

Appendix A -Employee Engagement and Equity Model



The Model

The model was developed around the survey questions related to engagement. Survey questions were broken down into the four separate focuses of engagement. We first initiate the process, survey staff, select strategies, and then work on those strategies in areas including Building Trust, Equipping Employees, Developing Employees, and Connecting to Purpose. Each one of these areas has associated strategies at the individual employee level, in teams, and organizationally. Organizational strategies are intended to help managers and supervisors create a culture of engagement, demonstrate the manager/supervisor's commitment to engagement, and to support the effectiveness of individual and team strategies.

- Initial implementation includes a baseline survey. The baseline survey utilizes fifteen questions aimed at determining employee engagement and equity, especially as it relates to inclusivity in the organization. This survey must be done in an anonymous fashion; more accurate results are achieved when employees feel free to answer honestly. A sample survey is available Appendix B. Results are then communicated and goals/strategies are selected in each of the four focus areas based on the results of the surveys.
- Strategies in the four focus areas are implemented over a specific time period to include:
 - o One-on-one approaches initiated by the supervisor. These strategies require consistent effort on a supervisor's part toward continuance of the chosen strategy. Supervisors must recognize that each individual will have unique motivators; a one-size-fits-all approach will not work with engagement.
 - o Engagement or process teams. Teams are especially effective at building trust and ensuring employees are well equipped for optimal performance. When creating engagement or process focused teams, team members should be encouraged to take responsibility for leading engagement sessions or projects. This allows them to take ownership of the engagement activities. Adequate resources and time for participation should be allotted to ensure the team is able to meet reasonable goals. Engagement teams should create an action plan that includes: the benefits of engagement, planned engagement initiatives, reporting on efforts that worked well at improving employee engagement and reporting on less successful efforts.
 - o Organizational strategies are about creating a culture of engagement. Creating a culture of engagement is about revitalizing the way we do business in the City of Madison. It involves assessment of the entire organization, and implementation of strategies toward creation of workplace that supports and sustains the engagement of all staff.

- Follow-up includes a survey to allow agencies to find out which measures were most successful, how improvements compare to the effort spent on the initiatives, and identification of barriers to success. Recognize that these are just measures. Success may not mean improvement, but rather maintenance.

Employee Survey

There are twelve key measures of engagement originally defined by Gallup. These measures are called the *Gallup Q¹²*. Demographic information included on the survey allows HR to assess inclusivity question responses along gender, racial, educational, and tenure lines. Those assessments can assist in design of the agency's initiatives.

Building Trust

- Build individual trust through 1 on 1 engagement sessions, coaching and counseling through the SBI model, check in time for staff, and providing individual autonomy in scheduling and operational decisions.
- Build team trust through creating cohesiveness through cross training and well structured communication meetings, managing conflict, creating cultural alignment teams, holding team events, encouraging healthy competition, and celebrating success.
- Develop organizational respect and civility, including implementation of Respect and Civility Program to include baseline climate survey, identification of issues, skill building training for supervisors and employees, focus groups, planning based on feedback from employee training and focus groups, provide mediated resolutions if necessary, and perform a follow-up evaluation.

Equipping Employees

In order to ensure employees have all of the tools necessary to do their jobs to the best of their ability utilize some of the following strategies:

- Update Position Descriptions (PDs) by providing detailed information assigned to each position and communicating and aligning expectations with responsibilities.
- Ensure equal application of the City's Performance Management process through use of the position description, ongoing coaching and counseling, issuance of discipline where necessary, and provision of performance improvement plans where appropriate.
- Provide Workplace Accommodations where necessary through the accommodations process.
- Provide and prioritize adequate training through team training inventories by inventorying assets and needs, costing and prioritizing available options, ensuring equity, and empowering a work group to make operational decisions related to training allocations. Training should be prioritized with first training necessary to

fulfill job responsibilities, then training to improve productivity in current position, and finally training only indirectly related to current position.

- Set up work group to inventory/prioritize tools through team tools inventories by inventorying assets and needs, costing and prioritizing available options, ensuring equity, and empowering a work group to make operational decisions related to new materials and technologies.
- Organizationally, utilize the Employee Assistance Program, Critical Incident Stress Management, and organizational wellness activities to ensure employees are able to come to work in a way that allows for optimal engagement.

Each of the strategies, whether individual, team, or organizational, is focused in equipping employees on ensuring employees not only have the right materials for the work, but the knowledge skills and abilities to do the work well.

Developing Employees

The engagement model focuses development of employees on skill building, and providing opportunities for employees to express talents within their own role.

Employee development includes, but also goes beyond, provision of basic training. Employee development is about utilizing individual employee talents, building on those talents, and encouraging continued growth of each of your subordinates. While not all of the following strategies should be implemented with all staff (Individual Development Plans, for example, should not be used for any employee not meeting performance expectations), insufficient development will result in overall lower engagement ratings. Some of the strategies associated with developing employees include:

- Hire for fit, including ensuring applicants selected have not only adequate job competencies but a passion for the chosen occupation, by utilizing behavioral interviewing and identifying skills needs in the position description. It is also important to analyze where gaps exist in the current employee talent pool and hire to fill those gaps.
- Match employee talents with discretionary tasks while taking into account the needs of the organization, identifying flexibility in assignment, and classification or contractual implications.
- Utilize IDPs, including identifying consistent strong performers and then helping identify training and other skill building opportunities.
- Leadership Development through Organizational Development and Training.
- Succession Planning and the Civil Service System through an inventory of needs, identification of potential vacancies, training to expand current employee skill base, and utilization of internal hiring where appropriate.

Developing employees does not just mean additional training or skill building; it is about assisting employees in finding where there is flexibility adequate to allow an employee to express their talents. Employees who are better able to express talents, develop new skills, and expand competencies are more likely to be engaged.

Connecting to Purpose

Connecting to purpose gets to the heart of one of the main reasons public employees choose public employment to begin with; they derive value from serving their community. Connecting to purpose is one of the easiest strategy areas to implement for some, and one of the most difficult for others. For example, tying the police officer to the impact they have on the community is not a difficult task, but linking the payroll clerk to the overall organizational goals can be more difficult. Strategies to employ include:

- Connect individuals to organizational purpose through actively seeking operational input, identifying links between individual responsibilities and organizational mission and goals, and reviewing agency and City projects and roles. These initiatives can include events like departmental mystery guests, and project presentations.
- Connect teams to organizational purpose through defining the agency customer service model, internal and external, process improvement and change management utilizing Organizational Development and Training models.
- Build equity both internally and externally by providing both the community and employees with equitable access to resources and opportunity, utilizing steps outlined in the City of Madison Guide for Supervisors on Creating a Culture of Engagement and Equity.
- Create unit or departmental goals, missions, and work plans that exemplify the values and mission of the agency, then tie organizational goals to projects and daily responsibilities

Connecting to purpose, more than any other focus area, relies on the agency to participate organizationally by creating their own mission, goals, and workplans, and then integrating the values expressed into every day responsibilities. Connecting to purpose is about creating a relationship with the community needs and about developing community amongst staff.

References

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