SUMMARY of RESULTS:

Advanced Supervisory Training Needs Assessment Survey

September/October 2006

Introduction/Purpose: On September 25, 2006, the Office of State Employment Relations (OSER) launched a web-based survey to assess the training needs of State of Wisconsin supervisors and managers. The survey closed on October 6, 2006.

The purpose in conducting this survey was to gauge interest and collect information that will help in the development of Advanced Supervisory Training modules that go beyond the basic training that is currently provided.

Demographics/Responses: Responses were received from approximately 40% of all state managers/supervisors, or approximately 1,500 supervisors and managers representing almost all job classifications and almost all state agencies, with only a few notable exceptions. (The Department of Health & Family Services and the University of Wisconsin-Madison did not participate because recently they had done a very similar survey of their supervisors/managers and this survey would have been duplicative of their efforts.)

Supervisory Experience: 60% of respondents have been a state supervisor/manager for 10 years or less.

Main Work Location: All regions of Wisconsin were represented in the survey responses. About 45.3% of responses came from supervisors/managers working in south-central Wisconsin (including Madison), followed by 19.6% in Southeast Wisconsin, 13.6% in Northeast Wisconsin, 10.7% in Northwest/Northern Wisconsin, 5.7% in Southwest Wisconsin, and 4.9% in Central Wisconsin. 0.3% of responses came from supervisors/managers whose main work location is outside Wisconsin.

Attended Basic Supervisory Development Training: About 84% of respondents have taken the basic supervisory training. About 40% of respondents had taken the training 10 or more years ago. Roughly two-thirds of respondents took the training from OSER; with about 19% taking it at their agency level. (Note: UW-Madison and DHFS did not participate in the survey; and they have their own basic supervisory development programs.) Approximately 16% of supervisors/managers have not taken the basic supervisory training.

Interest/Needs in Advanced Supervisory Training:
More than 83% of respondents were very interested or moderately interested in attending advanced supervisory training modules. Respondents were provided with a list of 56 topics that could be potential advanced supervisory training modules, and were asked to rank them based on whether they have an *Immediate Need* (next 6 months), *Future Need* (within 6-18 months), or *No Need at this time.*

Here are the **Top 20 Topics** for which respondents indicated they had an immediate *or* future need for training. (Note: the rankings reflect the combined responses for immediate and future needs.)

TOPIC	Immediate need (next 6 months)	Future need (within 6 to 18 months)	No need at this time
1. Conflict Management, Conflict Resolution	23% (345)	42% (640)	35% (533)
2. Developing and Training Employees	19% (294)	44% (669)	37% (555)

3. Motivating Employees	24% (360)	39% (595)	37% (557)
4. Coaching & Mentoring Skills	20% (308)	41% (615)	39% (595)
5. Creativity & Innovation in the Workplace	17% (254)	43% (653)	40% (611)
6. Compensation, Broadbanding, Pay Ranges	21% (321)	38% (580)	41% (617)
7. Discipline, progressive and corrective; Just Cause	21% (315)	38% (576)	41% (627)
8. Performance Management	15% (222)	43% (633)	42% (625)
9. Change Management	18% (272)	38% (573)	44% (673)
10. Retirement Program (Wisconsin)	16% (241)	38% (566)	45% (673)
11. Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA); Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)	14% (212)	39% (586)	47% (714)
12. Recognizing Employees	14% (213)	37% (554)	48% (713)
13. Feedback, giving & receiving	13% (192)	39% (596)	48% (724)
14. Team-Building	17% (255)	34% (507)	49% (718)
15. Labor Agreements, Local Union Agreements	17% (251)	35% (527)	49% (734)
16. Budget/Fiscal Management	15% (235)	36% (539)	49% (744)
17. Job Classification Overview, Classification Surveys, Reclassification, Reallocation	14% (210)	36% (538)	51% (764)
18. Grievance Procedure; Arbitration	15% (220)	35% (522)	51% (770)
19. Delegation Skills	14% (218)	35% (524)	51% (776)
20. Career Development (your own)	14% (211)	34% (516)	52% (791)

Here are the **Top 10** topics ranked *only* for Immediate Need (within 6 months). (The combined rankings for Immediate Need and Future Need are in parentheses.)

TOPIC	Immediate need (next 6 months)	Future need (within 6 to 18 months)	No need at this time
1. Motivating Employees *(3.)*	24% (360)	39% (595)	37% (557)
2. Conflict Management, Conflict Resolution *(1.)*	23% (345)	42% (640)	35% (533)
3. Compensation, Broadbanding, Pay Ranges *(6.)*	21% (321)	38% (580)	41% (617)
4. Discipline, progressive and corrective; Just Cause *(7.)*	21% (315)	38% (576)	41% (627)
5. Coaching & Mentoring Skills *(4.)*	20% (308)	41% (615)	39% (595)
6. Developing and Training Employees *(2.)*	19% (294)	44% (669)	37% (555)
7. Change Management *(9.)*	18% (272)	38% (573)	44% (673)
8. Team-Building *(14.)*	17% (255)	34% (507)	49% (718)
9. Creativity & Innovation in the Workplace *(5.)*	17% (254)	43% (653)	40% (611)
10. Labor Agreements, Local Union Agreements *(15.)*	17% (251)	35% (527)	49% (734)

Best Ways to Learn/Desirable in Online/Web-Based Format:

Respondents were asked to select the methods in which they learn best. They were able to choose as many methods as possible.

Best Ways to Learn	Response Percent
1. In classroom setting	**71.2%**
2. Doing the work/"learn-by-doing"/drawing on past experience	**68.6%**
3. Talking to co-workers, asking questions of supervisor, meetings, etc.	**65.6%**
4. Viewing videotapes, watching demonstration	**40.5%**
5. Reading books, manuals, and other publications	**37.1%**
6. Online/Web-based learning programs (including CD-ROM)	**35.6%**
7. Writing notes, brainstorming on paper/screen, drawing diagrams, etc.	**35.4%**
8. Reading web pages/websites	**31.7%**
9. Listening to audiotapes and/or digital recordings (e.g. audio CD, iPOD)	**13.5%**
10. Other, please specify	**2.8%**

Desirability in Web-Based, On-Line Format: The rankings above contrast with the responses regarding the desirability of supervisory training via online/web-based avenues, in which nearly 61% of respondents indicated that the training could be delivered partially web-based/on-line. 11.2% indicated that they would desire all of the training in an on-line/web-based format, while an equal number (again 11.2%) said they would not want any of the training on-line. 17% said they were not sure.

Summary of Comments/Areas:
Open-ended comments were entered by about 250 of the approximately 1,500 respondents. Comments focused on several main areas, summarized below.

Common Suggestions:

- State should continually invest in training supervisors, including refreshers, updates, continuing education, peer groups, and annual or quarterly events/conferences
- Utilize technical colleges, higher education degree programs, regional training sites, and consider providing graduate credit
- Use experienced, quality trainers – including "in-house" experts from state agencies
- Training should be practical and interactive
- Consider the use of technology, but remember supervision is a "people business" and many benefit from classroom learning

Remarks About Training Attended:
Respondents indicated they had obtained training from a wide variety of sources, both inside and outside state government. There was mention of CPM, ELA, basic supervisory training, and ALR.

General Comments:

- Many comments expressing appreciation for the survey and stressing follow-up to meet critical supervisory training needs
- Workload demands and lack of funds for training were mentioned as areas of concerns
- A number of comments indicating that the respondent is planning to retire soon

Conclusions/Possible Actions: There is a need for more supervisory training, as expressed by more than 83% of the 1,500 respondents to this survey.

Some of the "top 20" topics rated by respondents are areas in which OSER could and should provide training. This will necessitate the development of new, more advanced training, such as refreshers, shorter modules, as well as more in-depth training such as the existing Advanced Labor Relations (ALR) training program. OSER will need to ensure the commitment of staff to providing these types of training programs. Other options may include developing a "supervisors' corner" web page on the OSER web site, with topical FAQ's for supervisors, available learning opportunities for state supervisors/managers, and other comprehensive resource and learning links.

There are also a number of topics rated in the "top 25" that OSER likely won't be involved in presenting. There needs to be a comprehensive approach across the state as an enterprise, with multiple entities involved in meeting these needs:

- individual agencies responding to their supervisors' needs,
- smaller/medium agencies working with each other and/or with larger agencies to get those needs met,
- the State Training Council stepping in where possible,
- the Enterprise Leadership Academy (and proposed EMDA)
- Certified Public Manager program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and
- other state-provided supervisory training programs, conferences, and other learning events.

Technology can and should also be harnessed to reach people at their desks and outside Madison, such as webcasts. This should be balanced with an eye toward the preferred learning methods as shown in the survey results – the majority of supervisors prefer learning in a classroom setting, followed by learning by doing the work, drawing on past experience, learning from co-workers/supervisors, discussions, and meetings. Online and web-based learning programs are desired learning methods for only about one-third of the survey respondents.

Results of this survey – with finalized conclusions and action items – should be widely communicated to state supervisors, the State Training Council, HR directors and other HR staff, agency leaders, and others in the state system involved in developing supervisory learning events.