Results of the 2018 Survey of New Executives in the Public Service

November, 2018

ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL EXECUTIVES
OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE OF CANADA

ASSOCIATION PROFESSIONNELLE DES CADRES
SUPÉRIEURS DE LA FONCTION PUBLIQUE DU CANADA
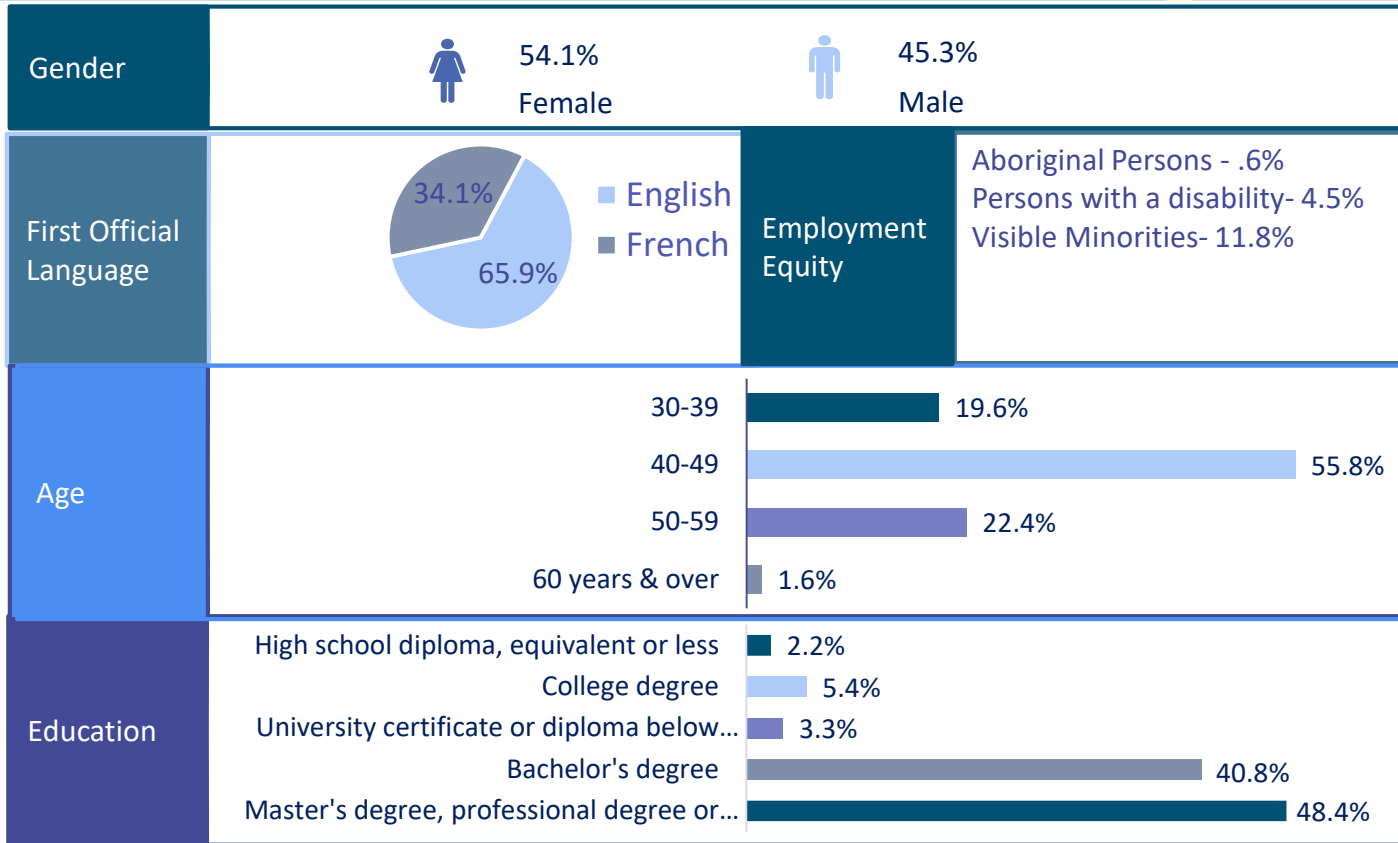
APEX

Survey of New Executives – Overview

The 3rd annual survey of new Executives was launched electronically on September 28th, 2018 to 605 Executives appointed between July 2017 and June 2018.

The goal of the survey was to obtain a snapshot of the views of new entrants into the Executive group in order to get a sense of how they perceive their work and what their top-of-mind issues are. This includes their motivation for joining the Executive ranks, the challenges they face in this new role, the development opportunities they were afforded and their onboarding experience as newly appointed Executives.
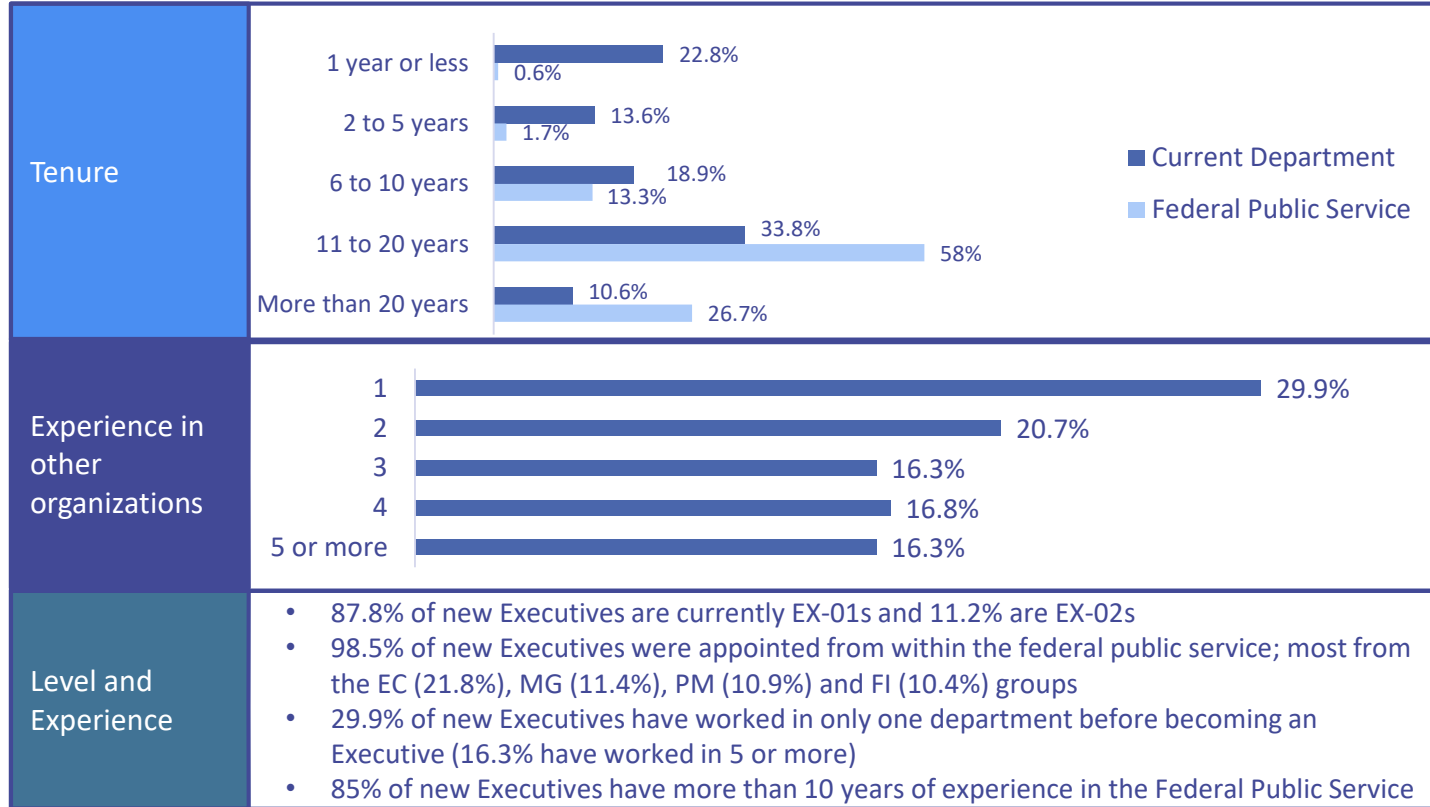
Other questions were centered around the use of personal electronic devices for work purposes and their experience with the Phoenix pay system as it relates to dealing with compensation and pay issues, both for them and their staff. It is also hoped that the survey will help clarify some of the challenges faced by new Executives and identify ways in which the Federal public service and APEX can support them in dealing with these issues.

A total of 222 respondents completed the survey by October 26th, 2018, a response rate of 36% (2017 – 46%)

Profile of Survey Respondents

Gender	54.1% Female	45.3% Male

First Official Language	English 65.9% / French 34.1%	**Employment Equity** — Aboriginal Persons - .6% / Persons with a disability- 4.5% / Visible Minorities- 11.8%

Age

- 30-39: 19.6%
- 40-49: 55.8%
- 50-59: 22.4%
- 60 years & over: 1.6%

Education

- High school diploma, equivalent or less: 2.2%
- College degree: 5.4%
- University certificate or diploma below…: 3.3%
- Bachelor's degree: 40.8%
- Master's degree, professional degree or…: 48.4%

Profile of Survey Respondents

Tenure	1 year or less — Current Department: 22.8%, Federal Public Service: 0.6% 2 to 5 years — Current Department: 13.6%, Federal Public Service: 1.7% 6 to 10 years — Current Department: 18.9%, Federal Public Service: 13.3% 11 to 20 years — Current Department: 33.8%, Federal Public Service: 58% More than 20 years — Current Department: 10.6%, Federal Public Service: 26.7%	■ Current Department ■ Federal Public Service
Experience in other organizations	1 — 29.9% 2 — 20.7% 3 — 16.3% 4 — 16.8% 5 or more — 16.3%	
Level and Experience	• 87.8% of new Executives are currently EX-01s and 11.2% are EX-02s • 98.5% of new Executives were appointed from within the federal public service; most from the EC (21.8%), MG (11.4%), PM (10.9%) and FI (10.4%) groups • 29.9% of new Executives have worked in only one department before becoming an Executive (16.3% have worked in 5 or more) • 85% of new Executives have more than 10 years of experience in the Federal Public Service	

Main Reasons for Becoming an Executive

For increased challenges

To participate in senior level decision making

To use my experience and expertise

Challenges

Most important challenges facing the new Executive community: (Arrows depict change from 2017)

Work-life balance

Attracting & retaining talent

People Management

Stress Management

Development Opportunities

Development opportunities that new executives **undertook** and found to be extremely or very helpful in preparing them for their executive role:

- Senior management exposure
- Acting Assignments
- Coaching or mentoring
- Language training

Development opportunities that new executives **did not undertake** but feel would have helped them for their executive role:

- Job shadowing
- Coaching or mentoring
- Leadership Training
- Work assignments at level

Onboarding Experience

Aspects of onboarding with which Executives were most satisfied*:

Welcome received from employees
(80.3%)
(2017 – 80%)

On-the-job learning
(72.6%)
(2017 – 64%)

Welcome from Senior Management
(64.2%)
(2017 – 61%)

Functionality of new workplace
(62.2%)
(2017 – 65%)
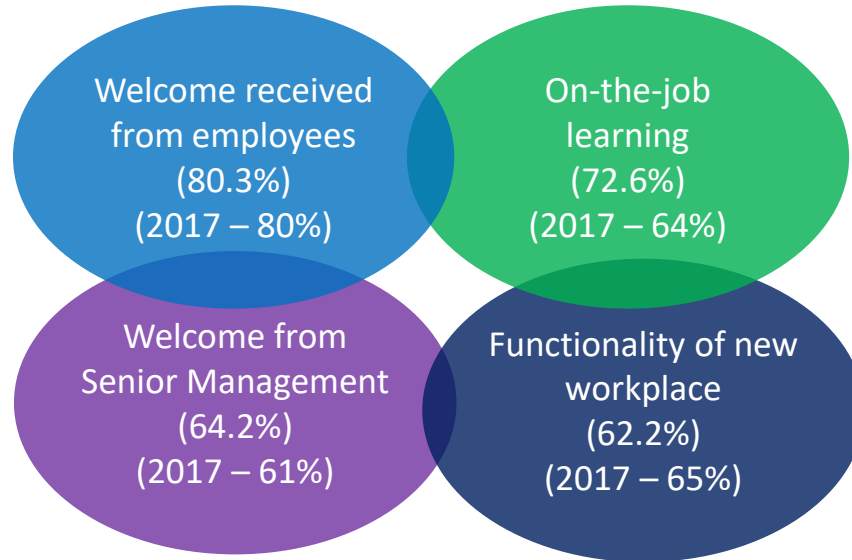
* Satisfied includes those who indicated they were 'somewhat' and 'very' satisfied; Dissatisfied includes those who indicated they were 'very' and 'somewhat' dissatisfied.

- 21.6% were dissatisfied with the overall orientation received towards their new job and role, and an additional 13.2% indicated that no orientation occurred.

On The Job

New executives perceived the following statements to be the most accurate in describing their jobs:

My job is a good fit with my skills and knowledge	I am required to think and make decisions quickly	I meet regularly with my superior(s) to discuss work plans
94.1% agreed * (2017 – 93%)	93.7% agreed * (2017 – 92%)	84.5% agreed * (2017 – 83%)

- Agreed includes those who indicated they 'somewhat' agreed or 'strongly' agreed with the statement

72.5% of respondents receive useful feedback from their supervisors (2017 - 65%) but only 29.7% agreed they can complete their assigned workload during regular work hours (2017 – 27%)

Job Satisfaction

88.3% of new Executives were very or somewhat satisfied with their job in general
(2017 – 84%)
63.6% were satisfied with the flexibility of work hours
(2017 – 62 %)

However, 29.1% were dissatisfied with workload, and 28% were dissatisfied with the number of hours worked.
(2017 – 36% and 30% respectfully)

Use of Personal Devices

Almost 35% of new Executives use their personal electronic devices (phone, tablet, computer etc.) for work purposes. Reasons for this include:

Restrictive departmental IT policies	Limited or no access to social networking tools	Delays in receiving new or upgraded devices

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Pay and Compensation Issues - Phoenix

47.6% of respondents indicated that staff pay/compensation have been affected to a large/very large extent by Phoenix

23.5% were satisfied with the support provided by their Department but only 7.5% were satisfied with support received from the Pay Centre

Top compensation issues included incorrect or missing acting/overtime pay (84%) underpayment of regular pay (78%) and missing pay (61%)

62.7% of new Executives spent 1 to 3 hours weekly (on average) dealing with staff pay/compensation issues

54.7% of new Executives spent 1 to 3 hours weekly (on average) dealing with their own pay/compensation issues

Summary of Key Results:

- The most important challenges facing Executives continue to be worklife balance, attracting and retaining talent, people management and stress management

- Key development opportunities not undertaken by Executives that would have been helpful in preparing them for the role include job shadowing, coaching and mentoring, leadership training and work assignments.

- Over one fifth of new Executives were dissatified with the orientation received towards their new job and role and 13% indicated that no orientation occurred.

- Only 30% of Executives indicated that they could complete their work within normal working hours while 29% were dissatisfied with the workload and 28% with the number of hours worked

- Over one third of new Executives are using their personal electronic devices for work purposes due to restrictive departmental IT policies, limited social networking tools/access and delays in obtaining new devices

- Many new Executives are dealing with both staff and their own pay/compensation issues (missing and incorrect pay) and while satisfied with the support provided by their Departments, they are less satisfied with the support received from their Pay Offices

APEX Resources

APEX has a variety of on-line resources available to new Executives which may assist with addressing some of challenges identified through this survey and with the new roles and responsibilities associated with EX positions in general. These include:

APEX's Guide for Executives:

https://apex.gc.ca/resources/compendium-ex-resources/

Information on EX Compensation:

https://apex.gc.ca/resources/compensation/

APEX Survey Results:

https://apex.gc.ca/surveys/

INFO APEX (includes Fact Sheets and other materials on key topics):

https://apex.gc.ca/info-apex/

These materials, in addition to a Calendar of Events which highlights upcoming learning events and activities on a variety of topics of interest to Executives, are available on the APEX website: www.apex.gc.ca