

**Building Employee
Buy-in for Provider
Transformation**
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Change
*"If there is no struggle, there is no
progress." - Frederick Douglass*



**The Importance of Staff
Buy-in**

Staff have always been any agency's greatest asset – more true than ever in transformation to competitive integrated employment (CIE) and other meaningful community engagement.



Staff Buy-in Objectives

- Ensuring staff understanding of the why and benefits of the change
- Addressing specific concerns of staff
- Making transformation a true agency wide effort in which staff become advocates rather than opposers
- Avoid sense of disenfranchisement or disrespect for the role staff have played in facility-based work. Creating excitement about transformation and new roles for staff



Acknowledging Staff Anxiety About People Supported

Staff can have anxiety during transformation for many reasons. They may wonder if the people they have supported will ever get a job, will be safe, will miss their friends or will be unavailable for staff to see every day.



Recognizing Staff Concern About Lack of Skills for New Roles

CIE and other community-based support options require different skills and competencies as well as qualities and characteristics for staff. Some staff may feel vulnerable if they aren't sure what skills will be needed and whether they will be given a chance to acquire them.

Acknowledging Staff Fear for Personal Livelihood



Staff may wonder about their own future and their livelihood. These fears, as well as their hopes for the people they support, should be acknowledged and addressed by leaders.

Addressing Staff Concerns



Engage in open and honest conversations about fears, concerns and hopes.

Communicate clear expectations regarding agency direction and changing staff roles but don't be afraid to admit what you don't yet know.

Support staff to understand and embrace new roles and responsibilities while staying consistently on-message about the agency's new direction.

Providing Assurances



Can't guarantee that there will be no problems, but leadership can listen and sympathize with staff concerns while providing the assurance that everyone in the agency will work together thoughtfully and collaboratively toward the vision for the future.



Making Staff Partners in the Transformation Process

Develop partnerships with staff to accomplish transformation goals. Everyone has something they can contribute, whether leads for jobs or training in the community, private fundraising opportunities or other community resource options.



Addressing Staff Concerns (knowledge)

Providing ongoing education, training and mentoring. Staff who are well informed and well trained tend to be the most satisfied at work



Become a Learning Organization

A learning organization is one in which a high value is placed on gaining new knowledge and ensuring that knowledge is shared widely throughout the agency.

Investing in Staff Development



Before an agency begins transformation, stakeholders need to have a clear idea of what it is transforming to.

Staff need to learn about what is possible and become inspired by the innovations that are occurring.

Once interest and excitement is established the next step is to gain knowledge about new technologies and approaches and acquire the skills to implement them.

Key Strategies for Gaining Knowledge



Encourage attendance at conferences – not just leaders and supervisors, but direct support professionals too.

Provide access to on-line and face to face training and webinars.

Develop the habit of sharing new information – Circulate information and discuss in staff meetings and other staff forums.

Key Strategies for Gaining Knowledge



Support participation in Communities of Practice (CoPs) to gain peer support during the transformation process.

Visit other organizations that have successfully transformed.

Encourage sharing of stories by individuals who have successfully transitioned from facility to CIE

Transformation as a Team Process



The transformation team will be the guiding force in the change process.

Transformation touches every part of an agency and every staff member. Thoughtful creation of this team is critical.

Well balanced teams include staff who are implementers (direct support staff) and have an "on-the-ground" perspective.

Direct support staff team members can and should serve as a conduit for information between the staff they represent and the team.

Delineating Team Responsibilities

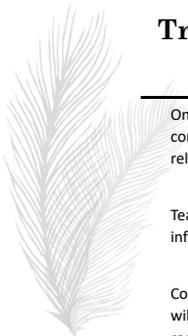


Team members should have specific responsibilities in the transformation planning and implementation process

People need responsibility to feel engaged and committed.

One way to achieve accountability is to break down these responsibilities into specific action steps and timelines.

Transformation Team's Role in Communication



One of the chief roles of the Transformation Team is communication. Members should have specific responsibilities related to communication.

Teams should have a communication plan that will delineate how information is going to be shared and with whom it will be shared.

Communication also should be two-way. That is, team members will have responsibility not only to carry messages to others but to receive and transmit message back to the team.

Communication Objectives



- > Communicating clear expectations regarding agency direction and changing staff roles
- > Providing information and support to staff during the change
- > Staying consistently on-message about the new direction while remaining open to input
- > Being honest and building trust, not always having the answers
- > Achieving buy-in from staff
- > Building a culture of optimism, determination, inclusiveness and teamwork

Promoting a Strong and Consistent Message



Values

Values clarification is key in transformation. It provides the why for transformation.

Involving staff in developing values statements will help to provide the foundation for the transformation effort.

You will often refer back to values statements for guidance.

Promoting a Strong and Consistent Message



Vision

The agency's vision is the description of what the organization and its services will look like in the future

Developing the agency vision requires involvement of various stakeholders, including staff

How you will achieve the vision will come next

Promoting a Strong and Consistent Message



Mission

The agency's mission describes how the vision will be accomplished. It provides guidance for planning and implementation of strategies in an agency.

It is the standard by which the agency's actions can be measured. Staff input is critical to mission development.

It is the guidance for CIE and other staff in the implementation of their work.

Agency Communications Plan



Communication plans are the **foundation** for effectively gaining, expanding and evolving the trust of stakeholders, including staff, especially in a time of significant transition.

These plans are used to inform internal (staff, people supported) and external audiences on an ongoing basis to create and maintain **transparency**.

What do you want to achieve by creating a communications plan? **BUY-IN!**

Avoiding the Silo Effect



- The Silo Effect in business refers to the lack of communication and cross-departmental support.

- This can occur between leadership, direct care staff, and even from program to program.

- Creating and maintaining an effective Communication Plan is a essential process to avoid the Silo Effect in your organization.

Developing Communication Plans



Select appropriate **strategies** for communication with staff. Usually a single strategy is not enough.

Reach staff using different **mediums**. People absorb information in different ways.

Identify the **frequency** of each strategy. Messages must be communicated more than once.

Receive and give **feedback**. Communication plans must be two-way. Just talking at people without listening may ultimately back-fire.

Communication Plan Template Audience: Staff



Message: Transformation is coming. We will work together to achieve it. Your participation matters. We value your opinion

Strategies: Internal Newsletter, monthly staff meetings with set agenda (and staff input), quarterly "Town Hall" meetings

Mediums: Newsletter, electronic messages, in-person meetings, minutes

Frequency: Monthly newsletter, monthly management staff meetings, quarterly Town Hall meetings

Projected Outcomes: Transparency; keeping staff current on issues related to their work and industry trends; and identifying internal issues and addressing concerns about change; achieving buy-in

Evaluation: Create & disseminate staff survey. Provide results feedback

Staff Satisfaction and Buy-in Surveys



Survey staff routinely

Use incentives for responses

Ensure confidentiality

Survey items consistently from one time to another so you can assess change

Analyze data in multiple ways (longevity, position, age, service area)

Use to identify where you do and do not have buy-in

Share outcomes!!

Using Quality Teams to Improve Outcomes & Enhance Buy-in



(One Agency's Process)

- Develop volunteer team comprised primarily of direct support staff
- Share outcome reports from satisfaction surveys
- Prioritize area to address
- Define the problem
- Review information & gather additional data, if needed
- Propose recommendations to leadership
- Implement & collect impact data
- Publicize the work of the team to the rest of the agency staff

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Survey Connect



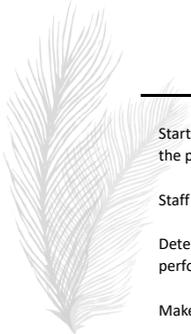
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Piloting to Promote Staff Buy-in



Start small w/ interested people but maintain diverse population in the pilot

Staff with "early adopter" staff – they will pull others along

Determine what you are trying to achieve - measure your performance and share outcome with staff

Make adjustments based on data based information AND staff in-put



Identifying Champions

Identify staff “champions” through piloting - those who believe in the changes and will promote them

Support that staff to share their perspectives and enthusiasm

Allow them to take the lead in communication with staff when possible. People always receive information and advise better from peers



Developing Staff Leaders to Promote Buy-in

Use the transformation process to build leadership from within the organization.

Providing them with them opportunities to lead throughout the change process, and mentoring them as they grow.

They are the future of the agency and the ones who will carry the transformation forward.



Developing Peer Mentors to Promote Buy-in

Identify and develop staff who could become mentors to their peers

Staff trust those they know best, just like all people

Engage staff mentors to assist those in doubt to see what is possible and how they can do it – provide support as staff are learning

Letting Go

Sometimes our best efforts to achieve buy-in from some staff fail

CIE and other community-based services cannot be provided well by staff who do not believe in them

Put our your best effort but if nothing works, then consider parting ways amicably – provide support for the staff’s transition

Celebrating Success

Keeping buy-in and morale high by recognizing and rewarding accomplishments, and *maintaining a focus on where your agency is going rather than what you’re leaving behind.*

Summary

- Transformation is hard! Staff are key to success and buy-in is critical.
- Open, frequent two-way communication is necessary for buy-in to occur.
- Everyone needs education and understanding about the direction of the field and your agency
- Transformation and communication plans help structure communicate your process and progress
- You have champions among your staff. Identify and mentor them. They are your best conduit to other staff
- Celebrate successes. Tell the stories of accomplishment to fuel further change.



Questions?



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