



CENTER FOR
INNOVATIVE PUBLIC POLICIES

Improving Internal Jail Culture Required to Retain Quality Employees

The workplace environment – both the physical plant and the people – must be the most positive and supportive to all employees as possible. Internal agency culture – how things are really done here – requires assessment, and when needed, profound corrections. Without “fixing” the internal culture, other initiatives are doomed to fail.

Addressing the internal culture is generally a longer-term process, so start sooner than later. Diagnosing the jail’s internal culture includes assessment of (at a minimum):

- Leadership
- Professionalism
- Quality of work life
- Daily operations
- Personnel selection, promotion, and development
- Communications

To get additional ideas on how to assess culture go to Appendix B – page 125 *FutureForce: A Guide to Building the 21st Century Community Corrections Workforce* <http://www.cipp.org/uploads/3/7/5/7/37578255/021799.pdf> Other opportunities are included in the Resource section of this website.

Strategies to address internal culture are discussed in The Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens, <http://www.cipp.org/uploads/3/7/5/7/37578255/nicresourceguide2017.pdf> pages 71 – 88, including a checklist on page 85. The guidance a focus on retention, alignment of the agency’s mission, vision, and values to its management practices, consistent two-way communication throughout the organization, fair, value-driving performance measures, clear expectations for employees, opportunities for growth and development, participatory management, publicly expressed recognition and appreciation and quality-oriented, caring supervisors.

Blend officer wellness into retention initiatives. The Resources Section lists several places to get more help on identifying options for inclusion of wellness initiatives.