
Landscape Executive Summary



Episcopal Diocese of Montana

"And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ - to the glory and praise of God." - Philippians 1:9-11

The Landscape was recently administered in the Episcopal Diocese of Montana, running from early March of 2018 and closing in the middle of April 2018. Within the Diocese, 554 persons responded to the assessment. These responses have been benchmarked against other Regional Associations in the Holy Cow! Consulting database to determine what is typical and what is exceptional about the Diocese of Montana. Out of the 554 responses, the following is the breakdown of those responders by their role within the Diocese:

Member of Parish	56%	310
Vestry Members	32%	176
Diocesan Leadership	1.4%	8
Diocesan Staff Member	1.6%	9
Active Priests	4.6%	26
Retired Priests	1.6%	9
Active Deacons	2.5%	14
Retired Deacons	0.3%	2
Totals	100%	554

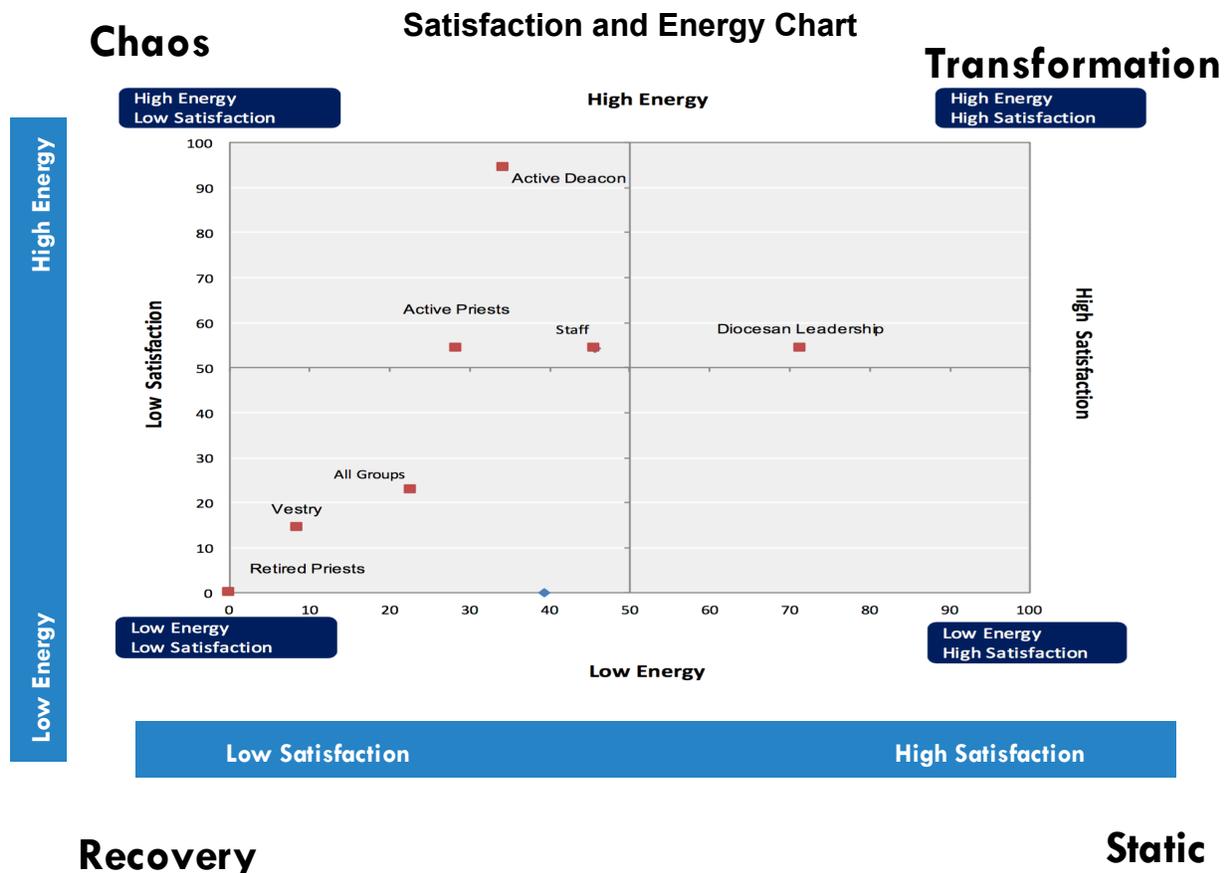
Vitality Measures:

Two things make up a vital Regional Association – satisfaction and energy. Overall, approximately 16% of the responders are clearly satisfied with how things are in the Diocese of Montana. Approximately 17% feel that there is a compelling sense of purpose or energy and that people within the Diocese are not just going through the motions in their work. In both the measure of satisfaction and energy over 60% of the responders are on the fence, which indicates that many people are waiting to see what is going to happen next before affirmatively stating whether they are satisfied or energized. Even in a time of leadership transition, this is an unusually large number of people within a Regional Association unwilling to commit one way or the other for the vitality measures. While 20% of the responders stated that the Diocese is weaker than three years ago, 26% of the responders agreed that the Diocese is stronger.

Compared to other Regional Associations this indicates that the overall vitality of the Diocese of Montana is in the low range. This also indicates that the Diocese is in the *Recovery or Reinvention* quadrant where both the work itself and the people working

within the system have experienced an erosion of morale or alignment, without a clear Diocesan mission and vision. This level of vitality suggests that the Diocese will need to make some necessary internal fixes before it can begin to have significant external impact. The data indicates that the Diocese would benefit from clarity in a mission and vision of a preferred future so that it can begin to align congregational support, leadership ministries, conflict management efforts with that clear mission and vision.

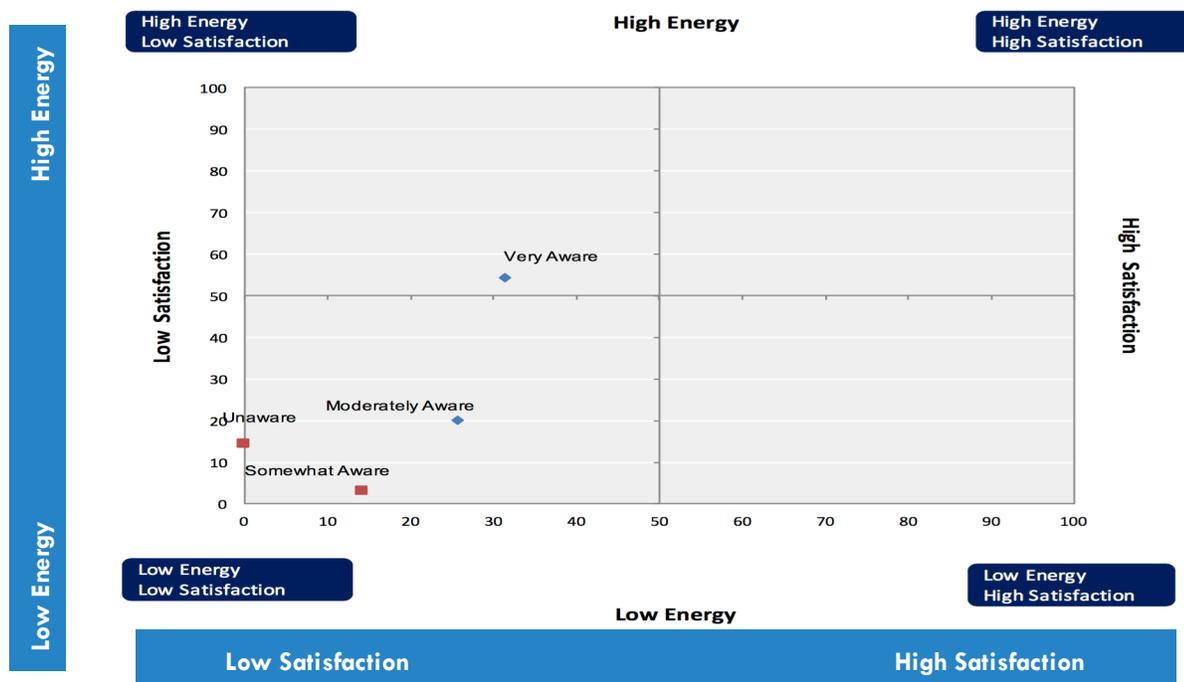
Groups within the Diocese are having different experiences in terms of their energy and satisfaction levels (see Satisfaction and Energy Chart below). While no one group is experiencing both satisfaction and energy in high levels, the Active Deacons, Active Priests, and Diocesan Staff have a higher level of energy or compelling sense of purpose than others. These groups are in the upper left quadrant or the *Chaos* quadrant. In this quadrant, people often feel energized about certain things that are happening but find themselves fairly isolated in that work and unable to see what mission and purpose the Diocese as a whole is moving towards. The lower levels of vitality are currently experienced by the Vestry with 13% stating that they are clearly satisfied, 15% feeling a compelling sense of purpose or energy, and 21% stating that the Diocese is stronger than it was three years ago. The lowest level of vitality is



currently experienced by the Retired Priests with 22% stating they are satisfied, 0% feeling a compelling sense of purpose within the Diocese and 11% stating that the Diocese is stronger than it was three years ago.

Significantly, the data indicates that the level of awareness of the work of Diocese is important for respondents to feel higher levels of satisfaction and energy (see chart below). In response to the question “what would you say your level of awareness regarding the work of the Diocese is” for the 20% who responded that they were “very aware” their levels of satisfaction and energy were higher. The 7% that responded that they were “unaware” of the work of the Diocese experienced much lower levels of both satisfaction and energy, but indicate they are much less satisfied than the other groups.

Level of Awareness Satisfaction and Energy Chart



Recovery

Static

Areas of Focus and Critical Success Factors:

To determine how satisfied people are within the Diocese, they are focusing on five different areas. If people perceive the Diocese is performing well in these five areas then their satisfaction will go up. Likewise, if people perceive that these five areas are not performing well, then their satisfaction levels will go down. These five areas of focus for people within the Diocese of Montana are:

- 1. In important decisions in our Diocese, adequate opportunity for consideration of different approaches is usually provided.***
- 2. Our Diocese does a good job helping each member understand that he or she has an important role to play. ***
- 3. Our Diocesan leadership has done a good job of developing a shared vision that unites us.**
- 4. The Diocese is effective in recognizing trends in the larger society and in helping us adapt in order to deal with those changes.**
- 5. The whole spirit in our Diocese makes people want to get as involved as possible.**

Additionally, to determine how energized people are within the Diocese, they are focusing on five different areas. If people perceive the Diocese is performing well in these five areas then their energy will go up. Likewise, if people perceive that these five areas are not performing well, then their energy levels will go down. These five areas of focus for people within the Diocese of Montana are:

- 1. There is a disturbing amount of conflict in our Diocese.**
- 2. Our Diocese has been successful in helping congregations like mine become more vital and effective.**
- 3. In important decisions in our Diocese, adequate opportunity for consideration of different approaches is usually provided.***
- 4. Most important decisions about what our Diocese should do as a whole are really made by the same, small group of people.**
- 5. Our Diocese does a good job helping each member understand that he or she has an important role to play.***

*indicate areas of focus that are shared in both satisfaction and energy levels.

Out of these areas of focus, there was one area of urgency that needs attention. Throughout the Diocese, people do not feel that ***in important decisions adequate opportunities for consideration of different approach is usually provided*** and have indicated that they would like this to be immediately addressed in order for both their satisfaction and energy levels to improve.

Other areas of less urgency that are still in need of attention and where improvements will have the greatest impact on the satisfaction levels within the Diocese are:

- **Helping each member understand that he or she has an important role to play.**
- **Creating a spirit that makes people want to get as involved as possible.**
- **Becoming effective in recognizing trends in the larger society to help adaptation occur in order to deal with those changes.**
- **Encouraging and fostering a healthy tolerance of differing opinions and beliefs within the system.**
- **Developing a vision that unites people within the Diocese.**
- **Developing a sense of discovery that engagement with the Diocese will create a source of energy and spiritual renewal for the members.**
- **Ensuring that there is a high quality gift discernment process so people can engage in work within the Diocese that fits their gifts.**

Future Priorities:

As the responders look at the future, their top two out of the top three priorities focus on congregational work. These priorities are:

- 1. Take a leadership role in working with churches that are struggling.**
- 2. Equip Rectors and other leaders in congregations with strategies that enable them to reach new members.**
- 3. Cultivate a higher level of trust within the Diocese.**

While the first two priorities are typical of Regional Associations, the third priority is unusually high on the priority list and may indicate a unique need within the Diocese of

Montana regarding trust and work around that priority moving forward.

Performance Areas:

There are seven performance indices reported in the Landscape: Morale, Conflict Management, Engagement, Governance, Collegiality, Leadership, and Support to Congregations. Within these performance areas, the Diocese scored in the low range compared to other Regional Associations. This indicates some opportunity for growth and needed changes in the future.

Responders perceive the Diocese of Montana to be extremely flexible and open to new ways of doing things. The largest group of responders feels that there is only a moderate amount of change necessary in order for their vision for the Diocese to be met. Overall, responders stated that they have a low level of vision clarity regarding where the Diocese is headed and how it is going to get there. Member readiness to follow the lead of the Diocesan leadership and the Bishop is in the very low range, but there continues to be a high level of congregational engagement within the life and work of the Diocese. 25% responders stated that they are more satisfied within this Diocese than other Dioceses or Episcopal Congregations they have been a part of, while 37% are less satisfied within the Diocese of Montana. In terms of gift utilization, 11% of the responders indicate that when they think about their gifts, interests and time they feel that they have something to give the Diocese but don't know how to give it.

Transition and Bishop Search:

This data can be used to assist with determining the following during this time of transition and search:

1. Identity and Direction
2. Remedial issues that need attention
3. The level of openness to change and leadership
4. The Diocese's opportunities and vulnerabilities during this time of change
5. The level of trust in leadership and ability to address conflict in a healthy way

It will be important to use these five areas to determine your next best fit for a Bishop in terms of professional interests, abilities, leadership styles, core motivations and skills needed within the context of the region and the Diocese.