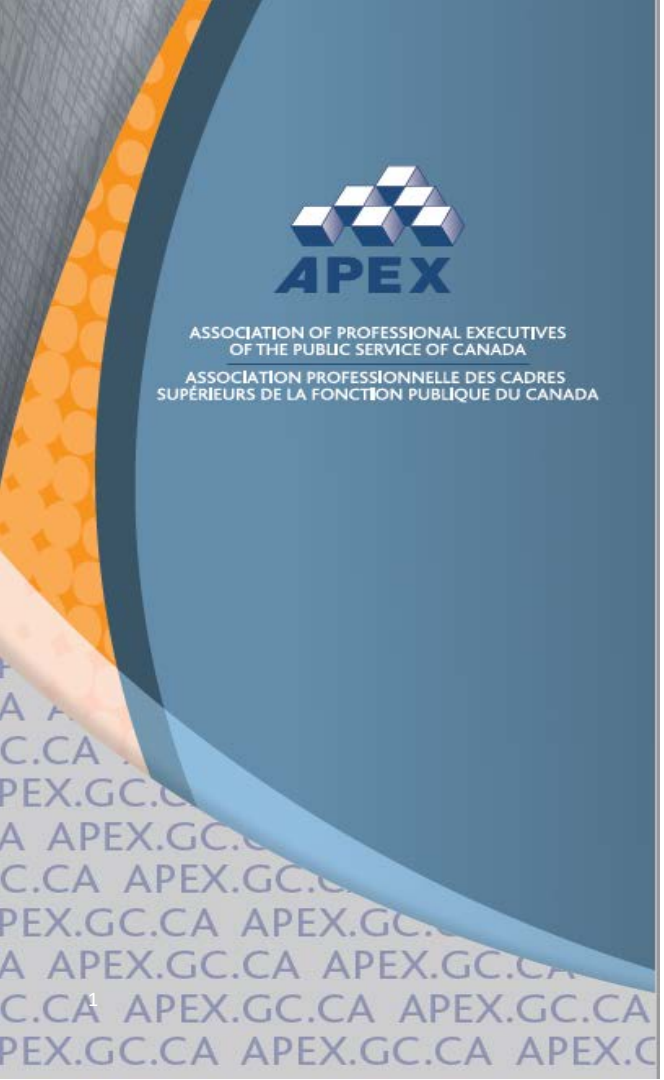

APEX 2017 Executive Work and Health Survey

Overview

EX Community Results

January 2018

Overview

3 Why this Survey?
4 What we did?
5 What we found
10 What needs to be done?
11 Spotlights
15 Now what?
16 Discussion
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Why this survey?

- Since 1997, APEX has conducted research focused on the health and wellbeing of executives within the federal public service.
- The survey provides an assessment of individual and organizational health measures within the executive work environment. This year we also explored new issues such as readiness for the future with a focus on preparing for the digital economy and digital services and addressing psychological and mental health issues in the workplace.

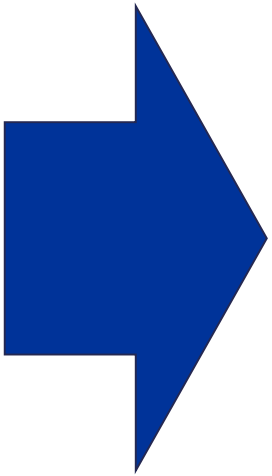
Objectives:

- Measure the current situation for executives with respect to their work, organizational environment and personal health; and,
- Identify trends compared to previous iterations of the survey in these key areas.

- The survey has been conducted every 5 years since 1997. For this cycle, APEX commissioned Ipsos to conduct the fifth iteration of the study.
- As part of an effort to streamline the survey, several changes were made to the 2012 survey instrument. Key measures were maintained to ensure consistency and the ability to measure trends over time.

What we did?

- The survey was in the field between May 2 and June 19, 2017.
- 3,075 executives provided a response to the survey which constitutes a 48% response rate (an increase over the 35% response rate achieved in 2012). Of those who provided a response, 2,674 executives fully completed the survey.
- The credibility interval for the sample of executives who fully completed the survey is +/-2.2 percentage points.



Representative of the EX population* by:

- EX level
- Age
- Region
- Gender
- Official language

* See Annex for details

What we found – Your Work

EX Community Results

COMMITMENT

'I am proud of what I do'

86% ALWAYS, VERY OFTEN OR OFTEN

Level of high commitment

57%

2012: **52%**

JOB SATISFACTION

72% VERY SATISFIED/ SATISFIED 'Job in general'

2012: 3.5 MEAN (vs 3.7 in 2017)

✓ *Most satisfied with job security (77%), the things you do (73%), job in general (72%). More satisfied with job security than in 2012.*

✗ *Least satisfied with Executive Talent Management (22%), workload (32%) or hours (36%). Satisfaction with pay has declined since 2012.*

WORKING HOURS

50.9 hrs/week

2012: **50.7 hrs/week**

35% working 55+ hours per week

2012: **25%**

PRESENTEEISM

Days went to work feeling unwell

7.5 /year

2012: **7.5/year**

INTENT TO LEAVE

Thought about leaving their position at least monthly in the past 6 months

70%

2012: **52%**

EFFORT / REWARD

I receive the respect I deserve from my superior or a respective relevant person.

79% AGREE

Considering my efforts and achievements my salary / income is adequate

56% AGREE

What we found – Your Workplace

EX Community Results

TAKING RISKS

'Members of this team are able to bring up tough issues' **64%** AGREE

'It is safe to take a risk on this management team' **53%** AGREE

INCIVILITY

% ever in the past 6 months

25% Supervisor put you down in some way

15% Supervisor made jokes at your expense

STRESSFULNESS

Those who report that most days are extremely or quite stressful

51%

2012: **51%**

HARASSMENT

Those who have experienced verbal harassment in the past year

19%

2012: **22%**

IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY

INCREASED WORKLOAD **75%**

2012: **84%**

DECREASED WORK/LIFE BALANCE **49%**

2012: **46%**

INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY **57%**

2012: **59%**

ATTITUDES TOWARDS TECH

'I am confident the federal government has policies in place to keep pace with changes in technology as they emerge.'

11% AGREE

'Federal government employees have the tools and technology available to them to do their jobs properly.'

26% AGREE

'Federal government employees are well-trained on how to utilize social media.'

6% AGREE

ATTITUDES TOWARDS HEALTH

'My employer promotes work-life balance.'

41% AGREE

Manager Norm*: 73%

'Feel used up at the end of the workday'

48% AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK

'I would describe my workplace as being psychologically healthy.'

47% AGREE

Manager Norm*: 75%

*Great-West Life Centre for Mental Health in the Workplace- Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace Study (n=2,047 among managers/supervisors across Canada)

What we found – Your Health

EX Community Results

GENERAL HEALTH

SCALE	APEX OVERALL 2017	APEX OVERALL 2012
Excellent / Very good	**57%**	57%
Good	**31%**	30%
Fair / Poor	**12%**	13%

MENTAL HEALTH

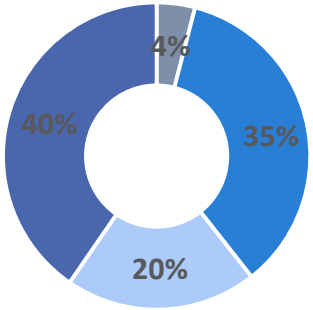
SCALE	APEX OVERALL 2017	APEX OVERALL 2012
Excellent / Very good	**54%**	N/A
Good	**31%**	N/A
Fair / Poor	**15%**	N/A

SOUGHT PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLING

	APEX OVERALL 2017	APEX OVERALL 2012
Work-related	**15%**	21%

EX01	EX02	EX03	EX04	EX05
19%	14%	13%	5%	2%

BMI SCALE



APEX Overall

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

3.2 times/week

APEX overall 2012: **2.9 times/week**

SMOKING / DRINKING

6% **Smoke daily or occasionally**

APEX overall 2012: **7%**

13% **High risk drinker**

APEX overall 2012: **9%**

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Musculoskeletal — **45%**
APEX overall 2012: **28%**

Mental Health — **21%**
APEX overall 2012: **11%**

Gastro-intestinal — **18%**
APEX overall 2012: **8%**

Cardiovascular — **14%**
APEX overall 2012: **17%**

What we found – differences by group

- EX-1's and 2's, while reporting fewer work hours, are much more likely to have issues managing the demands of work. The lower level the executive the less satisfied they are with their job, the less respected they feel, the more likely to get burnt out from work and the less likely they are to feel they can take risks on their team. They are also less likely to rate their mental health as positive and more likely to report being diagnosed mental health issues or to seek professional counselling.

- There are also consistent differences between male and female executives. Female executives report higher levels of stress, absenteeism, incidence of harassment and generally have more trouble separating themselves from the demands of work, however they are also more satisfied with their pay and career prospects, rate their personal health higher, are more likely to fall into an acceptable BMI, sleep better and drink less than male executives.

What we found – preparedness for the future

Diversity

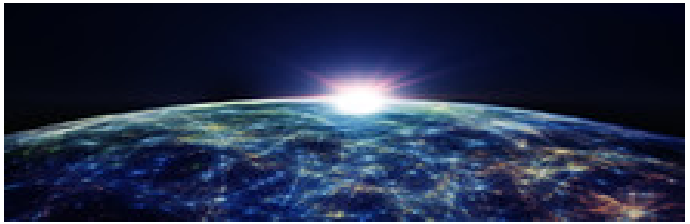
- Two-thirds (64%) feel they are personally well versed in how to manage an increasingly diverse workforce.

Use of Technology

- Only one-quarter of executives feel they have the tools and technology available to them to do their jobs properly.
- One in five (22%) feel federal government employees are knowledgeable and ready to adopt new digital platforms as they emerge.

Most pressing issue facing the federal government and facing executives are consistent

- Staffing, managing and retaining young and talented individuals and dealing with the retirement of experienced employees.
- Adapting policies in place to keep pace with technological change and workplace demands around increasing workloads, in particular work/life integration.
- Lack of adequate resources particularly technological.



What needs to be done?

Based on the survey results, there are four areas for further reflection and work – these are “spotlight areas”:

- Managing Talent and Leadership Development
- Healthy Workplaces
- Healthy Executives
- Culture

Spotlight 1: Managing Talent and Leadership Development

- Executives are seeking to manage their careers and are not satisfied that the current approach to talent management meets their career objectives.
- Newly appointed executives do not always have the support they need to succeed.
- Given workload demands, most find it difficult to invest in their own professional development as well as in the development of the next generation of leaders.
- Issues regarding compensation are raised consistently -- EX-01s are being paid less than staff they manage, this is having an impact on succession.
- Further consideration to:
  - How can we balance the needs of the community, the centre, and senior management in an integrative approach to managing talent?
  - What does a robust continuum of leadership development for Executives look like?

Spotlight 2: Healthy Workplaces

- Workload demands are high. 85% agree they have "… constant time pressure due to a heavy workload". Just under half feel they get a break from the demands of work in their free time.
- Over half of Executives describe their level of work-related stress as high or very high, compared to one third of public service employees.
- Just under one half of executives would describe their workplace as being psychologically healthy compared to three quarters of managers asked the same question in a private sector survey.
- While incivility and harassment are less prevalent for Executives than for employees overall, it still hovers between 15-20% and the number one source is from supervisors and superiors.
- Further consideration to:
  - What are the workplace conditions that position organizations for success?
  - How do we move our organizations there?

Spotlight 3: Healthy Executives

- The prevalence of chronic health conditions has increased significantly since 2012 even though self rated health status remains consistent with previous years.
- Lower level EXs are far more likely to show lower resilience and to seek more counselling.
- Executives haven't benefited from increased flexibility offered by technology, for example, in relation to where and when work gets done.
- Further consideration to:
  - What is the prescription for taking care of ourselves in the midst of a high demands and expectations?

Spotlight 4: Culture

- Overall, Executives report they are encouraged to take initiative in their work.
- In an increasingly collaborative and horizontal world, the delivery of our individual accountabilities is a challenge: our success often depends on others.
- However, trust remains low and secrecy is high, having a negative impact on communications and the flow of critical information.
- Expectations are that Executives are ‘’on’’ all the time. Technological change has increased productivity but decreased work-life balance and increased workload.
- Time for strategic thinking has been significantly reduced as back office reform has resulted in a higher administrative workload and work demands have increased.
- Low level of confidence in preparedness for the future – use of technology, attracting and retaining talent, etc.
- Further consideration to:
  - How can we improve the work environment to facilitate innovation, creativity and agility?

Now what?

Results are the beginning of a conversation to lead to concrete actions. APEX will:

- Dive in to the results and explore next steps.
- Lead discussion and working groups of community members, organizations, experts on “spotlight” areas.
- Continue its advocacy role focusing in on creating conditions for success for Executives, and as a result, the public service overall.

APEX has also requested Deputy Heads to:

- Ensure the survey results are discussed in their organizations
- Ensure that each organization has an EX Community Champion
- Take a personal interest and commit personally to take 3 actions
- Identify 3 organizational priorities for action

Discussion

- What do you think?

- What can you do?
  - How can you help to progress the 4 spotlight areas?

    (Some hints:
    - Join an APEX working group or discussion, or contribute your ideas in some way
    - Make a personal commitment to action in your Performance Agreement

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ANNEXES

What is APEX?

The Association of Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to:

- Provide opportunities for Executives to develop a strong executive community of practice;
- Promote the physical and mental health of executives;
- Support executive leadership excellence

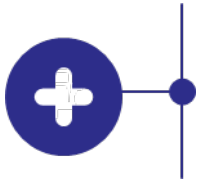
APEX helps Executives succeed:

- Offers frequent learning and networking events; produces information tools (Fact Sheets, Newsletter, Guide for Executives, etc.)
- Offers an advisory service to all Executives – independent confidential advice
- Holds special events such as annual Recognition of Entry to Executive Cadre and APEX Annual Symposium

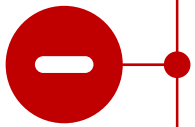
APEX is the voice of Executives:

- Gathers views from the community – regular engagement, Work and Health Survey
- Conducts research – Civility and Engagement papers
- Advocates on community behalf (e.g. Deputy Ministers, Central Agencies and the Clerk, Mental Health Joint Task Force, etc.).

Summary of Key Trends vs. 2012



- Satisfaction with job security has increased (4.0 Mean score vs. 3.7 in 2012).
- The proportion who feel committed to their department has increased (57% vs. 52% in 2012).
- Less likely to have experienced harassment in the workplace (19% vs. 22% in 2012).
- More likely to be active more frequently than in the past (3.2x / week vs. 2.9 in 2012).



- Satisfaction with pay has decreased (3.2 Mean score vs. 3.8 in 2012).
- More executives are working longer hours (35% working on average 55+ hours vs. 25% in 2012).
- More executives have thought about leaving their current position at least once a month in the past 6 months (70% vs. 52% in 2012).
- More likely to report being diagnosed with a musculoskeletal condition (45% vs. 28% in 2012), mental health issue (21% vs. 11%) or gastro-intestinal issue than in 2012 (18% vs. 8%).
- Increase in problem drinking (13% vs. 9% in 2012).
- Fewer sought counselling for personal or work-related reasons (15% vs. 21% in 2012), despite increase in mental health diagnosis.

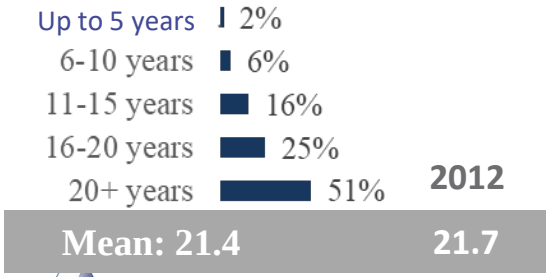
Profile of Respondents

LEVEL	Public Service	Survey respondents
EX-1	51%	**49%**
EX-2	26%	**27%**
EX-3	17%	**18%**
EX-4	4%	**4%**
EX-5	2%	**2%**

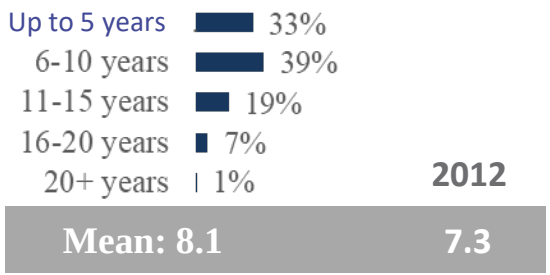
AGE	Public Service	Survey respondents
Under 40	8%	**6%**
40-44	16%	**14%**
45-49	23%	**25%**
50-54	28%	**29%**
55-59	19%	**19%**
60+	7%	**7%**

REGION	Public Service	Survey respondents
NCR	72%	**74%**
Atlantic	5%	**5%**
Quebec	4%	**5%**
Ontario	5%	**5%**
Prairies	4%	**4%**
Pacific	4%	**5%**
Outside Canada	2%	**3%**

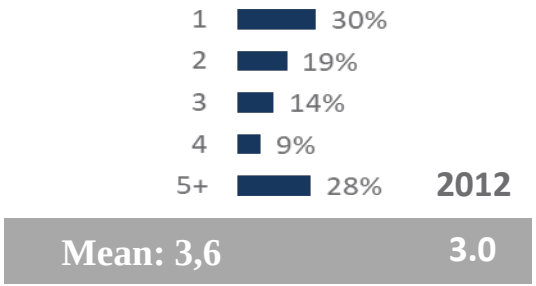
Years with the Federal Public Service



Years as an Executive

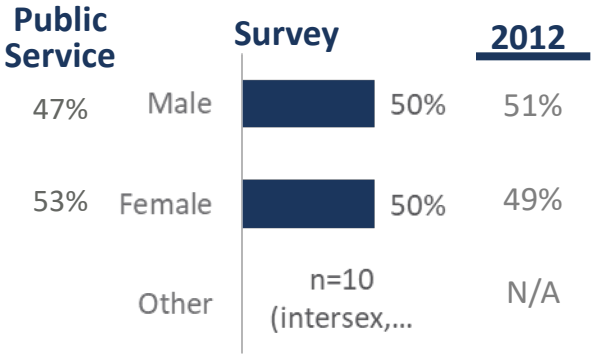


Length of Time in Current Position

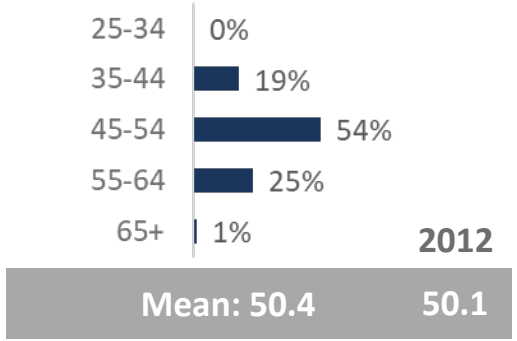


Profile of Respondents (cont'd)

GENDER

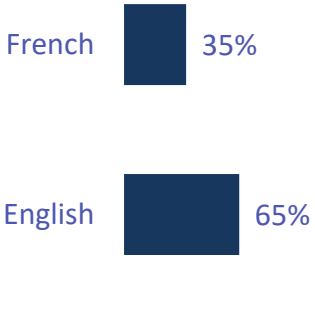


AGE

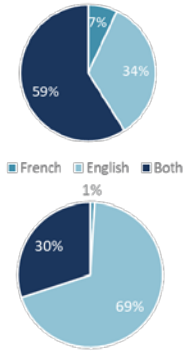


LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGE OF WORK

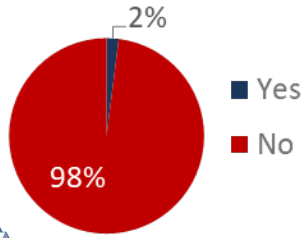
LANGUAGE



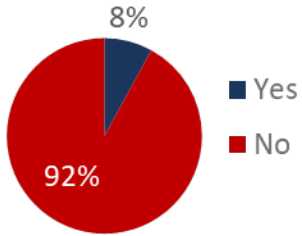
LANGUAGE OF WORK



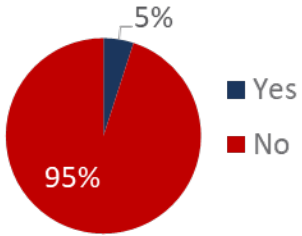
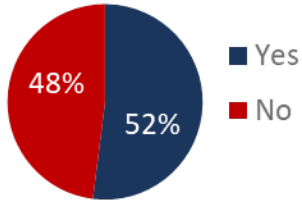
ABORIGINAL



VISIBLE MINORITY



PERSON WITH DISABILITY



APEX MEMBER