



OFFICE OF INTERNAL AUDIT

Stan Sewell, City Auditor

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Tim Kelly
City Council Members
From: Stan Sewell, City Auditor
Date: December 21, 2022
Re: Ethics Survey 2022

Integrity and ethical values are an integral part of the City's process to achieve desired goals. To evaluate the effectiveness of the work environment, the Office of Internal Audit conducted a confidential survey to determine employee opinions of the City's work environment. Survey questions primarily relate to ethical culture. However, we have included some questions that pertain to the broader work environment. A similar survey has been conducted the last few years and we intend to perform this survey annually in the future. Forty-one-percent of full and part time employees responded to the survey (1,106 individuals). This is a slightly higher percentage of employees than responded last year (2021).

The position classifications of respondents this year were consistent with the prior years. Approximately two-thirds classified themselves as staff, and one-third classified as middle management.¹ The majority of respondents believe their supervisor demonstrates high ethical standards², believe their department's policies & procedures help them do their job effectively³, believe their job responsibilities and reporting relationships have been clearly established and communicated to them⁴, know how to report fraud, waste and abuse⁵, and feel having a well-run City is a top priority for leadership⁶.

¹ Work Environment Survey question 1.

² Work Environment Survey question 3.

³ Work Environment Survey question 6.

⁴ Work Environment Survey question 7.

⁵ Work Environment Survey question 11.

⁶ Work Environment Survey question 12.

Except for a few survey questions, there was not an appreciable difference in the perceptions of employees based on their classification as staff, middle or upper management level. Gaps noted as worthy of mention follow:

- With regard to reporting wrongdoing and whether it would stop, fewer staff level employees (52%) thought wrongdoing would stop than middle management (61%) or upper management (71%).
- Fewer staff level employees (49%) believe they would not experience retaliation if reporting wrongdoing than middle management (62%) or upper management (75%).
- Fewer staff level employees (75%) believe their department's policies and procedures help them do their job effectively than middle management (84%) or upper management (83%).
- In regard to satisfaction with training opportunities, fewer staff level employees (69%) are satisfied than middle management (77%) or upper management (74%).

The only perception with a slightly negative change compared to 2021 pertained to "if you report wrongdoing, are you confident the wrongdoing would stop" (58% in 2021 vs. 56% in 2022).⁷ Other responses trended positively when compared to last year. The most positive change noted was that more individuals are satisfied with the training opportunities made available (62% in 2021 vs. 72% in 2022).⁸ Another notable positive change was an increase in respondents indicating their job responsibilities and reporting relationships were clearly established and communicated to them (79% in 2021 vs. 86% in 2022).⁹ Additionally, fewer respondents believe they would experience retaliation when reporting wrongdoing (22% in 2021 vs. 18% in 2022).¹⁰

There is a continuing concern about employee performance reviews. Only 63% of survey respondents indicated they receive a job evaluation at least once every 3 years.¹¹ Some employees have concerns about the value of their job evaluation or performance appraisal. Only 47% of respondents think their evaluation is beneficial.¹²

⁷ Work Environment Survey question 4.

⁸ Work Environment Survey question 8.

⁹ Work Environment Survey question 7.

¹⁰ Work Environment Survey question 5.

¹¹ Work Environment Survey question 9.

¹² Work Environment Survey question 10.

Effective and timely feedback clarifies expectations, while constructive criticism provides an avenue for improvement. The importance of a performance review was previously emphasized in our Control Environment audit report (Audit 18-03) issued November 29, 2018.

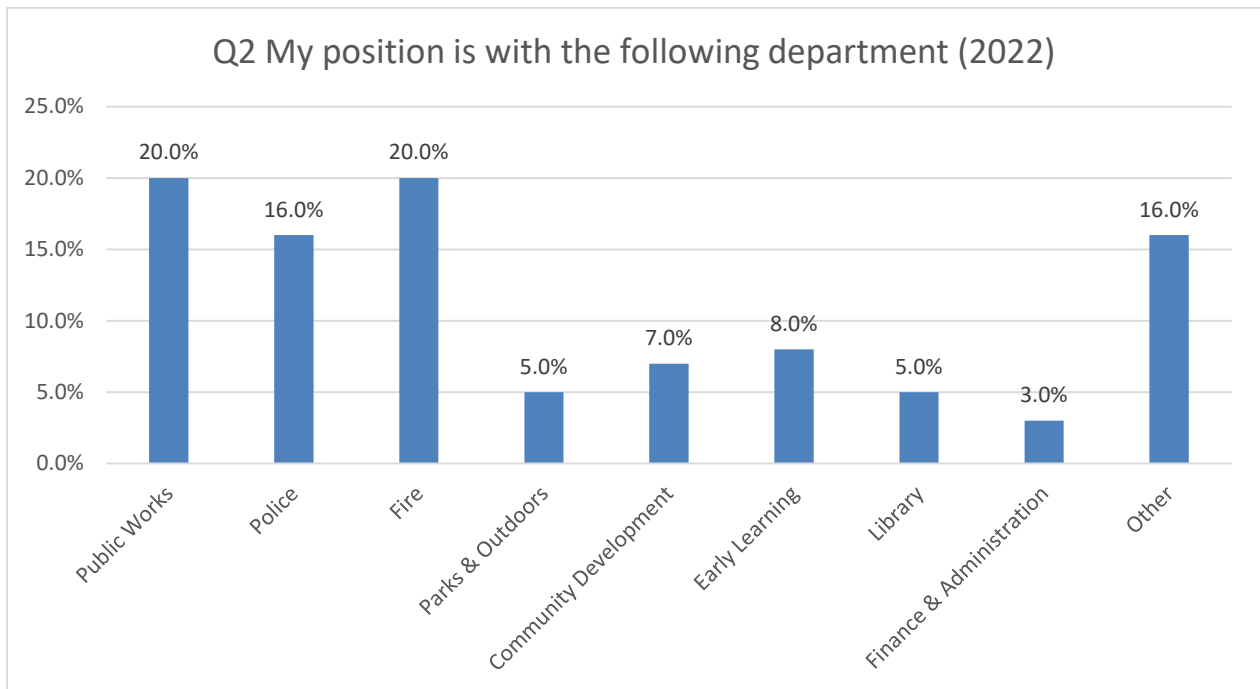
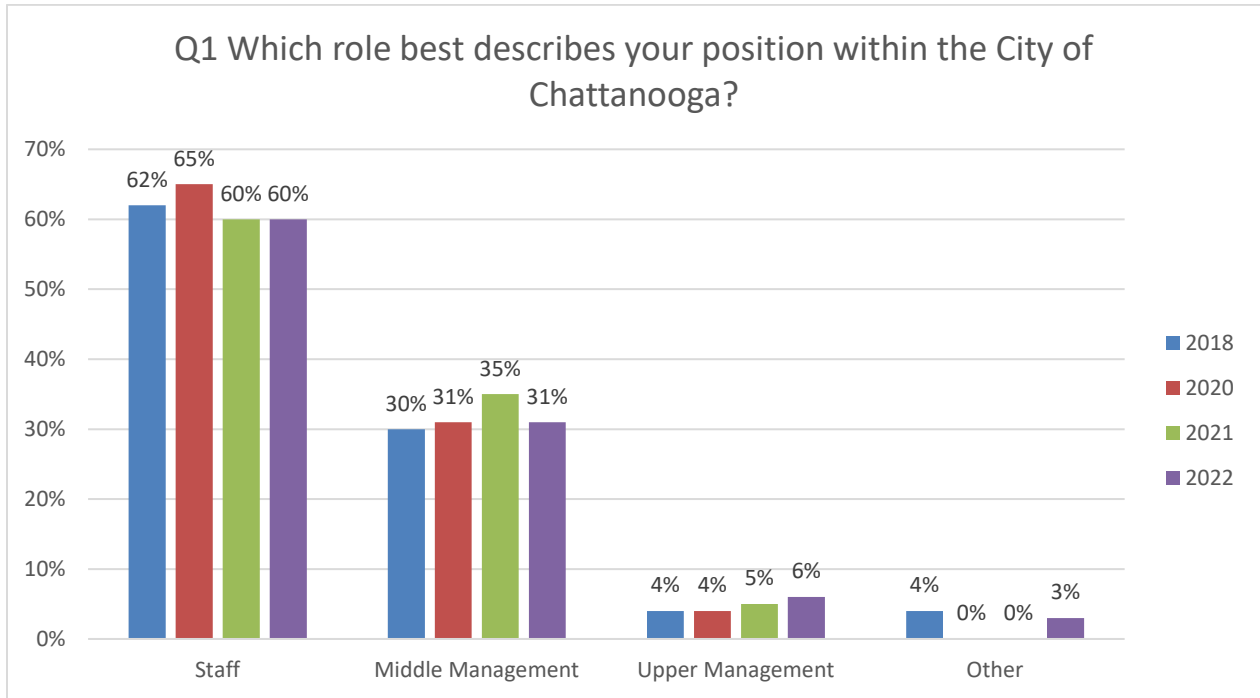
Summary graphs displaying the results of our work environment surveys is attached. Detail data can be obtained in Excel format on the Office of Internal Audit's page of the City's website. We encourage analysis of the raw data to obtain an understanding of perceptions at a granular level by applying filters (such as comparing different departments).

The issues discussed in this memorandum are not the result of an audit performed in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Had we performed such an audit, additional issues might have been reported.

Attachment

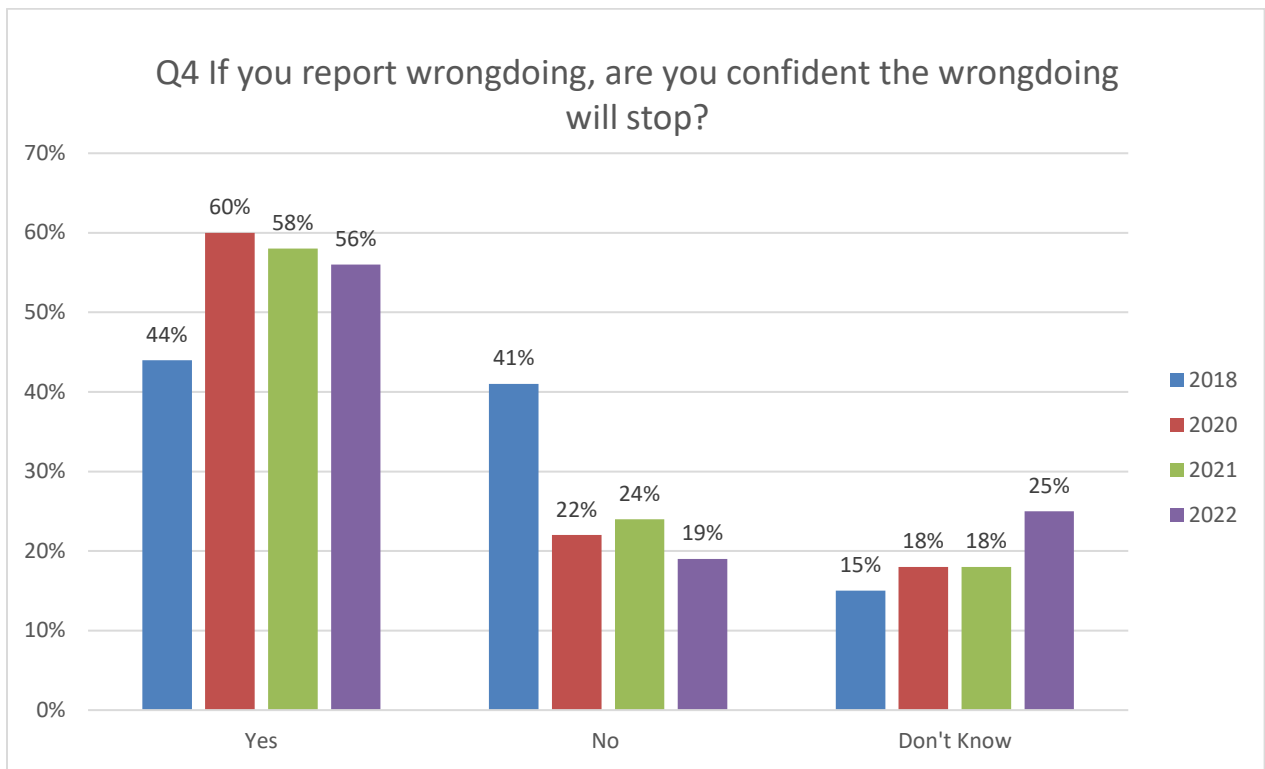
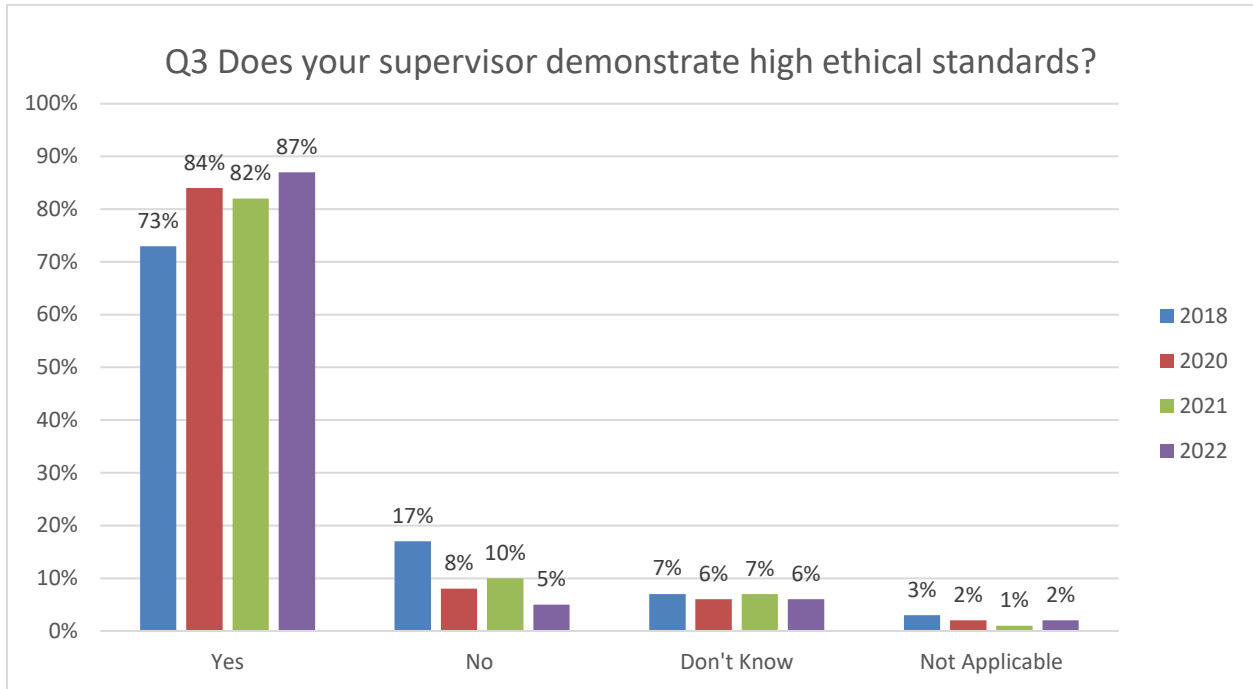
cc: Audit Committee
Joda Thongnopnua, Chief of Staff
Ryan Ewalt, Chief Operating Officer
Julia Bursch, Deputy Chief Operating Officer
Department Heads

City of Chattanooga Work Environment Survey 2022¹³

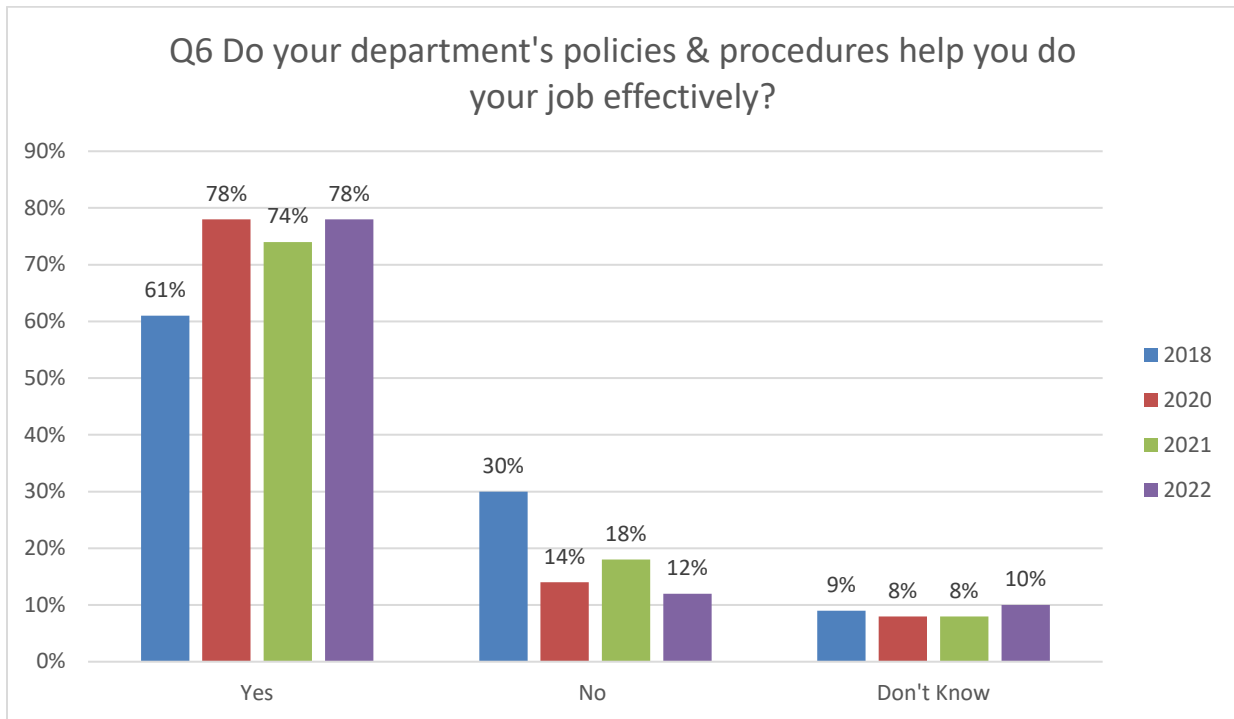
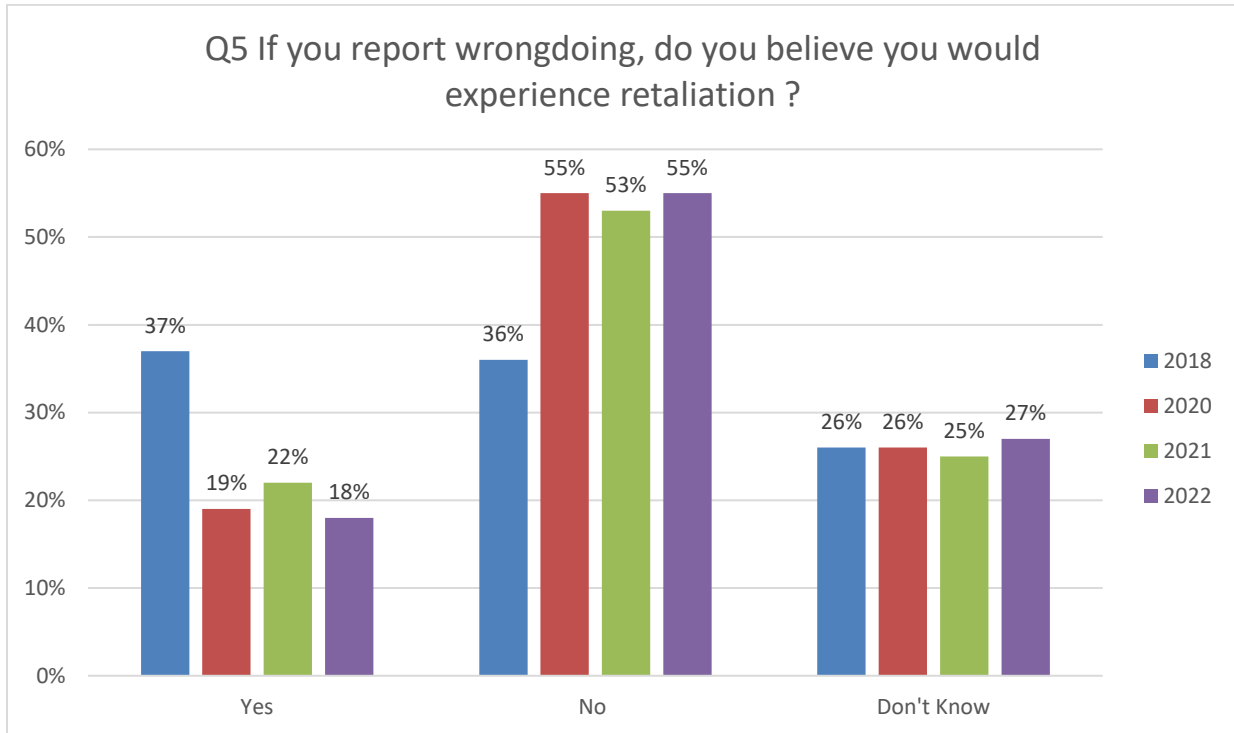


¹³ The 2018 survey was conducted as a component of an audit and had fewer respondents (506) than later years. Although we present the 2018 data in our graphs, comparisons to 2018 should be made with caution due to the lower response rate.

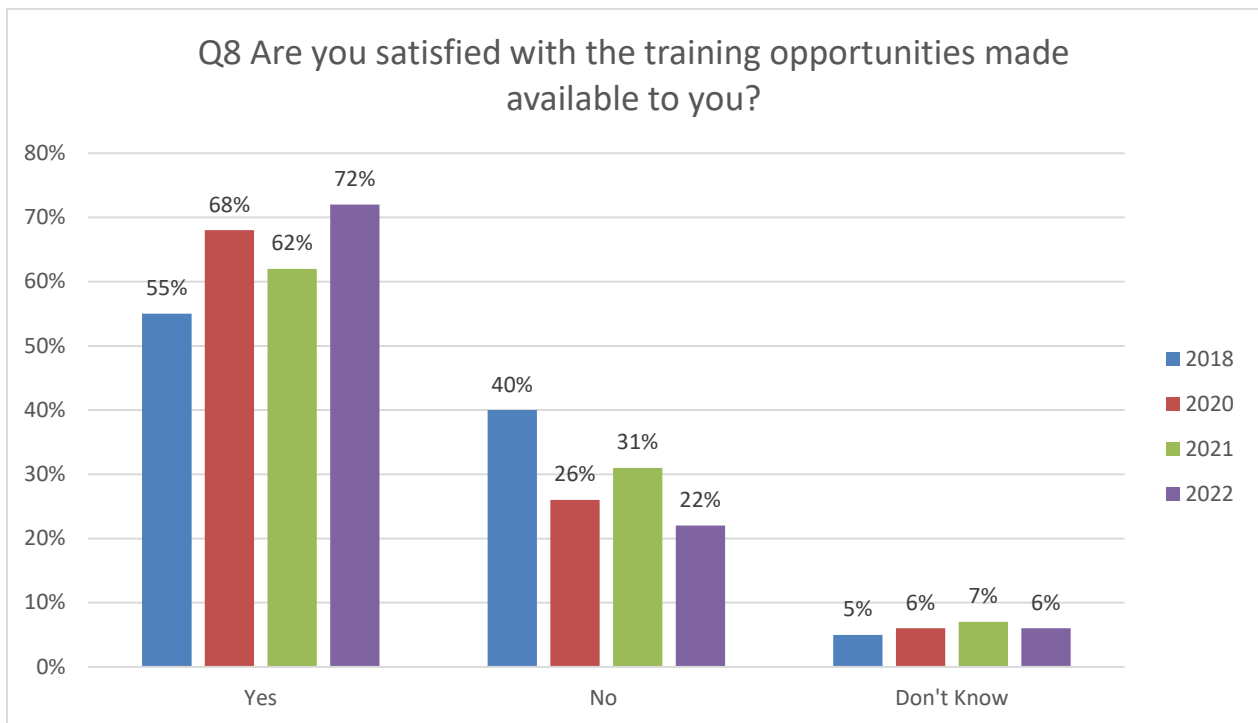
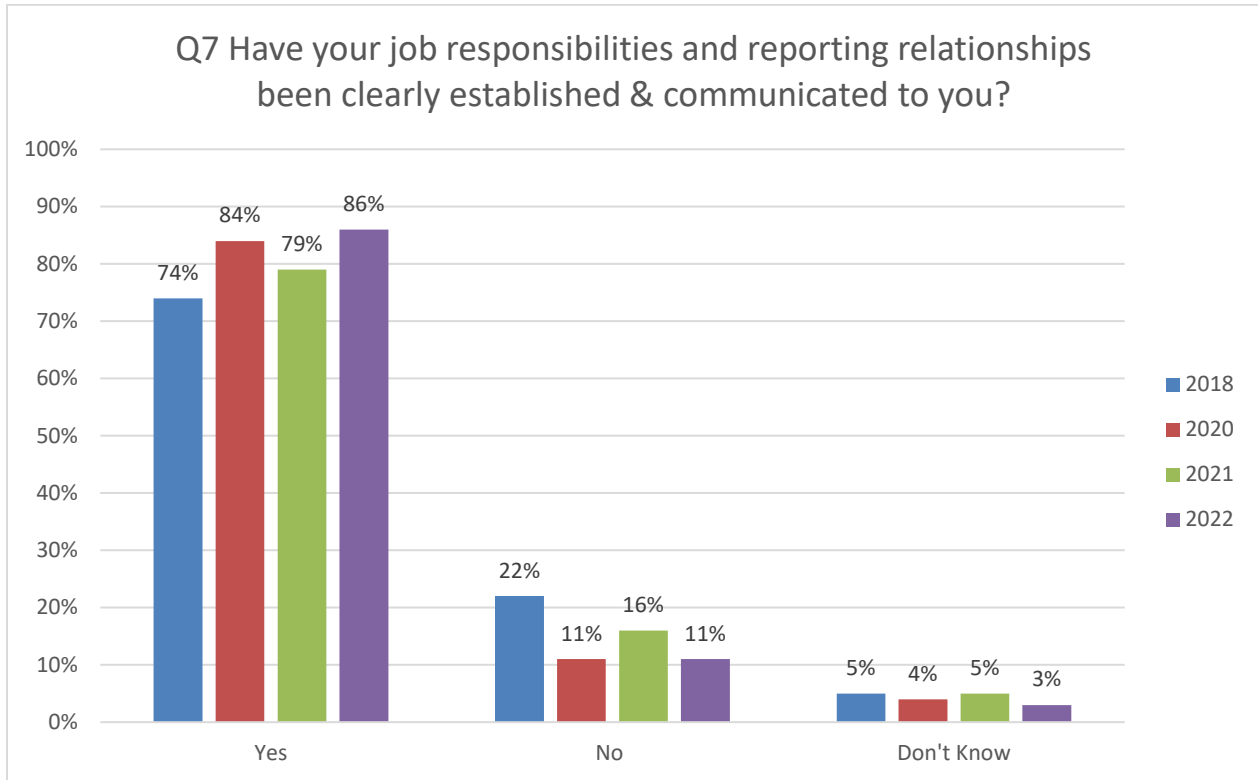
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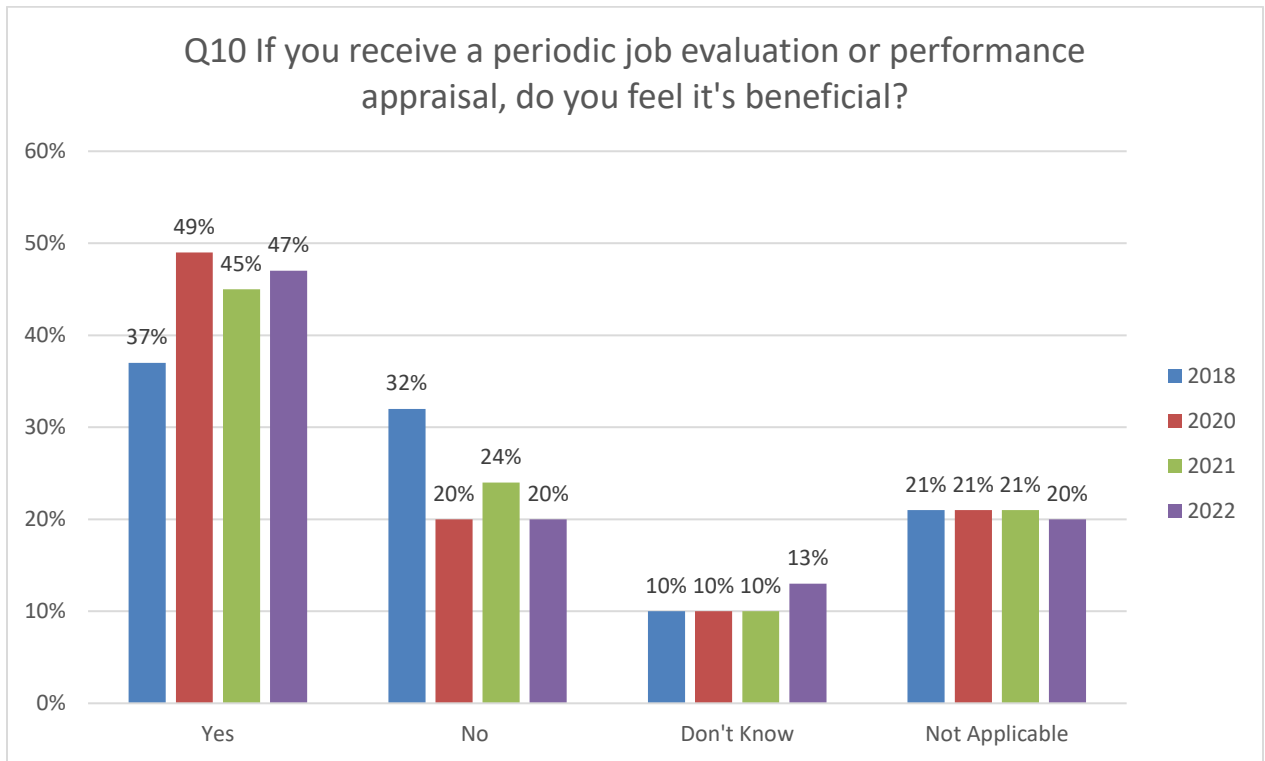
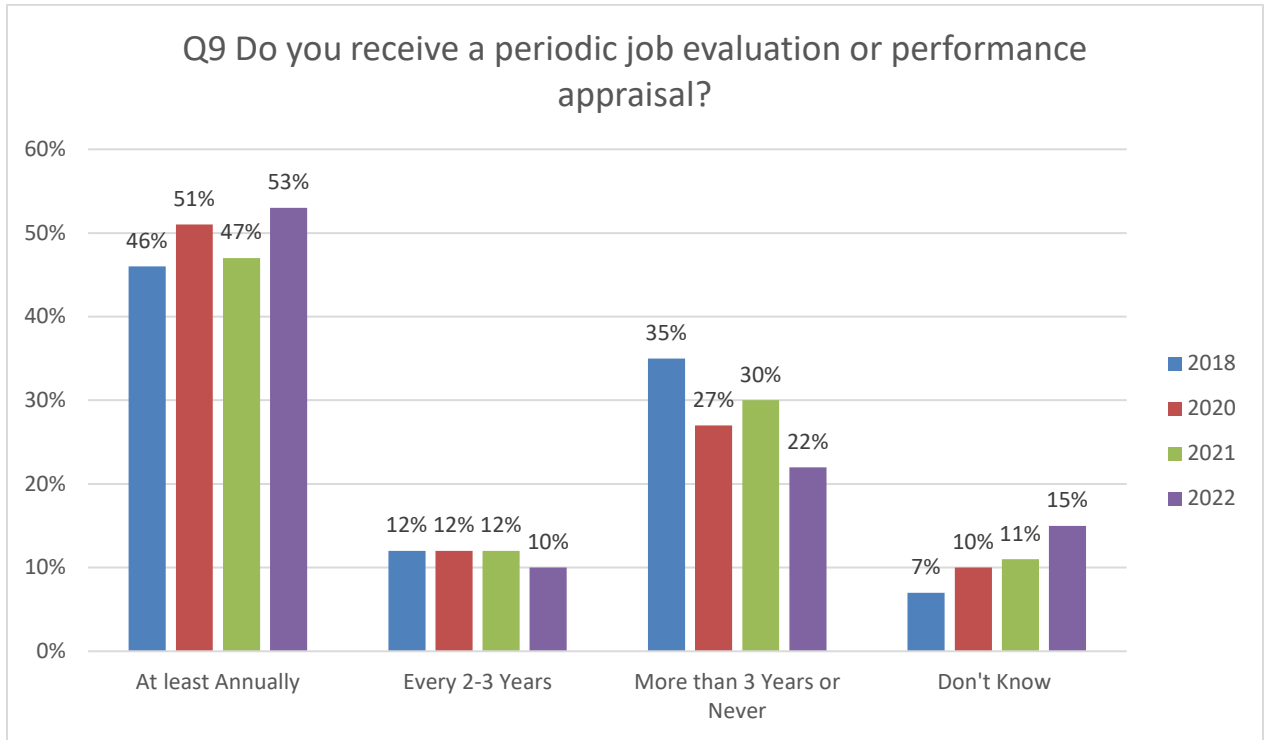
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