



THE WORKPLACE BLUEPRINT

2026 Workplace Environment Survey
Summary & Action Plan

La Plata County

Structural Integrity: The State of Our Workplace

A snapshot of our highest-performing areas versus foundational elements requiring immediate reinforcement.

High-Performers (The Foundation)

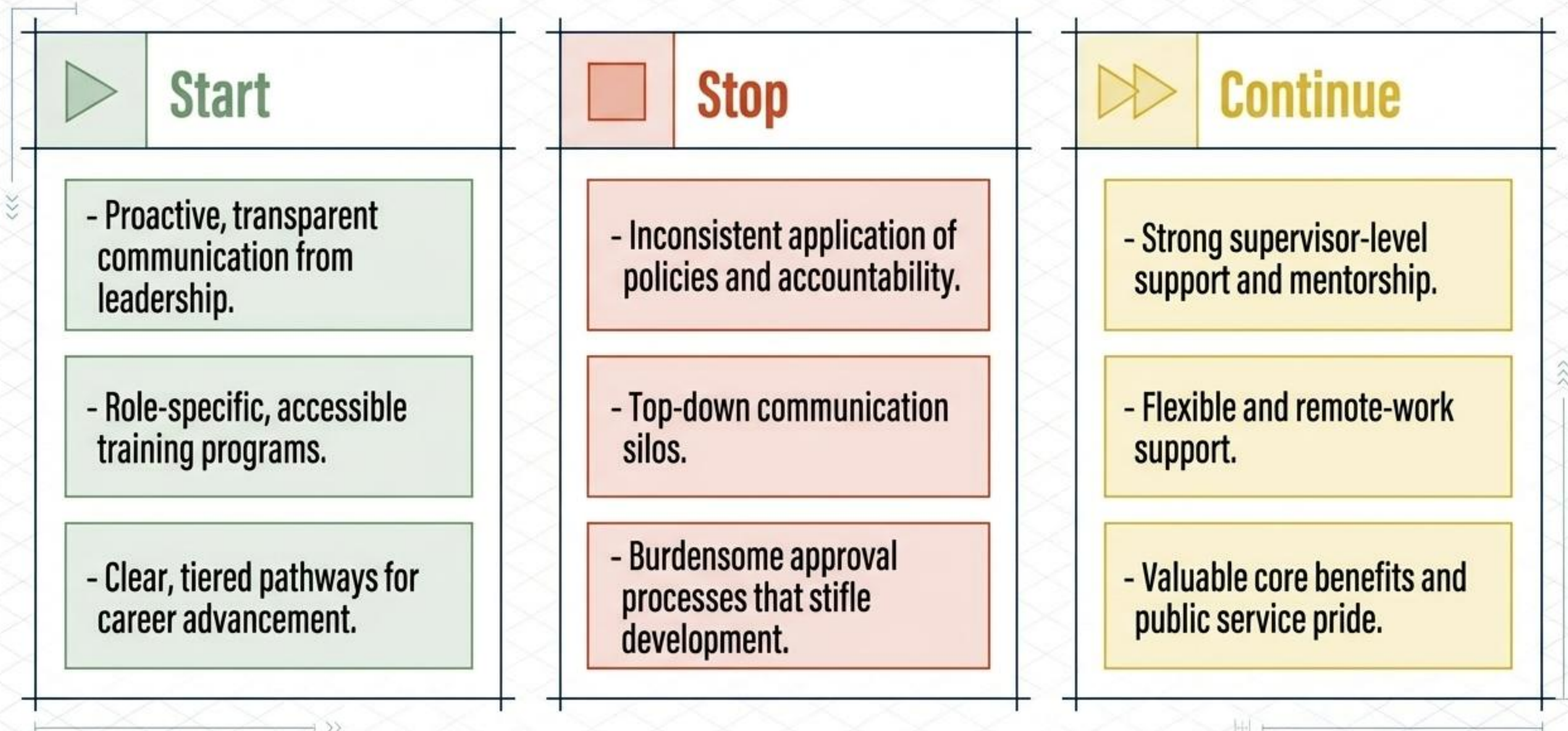


Areas for Improvement (Structural Repairs)



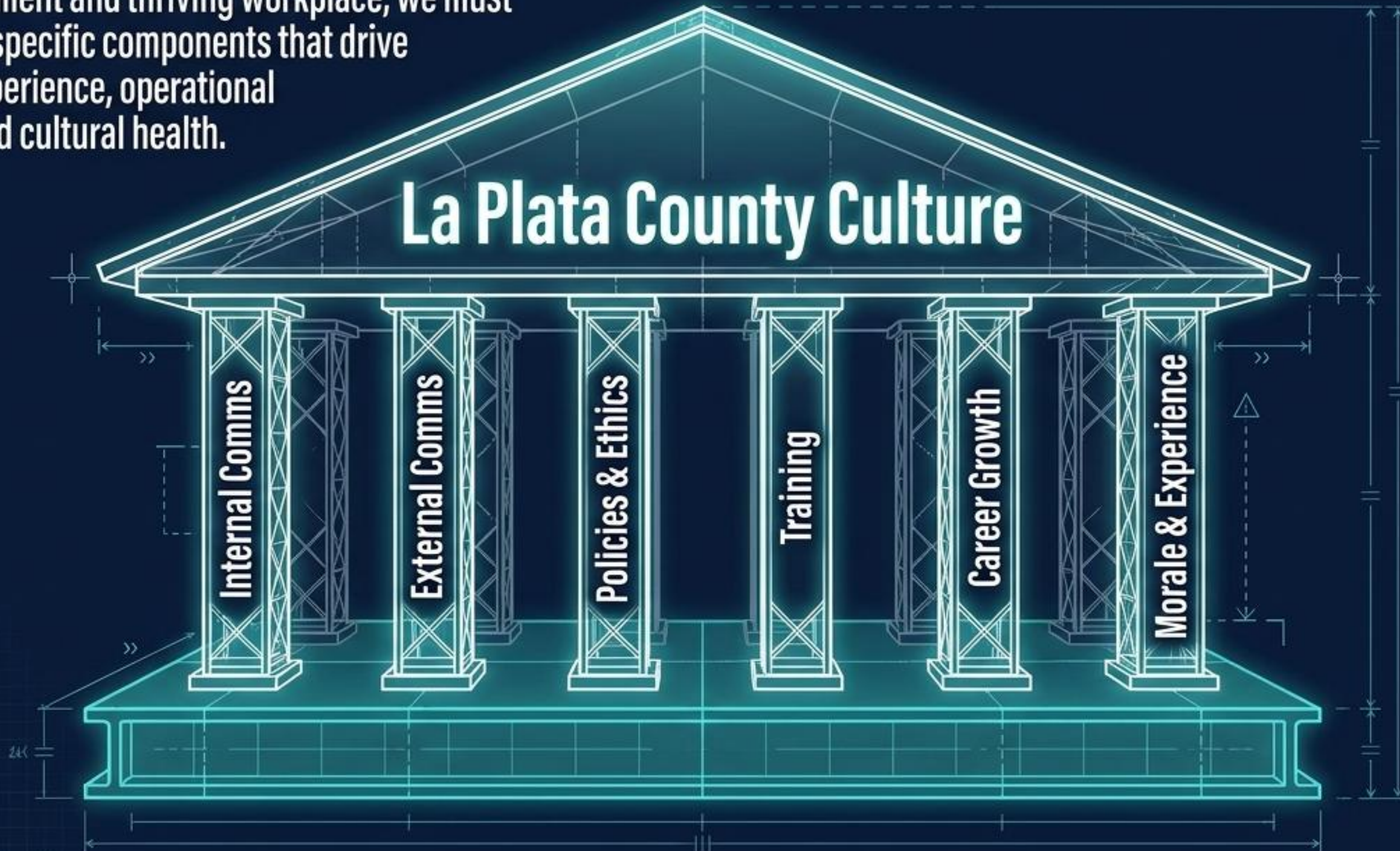
Headline: Organizational Feedback at a Glance

Context: High engagement (191–195 responses per question) indicating a workforce deeply invested in La Plata County's future.



Inspecting the Core Pillars

To build a resilient and thriving workplace, we must examine the specific components that drive employee experience, operational efficiency, and cultural health.



Pillar 1: Internal Communication



Thematic Findings

Moderate effectiveness. Employees report a strong desire for transparency and cross-departmental updates. There is a perceived gap between executive decisions and frontline awareness.

Voice of the Employee

- +** My supervisor is great for sharing any and all info with me and my team. Helps us feel included.
- Organizational communication is currently ineffective and lacks transparency. I often find out important things going on through the newspaper instead of from leadership.

Action Roadmap

- Short-term: Implement consistent, objective, cross-departmental operational updates.
- Medium-term: Establish interactive forums for leadership and frontline staff to connect.
- Long-term: Cultivate a culture of default transparency for organizational changes.

Pillar 2: External Communication



Thematic Findings

Mixed effectiveness. While social media effectively celebrates staff, overarching public communication feels reactive to optics challenges rather than proactive in telling the County's story.

Voice of the Employee

+

Our public-facing communication (social media) does a wonderful job of celebrating staff and promoting county programs.

-

External communication appears to be reactive rather than proactive. Leadership needs to come up with and communicate a clear path and goal to effectively communicate with the public.

Action Roadmap



Short-term: Improve consistency and frequency of informative press releases.

Medium-term: Develop a proactive storytelling strategy focusing on the active roles of the BoCC and organizational goals.

Long-term: Revive robust public-facing publications to control the narrative and educate the community.

Pillar 3: Workplace Policies & Ethics

Policies



Ethics



Thematic Findings

Consistent application is a major concern. Employees perceive double standards, where frontline staff are held strictly accountable while leadership behaviors may go unaddressed, eroding trust.

Voice of the Employee



Within my department policies are applied consistently and fairly.



There is no consistency in applying accountability to all staff. While frontline employees are expected to strictly adhere to policies, I have observed instances where leadership does not mirror these expectations.

Action Roadmap

- Short-term:** Audit policy enforcement mechanisms across all departments for equity.
- Medium-term:** Leadership training focused on modeling AIR (Accountability, Integrity, Respect) values.
- Long-term:** Establish a transparent, universal accountability framework regardless of organizational rank.

Pillar 4: Training & Development



Thematic Findings

Mixed experiences. While direct supervisors encourage growth, there has been a noticeable decline in county-sponsored resources, with current offerings viewed as basic or irrelevant to specific roles.

Voice of the Employee



La Plata County does a really good job of supporting personal and professional development within existing roles.



Professional development support has decreased significantly... Staff are rarely incentivized or encouraged to seek out continuing education. Standard training requests face inefficient processes that stifle growth.

Action Roadmap



Short-term: Streamline approval processes for department-level training requests.

Medium-term: Reintroduce robust, role-specific, and in-person training (e.g., Microsoft 365, leadership development).

Long-term: Rebuild the central training budget to invest equally across all staff levels.

Pillar 5: Career Growth



Thematic Findings

A key area for structural repair. Employees report limited advancement opportunities within their departments and a lack of clear pathways, leaving talented staff feeling stagnant.

Voice of the Employee

+

My supervisors have helped me move forward within the organization.

-

Organizational structure does not currently offer enough roles or opportunities to grow within a department. It seems like the investment in growth is geared more towards department heads and leaders.

Action Roadmap



Short-term: Improve transparency regarding hiring and promotional processes.

Medium-term: Develop and clearly define tiered positions within departments to create internal stepping stones.

Long-term: Implement a formal organizational leadership pipeline and mentorship program.

Pillar 6: Morale & Employee Experience



Key Themes: RIF Trauma, Burnout, & Cultural Shift

Thematic Findings

The organization is experiencing widespread burnout from staffing shortages and lingering trauma from recent Reductions in Force (RIFs). Employees are seeking a return to stability and core values.

Voice of the Employee

+

I appreciate the comfortable workplace surroundings and technology... and the sharing of information and collaboration involved at all levels [in my team].

-

I have seen a major shift in culture and stability and a lack of AIR in the organization. The RIFs were handled in a disturbing way... there is a high level of pressure impacting emotional wellbeing.

Action Roadmap



Short-term: Acknowledge recent organizational trauma openly and transparently.



Medium-term: Focus heavily on team cohesion, recognition events, and workload balancing.



Long-term: Completely restore and embed AIR values into everyday operations.

The Trust Gap: Micro vs. Macro Environments

Survey data reveals a distinct dichotomy in how employees experience the workplace based on their proximity to leadership.

The Micro-Environment (High Trust)



Locus: Direct Supervisor & Immediate Team



Sentiment: High psychological safety, strong collaboration, feeling valued.



Data Point: Supervisor Support scores an impressive 4.18 / 5.0.

The Macro-Environment (Low Trust)



Locus: Executive Leadership & Macro-Organization



Sentiment: Feelings of instability, opacity, double standards, and disconnection.



Data Point: Policy consistency and top-down communication score poorly.

The Imperative: We must scale the trust, communication, and support found at the supervisor level up to the executive and organizational level.

The Master Plan for Cultural Healing

Concrete steps to restore trust, operationalize AIR values, and rebuild organizational morale.



Building a Stronger Foundation, Together.

Key Takeaways:

- Our employees care deeply about La Plata County's mission.
- We possess a strong foundation of frontline leadership and peer support.
- By addressing the structural gaps in communication, accountability, and growth, we will heal the culture and emerge stronger.

Call to Action: Leadership is committing to the Short-Term stabilization steps immediately. Further updates on the Medium-Term roadmap will be communicated to all staff in the coming quarter.