



# Get SMAART

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Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, Lake County, Illinois  
[www.19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us](http://www.19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us)

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## The Survey Says...

As many of you have already seen (and maybe have already completed) in this week's payroll envelopes, the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit is again seeking your input via the Court Employee Survey. In this issue, SMAART Team Member Robert Verborg provides us with a sense of history and direction of this effort.

A committed and involved court staff has a direct impact on a court system's level of performance. Moreover, it is a fundamental component towards achieving the goals and objectives of the court. Knowing how employees perceive their workplace environments and experiences is absolutely essential to facilitating organizational development and change, assessing teamwork and management styles, and enhancing job satisfaction, which ultimately leads to improved service to the public. So important is court employee satisfaction to the health and function of the entire court system that it is one of ten core measures contained in the National Center of State Courts (NCSC) Trial Court Performance Measures initiative, commonly referred to as *CourTools* (NCSC, 2005).

It is with these purposes in mind that the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit instituted a court-wide employee survey in 2006. Court leadership was able to use the results of this initial survey to implement a number of changes within our court organization. Some of the more noteworthy examples of such changes include:

- Formation of employee-based Court Administration Teams Survey (CATS) Committee to review the results of the employee survey and make recommendations on ways to improve.
- Judicial Operations Divisional Meeting held in August (based on recommendation from CATS).
- Publishing and distribution of a court-wide Customer Service Manual.
- Monthly meetings for Adult Probation Services staff to attend and obtain information, discuss ideas, and address concerns about Evidence Based Practices.

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*"An employee's motivation is the direct result of the sum of the interactions with his or her manager."*

*Dr. Bob Nelson*

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*“When people work in a place that cares about them, they contribute a lot more than duty.”*

*Dennis Hayes*

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- Adult Probation staff offered the opportunity to become certified trainers in the Level of Service Inventory (LSI-R) and Motivational Interviewing.
- Providing new computer equipment to Adult Probation & Psychological Services staff in advance of the move to the new building.
- Creation of a Special Projects Administrator position in Juvenile Probation and Detention Services.

Although some of the necessary changes identified by the employee survey do require more time and financial support to achieve, court leadership remains committed to the constant improvement and development of the entire organization.

Court leadership remains keenly interested in surveying the opinion of staff on whether you feel that you have the tools, support, and direction so important to providing the highest quality of court services. The *19<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court Employee Survey - 2007* has a new look. This year’s employee survey, based on the NCSC Court Employee Satisfaction Survey, includes several additional items garnished from other court jurisdictions that also participate in the *CourTools* initiative and feedback received from our previous survey. The inclusion of these new items allows us the ability to better compare our performance to that of other, similar court organizations. The two open-ended questions on the reverse-side of the survey give participants a chance to directly share their input on what the court organization does well and where it might have the opportunity to make further improvements. Your opinions will assist court managers and directors determine how best we can improve. Therefore, all employees are strongly encouraged to participate.

Reference:

National Center for State Courts (2005). *CourTools: Trial Court Performance Measures*. National Center for State Courts: Williamsburg, VA.

Website: [http://www.ncsconline.org/D\\_Research/CourTools/tcmp\\_courttools.htm](http://www.ncsconline.org/D_Research/CourTools/tcmp_courttools.htm)

## Did You Know...

The results of last year’s survey are posted on the Court’s Daily for your review. Use the left side menus and click on the SMAART News tab and then select Employee Survey Results to review the pages.

Thanks for your time.