

# SHAPE THE Future

June 21, 2021

In 2018, the last **Public Service Employee Survey** was completed. We asked you how work was going, and we listened to your responses. We took this as an opportunity to build on strengths and address challenges that you identified in your answers. Key areas were identified and departments initiated a variety of activities in response to these. I will share some examples of these below.

**Improved communication efforts:** by sending frequent electronic communications to staff through newsletters and the *Public Service Matters*; sharing minutes from senior management team meetings; making staffing announcements and many more.

**Improved opportunities for employee recognition:** A Leaders in Action corporate project working group developed a new Employee Recognition Program was launched in spring of 2019 that includes: A new Employee Recognition Policy; Three new awards; A new working group to administer the awards during Public Service Week. In addition, various departments hosted employee appreciation days and other informal initiatives to recognize the hard work of their employees (e.g. PSC hosted Candy-Grams in February to thank co-workers and provide a sweet treat to peers), and PSC designated a place on the website where this information is also posted with everyday ideas for recognizing employees.

**Promoting innovation, motivation and pride:** In 2018, GPEI hosted its first Policy Hackathon to leverage development around innovative thinking across the public service. The Province of Prince Edward Island, Veterans Affairs Canada, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the Startup Zone partnered to bring Policy Hack: Design. Build. Change. The event has been offered annually and provides the opportunity to create a unique, creative and meaningful professional development event for all that also sparks innovative ideas for the public good.

**Career growth and learning and development plans by:** capturing learning needs identified by employees from the last survey for current and future work; encouraging employees to take opportunities to provide input, make work and work places engaging, safe and healthy; regular communication and promotion resulting in a 73% increase (since the last survey) in registrations for PSC funded learning opportunities.

### **Effective support for succession plans and leadership development including:**

modernization of performance development plans, annual work plans, and human resource coaching, and training for supervisors so that they can better support their employees and so that you have confidence in their leadership. There were several ways that employees could pursue leadership professional development sponsored by the PSC, e.g. Leaders in Action, Mid-Level Leaders Insights Transformational Leadership Program, or independent leadership courses offered through Pathways to Learning. In addition, the Public Service Leadership Competencies were created and implemented across the organization. These are aligned with the vision for a public service that is collaborative, innovative, streamlined, high performing, adaptable and diverse.

### **Improved focus on Mental Wellness and Psychologically Healthy Workplaces:**

Work was conducted on three policy items: Harassment in the Workplace; Respectful Workplaces; and Psychologically Healthy Workplaces. One 2018 Policy Hackathon case involved promoting training to employees according to the National Standards for Psychologically Healthy Workplaces. CMHA developed a course on *Being a Mindful Employee*, which was rolled out across the organization in April 2019. In addition, departments partnered/ cost shared to bring in external experts and speakers on Return to Work action planning; Positive Workplaces – Psychological Healthy Initiatives; and CMHA Certified Psychological Health and Safety Officer Training.

### **Improved education around diversity and inclusion by:**

reiterating our commitment that GPEI is committed to being an organization representative of the diverse population we serve, fostering an inclusive work environment that recognizes, respects, and accommodates the “diversity of individuals”, making use of the full range of talents and perspectives available to government. GPEI launched a new Diversity and Inclusion Policy in an effort to modernize and reflect this. Subsequent ongoing work includes development of a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and action plan; along with offering new courses on cultural awareness and diversity training.

These are a few examples of some of the initiatives that were of focus after the 2018 Employee Survey. Your answers made a difference, and many positive changes have happened over the years as a result of suggestions made in past surveys.

I look forward to continuing to hear from you again soon. In fact, I am excited to tell you that we will be launching several shorter “employee pulse” surveys over the next few months on various topics, starting next week with a focus on Mental Health and Wellness. This is consistent with other jurisdictions during the pandemic – we want to know how you are doing, but we respect you are busy. Please watch for future communications and thank you for participating and contributing to your workplace.

Sincerely,

*Tanya Rowell*

CEO, Public Service Commission