Executive Summary

The results of the UNB Employee Engagement Study indicate that employees enjoy relatively high levels of job satisfaction, are proud to work for the University and have high levels of commitment to the institution. At the same time, as is the case with most large and complex organizations, there are clear opportunities to improve the work experience and further engage with employees at the University of New Brunswick.

While a clear majority of employees consider UNB to be among the best employers, there is some sense of lack of progress in improving the University as a place to work. Certainly the recent two-year wage freeze for many employees may have contributed to that sentiment, as well as financial pressures affecting most organizations in the current economic environment.

It is important to differentiate between faculty and staff employees in several important areas. While there are certain similarities between these two employee groups in terms of what drives job satisfaction, important differences also are evident, with faculty more likely to be driven by their impact on students, and staff more likely to be driven by their jobs. There is also some evidence to suggest that the issue of work/life balance is a more important issue for faculty than staff.

Current performance management practices should be considered an opportunity area, especially in terms of providing timely and regular feedback on performance. A review of current orientation processes should also be considered. In addition, employees appear to be critical with regard to their personal development opportunities, which should be tied more directly to annual performance reviews and career planning.

The key performance gaps in the factors considered most important to evaluating UNB as a place to work should be further investigated for opportunities to better satisfy employee expectations. These include being respected in the workplace, being trusted to make decisions, making a positive impact on the student experience, and being given opportunities for career advancement.

The workplace culture at the University as it relates to issues such as recognizing and valuing diversity, being socially responsible, and dealing with harassment and discrimination should be considered a continuous and never-ending challenge for the University, where improvements are constantly required.

Overall awareness of and support for the University’s strategic direction is another opportunity area for UNB to consider for improvement, particularly among faculty members.

While there are many opportunities to improve the work environment at the University of New Brunswick, it is also clear that the University has a generally satisfied workforce that places great pride in their work and the institution overall, based on their willingness to recommend UNB as a place to work.