



Understanding Their Apprehension: A Look into the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

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¹The opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed in this presentation are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.



Outline

- Background on the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS)
 - Uses of the FEVS
 - Highlights from 2002 to 2017
- Opt Out Experiment in 2017
 - Purpose
 - Identify reasons for non-response from the non-respondents
 - Refusal Conversion
 - Sample Design
 - Survey Methods
 - Results
 - Summary

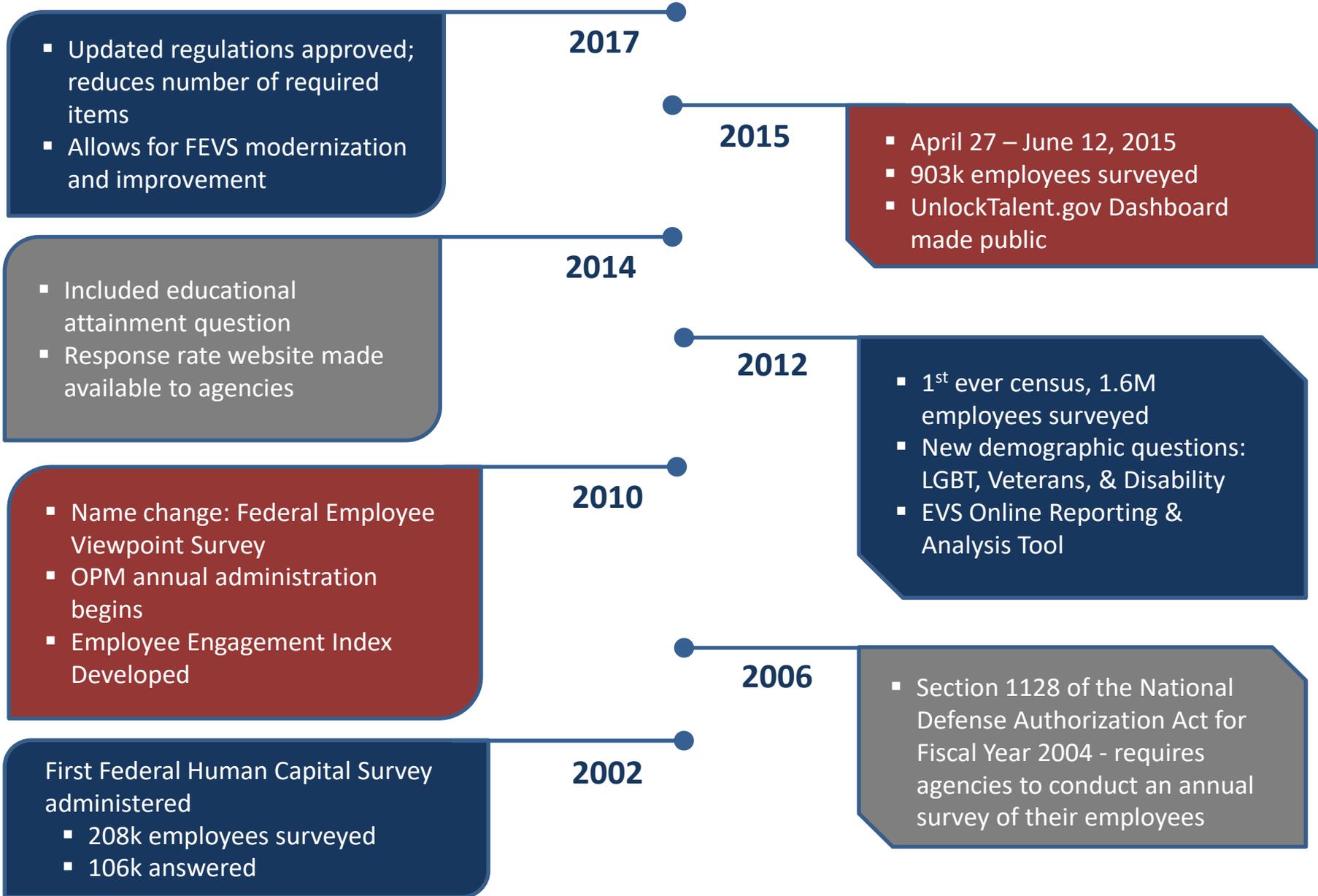


Background on the FEVS

2017


Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey
Empowering Employees. Inspiring Change.

- The Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) is an annual, Web-based survey of full-time, permanent, non-seasonal federal employees administered by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) required by law (NDAA 2004 & 2012)
- Measure employees' perceptions in agency leadership, work unit, and supervisor as well as work life environment.
- Produces three indices
Employee Engagement Index, Global Satisfaction Index, Inclusion Quotient Index



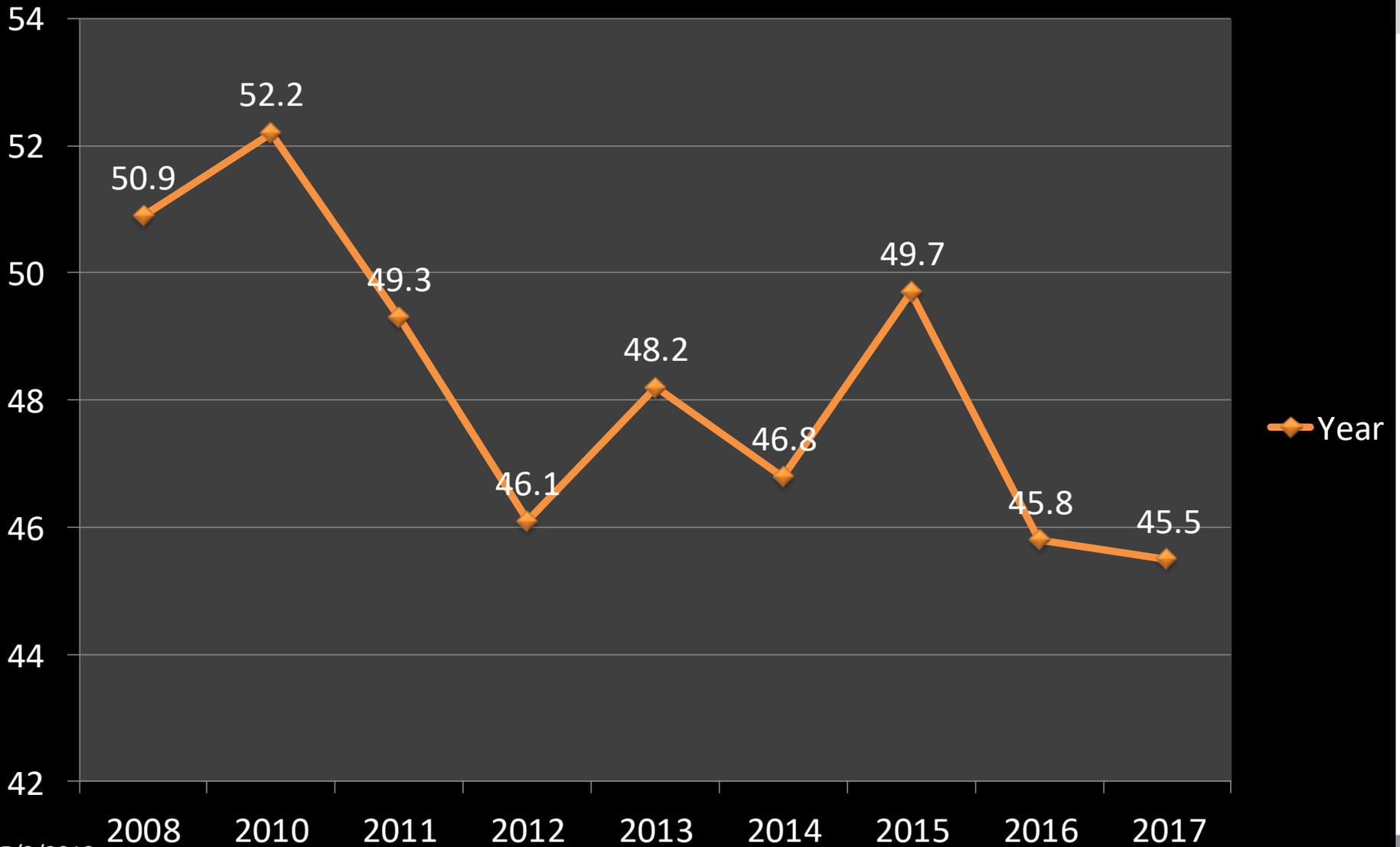


Opt Out Experiment in 2017

- Purpose
 - Identify reasons for non-response
 - Refusal Conversion
- Sample Design
- Survey Methods
- Results



GOVERNMENT WIDE FEVS RESPONSE RATES





FEVS Opt Out Sample Design

FEVS Sample Design

Work Unit Population Size	Sample	Sample Size
<50	Census	10 to 50
51 to 75	75%	38 to 56
76 to 150	50%	38 to 75
>151	25%	37+

Opt Out Sample Design

- Approximately 10% of the 2017 FEVS sample by SRS.
- About 112,000 people
 - 75% received a tailored appeal
 - 25% received no appeal



Survey Methods for Opt Out

- Invitation

Your opinions matter! Let your leadership know how you feel about your job, your supervisor, and your agency. The Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey provides a safe and confidential way for you to voice your opinions.

[Click here to access your survey](#)

If the link does not take you directly to the survey, copy and paste the following into a browser window: <PERSONALIZED URL HERE>

[Click here if you are considering not participating in the FEVS](#)

Please DO NOT forward this e-mail, as it contains your personalized link to the survey. Answering the questions will take about 25 minutes, and you may use official time. While participation is voluntary, your feedback is important.

This is an official survey from OPM, to see all current surveys from OPM [click here](#).

Reply to this message if you have any questions or difficulties accessing the survey, or call our Survey Support Center toll free at: 1-855-OPM-FEVS (1-855-676-3387).



Survey Methods for Opt Out

- First Opt Out Question: Conviction Level

2017

Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

Empowering Employees. Inspiring Change.



We are sorry to hear that you do not want to participate in the 2017 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. This is a voluntary survey and we respect your right not to participate.

Would you say that you are unsure about participating in the FEVS, or that you do not wish to participate?

- I am unsure about participating in the FEVS
- I do not wish to participate in the FEVS

I do not want to take the survey

If you have questions, please contact the Survey Support Center at EVS@opm.gov



Survey Methods for Opt Out

- Second Opt Out Question: Identify Reason

2017

 **Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey**

Empowering Employees. Inspiring Change.



We would like to understand why people choose not to take the FEVS. Before we remove you from the survey participation list, could you please respond to the following question?
Which of the reasons below MOST influenced your decision not to take the survey?

- I am too busy to take the survey
- I receive too many requests to take surveys
- Survey results are not used to change anything in my workplace
- I am concerned about the confidentiality of my responses
- Participation in the survey is not supported by leadership in my agency
- Survey results are never shared with employees
- Other, please specify:

If you have questions, please contact the Survey Support Center at EVS@opm.gov



Survey Methods for Opt Out

- Response: Tailored Appeal for “Too Busy”

2017

Federal Employee  Viewpoint Survey*Empowering Employees. Inspiring Change.*

Thank you for providing feedback about why you do not want to take the FEVS. You may already be aware, but let us remind you one last time of a few important points:

- As federal employees ourselves, the FEVS Team understands you are busy and that your time is valuable.
- The survey is sent to the minimum number of federal employees necessary to provide for a representative sample of the government-wide workforce.
- The survey should only take about 25 minutes to complete.
- You are allowed to complete the survey during regular work hours but, if necessary, you can complete it during non-work hours from any Web browser.

[I will take the survey now](#)



Survey Methods for Opt Out

- Response: Tailored Appeal for “Not Used”

2017

Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey*Empowering Employees. Inspiring Change.*

Thank you for providing feedback about why you do not want to take the FEVS. You may already be aware, but let us remind you one last time of a few important points:

- Based on feedback the FEVS Team has received, almost all agencies have an action planning committee composed of employees tasked with extracting insights from the FEVS and other sources to improve the organizational culture.
- In the past, these committees have used survey results to expand training and leadership development opportunities, increase telework utilization, and improve channels of communication between leadership and the workforce.
- Specific examples can be found on the Community of Practice page of UnlockTalent at www.unlocktalent.gov, which any federal employee with a government email address can access.

[I will take the survey now](#)



Sample and Opt Out Disposition

Description	Frequency
2017 FEVS Sample	1,139,882
Original Opt-Out Cohort	112,576
Eligible Opt-Out Cohort	105,319
Viewed Opt-Out Survey	1,533
Completed FEVS	831
Opted Out	485
Just Clicked Link	217



Experiment Results

- Conviction Level by Type of Appeal

Nonresponse Conviction Level	Frequency	Conversion Rate*
Unsure about participating	325	
No appeal	91	52.7
Tailored appeal	234	66.7
Do not want to participate	551	
No appeal	124	13.7
Tailored appeal	427	22.2

* An Automated Refusal Conversion Strategy for Web Surveys by Taylor Lewis presented during Session B-1



Experiment Results

- Reasons Not to Take Survey

Non-response Reason	Frequency
Survey results are not used to change anything	226
Confidentiality concerns	186
Too busy	118
Receive too many survey request	80
Dislike format	34
Recent employment change	29
Survey results never shared with employees	24
Participation not supported by leadership	12
Other	66
No reason provided	101



Experiment Results

- Top Four Reasons by Appeal

Non-response Reason	Frequency	Conversion Rate*
Survey results are not used to change anything	226	
No appeal	54	18.5
Tailored appeal	172	27.3
Confidentiality concerns	186	
No appeal	35	20.0
Tailored appeal	151	53.6
Too busy	118	
No appeal	22	9.1
Tailored appeal	96	26.0
Received too many survey request	80	
No appeal	21	9.5
Tailored appeal	59	23.7

* An Automated Refusal Conversion Strategy for Web Surveys by Taylor Lewis presented during Session B-1



Experiment Results

- Top Four Reasons from People who Completed the Opt Out Questionnaire by Frame Status in 2016

Non-response Reason	Total #	In 2016	Not in 2016*
Survey results are not used to change anything	226	217	9
Confidentiality concerns	186	169	17
Too busy	118	101	17
Received too many survey requests	80	76	4

*New to the agency



Experiment Results

- Survey results are not used to change anything by 2017 and 2016 Response Disposition

Disposition	2016 Completed	2016 Non-Response
2017 Completed	5%	3%
2017 Non-response	53%	39%



Experiment Results

- Confidentiality concerns
by 2017 and 2016 Response Disposition

Disposition	2016 Completed	2016 Non-Response
2017 Completed	14%	6%
2017 Non-response	44%	36%



Experiment Results

- Too Busy
by 2017 and 2016 Response Disposition

Disposition	2016 Completed	2016 Non-Response
2017 Completed	9%	2%
2017 Non-response	44%	44%



Experiment Results

- Received too many survey request by 2017 and 2016 Response Disposition

Disposition	2016 Completed	2016 Non-Response
2017 Completed	14%	2%
2017 Non-response	29%	55%



Opt Out Experiment Results Summary

Reason	Completed 2017 & 2016	Complete 2017 Non-Response 2016	Non-Response 2017 Completed 2016	Non-Response 2017 & 2016
Survey Results Not Used	5	3	53	39
Confidentiality Concerns	14	6	44	36
Too Busy	9	2	44	44
Too Many Survey Requests	14	2	29	55



Summary

- Less than 2% of the sample viewed the link
- Most common reasons
 - Non-respondents in 2016-2017, people selected too many survey requests
 - Respondents in 2016 that transitioned to non-response in 2017, people selected survey results not used to change anything
- People who cite confidentiality concerns are more likely to respond than people who cite survey results are not changing anything



Recommendation

- Review the language in the invitation and reminder emails
 - Focusing on confidentiality
 - Agency accomplishments



Questions

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