

JULY 19, 2011



General Manager Selection Public Input Survey

BART Marketing & Research Department



BACKGROUND

As one means of soliciting public input on the selection of a new General Manager, BART riders and the public were invited to complete an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to rate the qualities and experience important in a new General Manager.

The questionnaire was administered through two channels: (1) the questionnaire was posted on bart.gov in an open-participation format, and (2) an email invitation was sent to about 3,000 randomly selected BART riders who had completed an on-board passenger environment survey and agreed to participate in future BART research.¹

To direct people to the open participation survey, email notifications were sent to more than 400 community-based organization leaders, as well as all elected officials throughout BART's four-county service area. These emails contained a link to the survey on bart.gov.

The survey was open and in the field from 6/9/11 – 7/12/11. A total of 430 people participated in the open survey on bart.gov, and an additional 389 people participated in the random sample survey. The response rate for the random sample group was approximately 13%.

Results from both groups were similar. The findings presented here are primarily from the randomly selected group (this group has less of a self-selection bias and is therefore more representative of BART riders' opinions). Differences between the two groups are noted in the findings section beginning on the next page. Appendix B provides the frequency responses for the open-participation and random sample groups.

Respondents were asked to rate ten personal characteristics or attributes (which help define a good candidate) from "very important" to "not important." The questionnaire also asked respondents to prioritize by indicating what the single most important task will be for the new General Manager, and what the General Manager's top focus should be.

Open-ended comments were solicited to allow respondents to voice their opinion on topics not included in the other questions. A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

¹ For both channels, controls were in place to make it difficult for someone to respond more than once to the online survey.

FINDINGS

Attribute Ratings

Most respondents feel that all ten attributes presented are very or somewhat important in the selection of a new BART General Manager. The “top two box” scores (“Very Important” or “Somewhat Important”) exceed 90% for all the attributes. Looking only at the top box, “Very Important,” four attributes emerge as most critical:

- People Management Skills (rated Very Important by 89%)
- Leadership (Very Important: 87%)
- Customer Orientation (Very Important: 87%)
- Communication (Very Important: 86%)

These four attributes are also rated highest by respondents to the open participation survey, though in a slightly different order.

Most Important Task

Greater than half (54%) feel the single most important task for the new General Manager will be to “Maintain quality service at an affordable price.” Nearly one-quarter (23%) say it’s to “Build trusting relationships with the community, partners in transportation, and other government entities.”

Some respondents wrote in other responses, rather than choosing one of the tasks presented as most important. Among these, one of the most common responses was that more than one of the tasks was very important, so they couldn’t select just one.

While maintaining quality service at an affordable price was rated as most important by 50% of the open participation group, these respondents were more likely to write in an “other” response. (Nineteen percent wrote in an “other” response). The most common theme was improving administrative efficiency / controlling employee costs.

Top Focus

Nearly two-thirds (64%) say the new General Manager’s top focus should be “Operating a cost-effective, on-time service.” Thirty percent say it should be “Running a professional, efficient organization.” Few choose the broader choices of “Representing the agency in regional, state, and national areas” or “Leading the agency’s efforts to obtain funds.”

Table 1: Importance Ratings of Attributes²

Sorted in descending order on "Very + Somewhat Important" column

Sorted by this column



	Attribute	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	No Opinion	Very + Somewhat Important
1	Leadership	87%	12%	1%	0%	99%
2	Communication	86%	14%	1%	0%	99%
3	People Management Skills	89%	10%	1%	1%	99%
4	Customer Orientation	87%	12%	1%	1%	98%
5	Strategist	78%	20%	1%	1%	98%
6	Collaboration	69%	28%	3%	0%	97%
7	Administrative Skills	65%	31%	3%	1%	96%
8	Political Skills	59%	36%	4%	1%	95%
9	Relationships	58%	37%	4%	1%	95%
10	Commitment to Developing Talent	57%	37%	5%	1%	94%

n=389

Descriptions of Attributes

1. Leadership: Establishes clear directions and engages staff in their accomplishment.
2. Communication: Is a clear and candid communicator, as well as an effective listener.
3. People Management Skills: Ability to accomplish objectives through and with others, including Board members, employees, customers and partners in the region, the state, and at the federal government level.
4. Customer Orientation: Consistently assigns high priority to understanding and satisfying the needs and preferences of customers.
5. Strategist: Conducts business in the context of effectively moving towards long term goals and objectives.
6. Collaboration: Values collaborative and cooperative efforts, including those within the District, with partners in the larger community, with other transportation partners, and with other government bodies.
7. Administrative Skills: Recognizes the importance of budget and financial stewardship, regulatory and procedural compliance, efficient back office support programs, and exhibits skill at accomplishing this work.
8. Political Skills: Accomplished at integrating a variety of perspectives and interests into the decision-making dialogue, and crafting outcomes that satisfy diverse interests.
9. Relationships: Values and maintains extensive and effective working relationships with individuals within and outside the District.
10. Commitment to Developing Talent: Will invest in growing and retaining the skills the District needs for effective growth into the future.

Table 2: Single Most Important Task for New General Manager

Most Important Task	%	Count
Maintain quality service at an affordable price	54%	208
Build trusting relationships with the community, partners in transportation, and other government entities	23%	88
Lead, inspire, motivate, inform and train staff	14%	53
Other: ³	9%	36
Total	100%	385

² Data in Tables 1, 2, and 3 are from the randomly selected group.

³ A list of verbatim responses to this question is available upon request.

Table 3: Top Focus for New General Manager

Top Focus	%	Count
Operating a cost-effective, on-time service	64%	247
Running a professional, efficient organization	30%	116
Representing the agency in regional, state, and national arenas	3%	12
Leading the agency's efforts to obtain funds	3%	11
Total	100%	386

Other comments / suggestions

About one-third (34%) of respondents in the random sample provided relevant comments / suggestions in response to an open-ended question regarding the characteristics and qualities that a new BART General Manager should have. When coded into broad categories, at least 10% of respondents mentioned the following:

- Customer / community focus; better customer service at stations
- Clean / modernize the system
- Improve administrative efficiency / control employee costs
- More for the money / keep fares down

The next tier, mentioned by at least 2% of respondents, included:

- More security / enforce rules
- Good relationship with / motivate staff; staff should have complementary skills
- Expand system / comprehensive Bay Area coverage
- Honest / trustworthy / has integrity
- General Manger should ride BART
- Comment about point of survey
- Expand hours
- On time, reliable, efficient service
- More than 1 / all of the above (attributes evaluated in survey)
- Improve service (more cars on specific lines, general comments)
- Coordinate with other agencies / meet regional needs
- Comment re: former General Manager termination
- Vision / strategy
- Don't try to please everyone / get consensus
- More bike-friendly / update bike rules

A few verbatim comments from selected categories follow. The full list of comments is available upon request.

Customer / community focus; better customer service at stations

In touch with the needs of commuters and occasional users - broadening the base of ridership - responding to issues users have - don't forget ventilation and noise of these trains! Work in partnership with pro-transit organizations, not stand alone BART by itself.

Someone who puts customers first. Works hard to create a convenient, comfortable and affordable system, so people get out of their cars and into the BART trains. A Public Transportation advocate.

Introduce him to the riders at stations to build relationships, make sure he is visible (media).

Clean / modernize the system

Overall the system needs a huge make over and needs to be a lot cleaner...

Improve administrative efficiency / control employee costs

Should be focused on identifying and eliminating inefficiencies; should not be afraid of shaking up an entrenched organization; should be empowered to dismantle a dysfunctional internal political system.

Be able to negotiate effectively with unions to avoid excessive wages impacting fares and services.

More for the money / keep fares down

Keeping cost down is very important for me, I think we should have someone who can run a balanced budget and keep fare increases to a bare minimum.

General Manger should ride BART

I strongly believe that BART's new GM should be someone who rides BART and/or other public transportation at least 50%. The GM should be someone who understands public transportation from a transit rider's perspective - this can't be done if you're sitting behind the wheel of a car.

He or she should actually RIDE BART at least three times a week at different times to see what BART patrons experience.

Comment about point of survey

It seems absurd to ask these questions of people who do not know what the job of General Manager entails or the level at which the manager works in the system. All BART employees should have the maximization of efficiency and reliability of the

transit system as their top priorities at the level at which they work. It is concerning that the Board needs guidance on this.

This survey seems moronic. You need guidance in hiring??? What's the real agenda in putting this out and sending reminders for completion?

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The majority of respondents in both the open participation and random sample surveys are commuters who ride BART at least five days per week and reside in BART's four-county service area. Responses shown here are from the random sample survey. Responses from both groups are included in Appendix B.

How often do you currently ride BART?	%	Count
6 – 7 days a week	12%	47
5 days a week	43%	164
3 – 4 days a week	15%	56
1 – 2 days a week	16%	59
1 – 3 days a month	11%	40
Less than once a month, but at least once a year	3%	12
Less than once a year	1%	2
Total	100%	380

For what purpose do you primarily ride BART?	%	Count
Commute to/from work	71%	268
Visit friends/family	7%	25
School	6%	22
Theater or concert	2%	9
Shopping	2%	8
Medical/dental	2%	6
Airplane trip	1%	4
Restaurant	1%	4
Sports event	0%	1
Other:	9%	33
Total	100%	380

In which county do you live?	%	Count
Alameda County	50%	188
Contra Costa County	20%	74
San Francisco County	19%	71
San Mateo County	7%	25
Other:	5%	19
Total	100%	377

Gender	%	Count
Male	44%	164
Female	56%	210
Total	100%	374

Age	%	Count
13 - 17	1%	2
18 - 24	7%	27
25 - 34	22%	82
35 - 44	20%	76
45 - 54	23%	85
55 - 64	19%	70
65 or older	9%	33
Total	100%	375

Race (multiples accepted)	%	Count
White	61%	225
Asian or Pacific Islander	17%	61
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish	12%	45
Black / African American	11%	42
American Indian or Alaska Native	2%	8
Other	1%	3

n=367

Annual Household Income	%	Count
Under \$15,000	7%	26
\$15,000 - \$24,999	8%	29
\$25,000 - \$49,999	18%	64
\$50,000 - \$74,999	20%	71
\$75,000 - \$99,999	12%	43
\$100,000 or more	36%	131
Total	100%	364

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE



The BART Board of Directors is engaged in a search for a General Manager for the District, and is interested in your input on the skills and experiences we should seek in an ideal candidate as we begin this process.

The results of this survey will be compiled and provided to the Board of Directors for its assistance in making this important selection.

We welcome your interest and thank you for your time.

Please rate each of the following characteristics in terms of importance in the selection of the new BART General Manager.

1. People Management Skills: Ability to accomplish objectives through and with others, including Board members, employees, customers and partners in the region, the state, and at the federal government level.

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important
- No Opinion

2. Political Skills: Accomplished at integrating a variety of perspectives and interests into the decision-making dialogue, and crafting outcomes that satisfy diverse interests.

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important
- No Opinion

3. Strategist: Conducts business in the context of effectively moving towards long term goals and objectives.

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important
- No Opinion

4. Leadership: Establishes clear directions and engages staff in their accomplishment.

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important
- No Opinion

5. Communication: Is a clear and candid communicator, as well as an effective listener.

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important
- No Opinion

6. Commitment to Developing Talent: Will invest in growing and retaining the skills the District needs for effective growth into the future.

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important
- No Opinion

7. Collaboration: Values collaborative and cooperative efforts, including those within the District, with partners in the larger community, with other transportation partners, and with other government bodies.

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important
- No Opinion

8. Administrative Skills: Recognizes the importance of budget and financial stewardship, regulatory and procedural compliance, efficient back office support programs, and exhibits skill at accomplishing this work.

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important
- No Opinion

9. Relationships: Values and maintains extensive and effective working relationships with individuals within and outside the District.

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important
- No Opinion

10. Customer Orientation: Consistently assigns high priority to understanding and satisfying the needs and preferences of customers.

- Very Important
- Somewhat Important
- Not Important
- No Opinion

11. In your opinion, what is the single most important task for the new General Manager?

- Lead, inspire, motivate, inform and train staff
- Build trusting relationships with the community, partners in transportation, and other government entities
- Maintain quality service at an affordable price
- Other: _____

12. What should the top focus of the BART General Manager be?

- Running a professional, efficient organization
- Operating a cost-effective, on-time service
- Leading the agency's efforts to obtain funds
- Representing the agency in regional, state, and national arenas

Please tell us about yourself.

(The following information will be helpful to the District in fully understanding and interpreting the responses we receive.)

13. How often do you currently ride BART? (select one)

- 6 – 7 days a week
- 5 days a week
- 3 – 4 days a week
- 1 – 2 days a week
- 1 – 3 days a **month**
- Less than once a month, but at least once a year
- Less than once a year
- Never

14. For what purpose do you primarily ride BART? (*select one*)

- Commute to/from work
- School
- Airplane trip
- Sports event
- Visit friends/family
- Medical/dental
- Shopping
- Restaurant
- Theater or concert
- Other: _____
- Not applicable – don't ride BART

15. In which county do you live?

- Alameda County
- Contra Costa County
- San Francisco County
- San Mateo County
- Other: _____

16. Are you:

- Male
- Female

17. What is your age?

- 12 or younger
- 13 - 17
- 18 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 – 44
- 45 – 54
- 55 – 64
- 65 or older

18. What is your race or ethnic identification? (Check one or more.)

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Black / African American
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish
- White
- Other: _____

19. What is your total annual household income before taxes?

- Under \$15,000
- \$15,000 - \$24,999
- \$25,000 - \$49,999
- \$50,000 - \$74,999
- \$75,000 - \$99,999
- \$100,000 or more

20. Do you have other comments or suggestions about the qualities and characteristics a new BART General Manager should have?

Thank you for completing this survey. Please click “submit survey” to send us your feedback.

APPENDIX B: FREQUENCIES – RANDOM SAMPLE & OPEN PARTICIPATION SURVEYS

1. People Management Skills: Ability to accomplish objectives through and with others, including Board members, employees, customers and partners in the region, the state, and at the federal government level.

	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Very Important	89%	347	86%	371
Somewhat Important	10%	37	12%	52
Not Important	1%	2	1%	4
No Opinion	1%	3	1%	3
Total	100%	389	100%	430

2. Political Skills: Accomplished at integrating a variety of perspectives and interests into the decision-making dialogue, and crafting outcomes that satisfy diverse interests.

	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Very Important	59%	228	53%	230
Somewhat Important	36%	140	37%	159
Not Important	4%	17	7%	32
No Opinion	1%	4	2%	9
Total	100%	389	100%	430

3. Strategist: Conducts business in the context of effectively moving towards long term goals and objectives.

	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Very Important	78%	305	81%	347
Somewhat Important	20%	78	17%	71
Not Important	1%	4	2%	7
No Opinion	1%	2	1%	5
Total	100%	389	100%	430

4. Leadership: Establishes clear directions and engages staff in their accomplishment.

	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Very Important	87%	339	85%	366
Somewhat Important	12%	47	13%	54
Not Important	1%	2	1%	4
No Opinion	<1%	1	1%	6
Total	100%	389	100%	430

5. Communication: Is a clear and candid communicator, as well as an effective listener.

	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Very Important	86%	333	86%	368
Somewhat Important	14%	53	13%	54
Not Important	1%	2	0%	2
No Opinion	<1%	1	1%	6
Total	100%	389	100%	430

6. Commitment to Developing Talent: Will invest in growing and retaining the skills the District needs for effective growth into the future.

	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Very Important	57%	222	56%	242
Somewhat Important	37%	144	36%	153
Not Important	5%	18	5%	22
No Opinion	1%	5	3%	13
Total	100%	389	100%	430

7. Collaboration: Values collaborative and cooperative efforts, including those within the District, with partners in the larger community, with other transportation partners, and with other government bodies.

	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Very Important	69%	270	71%	304
Somewhat Important	28%	108	26%	111
Not Important	3%	10	3%	11
No Opinion	<1%	1	1%	4
Total	100%	389	100%	430

8. Administrative Skills: Recognizes the importance of budget and financial stewardship, regulatory and procedural compliance, efficient back office support programs, and exhibits skill at accomplishing this work.

	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Very Important	65%	252	62%	267
Somewhat Important	31%	122	33%	143
Not Important	3%	12	3%	14
No Opinion	1%	3	1%	6
Total	100%	389	100%	430

9. Relationships: Values and maintains extensive and effective working relationships with individuals within and outside the District.

	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Very Important	58%	226	61%	263
Somewhat Important	37%	142	33%	143
Not Important	4%	17	4%	16
No Opinion	1%	4	2%	8
Total	100%	389	100%	430

10. Customer Orientation: Consistently assigns high priority to understanding and satisfying the needs and preferences of customers.

	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Very Important	87%	337	87%	375
Somewhat Important	12%	46	11%	47
Not Important	1%	3	1%	4
No Opinion	1%	3	1%	4
Total	100%	389	100%	430

11. In your opinion, what is the single most important task for the new General Manager?

	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Maintain quality service at an affordable price	54%	208	50%	212
Build trusting relationships with the community, partners in transportation, and other government entities	23%	88	16%	67
Lead, inspire, motivate, inform and train staff	14%	53	14%	58
Other:	9%	36	20%	83
Total	100%	385	100%	420

12. What should the top focus of the BART General Manager be?

	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Operating a cost-effective, on-time service	64%	247	62%	259
Running a professional, efficient organization	30%	116	32%	134
Representing the agency in regional, state, and national arenas	3%	12	2%	10
Leading the agency's efforts to obtain funds	3%	11	4%	17
Total	100%	386	100%	420

13. How often do you currently ride BART?				
	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
6 – 7 days a week	12%	47	13%	50
5 days a week	43%	164	42%	167
3 – 4 days a week	15%	56	13%	50
1 – 2 days a week	16%	59	13%	51
1 – 3 days a month	11%	40	12%	48
Less than once a month, but at least once a year	3%	12	7%	26
Less than once a year	1%	2	<1%	1
Never	0%	0	1%	4
Total	100%	380	100%	397

14. For what purpose do you primarily ride BART?				
	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Commute to/from work	71%	268	67%	264
Visit friends/family	7%	25	9%	34
School	6%	22	3%	12
Theater or concert	2%	9	1%	5
Shopping	2%	8	4%	15
Medical/dental	2%	6	1%	4
Airplane trip	1%	4	3%	13
Restaurant	1%	5	2%	6
Sports event	0%	1	2%	8
Other:	8%	32	8%	31
Not applicable – don't ride BART	0%	0	1%	3
Total	100%	380	100%	395

15. In which county do you live?				
	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Alameda County	50%	188	44%	174
Contra Costa County	20%	74	29%	114
San Francisco County	19%	71	14%	56
San Mateo County	7%	25	7%	26
Other:	5%	19	6%	25
Total	100%	377	100%	395

16. Are you:				
	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Male	44%	164	52%	203
Female	56%	210	48%	191
Total	100%	374	100%	394

17. What is your age?				
	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
12 or younger	0%	0	0%	1
13 - 17	1%	2	1%	3
18 - 24	7%	27	6%	25
25 - 34	22%	82	18%	69
35 - 44	20%	76	19%	75
45 - 54	23%	85	26%	103
55 - 64	19%	70	22%	84
65 or older	9%	33	8%	30
Total	100%	375	100%	390

18. What is your race or ethnic identification? (Multiple responses accepted)				
	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
White	61%	225	65%	248
Asian or Pacific Islander	17%	61	21%	79
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish	12%	45	5%	20
Black / African American	11%	42	8%	31
American Indian or Alaska Native	2%	8	2%	8
Other	1%	3	3%	10

n

367

380

19. What is your total annual household income before taxes?				
	RANDOM SAMPLE		OPEN PARTICIPATION	
	%	Count	%	Count
Under \$15,000	7%	26	5%	20
\$15,000 - \$24,999	8%	29	3%	11
\$25,000 - \$49,999	18%	64	10%	36
\$50,000 - \$74,999	20%	71	18%	67
\$75,000 - \$99,999	12%	43	19%	71
\$100,000 or more	36%	131	45%	165
Total	100%	364	100%	370