

Goal 2 Be a High-Performing Organization

Goal Statement

ORD will be a high-performing organization in which employees communicate openly, serve customers, and work collaboratively to make ORD more effective and efficient.

What This Goal Means

Excellence in scientific and engineering research requires a strong, supportive organizational foundation. We are committed to the growth and development of our staff and the continuous improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of our organization and infrastructure. Under this Goal, ORD will continue to provide leadership and devote resources to develop and foster our workforce, model effective management, and create a supportive work environment that promotes creativity, innovation, teamwork, and productivity. In short, we will recruit and retain the best possible people and provide them with the infrastructure, resources, and rewards for conducting results-oriented, customer-focused research in support of ORD's and EPA's missions. Becoming a high-performing organization will mean developing and sustaining the following:

- *A stimulating research environment* that attracts, holds, and values the best, brightest, and most energetic workforce in science, engineering, management, and administration and also encourages their creativity, innovation, and productivity;
- *Career opportunities* for staff to contribute to ORD's success, develop professionally, interact with colleagues, and achieve recognition;
- *Recognition and rewards* for achieving results, serving customers, and supporting each other;
- *Open, clear, and concise communication* that builds trust;

- *Efficiently managed and administered operations* that provide the resources and infrastructure for an effective research and development program;
- *Organizational flexibility* that balances the changing needs of the environmental agenda with the need for a stable research environment and ensures that administrative requirements are met with integrity while contributing to an atmosphere of trust;
- *A diverse workforce* whose varied backgrounds and perspectives are utilized and whose individual contributions are respected and valued; and
- *Clean, healthy, and safe facilities* that support and enhance the quality of ORD's science and engineering.

Why This Goal Is Important for ORD

Investing in our workforce and improving our organizational processes are key components of our success. The single most important factor is the talent and effort of our staff. None of our strategic goals can be realized without a highly qualified, diverse, and capable workforce. The discoveries and accomplishments we seek will spring from the efforts of a staff who are motivated in their work and provided with the support and recognition needed to help them do their best.

Motivating and supporting our workforce requires a culture that inspires respect, honesty, and trust and that rewards leadership, innovation, teamwork, and risk-taking. It also requires efficient management and administrative processes. All of these elements add up to



developing an organization where workforce policies, management and administrative processes, internal structure, and corporate culture are aligned to meet our strategic goals. Fostering this high-performing organization will directly contribute to achieving our other strategic goals by providing the workforce with tools and incentives to:

- Improve product delivery and customer service;
- Highlight our scientific excellence and leadership;
- Better integrate our work; and
- Better anticipate risks and issues.

Goal 2 Objectives and Actions

2.1 Recruit, retain, and develop a highly qualified and diverse workforce.

2.1.1 – Conduct an ORD workforce planning analysis to ensure staff competencies/skills mix to fulfill our mission.

2.1.2 – Develop and implement recruitment strategies to attract a highly qualified and diverse workforce.

2.1.3 – Institute an effective career development program for all employees, which includes a range of opportunities (e.g., rotations, training, Intergovernmental Personnel Act assignments, individual development plans, exchange programs with universities).

2.1.4 – Create and implement a consistent, ongoing approach to assess what attracts people to work at ORD and why they stay or leave.

2.1.5 – Modify promotion criteria to reflect ORD’s mission and goals and clearly communicate performance expectations to staff.

2.2 Create a culture that inspires respect, honesty, and trust.

2.2.1 – Identify elements of a trusting work environment and develop and implement a plan to improve workplace trust at all levels of the organization.

2.2.2 – Train and evaluate all managers in communication skills, particularly on providing feedback and recognition to employees.

2.2.3 – Increase direct communication between managers and staff (e.g., open-door practices, skip-level meetings, informative e-mails).

2.2.4 – Develop and implement an internal communication improvement strategy.

2.2.5 – Institute a feedback process (e.g., 360-degree evaluations) for all employees.

2.2.6 – Publish statistics on hiring, awards, training, developmental assignments, promotions, and travel.

2.3 Create a stimulating work environment that encourages and rewards leadership, creativity, innovation, teamwork, and risk-taking.

2.3.1 – Provide opportunities for staff to share leadership responsibilities.

2.3.2 – Design and implement a leadership development training program.

2.3.3 – Institute a peer-nominated award that recognizes an employee who exemplifies leadership.

2.3.4 – Increase recognition of and actively publicize awards and employee accomplishments, including team accomplishments.

2.3.5 – Identify and eliminate or reduce barriers to innovation and risk-taking.

2.3.6 – Expand opportunities for use of multidisciplinary teams.

2.4 Align our management and administrative processes and tools to help staff achieve our mission.

2.4.1 – Use quality management techniques to analyze and streamline administrative procedures and processes.

2.4.2 – Develop an orientation program that outlines roles, responsibilities, processes, and procedures.

2.4.3 – Align the reward, recognition, and promotion processes/criteria with strategic organizational goals and directions.

2.4.4 – Maintain support for technicians, infrastructure, and equipment.

2.4.5 – Develop and maintain a multifaceted, effective communication system that permits the efficient flow of accurate information into, within, and outside of ORD.

2.4.6 – Develop mechanisms to identify and disseminate best practices throughout ORD.

2.4.7 – Benchmark other high-performing organizations to identify and implement best practices.

2.4.8 – Invest in state-of-the-art information technology that can significantly streamline internal processes, promote information sharing and collaboration within ORD and with outside organizations, and facilitate ORD's technical assistance and risk communication activities.

Measures of Success

The principal assessment of how well we are achieving this Goal will be quantitative and qualitative measures of human resource performance, employee satisfaction on organizational assessments, and measures of administrative efficiency. In addition, a high-performing workforce will be measured by the amount, quality, and impact of the science produced, as found in performance measures for Goals 1, 3, 4, and 5.

Specific measures for this Goal include the following:

- Objective human resources data on acceptance rates, turnover, exit interviews, percentages of operating budget spent on recruitment, diverse employee backgrounds, and career development and training;
- Organizational climate survey data on employee satisfaction with career development and training, communication, levels of trust, and rewards and incentives;
- Administrative efficiency measures such as ratio of scientists to administrative staff, average cost per procurement, and average time for document approval;
- Evaluation of the 360-degree feedback process on whether the feedback is valued, provided openly and honestly, and acted upon; and
- Demonstrated payback from information technology investments.

