



## **Mini-Survey Feedback**

**Joan B**  
**Sept 06 to February 08**

**Regional Director in a large public utility July 08 –July 09**

## Mini-Survey Feedback for Joan B

Please note: For comparison purposes, ratings and comments marked "B" are from your manager, and those marked "§" are from your Self assessment.

*Less Effective*      *No Perceptible Change*      *More Effective*  
*No Change Needed*  
*Not Enough Information*

-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3		
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<b>Perceived change in Joan's behavior over the past few months:</b>									
Treats others with respect.....	1	1		1	2	1, B	3, §	1	1
Listens to different points of view with an open mind .....	1	1	1			3, B	3, §	1	1

<b>How much Response and Follow-Up?</b>							
Has Joan talked with you about her stated goals?	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <span><b>YES = 10, B, §</b></span> <span><b>NO = 1</b></span> </div>						
How much follow-up has Joan done with you to seek your feedback and suggestions (feedforward) on these specific leadership goals?	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;"><b>0</b></td> <td style="padding: 5px;">She has not asked for Feedback or Feedforward</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>7, §</b></td> <td style="padding: 5px;">She has done SOME Follow-Up</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>4, B</b></td> <td style="padding: 5px;">She has done CONSISTENT/PERIODIC Follow-Up</td> </tr> </table>	<b>0</b>	She has not asked for Feedback or Feedforward	<b>7, §</b>	She has done SOME Follow-Up	<b>4, B</b>	She has done CONSISTENT/PERIODIC Follow-Up
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<b>4, B</b>	She has done CONSISTENT/PERIODIC Follow-Up						

**Additional comments/suggestions for Joan's consideration ...**

**What specifically has Joan done in the past few months that you want to reinforce and encourage her to continue?**

- B:** Continue to bring the energy, initiative and focus to bear on moving forward. Keep focused on the Strategic Plan objectives.
- B:** Stay positive, engaged and approachable to all your employees.
- §:** Acknowledging the accomplishments of others
- §:** Asking for feedback and input into decisions
- §:** Hold everyone accountable for commitments
- §:** Encourage others to express opinions
- §:** Ignore and eliminate distractions

- As I mentioned, Joan does not interact with us, except for her meetings, so it is hard for me to provide feedback on what she has done that should be reinforced.
- Joan continually praises employees work efforts. I feel that she is sincere in her efforts, however I feel that praising employees for simply doing their job, or making a good comment is overkill. Hopefully as Joan gets more comfortable with this technique, praise will be consistent and clearly earned.
- Joan has continued to discuss this leadership improvement process with me in formal and informal meetings. This has been done in groups and one-on-one settings.
- Joan has done a good job assigning work and setting deadlines, then following up on those deadlines. Unfortunately, the work that is being assigned is not in alignment with my goals and priorities. Many of

the assignments are based on comments she has heard from others and become high priorities even though the benefit to WMD is limited. This takes away from my ability to conduct work that will have a much better return to the District. When Joan has been questioned regarding these priorities, she does not appear to really be listening to the justifications and open to modifications or priorities. Once her mind is made up, there is very little that you can do to change it. SEH is currently managed like a PR firm, rather than an SEH department.

- Joan has really worked to rise above the longstanding issues within this Section. Her situation would not be easy for anybody to deal with and I think that she has shown great strength and commitment to WMD and our section by working with a coach and sincerely implementing the strategies identified. I applaud her strength and continued forward movement and hope that soon the focus will be off of Joan and onto the work that is so badly need to ensure SEH.
- Joan is calm/deliberate at meetings, waits to hear peoples input prior to inserting her own thoughts. Acknowledges others points of views, supports appropriate decisions. Managers meetings are more structured than in the past and deliverables are clearly identified and followed up on.
- Continue to utilize all communication systems (e-mail, conference, etc) to keep open flow of information and feedback flowing.
- Has increased face-time, but I question the value of the face time. I feel it is an exercise in futility to speak w/ Joan on technical, managerial, and compliance SEH issues. She doesn't get it, and doesn't want to get it. Information is not funneled up to Shane and Jim. There were no SEH accomplishments listed in recent GM Business Plan Report. Weekly, monthly, and other periodic reports are submitted to Joan—don't know what happens to the information in the write-ups.
- Has scheduled routine staff meetings, but schedule and meeting format/agenda has not been discussed or revisited. In fact, she meets separately w/ direct reports, all SEH mgrs, and Paul meets separately w/ his direct reports. Perception is that she has created an adversarial atmosphere of divide and conquer between field and program staff by holding these separate meetings.
- Honestly, I do not see any difference in her behavior. It is very transparent that she is forced to do this coaching and her efforts to treat people with respect are superficial. The situation is worse because she simply avoids her staff. She stays out in the field (for what purpose, we are not privy) and when she shows up at Union Station, she stays in her office. My perception of her behavior is that she has checked out of her leadership role.
- I have noticed considerable effort and improvement.
- I have seen “Joan’s Leadership/Management Action Plan” on the table during most meetings. As a result I have noticed many instances of her conducting the various actions described.
- I like the rearrangement of your office, it allows staff to see when you are in and that you are accessible.
- In addition, I find it strange that before meetings, she will have her own private “direct reports” meeting. Instead of issues being discussed in an open forum during All Managers meeting, she will discuss it with our Unit Manager. The Unit Manager in turn, will discuss it with us. It seems that she uses the Unit Manager as her communication funnel to avoid dealing with us directly, and to ultimately wash her hands of the accountability.
- In the last month, Joan has had more of a presence at Union Station and seems to have stepped back in to more of a Section leadership role in providing management direction and moving issues along.
- In the meetings which I have attended, Joan has actively encouraged others to state their thoughts and opinions
- Meetings are constantly being re-scheduled to accommodate her schedule. Because of this, urgent matters that require discussion are being delayed to a point that can get us in trouble.
- Much more encouraging in asking other’s opinions

- One notable from #2 above - I have seen an increase in Joan's efforts to not only listen to different points of view but solicit them before even weighing in on an issue or holding back on weighing to let the floated POV get considered.
- Receive feedback from others outside stakeholder group
- She allows her staff to conduct the meeting, but make sure that you state # 1 below first and #2 at the end, if your staff hasn't done it prior to everyone exiting the room.
- She doesn't bring her blackberry into staff meetings anymore.
- She has asked for feedback, and been receptive to comments.
- She has engaged Section personnel (not just direct reports), and shown an interest in their activities. This is positive for morale.
- She has included various SEH managerial experts in meetings, but then doesn't know what to do with the technical feedback that she receives, so it does not go anywhere.
- She tends to gloss over important information on projects we are working on. We keep her in the loop during the process (via e-mail, weekly/monthly reports, phone mail, etc.) But she does not take the time to understand and comprehend the issues. She seems to not want to be part of the decision making, facilitating or guiding the work.
- She thanks people in staff meetings, but again this is perceived as insincere and superficial. We keep waiting for the other shoe to drop, after receiving the insincere thanks. She is more obsessed with discipline, deadlines, and gotcha's (creating obstacles) than in the work itself. The thanks is provided because it is part of her action plan, but she doesn't really mean it.
- Staying out in the field more, so she is away from US Program staff. Many people, including myself, try to avoid Joan whenever possible, and dread the staff meetings.
- Superficially, tries to listen to others' viewpoints, but doesn't understand or hear what SEH Mgrs., especially on the program side are saying. I don't see any in depth changes; changes have been on the surface only.
- Take a look at commitments that have been made in the past and update progress or determine what if any actions are needed. (IIPP, SEH Field Staff Job Description Update, FSCC)
- The meetings she holds are geared to her own interest and her own "special" initiatives. It rarely deals with compliance and core functions of the section. She covers her agendas first and when she is done, then she loses interest in what other people have to say or she appears to be in a hurry to go to another meeting.
- The meetings that Joan facilitates are not conducive for open discussion. She primarily reviews action items and deadline dues. Most of the time, the action items are unclear and not something that have been decided collectively. In my feeling, the due dates are set not to move projects along, but rather as her tool to use as a reason to get individuals (not on her good side) to be disciplined if they fail to meet the deadlines.
- Very good at maintaining a cool & calm (almost kind) demeanor in meetings & tough meetings
- Very personable. Much more open about her ideas and strategies than early on..
- Visit field locations

## What suggestions (feedforward) would you give Joan so there will be continued improvement in the future?

- **β:** Continue to constantly remind yourself that you are responsible, to a great degree, for your employees success or lack thereof. A lack in teamwork is yours to correct. Give your employees credit for their successes and coach/counsel them on what needs to improve to do better when things don't go well.
- **§:** Check in with all stakeholders more consistently. I have done this with most and often. Some less than others.
- **§:** Ask more questions when looking to find agreement
- **§:** Not be intimidated and distracted by some of the events in the section
- “treat others with respect” subitems 1, 5, related to meeting scheduling and meeting facilitation has resulted in lots of positive movement on our work. Also related is the increased attention to “listen to different points of view” subitem 5, related to accountability and deliverables.
- Address and resolve key regulatory compliance issues. While management activities need to be balanced with compliance efforts, the latter should be the priority.
- Address the Engineering-SEH coordination issue.
- Again, Joan has a gift in appearing to solicit input and getting clarification on issues. She may even indicate that she will do various follow-up activities. Nonetheless, she does not change her priorities based upon input from staff. She knows what she wants to do and anything else is just a distraction that is soon ignored and not addressed.
- Be engaged with compliance projects and make an effort to try to understand the issues.
- Be transparent on her activities specially when working out in the field sites.
- Joan alone determines what, when and where she wants input on something. She does not openly allow staff to express their opinions and ideas on issues of importance to them. One important element for SEH compliance is to know that upcoming laws and regulations have an impact the organization [sic]. Recently, the budget for CCEEB was deleted from the SEH budget. Joan has cut-off all conversation how to get back the funding for this critical function, thereby ensuring that the District will not be able to participate and keep abreast of changing California environmental laws and regulations.
- Joan continues to communicate only good news, and appears to not even remember her promises. When the Safety Culture Survey was issued last year it was clearly communicated that the results would be shared with all WMD staff. Though the results were compiled [sic] in September 2008, they still have not been communicated to all WMD staff. In the meantime, Joan continues to communicate that she is making progress to attain Safety VPP/Star status, although she has not even acknowledged or started to address the safely problems mentioned in the survey.
- Joan continues to not hold her friends and favorite employees accountable for poor performance as long as they support her special initiative and say that all the problems are being handled.
- Joan does not visibly take responsibility for her own mistakes. Rather, she continues to make the same mistakes over again.
- Joan has done a great job at implementing the strategies worked on with her coach. I would like her to continue soliciting input, and possibly providing a bit more of her input as she has great leadership qualities that have been a bit stifled due to internal circumstances.
- Continue providing the visible Section with active, concrete leadership and direction.
- Continue to be engaged in subject at hand in meetings
- Continue to communicate with all Section personnel.

- Continue to hold people accountable for work products and deliverables. We as a section have a lot of work to do and we need to increase our performance levels.
- Does not encourage risk taking because she has little trust and respect for the abilities of her corporate staff. Recently, staff has implored her to get involved in a major issue that could significantly lower costs and add flexibility for Operations. Even though her own management has voiced support for the initiatives, Joan has become a clog in the system for progress because she is focused on other endeavors that have less risk but has much more limited positive returns.
- In addition to working on proactive initiatives, I would like to see more attention on how to apply limited resources to our core business obligations
- Interject some light comment whenever possible; Chocolate works.
- Keep pushing on the Section-level issues and communications
- Listen to managers and come to agreement on establishing priorities, focusing on those that will have the most positive impact to the District.
- make sure that at the end, there are specific follow up items associated with staff and a due date, which they set, unless there is extreme urgency, but explain the urgency
- Makes a great show of having a deliverables list with deadlines but interestingly, the important critical deliverables for her friends are missing from the list. Also, she unfairly holds some accountable for deadlines while not holding others accountable for deadlines.
- Meeting focus/agenda of staff meetings is on dates of deliverables. The meetings are like groundhog day or déjà vu, and are not productive or useful. the same things are discussed at each meeting with the same items discussed, and no resolution or movement.
- Meetings are better, but still some improvement needed...the Blackberry is problematic
- My opinion is that the coaching process has been a failure, and that the type of bullying and intimidation behavior that Joan exhibits cannot be changed. The behaviors are beyond management and leadership coaching. On the surface, she does not yell or scream at her subordinates; instead she utilizes more “underground” types of behavior and tactics of setting people up for failure, and eroding self-esteem, self-confidence, and morale. This type of person should not be managing people, and is a danger to the District working in the capacity of the SEH Section Manager.
- Never acts on the perspectives of others. She knows what she wants to do and barely tolerates anything that will delay what she wants.
- Not really for Joan – but there are definitely distraction in the group particularly from personnel located at Union Station who continually try to undermine Joan’s authority and progress by going constant complaints and attempts to solicit support from others in opposition to Joan and SEH management. Eg. During the holiday season other evaluations of Joan were being solicited, I choose not to participate since the purpose only seemed to be to gather negative feedback.
- Priorities have been solicited, but haven’t been implemented. We keep providing input and comments, but don’t see anything coming from Joan. Paul has provided some items, but it doesn’t integrate with Section work. Priorities haven’t been communicated, nor have changes to priorities. Compliance should be the priority, but it continues to be SEH marketing and public relations.
- Reduce the number of meetings. We currently have a weekly unit managers meeting, and also a weekly section managers meeting. Usually both these meetings cover the same topics and take away from other work activities. If we set good goals, and priorities, we should be able to reduce these meetings to monthly.
- Ref: How much follow-up ...? Only once.
- Remove the layers of communication.
- Sets the priorities with input only from Jacky and to a lesser extent with Paul and Sean. For the most part she dictates priorities without much input from staff. The priorities are not part of a bigger plan for setting up a comprehensive SEH program.

- She does not take responsibility for her own mistakes and blames her management staff or other staff. She doesn't help to break down barriers, but instead sets up barriers or doesn't communicate upwards, so it makes our jobs almost impossible. If she does communicate upwards, it seems to be with negative information to make others look bad, and to make herself look good. It appears that she almost enjoys putting obstacles in your way, so she can then criticize someone else, and shift the blame. She does not take ownership. I thought managers were supposed to support their staff. The SEH Strategic Plan project is one example. To this date, there is still no "final" Strategic Plan" that has been rolled out to SEH staff.
- She tried to coordinate w/ managers on meeting times, but that quickly fell apart. There was one staff meeting that the time/location was changed 4-5 times in a matter of one day. She does not show respect for work that others are doing, unless she sees a direct linkage to her personal agenda and image. SEH training for mgrs and supervisors has been scheduled, cancelled, and rescheduled multiple times with the latest training now scheduled for March/April and a dry run on a working Friday. Joan had Alicia set the dates, and failed to check w/ all of the SEH Mgrs. who are doing the training on their availability. She told us last Thursday that these were the final dates, and asked, now who doesn't understand that. No one spoke up because of her tone of voice, and fear.
- Since the SEH Managers' Deliverables List is a working tool that highlights significant issues that the managers are working on, would recommend cleaning/tightening up the list to focus on the key significant issues and eliminate redundancies.
- Some of your staff is very naturally loud. Reduce their Db's, especially when it comes to confidential issues.
- Spend some time with each team to understand their processes, workload, and day to day operations. I feel that Joan truly doesn't understand the work that's being done in SEH, and therefore cannot appreciate and reward the hard work that occurs.
- Stakeholders were told by Chris to forget the past, and let it go. The only problem is that the past is the present, and will be the future, if things don't change. Joan's past behavior of intimidation continues, and she continues to look for gotcha's, and in several cases, is retaliating, probably for the feedback that has been provided. (Feedback in this survey, in the investigation report, and in MAPA's 360 survey.) It is impossible, as a stakeholder to let the past go, when the past practices are continuing, and in many cases, are worse than when we started this coaching process.
- State the purpose of the meeting and what you would like to accomplish by the conclusion. (keep it up)
- Stay the course...don't let the behind-the scenes stuff get to her (at least don't show it)
- Still solicits feedback from others in a superficial manner. She already knows what she wants to hear so anything said differently is summarily ignored.
- The entire SEH Management Team is afflicted with unclear, differing and/or shifting priorities. A method to include key customers (WSO Section Managers and possibly Unit Managers) in establishing and communicating priorities might help. This would ensure that we all (WSO) agree that some initiatives will have to wait.
- Understand that there are those who will never be happy with any changes that Joan makes since they have never been happy with any previous management and are most-likely unhappy with their own issues and distractions outside the District which they project internally towards Joan.
- We have been talking about roles and responsibilities for over two years, and there is still no final document that has been complete, and distributed. Decisions on roles and responsibilities are frequently tabled with no resolution.
- With the listed deliverables in the staff meeting, focus has been on accountability – but she picks and chooses which staff should be held accountable. Joan's favorites are treated differently than managers and staff on the program side. In fact, some deliverable actions/dates appear to drop off the staff meeting agenda lists for her favorites, and the due dates are changes.

- Work to unite the various teams within SEH. The relationships that used to exist within the SEH teams have eroded over the last year. Set common goals for each team, and ensure that teams assist each other. We have many co-dependencies that must exist in order for us to be successful. Changing the reporting hierarchy of the SEH program staff, and the SEH site support staff has built barriers that cannot exist if we want to be successful. The current infighting between teams is at an all time high, and is seriously affecting SEH's ability to meet compliance goals. Do not allow other SEH teams to disrespect other teams. If we all share the same goals, than we will all be responsible for their outcomes. Us against them is a sure recipe for failure.
- Yes, she has made quite a show of soliciting input from others but she continues to quickly discount and ignored input from others on critical compliance issues. She is focused on PR not compliance. The District continues to walk the compliance violation tightrope because we are focused on non-compliance PR issues.

## **After Action Review**

**Joan B**

**June 30, 2009**

1. What did you set out to do and why?
  - a. I selected two objectives based upon feedback from my stakeholders – (1) Treat others with Respect and (2) Listen to different points of view with an open mind. A few of my stakeholders stated that based upon my actions, they felt that I did not exhibit characteristics that validated their opinions as well as listened to them with an open mind. I wanted to improve upon my behavior and create an environment that encouraged input as well as demonstrate my appreciation for their hard work.
2. What actually happened and why? Examples
  - a. 10 of 13 of my stakeholders believed that I had improved upon my behavior or felt that no improvement was needed. Each gave feedback on past behavior and feed-forward towards improvement. Three of the stakeholders saw no change at all. In the mini survey, it was apparent that two – three stakeholders were struggling with letting go of the past. I felt that I had indeed made significant changes in those areas we had selected. I also found myself letting go of the past and taking better responsibility for my actions.
  - b. I worked daily on my actions and carried my weekly/daily check list. I worked diligently to demonstrate as many of the listed characteristics into my daily interaction with my section staff and others outside of the group. I was told, without prompting, that I was exhibiting an engaged style and validating my staff regularly. Some of the “non-supporters” continued to complain about my behavior when I held

- them accountable, and my management was engaged in the process so that those complaints were viewed as noise.
- c. Each month I asked my stakeholders for input into the process. Many were encouraged to provide that feedback and it appeared that they did not seem hesitant. A couple refused to provide any feedback and stated that they did not see any change.
  - d. In the end, my management struggled with supporting me in adding one final objective, “holding myself and others accountable.” The noise from three employees, considered just noise, made managers uncomfortable and unwilling to support that objective. I then elected to move on to a new assignment.
3. What insights did you have along the way? Examples
- a. I have grown as a manager in many ways. I find myself deferring credit and appreciating the positive responses. I also listen and ask questions more often than just stating my opinions. I also find myself not taking criticism or feedback so personal and much more positively.
4. How was the coach most helpful? Examples
- a. I appreciated Chris’s insights and reminders. Often when I was frustrated and overwhelmed with the noise and attacks by some, Chris simplified the process of next steps and how we can achieve the most positive result. He reminded me often to get clarity and to really be clear myself. His validation of the process and the resulting changes I felt in me and my management was most beneficial and rewarding.
5. How have you sustained and built upon what you learned? Examples
- a. I find that in my new role (I have moved into a different role), I am still practicing listening and asking for clarification. I don’t feel so committed to a process or result. I feel very comfortable with getting feedback and feed forward with my new manager. The process opened my mind and allowed me to be more flexible and open to any outcome. As a manager, I find that I gain more cooperation and support from teammates and supporting staff.