

# OYA *In the Loop*

**September 26, 2008**

## **Survey is in your hands**

An agency is only as good as its employees.

It's not the organization chart, it's not the budget, and it's not the statutes that make an agency good. Rather, it is the talent and attitude of employees that always set an organization apart.

As many of you have heard me say, public service is a privilege. In choosing to be in public service, we have an obligation to reach and operate at peak performance.

To continuously improve, we need you -- and your candid thoughts, ideas, suggestions, and feedback. Every employee owns a piece of that responsibility.

If we could read minds we would know what you think and wouldn't have to ask for a few minutes of your time. Also, I know if employees speak their minds, we'd have higher retention rates, lower absenteeism, improved productivity, enhanced customer service and better morale.

Mind reading, alas, remains in the realm of science fiction. So, the next best thing is to invite you to share your thinking.

In early October, we will ask every OYA employee who joined us before September 5<sup>th</sup> to share their thoughts on our 2008 Culture/Climate Survey. We have partnered with the National Business Research Institute (NBRI) to design, administer and interpret the survey results.

Using an outside firm ensures anonymity and confidentiality for all participants. We gave them a formatted employee database, and they will use that to email you instructions on how to complete the survey. You will submit your completed survey directly to NBRI for processing. No one will be identified by name, and no one at OYA will have the ability to view individual responses.

In order to measure organizational dynamics of related groups of employees, such as field, facility or central, your responses may be sorted demographically. To ensure the fidelity of the assessment, it will be important that you complete your survey and only your survey, and do not share your survey with anyone else.

Again, this is an assessment of the organization and not of any individual. Your survey answers will remain completely confidential.

We anticipate receiving results from NBRI before Thanksgiving. We will absolutely share them with you.

Continuous improvement is a well established best practice and this assessment is the first step. Strengths and weaknesses will be evaluated, and action plans will be developed to address the opportunities that are identified.

When OYA began its Systems Improvement Project more than a year ago, we didn't begin to imagine there would be 90 recommendations on the table. Twelve from the agency and four from labor are the top priorities. This survey we're asking you to take is an exciting, tangible outcome of the SIP process.

I speak for all of OYA leadership when I say that I am eager to see what the organizational assessment shows and I anticipate it will yield great information. It will help us channel our energies in the near and long terms, it will help your new director set priorities, and I hope that it engages your hearts and minds because it is your talent and abilities that sets this organization apart.

Thank you, OYA World, for your candor, your thoughtful responses, your ideas and your feedback.