

The Best Places to Work

IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

2009 RANKINGS



PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE



INSTITUTE for the STUDY of
PUBLIC POLICY IMPLEMENTATION
SCHOOL of PUBLIC AFFAIRS

BEST PLACES TO WORK 2009

Increases in employee engagement lead directly to improvements in organizational performance. An engaged employee is satisfied with her job and organization; derives a sense of personal accomplishment from her work; believes that her talents are used well and that she is given the chance to develop professionally; and feels encouraged to innovate, among other factors.

The *Best Places to Work in the Federal Government* rankings offer the definitive assessment of employee satisfaction and commitment in federal agencies, and the 2009 version offers good news for those who care about the effectiveness of our government.

After leveling off from 2005 to 2007, government's overall employee satisfaction rating has resumed its upward trajectory. This year's government-wide index is up 2.4 percent, and since the initial rankings in 2003, the index is up 4.6 percent. The movement is not dramatic, but change comes slowly in large organizations and the trend is consistently and clearly moving in a positive direction.

Looking at specific agencies, one of the biggest findings to emerge is that anybody can improve. In fact, 71 percent of federal organizations did.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Government Accountability Office ranked first and second, respectively, in the 2007 rankings. These two agencies have maintained their positions in 2009. Perhaps more noteworthy is the fact that both agencies significantly improved their scores, even though they were already top-ranked. If the NRC had simply maintained its 2007 index score, it would have lost the top spot, suggesting that to stand still is to fall back when it comes to employee satisfaction and commitment.

FAST FACTS

- ★ The government-wide *Best Places* index score is 63.3, up 2.4 percent from 2007's score of 61.8, and up 4.6 percent since the rankings were first launched in 2003.
- ★ Employee satisfaction increased (from 2007) in 71 percent of federal organizations, including 79 percent of large agencies, 65 percent of small agencies and 70 percent of subcomponents. Only 42 percent of organizations increased scores from 2005 to 2007.
- ★ The highest-scoring "Best in Class" workplace categories are, in order, employee skills/mission match, teamwork, pay and benefits, and work/life balance.
- ★ For the first time, government-wide scores on all 10 "Best in Class" workplace categories improved. The biggest increase was on support for diversity, which was up 4.4 percent.
- ★ The 2009 *Best Places* rankings include 278 federal organizations (30 large federal agencies, 32 small agencies and 216 subcomponents) and are based on the responses of more than 212,000 employees.

On the other end of the spectrum, the three lowest-ranked agencies in 2007 were the Department of Education, the Department of Homeland Security and the Small Business Administration. This year, all three are among the most improved large agencies, with SBA improving its index score by 30 percent to become this year's top mover. These agencies still have work to do before they make it to the top 10, but they prove that even low-ranked agencies can make significant improvements.

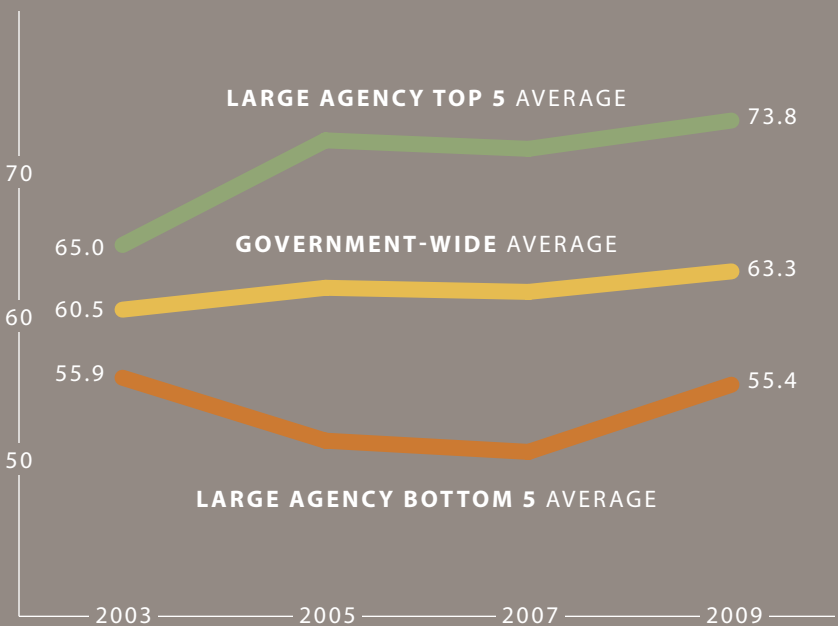
So, we know that a broad array of agencies saw their *Best Places* scores improve significantly. The logical follow-up question is, "How did they do it?"

For the fourth time in a row, the primary driver of job satisfaction in the federal space is effective leadership. While this finding is no surprise, the reasons behind it are. In a first, the 2009 *Best Places* rankings break down which factors shape employees' views of their leadership. Conventional wisdom holds that the greatest influence on an employee's satisfaction is his or her immediate supervisor. However, the 2009 *Best Places* rankings reveal that it is actually the quality of an agency's senior leadership that has the greatest bearing on employee views.

While employee satisfaction is on the rise overall, federal agencies still have work to do if they hope to attract their fair share of America's top talent. The federal government consistently lags the private sector according to several indicators of worker engagement. Government trails the private sector most dramatically when it comes to effective leadership, particularly with regard to management's sharing of information with employees.

The 2009 rankings are based on survey data from August and September 2008, and they provide the new administration with an excellent benchmark as it works to improve government.

TOP TRENDS



LARGE AGENCY RANKINGS

RANK	AGENCY
1	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
2	Government Accountability Office
3	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
4	Intelligence Community
5	Department of State
6	Environmental Protection Agency
7	Department of Justice
8	General Services Administration
9	Social Security Administration
10	Department of Commerce
11	Securities and Exchange Commission
12	Department of Veteran Affairs
13	Department of the Army
14	Department of the Navy
15	Department of the Air Force (tie)
15	Department of Defense (tie)
17	Department of the Treasury
18	Department of Labor
19	Department of Energy
20	Office of Personnel Management
21	Department of Health and Human Services
22	Department of the Interior
23	Department of Agriculture
24	Department of Housing and Urban Development
25	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
26	Small Business Administration
27	Department of Education
28	Department of Homeland Security
29	National Archives and Records Administration
30	Department of Transportation

BEST IN CLASS

EMPLOYEE SKILLS / MISSION MATCH	
1	Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
2	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
3	Department of Veterans Affairs
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	
1	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
2	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
3	Department of Commerce (tie)
3	Department of State (tie)
EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP	
1	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
2	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
3	Department of State
WORK / LIFE BALANCE	
1	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
2	Securities and Exchange Commission
3	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
PAY AND BENEFITS	
1	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
2	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
3	Department of Education (tie)
3	Office of Personnel Management (tie)

BY DEMOGRAPHIC

AFRICAN-AMERICANS	
1	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
2	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
3	Government Accountability Office
HISPANICS	
1	Nuclear Regulatory Commission (tie)
1	Government Accountability Office (tie)
3	Social Security Administration
WOMEN	
1	Nuclear Regulatory Commission (tie)
1	Government Accountability Office (tie)
3	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
YOUNG PEOPLE (UNDER 40)	
1	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
2	Government Accountability Office
3	National Aeronautics and Space Administration

View the complete "Best in Class" and Demographic rankings at bestplacestowork.org.

SMALL AGENCY RANKINGS

RANK	AGENCY
1	Surface Transportation Board
2	Overseas Private Investment Corporation
3	Congressional Budget Office (tie)
3	Office of Management and Budget (tie)
5	National Science Foundation
6	Federal Maritime Commission
7	National Transportation Safety Board
8	Commodity Futures Trading Commission
9	Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
10	Federal Trade Commission
11	Merit Systems Protection Board
12	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (tie)
12	National Endowment for the Arts (tie)
14	U.S. International Trade Commission
15	U.S. Agency for International Development
16	Railroad Retirement Board
17	Corporation for National and Community Service
18	Export-Import Bank of the United States
19	Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation
20	Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency
21	National Endowment for the Humanities
22	Federal Housing Finance Board
23	National Credit Union Administration
24	Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight
25	Consumer Product Safety Commission
26	National Labor Relations Board
27	Federal Election Commission
28	Federal Communications Commission
29	International Boundary and Water Commission
30	Selective Service System
31	Broadcasting Board of Governors
32	Federal Labor Relations Authority

BEST IN CLASS

EMPLOYEE SKILLS / MISSION MATCH

- 1 Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
- 2 Office of Management and Budget
- 3 National Transportation Safety Board
- 4 Merit Systems Protection Board
- 5 National Science Foundation

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

- 1 Federal Maritime Commission
- 2 Surface Transportation Board
- 3 Merit Systems Protection Board
- 4 Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
- 5 Office of Management and Budget

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

- 1 Surface Transportation Board
- 2 Federal Maritime Commission
- 3 Office of Management and Budget
- 4 National Science Foundation
- 5 Federal Trade Commission

WORK / LIFE BALANCE

- 1 Surface Transportation Board
- 2 Merit Systems Protection Board
- 3 Federal Maritime Commission
- 4 National Endowment for the Arts
- 5 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

PAY AND BENEFITS

- 1 Federal Maritime Commission
- 2 Federal Housing Finance Board
- 3 Surface Transportation Board
- 4 Commodity Futures Trading Commission
- 5 Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight

TEAMWORK

- 1 Surface Transportation Board
- 2 Federal Maritime Commission
- 3 Office of Management and Budget
- 4 Merit Systems Protection Board
- 5 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

AGENCY SUBCOMPONENT RANKINGS

RANK	AGENCY
1	Environment and Natural Resources Division (Justice)
2	Office of the Inspector General (OPM)
3	Civil Division (Justice)
4	Bureau of the Public Debt (Treasury) (tie)
4	Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center (NASA) (tie)
6	Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys / U.S. Attorneys Offices (Justice)
7	Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (Treasury)
8	Region 9 – San Francisco (EPA)
9	Tax Division (Justice)
10	Region 3 – Philadelphia (EPA)
11	Antitrust Division (Justice)
12	Region 1 – Boston (EPA)
13	Office of the Inspector General (Interior)
14	Office of the Inspector General for Tax Administration (Treasury)
15	George C. Marshall Space Flight Center (NASA)
16	Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (Treasury) (tie)
16	Strategic Human Resources Policy (OPM) (tie)
18	Goddard Space Flight Center (NASA)
19	National Institute of Standards and Technology (Commerce)
20	Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (Justice) (tie)
20	Region 6 – Dallas (EPA) (tie)
22	Federal Bureau of Investigation (Justice)
23	All Other Components (EPA)
24	Region 10 – Seattle (EPA)
25	U.S. Army National Guard Units (Army)
26	John C. Stennis Space Center (NASA)
27	National Cemetery Administration (Veterans Affairs)
28	Region 2 – New York (EPA)
29	U.S. Coast Guard (DHS)
30	Dryden Flight Research Center (NASA)

View the complete rankings for all 216 agency subcomponents at bestplacestowork.org.

BEST IN CLASS

EMPLOYEE SKILLS / MISSION MATCH	
1	Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys / U.S. Attorneys Offices (Justice)
2	Civil Division (Justice)
3	Environment and Natural Resources Division (Justice)
4	National Cemetery Administration (Veterans Affairs)
5	Criminal Division (Justice) (tie)
5	Tax Division (Justice) (tie)
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	
1	Office of the Inspector General (Interior)
2	Environment and Natural Resources Division (Justice)
3	Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (Treasury)
4	Strategic Human Resources Policy (OPM)
5	George C. Marshall Space Flight Center (NASA)
EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP	
1	Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center (NASA)
2	Environment and Natural Resources Division (Justice)
3	George C. Marshall Space Flight Center (NASA) (tie)
3	Strategic Human Resources Policy (OPM) (tie)
5	Office of the Inspector General (Treasury)
WORK / LIFE BALANCE	
1	Office of the Inspector General (Interior)
2	Bureau of the Public Debt (Treasury)
3	Office of the Inspector General for Tax Administration (Treasury)
4	Environment and Natural Resources Division (Justice)
5	Strategic Human Resources Policy (OPM)
PAY AND BENEFITS	
1	Human Capital Leadership and Merit System Accountability (OPM)
2	Office of Inspector General (Treasury)
3	Office of Inspector General (Interior)
4	Office of Inspector General (OPM)
5	Strategic Human Resources Policy (OPM)
TEAMWORK	
1	Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center (NASA)
2	Environment and Natural Resources Division (Justice)
3	Office of the Inspector General (Interior) (tie)
3	George C. Marshall Space Flight Center (NASA) (tie)
5	Strategic Human Resources Policy (OPM) (tie)
5	Bureau of Public Debt (Treasury) (tie)

View the complete "Best in Class" and Demographic rankings at bestplacestowork.org.

FIND MORE ONLINE

Visit bestplacestowork.org to access the complete 2009 rankings, formulate customized reports and conduct side-by-side comparisons of agencies and their subcomponents.

Here is what you will find online:

- ★ The **complete rankings** for the 30 largest Cabinet departments and independent agencies, 32 small agencies, and more than 200 organizations within those agencies, with **detailed profiles** of each.
- ★ New capabilities that allow you to generate **customized reports** by selecting the agency features most important to you.
- ★ New capabilities to conduct **side-by-side comparisons** of how agencies or their subcomponents ranked in various categories.
- ★ “Best in Class” rankings focused on **topics that matter** to you, like effective leadership, work/life balance, pay and benefits, and support for diversity.
- ★ Worker satisfaction rankings broken down by **demographic areas** including age, gender and minority status.
- ★ An in-depth “**For Job Seekers**” section with the information you need to understand the federal hiring process, find the right job and make your application count.
- ★ **Insightful analysis** of what the rankings mean, with **trend data** to help you understand where the agencies stand and where they are going.

The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with tabs for RANKINGS, ABOUT BEST PLACES, ANALYSIS, FAST FACTS, FOR JOB SEEKERS, CONTACT US, and AGENCY LOGIN. Below the navigation is a banner for 'The Best Places to Work IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT 2009' featuring a person holding an American flag. The main content area is titled 'Custom Report - Agencies' and includes filter buttons for 'Large Agencies', 'Small Agencies', and 'Agency Subcomponents'. A table displays agency rankings with columns for Rank, Agency Name, 2009 Score, 2007 Score, and Percent Change. On the left sidebar, there is a 'FIND AN AGENCY' search bar and a 'WHAT ARE YOU INTERESTED IN?' section with star ratings for categories like Employee Skills/Mission Match, Strategic Management, Teamwork, Effective Leadership, and Performance Based Rewards and Advancement.

RANKINGS ABOUT BEST PLACES ANALYSIS FAST FACTS FOR JOB SEEKERS CONTACT US AGENCY LOGIN

The Best Places to Work IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT 2009

The Best Places to Work rankings — the most comprehensive and authoritative rating of employee satisfaction and commitment in the federal government — are produced by the Partnership for Public Service and American University's Institute for the Study of Public Policy Implementation (ISPP).

FIND AN AGENCY

WHAT ARE YOU INTERESTED IN?
You can assign a rating to the categories below to indicate their importance. Select the item you want to include in the report, and then click or drag the dots in the row to add or remove stars.

Employee Skills/Mission Match ★ ★ *

Strategic Management ★ ★ ★

Teamwork ★ *

Effective Leadership ★ ★ ★ ★

Performance Based Rewards and Advancement ★ ★ ★ *

Custom Report - Agencies

Large Agencies Small Agencies Agency Subcomponents

Rank	Agency Name	2009 Score	2007 Score	Percent Change
8	General Services Administration	67.5	65.7	2.70
1	Nuclear Regulatory Commission	80.7	76.2	5.90
3	National Aeronautics and Space Administration	71.7	69.7	2.80
6	Environmental Protection Agency	68.2	65.5	4.20
20	Office of Personnel Management	62.7	54.9	14.30
11	Securities and Exchange Commission	66.2	71.9	-7.90
27	Department of Education	56.4	52.1	8.20
10	Department of Commerce	66.5	63.5	4.70
25	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	57.6	57.1	0.90
24	Department of Housing and Urban Development	58.0	57.2	1.50
21	Department of Health and Human Services	62.3	61.3	1.70
...	Department of Agriculture	60.6	61.6	-1.70

ABOUT BEST PLACES TO WORK

The *Best Places to Work in the Federal Government* rankings—the most comprehensive and authoritative rating of employee satisfaction and commitment in the federal government—are produced by the Partnership for Public Service and American University’s Institute for the Study of Public Policy Implementation (ISPPi).

The **Partnership for Public Service** is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization working to revitalize our federal government by inspiring a new generation to serve and by transforming the way government works. To learn more, visit ourpublicservice.org.

ISPPi, a center within American University’s School of Public Affairs, is dedicated to identifying and creating solutions to public policy issues facing federal leaders. ISPPi conducts research, provides executive development training, and facilitates dialogue among critical stakeholders in the public policy implementation process. AU’s School of Public Affairs offers education in public administration, public policy, political science and justice. To learn more, visit american.edu/isppi.

METHODOLOGY

The *Best Places* rankings are based on the Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM) 2008 Federal Human Capital Survey, which included responses from more than 212,000 civil servants. Working with the global management consulting firm Hay Group, the Partnership for Public Service and the Institute for the Study of Public Policy Implementation created a statistical model to transform this raw survey data into an overall measure of workplace satisfaction and commitment and 10 workplace environment indices. This information was then used to calculate the results for each organization. Small agencies are those independent agencies that have at least 100 but less than 2,000 full-time, permanent employees. Large agencies are those independent agencies or Cabinet departments with 2,000 or more full-time, permanent employees. Finally, statistical analysis was performed to determine the relationship between the 10 workplace dimensions and the overall *Best Places* index score.

“AT A TIME WHEN WE NEED TO RECRUIT A NEW GENERATION TO PUBLIC SERVICE, and there is a renewed focus on quality performance, it is especially meaningful that the *Best Places to Work* rankings measure federal employee satisfaction and commitment, which are essential to effective government.”

*U.S. Senator Mark Warner
Virginia*

“EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION IS A LEADING INDICATOR OF EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONS, and there is no better measure of worker engagement in the federal government than *Best Places to Work*.”

*U.S. Senator Susan Collins
Maine*

“THE BEST PLACES TO WORK RANKINGS ARE A ‘MUST-READ’ for anyone who cares about the federal workforce. They provide job seekers with critical information based on the opinions of federal employees and managers with a powerful tool to attract and retain the best and brightest.”

*U.S. Representative Edolphus Towns
New York*

“BY MEASURING THE JOB SATISFACTION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, *Best Places* offers a powerful incentive for managers to create better workplaces and, consequently, a government that is more responsive to the needs of the public.”

*Then-U.S. Senator Barack Obama
Illinois*

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

HayGroup®