Workforce Employee Experience Tool



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Table of Contents

Overview **1**

Who Should Use the Tool **1**

How to Use the Tool **1**

- Implementation Models 1

Tool Content **2**

- Broad Phases of Employee Experience Journey 2

Subcomponents **3**

- Recruitment 3
- Onboarding 8
- Retention 12
- Offboarding 18
- Succession Planning 19
- Implementation Walkthrough 20

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Overview

This implementation tool serves as a guide and aspirational framework for addressing public health workforce priorities in state health agencies through the lens of employee experience. Employee experience refers to how work feels day to day — shaped by agency policies, leadership, systems, and workplace culture. In this tool, employee experience includes well-being, engagement, support, and retention, and focuses on changes agencies can make to improve the conditions in which employees work rather than focusing exclusively on recommendations to employees on how to care for themselves.

As you interact with the content, the ASTHO Workforce team invites you to share any gaps, questions, and requests for support that arise by emailing workforce@astho.org.



Who Should Use the Tool

This tool is intended for any governmental public health agency employee with a role in recruiting and retaining a strong workforce. Supervisors, team leaders, workforce and HR specialists, and executive leadership could all find useful information to support the workforce with the information included in this tool. Workforce professionals in particular are encouraged to assess, understand, and address public health workforce needs as part of a sustainable workforce infrastructure.

How to Use the Tool

You are encouraged to explore phases that are most relevant to your agency's current priorities (i.e., there is no specific order for which you must engage with the content). You may review the entire employee engagement lifecycle to consider areas for improvement, or you might hone in on a specific area that you're interested in addressing.

Implementation Models

Each subcomponent of the employee engagement phases contains short descriptions of what Good, Better, and Best may look like through implementation. Any of them may be the best fit for your agency right now. This format lets you explore resources and recommendations that are most relevant to what currently fits best for your agency while providing a vision for what future improvements may look like.

1. Good: Ensuring fundamentals of areas of employee experience are considered.
2. Better: Scaling strategies with a focus on informed process and systems improvement.
3. Best: Focus on innovation and sustainability.

Orange Label: Good | **Blue Label**: Better | **Green Label**: Best

Tool Content

Broad Phases of Employee Experience Journey

- **Recruitment:** Pathways, building awareness about public health as a field and individual careers, job postings, interview process, and extending job offer.
- **Onboarding:** Orientation, knowledge building around individual roles, building consistency, building connections within team and larger units/agency. Ongoing process that supports the employee.
- **Retention:** Developing system-level environments, policies, and practices to provide an optimal workplace. Being responsive to individual employee preferences to promote job satisfaction, incentivizing them to remain engaged and continue contributing to the agency.
- **Offboarding:** Process of ensuring a smooth departure of the employee from the agency and understanding areas for agency improvement.
- **Succession Planning:** Intentional planning for the routine turnover of individual employees to best set the agency up for success.

Table 1: Recurring Themes

Theme	Icon	Description
Social Connection		Social connection promotes well-being, increases collaboration, and leads to greater job satisfaction and retention. When this icon appears, the related subcomponent is an ideal opportunity to incorporate social connection among employees.
Change Management		The processes, systems, and channels to communicate and address organizational changes. This icon indicates an area where effective change management principles can mitigate employee burnout, undue stress, and confusion.
Coalition Building and Engaging Champions		Effective coalition building and continuous communication with teams/stakeholders/ partners that impact workforce structures/process is essential for ensuring the employee experience remains positive and seamless. Common champions that drive workforce improvement forward include HR teams, finance/budget/grants managers, social/behavioral health divisions, data modernization units, etc.
Trauma-responsive		Trauma-responsive approaches consider the impact of trauma, recognize signs/ symptoms, and respond to trauma through policies, practices, and procedures. Key trauma-responsive principles include safety, peer support, trustworthiness/ transparency, collaboration, cultural services, and empowerment. This icon indicates an area that would benefit from a trauma-responsive approach.
Supervisor Support		Aspects of the employee experience that are centered on the effectiveness of a trained and supported supervisor. While effective supervisors have an outsized impact on their reports' experience, this is also a product of the support that the supervisors themselves receive. This icon indicates an area where systems designed to support supervisors would be beneficial.

Subcomponents

Recruitment

- **Pathways**
  - **Purpose**: Ensure that the public health field and agencies attract candidates with the right skills, values, and exposure to public health careers.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Designing and maintaining robust pathways is a core element of employee experience because it shapes how employees perceive opportunity, support, and the agency's commitment to its workforce. Public health professionals who enter the field through structured, transparent, and intentional pathways are more likely to feel welcomed, prepared, and connected from the start.
  - Investing in pathways demonstrates that the agency values equitable access, skill development, and long-term growth, which are key drivers of morale, engagement, and retention. By creating clear entry points (through internships, fellowships, community partnerships, or school outreach), agencies send a strong signal that employees' career trajectories matter, and that the organization actively supports professional growth.
  - From an employee's (or prospective employee's) perspective, pathways aren't just about filling positions. Pathway development is about crafting the initial experience that sets the tone for the employee's relationship with the agency. When employees see that the organization intentionally invests in attracting talent, aligning roles with skills, and offering transparent opportunities, they are more likely to feel valued, connected, and motivated to contribute meaningfully.

Resources

DeBeaumont Public Health Pathways:

PublicHealthWorkForce-PathwayPrograms-Screen.pdf

Student Career Pathways Toolkit | New England Public Health Training Center

CDC Example Program:

About The Public Health Associate Program for Recent Graduates | Public Health Associate Program for Recent Graduates (PHAP) | CDC

- **Building awareness about public health as a field and individual careers.**
  - **Purpose**: Increase understanding of public health as a field and of the range of roles within governmental public health agencies. Building awareness helps attract candidates who are informed, motivated, and aligned with the mission and realities of public health work.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Building awareness of public health careers is an early and influential part of the employee experience. It shapes expectations before individuals ever apply for a job and influences how connected they feel to the mission, culture, and impact of the work once they join an agency. When people enter public health with a clear understanding of what the work involves, they are more likely to feel prepared, engaged, and committed over time.
  - From an employee experience perspective, this work reflects the agency's responsibility to set realistic expectations, highlight meaningful contributions, and communicate the value of public health work. Thoughtful career awareness efforts help reduce misalignment between expectations and reality, which supports morale, engagement, and retention. They also signal that the agency values transparency and invests in building a workforce that understands and believes in the work it does.
  - **Good**: Share basic public health career information on the agency website.
  - **Better**: Develop structured awareness programs with learning outcomes in cooperation with public health leaders across the agency; conduct outreach to K-12 schools, universities, and communities; encourage staff engagement with educational institutions.
  - **Best**: Map career pathways for public health roles publicly; create "day-in-the-life" videos; participate in national initiatives like the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health's "This is Public Health;" build long-term institutional partnerships with academic programs for sustainable pipelines.

Resources

Public Health Careers | NERD Academy | CDC

PublicHealthCareers.org

- **Interships**
  - **Purpose**: Provide structured opportunities for students, recent graduates, and early-career professionals to gain practical experience in public health while building a pipeline of future talent. Internships help both the agency and the individual assess fit, develop skills, and establish professional connections within public health.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Internships are a key part of the employee experience because they shape the first impression of the agency and set the tone for engagement, inclusion, and professional growth. Well-designed internships create an environment where participants feel supported, welcomed, and part of meaningful work. When interns experience clear guidance, skill-building opportunities, and exposure to agency culture, they are more likely to see the agency as a place where careers can grow and contributions are valued, which are all hallmarks of positive employee experience.
  - Devoting attention to internship design also demonstrates the agency's commitment to equitable opportunity and long-term workforce development, signaling that employees' growth and contribution are central to the organization. This contributes not only to recruitment success but also to morale, retention, and engagement for both interns and permanent staff who participate in mentorship roles.



  - **Good**: Offer internships, practicums, or short-term fellowship positions as funding allows. Encourage interns to complete basic public health tasks aligned with their training program.
  - **Better**: Suggested activities include:
    - Develop structured internship/fellowship programs with clear learning objectives, skill-building projects, and guidance on potential career paths within the agency.
    - Conduct outreach to universities, community programs, and national programs (e.g., Health Career Connections) to attract a diverse pool of candidates.
    - Provide preparation materials (e.g., agenda templates, curriculum outline, field examples) and ongoing support for preceptors.
  - **Best**: Suggested activities include:
    - Create sustainable, multi-year internship programs with formal mentorship, rotation across divisions, and opportunities for full-time employment after program completion.
    - Publicly share career pathways and internship success stories to showcase agency commitment to workforce development and inclusion.
    - Offer compensation for preceptors.

Resources

Health Career Connections: Students & Aspiring Health Professionals: HCC Internships

Success Stories:

VDH Internship Academy Paves the Way for the Next Generation of Public Health Talent | ASTHO

A Win-Win for Denver: Expanding Public Health Services Today While Building Tomorrow's Workforce - Public Health Infrastructure Grant



- **Job Postings**
  - Purpose: Make specific job opportunities visible and accessible to qualified candidates by clearly communicating about the unit the job is located in, role, expectations, and conditions of employment. Well-written job postings, grounded in accurate position descriptions, help candidates understand the work and determine whether the role is a good fit.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Job postings are often a candidate's first direct interaction with an agency and play an important role in shaping employee experience. When job postings are built from clear, well-written position descriptions, they set realistic expectations about responsibilities, workload, and scope of work, reducing confusion and misalignment after hire.
  - From an employee experience perspective, this transparency builds trust, supports equity, and helps employees enter their roles feeling informed and prepared. Job postings that reflect the actual work and environment signal that the agency values clarity, fairness, and respect for its workforce, which contributes to engagement and retention over time.
  - **Good**: Job postings are based on an accurate position description and clearly outline core responsibilities, required skills or experience, salary range, and benefits. Education and experience requirements align with the actual needs of the role.
  - **Better**: Job postings include a clear, plain-language summary of the role and make the full position description available to candidates (embedded or linked). Requirements are reviewed for clarity and inclusivity, with attention to transferable skills and lived experience. Posting language is informed by past hiring outcomes and workforce feedback.
  - **Best**: Position descriptions are routinely reviewed and updated to reflect the current scope of work and career pathways. Job postings refer to public health core competencies, clearly communicate growth opportunities, and are adapted for multiple platforms and audiences. Agencies use candidate and new-hire feedback to continuously improve position descriptions and posting practices over time.

Resources

NHHF Job Description Guide

Public Health Model Job Descriptions Project 2.0 | Region V Public Health Training Center

Success Stories

Finding the Right Fit, Faster: Model Job Descriptions Take the Guesswork out of Public Health Hiring - Public Health Infrastructure Grant

- **Benefits and Pay**
  - **Purpose**: Communicate pay, benefits, and other forms of compensation clearly and consistently so candidates can make informed decisions about employment. Transparent and thoughtful approaches to benefits and compensation help agencies attract qualified candidates and support long-term workforce stability.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Benefits and compensation are a foundational part of the employee experience because they directly affect employees' sense of fairness, security, and value. Clear communication about pay and benefits early in the hiring process helps build trust and sets realistic expectations, reducing uncertainty and frustration for candidates and new hires.
  - From an employee experience perspective, compensation is not only about wages, it also includes flexibility, leave, insurance, retirement, and other supports that shape how employees experience their work and balance their lives. When agencies are transparent about what they can offer and how compensation decisions are made, employees are more likely to feel respected and supported, which contributes to morale, engagement, and retention. In a government agency, pay is rarely competitive with the private sector but benefits can be more enticing.
  - **Good**: Disclose salary range during the interview or at offer. Encourage HR to include benefits packages (e.g., health insurance, FSA/HSA, PTO, Holidays, etc.).
  - **Better**: Disclose the budgeted salary range upfront. Encourage policies that allow for flexible work arrangements (hybrid, remote, etc.), EAPs, and other wellness supports through corporate benefits programs.
  - **Best**: Regularly review compensation and benefits structures to support fairness, competitiveness, and retention. Total compensation is communicated holistically, including non-monetary supports such as flexibility, professional development funding, and wellness resources. Include information on retention and engagement to highlight positive workplace culture. Seek sustainable funding strategies and partnerships to strengthen compensation and benefits over time.

Resources

Small Steps to Support and Compensate the Public Health Workforce | ASTHO

Pay Transparency in the Workplace: A Comprehensive Guide

- **Interview Process**
  - **Purpose**: Assess candidate qualifications and fit in a fair, consistent, and transparent way while giving candidates a clear understanding of the role, team, and agency. A well-designed interview process helps agencies make informed hiring decisions and supports positive candidate experiences.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: The interview process is a critical early touchpoint in the employee experience because it shapes how candidates perceive the agency's culture, values, and respect for people. Interviews that are clear, well-organized, and equitable signal that the agency values fairness, preparedness, and thoughtful decision-making.
  - From an employee experience perspective, the interview process is not only about evaluation, but also about setting expectations and building trust. When candidates understand how decisions are made, feel welcomed and respected, and receive clear communication throughout the process, they are more likely to enter the agency feeling confident and engaged. These early impressions influence morale, commitment, and retention well beyond the hiring phase.
  - **Good**: Interviews follow a consistent structure with standard questions aligned to the position description. Candidates have an opportunity to ask questions about the agency and role, and they receive clear information about interview logistics, timelines, and next steps.
  - **Better**: Interviews use structured questions and scoring criteria to promote fairness and reduce bias. Collaborate with interview panels to include diverse perspectives, craft questions, understand the process, and ensure candidates are provided with information about the team, role expectations, and agency culture. Support communication with candidates that is timely and consistent throughout the process.
  - **Best**: The interview process is continuously improved using feedback from candidates and hiring managers. Agencies provide transparent information about how decisions are made and create opportunities for candidates to engage with the team or experience the work environment (e.g., virtual tours, realistic job previews). Interview practices are documented and standardized to support fairness, consistency, and long-term sustainability. Hiring managers and interview panel members conduct formal interview debrief sessions to clarify decision-making. Consider creating and sharing a microsite for candidates to ask questions, see an FAQ about the logistics of the process, and find contact information.

Resources

Crafting an Exceptional Interview Journey for Candidates - C

Public Health Recruitment Workshop Series Part 3: Candidate Experience: How to Keep Top Candidates Engaged in Your Hiring Process - TRAIN Learning Network - powered by the Public Health Foundation

- **Extending Job Offer**
  - **Purpose**: Formally communicate employment offers in a clear, timely, and supportive way that confirms role expectations, compensation, and next steps. A well-designed offer process helps candidates transition confidently from applicant to employee.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: The job offer marks a key transition point in the employee experience, where candidates begin to form expectations about how the agency communicates, supports, and values its workforce. Clear and respectful offer practices reinforce trust built during recruitment and reduce uncertainty at a moment when candidates are making significant personal and professional decisions.
  - From an employee experience perspective, the offer process is an opportunity to reinforce transparency, fairness, and care. When agencies provide complete information, respond to questions, and support candidates through decision-making and onboarding preparation, new hires are more likely to begin their roles feeling informed, welcomed, and engaged.
  - Salary negotiations should be handled transparently and with respect for the candidate and current employees. Hiring managers may seek training on the negotiation process and organization compensation structure to support this stage in the process. The compensation offered should reflect a fair market value for the candidate's qualifications as reflected in current salaries paid to staff, with negotiated salary adjustments made if possible, or respectfully communicated if a request cannot be accommodated.
  - **Good**: Job offers are extended in a timely manner and include key information such as position title, salary, benefits overview, start date, and required pre-employment steps. Candidates are given a clear point of contact for questions.
  - **Better**: Offers are accompanied by plain-language explanations of compensation, benefits, and employment conditions. Agencies provide realistic timelines for onboarding and clarify what candidates can expect before their first day. Offer processes are standardized to promote consistency and equity.
  - **Best**: The offer process is designed as a welcoming transition into the agency, incorporating personalized communication, onboarding previews, and early connections with supervisors or team members. Agencies gather feedback from new hires to improve offer practices and ensure long-term alignment with employee experience goals.

Resources

Designing a successful job offer strategy: a definitive guide - Workable

- **Internal Recruitment and Advancement**
  - **Purpose**: Create transparent and equitable pathways for current employees to grow, advance, and move within the agency. Intentional internal recruitment practices support skill development, continuity of institutional knowledge, and long-term workforce stability.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Internal recruitment and advancement are central to employee experience because they shape how employees perceive opportunity, fairness, and investment in their growth. When employees can see and access clear pathways for advancement, they are more likely to remain engaged, motivated, and committed to the agency.
  - From an employee experience perspective, internal mobility reflects whether agency systems support learning, career progression, and retention at a structural level. Strong internal recruitment practices reduce burnout, minimize avoidable turnover, and signal that the agency values developing talent from within, not just filling vacancies.
  - **Good**: Staff are informed of vacancies, reorganizations, or anticipated staffing changes within their teams or divisions. Internal candidates are encouraged to apply for open positions and receive basic guidance on the application process.
  - **Better**: Agencies formalize internal posting practices and ensure all employees have equitable access to information about open roles. Supervisors are encouraged to support career conversations and help staff identify opportunities aligned with their skills and interests.
  - **Best**: Internal recruitment is embedded into workforce planning and succession planning, with clear career pathways, succession planning, and proactive identification of emerging skill needs. Agencies provide tools that allow employees to explore potential roles, understand required competencies, and prepare for advancement through training, mentorship, or stretch assignments.
  - **Reflection Question**: What resources can I use to increase my/my team/my department's capacity to move from good recruitment practices to better recruitment implementation activities?



Resources

Retention and Recruitment Toolkit for Public Health Professionals | PHF

Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals | Council on Linkages

Five Recommendations for Enhancing Governmental Public Health Workforce Recruitment and Hiring

Success Stories & Jurisdiction Examples

1006: PHIG Funding The Future Workforce

Onboarding

- **Employee's Day 1**
  - **Purpose**: A well-designed Day 1 sets the tone for engagement, learning, and long-term retention. The time between an accepted offer and Day 1 provides an opportunity to ensure a smooth onboarding process for the new employee in alignment with HR, IT, and programmatic leadership. Partnering with these teams to set a structure for onboarding tasks can ensure coordination for mandatory tasks like legal and financial paperwork as well as access to IT systems required for the position.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Day 1 is a high-impact moment in the employee experience lifecycle. Engaging with new employees prior to their first day can relieve anxiety, confusion about what to do during onboarding, imposter syndrome, and clear any details about the position.
  - Well-informed employees can enter the organization on their first day with greater confidence and capacity to integrate with the team.
  - A structured Day 1 shapes early perceptions of organizational culture, leadership accessibility, and team dynamics. When the first day is organized and human-centered, employees are more likely to feel valued and connected from the start.
  - On the other hand, gaps in the new employee's Day 1 experience can create lasting doubts about the effectiveness and culture of a new workplace.
  - **Good**: Send a Welcome letter, onboarding documents (e.g., W2, I-9, etc), and what to bring/know for Day 1 at work. Provide specific instructions (including but not limited to worksite location, parking, building entry, workspace location, and information to access computer or any required tools to work). Schedule a welcome meeting (or video call) on the new hire's first day to introduce team members and set expectations for the first day.
  - **Better**: Provide (or send) a Welcome Kit that includes a handwritten letter, available agency merch (e.g., T-shirt, mug, mouse pad, etc.), and office supplies. Offer a personalized onboarding plan/matrix for the new hire to see what they can look forward to and check-off as they complete tasks with established opportunities to check in for support or questions.
  - **Best**: Standardize all processes across the agency to build a positive and equitable workplace culture, with given room to customize the experience as needed across teams.



- **Supervisor Onboarding Support**
  - **Purpose**: Equip supervisors and managers to play an active, consistent role in welcoming, orienting, and supporting new employees. Provide supervisors with the tools, structure, and organizational support they need to onboard new employees effectively with minimal additional burden. This subcomponent focuses on building systems that make high-quality onboarding easier, more consistent, and more sustainable for managers.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Supervisors shape day-to-day employee experience, but their ability and capacity to support new hires depends on the resources and expectations set by the agency. When onboarding responsibilities are unclear, fragmented, or unsupported, supervisors may struggle to provide consistent guidance — leading to uneven employee experiences across teams and more burnout for managers.
  - From an employee experience perspective, investing in supervisor preparedness improves onboarding quality while also protecting manager well-being. Clear processes, shared tools, and organizational alignment reduce burnout, increase confidence, and allow supervisors to focus on relationship-building and coaching rather than navigating administrative complexity.
  - **Good**: All supervisors receive basic onboarding guidance, including checklists or timelines outlining key first-week and first-month responsibilities. Agencies clarify expectations for manager involvement in onboarding and provide standard templates for welcome messages, check-ins, and role introductions.
  - **Better**: Agencies develop standardized onboarding toolkits for supervisors that include conversation guides, sample agendas, role clarification templates, and recommended check-in schedules. HR and central teams coordinate logistics such as system access, training enrollment, and compliance tasks to reduce administrative burden on supervisors.
  - **Best**: Supervisor onboarding support is embedded into agency infrastructure through automated workflows, centralized onboarding platforms, and manager training programs. Supervisors receive ongoing coaching and peer learning opportunities focused on onboarding practices, employee experience, and inclusive leadership. Feedback from managers and new hires is used to continuously improve tools and processes.

Resources

A Guide to Onboarding New Hires (For First-Time Managers)

- **Supervisor Onboarding Support**
  - **Purpose**: Ensure employees have timely access to the tools, systems, and process knowledge needed to perform their roles effectively. This includes technology platforms, internal workflows, documentation, and key points of contact that support daily work.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Employees cannot perform well — or feel confident in their roles — without reliable access to the systems and information required to do their jobs. Delays, unclear processes, and fragmented documentation create frustration, slow productivity, and undermine early engagement.
  - From an employee experience perspective, enabling workers in this way reduces unnecessary friction and cognitive load during onboarding. When agencies design systems that support operational readiness, employees are able to focus on learning their roles, building relationships, and contributing to agency priorities instead of navigating administrative barriers and pinging supervisors for individual needs.
  - **Good**: New employees are granted access to a computer, required software platforms, shared drives, and internal systems within their first week. Supervisors or team members provide tutorials of commonly used tools and explain essential workflows and reporting processes in advance or as requested by the new employee.
  - **Better**: Agencies develop standardized tool orientation materials, such as quick-start guides, recorded demos, or onboarding resource hubs. Clear documentation outlines common workflows, approval processes, and key contacts for administrative, IT, and programmatic support.
  - **Best**: Exposure to required systems is integrated into centralized onboarding platforms or learning management systems that personalize system access and training based on role. Agencies maintain updated process libraries and internal knowledge bases that are easily searchable and regularly refreshed. Feedback from new hires is used to improve system usability and documentation over time.



- **Social Connection**
  - **Purpose**: Create intentional opportunities for new employees to build professional relationships, feel welcomed, and develop a sense of belonging within their team and the broader agency. Strong social connection supports trust, collaboration, and long-term engagement.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Belonging is a core driver of employee experience. When employees feel socially connected and valued, they are more likely to engage with their work, communicate openly, and remain with the organization. Conversely, isolation and weak social integration (especially in hybrid and remote environments) can contribute to disengagement and turnover.
  - From a systems perspective, social connection should not depend solely on individual personalities or informal efforts. Agencies that intentionally design onboarding experiences to foster connection create more equitable and consistent experiences across teams and roles.
  - **Good**: New employees are introduced to their immediate team and key collaborators. Supervisors encourage informal check-ins or introductory meetings to help new staff build early relationships.
  - **Better**: Agencies establish structured connection opportunities, such as onboarding cohorts, buddy or peer mentor programs, and facilitated team introductions. New hires are invited to participate in existing employee groups, communities of practice, or social spaces within the organization.
  - **Best**: Social connection and belonging are embedded into onboarding infrastructure through recurring agency-wide welcome sessions, cross-team networking opportunities, and intentional community-building programming. Agencies regularly collect feedback on inclusion and belonging experiences and use the data to strengthen onboarding design and organizational culture practices over time.

Resources

How Workplaces Can Address the Loneliness Crisis



- **Work Style Awareness**
  - **Purpose**: Support new employees and teams in understanding individual work styles, communication preferences, and collaboration needs. This helps teams work together more effectively while respecting individual differences.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Employee experience is shaped not only by policies and systems, but by everyday interactions and working relationships. When teams take time to understand how individuals prefer to communicate, receive feedback, manage workload, and collaborate, employees are more likely to feel respected, supported, and psychologically safe.
  - From a systems perspective, building structured opportunities for work style awareness reduces misunderstandings, dispels stereotypes, improves team dynamics, and supports inclusive work environments. This approach shifts responsibility away from individuals "figuring it out on their own" and toward shared understanding and intentional team practices.
  - **Good**: Supervisors hold early conversations with new employees about communication preferences, working hours, feedback styles, and collaboration needs. Teams encourage informal introductions that include sharing basic work habits and expectations.
  - **Better**: Agencies provide optional tools or structured templates (such as work style profiles, onboarding questionnaires, or discussion guides) that help employees and supervisors align on expectations. Teams incorporate work style conversations into onboarding check-ins and team meetings.
  - **Best**: Work style awareness is embedded into onboarding and team development practices through facilitated sessions, shared team agreements, and ongoing learning opportunities. Agencies use inclusive, non-prescriptive frameworks to support communication and collaboration across diverse work styles and roles.

Resources

Embracing Different Work Styles to Strengthen Your Team

True Colors Personality Assessment Landing Page

Leadership Assessments & Leadership Assessment Tools | CCL

CliftonStrengths Online Talent Assessment | EN - Gallup

- **Role Clarity and Performance Expectations**
  - **Purpose**: Ensure new employees clearly understand their responsibilities, competencies, priorities, and how success is defined in their role. This clarity supports confidence, reduces anxiety, and sets a foundation for early engagement and long-term performance. During early onboarding, ensure written competencies are provided to the employee and introduce dialogue about how they like to be recognized.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Uncertainty about role expectations can be a major source of stress and disengagement. Clear, consistent, and structured communication about responsibilities, goals, and performance metrics strengthens trust in supervisors and the organization. Employees who understand what is expected of them can focus on meaningful contributions, collaborate effectively, and experience a stronger sense of competence and belonging.
  - From a systems perspective, defining expectations as part of onboarding ensures consistency across teams, reduces reliance on informal knowledge transfer, and supports equitable access to performance guidance and feedback.
  - **Good**: Supervisors communicate key responsibilities, priorities, and initial tasks. Basic performance expectations, reporting structures, and recognition opportunities are shared. Employees know who to contact with questions about their work.
  - **Better**: Agencies provide structured onboarding documents, role descriptions, and goal-setting templates. Supervisors meet with employees to review short and medium term objectives, clarify success metrics, and co-create a roadmap for the first 90 days. Feedback loops are established for ongoing check-ins.
  - **Best**: Role clarity is embedded into agency systems and workflows. Supervisors and employees collaboratively define goals, responsibilities, competencies, and success criteria aligned with team and organizational priorities. Agencies provide tools and platforms for tracking progress, facilitate regular coaching and reflection sessions, and integrate role expectations into agency performance development systems and career planning. This approach is continuously refined using feedback from employees and supervisors.

- **Ramp Up to Long Term Acclimation**
  - **Purpose**: Support new employees as they transition from initial onboarding to sustained, confident, and independent contribution within their roles and the broader agency. This phase focuses on reinforcing learning, deepening relationships, and integrating employees fully into agency culture, workflows, and team dynamics.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Onboarding does not end after Day 1 or the first month. A structured ramp-up ensures employees continue to feel supported, connected, and clear about expectations as they take on increasing responsibility. Sustained engagement during this period improves retention, job satisfaction, and overall employee experience.
  - From a systems perspective, long-term acclimation involves aligning team and agency-level processes, providing ongoing feedback and coaching, and ensuring access to development opportunities.
  - **Good**: Supervisors check in periodically over the first 90 days to answer questions, clarify processes, and provide feedback. New employees are encouraged to continue asking questions, and resources for learning key systems and workflows remain accessible.
  - **Better**: Agencies implement structured follow-up check-ins with supervisors and/or peers at regular intervals (e.g., 30, 60, 90 days). Goals, progress, and challenges are reviewed, and development plans are co-created for the next phase of work. Opportunities for cross-training or shadowing other roles may be offered to broaden exposure.
  - **Best**: Long-term acclimation is embedded into the agency's culture and systems. Employees have a clear roadmap for growth and ongoing skill development, supported by mentorship, structured feedback loops, and learning communities. Agencies track and evaluate acclimation outcomes, including confidence, engagement, and performance, and use insights to continuously refine onboarding and early development programs.

Resources

I2A-NewStaff.pdf

Complete Employee Onboarding Guide

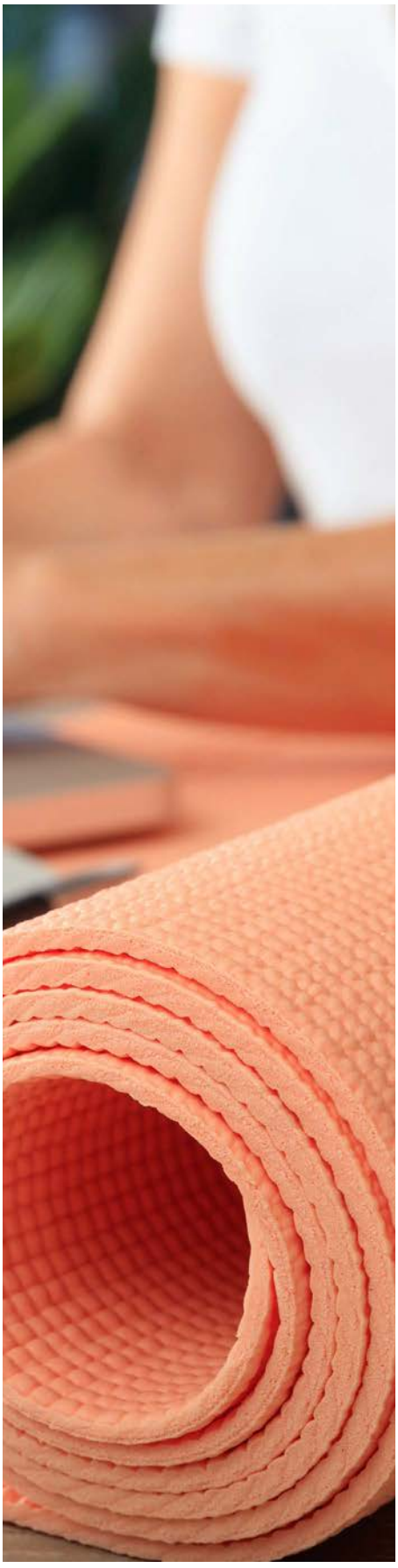
Success Stories & Jurisdiction Examples

Arizona's Onboarding App: How Faster, More Targeted Public Health Hiring Protects Communities - Public Health Infrastructure Grant

Retention

- **Wellness Initiatives**
  - **Purpose**: A well-supported and healthy workforce leads to lower health care costs, improved productivity, greater job satisfaction, and higher employee retention. Wellness initiatives empower employees to take hold of their well-being through accessible support groups, programs, memberships, resources, etc.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Wellness initiatives benefit employees by boosting morale, creating an enjoyable work environment, lowering health risks, mitigating burnout, and promoting community among colleagues. Agencies that prioritize employee wellness show employees that their value to the agency includes, but is not defined by, work output.
  - **Good**: Guide the development of and oversee a community of practice where agency employees can learn about wellness activities, supports, experiences, etc.
  - **Better**: Establish a wellness committee/workgroup to lead initiatives, analyze feedback, and advocate for sustained funding to support this work.
  - **Best**: Establish a wellness portal, operated by the committee, to house a calendar of wellness events, resources, social groups, etc. Continue to seek sponsorship opportunities for this work through leadership integration in the committee, ongoing agency-wide communication about wellness programs, and partnership with external funders to subsidize agency or individual wellness activities.

- **Workload and Job Design**
  - **Purpose**: Ensure employees have clear, manageable responsibilities and work structures that align with their skills, role expectations, and agency priorities. Thoughtful job design reduces unnecessary stress, prevents burnout, and supports meaningful contributions.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Employee experience is shaped not only by benefits and programs but by the daily realities of work. Overly ambiguous, heavy, or misaligned workloads and job descriptions can erode morale, engagement, and retention, even in agencies with strong wellness supports. Clear role design and workload balance help employees focus on meaningful tasks, collaborate effectively, and feel competent and supported in their roles.
  - **Good**: Supervisors provide clear task lists that align with basic expectations for each role based on position descriptions. Employees know their immediate priorities, reporting structures, and who to approach with questions about work responsibilities.
  - **Better**: Agencies develop structured workflows and guidance to balance workloads across teams. Supervisors regularly review assignments, redistribute tasks as needed, and collaborate with employees to ensure alignment with skills and capacity. Role responsibilities and outcomes are clearly documented and communicated.
  - **Best**: Job design is embedded into agency systems, with ongoing monitoring of workloads, cross-training, and process improvement to optimize efficiency and equity. Agencies use employee feedback, workload data, and workflow analysis to adjust roles and responsibilities and position descriptions when needed. Flexible work arrangements, role customization, and development opportunities are integrated to ensure employees can contribute effectively while maintaining work-life balance.



- **Training, Development and Career Pathways**
  - **Purpose**: Provide employees with opportunities to build skills, expand knowledge, and advance their careers within the agency. This includes formal training, mentoring, professional development, and clear pathways for internal advancement.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Employee experience is enhanced when staff see that the agency invests in their growth and future. Access to meaningful development opportunities fosters engagement, motivation, and retention. Career pathways also signal that the agency values long-term contributions and is committed to helping employees achieve their professional goals.
  - **Good**: Baseline development offerings may include mandatory annual training provided for regulatory and liability compliance, funds allocated to professional development opportunities for staff members, and regular performance check-ins and individual goal setting.
  - **Better**: Agencies maintain a structured catalog of internal and external development opportunities aligned with roles and skill levels. Employees are encouraged and supported to participate in workshops, cross-training, mentorship programs, or leadership development. Career pathways are documented, and supervisors provide guidance on progression options.
  - **Best**: Development and advancement are embedded into agency culture and infrastructure. Employees have individualized growth plans aligned with both personal goals and organizational needs. Agencies offer robust, accessible platforms to track and select training, formal mentorship programs, rotational assignments, and leadership pipelines. Development opportunities are continuously updated based on feedback, emerging public health trends, and succession planning needs.
- **Engagement Surveys/Data**
  - **Purpose**: Collect and act on employee feedback to understand workforce needs, identify areas for improvement, and inform decision-making. This includes both structured surveys, stay interviews, and other ongoing feedback mechanisms that allow employees to share input regularly.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Employee experience is strengthened when staff feel heard and see that their feedback leads to meaningful action. Engagement surveys and feedback loops create transparency, trust, and a sense of agency, while enabling leadership to address challenges proactively and improve retention, morale, and performance.
  - **Good**: Distribute annual/biannual survey to all staff that gathers data on general staff feedback, engagement opportunities, employee well-being, and development opportunities.
  - **Better**: Conduct surveys with targeted questions aligned to agency priorities and team needs. Results are analyzed in depth, shared with employees, and used to guide action planning. Agencies implement mechanisms for ongoing feedback, such as pulse surveys, focus groups, or check-ins, and track follow-up actions.
  - **Best**: Engagement and feedback are continuous and integrated into agency culture. Agencies use multiple channels (surveys, listening sessions, suggestion platforms, digital feedback tools) to gather insights, share results transparently, and actively close the loop with employees. Feedback drives iterative improvements to policies, processes, wellness programs, and professional development. Agencies measure outcomes over time to evaluate the impact of actions on engagement and retention.

Resources

Use SBI (Situation-Behavior-Impact) to Inquire About Intent | CCL



- **Social Connection**
  - **Purpose**: Foster meaningful relationships and interactions among employees at all levels to build trust, camaraderie, and a sense of belonging. Social connection includes team-building, peer networks, cross-departmental collaboration, and opportunities for informal engagement.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Employee experience is enriched when staff feel connected to their peers and teams. Strong social bonds reduce isolation, support collaboration, improve morale, and contribute to overall engagement and retention. In hybrid or remote environments, intentional strategies are critical to maintain these connections.
  - **Good**: Teams hold occasional gatherings, check-ins, or informal virtual coffee chats. Staff have some opportunities to meet colleagues outside their immediate team.
  - **Better**: Agencies offer structured, recurring social opportunities, such as monthly cross-team meetings, interest-based groups, or organized team-building events. Participation is encouraged but not required, and feedback is collected to improve inclusivity and engagement.
  - **Best**: Social connection is embedded into agency culture and systems. Employees have access to multiple, ongoing opportunities to connect, both virtually and in-person, across teams and divisions. Agencies track participation, collect feedback, and continuously refine programs to strengthen relationships and inclusion. Peer networks, mentorship circles, and employee-led affinity groups are supported and recognized as integral to agency success.



- **Manager Training Support and Accountability**
  - **Purpose**: Equip managers and supervisors with the knowledge, skills, and support needed to lead effectively, support their teams, and foster a positive employee experience. This includes guidance on onboarding, performance management, business processes, well-being, communication, and team development. Additionally, managers/supervisors should differentiate that leading change is about the people and change management is about the process, structure, or system.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Supervisors are the primary link between employees and the organization as a whole. Their behaviors, decisions, and support directly influence engagement, morale, and retention. Providing structured training and ongoing support ensures managers can meet employee needs without undue burden, build trust, and consistently implement agency practices that enhance the workforce experience.
  - **Good**: Supervisors receive basic training on role responsibilities, performance expectations, and key HR policies. Guidance on how to support new employees and provide feedback is available, though participation may be optional.
  - **Better**: Agencies offer structured, role-specific training for supervisors, including coaching on employee engagement, well-being, communication, and team development. Supervisors have access to tools, checklists, and resources to support onboarding, performance management, and workload balancing. Accountability mechanisms are in place to ensure supervisors participate in required training.
  - **Best**: Manager and supervisor development is embedded in agency culture and ongoing practice. Training is continuous, adaptive, and includes how to lead change, mentorship, peer learning, and scenario-based exercises. Supervisors are held accountable through performance evaluation metrics tied to employee experience outcomes. Agencies provide dedicated support resources, leadership communities of practice, and structured feedback loops to refine supervisory skills and sustain high-quality team management.

Resources

Investing In Managers Is A $438 Billion Opportunity

- **Healthy Communication Framework**
  - **Purpose**: Establish clear, consistent, and transparent communication practices across all levels of the agency. Healthy communication ensures employees have access to the information they need to perform their work, understand agency priorities, and feel informed and included.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Clear, timely, and consistent communication reduces uncertainty, builds trust, and fosters a sense of inclusion. When employees understand decisions, priorities, and changes, they are better able to contribute meaningfully and feel respected as part of the organization.
  - **Good**: Supervisors and teams share necessary information relevant to daily work. Agency-wide announcements and policies are communicated via email or intranet, though frequency and consistency may vary. Employees know where to find essential information.
  - **Better**: Agencies implement structured communication processes, including regular team meetings, newsletters, and updates from leadership. Communication is clear, consistent, and aligned across departments. Employees are encouraged to ask questions and provide feedback, and supervisors are trained on effective communication practices.
  - **Best**: Communication is embedded into agency culture and systems. Information flows consistently and transparently across agency, division, and team levels. Channels are multi-modal (email, intranet, digital platforms, town halls, meetings) and accessible to all employees. Two-way communication is actively promoted, with formal mechanisms for employee input, leadership updates, and tracking responses. Agencies regularly evaluate communication effectiveness and refine practices based on employee feedback and engagement metrics.

Resources

Step-by-Step Internal Communication Strategy & Plan for 2026 - HubEngage

- **Psychological Safety**
  - **Purpose**: Create an environment where employees feel safe to share ideas, ask questions, admit mistakes, and raise concerns without fear of negative consequences. Psychological safety supports learning, innovation, and healthy team dynamics. It is important for leaders to build and gain their team's trust through intentional relationship building, transparency, and a person-centered approach to work.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Employee experience is enhanced when staff trust that their voices are valued and respected. A psychologically safe workplace reduces stress, increases engagement, and fosters collaboration and creativity. In public health agencies, where decisions can have broad impact, ensuring employees feel safe to contribute is essential for both individual well-being and organizational effectiveness.
  - **Good**: Supervisors model respectful behavior, encourage questions, and host occasional team check-ins to allow employees to voice concerns. Staff know they can seek guidance or support without fear of punishment.
  - **Better**: Agencies implement structured opportunities for dialogue, such as facilitated team discussions, peer debriefs, or reflection sessions. Supervisors are trained in active listening, conflict resolution, and providing constructive feedback. Employees are encouraged to participate and share ideas regularly, with mechanisms to ensure follow-up.
  - **Best**: Psychological safety is embedded into agency culture and leadership practice. Teams routinely engage in structured feedback sessions, after-action reviews, and collaborative problem-solving. Agencies track psychological safety indicators through surveys or other feedback loops, integrate learnings into training and performance expectations, and ensure continuous improvement. Leaders consistently demonstrate vulnerability, model transparency, and celebrate learning from mistakes to normalize open communication.

Resources

IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work | Institute for Healthcare Improvement



- **Benefits, Pay, and Material Support**
  - **Purpose**: Though pay is a strong factor for recruiting and retention, benefits and other ongoing material support are essential for employee retention and can impact productivity and engagement. Benefits that are proactive in helping employees manage life stressors can support engagement and job satisfaction.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Employee experience is shaped not only by culture and engagement but also by tangible rewards and resources. Transparent, equitable, and adequate compensation and benefits enhance morale, reduce turnover, and contribute to a sense of fairness and organizational trust. Material supports — like technology, equipment, or workspace accommodations — enable employees to perform their work effectively.
  - **Good**: Analyze internal pay structures and compare them with job market trends. Share gaps with agency leadership to inform policymakers of need. Identify and promote external tuition reimbursement and loan repayment programs.
  - **Better**: Provide non-monetary support such as flexible work schedules/environments, retirement plan contributions, professional development funds, insurance benefits, etc.
  - **Best**: Agencies integrate benefits, compensation, and material supports into strategic workforce planning. Programs include robust flexible work options, tailored wellness and professional development supports, and innovative perks aligned with employee needs. Agencies regularly benchmark compensation and benefits, engage employees in shaping offerings, and ensure sustainable funding to maintain long-term access to supports. All employees have equitable access to resources regardless of location, role, or employment status.



- **Employee Recognition**
  - **Purpose**: Celebrate and acknowledge employees' contributions, achievements, and efforts at both the team and organizational level. Recognition reinforces valued behaviors, strengthens engagement, and fosters a positive workplace culture.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Employees want to know that their hard work does not go unnoticed. Increased exposure to leadership through high stakes projects or formal recognition may help employees feel further connected to the overall mission, vision, and strategy of the agency. Increased support on current achievements may encourage the employee to continue to pursue and strengthen transferrable skills, boosting the capacity of the agency.
  - **Good**: Supervisors or peers occasionally acknowledge employee contributions through informal methods, such as verbal thanks or email shout-outs. Employees receive basic recognition during team meetings or periodic check-ins.
  - **Better**: Agencies implement structured recognition programs, including monthly or quarterly awards, newsletters highlighting achievements, and peer-nominated recognition. Recognition is consistent, timely, and tied to meaningful accomplishments or behaviors aligned with agency values.
  - **Best**: Recognition is embedded into agency culture and systems. Multiple recognition channels exist, combining peer-to-peer, team, and organizational-level acknowledgment. Programs are transparent, equitable, and aligned with agency priorities. Recognition data is used to evaluate effectiveness and guide continuous improvement. Employees feel empowered to recognize one another, and leadership models recognition consistently. Recognition practices are integrated into onboarding, performance management, and ongoing workforce engagement strategies.

Resources

What is Appreciative Inquiry (AI)? - The Center For Appreciative Inquiry

Workplace Recognition is Actually Reassurance- and Necessary

The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace : Appreciation at Work

- **Fair and Inclusive Retention Practices**
  - **Purpose**: Ensure retention policies, programs, and practices are fair, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of all employees. This includes equitable access to development, benefits, recognition, and advancement opportunities.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Employee experience is deeply influenced by perceptions of fairness and inclusion. Agencies that embed equity into retention practices foster trust, engagement, and a sense of belonging. Employees are more likely to stay and thrive when they see that opportunities, support, and recognition are accessible regardless of role, identity, location, or background.
  - **Good**: Agencies ensure policies are applied consistently across teams. Supervisors are aware of basic equity considerations when making decisions about assignments, promotions, or access to programs.
  - **Better**: Agencies review retention practices for potential disparities and implement targeted interventions to address gaps. Training is provided to supervisors and HR staff on equitable practices, bias mitigation, and inclusive decision-making. Employee feedback is collected to inform improvements.
  - **Best**: Equity and inclusion are fully embedded into retention strategy and agency culture. Agencies use data to monitor outcomes and continuously improve policies, programs, and practices. Leadership champions inclusion, employee voices are integrated into decision-making, and all retention efforts are designed to proactively support diversity, equity, and belonging. Agencies foster an environment where every employee has fair access to growth, recognition, and meaningful engagement opportunities.

Reflection Opportunity:

Conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis of the resources, business processes, and systems that the agency has to support, communicate with, and retain staff in an evolving public health climate.

Resources

PH WINS Dashboard

Kansas Health Institute Public Health Employee Well-Being Assessment Guide

Workforce Planning Guide: Guidance, Tools, and Resources to Assist Public Health Agencies in Workforce Planning | ASTHO

https://www.astho.org/topic/leadership-and-workforce-development/ph-hero/ph-workforce-resources/

Success Stories & Jurisdiction Examples

Thrive - Oklahoma Wellness Portal



Offboarding

- **Knowledge Capture**
  - **Purpose**: As an employee departs from a role or agency, it is essential to capture subject matter expertise, information on day-to-day functions, crucial stakeholder contact information, process documentation, etc. This information allows incoming employees to integrate into their role with less barriers and reduces the time required to learn essential functions.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Embedding a culture of knowledge sharing in the agency encourages departing employees to pass on their expertise to their successors in a seamless manner. Offboarding employees can reflect on the value that they brought to the role/organization and the skills, resources, knowledge, and relationships developed during their time at the agency. Maintaining transparent communication about how the shared knowledge will be applied helps ensure the departing employee feels respected and valued throughout the offboarding process.
  - **Good**: Maintain a shared drive for centralized knowledge repository to include projects, processes, and best practices. Conduct a standardized exit interview as a structured way to obtain employee feedback and departing suggestions.
  - **Better**: Offer templates on what employees should include in their offboarding documentation (e.g., daily tasks, key responsibilities, project status, key contacts, and process instructions).
  - **Best**: Organize an ongoing internal shadowing program where staff can learn about other roles/responsibilities of other team members with the potential of moving into those positions as needed.

- **Knowledge Capture**
  - **Purpose**: Providing departing employees with the opportunity to share why they are leaving the agency encourages transparency and accountability about what is working and what is not working pertaining to employee experience.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Departing employees may feel respected and heard when provided with a safe space to express factors that contributed to their decision to leave. This time of open feedback may reduce unresolved conflict, offer closure, and mitigate negative sentiment for the employee.
  - **Good**: Conducting an exit interview
  - **Better**: Communicating effectively with the relevant teams/departments/divisions about the nature of the departure and the plan for moving forward (reassigning tasks or filling the vacancy).
  - **Best**: Allow for an offboarding liaison to support the employee in gathering transition information, returning equipment, having a support group call for all affected employees (e.g., in case of a RIF), and understand compensation/severance/benefits packages.

Resources

Offboarding: Definition & Best Practices – Forbes Advisor

RM Assessment Report: On-Boarding/Off-Boarding Process

Lasting Impressions: Upgrade Your Offboarding



Succession Planning

- **Planning and Analysis**
  - **Purpose**: Succession planning ensures that agency staff are well equipped to transition to a variety of roles, critical to public health essential functions. Key components include committee development and preparation, strategic plan alignment, and workforce analysis.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Agencies that prioritize succession planning are essential for the employee experience because it is a trauma-informed approach to ensuring agency capacity and infrastructure is maintained through periods of organizational change. Succession plans benefit employees in several ways, including boosting employee moral and communication with leadership, increasing engagement and productivity, and offering career development opportunities.
  - This strategic process also allows employees to understand which agency roles are critical, which skills are in demand, and what subject matter expertise is priority. Additionally, transparency in communication and agency resources builds trust between employees and agency leadership.
  - **Good**: Identify positions that are essential to organization success and infrastructure. Pursue and offer leadership development and career development opportunities to agency staff on an ongoing basis, especially those that focus on skills that are necessary for critical roles.
  - **Better**: Field a staff interest survey to assess employee career aspiration and engagement within organization goals. Reward curiosity and creative thinking through stretch projects, employee recognition programs, and development opportunities. Establish mentorship structures between leadership and potential successors to build relationships and help mentees understand organizational structure, management, and strategy better.
  - **Best**: Integrate a dual-approach focused on developing internal talent and strategic recruitment of new talent. Hire a consultant to analyze the existing succession plan and identify gaps and strategies for improvement.
- **Strategy and Execution**
  - **Purpose**: Organizations should develop a business case-focused strategy, launch an implementation plan, and conduct a thorough evaluation. Sharing clear succession plan goals and evaluation structure with appropriate leadership and managers ensures that effective task forces and action-learning projects can be enacted. Managers can appropriate delegate employees to specific trainings and skill building projects in alignment with their career goals and performance reviews.
  - **Relationship to Employee Experience**: Intentional performance reviews that prioritize knowledge building, skill development, and a deeper understanding of organization priorities can encourage employees and ensure that they feel valued and prepared to develop their skills.
  - **Good**: Organize and track action steps, development opportunities, and initial feedback/evaluation on competency development across identified vital positions.
  - **Better**: Solicit advice from an internal coach or consultant to define the succession plan strategy and identify organization action steps.
  - **Best**: Drawing on the analysis phase, use data-driven approaches to address gaps, identify multiple people with appropriate competencies, and align with organizational direction and strategy. Utilize the expertise from an external coach or consultant to build/implement a strategy that is forward-thinking and sustainable throughout macro-level changes.

Resources

Succession Planning for Public Health Agencies: A Three-Part Webinar Series | ASTHO

Modernize Succession Planning for Better Results



Implementation Walkthrough

What's for Dinner - The Pasta Aisle

You are a busy working parent who loves to make meals for your family, but have a packed schedule today. After work, you have to pick up your kids from two different schools, run to the bank before closing, take your kids to soccer practice, and stop by the grocery store.

You arrive at the grocery store and need to determine which pasta to purchase and cook for dinner tonight, while being mindful of the fact that the kids need to finish homework and be in bed by 8 p.m.

On the pasta aisle you encounter the following options. Read through each option and determine which choice best fits your choice for tonight's dinner (consider how much time you have, your energy levels, nutrition, etc.).

- **Good**: Boxed Dried Pasta — This is reliable, cost-effective, and simple to cook (add to boiling water for 15 minutes). This option contains preservatives to maintain a shelf life.
- **Better**: The Whole Grain Refrigerated Tortellini — A bit more expensive, higher quality pasta, and requires more attention to cook effectively.
- **Best**: Hand-Rolled Artisanal Tagliatelle — This pasta is delicate, expensive, and high quality. Requires an hour of prep + cook time and the purchase of individual ingredients (eggs, flour, etc.). This option could make for a great family activity, when planned well.

As you navigate through the modules in this implementation tool, consider the decision-making process from this pasta scenario. Though all options may look enticing and ready to be acted upon now, consider your agency's capacity, resources, and priorities to align your decision making with realistic expectations and goals.

