In November 2023 we asked you, “How’s it going?” Over 200 of you answered – 258 to be exact. Thank you!

We’ve looked at what you shared to the two questions, “What is going well for you at work?” and “What could be better?” Here are the top themes, in alphabetical order along with a representative quote.

### What’s going well for you at work?

#### Positive Leadership and Supportive Supervisors
Some of you express sentiments about supportive supervisors and good leadership, with mentions of supervisors listening to concerns, acting on issues, supporting personal growth, and creating a positive work environment.

My managers are flexible, encouraging and truly believe in the idea of us as a team.

#### Professional Development and Opportunities
A number of you mention having opportunities for growth, professional development, training, and advancement in your roles. You appreciate being given new responsibilities, involvement in meaningful projects, and the chance to explore new ventures.

The type of work is interesting, and I feel connected to the mission.

#### Team Collaboration and Support
Many of you express satisfaction with your team dynamics, support from colleagues, and positive relationships at work. You mention feeling supported, valued, and appreciated by your coworkers, supervisors, and within your teams.

I work with smart and capable colleagues!

#### Work Flexibility and Hybrid Schedule
Another prominent theme is flexibility of work hours, teleworking opportunities, and a hybrid work schedule. You appreciate the balance between remote work and in-person office time, noting the positive impact on your mental, emotional, and physical well-being.

Flexibility with my work hours helps me to manage work and life.

#### Work-life Balance and Well-being
You value a manageable workload, a fair work-life balance, and supportive environments that consider your mental health. Some of you mention appreciating the support received during personal challenges and the ability to set work boundaries.

The ability to telework 2 days a week is a blessing. I am enjoying a better work/life balance, and am saving time and gas expenses. I enjoy my days in the office as I can connect with colleagues and students.
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What could be better?

**Employee Well-being & Morale**
Burnout and stress appear to be widespread due to high workloads, insufficient support, and limited resources. Those of you reporting low morale also say that contributing factors include lack of trust, feeling undervalued, and need for transparent communication.

- Too many fire drills and demands without enough resources to complete. No one knows how to stop or say no.

**Infrastructure & Physical Workspace**
Concerns about office spaces being inadequate, outdated, and uncomfortable were reported. A number of you noted the ongoing construction and infrastructure challenges which affect the campus environment negatively.

- Ongoing construction makes moving around campus a continued challenge and an eyesore--there is a sense that the construction is never going to stop.

**Leadership & Organizational Challenges**
You express a desire for better organization and communication of clear goals from your leadership. You also want more transparency from management, including more effective delegation, and greater empowerment. Improved clarity in roles and responsibilities could help some of you navigate “politics” and feel more effective.

- Navigating politics is a challenge, tedious and tiresome. More empowerment to lead or at least clarity regarding the scope of what I have authority to champion would be helpful.

**Telework & Work-life Balance**
There’s a desire to increase telework due to commuting issues and a need for better work-life balance. Some of you note struggling with energy levels and how the long semesters impact efficiency.

- Wish I had more agency to telework on a schedule that worked best for our work flow and not arbitrary scheduling.

**Workload & Time Management**
Relatively, a number of you report having an overwhelming workload which leads to stress, difficulty focusing, and inconsistent workdays. Challenges in managing time effectively due to workload variations and commuting issues are also reported.

- I am overwhelmed. My department is way understaffed, so I feel like too much is put on each of us, and we’re falling behind/failing. My supervisor tells me there is a plan and changes are coming, but between here and there, it just seems like an uphill, never-ending battle to stay afloat. I used to enjoy my job, but not so much anymore.
Summary
There are a number of bright spots worth lifting up. Many of you report positive experiences with the work you are doing, relationships with colleagues and leaders, and with the flexibility some of you enjoy. And there is much work to be done. Work-life balance and (the ongoing) adjusting of remote versus in-person work needs more attention for many. And the complexity of the workplace puts a high premium on highly effective leadership to create the necessary conditions for a smooth running team, and to ensure all feel the work they do matters.

Our analysis process
Analyzing qualitative data is something we do regularly at CLOC. It involves taking a dataset of text, reading it, looking for patterns, rereading it, and then grouping the data into themes. It’s laborious and important work. For this pulse check we decided to kick the AI tires to see what happened.

One CLOC consultant conducted a traditional “analog” analysis, reading through all the responses and clustering them accordingly. Another consultant constructed a series of prompts for ChatGPT and fed it the data. Along with our Director, we performed a side-by-side comparison and the results surprised both our AI enthusiast AND our AI skeptic. The ChatGPT themes lined up nearly identically to the “analog” themes. There were some differences in the theme title naming (e.g. “Flexibility” in the manual results, and “Work Flexibility and Hybrid Schedule” in the AI-generated list), and in the order of the themes generated. However the top six or so themes for each were consistent with each other. In this report, the theme titles and descriptions come directly from ChatGPT, with light edits for clarity and voice.

We also asked ChatGPT to find some example quotes to highlight each of the themes and this is where the AI led us astray. Instead of providing verbatim quotes, ChatGPT appeared to create composite or representative quotes. So we asked our human to go back and extract real quotes from the original dataset. Those “human curated” quotes are what you see above.

And by the way, we were using the free GPT-3.5 version.

Now what?
Helping people make meaning of and take action on data is important to us. Try out this 3-2-1 activity with your team to take these data from just interesting to useful.

- What are 3 reflections you have about these findings?
- What are 2 questions you’d like to ask your colleagues about these data?
- What is 1 concrete action you can take to amplify what’s going well or improve what’s not?