

Job Satisfaction and Transit Operator Recognition Programs: Results of a Survey of Muni Operators

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ABSTRACT

Described are the results of transit operator surveys that investigated operator perceptions of job conditions and potential enhancements to recognition programs. The surveys were carried out by the San Francisco Municipal Railway (Muni) as part of a demonstration project to improve transit service reliability and performance, funded by the Service and Methods Demonstration Program of UMTA, U.S. Department of Transportation. The project, which is currently still in progress, addresses recognition programs, attendance management, street supervision, rulebook revisions, and performance monitoring. A follow-up survey will be carried out as part of the project evaluation. The results of the initial survey have indicated that lack of recognition of good operators, poor public image of the transit system, and lack of responsiveness to operator suggestions are key sources of job dissatisfaction among operators. Operators favored several changes in the current Operator of the Month program, including increasing the number of operators recognized each month, rewarding more than one level of achievement, basing awards on the operator's overall record, and involving operators in the selection process. Type of award was not among the most important changes operators wished to see in the program.

As part of a federally sponsored demonstration project that focused on improving transit operator performance and service reliability, potential enhancements to the San Francisco Municipal Railway (Muni) recognition program for transit operators were examined. As a preliminary element of this investigation, a survey was conducted by Muni of its full-time and part-time operators. The purposes of the survey were to

1. Determine the operator's views on existing and proposed recognition program elements,
2. Assess the specific areas of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and
3. Provide a baseline for measuring effects of recognition and attendance program changes.

Specifically, the operators were asked to do five things:

1. Rate their jobs at Muni according to various characteristics,
2. Identify the best and worst aspects of their jobs,
3. Express their opinions on the Operator of the Month program and ways in which it could be improved,
4. Rank alternative types of awards for outstanding operators, and
5. Suggest ways to encourage good attendance.

After a pretest, the surveys were distributed in early April 1985 at all seven Muni divisions to all active (driving) operators, numbering slightly more than 2,000. A total of 243 responses, or about 12

percent, was obtained. Summarized in this paper are the results of the survey and its implications for design of a recognition program.

BACKGROUND

The objective of the demonstration project is to improve the reliability of service delivered to transit passengers by applying a variety of management and operational strategies. Among the primary strategies are an operator performance evaluation and motivation program, an attendance management program, and on-street supervision and control strategies.

The project was initiated in December 1983 with a review of Muni's current performance evaluation procedures and the approaches of several other transit authorities, including Metropolitan Dade Transit Administration, Houston Metro, Seattle Metro, Metropolitan Transit Commission of the Twin Cities (MTC), Flint Metropolitan Transit Authority, Chittenden County (Vermont), and San Diego Transit. In April 1984, representatives of Muni labor and management and representatives of the management of six other transit properties met to discuss approaches to establishing operator performance standards and motivation programs that could be used at Muni. (The six properties were selected to represent a variety of approaches; selection was based on recent innovations they had undertaken.)

The study group discussions focused on three major components of a performance standards and motivation program, as outlined in research by the Urban Institute (1): (a) measurement and targeting; (b) incentives, awards, and discipline; and (c) appraisal and communication.

Within these three categories, six aspects of performance were considered:

- Attendance and punctuality;
- Schedule adherence;
- Safety;
- Appearance and courtesy;
- Substance abuse and dealing with stress; and
- Observance of rules, operating procedures, and directives.

Specific measures were formulated by the study group and a series of recommendations was made (2). To date, several of the recommendations have been implemented, including the installation of a micro-computer-based operator performance tracking system (OPETS) developed for the project.

Recommendations included enhancing incentive, awards, and recognition programs to reward employees for their superior performance. Three distinct categories were discussed at the study group meeting:

1. Pay incentives--These are monetary payments (i.e., bonuses, incentive-based pay scales) directly tied to performance, which are a significant percentage of the total paycheck (i.e., 5 to 15 percent). Such pay incentives may be offered to individual employees or to groups (divisions) that meet the criteria.

2. Non-pay awards and recognition--These may be a small monetary award (less than \$200), a nonmonetary gift (trip, dinner, trophy, etc.), preferential parking, dedicated bus with driver's name on it, or social activities. Publicizing the award (at ceremonies, in articles in newspapers) is also a form of recognition that enhances the impact of the award itself.

3. Time off--This is a unique type of nonmonetary reward that can be used to reward superior attendance and punctuality. Depending on its application, it can discourage the abuse of sick leave and transform a large number of expensive, unscheduled absences into a smaller number of less expensive, scheduled absences.

Nonpay awards and recognition were cited by the study group as offering the greatest return in terms of being both relatively inexpensive and a strong performance motivator. Although pay incentives were cited as being effective (in Flint and Houston), the increased data processing requirements and complication of pay structures might make them difficult for Muni to implement in the immediate future. More important, San Francisco City Charter laws prohibiting "giveaway of city funds" would present a greater barrier to pay incentives than to nonpay incentives. Thus, pay incentives should be considered only a longer term possibility. Although the law may also apply to monetary nonpay awards (i.e., cash prizes), the smaller magnitude and special nature of these awards might make them easier to structure in order to come within the law. Furthermore, because the cost is relatively low, it may be practical to establish special funds, perhaps raised by nontransit activities (advertising, business contributions); such funds would not be subject to the restriction. However, in the long run, it may be advisable to seek legal advice on how to remove the city restrictions.

In addition to the constraints just discussed, clear sentiment was expressed at the meeting by both management and labor that nonpay awards--in particular, publicized recognition--would be stronger motivators than pay incentives. This led the study group to recommend that Muni give a higher priority to nonpay incentives than to pay incentives for the immediate future.

Two philosophies were identified in designing an incentive-award system: the awards can be large and go to a few operators or be smaller and go to many.

Rewarding a few results in focused recognition; positive examples are created. However, spreading the rewards spreads recognition, and makes rewards more attainable; this increased attainability is consistent with the philosophy of setting achievable (not necessarily easy) goals--success is a strong motivator.

MTC (Minneapolis-St. Paul) struck a compromise between these two philosophies in designing its incentive system. By using a two-tiered approach, several levels of achievement with increasing rewards were established. As many as 40 to 60 percent of operators qualified for the first level; a much smaller percentage reached the highest level. This appeared to be a good compromise and was recommended to Muni.

It was also suggested that Muni widen award distribution through the giving of separate awards for each division or mode. Alternatively, awards to an entire division can be used to create positive competition among divisions, and common spirit within divisions. This approach has been applied successfully in Houston.

Considerable discussion occurred at the study group meeting about which incentives are the strongest motivators; the recommendation was that this question be addressed to the employees themselves. Accordingly, a survey of operators was undertaken (as was done at MTC). The study group stressed the importance of follow-up and action based on the survey. Otherwise, expectations might be raised but not realized, which could adversely affect morale.

Another method for selecting the strongest motivators is to build some flexibility in the award programs, where it is practical to do so. For example, an operator might be offered a choice between a cash award and some time off.

Finally, in selecting operators for awards and recognition, selection criteria should be made clear in order to ensure credibility. These criteria should be tied in to the performance measurement system. Additional credibility can be achieved by involving operators in the selection process (an approach used at MTC).

From the start, the MTC recognition program was considered to be a good model for Muni. In addition, the undertaking of a survey at Muni was also based on MTC's experience. MTC's motivational research project, conducted in part by its Human Resources Department, involved a three-part survey effort: a written attitudinal survey of 320 randomly selected employees, focus group discussions involving 100 employees in total, and in-depth interviews of 38 employees by trained interviewers (3). The MTC effort was broader in scope and objective than that undertaken at Muni; at Muni the study group, involving union and management, had already considered several possible changes to the recognition program and was seeking additional operator input. Muni also intended to build on the experience of other transit properties, including MTC. As it turned out, the Muni survey results exhibited several similarities to those at MTC.

EXISTING MUNI RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

Muni already had employee recognition programs in place when the project was undertaken. The Operations Department expends about \$24,000 per year on recognition programs for operators and supervisors. About 80 percent of the funding for these programs is derived from outside sources such as the transit advertising contractor, film companies using Muni vehicles, the employee credit union, and the labor unions. For operators, such employee recognition

programs include the Operator of the Month award and the Safety Award Program. The cost per operator in 1985 was \$10. The Operator of the Month award program originally included a single operator being selected systemwide; this was modified to one operator per division being selected (Muni has seven divisions) in response to the study group's recommendation. The operator is selected based on passenger ballots and the division manager's review of the operator's record. The divisional operator of the month is given a plaque, an insignia sweater, a reserved parking space for one month, a night on the town, and an entry into the annual vacation prize drawing. The award is publicized in the Muni newsletter, which also was begun during the project period. Systemwide operators of the month also get a trophy and a \$300 cash prize.

Safety awards are given to all operators who meet the safe driving record standards: no chargeable accidents for the year. About 70 percent of operators are recognized. Each receives a safe driver patch, belt buckle, and certificate. In addition, a banquet dinner is held for those who have completed 15 years or more as safe drivers.

COMPOSITION OF THE SAMPLE

Before inferring conclusions from the survey responses, it is important to confirm the representativeness of the sample. This is particularly important because the response rate was only 12 percent. Unfortunately, it is difficult to test for representativeness as far as attitudinal bias is concerned because there were no comparative data. However, several key characteristics of Muni operators were examined: distribution of the responses over division, shifts, regular day off, work hours, and seniority. These characteristics were compared with actual statistics on the total Muni operator population to determine if the sample is representative.

The sample appears to adequately represent the distribution of operators among the divisions. With respect to the distribution of part-time versus full-time drivers, the sample appears to underrepresent the part-time drivers--the sample includes 6.8 percent part-time operators, whereas the actual percentage of part-time driving drivers (as of April 2) was 11.3 percent. Concerning shift, the sample was almost equally divided among day, night, and split shift--30.5 percent worked the day shift, 34.3 percent the night shift, and 35.2 percent split shifts. Comparative figures for the actual distribution of drivers by shift were not available. Concerning regular days off, the sample appears representative--41.7 percent reported having both weekend days, 40.9 percent neither weekend day off, and 17.45 percent one weekend day off, compared with actual figures of 41.3, 42.8, and 15.9 percent, respectively. The respondents included persons with a wide range of seniority levels ranging from relatively new hires to those with 34 years of service. There is some underrepresentation of drivers with low seniority.

For the purposes of this analysis of operator views, it is concluded that in general, the sample is sufficiently representative of Muni's operators in terms of seniority, shift, regular day off, division, and work hours. Again, concerning attitudinal bias, one cannot be confident; nevertheless, substantial negative opinions were expressed in the anonymous survey and in many cases the responses mirror those of the MTC experience.

SURVEY RESULTS

In the following sections, the operators' views are presented on an aggregate basis; later the responses

are stratified by several of the key characteristics discussed previously.

Ratings of Muni

The operators were first asked to rate Muni on a number of different job characteristics. The rating scale categories were very good, good, neutral, poor, and very poor. Almost all of the operators indicated ratings for all of the 22 characteristics. Figure 1 shows a plot of the average rating for each characteristic (assigning values of +1 and -1 to the good and poor ratings, and +2 and -2 to the very good and very poor ratings, respectively). Note that the characteristic receiving the worst rating was by far responsiveness to operator suggestions, which, on average, placed close to the poor rating. Several characteristics received a rating that was on average about halfway between the neutral and poor rating, including planned social activities for operators, layover/recovery time, run time, Muni's community image, and recognition of good operators. The characteristic receiving the highest (best) ratings was quality of service provided to riders, followed by flexibility of policy for other time off, procedures for scheduling vacations, and fairness of attendance policy.

Looking at averages may mask some of the differences in the distribution of ratings. An alternative way to rank the results is to examine the percent of individuals rating the characteristic as very poor. The largest percentage of very poor ratings occurred for responsiveness to operator suggestions (32.5 percent) followed by planned social activities for employees (25.8 percent), Muni's community image (25.2 percent), running time (24.9 percent), recognition of good operators (24.0 percent), layover/recovery time (23.8 percent), communications between division management and operators (23.0 percent), variety of runs offered at sign-up (22.2 percent), and communication between street supervisors and operators (20.2 percent).

These results indicate that the primary sources of job dissatisfaction at Muni appear to derive from a lack of recognition of good operators by management and the public, lack of responsiveness to operator input, and frustration with the constraints imposed by the schedule. It is likely that the highest increases in job satisfaction would therefore derive from enhanced recognition programs, an aggressive program of publicity about the good aspects of Muni service and personnel, enhancement of camaraderie among the operators through social activities, opening up increased avenues of operator input through enhancements of the Joint Labor Management Board, and better communication with supervisors at the division and on the street, as well as attention to any real and substantial deficiencies in the schedule that may be a source of frustration among operators. The ratings also suggest that attendance policies are currently liberal enough to provide for employee needs.

Best and Worst Aspects of Working at Muni

In addition to rating specific characteristics, operators were asked to identify (in an open-ended question) the best and worst aspects of their job at Muni.

The best aspects identified were, first, pay and benefits, identified by 49 percent of the operators, followed by public service and job security, identified by 15 and 14 percent, respectively.

The worst aspects identified were more diverse;

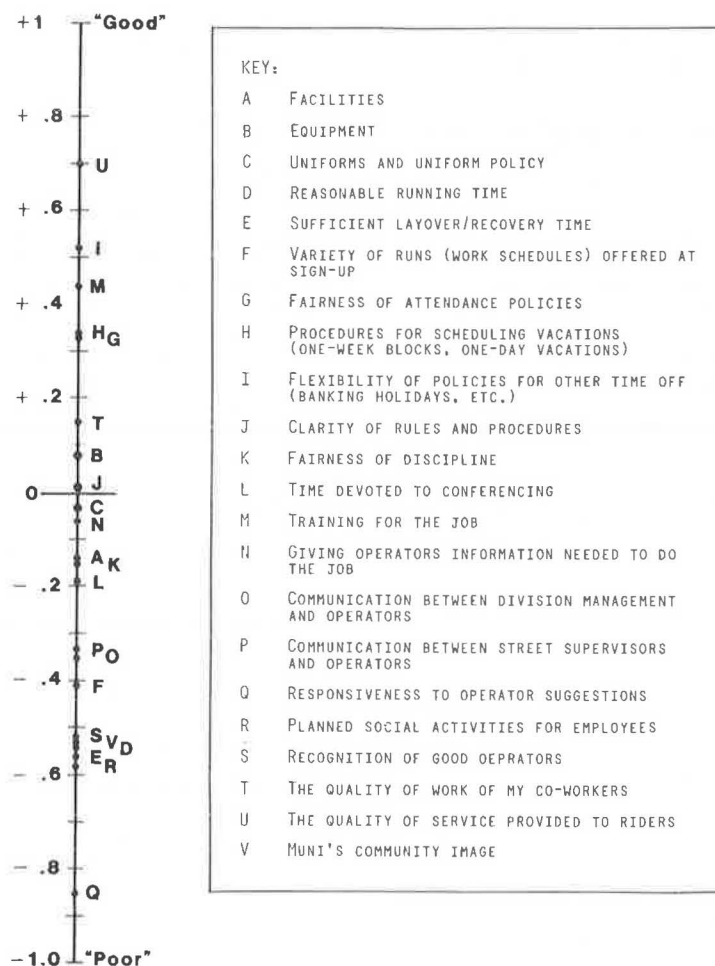


FIGURE 1 Average ratings of Muni.

they included in order of prevalence poor management, insufficient schedules, stress on the job, bad equipment, uninformed public, and poor communication. Numerous operators made comments about the stress associated with their jobs and the need for opportunities to let off steam and relax. A number of operators commented on the additional stress caused by frequent changes in runs and schedules and some suggested fewer run sign ups per year.

Operator complaints about poor management and poor communication, combined with their extremely low ratings of responsiveness to operator suggestions, suggest that there are serious morale problems and that there is a need to provide some mechanism for operator feedback. One approach to this problem would be to initiate a recognition program for managers and supervisors; it could provide greater incentives to lower level management in order to improve communications with the operators and could include operator input. Several other approaches to improved communication were identified by the study group, for example, rap sessions and a newsletter (2).

Opinions About the Current Operator of the Month Program

Operators were asked whether they thought they were likely to be selected Operator of the Month. The aim of this question was to determine whether the program was a meaningful motivator. Although 42 percent of the operators said they were likely to be operator

of the month, the remainder indicated that they were not.

Muni's Operator of the Month program was instituted to recognize outstanding operators. A single operator was recognized systemwide and a ceremony was held at the operator's division. (Note that the Operator of the Month program was expanded in accordance with the Performance Study Group's recommendation to recognize one operator in each division each month. This change took place just after the survey was distributed and may have increased the number of operators who believe they are likely to be selected since the survey.) At the ceremony, cash awards, a trophy, and noncash prizes are presented. The winning operator also receives publicity in the Muni newsletter. The operator is selected based on recommendations of managers and through the opinions of passengers who may vote for an operator by turning in a card available on board Muni vehicles.

The concept of awarding a number of operators with outstanding performance each month through a modification of the Operator of the Month program was introduced in the survey. The majority of operators believed that awarding only 10 percent of operators would be the best motivator; they were presented with alternatives ranging from 10 to 90 percent.

Operators were asked to identify what they believed were the two most important improvements to the existing Operator of the Month program. They were presented with a series of alternative suggestions, including the following:

- Recognize more than one driver each month,
- Recognize more than one level of achievement,
- Make changes in the type of awards and prizes,
- Involve operators in the selection of winners,
- State selection criteria or formula,
- Base selection on overall record,
- Require minimum number of years of service,
- Give group (division) awards,
- Other

The responses indicated that about one-half of the operators believed that increasing the number of operators awarded each month was among the two most important alternatives, whereas about one-third cited awarding more than one level of achievement; almost as many believed that basing awards on the overall record and involving operators in the selection process were among the two most important alternatives. Note that changes in the type of awards ranked far less important; only about 7 percent of the operators listed it among the two most important program modifications. A surprising result was that stating the recognition criteria was only fifth in importance overall. Given the opportunity to make additional comments on the program, the majority of operators had no comments.

Opinions on Alternative Awards for Outstanding Performance

Operators were asked to rank several alternative types of awards for outstanding performance as their

first, second, and third choices. In addition, they were given an opportunity to suggest additional awards not presented in the initial set of alternatives. The question was asked separately for three recognition programs, the individual Operator of the Month program, a proposed Division of the Month program, and the existing Safety Award Program. To analyze the results, the selections have been weighted to reflect their ranks as first, second, or third choice, and an average ranking has been calculated. (First choice was counted as 3 points, second choice as 2, and third choice as 1.) The results are shown in a plot in Figure 2.

Concerning the Operator of the Month awards, the highest average ranking was for paid time off. Gift certificates and award badges were close in second place. Recognition party and assigning the winning operator his/her own bus were less popular.

For the Safety Award Program, the results were fairly similar, with paid time off most popular, followed by awards or badges, then recognition party and assigned bus. It should also be noted that the operators preferred by more than 3 to 1 that the safety program remain separate from the Operator of the Month program. Note that the Operator of the Month program awards only a single operator (now one per division), whereas the safety award program awards a number of operators; the question was presented after identifying the possibility of a broader recognition program.

Concerning divisional awards, facility improvements were most popular; the remaining choices--trophies, social activities for the division, badges,

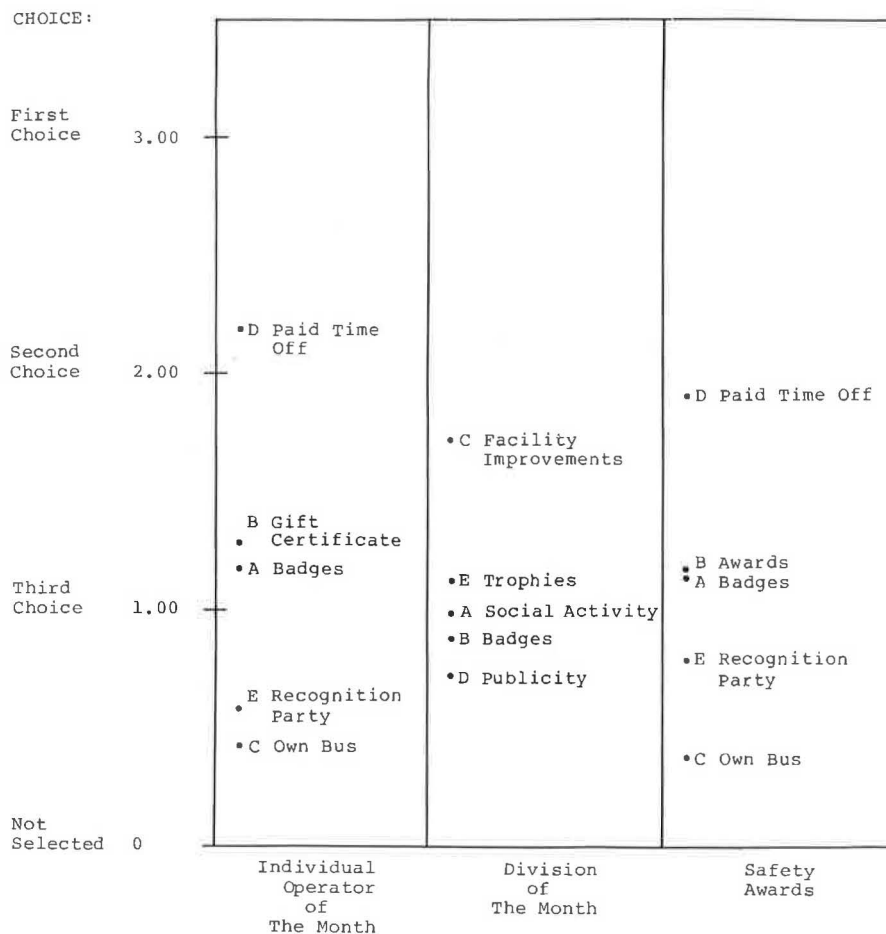


FIGURE 2 Average ranking of awards.

and publicity about the winning division--all were ranked fairly closely, in the order just given.

Operators had the opportunity to suggest additional awards. Although about two-thirds had no suggestions, 17 percent suggested cash awards and 8 percent suggested public recognition for the Operator of the Month program. Concerning divisional awards, 83 percent had no additional suggestions, and a few suggested social events, cash awards, and public recognition. In reviewing the responses to this question, it should be noted that the current time-off policies at Muni were rated highly by the operators. Therefore, although the operators ranked paid time off the highest, Muni might want to give serious consideration to less costly alternatives that ranked second overall, such as gift certificates, award ceremonies, and badges. Perhaps paid time off would best be saved as a reward for an excellent attendance record or an annual selection of one individual from the group of operators of the month.

In any event, it is clear that operators' first choices center on the most costly alternatives--paid time off and facility improvements. These are items that would require substantial resource commitments to the recognition program. Paid time off may be difficult given the City Charter restrictions on giveaway of public funds. Gift certificates using special funding sources may be more feasible (e.g., transit advertising, contributions). The other costly item, improvement to Muni facilities, should be justifiable within the City Charter restrictions.

It is also noteworthy that badges ranked fairly high in the set of choices for individual and safety awards. These low-cost items may buy a considerable amount of recognition for operators who responded with low ratings for Muni's public image and recognition of good operators. It is suggested that badges be included in the Operator of the Month program and that they be highly visible to the public, for example, perhaps cap badges should be given rather than belt buckles.

Attendance Program

Operators were also asked how good attendance could best be encouraged. The variety of suggestions included the following: more money (15 percent), improved communications (15 percent), more layover (13 percent), more time off (10 percent), stricter discipline (9 percent), and better sign-up rules (5 percent).

In the author's opinion, more money in the form of increased pay would not increase attendance unless directly tied to attendance performance. Similarly, given the high ratings of time-off policies, the author believes that additional time off is unlikely to encourage better attendance; however, paid time off could be used to reward operators with particularly good attendance. It is also interesting to note that the number of operators identifying improved communication was the same as the number identifying more money. Perhaps low-cost communication efforts would have some beneficial effect on attendance. Overall, there does not appear to be a clear consensus among operators on the best way to motivate them to reduce absenteeism. Thus, the author believes that attendance program suggestions might best be derived from the experience of other transit properties.

It should also be noted that sentiments expressed by several operators indicated their desire for stricter discipline of those operators who abuse attendance policies while recognizing and rewarding the majority of good operators. Comments included, for example, "do something about operators who abuse sick time," "it's too easy to take time off," "get

rid of bad operators," and "don't make good drivers suffer with bad drivers on Muni policies."

Stratification of Responses by Key Operator Characteristics

As an additional aid in the design of an effective recognition program, the survey responses are disaggregated in the following sections by division, seniority, shift, regular day off, and perceived likelihood of being Operator of the Month.

Differences by Division

The operators' ratings of service characteristics were examined on a divisional basis. Some divisions indicated great satisfaction with one characteristic but great dissatisfaction with another. Statistics indicated that the most significant differences among divisions occurred with respect to time for conferencing, equipment, and communications between division management and operators. Significant differences were also found regarding layover time, run time, uniforms and uniform policy, facilities, and fairness of discipline. It should be noted that correlations were evident between division and other key characteristics--seniority and part-time or full-time status.

Differences by Seniority

Operators were disaggregated into four seniority categories: less than 5 years, 5 to 9 years, 10 to 19 years, and 20 years or more. Several significant differences among seniority categories were found; these were in the ratings of Muni for uniform and uniform policy, layover time, variety of runs offered, training for the job, giving operators sufficient information for the job, responsiveness to operator suggestions, and Muni's image in the community.

In general, the differences among seniority categories indicated that the operators with the least seniority and, in some cases, those with the greatest seniority were more satisfied with their jobs. For example, 31 percent of those with less than 5 years at Muni rated uniforms and uniform policy poor or very poor, compared with 51 percent of those with 10 to 19 years at Muni. Similarly, 44 percent rated responsiveness to operator suggestions as poor or very poor compared with 72, 74, and 60 percent of the other groups with increasing seniority. Concerning Muni's community image, the most senior operators were the least critical--33 percent rated the image as poor or very poor followed by 43 percent of those with less than 5 years; this was in contrast with 67 and 62 percent in the 5 to 9 and 10 to 19 year groups, respectively.

Ratings of layover time adequacy revealed that the most senior operators were most satisfied, whereas the lower seniority operators--particularly the 5 to 9 year group--were least satisfied. This may be partially explained by the sign-up procedures, which allow the best runs to be selected by the operators with the greatest seniority. However, concerning the variety of runs offered at sign up, the operators with the least seniority were the most satisfied; 28 percent of those with less than 5 years of seniority rated the variety of runs poor or very poor compared with 60, 54, and 59 percent of those groups with increasing seniority.

Finally, concerning training and information provided for operators to do their job, operators with less than 5 years of seniority were the most satisfied.

Comparing average ratings based on numerical scaling of the responses indicates that the groups with less seniority view three job characteristics with similar levels of dissatisfaction: layover, variety of runs, and responsiveness to operator suggestions, whereas the higher seniority groups do not. Also, the groups with middle seniority view the community image much more negatively than the extreme groups--those with less than 5 years and those with 20 year or more seniority.

As noted previously, a correlation existed between seniority and division. Nevertheless, it appears that neither seniority nor division fully explains the effects of the other. For example, it appears that the least satisfied operators are those in the middle range of seniority and are concentrated at three particular divisions. The divisions with the highest percentage of operators in the middle range of seniority overlap but do not coincide with these three divisions. However, at the same time the division noted as containing the most satisfied operators (based on the ratings) has the smallest percentage of operators in the middle seniority range.

Differences by Shift

For the most part, shift did not influence survey responses. Some differences were noted in the percentages ranking particular awards as their first, second, and third choices. Split-shift operators tended to rank paid time off higher than did others. Day shift operators tended to rank recognition parties higher and facility improvements lower than those working other shifts. These differences are minor and should not necessarily influence the choice of awards in a recognition program. First-choice selections were the same across shifts.

Differences by Regular Day Off

To examine the effect of regular day off, operators were disaggregated into three groups: persons having both weekend days off, those having one weekend day off, and those having no weekend days off. However, this characteristic appeared to have only minor influences on the responses.

Characteristics of Those Who Did Not Consider Themselves Likely To Be Selected Operator of the Month

The operators who indicated they were not likely to be selected as Operator of the Month tended to have negative views of Muni in terms of the following characteristics:

- * Equipment,
- * Uniforms and uniform policy,
- * Layover time,
- * Variety of runs offered,
- * Clarity of rules,
- * Fairness of discipline,
- * Informing operators, and
- * Responsiveness to operator suggestions.

Thus, job dissatisfaction appears to correlate with the employee's investment in the recognition programs. Overall, operators who did not think they would be selected rated Muni more negatively than did operators who thought they would be selected.

Other differences (between those who believed they were likely to be selected and those who believed they were not) were (a) part-time versus full-time status and (b) regular day off. Those operators who worked part time and those who had neither weekend day off were more likely than others

to believe they would be selected Operator of the Month.

It is particularly interesting to examine the Operator of the Month program improvements that are most important to those who thought they were unlikely to be selected. In general, they ranked the suggested improvements similar to other operators, although a higher percentage responded to the question. The improvements they appeared to be much more likely to choose were (a) involve operators in the selection process, and (b) reward more than one level of achievement. These changes should be most likely to increase the impact of the recognition program.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

1. Primary sources of job dissatisfaction at Muni are a lack of recognition of the good operators by both management and the public, lack of responsiveness to operator input, and, for many operators, frustration with the scheduled run and recovery time.

2. Some divisions exhibited greater operator dissatisfaction than others in the areas related to (a) communication with management and (b) facilities.

3. Operators in the middle levels of seniority (5 to 19 years) were more dissatisfied with a number of job characteristics than were those with either high or low seniority.

4. Flexibility in time-off policies, fairness of the attendance policy, and procedures for scheduling vacations were all rated high.

5. Approximately 4 of every 10 operators believed that they were likely to be selected Operator of the Month. Operators favored several changes in the program, most important, increasing the number of operators rewarded each month and rewarding more than one level of achievement; these changes were followed by basing awards on the overall record and involving the operators in the selection process. Those operators who did not believe they were likely to be selected believed that the most important changes to the program were involvement of operators in the selection process and rewarding more than one achievement level. Note that operators identified 10 percent as the appropriate number of operators to be awarded in order to make the program a good performance motivator.

6. Type of award was not among the most important changes, but was addressed in the surveys. Operators favored paid time off over other awards to individuals and facility improvements for awards to divisions. They also preferred keeping the Safety Award Program as a separate program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the survey results, it is recommended that the following seven steps be undertaken to improve recognition programs:

1. Create a joint labor management committee to revise the Operator of the Month program.

2. Prepare a set of recognition criteria and use the microcomputer monitoring system in the selection process.

3. Identify a second level of achievement for awards.

4. Develop a Division Award Program that will reward a division with funds to improve amenities in the division. This may be effective as a group motivator and may permit the expenditure of Muni funds for recognition more easily than will individual awards, which face City Charter restrictions.

5. Increase publicity about the achievements of Muni's operators, create visibility for the recogni-

tion program, and inform operators about efforts to improve the public image of Muni.

6. Target problem divisions for a program of increased conferencing and communications with operators.

7. Create a Manager Recognition Program to reward managers who excel and include operator input in selecting outstanding managers.

CONCLUSION

As of this writing, this project is still in progress. The union is currently reviewing survey results and will shortly confer with management on management's response to the survey. Muni management has had a favorable reaction to many of the recommendations.

The author believes that the survey was useful in pinpointing problems and solutions and should be useful in providing greater credibility with Muni drivers. However, the making of definitive conclusions on the effectiveness of the process must follow implementation of recognition program changes.

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