

We looked at various measures of satisfaction in relation to CPS work and job-related stress to assess how using the laptop impacts employee morale. The overall level of satisfaction with the laptops is high. Graph 12 below shows more than 65% of all testers expressed being somewhat or very satisfied, compared to less than 20% being somewhat or very dissatisfied. In general, Manhattan testers express a higher general satisfaction with using the laptops (69%). While Staten Island also expressed satisfaction, a greater proportion of testers were somewhat to very dissatisfied compared to Manhattan testers (24% in Staten Island compared to 11 % for Manhattan).

Graph 12 - Overall User Satisfaction With the Laptops

Through workshops and survey responses, Staten Island participants reported more technical difficulties, such as loss of connection, trouble establishing a connection, and connection in court as more problematic, compared to Manhattan. Other organizational or managerial factors may be influencing these overall satisfaction levels. It could also be the case that having a laptop produced higher expectations for use at court and in the field, expectations that were not wholly met.

Use of the laptops does not appear to have much of an impact on the attitudes of the testers toward their work, except on the question of resources. Both field office testers fairly consistently reported liking their job and feeling they work in a supportive environment. Both of these attitudes appear to have improved slightly from the pre-pilot period to the during-pilot period. There was also little change overall in the testers' feelings of being valued by their organization. However, having the laptop does appear to have substantially increased the overall feeling of having adequate resources to do the job. The baseline survey showed 57% of testers in both field offices disagreed or strongly disagreed that they had sufficient resources to do their job and only 28% agreed or strongly agreed. The proportions reversed after using the laptops, with 57% of testers now agreed or strongly agreed that they had sufficient resources to do their job well, and only 21% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

There are some differences worth noting between the two field offices in testers' attitudes toward their work. Staten Island testers were slightly more positive than Manhattan testers concerning

liking the job and working in a supportive environment. Graph 13 below shows that Staten

Graph 13 - Perceived Sufficiency of Resources by Field Office

Island testers are somewhat more positive than the Manhattan group with respect to the sufficiency of resources, but overall, as mentioned above, both groups became much more positive in this regard during the pilot.

The difference between responses for the two field offices are the most noticeable in feeling valued by the organization. Graph 14 below shows that Manhattan testers' responses are more negative after the test period than in the baseline survey. At the outset of the test, over 32 % reported feeling valued, but that rating dropped to 22 % in the post-pilot survey (conversely, the negative responses rose from 34 % to 46 %). In Staten Island, by contrast, the positive responses increased from approximately 33 % to 49 % over the test period. We did not uncover any possible intervening factors through the surveys or workshops that would account for this negative trend.

Graph 14 - Perceptions of Feeling Valued by Field Office

Overall, many testers feel their jobs are stressful. There appears to be a slight overall reduction in perceptions of job-related stress from the baseline to the post survey (66 % high to very high pre-pilot ratings; 57 % high to very high post-pilot ratings). The top three situations that testers say caused them stress before the pilot were the amount of documentation (78 %), insufficient technical tools to do their work well (70 %), and documentation deadlines (63 %).

After the test period, there was a considerable reduction in testers' reporting that insufficient technological tools to do their jobs was major cause of job-related stress (23 % compared to 70 % prior to the test). In addition, 60 % of testers in the pre-pilot period reported that inflexibility in places to do their documentation caused them stress; that stress factor substantially reduced to only 35 % in the post-pilot survey.

Laptop use generally was seen as contributing to lower job-related stress; almost two-thirds said that it did and 35 % said it did not. Those who reported a reduction in stress said that their ability to catch up on their work, being able to submit reports on time, just knowing the laptop is available and having the flexibility of working on

documentation outside of the office were reasons for stress reduction. One caseworker said, "If I can't sleep at night because of all the stress that results from a build up of casework activities not completed, I can complete case documentation at home during the evening to reduce some of the work I will have to do the following day." Several others expressed this similar sentiment, "Knowing that I have it [the laptop] helps me relax when I feel I don't have enough time to complete work while in the office."

Those whose stress levels were not reduced by having a laptop varied more in the reasons why. The most frequently mentioned were the problems they experienced while working with the laptop including poor or intermittent connectivity, and slow speed. One caseworker said, "The laptop requires too much time to connect and therefore sometimes creates additional stress when I am striving to meet deadlines and cannot stay connected. The laptop also locks up at times and offers me more frustration, I've since stopped using it as much." However, many others expressed that the nature of CPS work in general, such as difficulty dealing with increased pressure for timely documentation, not getting paid for work at home, and changes in work/life balance are issues. One caseworker stated, "Technology only helps us to have flexibility in where and when we do the documentation but does not lessen the complexity and tension in each case."

Overall, 77% of testers' recommend the continued use of the laptops (84 % positive recommendations in Manhattan and 69 % in Staten Island). The reasons mentioned for this included perceptions that it increases one's ability to use time more efficiently, it enables you to do your work outside of office and on your own timetable, and it increases access to information and timeliness of your documentation.

Although all managers and supervisors II, who were interviewed recommended that a laptop computer be provided for CPS workers, they also stated that the degree of benefit each worker derives from such a tool is directly dependent on the work ethic of the individual.
