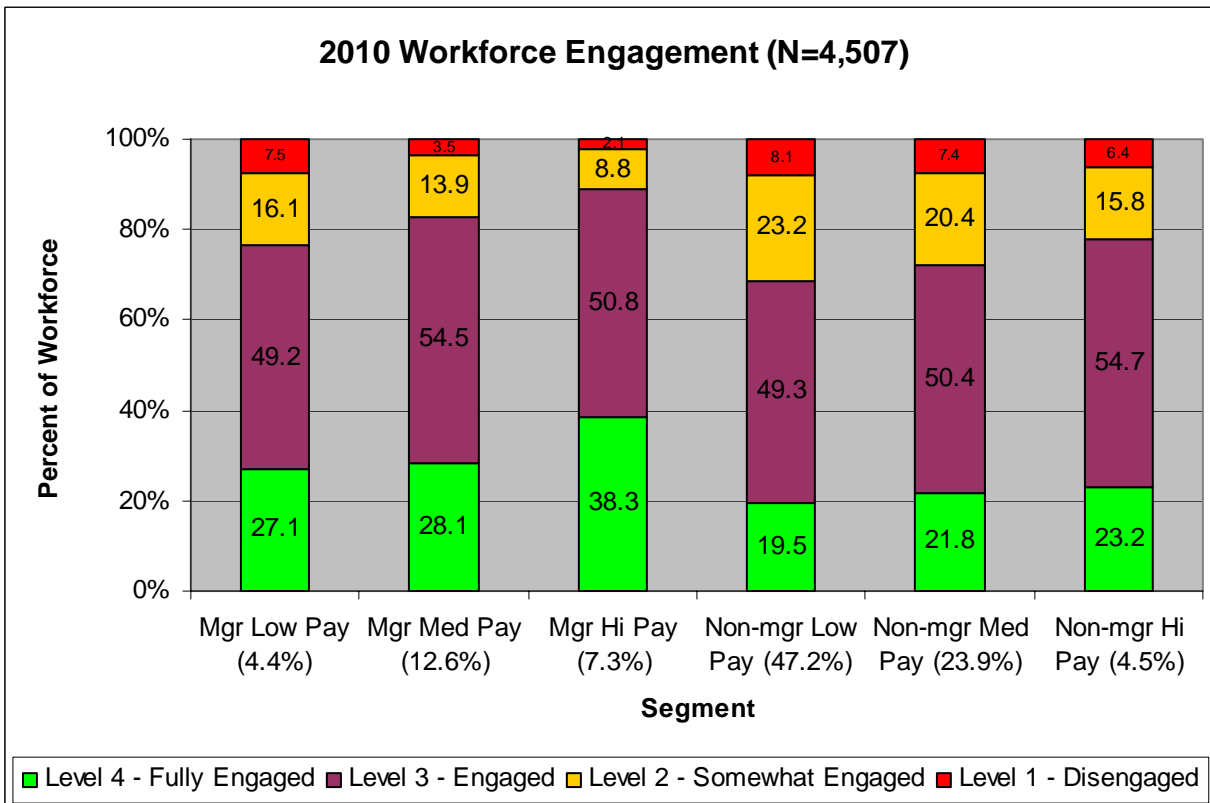
Key Finding 3: Overall Program workforce engagement has decreased in 2010 from 2009. Chart 4 below reports the results from Charts 2 and 3 above side-to-side and illustrates that for every one of the six workforce segments, the percent of Fully Engaged employees has dropped and the percent of Disengaged employees has risen.

Chart 4
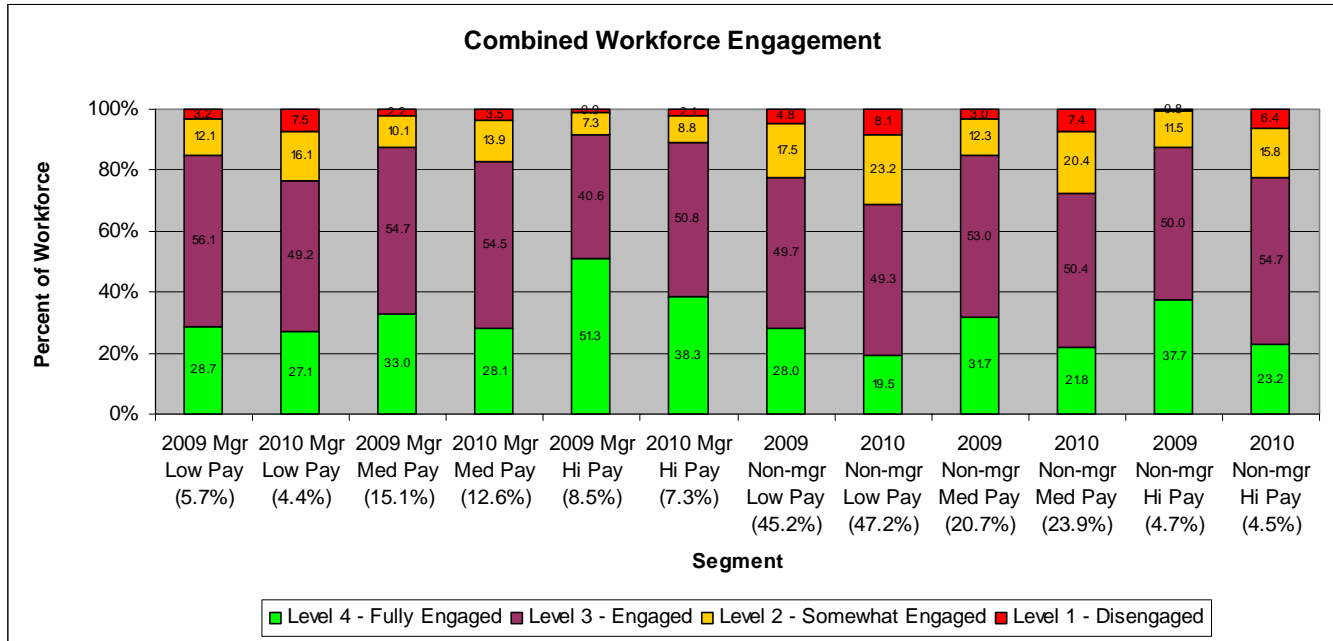
Combined Workforce Engagement

Workforce engagement is the key to unlocking the performance potential of your organization.

Chapter 3 - Five distinct and controllable organizational conditions drive workforce engagement

Key Finding 1:   Disengaged leadership leads to a disengaged workforce.

The Leader Engagement Metric (LEM) is comprised of multiple survey questions shown to be individually highly correlated to workforce engagement. The LEM is set to the same scale as the Workforce Engagement Metric (WEM).

> 1 = Level 1 – Disengaged
> 2 = Level 2 – Somewhat Engaged
> 3 = Level 3 – Engaged
> 4 = Level 4 – Fully Engaged.

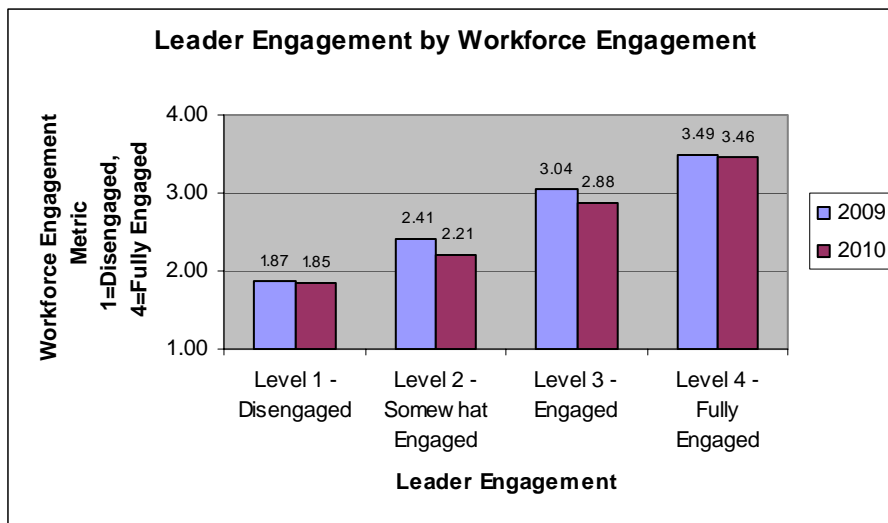The LEM is highly predictive of the level of Workforce Engagement. In other words, if the Leader Engagement for an organization is defined, an accurate prediction of the level of Workforce Engagement can be made.

It's important to note that even in an environment where both leader engagement and workforce engagement have been changing dramatically from 2009 to 2010, the relationship between these two variables is remarkably stable year-to-year.

What does this mean for management? Improve Leader Engagement if you wish to improve workforce engagement.

How does an organization go about improving leader engagement? Participate in the Best Places to Work in Idaho for 2011 (http://www.bestplacestoworkinidaho.com). Individual results on these metrics will be delivered, benchmarked against Idaho peers, and allow identifying specific areas to address to raise individual LEM.

> *If you want to improve workforce engagement – improve leader engagement.*

Key Finding 2: The internal factors "job fit", "organization fit", and "training and development" impact Workforce Engagement.

In a fashion similar to the creation of the LEM above, the Job Fit Metric (JFM) Organization Fit Metric (OFM), and Workforce Development Metric (WDM) were created by combining the results from survey questions. None of these variables uses the same survey questions and all three appear to be highly predictive of workforce engagement.

Job Fit Metric by Workforce Engagement Metric

Job Fit Metric	2009	2010
Level 1 - Poor	2.15	1.93
Level 2 - Substandard	2.51	2.46
Level 3 - Good	3.14	3.03
Level 4 - Excellent	3.56	3.50

Y-axis: Workforce Engagement Metric 1=Disengaged, 4=Fully Engaged

Organization Fit Metric by Workforce Engagement Metric

Organization Fit Metric	2009	2010
Level 1 - Poor	2.05	1.97
Level 2 - Substandard	2.50	2.40
Level 3 - Good	3.08	2.96
Level 4 - Excellent	3.53	3.46

Y-axis: Workforce Engagement Metric 1=Disengaged, 4=Fully Engaged

Workforce Development Metric by Workforce Engagement Metric

Workforce Development Metric	2009	2010
Level 1 - Poor	2.21	2.05
Level 2 - Substandard	2.61	2.44
Level 3 - Good	3.10	2.99
Level 4 - Excellent	3.54	3.44

Y-axis: Workforce Engagement Metric 1=Disengaged, 4=Fully Engaged

What does this mean for management? Improving job fit, organization fit, and training and development where needed will improve the engagement of your workforce.

Key Finding 3: Organizational publicity impacts the quality and quantity of employee applicants.

A significant amount of research has established the value of an employer brand and its impact on the quality and quantity of the employee application pool. It stands to reason that publicity, positive and negative, affects the brand image in the market place.

"A powerful employment brand increases the size of your candidate talent pool by opening up an additional 50% of the labor pool with passive candidates. Actively managing your company's value proposition will ensure effective and accurate perceptions of your brand in the labor market and deliver many significant benefits:

- Better fit between candidates and your company's offer and culture
- Better performance from new hires
- Lower time to fill open positions
- Lower recruiting costs
- Lower turnover among new hires"[9]

Medium and small size companies don't have the same publicity opportunities as their larger competitors. Nor do they have the PR budget to allow them to compete effectively for applicant mind share against their larger competitors. This **_brand disadvantage_** emphasizes the importance of affordable programs like the Best Places to Work in Idaho. This Program not only delivers unparalleled publicity, but also delivers the key metrics, reports, and action plans to help companies of all sizes compete effectively for talent where it matters most, in a specific geographic market.

> _Positive publicity delivered by the Program will boost your employer brand and the quantity and quality of your applicant pool._

---

[9] Corporate Executive Board website, 8/10/2009, http://www.clcgenesee.com/attract.html

Putting all five influences together. *Diagram 3* below illustrates the five drivers of workforce engagement that can be managed and controlled as part of the Best Places to Work in Idaho program. The five drivers of workforce engagement are:

- Publicity
- Leadership Engagement
- Internal Factors
    - Job fit
    - Organization fit
    - Training and development

> *To control your organization's workforce engagement, control these five workforce elements:*
> 1. *Publicity*
> 2. *Leadership Engagement*
> 3. *Job Fit*
> 4. *Organization Fit*
> 5. *Training and Development*

POPULUS Workforce Performance Conceptual Model

Outside of Scope

Publicity

Recruiting process

Perceived Leader Engagement

Customer Loyalty

Employer Brand Image

Applicant quality & quantity

Workforce Quality

Workforce Engagement

Workforce Performance (productivity, accidents, etc.)

Organization Performance

Hiring process

Workforce Retention

External factors (e.g. economy, competitors, etc.)

Internal factors

Job Fit   Org Fit

Train/Dev

Workforce Advocacy

Legend
→ Arrows = Influence
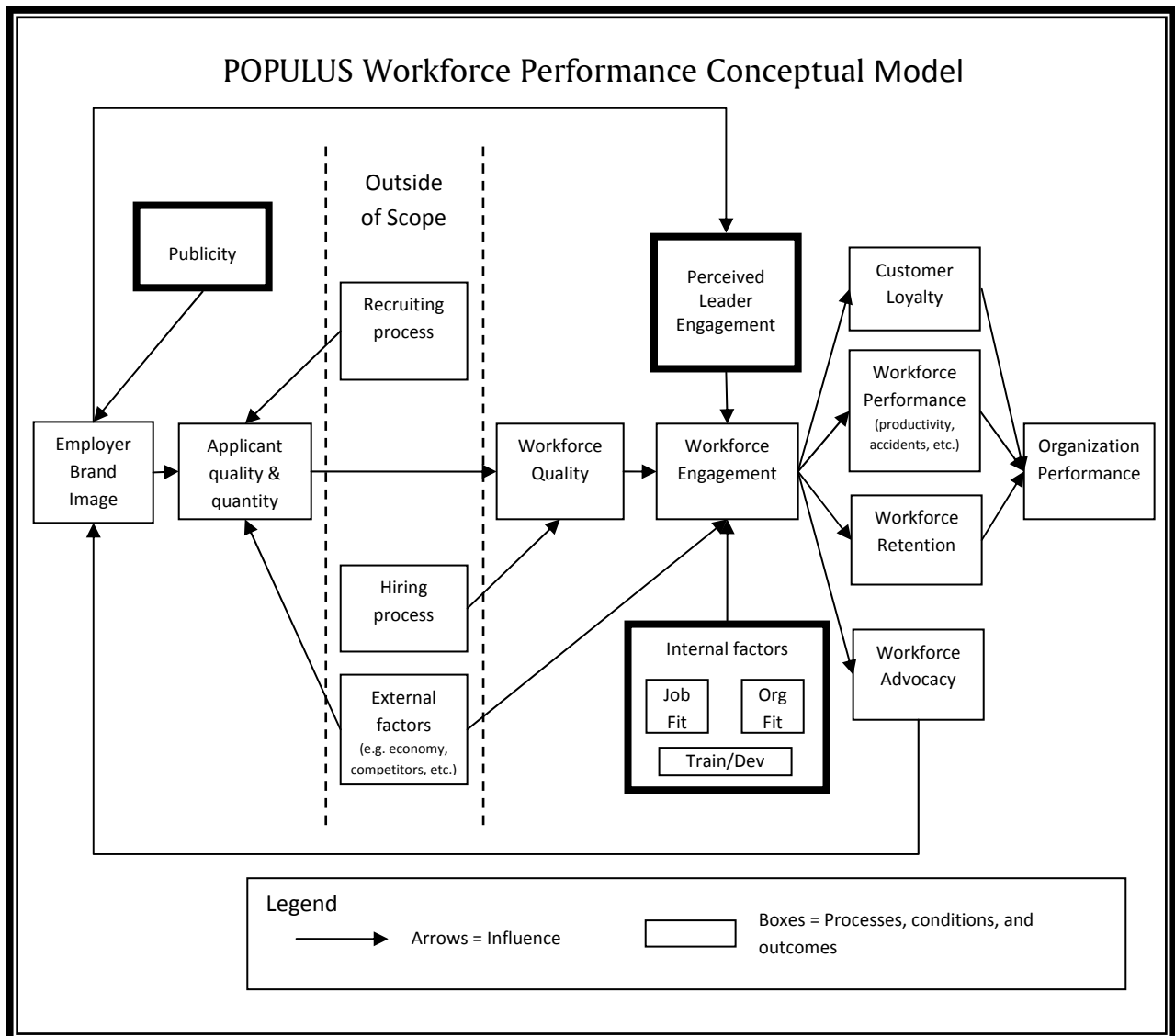☐ Boxes = Processes, conditions, and outcomes

Diagram 3

Chapter 4 - The worst thing an organization can do

In 2009 POPULUS identified a situation called the Partial Execution Paradox related to the Best Places to Work in Idaho survey. It's a paradox because of the natural presumption that by partially executing the survey and suggested follow up activities an organization would receive partial benefit. However, the opposite is true. That is, by partially executing the follow up process an organization is actually worse off than had they done nothing.

The lesson here is that unless an organization is ready, willing, and able to act upon the feedback given by their workforce in a survey such as the Best Places to Work in Idaho, they're better off not conducting the survey at all.

> *"There are fewer things worse than asking your employees for their opinions and then ignoring them."*

"There are fewer things worse than asking your employees for their opinions and then ignoring them."[10]

In 2009, POPULUS conducted an analysis of 2,335 Best Places to Work in Idaho survey respondents. The objective was to determine if satisfaction and engagement change over time relative to whether an organization conducts workforce surveys or not, and whether the organization conducts some perceptible follow up activities relative to the survey or not. The types of organizational follow up tested were candid communications of the results and perceptible actions based on the results of the survey.

What was found:
1. People at firms that didn't conduct workforce surveys indicated declines in their satisfaction and engagement over time.
2. People at firms that conducted workforce surveys that either didn't candidly communicate the results, took no perceptible action, or both, indicated the lowest workforce satisfaction and engagement which also declined over time.
3. Finally, people at firms that conducted surveys, candidly communicated the results, and took perceptible action based on the survey results actually indicated gains in their workforce satisfaction and engagement over time.

The results of this analysis are illustrated in *Chart 1* below.

[10] http://www.allaboutperformance.biz/pdfs/hrattitude.pdf
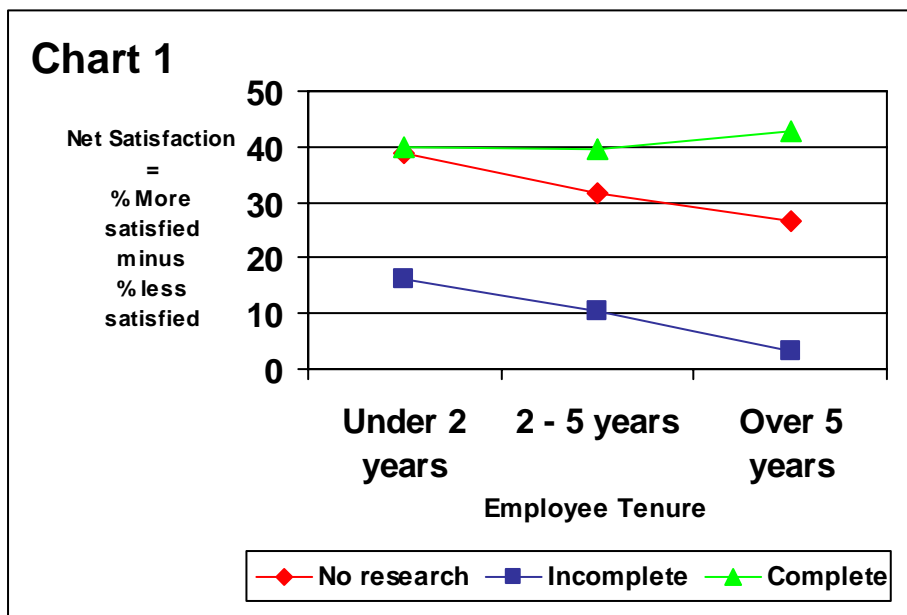
Chapter 5 - The best thing an organization can do

If the worst thing an organization can do is fail to perceptibly act upon the feedback given to them by their workforce, then it makes sense that the best thing an organization can do is to take perceptible action based upon the feedback given to them by their workforce.

Based on a decade of experience, coupled with the dozens of conversations POPULUS has had with the management teams of Idaho organizations, a best and worst practices short list of activities has been made. If formalized and executed on a regular basis, it will achieve significant improvements in the level of workforce satisfaction and engagement.

1. **Survey** - Obtain workforce feedback in a reliable, independent, and legitimate manner such as participation in the Best Places to Work in Idaho.

2. **Learn** - In a reliable manner, determine the key findings from the feedback. Detailed reports provide the results from your company and enable a comparison to peer organizations (benchmarking).

3. **Communicate** – Candidly communicate the key findings, both good and bad, to the workforce along with intended actions relative to each finding. Taking no action is an acceptable intention, if there is legitimate justification and communication. Finally, an intention to research the matter further is sufficient action as well. Employees don't expect all their problems to be resolved, just to be heard, acknowledged, and addressed in some genuine fashion.

4. **Act** – The actions, as mentioned, can be a communication, or a research task. In any case, the action should be genuine and tied to each finding. No finding from the survey should be left unaddressed.

5. **Follow through** – This should be self-evident. If an organization's leadership promises to do something relative to the welfare of the workforce, they better do it, or have a good reason why they won't, which should be communicated. The consequences of not following through are similar to the Partial Execution Paradox described earlier where workforce expectations were set and then not met.

6. **Repeat** – The five-step process described above is a continual loop, it isn't a one-time event. Workforce perceptions are constantly shifting. This process derives a great deal of its impact from the process itself, not necessarily any remedial action implemented as a result of the process. By implementing this process, leadership demonstrates its engagement and, if done correctly, reflects a genuine concern on the part of the organization's leadership for the welfare of the workforce. Workforces don't expect perfection, they want to know that their leadership cares, is willing to listen, and is willing to invest time and effort in addressing concerns.

Use this simple diagram to help understand the ongoing nature of a robust and legitimate workforce feedback mechanism.
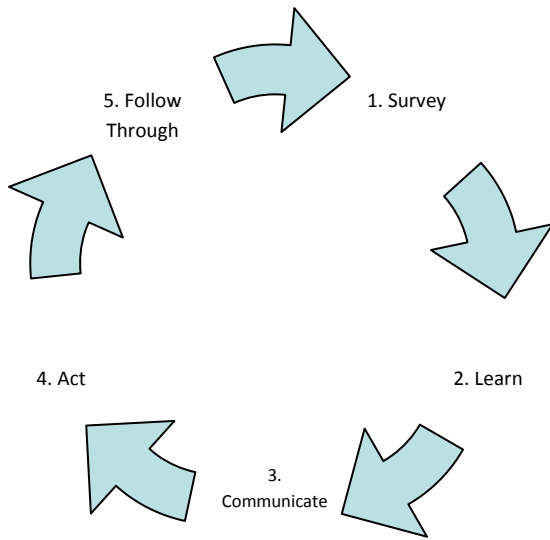
5. Follow
Through

1. Survey

4. Act

2. Learn

3.
Communicate

> *The best thing an organization can do is to take perceptible action based upon the feedback given to them by their workforce.*

Chapter 6 – Latent Defection Bubble

2009 and 2010 have been challenging years for both Idaho employers and employees. Unemployment remains at very high levels. Based on Program data analyzed, POPULUS believes strongly that there is a building latent defection bubble that will correct itself as the economy turns around and unemployment rates return to healthier levels. This will have serious implications for employers that have not taken proper steps to prepare for this threat.
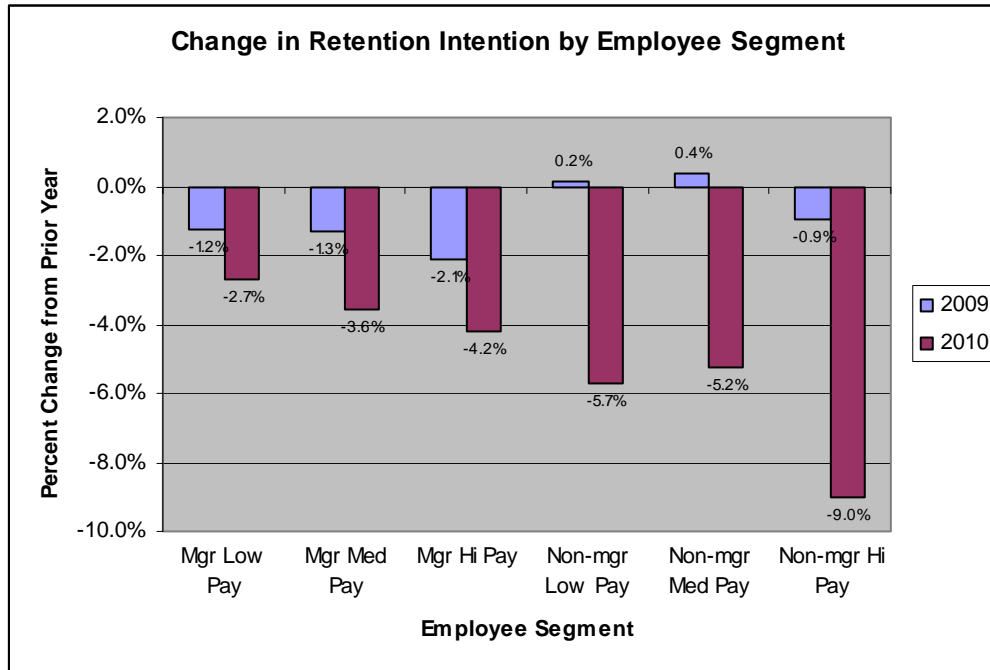
My research has shown that for most people, engagement degrades over time (Refer to *Chart 1* under Chapter 4 above) due primarily I believe to the lack of, or ineffectiveness of programs and processes intended to engage employees. Yet for most companies, in a healthy economy, the ratio of engaged to disengaged employees remains fairly constant, all else being equal. It is my opinion that in a healthy economy, disengaged employees tend to leave and seek more engaging employment elsewhere which releases the pressure of a growing bubble of disengaged employees and maintains equilibrium.

However, in the current economic environment, the opportunity for disengaged employees to find employment elsewhere has been drastically diminished. Unfortunately this situation hasn't changed the normal employee engagement degradation for most people. The result is that there are growing bubbles of disengaged employees in the workforce of most companies (refer to *Chart 4* in Chapter 2 above). These aren't just reflected in the growth of the 'disengaged' category but also in the reduction of the 'fully engaged' category.

POPULUS has observed in the data from the last two years of the Program's operation that the defection intentions (the inverse of retention intentions) are growing. This trend is shown in the chart below.
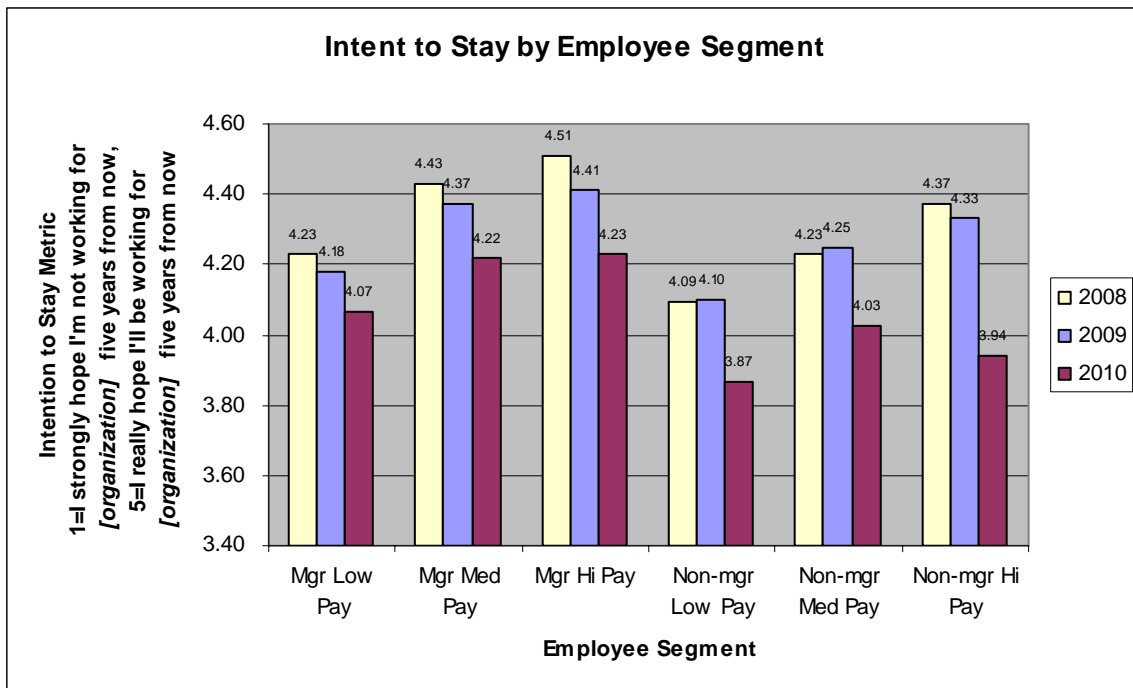
Perhaps the most alarming part of the increasing defection intention is the disproportionate impact it has on the high value segments. As illustrated in the chart below, the most valuable segment, that is, the highly compensated non-managers show the largest percentage change in their retention intention in 2010 compared to 2009. In general, non-managers have consistently shown a higher inclination to leave than do managers. However, the non-managers are becoming more inclined to leave at a faster rate than are managers.

Change in Retention Intention by Employee Segment

Employee Segment	2009	2010
Mgr Low Pay	-1.2%	-2.7%
Mgr Med Pay	-1.3%	-3.6%
Mgr Hi Pay	-2.1%	-4.2%
Non-mgr Low Pay	0.2%	-5.7%
Non-mgr Med Pay	0.4%	-5.2%
Non-mgr Hi Pay	-0.9%	-9.0%

What does this mean for Idaho employers?

Steps should be taken to anticipate a higher than normal defection rate once the economy turns around and unemployment rates drop back to reasonable levels which will lead to a correction in the latent defection bubble.

By implementing this Program specifically, participating organizations can monitor the levels of engagement and disengagement, along with the stated intentions to leave of the six workforce segments tracked by the Program. This is invaluable in determining if your organization is more or less susceptible than other Program participants to defection bubbles in the higher value employee segments. The higher value segments cost the most when unfilled and cost the most to fill. The goal is to implement remedial actions before it's too late.

Can the bubble be avoided entirely? It's doubtful. Can the effects be substantially reduced? ABSOLUTELY!

Organizations that act now can reap incredible payback from a smart plan to boost workforce engagement.

> *Idaho employers should begin preparing themselves for higher than usual turnover once the unemployment rate begins to fall, especially in the higher value employee segments.*

> ### It's not too late!
>
> *I believe that it is more important than ever to implement a plan to manage and improve workforce engagement in order to prevent the bubble from bursting within your organization.*

Chapter 7 – Tying it all together

In order to tie all the elements described previously into one easy to follow, powerful, and integrated process that will help any organization drive their workforce engagement, and consequently their organizational performance to dramatic new heights I suggest the 1-6-7-1 plan.

This 1-6-7-1 plan consists of the following elements.
1. One annual survey
2. Six workforce segments
3. Seven workforce metrics
4. One easy to follow process

> *The 1-6-7-1 plan will boost workforce engagement.*

One Annual Survey

POPULUS recommends every person reading this report register their organization for participation in the Best Places to Work in Idaho program because of the many benefits it delivers and the smart investment that it is.

1. *An internally administered workforce survey is perceived as less confidential than one administered by an external agent.*

"HR people aren't doctors or priests; there's no confidentiality statute and you shouldn't assume confidentiality when talking to them, even if you're at lunch. Even if you're talking to them when you run into them at the grocery store over the weekend. HR is there to serve the company; their loyalty and responsibilities are to the employer. If they hear information that they judge needs to be shared or used to address a situation, their job obligates them to do that."[11]

There are many workforce survey options available on the market. However, to be effective, a survey option must be viewed as legitimate, independent, and confidential. Many organizations prefer to conduct workforce surveys internally in order to help control costs. Unfortunately, internally administered surveys are perceived by employees as less confidential than externally administered surveys. This perception absolutely compromises the quality of the data. The extent of the impact on the quality of the data is difficult, if not impossible to predict. However, the impact is not zero, and it is negative in that it makes the data less reliable in reflecting the opinions of the workforce. Is it "good enough"? Maybe it is and maybe it isn't.

2. *Internally administered surveys lack benchmarking and context.*

Another weakness of internally administered surveys is the lack of benchmarking. I can't stress enough the importance of benchmarking when it comes to workforce surveys. Benchmarking adds context to the results enabling an organization to accurately identify the most important issues to address and not waste resources on issues that, in context, aren't as important as they may appear. Without benchmarking, it is human nature to focus on the absolute large and small numbers. However, when these numbers are compared to those from other organizations across the state, it always turns out that some of the absolute high numbers are relatively low and some of the absolute low numbers are relatively high.

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[11] http://askamanager.blogspot.com/2010/08/when-i-talk-to-hr-dont-they-have-to.html

Six Workforce Segments

When it comes to job fit and organization fit, one size definitely doesn't fit all. In a typical Program participant, non-managers outnumber managers 3:1. The ratio of low paid employees to high paid (and presumably more valuable) employees is 4:1. The point is that if an organization bases their decisions to address the results from their survey on just an overall average, the opinions of the managers and the higher paid (aka more valuable) employees are being washed out.

To this end, the Program uses an easy to understand, actionable, and differentiating segmentation by combining the responses to the manager / non-manager survey question and the annual income question to come up with the following six segments by which to report the survey results. An analysis of the Program's data for the last three years shows that these six segments generally indicate different workplace aspects that are causing them the most concern.

1. Manager Low Pay (under $35k per year)
2. Manager Medium Pay (from $35k to under $75 k per year)
3. Manager High Pay ($75k per year and above)
4. Non-manager Low Pay (under $35k per year)
5. Non-manager Medium Pay (from $35k to under $75 k per year)
6. Non-manager High Pay ($75k per year and above)

Seven Workforce Metrics

Seven metrics provided by the Best Places to Work in Idaho survey can help manage workforce engagement.

Diagram 4 below illustrates seven components of workforce engagement measured by the Best Places to Work in Idaho program. They are:
- Perceived Leader Engagement (Leader Engagement Metric – LEM)
- Workforce Engagement (Workforce Engagement Metric – WEM)
- Job Fit (Job Fit Metric – JFM)
- Organization Fit (Organization Fit Metric -- OFM)
- Training and Development (Workforce Development Metric -- WDM)
- Workforce Retention (Retention Intention Metric – RIM)
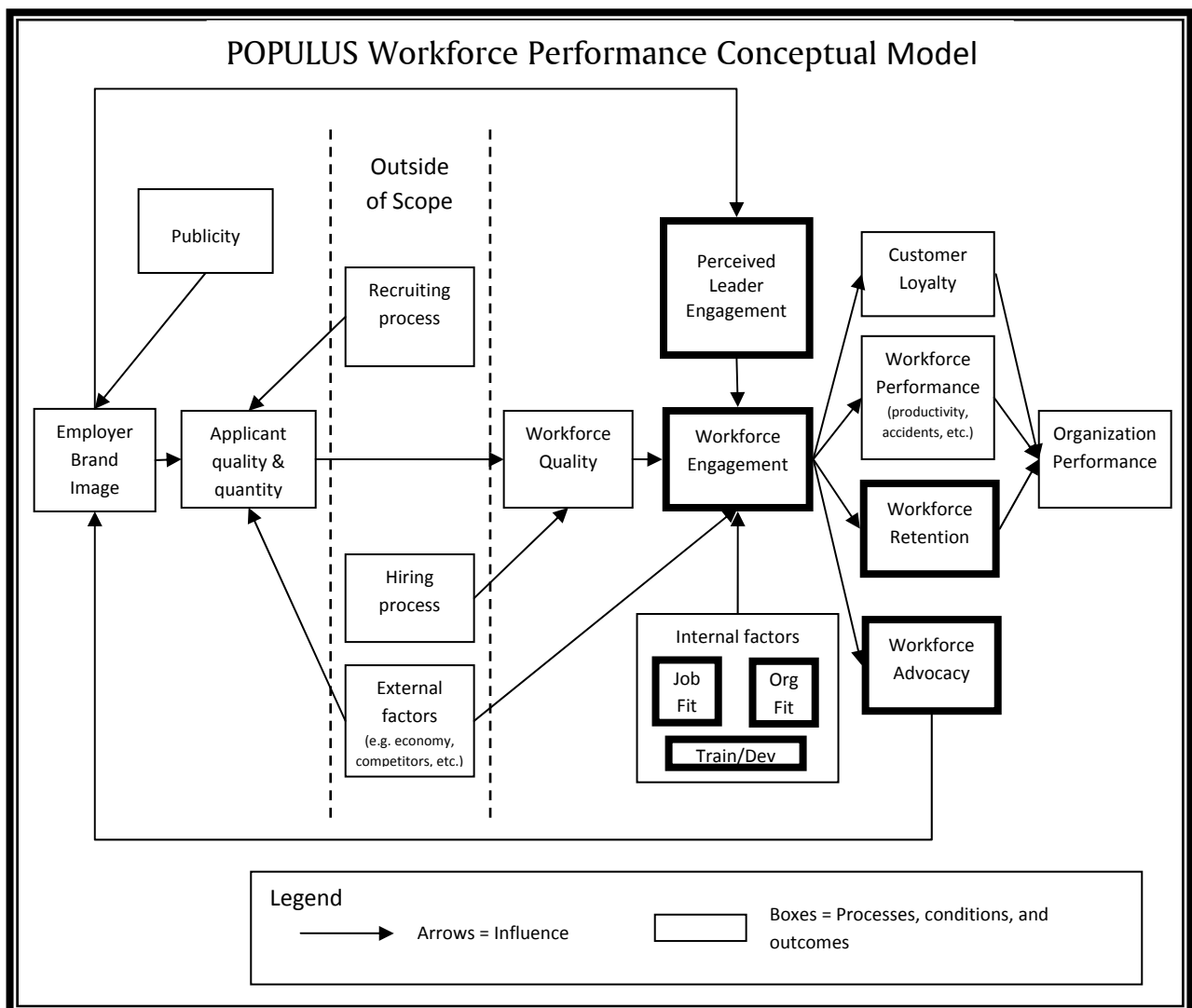- Workforce Advocacy (Workforce Advocacy Metric – WAM)

Diagram 4

All of the metrics mentioned above will be reported to the Program participants beginning in 2011. These metrics will be reported for each workforce segment, providing the population of each segment has 5 or more completed surveys. Segments with fewer than 5 completed surveys will be joined with the nearest segment in order to ensure respondent confidentiality.

Each metric will also be confidentially benchmarked to the results from the other participating organizations in order to deliver the maximum context for each metric and help participating organizations quickly identify those areas requiring immediate attention and to help prioritize their communications and actions.

The Job Fit, Organization Fit, and Training and Development metrics are supplemented by information generated from a gap analysis. The survey asks each respondent to indicate the importance of 26 workplace attributes. Later in the survey, each respondent is asked to indicate to what degree each of the 26 attributes are satisfied. From this information the Program computes a gap score for each of the attributes as the weighted difference between the respondent's stated importance of each attribute and the stated level of satisfaction.

By rank ordering the gap scores for each segment, it becomes easy to identify the most pressing issues in order to prioritize and craft the suggested communications and actions for each segment.

> *The Program doesn't just identify areas of weakness, through the use of a gap analysis the Program pinpoints specific actions to consider.*

One Easy to Follow Process

The recommended process is listed in detail in Chapter 5 above. Below is a very high level overview of the process.

1. SURVEY – Participate in the Best Places to Work in Idaho program every year
2. LEARN – Review the 7 metrics for each of the 6 segments in order to prioritize your actions & develop your action plan
    Assign measurable actions to individuals
    Create your communication
3. COMMUNICATE – Broadcast your communication
4. ACT – Visibly implement your action plan
5. FOLLOW THROUGH – Review action plan progress & communicate findings periodically throughout the year (monthly / bi-monthly / quarterly)
6. REPEAT

What do the metrics look like for each segment?

The charts contained in this section are based on the entire Program data set. You should be asking yourself where your organization's numbers fall. Is your organization more or less susceptible to the risks suggested by this metric?

Leadership Engagement Metric – This metric indicates the level of engagement of an organization's leadership from the perspective of the workforce. Its values are:

1.   Level 1 – Disengaged
2.   Level 2 – Somewhat Engaged
3.   Level 3 – Engaged
4.   Level 4 – Fully Engaged

How does your organization compare to the Program averages? Are you better, worse, or average? What interventions will deliver the biggest bang for the buck?
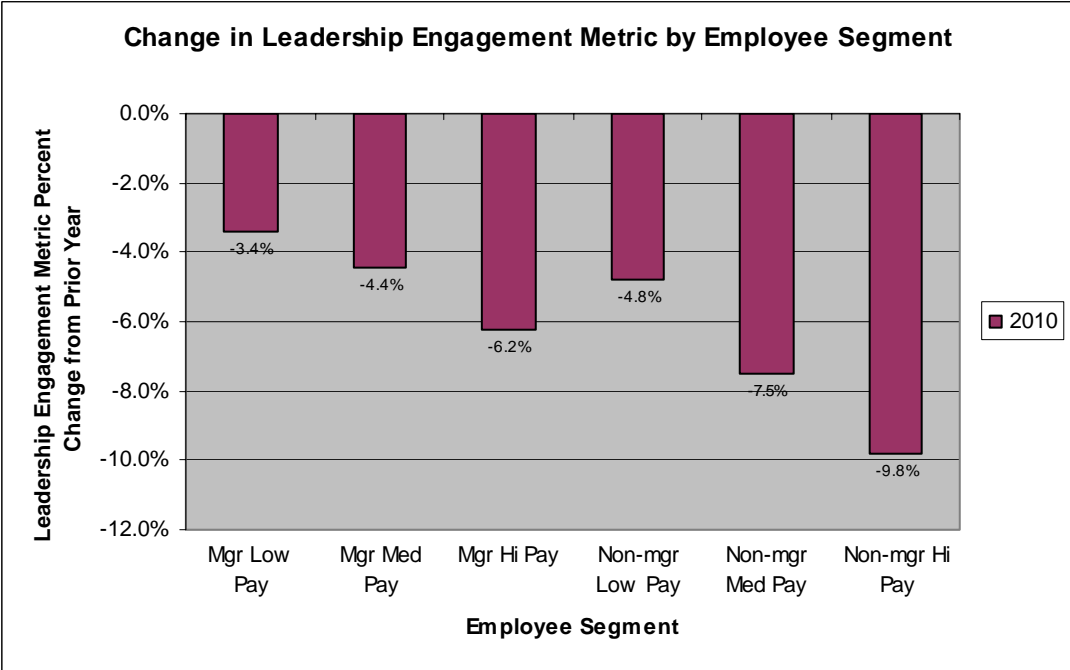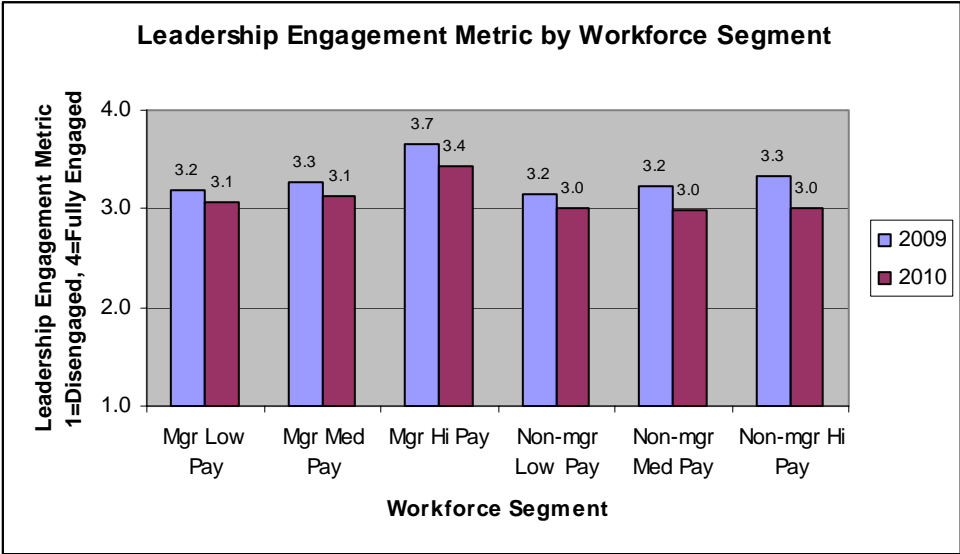
Workforce Engagement Metric – This metric indicates the level of engagement of the workforce. Its values are:

1. Level 1 – Disengaged
2. Level 2 – Somewhat Engaged
3. Level 3 – Engaged
4. Level 4 – Fully Engaged
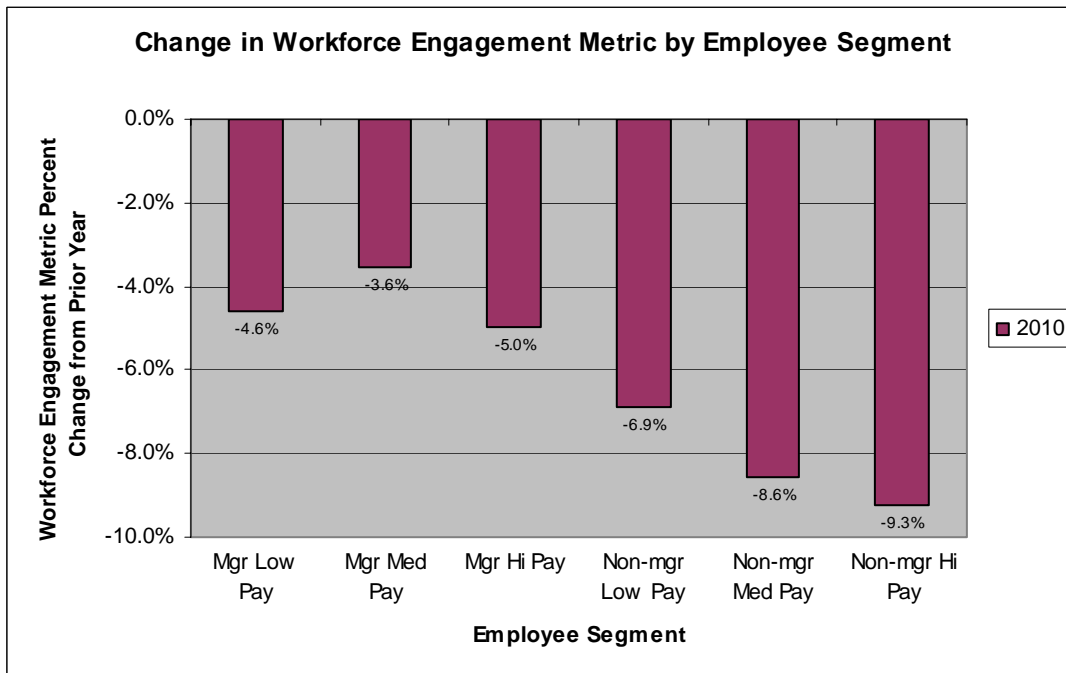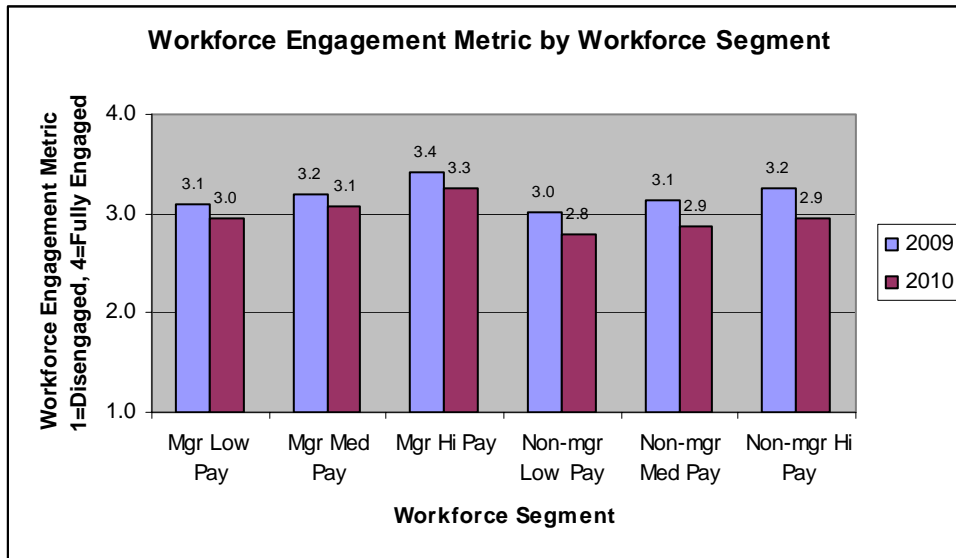
Workforce engagement has dropped significantly. Non-manager engagement is dropping faster than manager engagement.

Notice how similar the two charts above are when compared to Leadership Engagement on the prior page.

If you want to change your workforce engagement, change your leadership engagement.

Job Fit Metric – This metric indicates the perceived degree of job fit for the workforce by the workforce. Its values are:
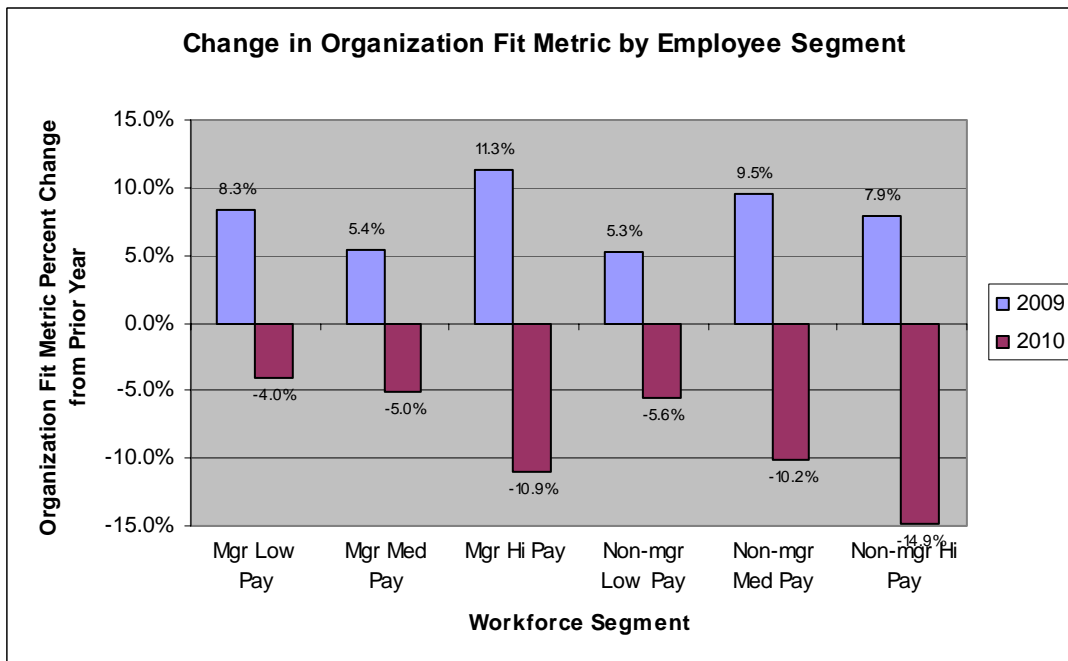
1. Level 1 – Poor
2. Level 2 – Substandard
3. Level 3 – Good
4. Level 4 – Excellent

Job Fit Metric by Workforce Segment

Change in Job Fit Metric by Employee Segment
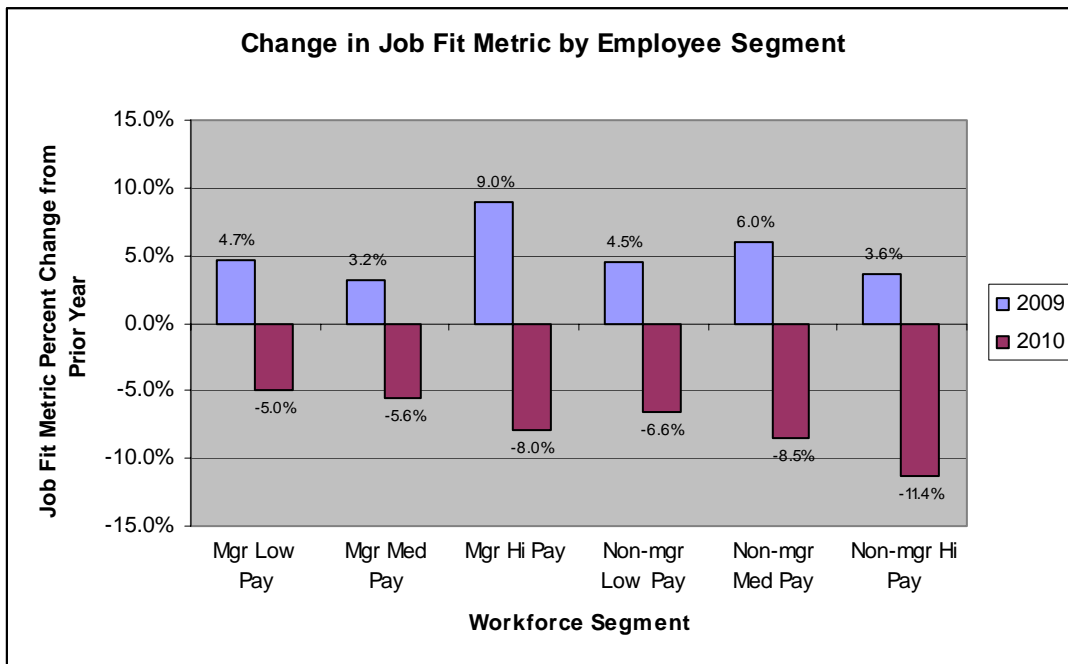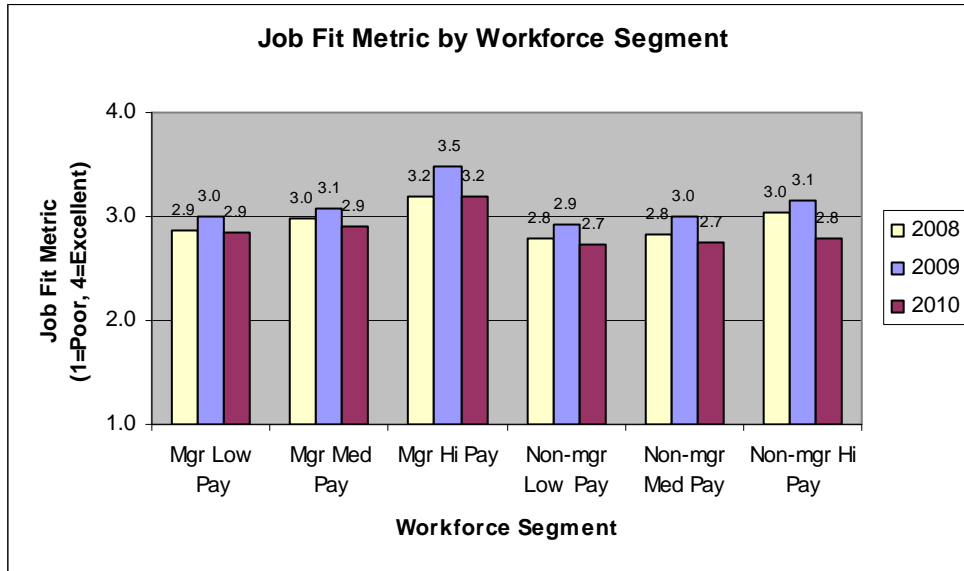
It appears that the job fit for the most valuable segment, the non-manager high pay, has dropped well below 2008 levels and is at approximately the same level as the other non-manager segments.

Organization Fit Metric – This metric indicates the perceived degree of organization fit for the workforce by the workforce. Its values are:
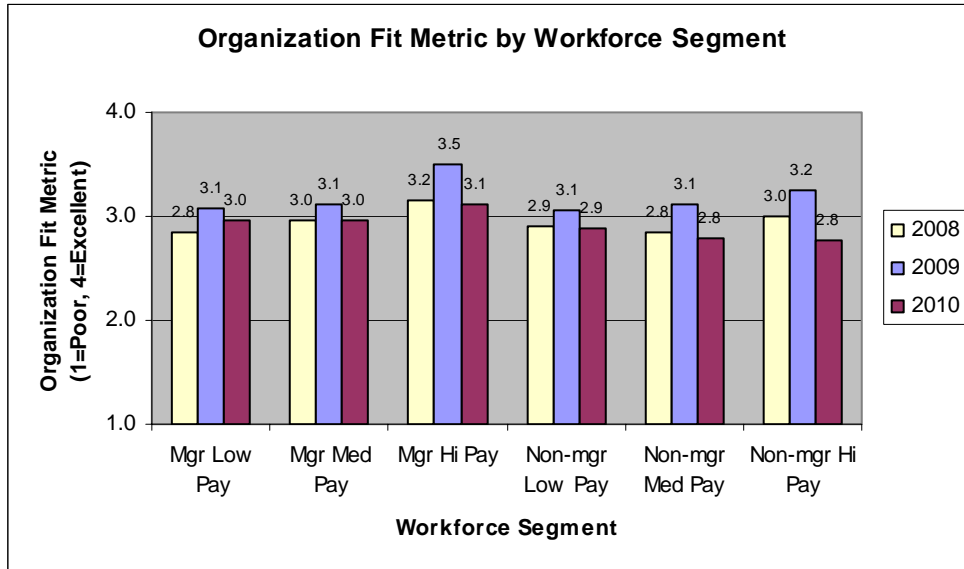
1. Level 1 – Poor
2. Level 2 – Substandard
3. Level 3 – Good
4. Level 4 – Excellent

Organization Fit Metric by Workforce Segment

Change in Organization Fit Metric by Employee Segment

Workforce Development Metric – This metric indicates the perceived degree of adequacy of the development of the workforce from the perspective of the workforce. Its values are:

1. Level 1 – Poor
2. Level 2 – Substandard
3. Level 3 – Good
4. Level 4 – Excellent
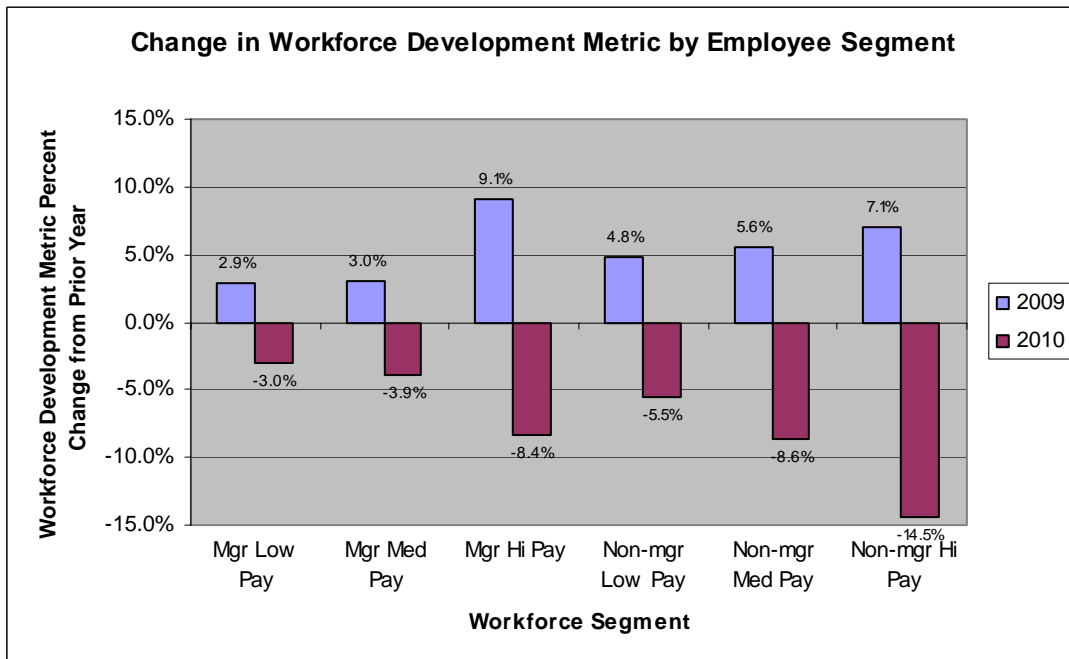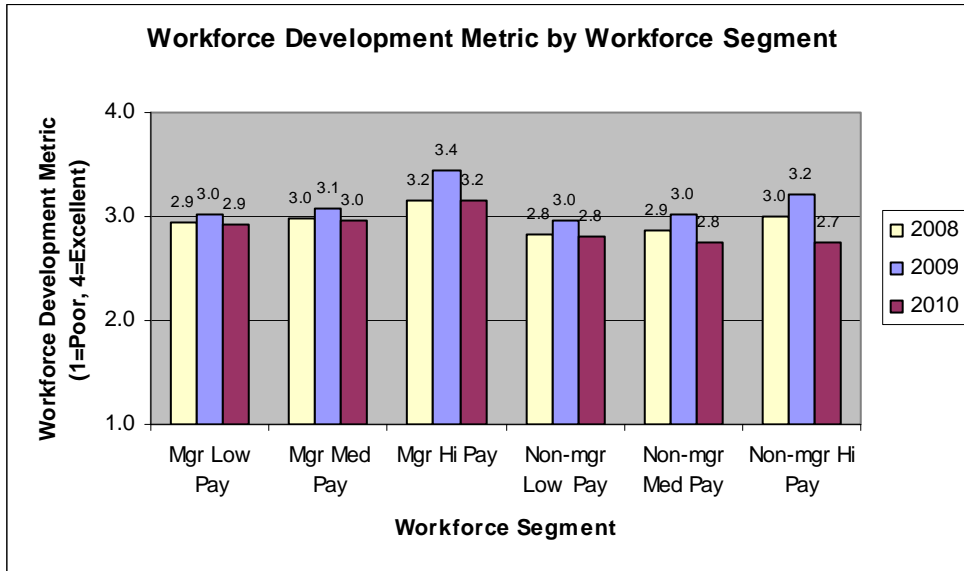
Retention Intention Metric – This metric indicates the self-reported desire to either be or not be employed by the organization in the future. Its values are:

1. I strongly hope I'm not working for *[organization]* five years from now
2. I would rather not be working for *[organization]* five years from now
3. I don't have very strong feelings one way or another about my future with *[organization]*
4. I would like to be working for *[organization]* five years from now
5. I really hope I'll be working for *[organization]* five years from now

Workforce Retention Metric by Workforce Segment

Change in Workforce Retention Metric by Employee Segment
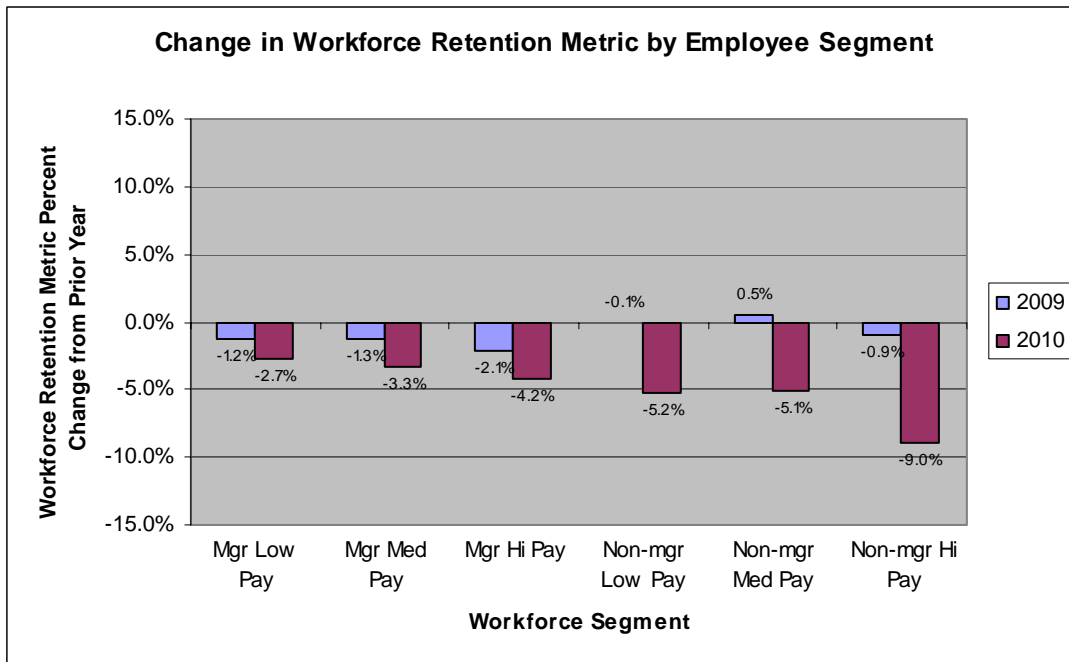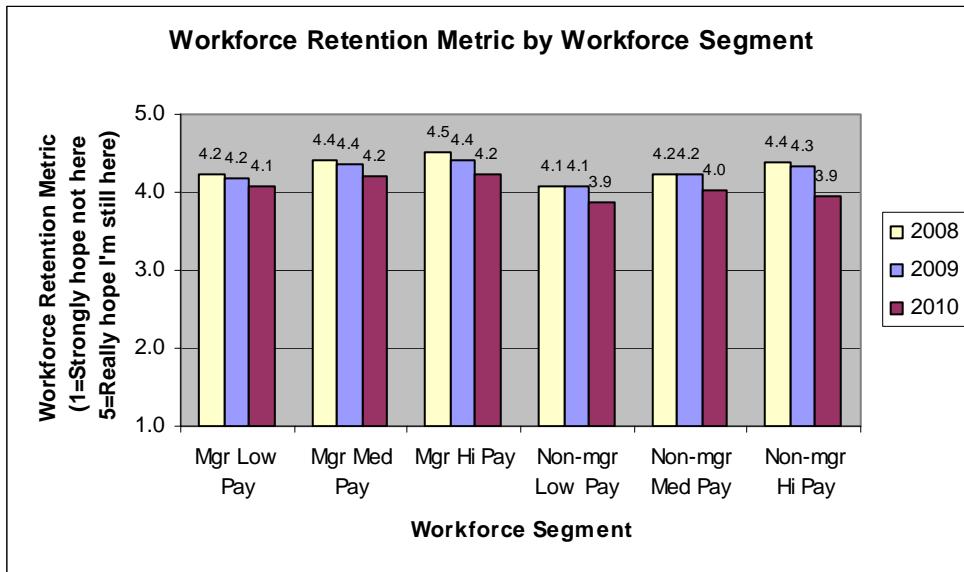
Workforce Advocacy Metric – This metric indicates the extent to which the workforce is a positive advocate for the organization. Its values are:

I would recommend this company to a friend as a great place to work.

1. Strongly disagree
2. Somewhat agree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Somewhat agree
5. Strongly agree

- 42 -
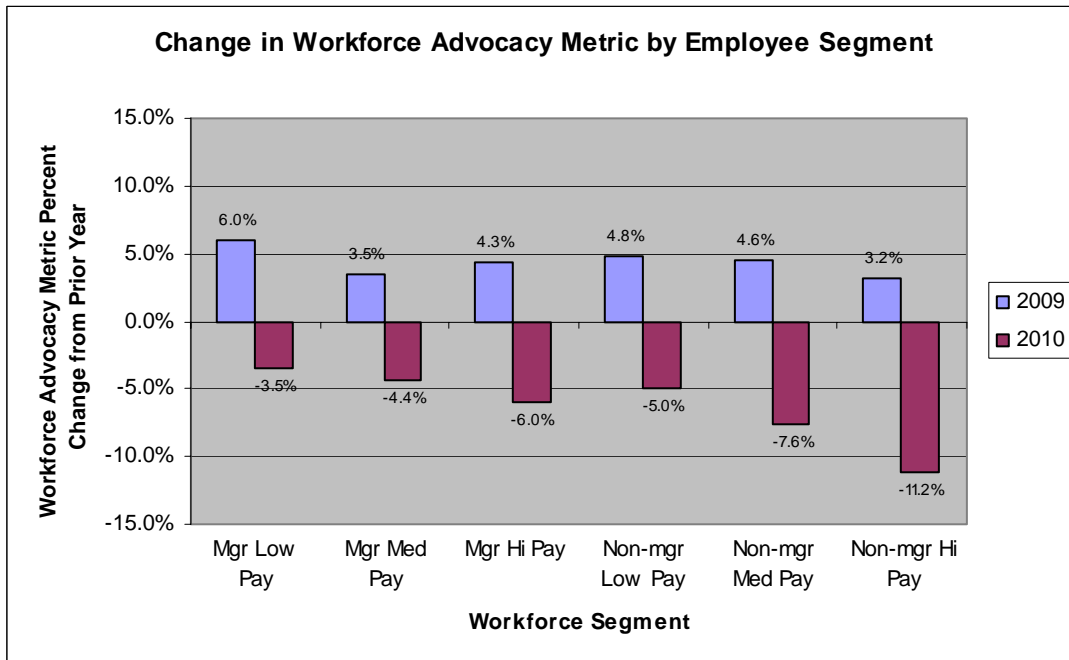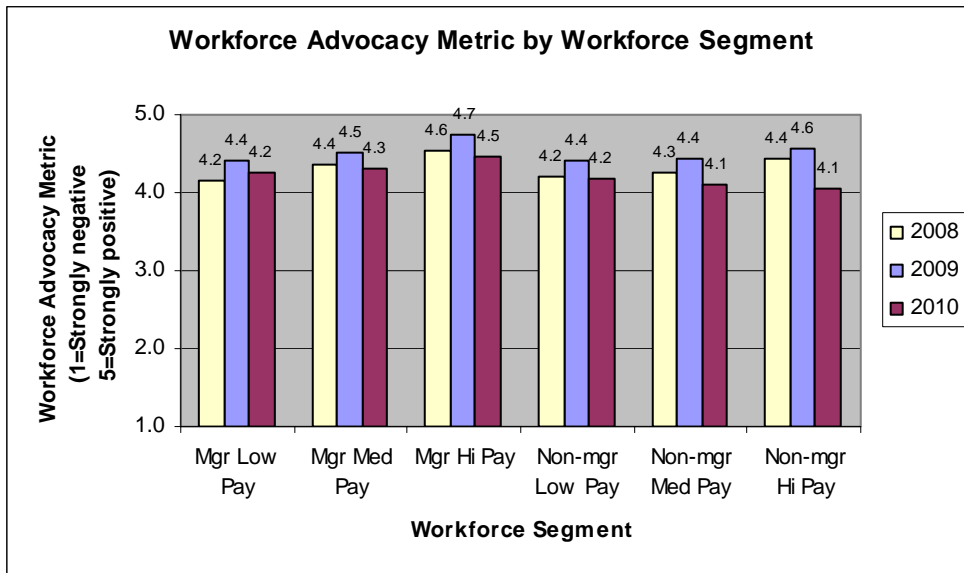
Chapter 8 – Conclusion

Addressing, managing, and optimizing workforce engagement is good business. It's not just a nice thing to do.

One Action Any Organization Can Take to Improve Performance

Earlier in this report POPULUS promised to reveal the one action that any organization can take that will have dramatic effects on its performance.

Of the five drivers of performance that have been examined (Publicity, Training and Development, Leader Engagement, Job Fit, and Organization Fit) Leader Engagement has the greatest influence on Workforce Engagement.

The biggest component of Leader Engagement, that is, the one workplace condition that has the most influence on a workforce's perception of the engagement of their leaders, is the implementation and sustained utilization of a legitimate workforce feedback mechanism.
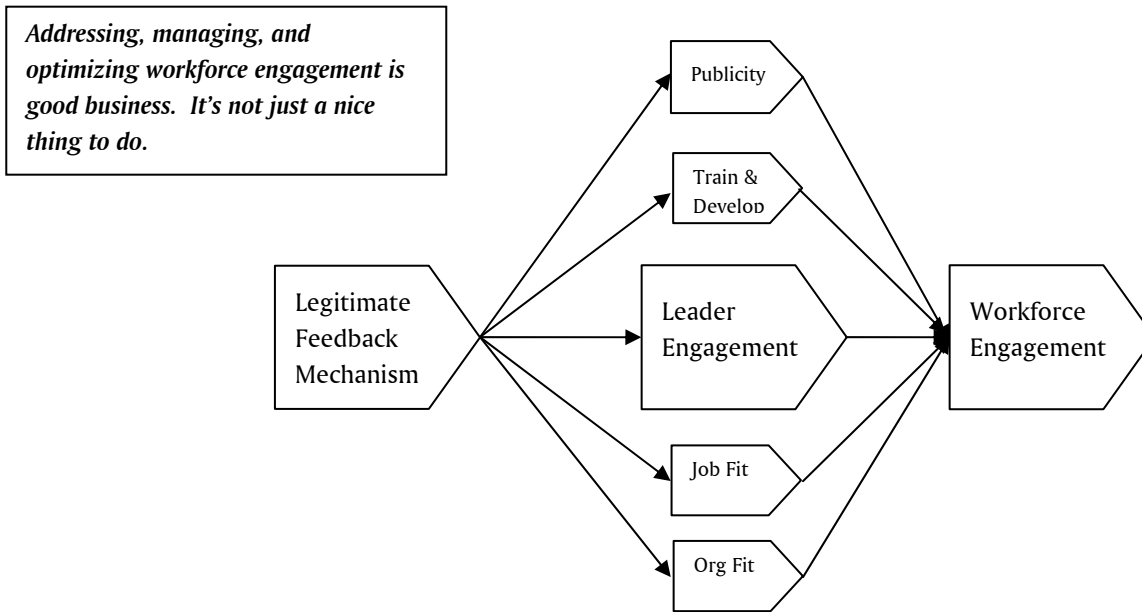
> *Addressing, managing, and optimizing workforce engagement is good business. It's not just a nice thing to do.*

> **The one action any organization can take to immediately and sustainably boost workforce engagement is to implement an ongoing, legitimate feedback mechanism, similar to the Best Places to Work in Idaho program.**

The beauty of such an implementation is that the Program itself delivers the data and facts necessary to sustain the mechanism, creating a meaningful, ongoing dialogue with the workforce related to their welfare.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Program statistics to date

The Best Places to Work in Idaho program has operated for three years, 2008 – 2010. In those three years, 106 different organizations have participated. Many of the participants have participated multiple times such that there have been 129 organizations that have participated.

The number of companies that have participated, by year, are shown below.

Best Places to Work in Idaho Program
Number of Participants by Year

Year	Number of Participants
2008	51
2009	36
2010	42
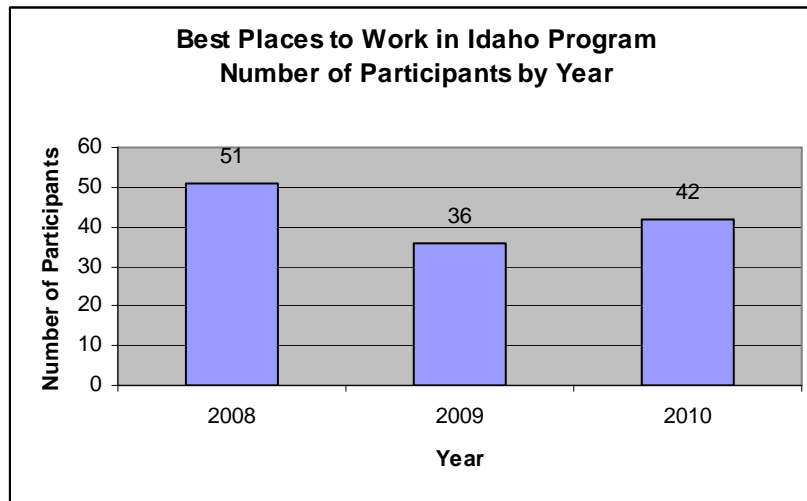
The number of survey respondents for each year are shown below. In 2009, a very high number of organizations registered for the Program then decided not to participate before the survey launched. Based on the comments from many of the organizations that were not able to participate in 2009, economic circumstances were such that participation was viewed as not in the organization's best interests.

Best Places to Work in Idaho
Number of Employees Surveyed by Year

Year	Number of Employees Surveyed
2008	5043
2009	2788
2010	4670

The industries of the participating organizations are shown below.

Best Places to Work in Idaho Program
Number of Participants by Industry 2008 - 2010

Number of Participatns

Industry	Participants
Banks and Credit Unions	23
Hospital / Health Care	11
Professional Services	19
Engineering	15
Light Manufacturing	10
Real Estate	6
Title Cos.	6
Non-profits	5
Legal	5
Higher Education	3
Financial Svcs and Insurance	7
Other	19

Industries

Although a significant number of respondents work outside of southern Idaho, improvement can be made in geographical representation.

Best Places to Work in Idaho
Employees Surveyed By Region

Percent of Total

Region	Percent
North Idaho (N=1561)	13.6%
South Idaho (N=8478)	73.7%
East Idaho (N=1458)	12.7%

Region
(not all respondents indicated a county)
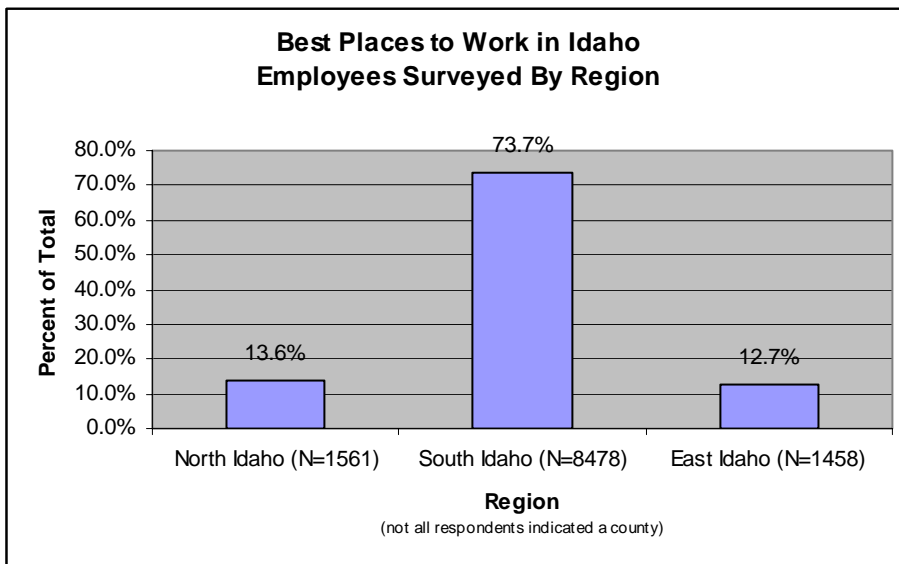
As the number and distribution of participating organizations continues to grow, the benchmarking opportunities from the Program's data base increases allowing for more relative peer benchmarking within industries and regions.

Appendix B: Program enhancements for added value

POPULUS and the *Idaho Business Review* are excited to announce three profound modifications to the Best Places to Work in Idaho program that will improve its ability to help Idaho organizations improve their performance by optimizing their workforce engagement at a very affordable price which ensures an incredible return on investment.

1. *Improved publicity and positive branding opportunities.*

In 2008 when the Program was initiated, POPULUS and the *Idaho Business Review* decided to keep the number of winners to less than 50% of the participants in order to ensure the prestigious nature of the award. It was always planned to be a legitimate award demonstrating excellence in workforce satisfaction. We continue to feel strongly that this is important and will not change this policy.

However, after operating the Program for three years, participating organizations have consistently fallen into three distinct categories. The first group, we'll call Group A, are the winners. These organizations receive their just rewards by being recognized as a Best Place to Work in Idaho as described earlier in this report.

The second group, Group B, is composed of those organizations who participate and whose scores aren't high enough to win an award and they are not willing or able to implement a plan for improvement.

Finally, there's a third group, Group C, that sits in the middle. Group C's scores aren't high enough to win an award but they do have the willingness and ability to implement a plan for addressing weaknesses in order to make the workplace as good as it can be.

The Best Places to Work in Idaho program will begin offering a new branding opportunity for the Group C organizations.

This new branding opportunity is called the **Choice Employer Network** ™. Any Idaho organization with 20 or more employees may become a member of this Idaho employer network. By joining this network and adhering to its terms of membership, member organizations are eligible to brand themselves as a **Certified Choice Employer** ™ and display the Network's certification icon in their promotional materials.

The intention of the Choice Employer Network ™ is to recognize those companies that are making an earnest and legitimate effort to make their workplaces as good as they can be, regardless of their absolute scores compared to other participating organizations.

For more information on the Choice Employer Network ™ and the Certified Choice Employer ™, please visit our website at www.bestplacestoworkinidaho.com and click on the Choice Employer Network link.

2.   *Improved and simplified reporting.*

As a result of the analysis conducted as part of the research for this report, POPULUS has identified the POPULUS Workforce Performance Conceptual Model (PWPCM), six meaningful and actionable workforce segments, seven critical metrics for actionable management, and the process that ties it all together.

From this point forward, each participants' results will be reported to them using the 1-6-7-1 model explained in Chapter 7 above. This reporting model will incorporate the PWPCM, the six segments, and the seven metrics in order to help participating organizations prioritize their communications and actions allowing them to optimize their workforce engagement and maximize their organizational performance in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

3.   *Improved and simplified billing and payment options.*

2011 will mark a new level of integration between POPULUS and the *Idaho Business Review*. In order to simplify billing and payment options, the *Idaho Business Review* will handle all billing and payment collection activities. This modification will provide participants more flexible payment arrangements than in years past.

4.   *Increased regional coverage.*

POPULUS and the *Idaho Business Review* have committed a great deal of time and resources to increasing the Program's participation in the Eastern and Northern Idaho regions. This work will pay off in much larger numbers of participating organizations and employees from those regions. These efforts will also increase the publicity opportunities for winners and Choice Employer Network participants.

5.   *Program expansion.*

In a fashion similar to the geographical expansion, POPULUS and the *Idaho Business Review* are intent on continuing the growth of the Program year over year.

> *For 2011:*
> *Better Publicity*
> *Better Reporting*
> *Better Accounting*
> *Better Coverage*

Appendix C: More Information

Best Places to Work in Idaho program

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