Conducting an Organizational Readiness Survey

The Organizational Readiness Survey was derived from the Likert Organizational Climate Survey, which is based on business management theory. In the Organizational Readiness Survey, staff and leadership are asked what they think is true of an ideal organizational environment and their impressions of what currently exists. Organizations will want to develop a plan to address areas where there are large gaps between perceptions of the ideal and the current environments.

The Organizational Readiness Survey can be used to assess the culture for any large initiative, such as the implementation of evidence-based practices. Pennsylvania's Juvenile Probation Departments have conducted a similar survey with successful outcomes. In addition, some Pennsylvania County Probation Chiefs have previously conducted the Organizational Readiness Survey and offer the following 10 tips.

Tips from the Field

1. **Explain the Why:** It is strongly recommended that department leadership clearly communicate—at a staff meeting or in a similar setting—the purpose of the Organizational Readiness Survey and the process for implementing it. Understanding the context for its implementation is crucial for participation and buy-in.
2. **Use an Independent Vendor:** When possible, use an independent vendor to administer the survey and to aggregate the data. This helps eliminate any potential bias in the implementation of the survey and in the interpretation of the survey results.
3. **Encourage Participation:** Encourage survey respondents to be open and honest when completing the survey and to make clear recommendations on how the department can be improved. Reassure them that survey responses are anonymous.
4. **Encourage Respondents to Complete the Survey Independently:** Ask staff and leadership to complete the survey on their own rather than with a group so that their responses reflect their personal views and are not influenced by those of their peers.
5. **Seek External Perspectives:** Ask external stakeholders who can provide insight into the organization's strengths and challenges to complete the survey.
6. **Discuss Results with the Management Team:** Aggregate and discuss results with the management team. It is suggested that this take place before survey results are shared with staff.

7. **Share Results with Staff:** Be transparent and share the survey results with staff. Focus on strengths as well as areas for improvement. Invite a cross-section of staff to be part of the committee that is driving the change initiative.
8. **Act:** Even before implementing the survey, commit to addressing the issues that the survey uncovers. Conduct the survey only if you plan to act.
9. **Have a Thick Skin:** Be open to feedback that may be difficult to hear and try not to be defensive. We all have areas where we can improve.
10. **Do it Again:** Conduct the survey at regular intervals (e.g., annually). The survey is an excellent tool to measure outcomes and to identify trends.

Survey Implementation Details

Carey Group will develop the survey in SurveyMonkey and create a link specific to each county. The survey should be completed within 5–7 business days. Carey Group will then aggregate the results for each county and present them in a clear, easy-to-understand format.