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Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy

Ontario Developmental Services
Make a difference every day.

Developmental Services Sector Best HR Practices Committee

RECOMMENDED BEST HR PRACTICES FOR ONTARIO DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

Prepared for the Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy Steering Committee

RECRUITMENT: WORKFORCE AND RECRUITMENT PLANNING

Develop focused workforce and recruitment plans to address critical workforce segments.

Rationale:
Research shows that leading organizations have a good understanding of present and future workforce needs and prioritize and focus their plans on strategic roles.

Each DS agency should develop workforce plans, followed by recruitment plans and focus on the supervisor and executive director positions (which are the critical roles for developmental services in Ontario).

Current Situation:
While some formal planning is done in a few agencies across the province, it appears that most of the workforce planning is occurring at the executive director level only. In addition, many agencies indicated that they are hiring as a reaction to vacancies and turnover or are constantly hiring.

Strategies:

- Develop a short and long-term recruitment plan (one to five year plans). This plan should reflect predictions for supply and demand of services and workforce trends. The recruitment strategy should reflect the overall agency strategic plan.
- Identify seasonal variances and plan for them (e.g. for September, when people are leaving for school, for holidays, etc.).
- Develop succession planning – consider information on age, demographics, and how retirement in one position may impact the rest of the agency.
- Coordinate with volunteer recruitment efforts.
- Use the marketing strategy and marketing materials developed as part of the Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy (DSHRS).
    - Agencies can access the Developmental Services Human Strategy online, by accessing the DSHRS website: ontariodevelopmentalservices.ca .
- Use the applicant tracking software or other similar tracking system.
- Develop a skill-set database.
- Develop a “pool” or relief base of qualified staff.
- Identify back-up for all positions for short-term responses.
- Use the “Hire From Within” policy.
- Hire part-time and casual employees in groups, four times a year.

- ❖ Develop partnerships with local colleges for recruiting and to support a curriculum that reflects the educational needs of your workforce, student placements, and the number of graduates each year.
    - o For strategies on building relationships with your local college see the document *College Recognition of Agency-Based Training: A Reference Guide for Developmental Services Agencies Seeking Formal College Recognition of Agency-Based Training.*

- ❖ Incorporate core competencies into the recruitment process. This can include behaviour-based interviewing, which is part of the provincial core competencies rollout.
    - o For more information on the behaviour based interviewing refer to the core competencies provincial implementation through the DSHRS.

RECRUITMENT: INTERNAL RECRUITMENT

Develop strategies for encouraging and supporting internal applicants.

Rationale:
Human resource literature indicates that "leading organizations focus on filling vacancies with existing employees and have established policy and process with guidelines for employee job-postings and managing departmental transfers." Internal recruitment has the advantage of being cost-effective, ensuring that candidates fit well in an organization and helps with retention by supporting employee engagement.

Current Situation:
In the focus groups conducted by the committee most agencies did report promoting from within and filling full-time positions from their organization's current part-time employees.

Strategies:

- Identify future leaders and develop a plan to train them.
- Develop formal mentoring programs.
    - See the section below on *Information on Mentoring*.
- Offer a variety of methods to inform internal employees about available positions. This could include intranet postings.
- Provide an online application system available through intranet.
- Provide internal workshops for interested employees on interviewing skills.
- Develop an "eligibility list" to limit the necessity of re-interviewing interested employees if a position becomes available within a year.
- Provide opportunities for employees to expand and enrich their skills-set (maternity leaves, "Acting Manager," secondments).
- Work collaboratively with employee representatives and/or bargaining units with respect to internal hiring processes.
- Encourage professional development for employees.
    - The provincial implementation of core competencies includes a *Competency Assessment Questionnaire* and the *Developmental Resource Guide* to assist employees with professional development. Agencies that participate in the implementation of core competencies will receive this valuable material as part of their training.

❖ Support value-based training for new internal hires to promote the culture of the organization.

Information on Mentoring

Definition of Mentoring
"A deliberate pairing of more skilled or experienced professionals with someone who is lesser skilled or experienced to help the lesser skilled person grow, become socialized into his/her new role within the agency, and to develop specific competencies."[1]

Mentoring programs can use peer mentors (employees in the same position as the new hire) or agency mentors (employees higher in the hierarchy than the new hire but not in the new hire's direct chain of command).

Value of Mentoring Programs
Deloitte's international research suggests that more than 70% of what people know about their jobs, they learn through everyday interactions with colleagues. In comparison, 22% of learning is achieved by doing research, and 2% when using a manual or text.[2]

Relevant literature shows the importance of creating and implementing mentoring programs in organizations. It creates an open and honest learning and teaching environment for the mentee and mentor alike.

Purpose of Mentoring
- To support and socialize an employee to have a successful employment experience and to move toward certain career goals, and
- To support an employee in developing certain skills.

Benefits of Mentoring[3]

<u>For organizations</u>
- Low cost method to communicate vision, mission and recommended practice;
- Better quality supports;
- Development of employees;
- Increased retention and reduced turnover; and
- Stronger employee commitment.

<u>For new hires</u>
- Accumulated knowledge and experience of mentor;
- Safe opportunity for feedback;
- Occasion to discuss anxiety and concerns;
- Social connections with others;
- Decreased feelings of isolation;
- Access to information; and

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[1] *Introduction to Learner Guide, O'Neil, Hewitt, Sauer & Larson, 2001.*
[2] *Where Productive Work and Learning Converge,1998.*
[3] *Source: Taylor,Sauer, Hewitt, O'Neil & Larson, 2001.*

- Guidance on norms.

<u>For mentors</u>
- Recognition of skills and abilities;
- Opportunity to develop new skills and advancement;
- Renewed interest in job; and
- Raises, bonuses and rewards.

<u>For supported individuals</u>
- Better services;
- Less turnover; and
- Positive long-term relationships.

***Possible Issues with Mentoring Programs*[4]**
- Lack of advancement opportunities for those mentored;
- Protégée leaves and takes the skills with him/her;
- Not enough time to mentor properly; and
- Too much resentment by others not being mentored.

***Strategies for a Successful Mentorship Program*[5]**
1. Define the mentoring program's Mission, Goals, and Outcomes
    - The mission helps to focus the program's purpose.

2. Build commitment to the mentorship program by developing the needed training, incentives, flexibility, time, and supports for people to participate in the program:
    - Ensure that someone from upper management and administration is involved in the development process for the mentoring program.
    - Seek to identify the financial resources available for marketing, training events, and incentives to mentors and mentees early in the development process.
    - Schedule for the mentors and mentees to have time away from their duties to get together.
    - Train mentors on empathic listening, conflict resolution, providing feedback, leadership and instructional techniques.
    - Match mentors carefully by selecting voluntary mentors based on fair, attainable, and known criteria.
    - Involve employees and people receiving support and their families in planning and implementing the mentoring program.
    - Solicit short news briefs or newsletter articles from the executive director or administrators regarding the mentorship program.

3. Outline roles and responsibilities of the program stakeholders at all levels of their organization (agency, managers, supervisors, mentors, mentees).

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[4] *Source: Ebsenstein & Gooler, 1993.*
[5] *Sources: Staff Recruitment, Retention and Training Strategies for Community Human Services Organizations, Larson and Hewitt, 2005* and *Staff Recruitment and Retention: Study results, Larson, Lakin and Bruininsk,1998.*

4. Develop and implement the program.

5. Evaluate the mentoring program (in terms of cost-effectiveness and staff knowledge) and modify the program as needed.
    - Mentoring program exit interviews for managers and for mentees can be conducted using a survey method.

Possible Implementation Barriers

- Diversity should be part of the mentor-mentee matching criteria.
- Agencies need to be aware and committed to the amount of time and resources required to create a successful mentorship program.
- Start with a small pilot project (as mentors need training, process needs to be developed, the program has to be marketed, etc.).

DO's and DON'TS of Implementing and Evaluation the Mentoring Program[6]

DO…	**DON'T…**
View mentors as leaders	Expect that program to run on its own
Provide incentive to mentors	Use mentoring to replace orientation training
Offer frequent opportunities for celebration and recognition of mentors and mentees	Use mentoring to replace supervision
Create time-limited partnerships	Ask people to mentor without preparation
Ensure that partners have specific goals	Force people to become mentors
Empower mentors and mentees to direct the program	Expect mentors to do the extra work of participating without incentives
Ensure leaders' support of mentoring program	
Coordinate and support the mentoring program	
Provide ongoing support to members	
Publicly announce criteria for selecting program participants	

[6] *Source: "The Peer Empowerment Program: A Complete Toolkit for Planning and Implementing Mentoring Programs within Community-Based Human Service Associations, Taylor, Sauer, Hewitt, O'Neil & Larson, 2001.*

RECRUITMENT: EMPLOYMENT BRANDING

Clarify the employment brand and support activities and recognition of developmental service professionals in general.

Rationale:
The developmental services sector has relatively low profile as a career opportunity for prospective employees. In order to compete successfully with other sectors and to attract more people to developmental services, agencies should strive to become an "employer of choice".

Current Situation:
Some agencies indicated during focus groups that in communities where there is an abundance of competition for employees, compensation becomes the main attraction for recruiting employees. A few agencies are strategizing to be recognized as an employer of choice as part of their unique branding (i.e., faith-based agencies).

Strategies:

- ❖ Strengthen the awareness and recognition of DS workers in general.
  - The Awareness and Marketing Committee of the DS HR Strategy has developed materials and resources to promote a career in Ontario as a profession of choice. Agencies can access more information about the campaign on the DSHRS website: ontariodevelopmentalservices.ca.

- ❖ Attend job fairs and promote developmental services as a "Career with Meaning" with appropriate signage and hand outs that reflect the professionalism of the sector
  - The Awareness and Marketing Committee of the Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy has developed a marketing strategy and resources that can be used by agencies. For more information see the e-tools available on the DSHRS website.

- ❖ Strategize to be recognized as an employer of choice.
  - For an example see: http://www.canadastop100.com/index.html

RECRUITMENT: RECRUITMENT METHODS

Carefully assess and target recruiting methods. Increase the use of technology to support recruiting. A variety of recruiting methods may be required to tap into different workforce segments.

Rationale:
Research shows that leading organizations carefully assess the recruitment method used and understand that a variety of recruiting methods may be required to tap into different workforce segments.

Current Situation:
During focus group discussions, DS agencies reported the use of a variety of methods for recruiting including job fairs, word of mouth, field placements, HRSDC and posting on various websites. Some agencies reported using online application processes however the potential of this method appeared somewhat dependent on the sophistication of their computer hardware and software. Many agencies reported that they are experiencing a decline in the number of employees hired therefore minimizing some of the recruiting strategies used in the past (i.e. agency job fair).

Strategies:
- Develop a workforce recruitment plan.
- Explore recruitment of a non-traditional workforce.
- Consider using Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, or SWAT for recruitment purposes.
- Attend career fairs, including those at local educational institutes.
- Visit education institutes and present employment opportunities.
- Develop an employee referral program for employees to recruit using their personal networks.
- Consider the DSW Apprenticeship program to develop potential internal applicants.
- Identify employees who demonstrate advancement potential.
- Promote the use of DSW field placement programs.
- Develop an online application process.
- Pre-screen applicants.

Include input from people supported and their natural support network in the recruitment process.

Rationale:
By including input from people supported and their natural support network in the process of recruitment and selection, agencies can increase the quality of supports

Current Situation:
Some DS agencies across the province have found various strategies to include this valuable input.

Strategies:

- Once an initial interview has occurred, conduct a second interview, including the person supported, at their home.

- Develop an *Interests List* with persons supported to document interests and preferences. For example, a supported individual may be interested in outdoor, physical activities. This document can then be used during the recruitment phase when hiring and/or matching staff with supported individuals.

RECRUITMENT: STRUCTURED ASSIGNMENTS METHODS

Use behavioural-based interview methods to test for core competencies when hiring; ensure supervisors have a role in assessing candidates to ensure cultural fit.

Rationale:
One of the recommendations of the Expert Panel on Training was that the "developmental services sector should use leading practices in the selection of future workers (e.g., behavioural-based interviews linked with core competencies)." Agencies can then ensure that employees hired have the right competencies to perform the duties of the job offered. Linking core competencies to specific job classifications will provide the best quality service to people supported.

Agencies that have piloted the core competencies for DS professionals have reported that while the behavioural-based interview method is very time-consuming, it has had a positive impact on the quality of candidates selected for employment.

Current Situation:
Very few agencies in the developmental services sector are using behavioural-based interviews as part of the selection process.

Strategies:

- ❖ Ensure management and human resources staff are trained in behavioural-based interviewing.
  - o Agencies participating in the implementation of core competencies will receive training and material to support the implementation of behaviour based interviewing in their agency.

- ❖ Train internal employees on the skills to be successful during a behavioural-based interview.

- ❖ Interview external hires for the threshold competencies as a minimum requirement.
  - o The core competencies model outlines threshold competencies that are required for all employees working it the sector. These threshold competencies should be interviewed for in external hires. For more information on threshold competencies refer to the report *Building Human Resource Capacity: Core Competencies for Ontario Developmental Services Sector*.

- ❖ Include written questions to assess literacy. i.e., written examples.

- ❖ Include a computerized component to the interview process.

- ❖ Consider conducting the second interview at the location where the person will be working.

Increase consistency of on-boarding programs to ensure new hires are properly trained and well connected to the agency.

Rationale:
A formal on-boarding process is a key part of managing the investment organizations make in new hires. The Expert Panel on Training recommended “formal, consistent on-boarding programs for all new hires to ensure that they are properly trained and well connected to the agency.”

Current Situation:
There is significant variety in the sector in the way on-boarding programs are structured (e.g., ad-hoc, regular) and conducted (e.g., individual or in group).

Strategies:

- Develop a system which helps new hires get up to speed quickly and ensure they have the tools in order to be successful in their new role.
- Implement a structured orientation session. Include various levels of management and people who receive support.
- Develop a formal new-hire learning program that maps out specific core competency requirements.
- Develop various levels of orientation, i.e. site, human resources, and agency-wide.
- Include shadow shifts and the “buddy system” as part of the orientation process as these methods help new employees integrate into the organization.
- Provide opportunities that are interactive, and offer varying methods of delivery. i.e. role playing, games etc.
- Consider personal touches, i.e. note or presentation from the executive director to welcome new hires.
- Include health and safety as a topic in orientation.

RECRUITMENT: NON-TRADITIONAL WORKFORCE

Create specific recruitment strategies to target specific labour markets.

Rationale:
Commenting on the dynamics created by a changing labour force, the Expert Panel on Training noted that "the workforce is changing and shortages of skilled workers are being experienced in many sectors, including the developmental services sector. There is a growing sectoral competition for workers as recruitment and retention issues intensify in many labour markets."

Deloitte's research also suggested that "retired and soon to be retired baby boomers may be less likely to have the same family obligations as young working parents and may be attracted to part-time work, varied hours or residential positions. They may also be motivated more by non-financial rewards such as personal satisfaction from the impact they have on people's lives. New immigrants with medical credentials may lack Ontario's formal credentials to work in the medical field and may look to other care-giving sectors for employment. They may also be beneficial in helping agencies to serve clients who are increasingly from diverse backgrounds."[7]

Current Situation:
Some agencies are beginning to target these two categories, baby boomers and new immigrants, and have identified Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) as a good starting place to recruit diverse applicants. Most agencies indicate that they do not have formal policies or practices in place with respect to hiring, employing and supporting a diverse workforce.

Strategies:

- Implement policies and training that support diversity in the workplace.
    - Such as hiring practices that consider applicants and employees who have English as a second language.

- Develop partnerships with educational institutions for accelerated DSW programs that may be particularly attractive to those who already have a related degree (such as skilled immigrants and mature students).
    - For strategies on building relationships with your local college see the document *College Recognition of Agency-Based Training: A reference Guide for Developmental Services Agencies Seeking Formal College Recognition of Agency-Based Training*.

- Consider recruitment strategies that focus on retired and soon-to-be retired baby boomers.
    - Consider where you post your job ads.

- Consider recruitment strategies that focus on internationally trained workers.

[7] Deloitte

- Consider where you post your job ads (i.e multicultural centres).

- Work with a diversity officer, local multicultural centre or other resources that support diversity.
  - http://www.ocasi.org/index.php?catid=138
  - http://www.onip.ca/about.php

- Consider the international training of employees.
  - http://www.wes.org/employers/evalreports.asp

- Develop a process to recognize foreign credentials, formal accreditation maybe achieved through colleges or World Education Services (WES).
  - http://www.wes.org/

RETENTION: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Implement robust performance programs which encourage regular conversations and constructive feedback. RT 11

Rationale:
Performance management programs are important organizational tools. The alignment of individual employee performance goals with identified competencies as well as the organization's mission and vision is integral to overall organizational goal achievement. The use of core competencies can be utilized to target professional development in the performance appraisal process.

Current Situation:
There are a number of performance management tools used in the sector. The performance management process can be viewed negatively by employees. Only 44% of respondents to Deloitte's employee survey indicate that their agency effective manages performance.

Strategies:

- ❖ Ensure you have a formal performance program in place utilizing the core competencies developed for Ontario's developmental services sector.
  - o See the section *Information on Performance Management and Core Competencies* below.
  - o Agencies that are participating in the implementation of core competencies will receive a document entitled, *Core Competency Backgrounder*, which provides further information on core competencies.

- ❖ Train employees and managers to ensure a clear understanding of the purpose of performance management including core competencies.
  - o See the section *Information on Performance Management and Core Competencies* below.
  - o Agencies that are involved with the implementation of core competencies will provide their employees with a training session *Introduction to Core Competencies* to ensure a clear understanding of the core competencies.

- ❖ Train managers on how to coach for core competencies.
  - o See the section below *Why is Performance Management Important?*
  - o Agencies that are involved with the implementation of core competencies will receive *Coaching for Competencies* training.

- ❖ Train managers on how to complete and present a performance evaluation and the importance of the process.
  - o See the section *Why is Performance Management Important?* below.
  - o Simcoe Community Support Services has developed material for this area.

- ❖ Evaluate the performance program.

Information on Performance Management Programs and Core Competencies
The Deloitte research results in Ontario's developmental services sector study (2008) reported that only 44% of employees indicated their agency effectively manages performance involving regular performance appraisals, rewarding good performance, and addressing performance problems. The use of performance appraisals vary across DS agencies, some do not conduct formal appraisals, they do more of a sit down and talk, and other agencies have a formal process but due to workload and staffing ratios, they may not be implemented as designed.

What is performance management[8]?
Performance Management is composed of the processes used to identify, measure, communicate, and develop employee performance.

Why is Performance Management Important?
- It provides information to employees about their performance.
- It clarifies the organizational performance expectations.
- It identifies the development steps that are needed to enhance employee performance.
- It documents performance for personnel actions.
- It provides rewards for achieving performance objectives.

There are a wide variety of performance management tools available through human resources-related websites. Examples of performance management tools are available through the various DS sector networks.

Core Competencies Developed for Ontario's Developmental Services Sector
The term 'core competencies' refers to any skill, knowledge, behaviour, or other personal characteristic that drives superior performance in a job role.

Competencies are what outstanding performers do more often, in more situations, and with better results than typical performers.

Why do you want to include core competencies in performance management?
When employees can identify more clearly what is expected in terms of behaviours on the job, then they can do their job better. Also managers and supervisors can be more objective and provide the appropriate coaching to support employees in their personal and professional growth.

For more information on the core competencies developed for Ontario's developmental services sector see the following sections at www.ontariodevelopmentalservices.ca:
- *The Intention of Core Competencies … Outlining the* Principles (March 19, 2010)
- *Competency Backgrounder* (February 2010)
- *Core Competencies Project: Competency Dictionary* (October 1, 2009)

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[8] *Human Resource Management, authors Mathis, Jackson, and Zinni, 2008.*

Understanding the Purpose
It is important for everyone involved in this process to understand the purpose of performance management. Managers need to be trained in doing performance appraisals. Employees need to understand the purpose of the appraisal process and timing, and how performance expectations are linked to job duties and responsibilities. This understanding of the process is important. Appraisals done well should be viewed as what they are meant to be – constructive feedback.

Managers and supervisors are required to assist, encourage, coach, and counsel employees to develop their performance. Employees may find the process difficult. Others may welcome the process to talk about their job performance and professional development opportunities they may wish to pursue.

Agencies that are involved in the provincial implementation of core competencies can refer to the document *Introduction to Core Competencies Training* below for more information on core competencies.

Why Performance Evaluations Are Important
Performance management is the process used to identify measure, communicate, and develop employee performance. Performance management links organizational strategies to results. Performance evaluation is the process of evaluating employee performance relative to a measurable standard, followed by a meeting between the employee and supervisor.

For employees, performance evaluations are a primary source of information and feedback, which are important to their future development. In the process managers can identify employee strengths, areas requiring growth, potentials, and training needs.

Managers need to be trained on how to conduct an evaluation meeting to deliver both praise and constructive criticism. It is important for managers to emphasize the positive aspects of the employee's performance while still discussing ways to facilitate growth.

Appraisal Interview Hints:
- Prepare in advance;
- Focus on performance and development;
- Be specific about reasons for ratings;
- Decide on specific steps to be taken for improvement;
- Consider the manager's role in the employee's performance'
- Reinforce desired behaviours; and
- Focus on future performance.

Agencies need to structure the frequency of evaluations. When first hired, an employee should be given a probationary evaluation. After an employee successfully completes probation, performance evaluations should be done at least annually. Performance evaluations should be recorded and tracked for each employee using an human resources information system and/or computerized programs.

The immediate supervisor is the person most qualified to evaluate an employee's performance. However, there are a variety of other methods that can be used, such as:

Team/Peer Rating: This is a method in which employees and team members rate each other.

Self-Rating: Appraisals can work in certain situations as a self-development tool. This method encourages employees to think about their strengths and weaknesses and to set goals for development.

Multisource/360 Degree Rating: This is a method in which feedback for the performance appraisal is provided by a variety of sources such as managers, peers, people supported, and their families.

Agencies that are involved in the provincial implementation of core competencies can refer to the following documents for more information at www.ontariodevelopmentalservices.ca:

- *Introduction to Core Competencies* Training (March 2010)
- *Coaching for Core Competencies* (February 2010)

10 Tips for Effective Performance Evaluations[9]:

1. **Increase your employees' comfort level with performance evaluations**. At the beginning of each review period, explain the appraisal process, rating system, and appraisal form to your employees. Agree on performance objectives and measurements for the upcoming review period.

2. **Take full advantage of performance appraisals.** Start thinking about appraisals as an opportunity to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of your team. Use them to:
    - Clarify team and individual responsibilities and priorities so that everyone stays focused on activities that produce desired results;
    - Summarize continuing on-the-job discussions to reinforce their significance;
    - Document performance of the entire review period;
    - Recognize team and individual accomplishments and contributions;
    - Measure performance based on mutually understood, job-relevant criteria; and
    - Identify and suggest actions to improve results.

   Appraise each individual's potential for more responsibility.

3. **In addition to keeping your own records, encourage your employees to keep ongoing records.** This includes updates to team and individual objectives when company objectives change, progress reports, commendations, descriptions of results achieved with special assignments, documentation of ongoing coaching discussions and of feedback from other business areas.

   Having the employee's input will let you know what the employee considers important (that is, how well you are communicating priorities) and will help ensure an accurate, fair appraisal.

[9] www.ulivelearn.com

4. **Use examples, facts, and accomplishments drawn from these ongoing records to present a factual, complete summary of employees' results.**

5. **Use objective (factual) wording so that you concentrate on observed behaviours rather than on personality traits or "attitude."** Instead of "Laura has a bad attitude," write, "Laura's interactions meet two of the 'Five Criteria for Excellence.' Improvement areas are 'focus,' 'courtesy,' and 'listening.'"

   Use objective wording to write credible performance appraisals that reinforce desired behaviours.

6. **Help employees achieve their full potential through recognition and encouragement.** Use constructive wording to cite accomplishments and suggest improvements. Be thorough and honest, but be careful to consider the effect of negatively worded comments on employees.

   Comment on only a few development areas – those that are critical to your team's success and those that you have discussed previously with the employee. Translate those areas into improvement suggestions.

7. **Use benefit wording to reinforce desired behavior and motivate employees**. Remind your employees and your next level manager of the value and significance of your employees' actions.

8. **Use performance appraisals to summarize the year's performance and your discussions with your employees, not to introduce development areas for the first time.** Include no "surprises." Feedback to an employee has its most significant impact immediately after a specific behaviour has occurred. Always deal at once with unsatisfactory performance, especially serious conduct violations.

9. **When writing action plans for development needs:**
   - Keep an immediate or short-term focus; and
   - Link the plan and any training you recommend to team objectives.

   Write clearly stated and task-related action plans.

10. **Avoid comments that trivialize the whole appraisal.** Keep the performance appraisal focused on significant accomplishments and critical improvement areas that are tied to your team's business objectives.

RETENTION: COMPETITIVE TOTAL REWARDS

Total rewards must be competitive with market pay for the job; agencies need to assess their employees preference for total rewards and reflect this in the total rewards package; total rewards (not just wages) need to be communicated to employees.

Rationale:
Total rewards combine total financial compensation and benefits with less tangible items that can be used to compensate staff (e.g., training opportunities, work environment). A more competitive total rewards package supports retention and reduces employee turnover costs.

A better total rewards package/ benefits is the third most common reason for DS employees to leave an agency for another (as identified by Deloitte's employee survey).

About 76% of respondent employers in Deloitte's survey believe that changing the benefits package would be successful for recruiting and retaining employees.

Current Situation:
Most agencies provide benefits only to their full-time employees. Very few agencies communicate rewards besides wages to their employees.

Strategies:

- Ensure the organization is committed to creating effective reward systems.
  - See the section below *Information on Competitive Total Rewards*.

- Ensure employees know the benefits available to them and make them aware of the value of their benefits.
  - See the section below *Communicating Total Rewards*.

- Provide total rewards that are of value to employees.
  - See the section below *Total Rewards of Value*.

- Consistently investigate new opportunities for enhanced benefit options.
  - See the section below *Investigate New Opportunities*.

Information on Competitive Total Rewards[10]

The Deloitte research results for Ontario's developmental services sector study (2008) concluded from the literature review that compensation systems do not necessarily support organization objectives. Overall, employees focus on wages more than on total rewards.

Based on the focus groups most agencies do not provide benefits to part-time employees but responding employers believe that positively changing the benefit packages would be impactful for recruiting and retaining employees. Nearly half of the responding employers have made changes to benefits, and 17% plan on doing so in the near future. Another group of employers have reduced benefits to contain costs.

Employers need to be committed to creating effective and valued reward systems, but first they need to understand what total rewards are.

What are Total Rewards?

Total Rewards is the monetary and non-monetary return an organization provides to employees in exchange for their time, talents, efforts, and results. These rewards are used to attract, motivate, and retain talented employees who will provide superior service to people being supported in your agency.

Why Total Rewards are Critical

Critical to an effective total rewards approach is the need to balance the interests and costs of the employers with the needs and expectations of employees. The actual costs can be easily calculated, but the value derived by employers and employees may prove more difficult to identify.

Compensation is an important factor affecting how and why people choose to work at one organization versus others. To attract and retain competent employees, employers must be reasonably competitive with all aspects of compensation.

Key Reward Elements

Compensations and Benefits

To attract and retain competent employees, employers must be reasonably competitive with several types of compensation. Compensation can be explained in two ways. **Intrinsic** rewards are derived from the working environment such as the opportunity for personal growth, quality of work life, job satisfaction, challenge, personal and professional development opportunities, belonging, and receiving praise. **Extrinsic** rewards are tangible, such as money, and group benefits, (i.e. health and dental, income replacement plans, and pensions).

Work/Life Balance

Balancing the demands of work with the responsibilities of life, including family and personal responsibilities, is a challenge.

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[10] Information collected from the following sources:
Human Resources Management, authors Zinni, Mathis, Jackson
www.worldatwork.org

Some programs may include the following options:

- Flexible work arrangements;
- Leave for children's school functions;
- Compressed work weeks;
- Job sharing;
- Employee assistance programs; and
- Wellness programs.

Performance and Recognition
Employee recognition can be tangible, such as employee of the month awards, highlighting a team's efforts in a staff newsletter. Intangible and psychological recognition includes feedback from supervisors that acknowledge extra effort and performance.

Development and Career Opportunities
It is important for organizations to become learning organizations. These organizations encourage development through shared information, culture, and leadership that stresses the importance of individual learning. For more information refer to the core competencies developed for Ontario's developmental services sector (www.ontariodevelopmental services.ca).

Communicating Total Rewards
Based on the information from the focus groups it was noted that agencies rarely communicate to employees about total rewards. Some employers believe that employees do not recognize the value of a benefits package.

Do employees understand or appreciate the value of their benefits? Employees generally do not consider the costs associated with the benefits they receive from employers. Communication regarding benefits and benefits satisfaction are linked. One study found that nine out of ten employers think its important employees understand and appreciate their benefits, but only 21% of employees do.[11].

Ideas for best practices:

- Communicate benefits information during orientation and supply employees with benefit booklets.
- Provide links to provider's sites on the agency website.
- Give employees a personal statement of benefits that translates benefits into dollar amounts. Pension legislation requires that employees receive an annual pension statement.
- Request that your benefit provider organize an information meeting annually to inform employees of the benefits available to them.

This does not only apply to health and dental benefits, but to any form of retiring benefits your agency offers, such as pension and RRSP opportunities.

[11] *Human Resources Management, authors Zinni, Mathis, Jackson*

Total Rewards of Value
The composition of our workforce is changing, and expectations about benefits vary over generations of employees. Many baby boomers approaching retirement are more concerned about retirement benefits and healthcare. Younger employees are more interested in flexible benefits.

How do you find out what employees value? Ask them. To develop a customized rewards and benefits program, survey employees about what they want. But don’t ask until you are ready to act on the feedback, because there’s only one thing worse than not asking for input…asking and not doing anything about it.

Start by clearly stating the purpose of the survey, and then ask your employees to rate a variety of benefits you could offer. The goal is to determine a range of rewards and benefits that they value so you can structure a program that will work, but it doesn’t imply that you will give them everything on their list.
(www.monkeydish.com/2000081623008/trade-secrets/the-art-of-giving.html)

You will want to contact your broker or supplier and talk to them about trends in benefits. They may be best to help you with some guidelines for building an effective benefits program. You may be surprised on changes you may be able to make to your benefit plans to accommodate employees needs.

Investigate New Opportunities
There are significant costs associated with benefits therefore employers need to analyze the programs they offer on an on-going basis to determine what they can afford to provide and what will be valued by employees. It is also important to cost out the benefits that you currently offer to make sure you are getting the best possible value.

Possibilities

Investigate Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)
Employee assistance programs help employers with a variety of work and non-work related issues. EAPs help employees deal with depression and anxiety, marital and relationship problems, legal difficulties, and family and child concerns.

EAPs have been proven to reduce employee absence, improve productivity by helping with day-to-day issues that affect focus at work, and help with benefit costs by addressing mental and physical well-being.

Investigate Benefits for Part-Time Employees
There may be some form of benefits that you could provide. Possible types of benefits include having a co-payment plan, life insurance, accidental death and dismemberment, etc. Your carrier or broker should be able to offer you some suggestions.

Investigate Perks Provided by Local Businesses
Investigate what businesses may offer discounts for your employees. We all have companies that we do a lot of business with, such as, cellphone companies, insurance companies, local gyms, local car dealerships, local furniture stores, etc.

Make sure employees are aware of these perks at orientation and through other sources such as e-mail or website.

Refocus activity on smaller more immediate recognition which is highly valued by employees.

Rationale:
Positively reinforce great behaviour immediately. Deloitte's employee survey indicated that the most valued reward is considered to be "verbal appreciation" and that this is used less than the typical service award that many agencies are using.

Current Situation:
The most used reward (service award) is only valued by 11% of employees who responded to Deloitte's employee survey. The most valued reward (verbal appreciation) is used by less than 30% of agencies that were surveyed.

Focus groups revealed that in our sector, management/supervisor personality has a great influence on rewards and recognition.

Strategies:

- Ensure employee recognition programs are in place.
  - See the section below *Employee Recognition Programs*.

- Determine the type of recognition programs that will work in your organization.
  - See the section below *A Program That Will Work in Your Organization*.

- Train managers on how to recognize employees for their individual performance and service.
  - See the section below *Employee Recognition in Practice*.

- Evaluate the recognition process.

Information on Rewards and Recognition

Employee Recognition Programs
The Deloitte Retention research results in Ontario's developmental services sector study (2008) concluded from the literature review that smaller more immediate recognition is highly valued by employees.

What is Recognition?
Recognition acknowledges or gives special attention to employees for their actions, efforts, behaviours, and personal performance. By reinforcing certain behaviours, support for organizational strategies is demonstrated and there is a contribution to organizational successes.

A recognition program does not have to be expensive. An effective program has the following components:[12]

Fairness
A program must not favour one employee over another. There must be an effective way of identifying employees who should be recognized.

Highly Visible and Consistent
Making a program highly visible helps to ensure consistent implementation.

The Value of Recognition Programs

Recognition programs:
- Reinforce the value of performance improvement;
- Foster continued improvement, although it is not guaranteed;
- Formalize the process of showing appreciation;
- Provide positive and immediate feedback; and
- Foster communication of valued behaviour and activities.

A Program That Will Work in Your Organization

A recognition program does not have to be expensive. Some awards to consider include:
- Dinner certificates;
- Pizza party thrown in honour of the employee;
- Movie passes;
- Long service awards with a celebration;
- Staff retreats;
- Certificates, trophy, plaque; or
- Reserved parking spot.

Another approach is to have small rewards initially, and make each employee who receives a small award eligible for a larger reward at the end of the year. The structure of a recognition program is only limited by your imagination[13].

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[12] *www.busreslab.com*
[13] *www.busreslab.com*

Employee Recognition in Practice[14]

Recognizing an employee's superior performance often costs little or no money.

Recognition can be as simple as a spontaneous and private "thank you," a handwritten note or an e-mail acknowledging something positive the employee has done. For some employees being publicly recognized for their accomplishments can be rewarding. To enhance group motivation and cohesiveness you can celebrate team success.

Have the executive director send out an e-mail or a handwritten note to celebrate employees' accomplishments. Ensure people being supported, peers, and families involved in recognition.

Rewarding behaviour immediately following the behaviour is likely to encourage repetition.

[14] Sources for this section: "Organizational Behaviour", authors Langton, Robbins

RETENTION: DEPLOYMENT OF EMPLOYEES

Deploy human resources effectively.

Rationale:
Research suggests that although the supported individual-staff relationship is of primary importance to employers, over time, vacancies are simply filled with employees who are able to work. Successful deployment supports not only on-the job learning but consideration of employees' interests.

Current Situation:
In Deloitte's employee survey only 11% of direct support respondents strongly agreed that in their agency "the staffing process effectively matches employees with work that enhance their skills and helps with career development"[15]

Strategies:

- Create opportunities to help with career development and showcase advancement opportunities.

- Match employees and people who receive support appropriately.
  - See the section below *Match Employees and the People They Support Appropriately.*

- Negotiate with employee representatives or unions in terms of specific job classes and duties and the ability for employees to change locations.

- Consider employees' needs.

- Define "Meaningful Work."
  - See the section below *Defining Meaningful Work*

- Re-deploy talent – transfer employees when appropriate.

- Work towards regular schedules and predictable hours.

- Promote work-life balance.

[15] Deloitte

Information on Deployment of Employees

Background

Research completed by Deloitte in 2007 suggests the following:

- Staffing is based on supported individuals' needs first, but often ends up focusing on simply "finding any employee to fill empty blocks on the schedule."
- Rarely are employee needs taken into consideration in staffing decisions.
- Only half the respondents believe that the staffing process effectively matches them with work that enhances their skills and helps with career development.
- While relationships between employees and people who receive support are important, over time it should be possible to rotate employees to different assignments.

The recommendation taken from this research suggests that while recognizing the importance of the relationships between employees and the people they support, there are opportunities for deploying employees more effectively.

Defining Meaningful Work[16]

People work for many reasons. Some are obvious (I am paid to work), some are not as obvious (work is where my friends are). Research evidence and case studies testify to the reality that understanding how people approach work and what they get from it is vital to learning how to achieve the best possible outcomes for employees and organizations. Few other avenues offer as much promise for accomplishing valued outcomes as creating meaning in work – both in terms of a person's flourishing, citizenship, commitment, and engagement and in terms of long-term, sustainable innovation, culture maintenance, and performance in organizations.

Where Does Meaning in Work Come From?

Meaningful work can come from the individual or the organization. Some people bring a sense of meaning and mission with them to the workplace, and some organizations excel at creating meaningful workplaces where every employee becomes part of creating success, cohesiveness, and culture at work.

Meaningful work consists of three, central components.

- First, the work we do must make sense; we must know what's being asked of us and be able to identify the personal or organizational resources we need to do our job.

- Second, the work we do must have a point; we must be able to see how the little tasks we engage in build, brick-by-brick if you will, into an important part of the purpose of our company.

- Finally, the work that we do must benefit some greater good; we must be able to see how our toil helps others, whether that's saving the planet, saving a life, or making our co-workers' jobs easier so that they can go home and really be available for their families and friends.

[16] The sources for this section are: Hackman and Oldham, 1975

A growing body of evidence shows that meaningful employees are happy employees; more committed workers, and, in some tantalizing ways, better employees.

Not everyone is engaged in meaningful work, but maybe everyone can be. Part of making this happen is creating meaningful workplaces, and part of making this happen is helping employees see what they can do to make more of their job. In a time when it's not so easy to walk away from a paying job, finding a way to make the work one does have more meaningful is a way to make it a better job.

The benefits of meaningful work include:

- Growth of the employee;
- Employees have better job satisfaction;
- Self-actualization of the employee;
- Better employee performance for the organization;
- Organization gets intrinsically motivated employees;
- Less absenteeism, turnover, and grievances for the organization;
- Full use of human resources for society; and
- Society gains more effective organizations.

Match Employees and the People They Support Appropriately[17]

In many ways, organizational employees determine the quality of the services and supports provided to people. Therefore, matching employees and the people they support appropriately is vital to the work of the organization.

Identify the skills necessary to carry out the work of the organization

- Involve a broad group of people in identifying skills, including people who are supported, current employees, natural support networks, and community members.
- When recruiting, hiring and evaluating employees, ensure that issues of social capital, networking, and community building are considered, along with listening well and the ability to perform more traditional support tasks (personal care, driving, etc.).
- Recruit new employees using the skill-sets identified.

Involve people who receive support

- Use a variety of methods based on the preferences and skills of each person, including introductions before hiring, input into developing a list of questions to be asked of applicants, and/or conducting surveys of traits/tasks most desired in the organization's workforce.
- Recognize that providing and receiving personal support is a very intimate exchange. Respect the desires of the person and the employee when issues arise.
- Develop formal mechanisms for people who use services to have input into the evaluation of all employees. Again, use a variety of methods to gain their input.
- Involve natural support networks in evaluating employee performance.
- Create a formal mechanism for people to recognize employees who assist them in achieving personal goals.

[17] Sources for this section ©Copyright 2007. CQL-The Council on Quality and Leadership. Towson, MD.

Set clear expectations for all employees:

- Include person-directed information, such as Personal Outcomes Measures®, in hiring and evaluation processes.
- Ensure that all employees are expected to contribute to building social capital, networking and community building, not just the employees involved with direct support positions.
- Ensure that high-quality job performance is celebrated as much or more than lower quality job performance is critiqued.

RETENTION: CONNECT EMPLOYEES

Improve communication between staff and management through a variety of media; encourage programs to develop peer connections.

Rationale:
Research shows that having strong communication with employees is one of the key retaining strategies.

In addition, rumours and gossip can be minimized by increasing communication between management and employees.

Current Situation:
In the employee survey, "only half of survey respondents feel that management keeps them informed about matters that affect their job."[18] Focus group respondents also consider that communication is a challenge.

Across the province a variety of communication methods are used including job binders containing pertinent information about people supported, e-mail when computers are available at each location, internal newsletters, organizational calendar of events and labour/ management committees.

Strategies:

- Recognize the importance of communication
    - See the section below *Communication and Leadership*.
- Ensure open communication between staff and management.
- Develop communication strategies for employee awareness.
- Consider the principles of strategic communication.
    - See section below *Strategic Communication*.
- Communicate using a wide variety of forums – memos, notices, newsletters, websites, calendar of events, etc.
- Keep the lines of communication open and simple – make sure the message is easy to digest.
- Utilize technology to assist in distribution of information – staff e-mail accounts, web pages, computers at every site, etc.
- Consider your audience and prepare the message with the recipient in mind.
- Deliver message(s) in a way that is mindful of people's time.

[18] Deloitte

- Remember that effective communication requires you to be a good listener.
- Plan staff social events to bring people together.
- Encourage attendance at training, social events, and committees.
- Develop an internal mentoring program.

Information on Connecting Employees

Background

Research completed by Deloitte, 2007 found the following;

- There are limited communication channels in use at most agencies.
- While there are few formal programs to connect employees with each other, they develop relationships with peers through working or attending training together, as well as participating in social programs and committees.
- There are few initiatives to connect employees at a peer level across programs/locations or to establish communities of practice.
- Employees mention they value meeting peers from other agencies through industry events or umbrella organizations.
- Staff meetings are held at most agencies; however they are held at different frequencies, and may not include part-time or casual employees.
- According to employers, connections between direct support employees and management quell rumours.
- Only half of the survey respondents feel management keeps them informed about matters that affect their job

The recommendation from the research is to improve communication between employees and management through a variety of mediums; encourage programs to develop peer connections.

Communication and Leadership

The article below discusses the concept of Communication and Leadership. Included is an explanation of the Communication Process; Barriers to Communication; Active Listening; Feedback; Non-Verbal Communication and Speaking Tips[19].

No one would talk much in society if they knew how often they misunderstood others - Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

Effective communication occurs only if the receiver understands the exact information or idea that the sender intended to transmit. Many of the problems that occur in an organization are the either the direct result of people failing to communicate and/or processes, which leads to confusion and can cause good plans to fail (Mistry, Jaggers, Lodge, Alton, Mericle, Frush, Meliones, 2008).

Studying the communication process is important because you coach, coordinate, counsel, evaluate, and supervise throughout this process. It is the chain of understanding that integrates the members of an organization from top to bottom, bottom to top, and side to side.

[19] The attached article was found at http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/leadcom.html.

The Communication Process:

- **Thought:** First, information exists in the mind of the sender. This can be a concept, idea, information, or feelings.

- **Encoding:** Next, a message is sent to a receiver in words or other symbols.

- **Decoding:** Lastly, the receiver translates the words or symbols into a concept or information that he or she can understand.

During the transmitting of the message, two elements will be received: content and context. Content is the actual words or symbols of the message that is known as language — the spoken and written words combined into phrases that make grammatical and semantic sense. We all use and interpret the meanings of words differently, so even simple messages can be misunderstood. And many words have different meanings to confuse the issue even more.

Context is the way the message is delivered and is known as paralanguage — it is the nonverbal elements in speech such as the tone of voice, the look in the sender's eyes, body language, hand gestures, and state of emotions (anger, fear, uncertainty, confidence, etc.) that can be detected. Although paralanguage or context often cause messages to be misunderstood as we believe what we see more than what we hear; they are powerful communicators that help us to understand each other. Indeed, we often trust the accuracy of nonverbal behaviours more than verbal behaviours.

Some leaders think they have communicated once they told someone to do something, "I don't know why it did not get done. I told Jim to do it." More than likely, Jim misunderstood the message. A message has NOT been communicated unless it is understood by the receiver (decoded). How do you know it has been properly received? By two-way communication or feedback. This feedback tells the sender that the receiver understood the message, its level of importance, and what must be done with it. Communication is an exchange, not just a give, as all parties must participate to complete the information exchange.

Barriers to Communication:

Nothing is so simple that it cannot be misunderstood. — Freeman Teague, Jr.

Anything that prevents understanding of the message is a barrier to communication. Many physical and psychological barriers exist:

- **Culture, background, and bias** — We allow our past experiences to change the meaning of the message. Our culture, background, and bias can be good as they allow us to use our past experiences to understand something new, it is when they change the meaning of the message that they interfere with the communication process.

- **Noise** — Equipment or environmental noise impedes clear communication. The sender and the receiver must both be able to concentrate on the messages being sent to each other.

- **Ourselves** — Focusing on ourselves, rather than the other person can lead to confusion and conflict. The “Me Generation” is out when it comes to effective communication. Some of the factors that cause this are defensiveness (we feel someone is attacking us), superiority (we feel we know more that the other), and ego (we feel we are the center of the activity).

- **Perception** — If we feel the person is talking too fast, not fluently, does not articulate clearly, etc., we may dismiss the person. Also our preconceived attitudes affect our ability to listen. We listen uncritically to persons of high status and dismiss those of low status.

- **Message** — Distractions happen when we focus on the facts rather than the idea. Our educational institutions reinforce this with tests and questions. Semantic distractions occur when a word is used differently than you prefer. For example, the word chairman instead of chairperson, may cause you to focus on the word and not the message.

- **Environmental** — Bright lights, an attractive person, unusual sights, or any other stimulus provides a potential distraction.

- **Smothering** — We take it for granted that the impulse to send useful information is automatic. Not true! Too often we believe that certain information has no value to others or they are already aware of the facts.

- **Stress** — People do not see things the same way when under stress. What we see and believe at a given moment is influenced by our psychological frames of references — our beliefs, values, knowledge, experiences, and goals.

These barriers can be thought of as filters, that is, the message leaves the sender, goes through the above filters, and is then heard by the receiver. These filters muffle the message. And the way to overcome filters is through active listening and feedback.

Active Listening

Hearing and listening are not the same thing. Hearing is the act of perceiving sound. It is involuntary and simply refers to the reception of aural stimuli. Listening is a selective activity which involves the reception and the interpretation of aural stimuli. It involves decoding the sound into meaning.

Listening is divided into two main categories: passive and active. Passive listening is little more that hearing. It occurs when the receiver of the message has little motivation to listen carefully, such as when listening to music, story telling, television, or when being polite.

People speak at 100 to 175 words per minute (WPM), but they can listen intelligently at 600 to 800 WPM. Since only a part of our mind is paying attention, it is easy to go into mind drift — thinking about other things while listening to someone. The cure for this is active listening — which involves listening with a purpose. It may be to gain information, obtain directions, understand others, solve problems, share interest, see how another person feels, show support, etc. It requires that the listener attends to the words and the feelings of the sender for understanding. It takes the same amount or more energy than speaking. It requires the receiver to hear the various messages, understand the meaning, and then verify the meaning by offering feedback. The following are a few traits of active listeners:

- Spend more time listening than talking.
- Do not finish the sentences of others.
- Do not answer questions with questions.
- Are aware of biases. We all have them. We need to control them.
- Never daydreams or become preoccupied with their own thoughts when others talk.
- Let the other speakers talk. Do not dominate the conversations.
- Plan responses after the others have finished speaking, NOT while they are speaking.
- Provide feedback, but do not interrupt incessantly.
- Analyze by looking at all the relevant factors and asking open-ended questions. Walk others through by summarizing.
- Keep conversations on what others say, NOT on what interests them.
- Take brief notes. This forces them to concentrate on what is being said.

Feedback

When you know something, say what you know. When you don't know something, say that you don't know. That is knowledge. — Kung Fu Tzu (Confucius)

The purpose of feedback is to alter messages so the intention of the original communicator is understood by the second communicator. It includes verbal and nonverbal responses to another person's message.

Providing feedback is accomplished by paraphrasing the words of the sender. Restate the sender's feelings or ideas in your own words, rather than repeating their words. Your words should be saying, “This is what I understand your feelings to be, am I correct?” It not only includes verbal responses, but also nonverbal ones. Nodding your head or squeezing their hand to show agreement, dipping your eyebrows shows you don't quite understand the meaning of their last phrase, or sucking air in deeply and blowing it hard shows that you are also exasperated with the situation.

Carl Rogers listed five main categories of feedback. They are listed in the order in which they occur most frequently in daily conversations. Notice that we make judgments more often than we try to understand:

- **Evaluative:** Making a judgment about the worth, goodness, or appropriateness of the other person's statement.

- **Interpretive:** Paraphrasing — attempting to explain what the other person's statement means.

- **Supportive:** Attempting to assist or bolster the other communicator.

- Probing: Attempting to gain additional information, continue the discussion, or clarify a point.

- Understanding: Attempting to discover completely what the other communicator means by her statements.

Imagine how much better daily communications would be if listeners tried to understand first, before they tried to evaluate what someone is saying.

Non-Verbal Communication

To deliver the full impact of a message, use nonverbal behaviors to raise the channel of interpersonal communication:

- **Eye contact:** This helps to regulate the flow of communication. It signals interest in others and increases the speaker's credibility. People who make eye contact open the flow of communication and convey interest, concern, warmth, and credibility.

- **Facial expressions:** Smiling is a powerful cue that transmits happiness, friendliness, warmth, and liking. So, if you smile frequently you will be perceived as more likable, friendly, warm and approachable. Smiling is often contagious and people will react favorably. They will be more comfortable around you and will want to listen more.

- **Gestures:** If you fail to gesture while speaking you may be perceived as boring and stiff. A lively speaking style captures the listener's attention, makes the conversation more interesting, and facilitates understanding.

- **Posture and body orientation**: You communicate numerous messages by the way you talk and move. Standing erect and leaning forward communicates to listeners that you are approachable, receptive and friendly. Interpersonal closeness results when you and the listener face each other. Speaking with your back turned or looking at the floor or ceiling should be avoided as it communicates disinterest.

- **Proximity:** Cultural norms dictate a comfortable distance for interaction with others. You should look for signals of discomfort caused by invading the other person's space. Some of these are: rocking, leg swinging, tapping, and gaze aversion.

- **Vocal:** Speaking can signal nonverbal communication when you include such vocal elements as: tone, pitch, rhythm, timbre, loudness, and inflection. For maximum teaching effectiveness, learn to vary these six elements of your voice. One of the major criticisms of many speakers is that they speak in a monotone voice. Listeners perceive this type of speaker as boring and dull.

Speaking Hints

Speak comfortable words! — William Shakespeare

- When speaking or trying to explain something, ask the listeners if they are following you.
- Ensure the receiver has a chance to comment or ask questions.
- Try to put yourself in the other person's shoes — consider the feelings of the receiver.
- Be clear about what you say.
- Look at the receiver.
- Make sure your words match your tone and body language (nonverbal behaviours).
- Vary your tone and pace.

Strategic Communication[20]

Strategic Communication is communication aligned with the company's overall strategy, to enhance its strategic positioning.

Strategic communication enables the organization to use communication effectively in support of its long term business objectives.

Communicating in a non-strategic ways means creating and disseminating a flood of messages that could be unrelated, disconnect, contradictory, unfocused, with no clear purpose, without a way of ever knowing whether you are getting any return for your investment. More and more, organization are choosing to use strategic communications created as a result of a definitive communication plan to give purpose and value to all of their communication thinking.

The key development phases of a strategic communication plan should include:

- Identifying your strategic purpose;
- Tie-in with the organization's Business Plan;
- Communicating research, interviews and focus groups;
- Formulating business and communication objectives;
- Creating themes and messages appropriate to your objectives and audience;
- Media selection;
- Measurement tools to include in the plan; and
- Implementation and reporting.

[20] Source - **www.humanext.com**

RETENTION: CREATING A STRONG CULTURE

Develop a participative culture by involving staff in decisions and soliciting their feedback.

Rationale:
Research shows that culture is an important factor for employees when choosing to work at a specific workplace. As in any other organization, employees working in developmental services would value the opportunity to have input into the organizational plan.

Current Situation:
Only 58% of survey respondents (direct support employees) feel that they "are involved in decisions that affect their work and are encouraged to provide feedback for improvement."[21] In addition, it appears that culture emerges simply from the employees who work at a location at a given time.

Strategies:

- Articulate the vision, mission, and goals of your organization.[22]
  - This should clarify what the organization is about; the legacy it wants to leave; and how you plan to achieve service, performance, and operational excellence. Every employee should know and understand the organizational vision, mission and goals. Also, don't be afraid to refine the organization's vision, mission, and values every few years to ensure relevance to your current work environment.

- Educate your employees on the vision, mission, and goals of the organization.
  - Help them see how they fit into the big picture, what you expect from them, and how their individual and team contributions will lead to organizational success. This can be accomplished during the new employee on-boarding process, at departmental meetings, at all-employee general sessions, or one-on-one. Don't miss any opportunity to align employees, so that you feel confident in holding them accountable for contributing to improving the culture.

- Hold leadership accountable for driving a culture of excellence.
  - Demonstration and execution of the organization's vision, mission, and goals should be linked to their job performance, incentive program, and future career advancement. If a leader is incapable of consistently driving excellence, to some extent they are negligent in their job, and may be impeding the organization's ability to improve the culture. Leaders are crucial in improving organizational culture.

- Reward and recognize employees who consistently exemplify the qualities that will lead to organizational success.

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[21] Deloitte- employee survey results

[22] Source for recommendations below - http://www.psbydesign.com

- Once you have clarified what is needed to improve and drive a culture of excellence, educate employees on what is expected of them and how to deliver on the expectations; reward those who are uncompromising in their commitment to excellence.

❖ Coach, counsel, and develop employees who are deficient in driving organizational culture.
  - You do this by first finding out why they are unable to meet organizational expectations. Is it a commitment issue? Or is it a competence issue? If it is competence, they need further training and development. If it is a commitment issue, they need further one-on-one coaching to increase their motivation and buy-in; they need to know "what's in it for me?"

❖ Refine your new employee selection process.
  - Going forward, make a commitment to only select and hire potential job candidates who can help the organization positively advance, and enhance the culture you are trying to create or improve. Integrate questions into the interview process that will help you identify job candidates who will naturally fit in with the culture you are trying to create, and definitely avoid those who may erode or destroy it. Undeniably, this will require waiting for the right hire, and not just simply filling a job opening.

Information on Creating a Strong Culture

Background
The survey results of the Deloitte research of 2007 indicated the following;
- Culture is the second most important reason that respondents chose to work at a specific agency;
- Agency culture tends not be formally measured or monitored, but simply emerges based on the people who are working there;
- Overall, there appear to be cultures which are not very participative;
- Only one half of the survey respondents felt they are involved in decisions that affect their work, and are encouraged to provide feedback to make improvements to the programs and/or agency; and
- Direct support employees are significantly less likely to be involved in decisions.

Recommendation
Develop a more participative culture by involving employees in decisions and soliciting their feedback.

The foundation of an organization rests on management's philosophy, values, vision and goals. This in turn drives the organizational culture which is composed of the formal organization, informal organization, and the social environment. The culture determines the type of leadership, communication, and group dynamics within the organization. The employees perceive this as the quality of worklife which directs their degree of motivation. The final outcomes are performance, individual satisfaction, and personal growth and development. All these elements combine to build the model or framework that the organization operates from.

Culture is the conventional behaviour of a society that encompasses beliefs, customs, knowledge, and practices. It influences human behaviour, even though it seldom enters into their conscious thought. People depend on culture as it gives them stability, security, understanding, and the ability to respond to a given situation. This is why people fear change. They fear the system will become unstable, their security will be lost, they will not understand the new process, and they will not know how to respond to the new situations.

Checklist[23]

Use the following checklist to determine if your organization's culture requires attention. A "yes" to any of all of these questions could indicate that the corporate culture is broken.

- Are doors to offices closed most of the time?
- Are leaders seen as not walking the talk?
- Are people afraid to bring critical issues up their supervisors?
- Are there departments that do not collaborate, nor share information?
- Do managers blame each other for organizational problems?
- Is it common to hear about things more through the rumour mill than through organizational channels?
- Is there pressure to do what the boss wants without regard to questions of ethics or personal integrity?
- Are training and HR practices totally focused on advancing the organization's interests with little or no attention to developing people's talents and careers?

[23] Source - Cunningham, J. B. & Eberle, T. (1990). "A Guide to Job Enrichment and Redesign," *Personnel*, Feb 1990, p.57 in Newstrom, J. & Davis, K. (1993). *Organization Behavior: Human Behavior at Work*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

RETENTION: FORMAL SUCCESSION PLANNING

Apply formal succession planning across the organization; link succession planning with workforce planning and personal learning plans.

Rationale:
The development of succession planning in the developmental services sector is critical to ensuring that agencies are retaining and training employees with potential to become leaders in their organization. This planning is imperative considering that many executive directors in the sector will be at a retirement age in 5-10 years.

Current Situation:
The focus groups conducted by the committee revealed that most agencies have not done formal succession planning.

Strategies:

- ❖ Ensure organization commitment to a systematic succession planning and management program
    - o See the section “Best Practices in retention: Succession Planning/Management”
- ❖ Know the key roles and functions to include in the succession planning program with current and future performance criteria (i.e., competencies, knowledge, skills, and ability requirements).
- ❖ Assess current and future leadership potential for targeted positions
- ❖ Provide development opportunities and support structure
- ❖ Evaluate the succession planning process

Information on Formal Succession Planning

Best Practices in Retention: Succession Planning/Management

Context
The Deloitte study of the developmental services sector in Ontario found from literature review that the organizations that incorporate leading best practices in retention have formal succession planning programs in place and manage these effectively. They recommended that the organizations apply formal succession planning across the organization linking it with workforce planning and personal learning goals.[24].

[24] *Deloitte 2008*

Definition of Succession Planning/Management

There are two definitions that best capture what succession planning is. The first from the HR Council for the Voluntary & Non-profit Sector (2009), a Canadian professional and advocacy organization, defines succession planning very simply: the "identification and development of individuals with a high potential for taking on leadership positions."

The second comes from the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) defining succession planning as the process of identifying key positions, candidates, and employees needed to meet the challenges that an organization faces in the short term and in the long term[25] and this extended by an ASTD research study in 2010 to include the process of developing and advancing employees in the succession pipeline.[26] When the monitoring and evaluation of the program is added to the planning, then succession planning becomes succession planning and management.[27]

Value of Succession Planning/Management

The Deloittte study and the Best HR Practices Committee focus groups found that organizations did have succession planning for the executive level under consideration or in early development but very little had been done at all levels of the organizations. There is awareness of the need for succession planning programs overall for long-term organizational survival. Major reasons are to identify and prepare future leaders, to assure continuity, create opportunities for internal advancement and for retention.

Formal or Informal Succession Planning/Management

Many organizations in the research and in our best practices focus groups indicate they had informal succession planning approaches ranging from selecting people to mentor, using the chain of command – directors to replace executive directors, developing leaders in their current roles with the thought of future opportunities and giving high functioning performers stretch assignments. But Deloitte's and the ASTD study stress that formal succession planning are critical to achieving the reasons identified in the preceding section.

The responsibility for formal programs should lie with the Board for the Executive Director (CEO) and with the executive leadership for the overall program. Human Resources should be highly involved in the succession planning activities. There must be advocacy from the top of the organization if succession planning is to be a business imperative that gets funding, attention and support.

Transparency in Succession Planning/Management

Provide consistent communication about the succession planning process for greater transparency. This is for the criteria being used to identify candidates. Decisions have to be made on merit and not favouritism and transparency makes this clear to all. There remains a debate about the level of transparency for succession candidates. It is not known if their awareness of their place in the succession planning program is a best practice. The level of this kind of transparency should be determined specific to your organization.

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[25] Russo & Mitchell, 2005
[26] *ASTD 2010*
[27] *Rothwell, 2005*

<u>Technology's Role in Succession Planning/Management</u>
Organizations with successful succession planning use technology in one or more aspects of the program. The best use has been demonstrated to be in using technology to assess to provide metrics which assess the program and make good decisions about the program. Other areas where technology can add value include for performance review, learning content management, delivery of learning content, sourcing development opportunities, career planning, and social networking to facilitate informal learning.

<u>Implementation of Succession Planning/Management</u>

Step 1: Make the commitment.
The organization's leadership should commit to a systematic succession planning and management program. There are a range of actions to take in this step including determining the precise needs for the program, clarifying goals and target groups, writing procedures, developing action plans and providing learning for those who will lead the program implementation.

Step 2: Determine present and future work and people requirements.
The organization must know the key roles and functions to include in the succession planning program with current and future performance criteria (i.e., competencies, knowledge, skills, and ability requirements). Succession planning programs of necessity must include senior level positions but recent best practice research indicates that the organization's business objectives dictate what other positions should be included. Key positions are the jobs that provide greatest value or have duties that are crucial to executing business strategies.

Organizations are extending the succession planning process to managerial, technical and professional positions. In fact, some innovations include creating dual career ladders with one for managerial functions and another for technical or professional roles.

Organizations also must make an effort to assess what future work requirements and competencies will be required. Leaders need to be able to thrive when in the future requirements change and new organization objectives are developed.

Step 3: Assess current and future leadership potential.
The organization must be able to know how well people are performing in their positions. The best practice from the ASTD study indicates that organizations should start with four options for identifying succession planning candidates:

1. Do high-potential talent identification by addressing work performance, managerial recommendations for the employee and the aspirations/work ethic of the employee.

2. Depend on managers' nomination or selections to utilize their understanding of their direct reports' competencies and potential.

3. Use performance review measurements to remove some of the politics out of, and address fear of favouritism in, candidate selection.

4. Use assessment tools that are right for the organization and have validity to increase objectivity.

It is not just success in the current position that is critical to assess potential for success in the targeted positions. High potential employees are the stars who you can be slated into the next level position or can be capable of advancing to two levels beyond their present position. In order to identify and develop high-leadership potential employees, your organization needs to determine program selection criteria. The use of core competencies for Ontario's developmental services sector is a very valuable tool. The final set of criteria for program selection will be partially dictated by the functions performed by the organization, the organization type as well as its history, structure, and culture. Competencies need to align with business objectives and strategies – not all competencies are useful in specific roles. The focus then is on how to further develop these critical competencies most effectively. The issue of transparency in this process is important to address as described above.

When considering what sort of talent is needed to fill the succession pipeline, the organization has to decide whether to find talent within their current employee base or look to external sources. Best practice suggests that using internal talent leads to the greatest success. However, there are situations in which selecting outside talent makes sense. For example:

- When the organization is unwilling or unable to invest in internal development programs;
- When internal development would take too long;
- When the pool of internal talent is too lean; and
- When new ideas and approaches would provide a fresh point of view in a stagnant organization or turn around poor organization performance.

To be prepared for the circumstance when external talent is required a proactive strategy is to develop an external network to recruit talented individuals and build/augment future leadership capital. This network can be a strategic advantage in times when you have a shortage of internal leadership talent.

Step 4: Provide development opportunities and support structure.
To enhance and protect your leadership capital, you must ensure an adequate and balanced provision of leadership development opportunities and learning/training. The following have been identified as best practices:

1. Identified succession candidates need to be given regular performance and development feedback. They need both feedback from measurements of performance/achievement and assessments from experienced leaders. Candidates performance needs to be measured, their strengths identified and their competency gaps addressed with development opportunities.

2. Succession planning programs need to link with other talent management processes. The succession plan should be integrated with processes like recruitment, on-boarding, compensation, recognition, promotion, and performance management. By carefully integrating your leadership succession plan with other systems, you will facilitate the building of a strong leadership development culture; clearly signal the importance and legitimacy of your leadership development and succession plan; and increase the reputation of your organization as a proactive and learning organization.

3. Involve the learning function to drive development of customized programs that address the specific strengths, weaknesses, needs and desires of the individual in the succession pipeline. Ensure there are a range of options available including coaching, job shadowing, action learning, case studies, role playing, mentoring, and stretch assignments. An individual development plan is ideal to ensure success in the succession planning process.

Step 5: Evaluate succession planning.

1. It is important to cultivate and consistently monitor a succession candidate's progress and state of mind (e.g., overall satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intentions, etc.) In its simplest form, leadership succession planning is ultimately a numbers game. Failure to support development and career progression may result in high attrition rates and a reduction of your talent pool. As such, close monitoring is critical.

2. Organizations need to assess the effectiveness and the outcomes of their succession planning programs. Technology for tracking succession planning metrics has been shown to be a best practice although it does take additional resource commitment. There are five key measurements that organization should consider for evaluating their succession planning program

    1. Measure the number of key positions filled by succession candidates.

    2. Record the total number of candidates in the succession pipeline and assess if it is enough to handle contingencies such as the loss due to turnover and other factors.

    3. Document and measure the implementation of the succession planning program. Don't just be satisfied that there is a plan, instead asses the implementation of key steps.

    4. Develop and track critical business outcomes for the functions that are managed by succession candidates. These outcomes should be improving or at the very least being maintained.

    5. Have systems that hold managers accountable for ensuring that talent is in the pipeline and being developed. Develop ways to measure this to ensure accountability.

Resources

This presentation of best practices for Succession Planning/Management is an overview of key aspects. To move forward various resources and tools are available. The following is a list of some of these resources.

- AICPA. (2008). The 2008 PCPS Succession Survey. Retrieved from http://pcps.aicpa.org.
- American Society for Training and Development (2010). Improving Succession Plans: Harnessing the power of Learning and Development
- Behan, G., Kirschner, J., & Snyder, S. (2009, March/April). "Succession in Practice." CEO Magazine, 28-33.
- Bowley, J. (2009, July). Preference in Succession Planning. Retrieved from www.talentmgt.com.

- Christy, J. (2009, March). “Successful Leadership Transition.” Training and Development T+D, 56-60.
- Goldsmith, M. (2009, May 12). 4 Tips for Efficient Succession Planning. Retrieved from www.harvardbusiness.org.
- Heathfield, S. (2009). Succession Planning. Retrieved from http://humanresources.about.com.
- Heidrick & Struggles. (2009a). The Board of Directors’ role in CEO Succession. Retrieved from www.heidrick.com.
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- Pulse Survey Results: High Potentials. Retrieved from www.i4cp.com.
- Institute for Corporate Productivity. (2008, July).Taking the Pulse: Succession Planning. Retrieved from www.i4cp.com
- Jensen, K. (2009, May). “Making Succession Plans Work for Your Company.” Workspan, 57-62.
- McCready, T., & Hatcher, C. (2009, March). “How to Align Career Development & Succession Planning.” Workspan, 61-63.
- Rothwell, W. et al (2005) Career Planning and Succession Management. Praeger Publishers . Westport, New York.
- Rothwell, W. (2005) Effective Succession Planning Amacom: New York (3rd Edition).
- Russo, C. & Mitchell, J. (2005). The Infoline Dictionary of Basic Trainer’s Terms. Infoline, December

Regularly measure employee satisfaction; communicate results and implement changes based on results.

Rationale:
Research shows that leading organizations measure employee satisfaction regularly and make changes based on the results, ensuring increased employee satisfaction and engagement.

Current Situation:
Few organizations in the developmental services sector measure employee satisfaction.

Strategies:
- Make a commitment to gain input from employees on a regular basis.
- Communicate the findings from the input to employees.
- Establish action plans based on the findings.
- Develop and communicate an implementation plan based on suggestions gained from employees.

Information on Employee Satisfaction Management

Employee Satisfaction Management
"Employee satisfaction is the terminology used to describe whether employees are happy and contented and fulfilling their desires and needs at work. Many measures report that employee satisfaction is a factor in employee motivation, employee goal achievement, and positive employee morale in the workplace". [28]

Employees are the foundation of a successful organization. Not only do employers want to be sure that good employees are satisfied with the organization and the particular job, employers also should recognize those employees who are dissatisfied may also be demoralizing to other employees. Employers who have satisfied employees also tend to have better employee retention.

Identifying employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction is imperative to building company morale. By employing regular employee feedback tools, particularly satisfaction surveys, employers can build solutions for a successful work environment. The key to employee satisfaction is respecting the employees and the jobs they perform.[29]

It is also becoming more widely thought that if employers treated their employees as customers, putting the emphasis on employee satisfaction as a company might on customer satisfaction it would lead to a more productive work environment. It was found

[28] Humanresources.about.com
[29] www.wisegeek.com

that employees who feel like they are working as a team or part of a family are much more satisfied. Many employers, to help build morale will take employees out of the work environment and have them participate in team building exercises to accomplish this goal.

Deloitte completed a study of HR Best Practices among across the developmental services sector in Ontario as well as a scan of other services nationally and internationally. Among the many recommendation for the sector; they recommended that organizations “regularly measure employee satisfaction; communicate results and implement changes based on results.”

Deloitte further noted that employee satisfaction programs are rarely used by the DS agencies .When ‘staff engagement forms’ are used, the results are not shared among the employees nor does it appear that agencies design implementation plans to deal with concerns.

In Deloitte’s research in other jurisdictions they noted that in Alberta the PPD program had invested to increase employee’s job satisfaction which in turn reduced the turnover rate by 7.9%.They also found that in California, a Worker Job Satisfaction, Advancement and Retention program was developed which also focused on turnover rate issues. In Georgia, initiatives included recognizing and respecting the work of the direct support employees, provide more learning opportunities and guaranteed flexible work schedules, based on employee feedback. In Ohio, staff turnover was reduced from 68% to 13% as a result of obtaining and implementing feedback from employees.

In a review of many agencies across Ontario, completed by the Best HR Practices Committee, it appears that minimal resources are invested in employee satisfaction. Only a few agencies had examples of completing regular employee satisfaction surveys. Some agencies outsourced this work while others completed their staff satisfaction surveys internally.

It was noted that agencies did realize that conducting employee satisfaction surveys also required a commitment to develop an implementation plan.

In the agencies who did complete satisfaction surveys, issues such as work-life balance strategies and support for learning and education were important to employees.

Assessing Employee Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction should be measured relating to a number of organizational areas. Such areas include management, employees’ understanding of mission and vision, employees’ feelings of empowerment, teamwork, communication and their interactions with co-workers.

Employee satisfaction can be sought in various ways. Well thought-out employee surveys are very useful as they enable the employee to be open and honest without fear of retribution. Focus groups with employees can also elicit good feedback; however employees must feel comfortable in sharing information this way with an employer.

LRi Management Services, Inc states that satisfaction surveys provide a company with a roadmap to establish, implement change and then re-evaluate problem areas within the workforce. It is also recognized that surveys are an effective way to communicate to employees, letting them know that the employer is listening to their concerns.

Anonymous surveys do allow for open and honest answers however it is critical that the questions are thoughtfully asked to ensure the information sought and received is relevant to the workplace. LRi Management suggests that a small group of managers or a task force work together to develop the questionnaire. It is also suggested that open-ended questions will allow for more informed feedback.

There are many companies and tools available to employers to measure employee satisfaction. Halogen software is a product being used by hospitals across the province as a best practice tool for employee satisfaction. If the employer decides to use focus groups to obtain feedback it is important that the employees feel safe in this process. It is suggested that focus groups are held on site; otherwise it may be perceived that the employer has something to hide.

Regardless of how employee satisfaction is determined it is critical that the employer also follow up with the information obtained and act on the information. Employees will not participate in a continuous improvement program if they feel their concerns are not being heard. Failure to do so implies a lack of caring or concern for employee opinions.[30]

Recommendation

Make a commitment to gain input from staff regarding their satisfaction level and ensure that information obtained and suggestions are acted on.

[30] Jerry Lopper; Measure Employees Job Satisfaction with Opinion and Attitude Surveys

Consider flexible retirement options for critical workforce segments.

Rationale:
As the Baby Boomer generation is approaching retirement, in addition to developing succession plans, agencies are encouraged to consider managing retirement by developing strategies that support delayed or phased retirement.

Current Situation:
Most developmental service organizations have not considered how an aging population and retirement may create potential gaps. Less than 25% of employers who responded to Deloitte's survey have either taken initiatives to postpone retirement or plan to do so in the future.

Strategies:

- Identify possible skills shortage that is difficult to fill.
    - See the section below *Information on Delayed or Phased Retirement*.
- Determine the type of arrangement that would appeal to potentially retiring employees.
- Decide how to accommodate phased retirement, while meeting business objectives.
- Develop a policy and a program.
- Build mentoring and teaching opportunities into the process to ensure transfer of learning from the employees on phased retirement.
- Provide development opportunities and support structure.
- Evaluate the succession planning process.

Information on Delayed or Phased Retirement

What is Delayed or Phased Retirement?
Delayed retirement occurs when employees decide to work longer than what was the traditional or expected time for retirement. Continuing to work will ensure that the knowledge and experience they posses will be maintained in the organization.

Phased retirement is described as a broad range of employment arrangements, formal and informal, that allow an employee who is approaching normal retirement, to continue working, usually with a reduced workload, in transition from full-time work to full-time retirement. The re-employment of retirees, whether or not it was anticipated when they first retired, is also included in discussions of phased retirement.

Phased retirement includes part-time, seasonal, or temporary work, an extended leave of absence or a deferred retirement option plan. Phased retirement may take one of two forms: A pre-retirement gradual reduction in hours (or days) of work or post-retirement part-time work for pensioners who wish to remain employed. The key difference between phased retirement and standard flexible working arrangements is that phased retirement is often for a pre-determined period prior to formal retirement. In addition, phased retirement often involves a step-down process in which employees plan to gradually reduce the number of hours or days they work.

Strategy for Delayed Retirement

You should communicate early to your valued employees that you would like them to stay past the traditional retirement age. Research indicates that most people do not think about retirement until close to the date with as many as 18% waiting to the 6-month time frame to think about retirement. About 20% of people begin to do their thinking at the 12, 18 and 24-month time frame. As a result it is best to communicate about the desire to have the employee defer retirement and address issues before the 24-month period.

To encourage your valued employees to stay past what is generally considered retirement age the most successful strategies are to:

- Ensure the employee feels truly needed and is fully engaged in the workplace;
- Make sure that the work they do is meaningful work to them; and
- Consider strategies for maintaining health benefits if possible within your plans.

Benefits of Delayed and Phased Retirement

For Employees

Delayed retirement provides the benefit to the employee of meeting financial needs, of staying mentally active, the need for health benefits and delaying the use of their retirement funds.

Phased retirement provides an incentive for employees to delay retirement and continue to contribute to the workforce while also having time to pursue other lifestyle commitments and opportunities. Phased retirement can improve the quality of life of employees who do not need the income of a full-time position and again be able to defer using their retirement funds. Delayed or phased retirement creates a new option for employees, particularly those in physically demanding jobs, who are inclined to reduce work-time. For those in low-wage jobs, an opportunity now exists to continue working and building pension entitlement while slowing down the pace of work. Delayed and phased retirement allows a "work-and-pension-payment" combination at the same job, rather than having to fully retire and find work elsewhere.

For Employers

There are many advantages for employers. These include:

- Retention of skilled employees in the workforce for a longer period of time especially for positions that are difficult to fill;
- Preservation of organizational knowledge;
- Transfer of key skills from experienced to inexperienced employees easing the difficulty of replacing key skills;
- Provision of a system for effective succession management;
- Increased return on investment in training and development for employees;
- Improved ability to respond to potential retirees and their needs; and

- Reduced costs achieved through lower salary and benefits expenses, made possible by employees shifting from full-time to part-time status.

Key Issues for Employees and Employers
Employees who are considering whether to phase into retirement may have concerns about access to pension or retirement benefits to act as replacement income due to the reduced hours. They may be concerned about eligibility for the benefits and the impact the reduced schedule (and pay) has on the benefits from the pension or retirement plan. They may be worried that the rest of the workforce will perceive them negatively either for taking away job opportunities or for their ability to be productive. Other general issues that come from employees or employee groups are that this could:

- Lead to the reduction of early retirement options if they exist;
- contribute to pressures to increase normal age of retirement (for CPP age 65 for most workers); and
- Be applied selectively by employers to favoured individuals and may contribute to increasing movement from full-time to part-time jobs.

Employers who might want to consider offering a formal phased retirement program may have concerns about productivity and health issues with potential retirees, about how to address providing partial pension distributions before full retirement, and about how to limit administrative burdens for retirement planning and general human resources functions.

Barriers to phased retirement exist primarily under defined benefit pension plans, but not defined contribution plans. A major obstacle to phased retirement is that defined benefit pensions actually encourage many employees to retire from their current employer and seek employment elsewhere when they reach the maximum value of their pensions. Because of the nature of traditional defined benefit plans, the value (not necessarily the amount) of a participant's pension may actually decrease if he or she continues working past his or her normal retirement age. Defined contribution pensions are not a problem as the value in the plan would continue to increase with whatever further contributions are made by the employee in a phased retirement program.

Phased Retirement Options
Many options are available for phased retirement and which variations are adopted will depend on the needs and interests of mature age employees, as well as business and operational requirements.
For example, employees could:

- Work part-time rather than full-time in their current job;
- Take up alternative job opportunities on either a full-time or part-time basis;
- ‘Retire’ from the organization and come back on a contract; or
- Work full-time, with additional flexible leave and flexible hours entitlements.

The compatibility of any phased retirement arrangement with the requirements of the relevant award, agreement or employment contract must be carefully examined. Employers and employees should also consider the impact on pension and retirement plans.

Implementing Phased Retirement

Employers must realize that to encourage near-retirement employees to continue working, they need to ensure that they can continue to make a valuable contribution to the success of the organization. The employer must give them interesting, challenging work to do. They must focus on engaging this group of employees, just as they do others in the organization.

Employers need to do the following in establishing phased retirement programs:

- Identify where and which employees approaching retirement who depart will leave a skills shortage that is difficult to fill;
- Determine the type of arrangement that would appeal to these near-retirement employees;
- Decide how they can accommodate phased retirement, while meeting business objectives;
- Develop a policy and a program; and
- Build mentoring and teaching opportunities into the process to ensure transfer of learning from the employees on phased retirement.

Dealing with requests for phased retirement is made easier if there an organization has a clear policy and approval processes. The development and communication of a policy will also indicate to employees that management is willing to give serious consideration to requests for phased retirement. It is a good idea to document decisions made regarding requests for phased retirement and provide a copy to the employee.

For phased retirement to be successful, employers need to foster a culture that enables mature age workers to reduce hours or withdraw from former duties with dignity and respect. Employees on phased retirement are still required to meet normal standards of performance relevant to their role or position. Employers need to determine how the phased retirement arrangement will be monitored and how employee performance will be assessed.

Phased Retirement Agreements

A written agreement covering the conditions of phased retirement will assist in the management of this type of work arrangement. Key information to include in an agreement would be:

- Hours of work and planned further reduction in hours;
- Overall timeframe for phased retirement if known;
- Duties to be undertaken (if changing);
- Performance requirements;
- Security and method of communicating information (if home-based work is included);
- Occupational health and safety requirements;
- Review procedures and evaluation mechanisms; and
- Processes for changing phased retirement arrangements.

Resources

This presentation of best practices for delayed or phased retirement is an overview of key aspects. To move forward various resources and tools are available. The following is a list of some of these resources:

- Andrew Kang, JD, and Julie Weber, JD, Phased Retirement The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation: accessed at http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/pdfs/EWS_PhasedRetirement.pdf
- Chantel Sheaks, J.D. Marcie Pitt-Catsouphes, Ph.D. & Michael A. Smyer, Ph.D., Workplace Flexibility 2010, Georgetown Legal and Research Summary Sheet: Phased Retirement, Georgetown University Law Center and the Center on Aging & Work/Workplace Flexibility, Boston College Accessed at http://www.bc.edu/research/agingandwork/meta-elements/pdf/publications/PhasedRetirement.pdf
- Chantel Sheaks, The State of Phased Retirement, Generations, vol xxxi, no. 1, pp. 57-62, 2007 accessed at http://www.asaging.org/publications/dbase/GEN/Gen.31_1.Sheaks.pdf
- Diane Pitktilis, Adaptations to an aging workforce, Generations, vol 31, no 1, p76-82
- Dane Rice, A Literature Review by Older Worker Retention Strategies Waterloo Wellington Training and Adjustment Board January 2009 accessed at http://www.workforceplanningboard.com/Files/English/Older%20worker%20retention%20strategies.pdf
- Erin Kelly et al, Making Sense of a Mess: Phased Retirement policies and practices in the US., vol 23, no ½, pp147-164 Journal of Workplace Behavioural Health, 2008
- Graham S. Lowe, Retiring Baby Boomers Open to Options, but Get Them Before They Leave accessed at http://www.longwoods.com/content/16997
- HRM Guide: Phased Retirement accessed at http://www.hrmguide.com/career/new-retirement.htm
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada Chapter 6: Transition to Retirement: Collective Agreements and Older Workers in Canada accessed at http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/lp/spila/wlb/caowc/11chapter_6.shtml
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Reduction of working time (Workplace programs, policies and practices) accessed at http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/lp/spila/wlb/wppp/03reduction_working_time.shtml
- Labour Relations Division Department of Commerce, Phased Retirement, Perth, Western February 2009 accessed at www.worklife.wa.gov.au
- Met Life, The Emerging Retirement Model Study December 2009 retrieved from http://www.metlife.com/assets/institutional/services/cbf/retirement/EmergRetireModel-Study.pdf
- Questions and Answers about Phases Retirement: work-family information on: phased retirement accessed at http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/pdfs/phasedretire.pdf
- Susan Stibbe, Phased Retirement planning for life in the slower lane From Your Workplace Magazine Volume 11 -1 accessed at http://www.yourworkplace.ca/index.cfm/ci_id/2551/st_id/1010/la_id/1.htm
- Michelle Tew, The Aging Worker: Getting Age on Your Side Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers Inc, Hamilton accessed at http://www.ohcow.on.ca/enews/vol1iss1/agingworker.pdf
- Watson Wyatt Special Memoranda – English: A Closer Look at Phased Retirement – February, 2008, accessed at http://www.watsonwyatt.com/render.asp?id=18610&catid=16

Increase the proportion of full-time positions.

Rationale:
Full time positions are valued and important to both employees and employers. International research supports this best practice.

Current Situation:
Agencies across the sector have a full-time and part-time position ratio that fits with their unique operational requirements.

Strategies:

Full-time vs. Part-Time Positions
The Expert Panel on Training recommended that there be "a strategy to improve the sector's ability to recruit and retain employees and create a more stable workforce by increasing the proportion of full-time positions." Deloitte also made a recommendation around job design: "Decrease the proportion of part-time and casual roles and move to more use of staffing blocks."

Most of the international research and also Deloitte's report concluded that full time positions are valued and important to both employees and employers:

- Nearly 85% of employers believe that changing the terms of employment (from part-time to full-time) would be a successful strategy for improving recruitment and retention.

- The results of the Deloitte employee survey indicate that the most common reason for employees to leave an agency is "to get a full time position in another agency" and that respondents who are employed as either temporary, part-time or casual/ relief employees are less satisfied with various aspects of their work compared to employees in full-time positions.

Different trends and themes emerged during focus groups discussions conducted by the committee which provided valuable insight into the deliberation about full-time/part-time balances. A short summary of related discussions/conclusions are presented below:

- A number of agencies reported that in the last few years there has been a decline in turnover, possibly due to the change in the economical climate. Most agencies reported very low percentages in turnover for full-time employees, slightly higher for part-time employees and the greatest turnover being in casual and relief positions.

- Agencies reported varying definitions for casual and relief employees including the amount of hours they are required to work and their qualifications and pay levels. Relief/ casual employees appeared to typically not have set or guaranteed hours and work on a “call-in” basis that is less predictable and less guaranteed then part-time employees.

- It appeared that there has been a decline in the number relief/ casual employees hired in agencies. Some discussions indicated that this was due to the increased training requirements and the higher levels of turnover for this group of employees.

- Some turnover concerns were still noted for certain positions (i.e. hard-to-fill locations). Employees hired in full-time positions in residential homes where the people supported require specific support around challenging behaviours and those employed in overnight positions more often choose to transfer into another less challenging full-time position in a short timeframe, then other positions.

- The definition of full-time and part-time staff was defined by each individual agency.

- The compensation packages for full-time and part-time positions varied greatly across agencies. There was also a great variation in pay and benefits reported for the different employee levels. For example, in one agency all employees with at least two hours worked in a 2-week period were eligible for benefits. In other agencies, employees in a full-time position working between 35 – 40 hours/week were the only employees eligible for benefits.

- There was a large range in the qualification expectations for full-time versus part-time employees: at some agencies there was no difference in requirements, while at other agencies there were higher expectations from full-time employees.

- Employers feel that full-time employees had a higher retention rate which is a benefit to an agency.

- A number of challenges in moving towards an increased number of full-time positions were noted such as:
    - The need to rely on part-time employees to fill holiday, sick and statutory holiday shifts for the full-time employees;
    - Resistance from employees when agencies moved towards transforming some part-time positions into non-traditional full time positions (floater positions and positions where people work mostly evenings or weekend hours);
    - The possibility for an increased cost (e.g. benefit package costs) that must be weighed against the benefit of having more engaged full-time employees; and
    - The need to balance full-time and part-time positions to ensure that there are enough part-time employees to fill the required shift, but not too many; because sometimes there are not enough working hours available to maintain the interest of part-time employees.

In conclusion a number of criteria need to be considered in addressing issues related to the balance of full-time and part-time positions:

- Employees desire the benefits that are associated with full-time positions including pensions, sick leave accrual, vacation time, benefit plans and the predictability of their work schedule.

- Employers recognize that retention of full-time employees is higher and that strong relationships between full-time employees and supported individuals are established.

- Many organizations create part-time positions to increase flexibility during scheduling.

- Regional diversity, job design, and budgetary constraints also influence the balance between full-time and part-time positions within an organization.

After considerable deliberation, the committee strongly believed that specific strategies to address issues related to the balance of full-time and part-time positions should be an organizational decision.

TRAINING: LEARNING STRATEGIES THAT PRIORITIZE INVESTMENT

Develop formal learning strategies which make best use of limited funds by focusing on organizational priorities, critical workforce segments, and alternatives to formal training.

Rationale:
A qualified, properly trained workforce in the sector ensures that people with developmental disabilities receive the best support possible.

Current Situation:
Many organizations in the developmental services sector offer only legislated and required training such as first-aid, CPR, Non-Violent Crisis Prevention and Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS). Participants in Deloitte's survey noted there was a "gap in soft skills training such as dealing with families."

Strategies:

- ❖ Adjust talent management strategies to support more customized services to particular segments i.e. SIL, Vocational, etc.
  - Increase level of connectedness between direct support employees so they are able to ensure the people they support can access the appropriate services available to them.
  - Include training for the non-traditional workforce, multicultural, English as a second language.
  - Focus on softer skill sets such as cultural training (Tamir, Reena).

- ❖ Develop of "on-the-job" informal learning programs (70% of what people know about their jobs they learn through everyday interactions with colleagues). Have:
  - Direct support employees step up to supervisory positions and/or responsibilities for a given shift;
  - Job shadowing or job rotation to allow employees the opportunity to learn how other functions or programs operate;
  - Peer review which consists of sending employees to visit other agencies to learn about their operations;
  - Mentoring programs as a positive learning opportunity for both the mentor and mentee;
  - Training opportunities beyond the mandated training of NVCI, First Aid, CPR, etc; and
  - Seconded aspects (either internal or external) to provide employees with opportunities.

- ❖ Utilize formal job-related training which includes courses or workshops related to an employee's current or future job. Formal training follows a planned program and has a formal recognition upon completion (certificate, diploma, degree).
  - Reena has a robust curriculum that employee's must complete within the first year (of employment).

- A train-the-trainer approach is an effective way to deliver training. Consider a partnership for a train-the-trainer course where resources are shared.
- Consider joint training ventures and opportunities amongst similar agencies in specific geographic areas (regional networks) to share training. For example, Thunder Bay has a non-violent crisis training consortium.
- Niagara area agencies work with local colleges to develop curriculum that is based upon the needs of the specific area agencies which has led to the development of a certificate program in developmental support services and the revamping of the Educational Assistant – Special Needs diploma.
- Create a consortium for a training network, sharing training opportunities.
- Have brown bag lunch-and-learn sessions or learning cafes.
- Provide online training for WHMIS, CPI, and First Aid.
- Increase number of opportunities by offering courses through video-conferencing, webcast, and online.

❖ Ensure that most appropriate employees are attending training. The supervisor has a responsibility to identify training needs.
  - Ensure that training applies to current employee role and/or future plans.
  - Send manager and supervisor as a group to training to ensure consistency throughout agency.
  - If available, ensure that training information is kept on a computerized recording system with all supervisors.

❖ Review documentation required for reporting mechanisms of training in order to ensure that documentation is reviewed and acknowledged.

❖ Prioritize training investments with emphasis placed on critical workforce segments.
  - Training must be provided to supervisors that will enhance the understanding of the “business” side of sector.
  - Provide specific supervisor/management training such as discipline, ESA, and understanding a “Collective Agreement.”

Information on Learning Strategies that Prioritize Investment

Definitions and Background

Organizational priorities need to be clearly defined and are governed by the agencies mission and describe what the agency does.

Critical workforce segments are the segments of the workforce that are critical to future success and are those that generate a disproportionate share of current or future value; are in high demand, low in supply, and cannot be replaced easily (front line supervisors, managers, directors, and executive directors).

The agency-based training that is being developed for Ontario’s developmental services as part of the Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy will address this issue. In addition, as noted by the Expert Panel on Training, developmental services employees should be offered the opportunity to also “pursue other vehicles to build towards the core competencies” (i.e. DSW Apprenticeship program, relevant college programs).

TRAINING: ANNUAL PERSONAL LEARNING PLANS

Integrate personal learning plans with the annual performance management process; begin with critical workforce segments.

Rationale:
In leading organizations, personal learning plans are developed annually, as part of the performance management plan and outline courses that employees would like to take in order to grow professionally.

Current Situation:
Few developmental services employees have personal learning plans and very few agencies use formal learning plans as part of the appraisal process.

Strategies:

- ❖ Include a personal learning plan as part of the annual performance appraisal; invest in personalized staff development for all staff.
- ❖ Compile data regarding which employees are interested in particular training so connections can be made easily once opportunities become available.
- ❖ Track and document employee training using a human resources information system or other computerized method to ensure employees know when training is expired.
- ❖ Ensure all training opportunities are widely communicated.

TRAINING: ON-THE-JOB LEARNING THROUGH DEPLOYMENT AND INFORMAL CONNECTION

Formalize and promote on-the-job learning as highly effective development tool.

Rationale:
Beyond formal training, employees can benefit from on-the-job, practical experience for their professional growth. This method is very cost-effective.

Current Situation:
There are limited on-the-job learning opportunities (including mentoring programs) for employees in Ontario's developmental services sector.

Only 40% of employees who responded to Deloitte's survey indicated that they are receiving enough informal learning opportunities.

Strategies - Mentoring:

- Define the mentoring program's mission, goals, and outcomes.
- Build the commitment to the mentorship program by developing the needed training, incentives, flexibility, time and supports for people to participate in the program.
- Outline roles and responsibilities of the program stakeholders at all levels of the organization (agency, managers, supervisors, mentors, mentees).
- Develop and implement the program.
- Evaluate the mentoring program (in terms of cost-effectiveness and staff knowledge) and modify the program as needed.

Information About On-the-Job Learning Through Deployment and Informal Connection

Background
The Deloitte *Improving Training, Recruitment and Retention in Ontario's Developmental services Sector* study (2008) concluded from a literature review that "employee development extends beyond traditional classroom or online education to include the real-life learning employees need to master a job. Leading organizations employ trial-by-fire experiences that stretch employees' capabilities. They foster connections between employees for information knowledge sharing between peers, mentors, and others. It is through relationships that people learn how to perform complicated tasks, manage difficult colleagues, or navigate corporate politics."

Based on the employee/employer surveys and focus groups conducted with representatives from developmental services agencies, the same report concluded that "there are limited on-the-job learning opportunities at agencies. Only 40% of employees who responded the survey believe they are receiving enough informal learning opportunities[31]".

Some informal, on-the-job learning activities that are taking place in a very limited number of DS agencies include:

- Mentoring
    - "Mentoring programs exist at a few agencies, but are not prevalent, and their benefit is not universally understood. In some cases, there is a perception that mentors are only used when there is proof that a worker is having difficulty providing services, not as a positive learning opportunity for both the mentor and mentee" (Deloitte, 2008);
- Frontline workers are asked to step up to supervisory positions when supervisors are unavailable for a given shift;
- Use of job-shadowing, or job-rotation to allow workers the opportunity to learn how other functions or programs operate; and
- Peer review which consists of sending employees to visit other agencies to learn about their operations" (one agency).

Focus groups conducted with HR managers in the DS agencies by the Best HR Practices Committee in 2009 confirmed Deloitte's conclusions.

Mentoring is a good example of a strategy used to improve socialization of new employees and support for skills development of existing ones. Developing mentors that can support, train, and develop staff can be an important help to supervisors and agencies.

Mentoring

Definition of Mentoring

"A deliberate pairing of more skilled or experienced professionals with a lesser skilled or experienced to help the lesser skilled person grow, become socialized into his/her new role within the agency, and to develop specific competencies,"[32]

Mentoring programs can use peer mentors (staff on the same position as the new hire) or agency mentors (staff higher in the hierarchy than the new hire but not in the new hire's direct chain of command).

Value of Mentoring Programs

Deloitte's international research suggests that more than 70% of what people know about their jobs, they learn through everyday interactions with colleagues. In comparison, 22% of learning is achieved by doing research, and 2% when using a manual or text. [33]

Relevant literature shows the importance of creating and implementing mentoring programs in organizations. It creates an open and honest learning and teaching environment for the mentee and mentor alike.

[31] *Deloitte, 2008*
[32] Introduction to Learner Guide, O'Neil, Hewitt, Sauer & Larson, 2001
[33] Where productive work and learning converge,1998

Purpose of Mentoring

- To support and socialize an employee to have a successful employment experience and to move toward certain career goals; and
- To support an employee in developing certain skills.

Benefits of Mentoring[34]

1) For organizations:
- Low cost method to communicate vision, mission and recommended practice;
- Better quality supports;
- Development of employees;
- Increased retention and reduced turnover; and
- Stronger employee commitment.

2) For new hires:
- Accumulated knowledge and experience of mentor;
- Safe opportunity for feedback;
- Occasion to discuss anxiety and concerns;
- Social connections with others;
- Decreased feelings of isolation;
- Access to information; and
- Guidance on norms.

3) For mentors:
- Recognition of skills and abilities;
- Opportunity to develop new skills and advancement;
- Renewed interest in job; and
- Raises, bonuses and rewards.

4) For supported individuals:
- Better services;
- Less turnover; and
- Positive long-term relationships.

Possible Issues with Mentoring Programs (Source: Ebsenstein & Gooler, 1993)

- Lack of advancement opportunities for those mentored;
- Protegee leaves and takes the skills with him/ her;
- Not enough time to mentor properly; and
- Too much resentment by others not being mentored.

Strategies for a Successful Mentorship Program[35]

Please see the section earlier on in this document called *Recruitment: Internal Recruitment* for strategies for a successful mentorship program.

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[34] Source: Taylor, Sauer, Hewitt, O'Neil & Larson, 2001

[35] (Sources: Staff recruitment, retention and training strategies for community human services organizations, Larson and Hewitt, 2005 and Staff Recruitment and Retention: Study results, Larson, Lakin and Bruininsk,1998)

TRAINING: EVALUATION OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

Develop a strategy for evaluating training expenditures to ensure funding is concentrated on activities which have the greatest impact on performance or outcomes. Evaluate the success of a training session by tracking improved performance on the job.

Rationale:
Training and skills development need to be linked with an agency's overall strategic plan to ensure employees are fully equipped to achieve organizational goals. As training dollars are limited, it is essential to ensure that training offered does impact employees' performance in a positive manner.

Current Situation:
Traditionally, many organizations have only evaluated the trainer or participant's satisfaction with the content of the training being offered.

Strategies:

- ❖ Evaluate the success of paid training sessions offered to employees by measuring and tracking improvements in job performance.

- ❖ Combine methods for evaluation.
  - Portfolio development (a collection of work samples selected by the learner as a demonstration of his/her competence in a given area); and
  - Direct observation (observations made of the employee actually doing their job or demonstrating a skill; observations can be made by a supervisor, manager, co-worker, peer mentor, individual receiving support or other person).

- ❖ Track employee training using a computerized system, training expenses and the results of evaluation

- ❖ Concentrate agency training funding on training sessions that have the greatest impact on employee performance and outcomes.

Information on Evaluation of Program Effectiveness

Background
The Deloitte *Improving Training, Recruitment and Retention in Ontario's Developmental services Sector* report (2008) concluded that the literature review and jurisdictional scan do not identify examples of care-giving organizations that have leading practices in evaluating their training programs.

The same report also suggests that there is not wide-spread evaluation of training expenditures in the DS sector. Some agencies do ask participants to evaluate courses they offer. However, the focus is typically on the participant satisfaction rather than on connecting the training to changes in performance or outcomes. The focus groups conducted with HR representatives from DS agencies by the Best HR Practices Committee in 2009 confirmed this reality.

Across industries, only an estimated 15% of training courses are evaluated based on performance on the job.[36].

Value/Benefits of Mentoring Programs
To be considered effective by performance and competency standards, training must result in improved performance on the job.

Research shows that leading organizations manage the investments they make in training and development by evaluating the effectiveness of their training initiatives.[37]

Definition of Evaluation of Training
Evaluation of training is an assessment of the effectiveness of training programs.

Purpose of Evaluating Training
The cost of poor performance should serve as important indicators for tracking the success of training and other changes: greater satisfaction from people supported, reduced need for remedial supervision, cost savings through reduction of operation costs and less dollars spent on hiring new employees and providing remedial training to employees.

Options for Evaluation of Training[38]
In order to be successful, training evaluation should include direct observation of skills by different people (i.e., supervisor, co-worker, individual receiving support). One option to enhance observation opportunity is to create peer mentors.

The report identifies the following performance assessment and evaluation options for training:

1. True/false multiple choice test (written test of knowledge);

2. Scenario-based problem solving (learner is presented with a real-life situation and is asked to respond);

3. Portfolio development (a collection of work samples selected by the learner as a demonstration of his/her competence in a given area);

4. Self-assessment (assessment of an individual's own skills using behaviourally anchored rating scales); and

5. Direct observation (observations made of the employee actually doing their job or demonstrating a skill; observations can be made by a supervisor, manager, co-worker, peer mentor, individual receiving support or other person).

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[36] Caudron, 2000
[37] *Deloitte, 2008*
[38] from "Staff recruitment, retention, training strategies for community human services organizations", Larson & Hewitt, 2005

TRAINING: VARIETY OF FORMAL TRAINING METHODS

Explore creative opportunities to provide practical training to all staff within available resources.

Rationale:
About 56% of respondents in Deloitte's employee survey identified "hands-on" as the preferred method of training. The more traditional lectures and presentations were also highly rated by participants in the survey.

Current Situation:
Most training in the sector consists of courses and workshops were the information is delivered using a PowerPoint presentation and/or manuals and hand-outs.

Strategies:

- ❖ Offer less structured learning opportunities.
  - o See section below *Less-Structured Training*.

- ❖ Consider on-line training opportunities where applicable.
  - o See section below Online Training.

- ❖ Organize training sessions collaboratively with other agencies.
  - o See section below *Collaborate to Offer Training with Other Agencies*.

- ❖ Consider the age of participants in training sessions.
  - o See section below *Age is a Factor to be Considered*

Information On a Variety of Formal Training Methods

Less-Structured Training

Context: Formal training generally consists of courses and workshops. These types of training are often unaffordable and more generic in nature. Less structured training can be organizational specific as well as affordable. In-house training can be scheduled when least disruptive to an organization and target a specific audience/issue.

Types of less structured training opportunities in the DS sector include:

- Training to be offered by a supervisor at team meetings – examples include H1N1 mask fit testing, review of new organization policy and procedure, specific support strategies, etc. The training should be included in the team meeting agenda as well as staff who participated should be recorded in a human resources information system or personnel file.
- Utilizing other industry organizations for related training, i.e. fire department for fire training. Health units provide a number of training programs including safe food handling training, healthy food choice training, etc. VON provides tube feeding training, Shoppers Home Health Care provides safe lift system training, etc.
- Brown bag lunch-and-learns or "learning cafes" can be offered on a variety of subjects.

Online Training

Context: Online training is an inexpensive method of training especially when an organization is decentralized and the subject matter is that which can be absorbed by either participating and/or watching a training module.

Types of online training opportunities in the DS sector include:

- WHMIS and other health and safety related training opportunities can be viewed on-line and participants can be tested on knowledge using a variety of programs.
- Network of Specialized Care video-conferencing is an affordable and easily accessible method to participate and share ideas regarding a specific topic. Typically the topic, date, time, location is e-mailed in advance. Agencies will need to locate specific sites where video conferencing is available.
- HRPAO offers webinars on numerous HR-related topics such as Violence in the Workplace, H1N1 pandemic planning, succession planning, etc. Membership to HRPAO is paid annually and webinars topics are emailed to members in advance.
- Joining with similar organizations offering a variety of webinars such as local hospitals, health units, etc. to offer webinars on H1N1 planning tools, etc.

Collaborate to Offer Training with Other Agencies

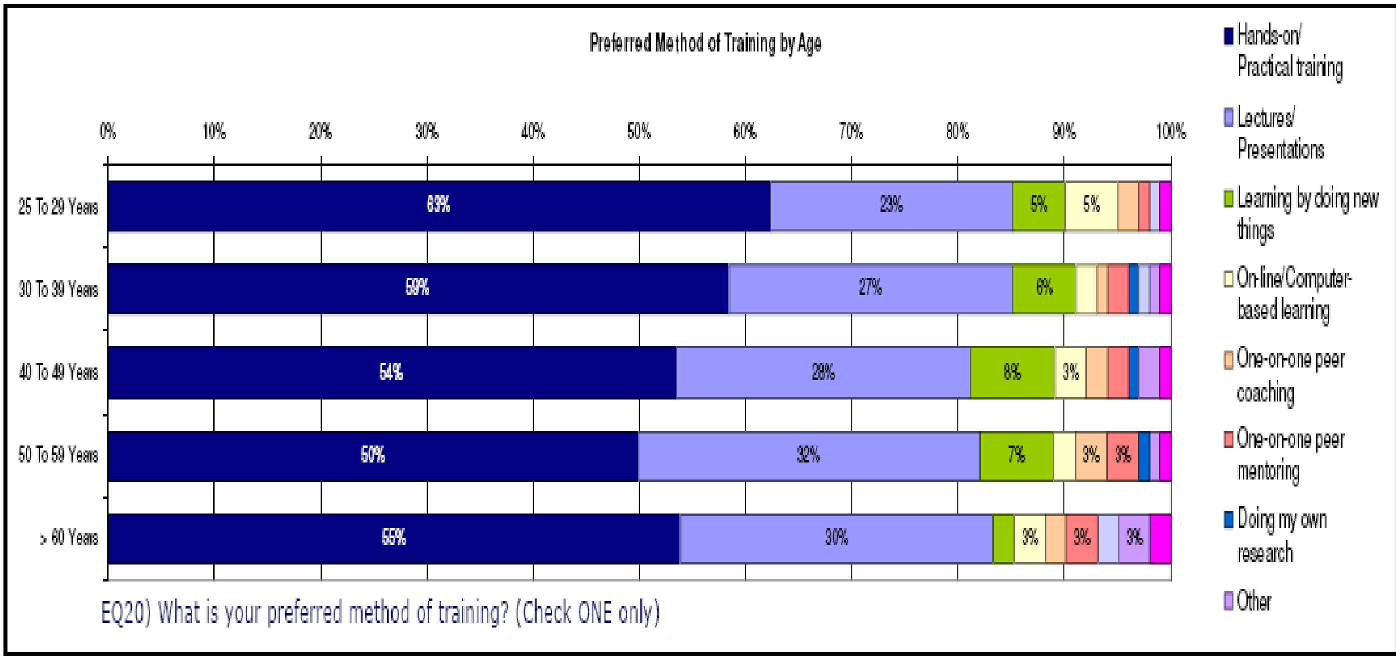
Context: Collaborating with other agencies to provide training is a cost-effective way to expose employees to new concepts/ideas and offer opportunities for networking between colleagues.

Types of collaboration to offer training opportunities in the DS sector include:

- Form a training consortium to offer a specific type of training. For example, create an NCI training consortium. One possible structure could be that each agency provides a certified trainer that offers training to all employees in the consortium to ensure that employees are trained consistently and timely. Each month the consortium participants meet to discuss issues/new concepts and discuss new training opportunities.
- Form a partnership with a like-minded organization to share training opportunities and costs. For example, collaborate with local school boards for specific training that staff are interested in.
- Form an HR regional group that meets regularly to discuss HR topics and issues. Sharing organizational best practices and processes is a best practice in itself. Provide an agenda in advance detailing which topic will be discussed to ensure that all participants are prepared, invite guest speakers.

Age is a Factor to be Considered When Offering Training

See graph below from Deloitte's final report.



Preferred Method of Training by Age
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
25 To 29 Years
30 To 39 Years
40 To 49 Years
50 To 59 Years
> 60 Years
63%
23%
5%
5%
59%
27%
6%
54%
28%
8%
3%
50%
32%
7%
3%
3%
55%
30%
3%
3%
3%
Hands-on/ Practical training
Lectures/ Presentations
Learning by doing new things
On-line/Computer-based learning
One-on-one peer coaching
One-on-one peer mentoring
Doing my own research
Other
EQ20) What is your preferred method of training? (Check ONE only)