

Government of Yukon



2018  
**Employee Engagement  
Survey**

**Supplementary Information**

This material is prepared for the Public Service Commission by the Yukon Bureau of Statistics.

**Contact:**

Liz Sutton, Public Service Commission, Government of Yukon  
867-667-8160, [liz.sutton@gov.yk.ca](mailto:liz.sutton@gov.yk.ca)

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# About the employee engagement survey

The success of any organization is built on people. Ensuring that employees are engaged in their work is critical for performance. Research involving both public and private sector data has shown that engaged employees are key to the achievement of positive organizational outcomes. Research has also shown that engaged employees are more productive, are less likely to resign, and provide better services.

At its core, employee engagement encompasses two essential aspects: how satisfied employees are with their employment, and how committed they are to their organization. However, the process of employee engagement is much more complex, as both satisfaction and commitment are influenced by many factors that employees experience in their work environment. A robust employee engagement survey captures this information so that all employees can better understand the aspects within their own work environment that impact engagement.

The Government of Yukon evaluates employees' experiences to help inform strategies for making the workplace the best possible. The 2018 evaluation was done by collecting feedback from employees<sup>1</sup> using the Employee Engagement Survey (EES) from May 3 to 24, 2018. The majority of employees (68%) provided feedback about their experiences. The response rate means that the information contained in this report is of high quality, enabling the right conclusions to be drawn.

This report delves into the survey findings in detail. The findings illustrate what aspects of the work environment are currently shaping engagement within the organization. The results can be used to guide and focus conversations on ways to maximize engagement and to support ongoing leadership and work-related efforts and initiatives.

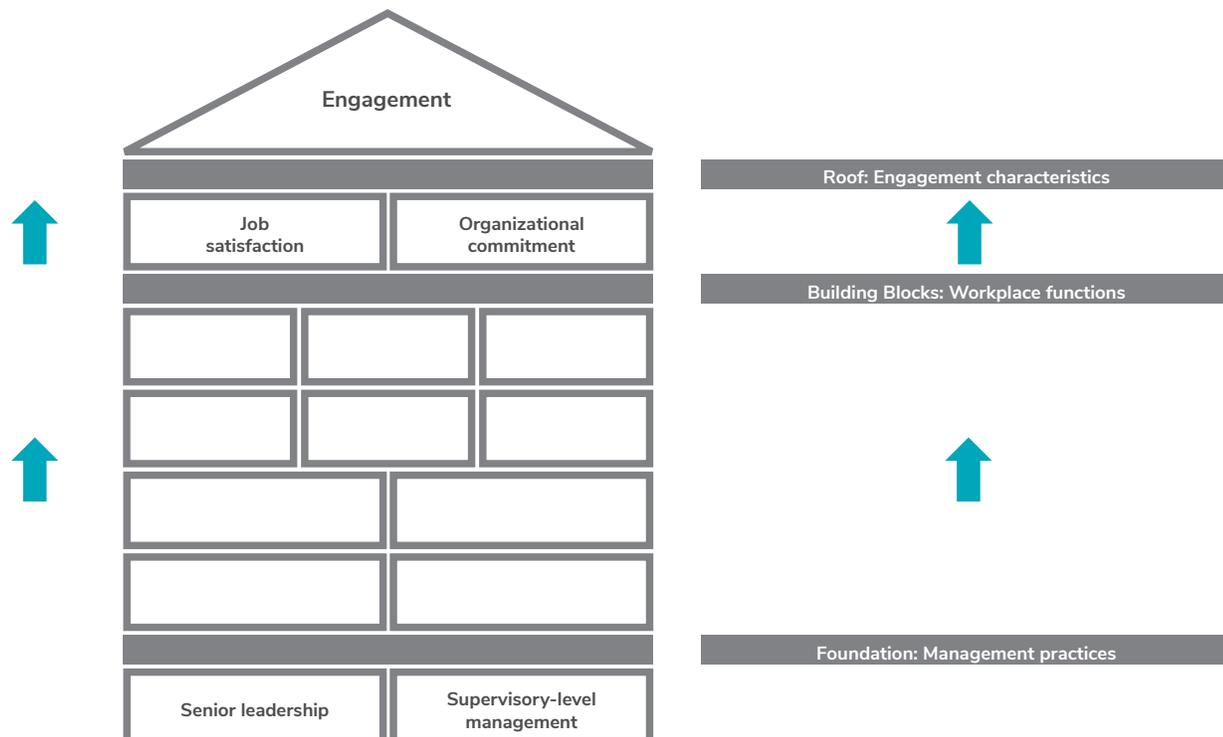
<sup>1</sup> In the 2018 cycle of the Employee Engagement Survey, the Department of Education decided to survey school-based employees' in the fall. These employees' responses are not included in this report.



# About the house model

The Employee Engagement Model identifies what matters when it comes to maintaining and enhancing the engagement of employees. The model has been statistically validated by testing the survey response patterns using an advanced statistical technique called structural equation modelling (SEM). The analyses found that responses to 35 survey questions covering a range of employee experiences are able to explain why engagement is low for some and high for others. Questions were combined with 33 additional non-model questions that targeted particular areas of interest to the organization. See *Model fit details* for further information about the SEM methodology.

In the model, various workplace functions directly and indirectly impact employee engagement. These functions are called drivers of engagement. Each driver is formed from a group of inter-related survey questions that explore specific workplace topics about employees' experiences. These drivers also can affect each other to increase or decrease overall engagement. Showing the survey results through the lens of the house model tells us what are important to employees in shaping their overall engagement in their work environment. In the context of the Government of Yukon, the house model is best viewed as a way of visually organizing a wealth of data and information in a clear and easily comprehensible manner. The structure and context of the house model help guide attention on ways to maximize engagement and to support ongoing management and human resource efforts and initiatives.





In the diagram, the three parts are as follows.

- **The foundation:** The model rests on the foundation of two drivers that measure management practices which are connected either directly or indirectly to every other driver in the model.
- **The building blocks:** These identify the core workplace functions influencing the engagement characteristics.
- **The roof:** The core engagement characteristics of employee satisfaction and commitment are located in the roof of the house.

The rest of this section introduces the house by identifying the individual survey questions that make up each building block, starting with the foundation.

## The foundation

The foundation of the house contains two drivers focused on management practices. These two drivers are connected either directly or indirectly to all other drivers in the model and, as a result, have a significant impact on engagement.

- **Senior leadership** reflects perceptions that senior leaders are genuinely interested in employees' well-being and provide clear direction for the future, and that essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff (three questions).
- **Supervisory-level management** includes survey questions that measure whether employees believe they have a positive working relationship with the person they report to, receive feedback that helps them improve their work performance and that the person they report to provides clear work expectations (three questions).

## The building blocks

Supported by the foundation, the middle section of the house contains the ten building blocks that represent the workplace functions that matter most to employee engagement. All building blocks are impacted by one or both drivers relating to management practices. Each building block is made up of between two and four survey questions.

- **Vision, mission and goals** represents employees' beliefs that their department's vision, mission, and goals are well communicated, and that their department is taking steps to ensure its long-term success (two questions).
- **Pay and benefits** is a measure of employees' perceptions that their pay is fair and their benefits meet their needs well (two questions).
- **Empowerment** reflects employees' opinions about having opportunities and freedom to provide input, make decisions to do their job well, and implement new ideas (three questions).
- **Job suitability** reflects employees' beliefs about their work being meaningful and a good fit with their skills and interests (two questions).
- **Recognition** captures employees' experiences with meaningful and performance-based recognition (two questions).
- **Stress and workload** is a measure of whether employees perceive that their work-related stress and workloads are manageable (two questions).
- **Tools** represents whether the computer and non-computer based tools employees have access to help them excel in their jobs (two questions).
- **Professional development** reflects employees' beliefs about the extent that their organization supports their learning and development, provides good quality training, and offers adequate opportunities to develop their skills (three questions).
- **Teamwork** represents employees' having positive working relationships and support from their team, and feeling that their team communicates effectively (three questions).
- **Respectful environment** captures whether employees experience a healthy and diverse atmosphere where conflict is dealt with effectively (four questions).

These building blocks interact and work together either directly or indirectly to influence the employee engagement characteristics in the roof of the house.

## The roof

The roof represents the multifaceted nature of engagement and contains two distinct but interconnected characteristics. Both characteristics are measured by different survey questions.

- **Organization commitment** assesses how employees are proud to tell people they work for the Government of Yukon, would recommend it as a great place to work, and whether they would choose to stay, even if a similar job became available elsewhere (three questions).
- **Job satisfaction** is measured by how satisfied employees are with their jobs (one question).

The combination of both characteristics measure overall engagement, which is shown in the top of the roof.

# Detailed survey results

The results in the *Question by question survey results* section are presented in two different but complementary ways. Results are shown as percentages to highlight the distribution of responses per question. The results are also shown as average scores, providing a single measure for each question allowing for easier comparability, where applicable. In the table that follows, please note that:

- percentages and scores are included in the same table for convenience,
- some percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding; and,
- the **difference** column contains the difference between the average score in 2018 and 2016, where possible.

## Percentages (%)

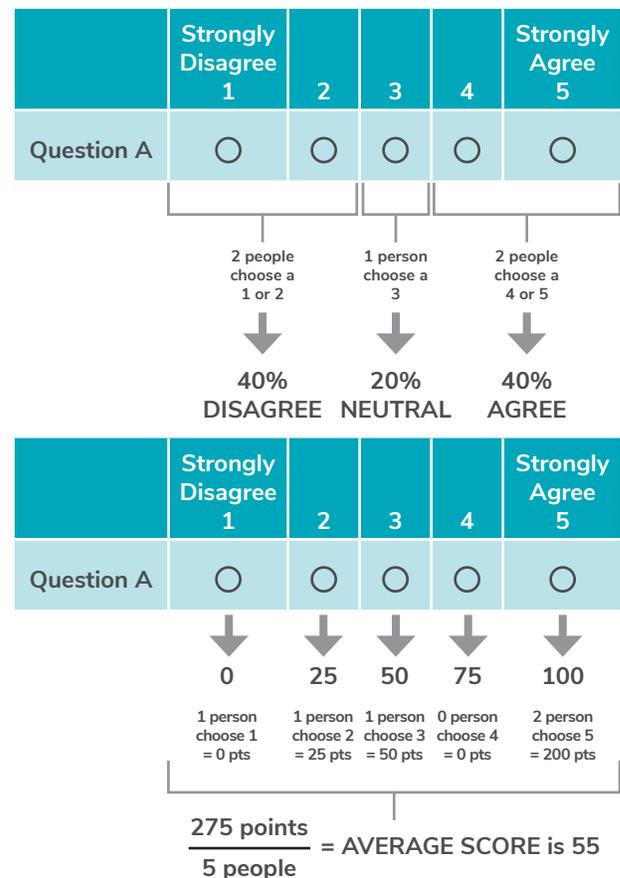
Percentages show the proportion of employees who disagreed, agreed or gave a neutral response to the survey question.

To calculate percentages, the number of times an answer was selected by respondents is totaled and collapsed into three categories.

## Average scores/100 points

Average scores range from 0 to 100 points and represent the full range of responses to each question. To calculate average scores, the five-point survey scale is converted into a 100-point scale and averaged based on the number of respondents.

Average scores for individual questions may not equal the overall score for that driver when the questions are averaged together. This is due to the method with which the overall scores are calculated for the drivers.





# Questionnaire definitions

Various phrases were defined in the employee engagement survey.

**Job:** If you are on a temporary assignment or recently changed jobs, think of your current job when responding to questions. If you typically have multiple jobs with the Government of Yukon, think of the position you work in most of the time or a greater portion of the time when responding to questions.

**Senior leadership:** “Senior leadership” refers to Deputy Ministers, Assistant Deputy Ministers, Directors, and equivalents. If you work in a school, “senior leadership” refers to your Superintendent, Assistant Deputy Minister of Public Schools, Deputy Minister, Directors, and equivalents.

**The person you report to:** The person you report to is the one you report to on a daily basis. If you report to multiple people, think about the person you report to most of the time or a greater portion of the time. If you work in a school, the person you report to refers to your school administrator.

**Work unit:** Your “work unit” refers to everyone in the group that you work with on a day-to-day basis. If you work in a school, your “work unit” is your school.

# Driver glossary

The engagement model drivers are defined as follows.

**Vision, mission and goals:** Employees believe that their department's vision, mission, and goals are well communicated, and that their department is taking steps to ensure its long-term success.

**Pay and benefits:** Employees believe that their pay is fair and their benefits meet their needs well.

**Empowerment:** Employees feel they have opportunities and freedom to provide input, make decisions to do their job well, and implement new ideas.

**Job suitability:** Employees believe that their work is both meaningful and a good fit with their skills and interests.

**Recognition:** Employees experience meaningful and performance-based recognition.

**Stress and workload:** Employees perceive that their work-related stress and workloads are manageable.

**Tools:** Employees believe that the computer based and non-computer based tools they have access to help them excel in their jobs.

**Professional development:** Employees believe their organization supports their learning and development, provides good quality training, and offers adequate opportunities to develop their skills.

**Teamwork:** Employees experience positive working relationships, have support from their team, and feel their team communicates effectively.

**Respectful environment:** Employees experience a healthy and diverse atmosphere where conflict is dealt with effectively.

**Supervisory-level management:** Employees believe they have a positive working relationship with the person they report to, receive feedback that helps them improve their work performance and that the person they report to provides clear work expectations.

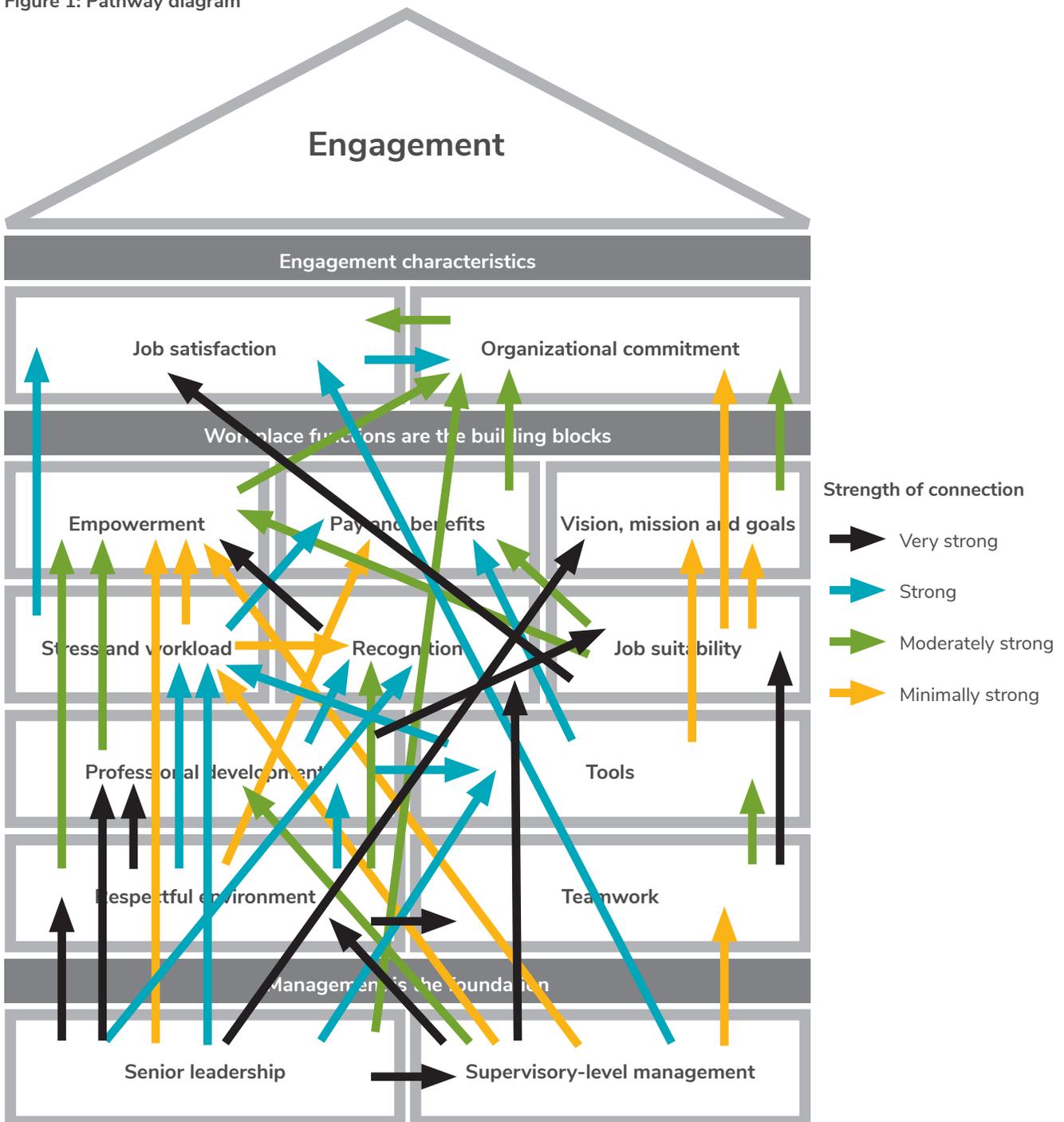
**Senior leadership:** Employees believe that senior leaders are genuinely interested in employees' well-being and provide clear direction for the future, and that essential information flows effectively from senior leadership to staff.



# Model fit details

Every pathway starts with senior leadership and flows in a specific direction, passing through various drivers, and ending at one or both of the two characteristics of engagement.

Figure 1: Pathway diagram



## Model and fit

Structural equation modelling (SEM) is conducted after a model has been theoretically determined. During the SEM process, individual questions were grouped mathematically together through factor analysis to represent each driver.

In order to determine how the model fits the survey data and assess the model's explanatory power, a set of established criteria is used. These criteria represent acceptable thresholds upon which a model's fit could be compared.

The chi square/degree of freedom ratio (CMIN/df) was reviewed to obtain an estimate of the overall fit as a plausible model. In terms of model fit, the indices and measures of interest consisted of the following: Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and Root Mean Square Error Approximation (RMSEA). Explanatory power was gauged by reviewing the squared multiple correlations (R<sup>2</sup>) for each of the endogenous latent variables (i.e., drivers) included in the model.

This cycle, we worked at keeping the model as close as possible to the 2016 model to enable comparability. While we were able to keep all the same questions and drivers as in the 2016 model, a few of the pathways changed to allow for a better fit with the model. Note that due to the exclusion of the school-based employees in 2018, the sample size for the model was smaller than in 2016. Unsurprisingly, this meant the model didn't fit quite as well as it did in 2016.

Structural equation modelling (SEM) is a complex statistical technique employed to determine pathways from a single or group of drivers to an outcome. Factor analysis is a type of statistical procedure conducted to identify clusters or groups of related questions, or 'factors'.

### Model fit indices

STATE	CMIN/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Model criteria/threshold (based on 2016 analyses)	Closer to 1, the better	> 0.95	> 0.97	≤ 0.05
2016 Model fit	3.9	0.97	0.97	0.04
<b>2018 Model fit</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>0.04</b>

## Limitations

There are several limitations which must be kept in mind when reviewing the model presented in this report.

1. The model represents a snapshot in time and is based upon attitudes and experiences that will likely change. The current results and model provide baseline measures so that future research can be used to monitor trends in the work environment and their impact on employee engagement.
2. The number of data points for SEM is dependent upon how many survey respondents completed each and every question constituting drivers in the model. Patterns in relationships between all of the model questions can only be detected from respondents who answered all the questions. This means that the total number of data points used for modelling is inevitably smaller than the overall number of completed surveys. As a result, SEM was performed on 1,691 respondents who provided a valid answer (i.e. not 'don't know' or 'not applicable') for all 35 model questions.
3. To ensure a sufficient sample size for modelling, survey questions are generally excluded where more than 10% of employees responded "Don't know" or "Not applicable". Three questions were excluded from modelling:
  - I am provided with the accommodation(s) I require to perform my job.
  - Essential information flows effectively from staff to senior leadership.
  - In my work unit, the process of selecting a person for a position is fair.
4. A key assumption for performing SEM is that the data is normally distributed. No survey question had a skewness or kurtotic value of more than |2.0|. Those survey questions with a mode of 100 were reviewed for non-normality; most were known to have an extremely high mode.
5. Questions with overly strong bivariate correlations (Pearson R of 0.9 or higher) with other questions indicate potential multicollinearity, or redundancy, in drivers. Seven question pairs were flagged as likely redundant before modelling, while a further 26 question pairs had strong correlations (0.8).<sup>2</sup> Further testing used acceptable threshold criteria of  $\geq 0.20$  tolerance and  $\leq 4.0$  VIF values to assess for multicollinearity in groups of potentially redundant questions. All potential drivers were checked for multicollinearity issues and adjusted accordingly if needed. One question was not correlated enough with any other question (all correlations less than 0.3), so was excluded from the model (i.e., I am aware of the services available to me through the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP).)

6. The model was based on responses to a questionnaire that was designed to reflect a framework of employee engagement in the public sector setting. As such, the model presented in this report can only represent what was measured within the context of this engagement framework. There may be other aspects unique to the Government of Yukon that were not captured in the survey and are therefore not reflected in the model presented in this report.
7. Lastly, the model is known to work with the inclusion of a third engagement characteristic in the roof, department satisfaction, comprising of the single question, “I am satisfied with my department”. However, in order to keep 2016 and 2018 models comparable, this characteristic was not included in the model. In the future, this is an option to consider assuming the characteristic still fits. Any work area with low engagement but high building block and management driver scores (or vice versa) should look to their results on this question. It is likely the discrepancy would be explained there.

## For more information

For more information about employee engagement including the survey methodology, explanation of the house model and definitions of terms used in the survey, visit the employee engagement section on Yukonnect: <https://yukonnect.gov.yk.ca/employee-info> or contact the Communications and Engagement Unit with the Public Service Commission at 867-667-8160.



# Factground

## High Level

**Study:** 2018 Government of Yukon Employee Engagement Survey

**Project sponsor:** Public Service Commission of the Government of Yukon

## Operations

**Instrument / data collection method:** survey

**Modes:** online, phone and post mail questionnaire

**Fielding window / dates:** May 3 to 24, 2018

**Project history:** annual survey 2007-2011; biennial survey 2013, 2016, 2018

## Key Measure(s)

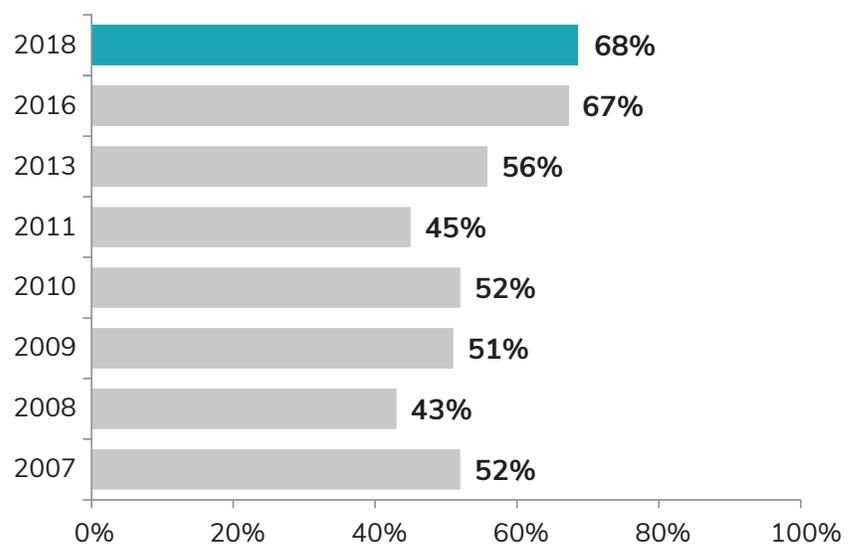
**Key construct:** engagement Score: 73 points (out of 100)

**Type of measures:** 5-point agreement response scale

**Methods of analysis:** structural equation modelling and descriptive statistics

## Response rates

In 2018, 68% of employees completed the survey, a one percentage point increase compared to 2016. The following chart shows the response rate trend for the overall response rates since 2007. Response rates varied for each Department within the Government of Yukon from a low of 56% to a high of 95%. The corporate response rate is not weighted, which may result in under/over representation of any one department.





  
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