Human Resources Management Performance Measurement Baseline Survey Results

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Executive Summary

The purpose of the Human Resources Management Performance Measurement Survey is to first establish a baseline and then measure improved performance among all servicing Human Resources offices across the entire Department of Commerce. The survey was administered to all Department of Commerce employees over the two week period ending December 2, 2005. The survey was administered as a web-based interactive tool that was available via anonymous login. The invitation to participate in the survey was distributed with instructions in a broadcast email to all email addresses within the Department. A total of 5,684 Commerce employees responded to the survey questions. Responses from contractors were removed.

Within the survey respondents were asked to evaluate the payroll, benefits, employee relations, and training services provided by the HR office. Additionally, overall satisfaction of the HR office was noted. Within each area of service, the survey respondents evaluated timeliness, effectiveness, communication, and follow-up.

This first Human Resources Management Performance Measurement Survey creates the baseline for measurements of change over time. As this survey is periodically repeated the trends will be noted and related to changes in program, levels of support, and advancing initiatives within the Commerce HR community. The goal of these surveys is to provide a quantifiable measurement of the successful implementation of programs within the realm of effective Human Resources Management.

Survey Purpose and Background

Four surveys were originally developed for the OHRM Balanced Scorecard in July of 2004. They were as follows: the Customer Satisfaction, Employee Satisfaction, Exit, and Transaction surveys. The first three surveys were administered to OHRM employees as a pilot. However, after careful evaluation of employee feedback and a closer review of the questions on the Customer and Employee Satisfaction surveys, a decision was made to discontinue the administration of these two particular surveys. Feedback for the Customer and Employee Satisfaction surveys were overwhelmingly negative and a closer review of the questions on these two surveys revealed prevalent ambiguity. The Exit and Transaction surveys are currently still in use by OHRM.

Additional ambiguity was revealed after further review of the original Balanced Scorecard measures. This prompted OHRM to make a second decision to change direction with the originally planned development and rollout of the Balanced Scorecard. A consultant from the University of Maryland was hired and the bottom line conveyed was "Less Is More". With the guidance from the University of Maryland, the third decision made by OHRM was to abandon the online scorecard and performance measures being developed by SAS to instead develop fewer and clearer measures concentrating on the operations aspects of Human Resources. Twelve Human Resources operational areas (Recruitment, Payroll Counseling and Administration, Benefits, Labor Relations, Employee Relations, Position Management/Classification, Training, Policy, HR Call Center (Census), IT Systems Development, Support for Human Capital Effort, and Performance Management Counseling) were identified as areas in which to capture measures for performance. There are currently 15 proposed surveys resulting from the identified operational Human Resources areas.

The following survey ground rules were established for the OHRM Balanced Scorecard:

a. The survey instruments will be developed by a vendor with expertise necessary to ensure the strength of the instruments.
b. The frequency of transaction surveys will be determined with consideration for (1) the desire to have responses provided as soon as possible following a transaction (or each significant milestone within a transaction), (2) the anticipated incidence of and impact on respondents of multiple surveys, and (3) the need to have such surveys conducted "automatically" rather than at the discretion of HR personnel.
c. All surveys will be conducted to ensure respondents that their responses will be anonymous and not "traceable."
d. Plans for surveying employees should allow for representative samplings (e.g., Census during peak employment years).
e. Any surveying of employees will be designed to meet legal and contractual union requirements.
f. Bureaus will have the option to segment survey populations (with prior OHRM approval) where appropriate (e.g., (i) between the field and HQ at

Census or (ii) surveying directors separately on notification of employee matters at OS).

g. To encourage ongoing participation in the surveys, the aggregated survey data will be shared with respondents, along with the performance analysis and any corresponding actions planned to improve performance (i.e., the answers to the four questions outlined below).

h. Annual and semi-annual surveys will be designed to elicit from respondents data for only for the period in question. General surveys will be structured to allow respondents to self-select questions for only the HR services they received in the relevant time period.

The purpose of the 15 proposed Human Resources Performance Measurement annual, semi-annual, and transaction surveys is to first establish a baseline and then measure improved performance among all servicing Human Resources offices across the entire Department of Commerce. The survey results will be published on the OHRM website.

What OHRM Intends To Learn

The University of Maryland explained to OHRM that the most important use of a performance measure is to compare an HR office's performance against its own history – its performance baseline. The comparisons of performance measure data (or trend lines) between HR offices should always be made only if the factors influencing the performance of each office (the "story behind the curve") have been carefully examined to determine whether any inferences from such a comparison are valid.

HR performance management involves four questions discussed on an ongoing basis between a manager and his or her supervisor:

1. How are we doing?

   This question is answered with HR performance measure data presented as a graph, with both an historic trend line and a projection (*e.g.*, "Percent of selecting officials who rated their pool of candidates as high quality.").

[Time units (e.g., months or years)]

2. What is the "story behind the curve?"

Identify the key factors (positive and negative, internal and external to HR) impacting performance (*i.e.*, impacting the trend line). Every presentation of performance measure data should include the story behind the curve.

3. What will work to turn the curve?

   Identify options for actions to address the key factors impacting performance. Options should include potential partners who may have a role to play in turning the curve, evidence-based strategies, and no-cost/low-cost actions.

4. What do we propose to do to turn the curve?

   Determine the specific, feasible actions that will be taken to turn the curve. Then monitor the trend line for improvement and, as new data are obtained, repeat the process.

Nature Abhors a Vacuum

- Performance measure data should never be presented in a vacuum – they should always be accompanied by the explanation of the most important factors that impacted the performance data trend line (the "story behind the curve").

- Also, HR performance measures should not exist in a vacuum; they should be tied to performance measures of both (1) the larger entity (*e.g.*, bureau) within which the HR office exists, and (2) the divisions within the HR office.

How OHRM Designed Its Survey Questions

In July of 2004, OHRM requested four surveys to be developed by the SAS Institute. The surveys were a combination of statistically tested questions written by SAS and taken from the Gallop Surveys as well as the Federal Human Capital Survey. The United States Census Bureau subsequently validated the survey questions.

Since the Transaction survey is still in use by OHRM, it was decided that the questions from the Transaction survey would be modified slightly to pertain to the functional areas covered in the Department-wide Human Resources Performance Measurement baseline survey.

Method in Which OHRM Administers Its Surveys

For the annual and semi-annual Performance Measurement surveys, the survey population consists of the entire Department of Commerce. Survey populations for the transactional surveys are identified based on specific functional area services or resources that are provided to customers.

Originally, OHRM used the SAS Data Acquisition Portal (DAP) web-based tool as a means for administering surveys. However, due to the cumbersome approach for developing surveys coupled with system unreliability and inflexibility, a final decision was made to discontinue with SAS services and purchase a $29.95 ($0.05 per additional response over 1000 responses) monthly subscription with Surveymonkey.com.

Surveymonkey.com is a user-friendly, web-based tool for developing and administering surveys, as well as analyzing survey results. Some of the features included in the Surveymonkey.com software allow the ability to: Create Skip Logic (Conditional Logic), Require Answers, Randomize Answer Choices, Add a Logo, Create Custom Themes, Custom Redirect, Filter Results, Share Results, and Download Results.

Please note the survey text for the Human Resources Performance Measurement Survey. The survey is anonymous due to the fact that there is not any personally identifying information collected from respondents. A Likert scale was chosen for each question to allow for in-depth analysis of frequency of distribution and mean scores and to provide better comparisons of data for bureaus and Directors.

As previously mentioned in the Survey Purpose and Background section, the annual and semi-annual baseline survey results will be published on the OHRM website. It is yet to be determined whether or not the results of the transaction surveys will be published on the OHRM website concurrently.

Human Resources Performance Measurement Survey

This survey is anonymous and confidential, and will be open for 15 calendar days and close on the evening of Friday, December 2, 2005.

***I am a contractor:**
No/Yes

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION
Please provide your following information.

***Bureau:**
BEA (Bureau of Economic Analysis); BIS (Bureau of Industry and Security); CENSUS - Headquarters & Regions (Bureau of the Census); CENSUS - NPC (Bureau of the Census); EDA (Economic Development Administration); ESA (Economic Statistics Administration); OGC (Office of the General Counsel); OIG (Office of the Inspector General); ITA (International Trade Administration); MBDA (Minority Business Development Agency); NIST (Nat'l Institute of Standards and Technology); NOAA (Nat'l Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration); NTIA (Nat'l Telecommunications and Information Administration); NTIS (Nat'l Technical Information Service); O/S (Office of the Secretary); PTO (Patent and Trademark Office); TA (Technology Administration)

***Personnel Office Indicator (POI): *If you are unsure of your POI, please refer to block labeled "PERSNL OFFICE" or "POI" in the upper right hand corner of your Earnings and Leave Statement.**
BEA (SES, Census Headquarters, 1798); BEA (1911); BIS (1911); BIS (1531); CENSUS (Census Headquarters, 1798); CENSUS (Jeffersonville, 1617); EDA (1426); EDA (1911); EDA (1423); EDA (1531); EDA (3173); EDA (3204); ESA (1798); ITA, (1911); ITA (1423); ITA (1531); ITA (3173); ITA (USFCS, 4471); MBDA (1911); MBDA (1423); MBDA (1531); MBDA (3173); MBDA (3204); NIST (3204); NIST (1703); NOAA (NOAA); NTIA (1911); NTIA (3204); NTIS (1703); O/S (1702); OIG (4341); PTO (2794); TA (1703)

***On average, I interact with my servicing Human Resources Office:**
Not at all/ Quarterly/ Monthly/ Weekly/ Daily

***I am a manager or supervisor:**
No/Yes

II. PAYROLL COUNSELING AND ADMINISTRATION

Please respond to the following questions if you have received any payroll counseling and/or administration in the last six months from your servicing HR Office in any of these areas: Time and Attendance, Leave, Pay, Direct Deposit.

The Payroll Counseling and Administration provided by my servicing HR office met my needs:
Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

The Payroll Counseling and Administration services were:

Effective
Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

Timely
Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

Delivered with Clear Communication
Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

Delivered with required Follow-up
Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

III. BENEFITS COUNSELING AND ADMINISTRATION
Please respond to the following questions if you have received any benefits counseling and/or administration in the last six months from your servicing HR Office in any of these areas: Health Insurance, Life Insurance, Thrift Savings Plan, Retirement.

The Benefits Counseling and Administration provided by my servicing HR office met my needs:
Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

The Benefits Counseling and Administration services were:

Effective

Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

Timely

Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

Delivered with Clear Communication

Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

Delivered with required Follow-up

Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

IV. EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Please respond to the following questions if you have received any employee relations advice and/or assistance in the last six months from your servicing HR Office in any of these areas: Adverse Actions or Disciplinary Actions, Performance-based Actions, Leave Administrative Issues.

The Employee Relations Advice and/or Assistance provided by my servicing HR office met my needs:

Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

The Employee Relations Advice and/or Assistance was:

Effective

Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

Timely

Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

Delivered with required Follow-up

Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

V. OVERALL TRAINING SERVICES

Please respond to the following questions if you have received any training services and/or assistance in the last six months from your servicing HR Office.

I feel that, overall, the skill levels of my staff are appropriate for performing assigned duties:
Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

The Overall Training Services provided by my servicing HR office met my needs:
Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

The Overall Training Services provided were:

Effective

Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

Timely

Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

Delivered with required Quality

Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

Delivered with required Follow-up

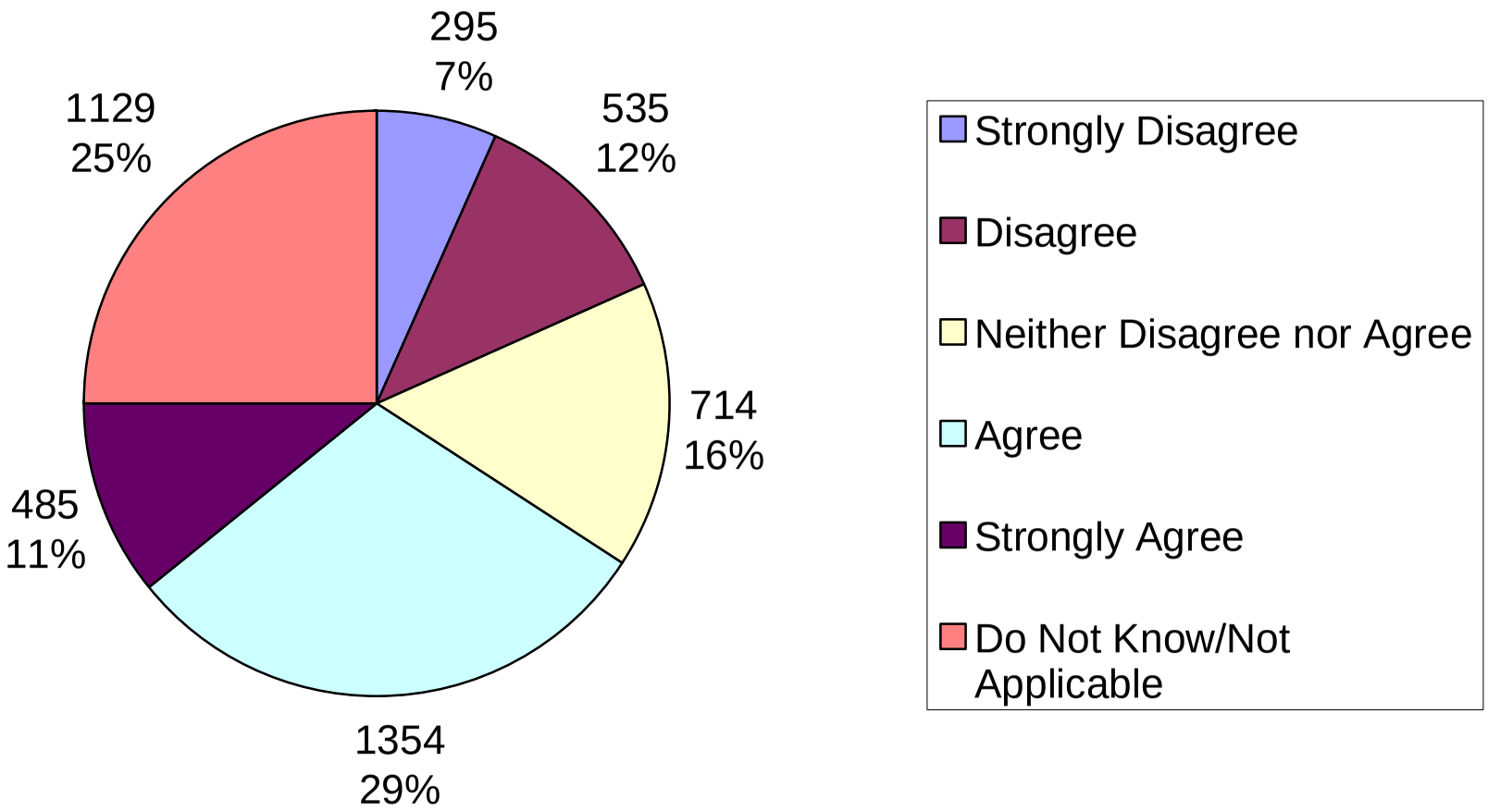
Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

VI. OVERALL EVALUATION

Please assess the overall performance in the last six months of your servicing HR Office.

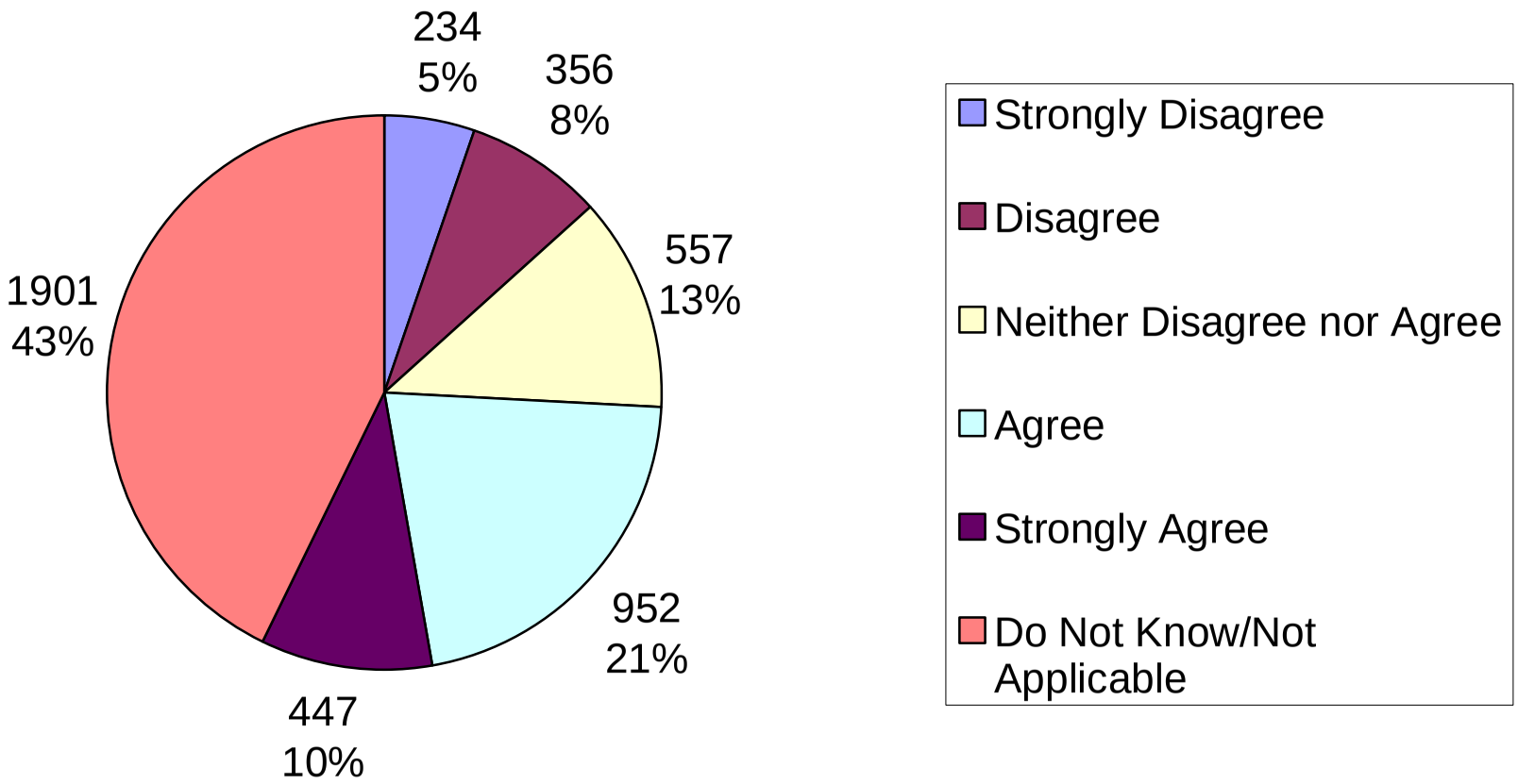
Overall, my servicing HR office met my needs:
Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Neither Disagree nor Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Agree/ Do Not Know/Not Applicable

Overall my servicing HR office met my needs:

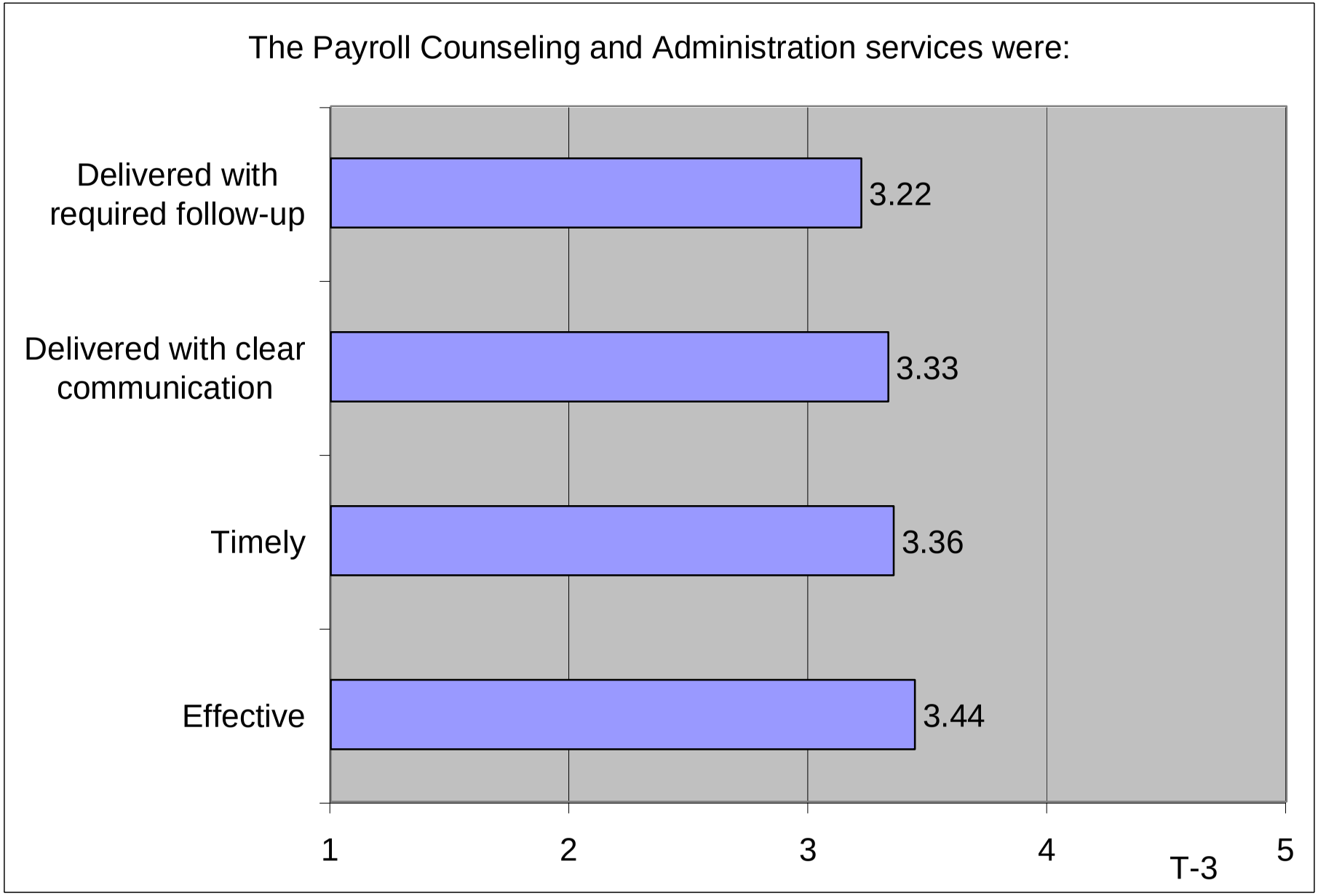


T-1

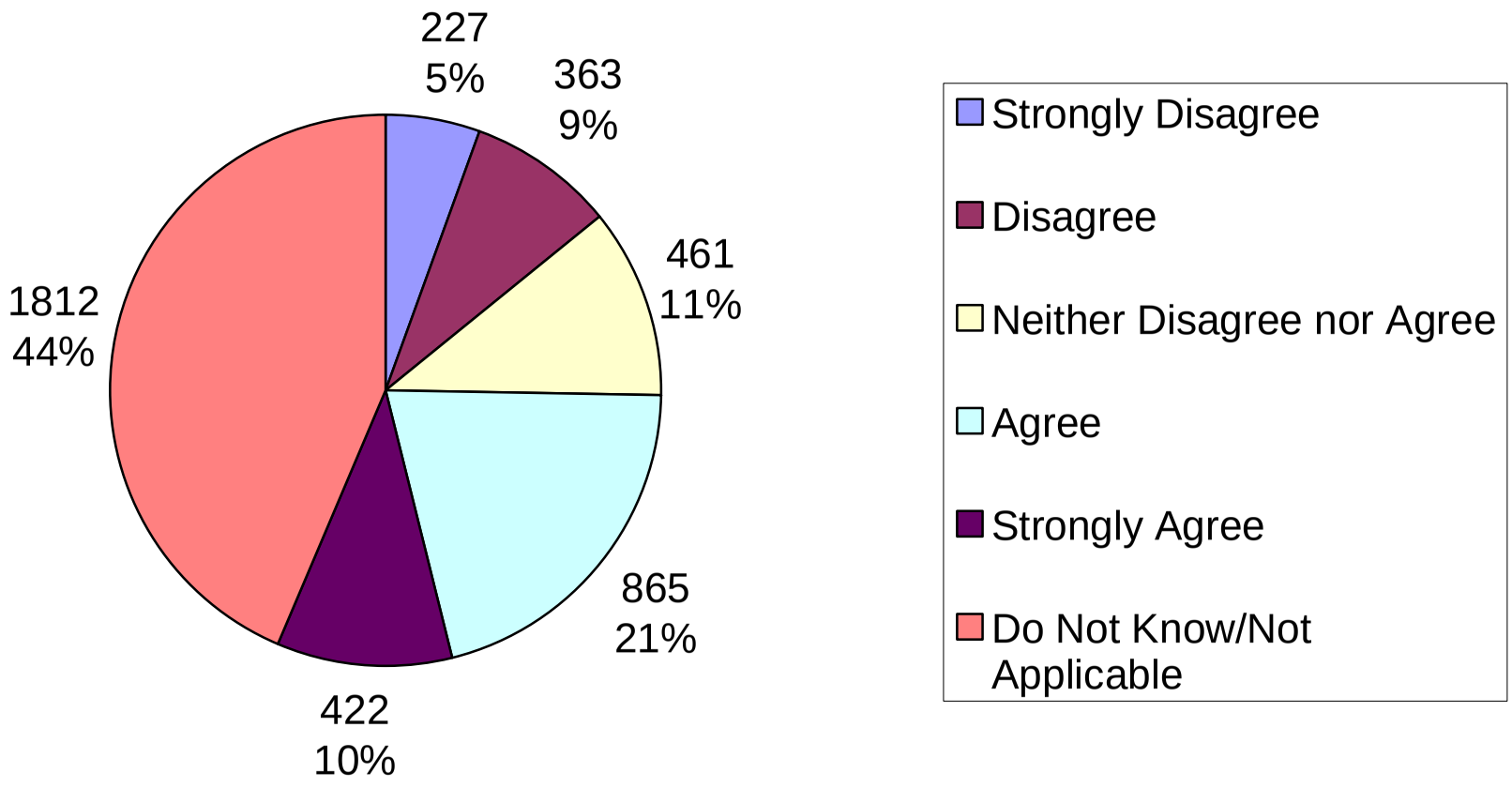
The Payroll Counseling and Administration provided by my servicing HR office met my needs:



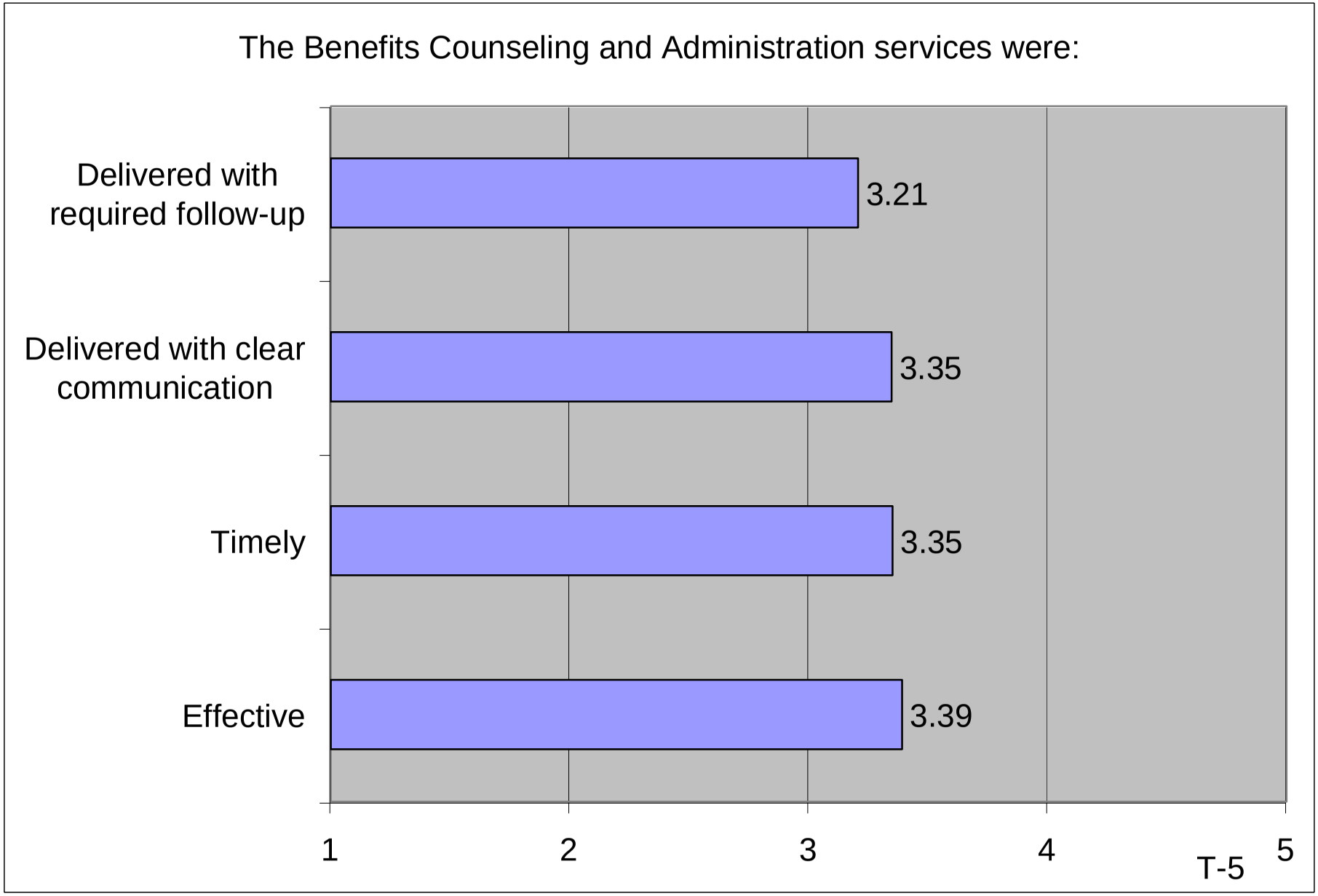
T-2


The Payroll Counseling and Administration services were:
Delivered with required follow-up
3.22
Delivered with clear communication
3.33
Timely
3.36
Effective
3.44
1
2
3
4
5
T-3

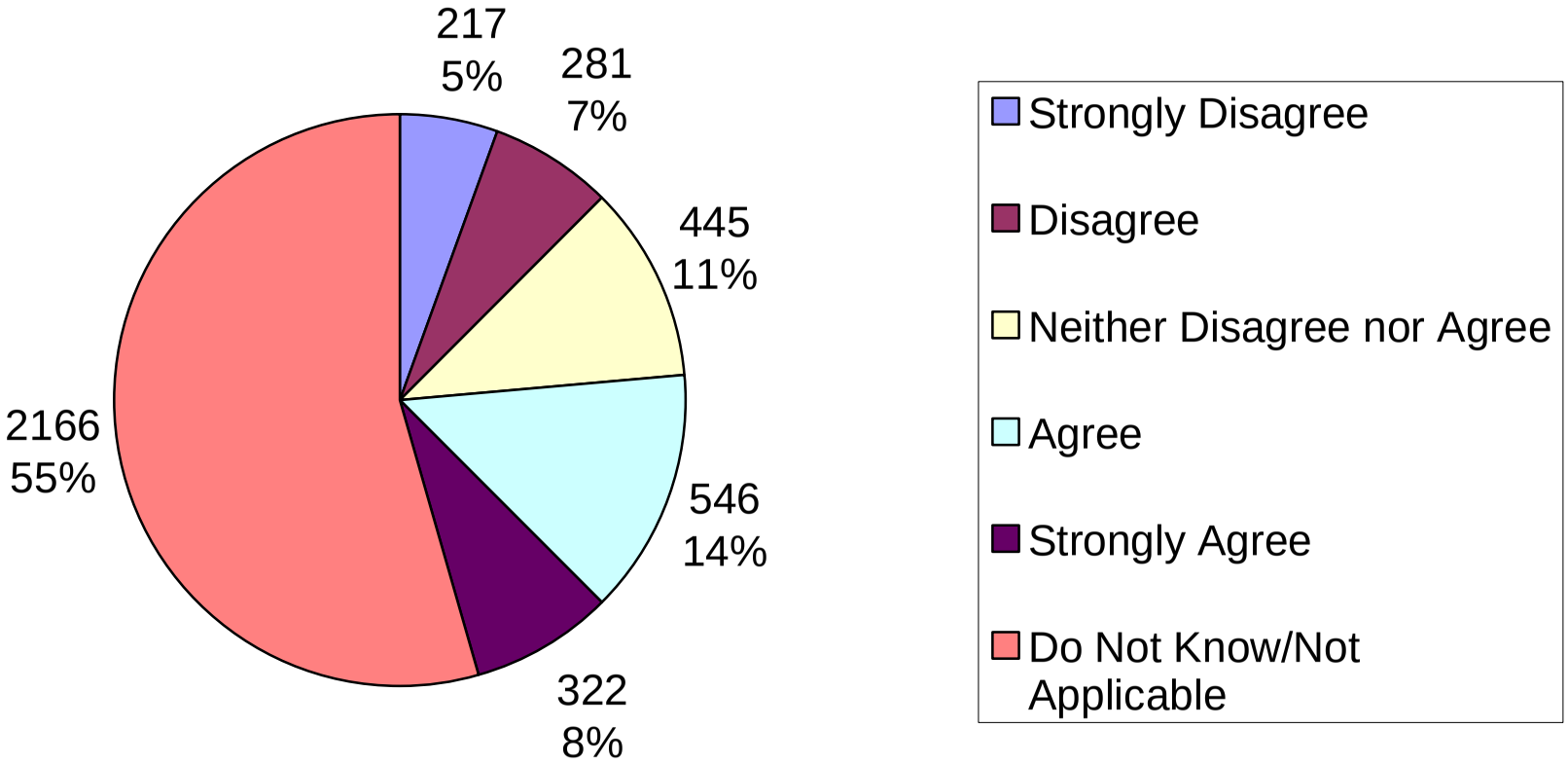
The Benefits Counseling and Administration provided by my servicing HR office met my needs:



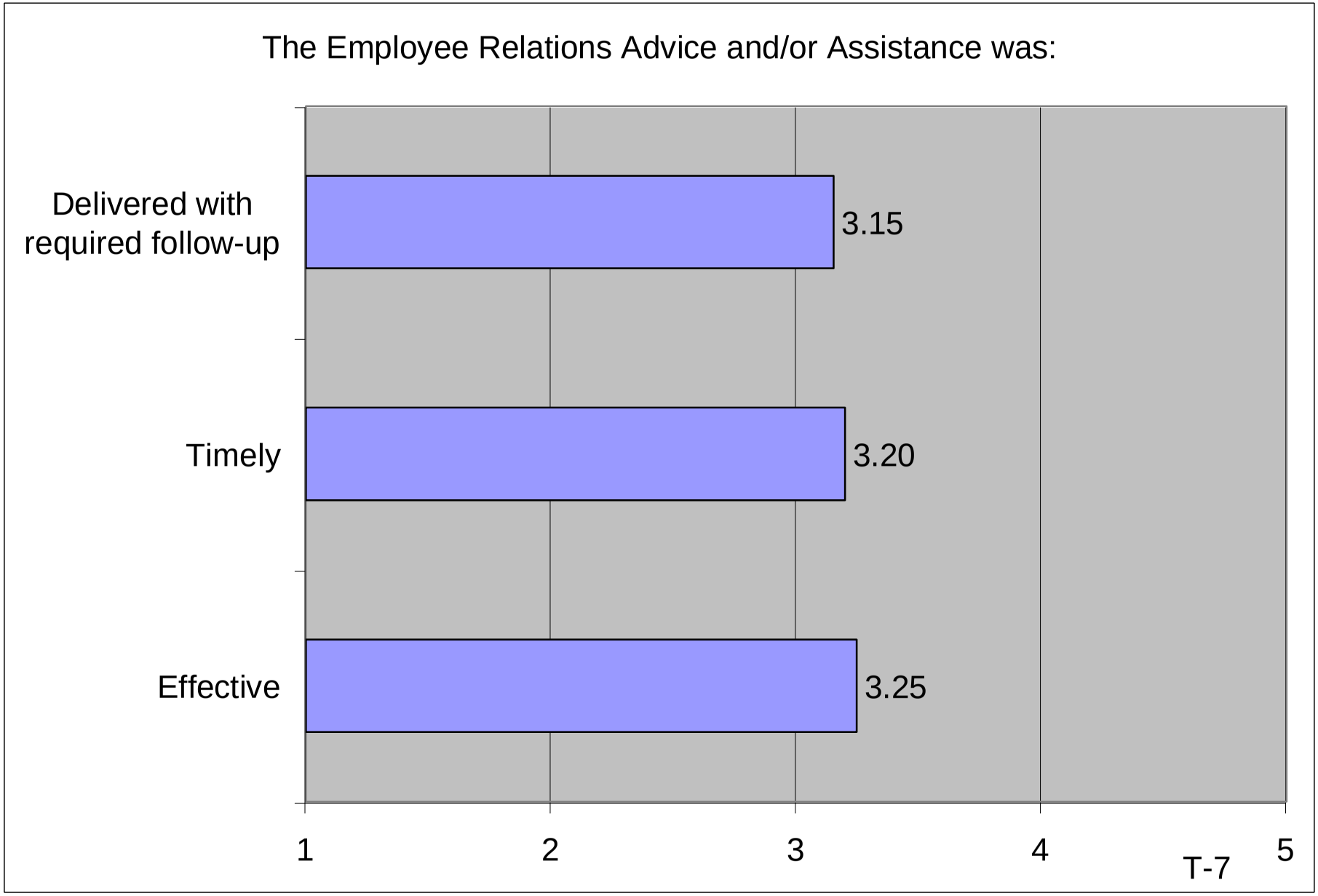
T-4


The Benefits Counseling and Administration services were:
Delivered with required follow-up
3.21
Delivered with clear communication
3.35
Timely
3.35
Effective
3.39
1
2
3
4
5
T-5

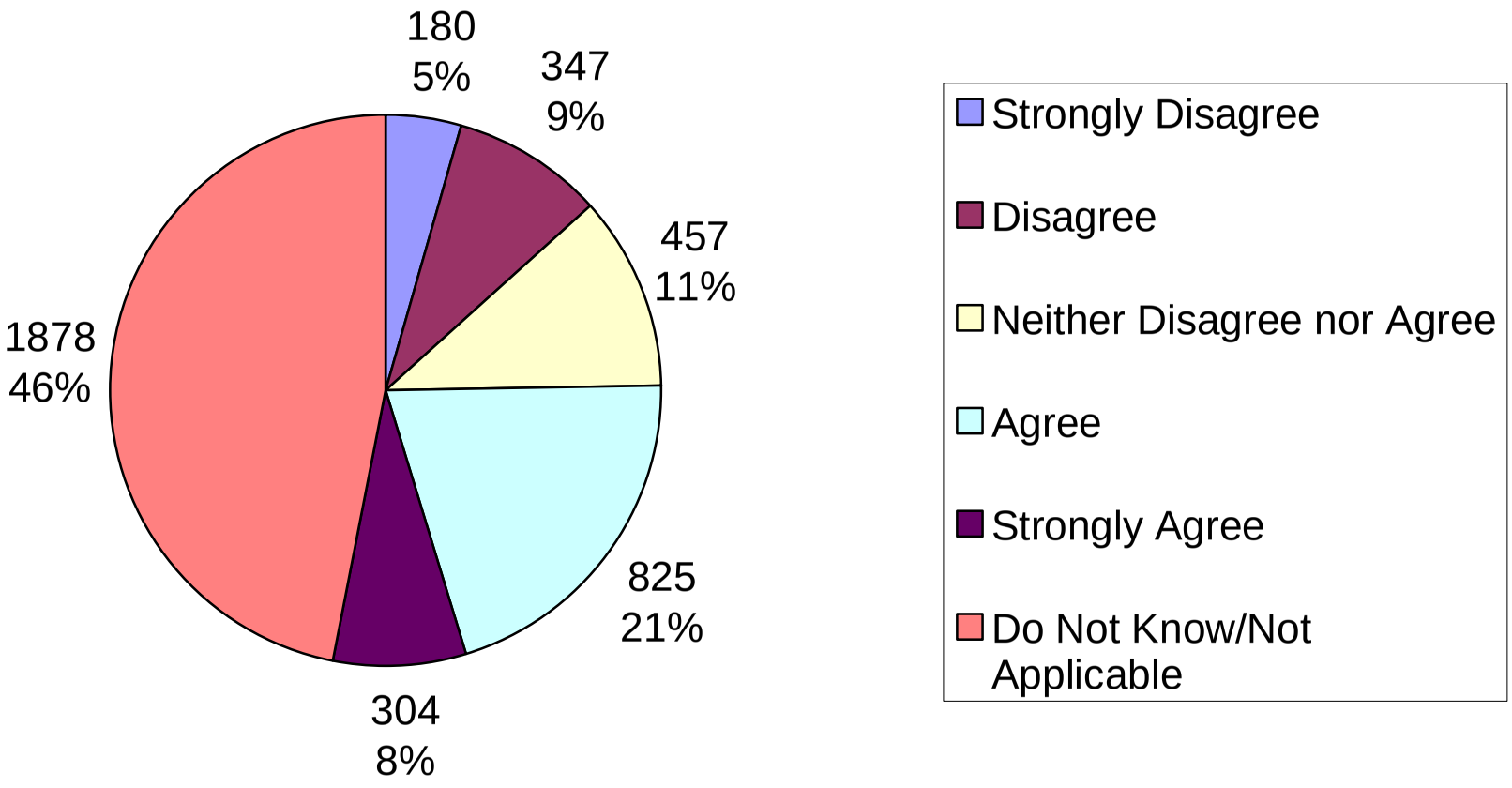
The Employee Relations Advice and/or Assistance provided by my servicing HR office met my needs:



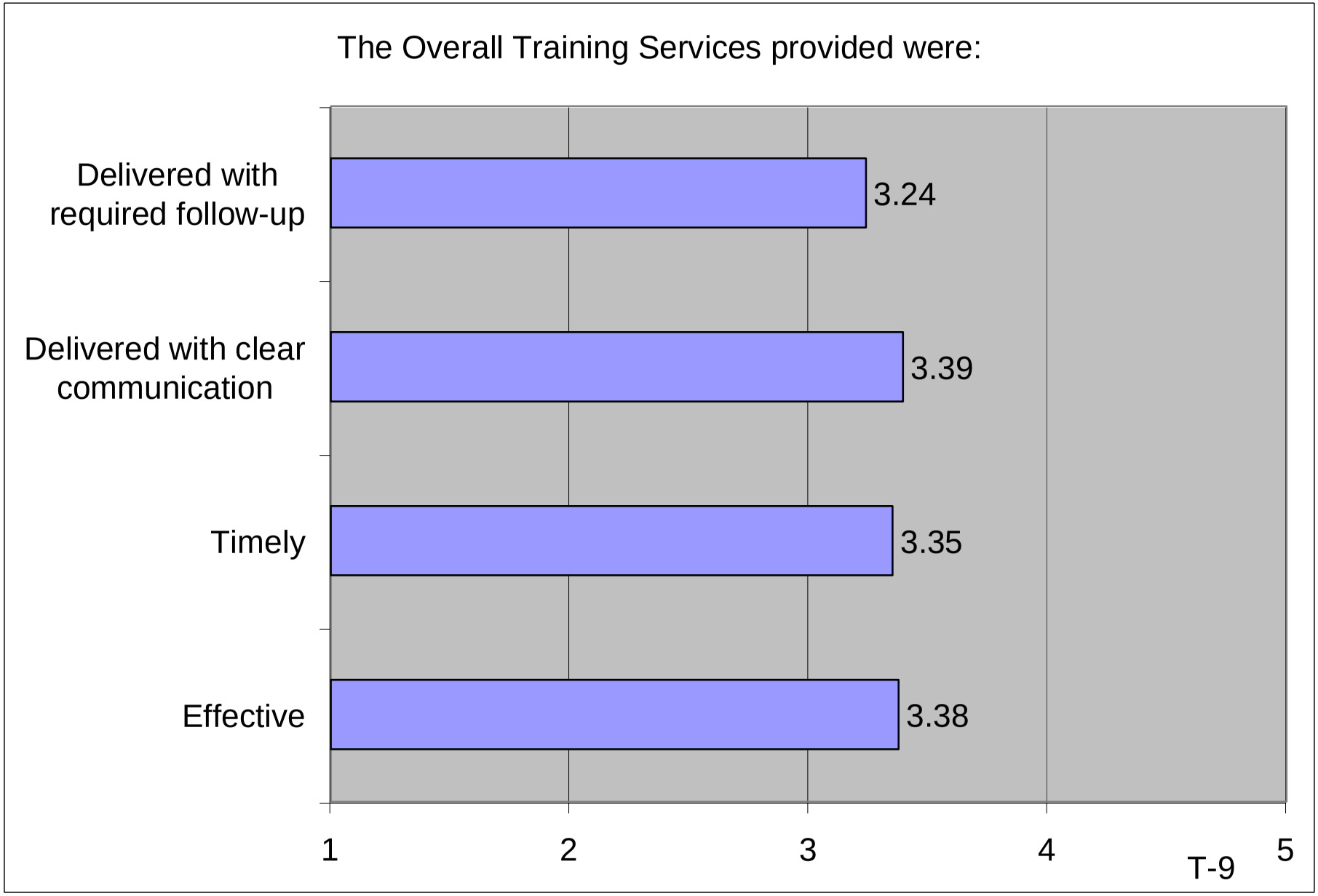
T-6


The Employee Relations Advice and/or Assistance was:
Delivered with required follow-up
3.15
Timely
3.20
Effective
3.25
1
2
3
4
5
T-7

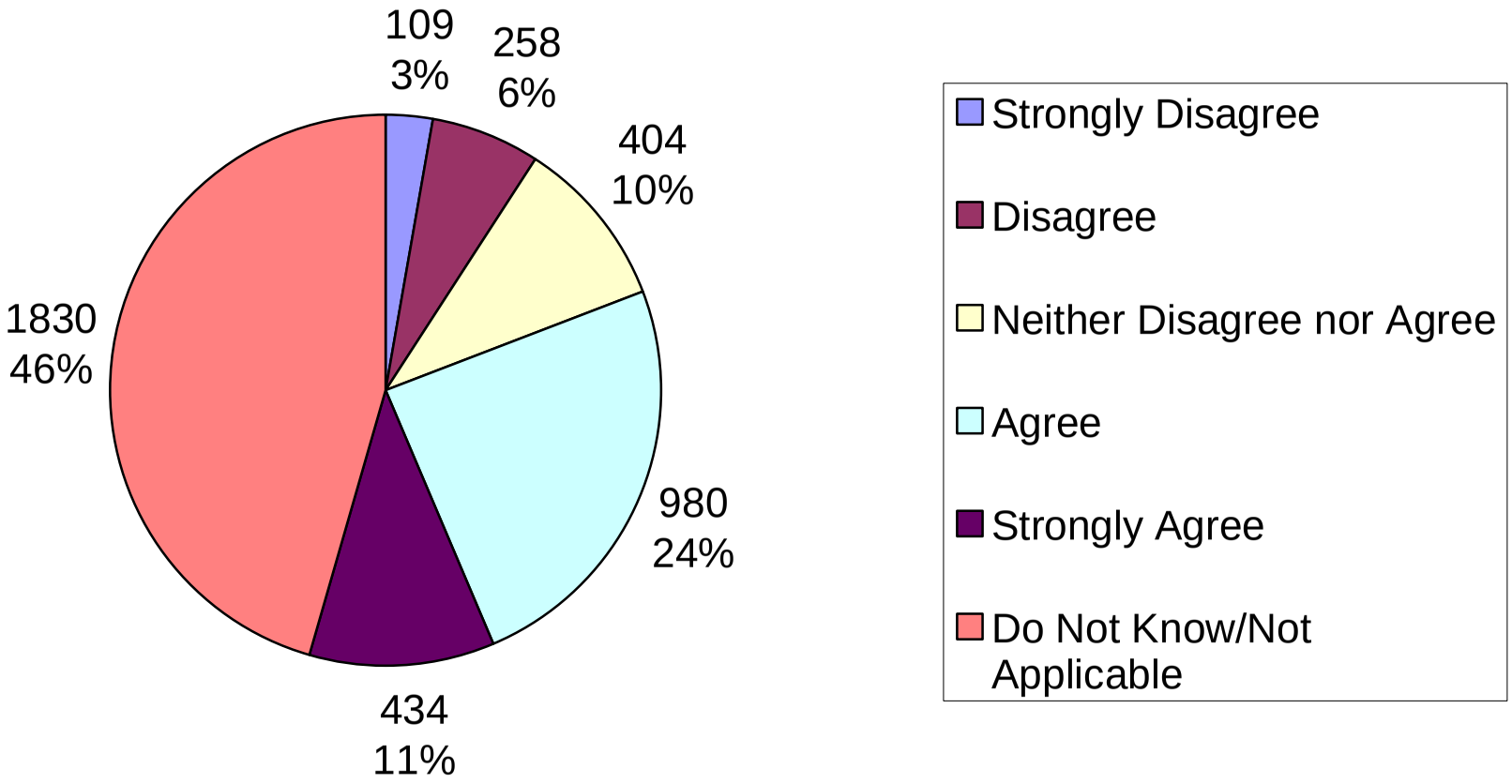
The Overall Training Services provided by my servicing HR office met my needs:



T-8


The Overall Training Services provided were:
Delivered with required follow-up
3.24
Delivered with clear communication
3.39
Timely
3.35
Effective
3.38
1
2
3
4
5
T-9

I feel that overall the skill levels of my staff are appropriate for performing assigned duties:



T-10