



## Develop Employees

### Objective:

Develop and retain quality employees

### How is our performance?

Delivering high quality services and products to the residents of King County requires maintaining a high quality workforce. In order to maintain a high quality workforce, King County needs to ensure it is cultivating the right workplace environment to keep the quality employees who are currently employed at King County. It is estimated that replacing an employee costs an organization one-half to five times that employee's annual salary (see technical notes for detail). These costs can be attributed to resources dedicated to the application and hiring process, training a new employee, time and productivity lost, and impact to other employees. Although there can be many reasons why an employee leaves King County voluntarily, examining the rate of voluntary employee turnover can help King County identify areas of further research to target that can be addressed by management.

Current data reveals the ratios of involuntary to voluntary turnover. We do not know the current percentages of turnover compared to total employee count (which will reveal true turnover rates). Once these rates are developed, we'll be able to compare our rates to national and peer rates which will help us better assess our performance in this area.

Gallup research identified top five predictors of employee turnover: the immediate manager, poor fit to the job, coworkers not committed to quality, pay and benefits, and connection to the organization or to senior management. Based on the 2012 King County Employee Survey, 61 percent of employees reported they were satisfied with the level of supervision they receive. However, when asked about specific roles and responsibilities of their supervisor (that are connected to employee retention) satisfaction slips lower closer to 50 percent. Forty to fifty percent of the King County workforce is experiencing dissatisfaction with some or many aspects of their relationship with their supervisor.

Training, professional development, and career growth are aspects of a "good fit" for an employee. Over the last decade, King County had decreased the services of their training and employee development program eventually leading to its nearly complete elimination. The impact of the loss of these services is seen in several areas of the Employee Survey: the employee's interest and commitment to training and development is quite high, but their perceptions of opportunities for that training, developing a career path, and the overall value of training within the organization is significantly lower. There are clear opportunities to capitalize on employee desire for training in order to increase retention rates. Perceptions of work/life balance are included to understand how employees feel King County is supporting their personal development as well as their professional development. Just over half of King County employees feel there are policies that support work/life balance, which leaves almost half of employees who do not feel supported in this area.

### Moving forward

In 2012, King County re-invested resources to build an Organizational Development Team and a Continuous Improvement Team. The focus of both of these groups would be to provide resources, training, coaching, and strategic direction around different aspects of the work environment that impacts employees. Because the relationship with the immediate manager is such a strong predictor of employee retention (verified in the King County Employee Survey as well as leading national research), a high priority for the Organizational Development Team is developing technical and soft skills training for first-line supervisors and managers.

In the Spring of 2012, the Human Resources Division trained members of the Human Resources community across executive departments and independently elected agencies in the Lominger competencies assessment framework -- a system of leadership competencies that help identify desired qualifications for different levels of leadership within the organization. This training will aid work groups across the county in leadership and professional assessment and development.

Complementing these efforts will be improvements to data tracking, allowing King County to better monitor total turnover rates and follow best practices in benchmarking our performance in this area.

## **Related Links**

**[Employee Turnover Information](#)**

**[King County Training](#)**

**[King County Employee Resources for Work/Life Balance](#)**

**[2012 King County Employee Survey](#)**

## **Technical Notes**

From the Gallup Business Journal - Turning Around Employee Turnover

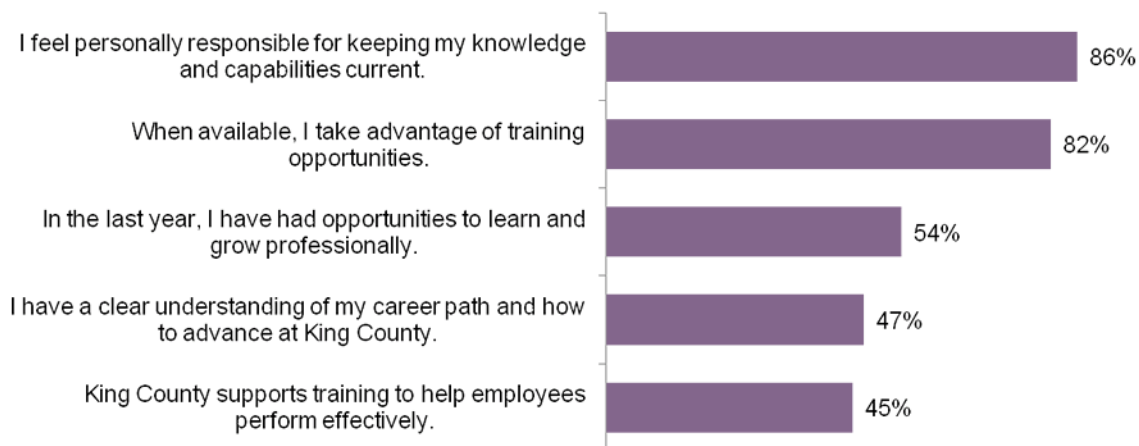
The 2012 King County Employee Survey asked 59 questions. Most responses came through the online version. Of King County's 13,030 employees, 6,783 (52%) participated in the 2012 survey. Most questions asked employees to respond using a five-point scale with '1' being low and '5' being high. Responses of "Not sure" or "Not relevant" are excluded from the results. The survey was conducted both online and in hard-copy.

## Charts and Maps

King County Employee Turnover All Permanent Position Terminations			
	2010	2011	2012
Total Terminations	355	504	101
Voluntary	66% (233)	61% (308)	54% (55)
Involuntary	34% (122)	39% (196)	46% (46)
New	21% (73)	14% (71)	22% (22)
Old	79% (282)	86% (433)	78% (79)
Proportion of New Employee Turnover for Voluntary Reasons	67%	62%	68%

Data for 2010 and 2012 include only part of each year. Terminations include all permanent positions, including part time. Data provided by King County Human Resources Division

### Employee Perceptions of Career Advancement Opportunities at King County (percent of employees agreeing or strongly agreeing)



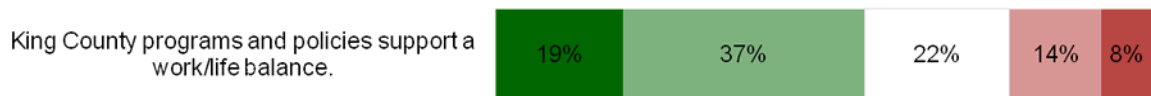
Data source: 2012 King County Employee Survey

## Employee Perceptions of Supervisors (percent of employees agreeing or strongly agreeing)



Data Source: 2012 King County Employee Survey

## Employee Perception of King County Work/Life Balance



■ I strongly agree   
 ■ I agree   
 □ Neither agree nor disagree   
 ■ I disagree   
 ■ I strongly disagree

Data Source: 2012 King County Employee Survey