Workforce Challenges

National Science Foundation

Business and Operations Advisory Committee

November 14, 2012

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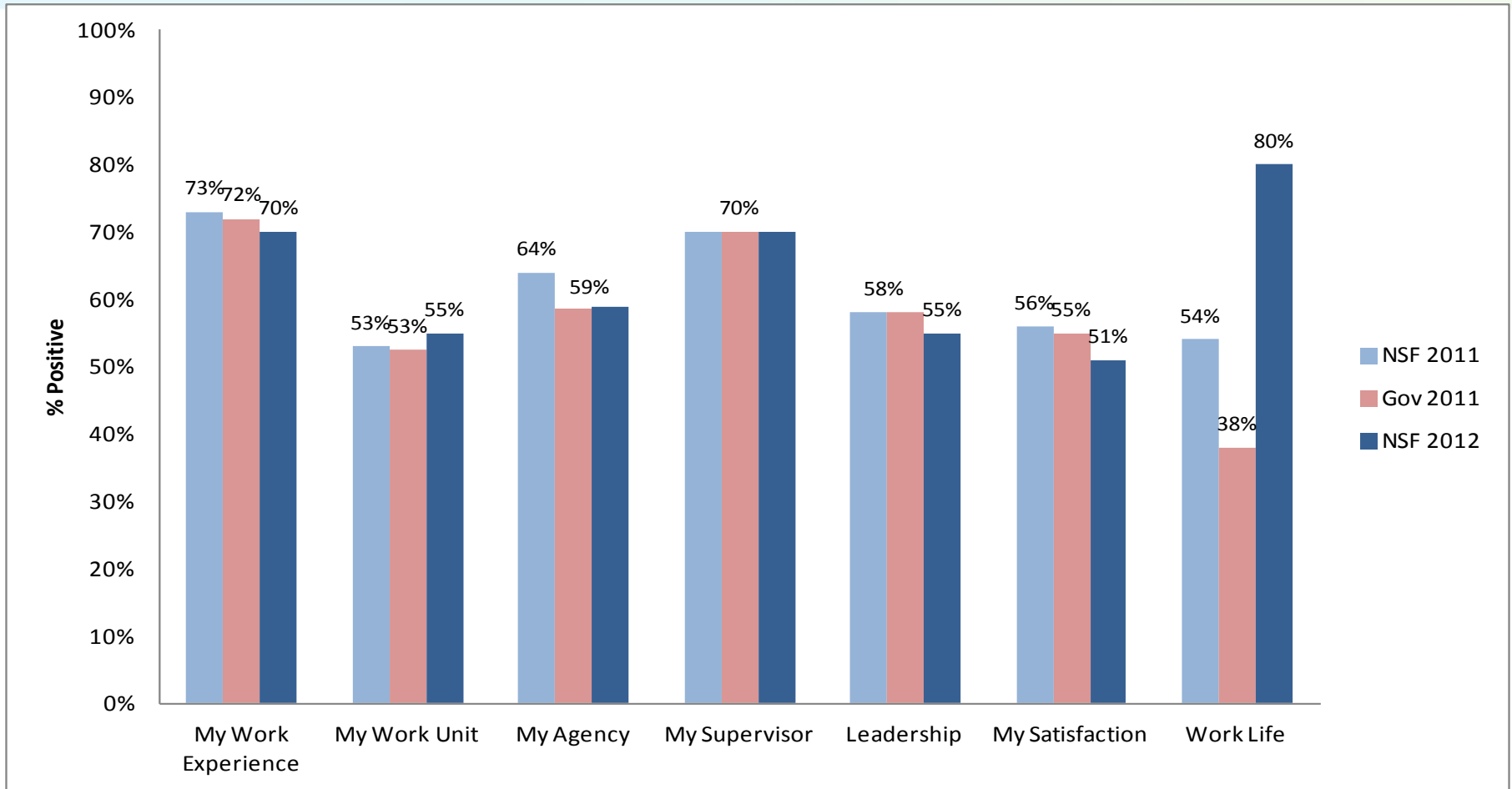Your Success is Our Success!

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Data from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

NSF Composite Scores

Average of positive responses by focus area
Work/Life results reflect a new methodology limiting responses to only those who participated in work/life programs

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NSF Composite Scores

My Work Experience (19 items)

- Slight negative trend, although relatively positive scores overall
- Lowest items (<50% positive): sufficient resources; workload; and assessment of training needs
- Highest items (>90%): putting in extra effort; looking for better ways to do one's job

My Work Unit (9 items)

- Slight positive trend, although relatively low scores overall
- Lowest items (<50%) related to performance management: promotions; dealing with poor performers; recognition; awards
- Highest item (88%): quality of work done by one's work group

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NSF Composite Scores

My Agency (13 items)

- Negative trend and low scores overall
- Lowest items (<50%): personal empowerment; pay raises; rewards for creativity
- Highest items (84%): agency is successful at accomplishing mission
- Only 47% believe results of the survey will be used to improve agency

My Supervisor (11 items)

- Steady, relatively positive scores
- Lowest item (57%): supervisor provides constructive suggestions to improve job performance
- Highest item (82%): supervisor talked to me about my performance in past 6 months; significant improvement from 2011

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NSF Composite Scores

Leadership (10 items)

- Negative trend and low scores overall
- Lowest item (40%): leaders generate motivation and commitment in the workforce
- Highest item (63%): senior leaders support work/life program

My Satisfaction (9 items)

- Negative trend and low scores overall
- Lowest items (<50%): satisfaction with information from management; policies and practices of senior leaders; and opportunity to get a better job
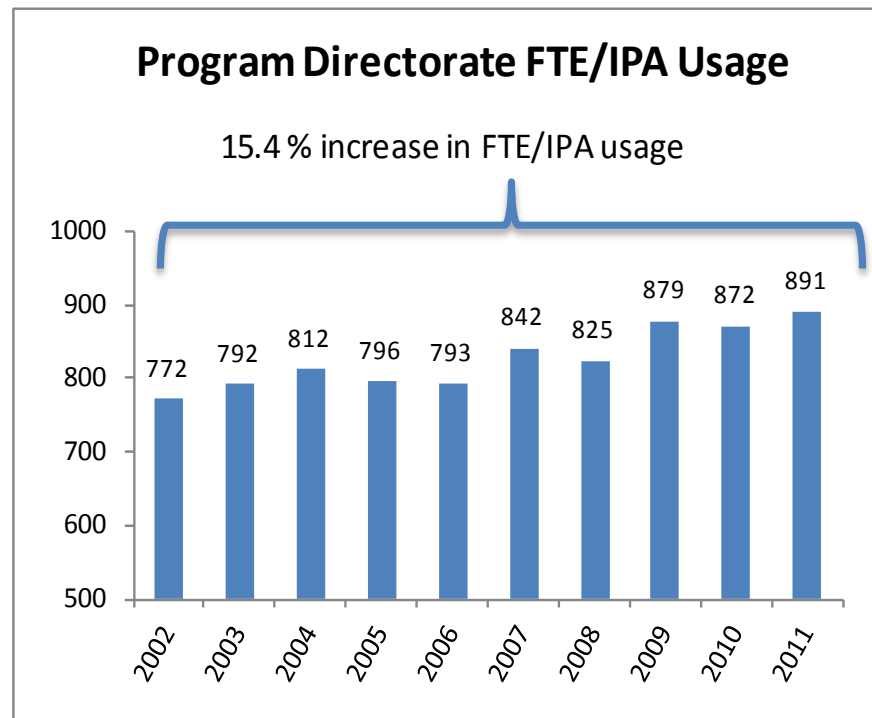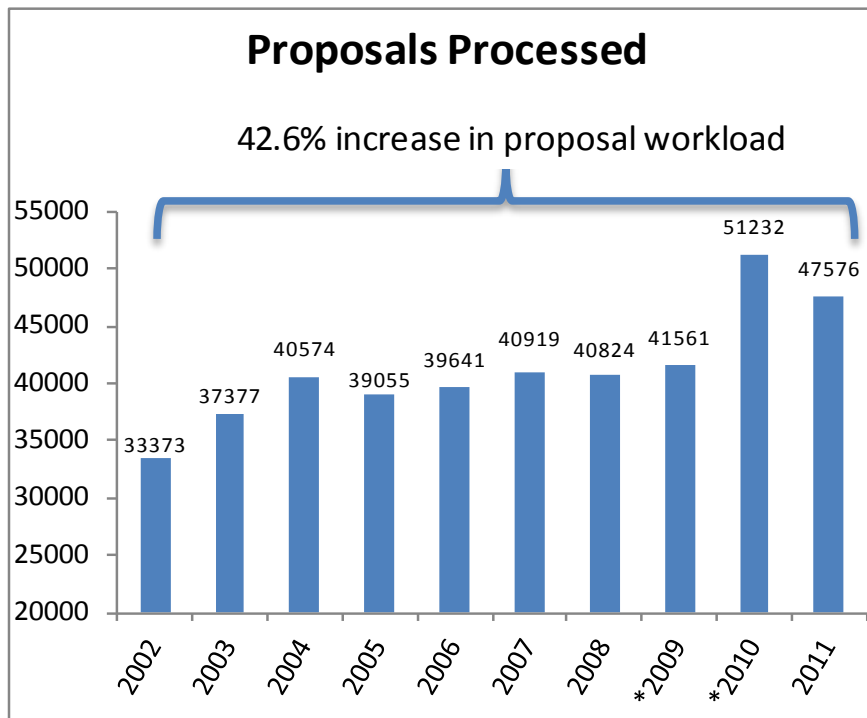- Highest item (66%): overall satisfaction with job

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Workload

FEVS Workload Trends

Question	NSF 2010 % Positive	NSF 2011 % Positive	NSF 2012 % Positive	NSF Difference 2011 to 2012
(7) When needed, I am willing to put in the extra effort to get a job done.	98%	↑ 99%	↓ 97%	-1.8%
(9) I have sufficient resources (for example, people, materials, budget) to get my job done.	↓ 54%	↓ 52%	↓ 48%	-4.7%
(10) My workload is reasonable.	↓ 52%	↓ 45%	↓ 44%	-0.8%
(20) The people I work with cooperate to get the job done.	↓ 75%	75%	↑ 76%	0.5%
(21) My work unit is able to recruit people with the right skills.	↓ 53%	↓ 51%	↑ 53%	2.6%
(27) The skill level in my work unit has improved in the past year.	↓ 51%	↑ 51%	↑ 52%	1.2%
(29) The workforce has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.	↓ 76%	↑ 77%	↓ 75%	-1.7%

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Workload and Staffing: 2002-2011

Proposals Processed

42.6% increase in proposal workload

Values by year:
- 2002: 33373
- 2003: 37377
- 2004: 40574
- 2005: 39055
- 2006: 39641
- 2007: 40919
- 2008: 40824
- *2009: 41561
- *2010: 51232
- 2011: 47576

Program Directorate FTE/IPA Usage

15.4 % increase in FTE/IPA usage

Values by year:
- 2002: 772
- 2003: 792
- 2004: 812
- 2005: 796
- 2006: 793
- 2007: 842
- 2008: 825
- 2009: 879
- 2010: 872
- 2011: 891

*ARRA funding impacted the number of proposals processed in 2009 and 2010.

Note: The weighted workload analysis examines workload in Program Directorates only, and thus the numbers above are reflective of proposals and staffing in Program Directorates only. FTE *allocations* for NSF as a whole increased 12.5% from 2002 to 2011.

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Weighted Workload By Directorate
Program Directorate Weighted Workload to FTE by Year

Note: Above ratios provide one indicator of relative workload across time and organizations, but should be interpreted within the context of other information known about the organizations. Model does not include SRS/NCSES Division data (FY02-11) or ISE Division data (FY02-04) from SBE.
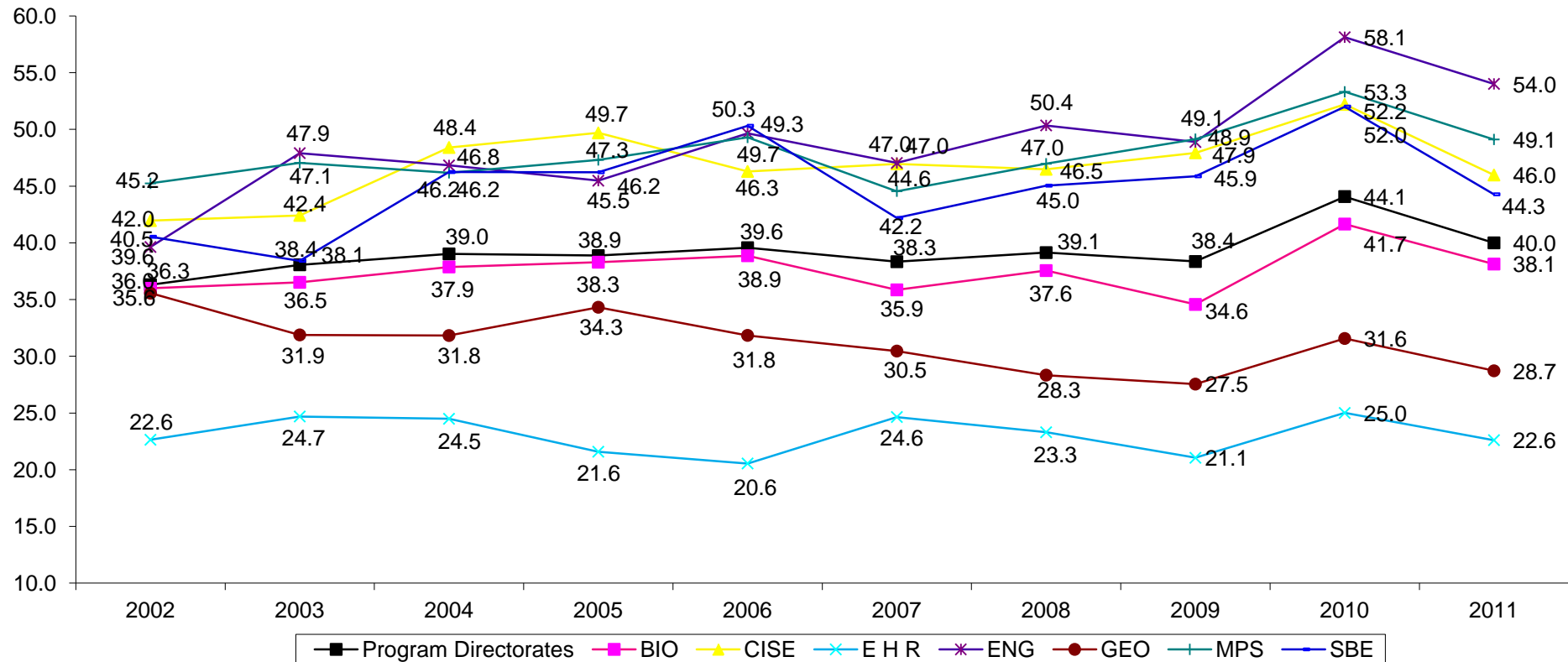
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Related Workload Drivers

- NSF program emphases
  - Transformational research
  - Interdisciplinary research
  - Cross-cutting priorities
  - Partnerships (interagency, international, with the private sector, etc.)
- NSF processes
  - Merit review
  - Award oversight
  - Assessment and evaluation

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- Based on your experience as customers of NSF's programs or processes, what do you see as action targets for managing our workload more effectively?

- Are you aware of research on organizational behavior that might be of value in addressing workload management?

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Performance Management

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NSF Performance Management Systems

- NSF has three distinct performance management systems
  - General Workforce (GWF)
    - Covers the largest numbers (~1000)
    - April 1 – March 31 cycle
  - Senior Executive Service (SES)
    - Covers <100 senior executives
    - October 1 – September 30 cycle
    - Must transition to a new government-wide system in FY13
  - Intergovernmental Personnel Act Assignees (IPAs)
    - Newest system – initiated in 2011; covers ~200 IPAs
    - Cycle depends on nature of position held

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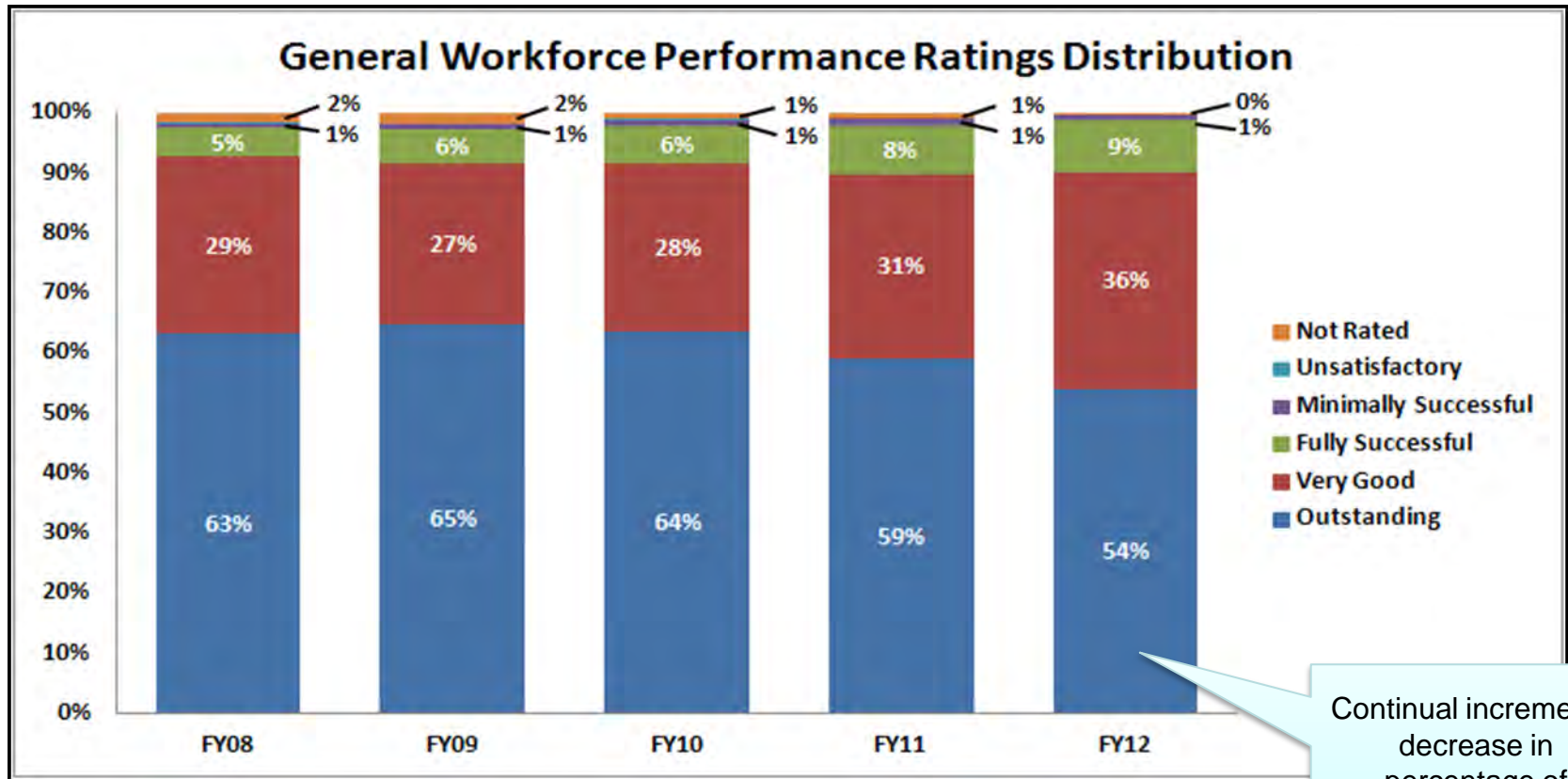Chief Information Officer

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Performance Management System Ratings Trends

General Workforce Performance Ratings Distribution

Legend:
- Not Rated
- Unsatisfactory
- Minimally Successful
- Fully Successful
- Very Good
- Outstanding

	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12
Not Rated / Unsatisfactory	2%	2%	1%	1%	0%
	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Fully Successful	5%	6%	6%	8%	9%
Very Good	29%	27%	28%	31%	36%
Outstanding	63%	65%	64%	59%	54%

Continual incremental decrease in percentage of Outstanding ratings

NOTE:
For the FY08 – FY12 cycles there were zero Unsatisfactory ratings

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Performance Management System EVS Trends

Relevant Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS) Trends:

Question	NSF 2008 % Positive	NSF 2010 % Positive	NSF 2011 % Positive	NSF 2012 % Positive
(15) My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my performance.	79% ⬆	79% ⬆	72% ⬇	67% ⬇
(19) In my most recent performance appraisal, I understood what I had to do to be rated at different performance levels (for example, Fully Successful, Outstanding).	72% ⬆	68% ⬇	63% ⬇	62% ⬇
(23) In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.	37% ⬆	31% ⬇	28% ⬇	33% ⬆
(24) In my work unit, differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way.	47% ⬆	39% ⬇	34% ⬇	35% ⬆
(25) Awards in my work unit depend on how well employees perform their jobs.	60% ⬆	49% ⬇	44% ⬇	42% ⬇
(44) Discussions with my supervisor/team leader about my performance are worthwhile.	65% ⬆	63% ⬇	60% ⬇	59% ⬇
(50) In the last six months, my supervisor/team leader has talked with me about my performance.	NA	78%	74% ⬇	82% ⬆

NOTE: *Arrows indicate trend direction from the previous year.*

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Performance Management System
SES Performance Management

SES Performance Ratings Distribution

Legend:
- Unsatisfactory
- Minimally Satisfactory
- Meets Expectations
- Superior
- Exceptional

Rating	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11
Minimally Satisfactory	1%			1%
Meets Expectations	5%	6%	4%	8%
Superior	26%	13%	40%	45%
Exceptional	69%	81%	57%	45%

Continual significant decrease in percentage of Exceptional ratings
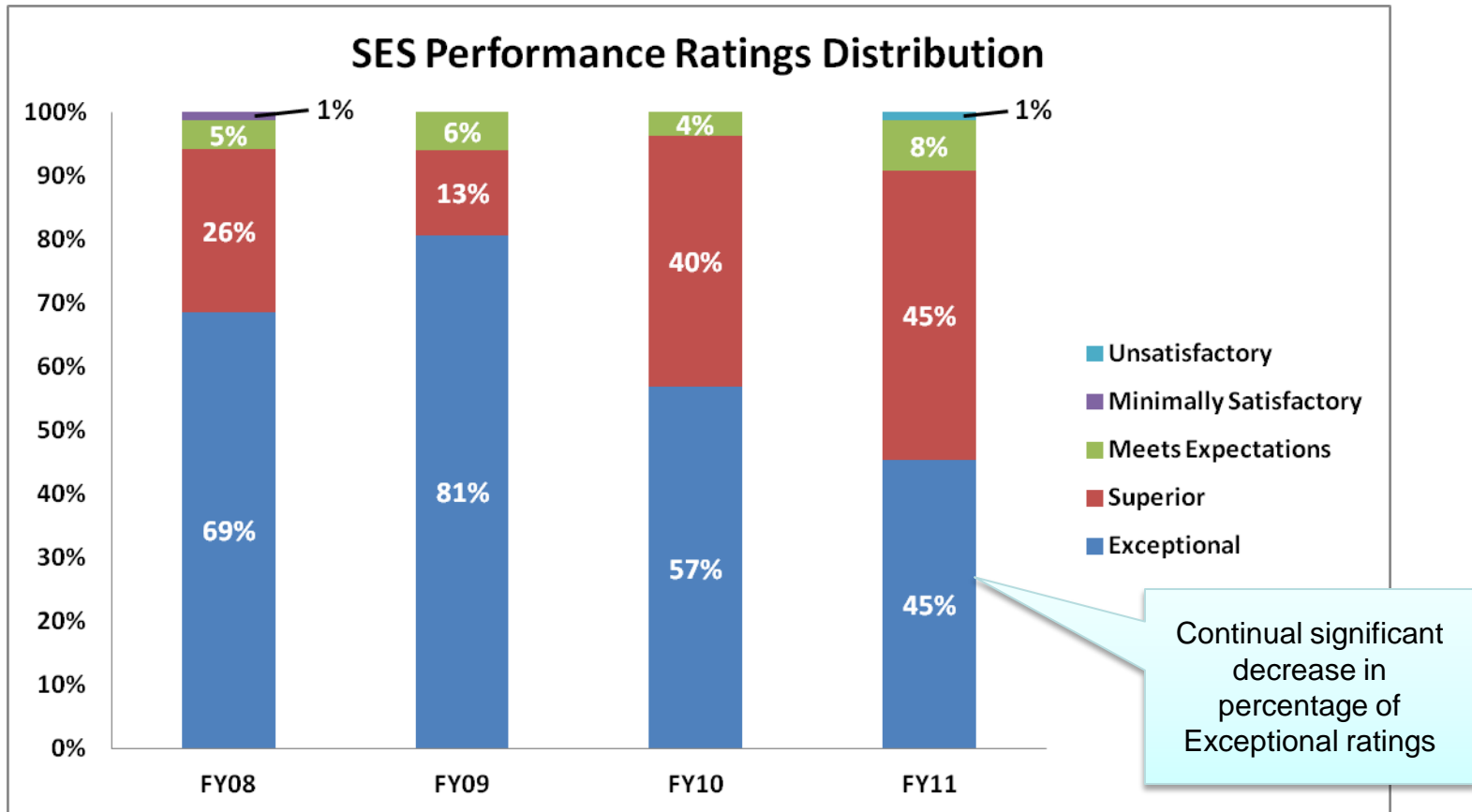
NOTE:
For the FY09 – FY11 cycles there were zero Minimally Satisfactory ratings
For the FY08 – FY10 cycles there were zero Unsatisfactory ratings

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Performance Management System
EVS Results by Employee Group

Relevant 2011 EVS Results Distributed by Pay Plan / Grade:

Question	GS 1-12	GS 13-15	SES	Scientific/ Prof (*Perm AD*)[1]
(15) My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my performance.	65%	76%	79%	73%
(19) In my most recent performance appraisal, I understood what I had to do to be rated at different performance levels (for example, Fully Successful, Outstanding).	61%	67%	64%	58%
(23) In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.	30%	30%	62%	19%
(24) In my work unit, differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way.	29%	36%	72%	32%
(25) Awards in my work unit depend on how well employees perform their jobs.	36%	45%	77%	45%
(44) Discussions with my supervisor/team leader about my performance are worthwhile.	64%	58%	66%	57%

SES responses are significantly different than the rest of the workforce

[1]"Scientific/Prof" was one of four categories survey participants could self-select. Due to NSF's structure, this category captures permanent employees on the AD pay plan.

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IPA Performance Plans

Relevant Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS) Trends for IPAs:

QUESTIONS	NSF 2008 % Positive	NSF 2009 % Positive	NSF 2011 % Positive
	n=33*	n=29*	n=87*
(15) My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my performance.	36% ⬆	17% ⬇	58% ⬆
(19) In my most recent performance appraisal, I understood what I had to do to be rated at different performance levels (for example, Fully Successful, Outstanding).	21%	14% ⬇	48% ⬆
(23) In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.	18% ⬆	21% ⬆	37% ⬆
(24) In my work unit, differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way.	18% ⬇	3% ⬇	47% ⬆
(25) Awards in my work unit depend on how well employees perform their jobs.	33% ⬇		48% ⬆
(44) Discussions with my supervisor/team leader about my performance are worthwhile.	39% ⬇	41% ⬆	70% ⬆

> 2011 was the first year IPAs developed plans.

NOTE: Arrows indicate trend direction from the previous year.
*Results could be skewed by low number of survey participants in 2008 and 2009 compared to 2011

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Performance Management Questions for Discussion

- What do you see as the most important elements of effective employee performance management systems? What makes them important/effective?

- As a federal agency, we are required to have very structured performance management systems (with slightly different structures at different levels). What mechanisms would you suggest for melding the structured systems with less formal, on-going feedback on performance?

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- What guidance do you have for us in setting performance (or customer service) expectations and standards for individuals and/or organizations in a situation where more than half the staff regards workload as unreasonable?

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