
MINUTES

TALENT DEVELOPMENT WORKGROUP
JANUARY 28, 2015 1:30 PM TO 3:00 PM
CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES ~ 100 W. COURT STREET

Present:

Natalie Dillon, Child Support Services; R.C. Smith, District Attorney; Brody Lorda, Human Resources; Kevin Martyn, Agriculture & Standards Inspector; Tracie Olson, Public Defender; Diane Parro, Board of Supervisors; Amy Thurman, Public Health; John Young, Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer of Weights & Measures; Tanya Provencher, Employment & Social Services; Yovana Gojnic, Intern and Carolyn West, Intern

Not present:

Aundrea Garvin, Child Support Services; Svitlana Shramenko, Mental Health Services; Mashan Wolfe, Sheriff

Discussion of survey analysis

- Yovana distributed analyses of the employee survey results and the compiled comment summaries done by the group. The group went over the analysis of results by job role.
- Question 8 on the fairness and appropriateness of performance evaluations was one of the main discussion points. Natalie was surprised at the amount of people who commented that they never received an evaluation and the number feeling that evaluations are meaningless, which clearly represents an issue. Brody mentioned that many of the evaluations that are submitted to HR are the exact same, with just a change in the employee's name. RC commented that this represents an organizational problem, because the management is still signing off on evaluations that have no meaning. John mentioned that it would be good to have evaluation trainings, and Amy agreed saying that she has been doing evaluations for 9 months now and has never had a training for how to do evaluations. Tanya said that often the shorter term 3, 6, and 9-month evaluations come all at once and there is not enough time for supervisors to put that much thought into them. To this, Brody suggested coming up with a separate evaluation form specifically to rate newer employees. The group agreed that this is a good idea.
- *Action item: Yovana and Carolyn will work on a draft for a second evaluation form to use specifically for the 3, 6, and 9- month performance evaluations.*
- Of the employees who commented on Question 11 of the survey about opportunities that they have to learn new skills, 22% felt they were not encouraged by their supervisors and 30.4% said that they had no time coverage to do so. Amy's graph showed these results, but Yovana has to go back and reformat it to show all of the results.

- *Action item: Yovana will reformat the Question 11 comment chart to show all results.*
- In general, many of the question ratings seem to decline the lower employees are in the organizational chart. At the department level, it seems that employees feel they have more impact than at the County level.
- The group spent a bit more time discussing Questions 21-23 on mentoring and professional development needs. RC said that he started an internal mentoring program in his department. Natalie said that once we start developing a County program, we can look at what they have developed and consider using it as a model. Overall, there is a high level of interest among employees to have a mentor. For professional development, Brody said that for supervisors it is most important because it is a harder transition to move up. Of all ratings for best sources to enhance professional development, feedback was the highest.
- *Action item: RC will discuss what he has done for mentor training in his department at the next talent development meeting*
- The group discussed the need for better communication. Many employees feel their development interests are limited because they are not aware of development opportunities (Question 25).
- The group discussed whether and how to provide directors with feedback on the results from their departments. Brody said that since we promised anonymity, we have to think about what information we give them based on the response rates. The group decided that department heads should receive the raw quantitative departmental data without demographic information. The group will also provide the overall comment summaries for the County as a whole. Natalie discussed the need to communicate with the department heads before they get the results, to ensure that they understand the purpose and importance of what the results mean to better integrate County culture.
- After the discussion of results, the group discussed our next priorities, and agreed that the four main takeaways from the survey results indicate interest in:
 - A mentoring program
 - A supervisory training program
 - An improved performance evaluation form & process
 - Countywide communication strategy
- RC said that a good performance evaluation serves as a bridge to all of these components. Overall, survey results on preferred communication methods indicate that 86% of employees prefer email. Second preferred method is in-person meetings at 16%.

Discussion of performance evaluation

- Yovana distributed copies of some sample template ideas for the performance evaluation

revision and a competency supplement document to use with the performance evaluation. The purpose of the supplement document is to be able to condense the length of the performance evaluation and to have a reference document for what each of the ratings within each competency mean.

- RC liked the language in the competency supplement document better than the wording on the actual evaluation. He said that revision of the rating levels themselves were too performance specific, and the group agreed that this should be changed back to something more general.
- The group discussed the rating scale and how many levels we need. Everyone agreed that a scale of four is sufficient, since we are basing it off LACOE's evidence-based competency scale, rather than compiling subjectively. The group also agreed that more text descriptions of each rating level are best to have on the survey itself, rather than a supplement document. John said that evaluators probably won't take time to reference a separate document.
- Amy asked why the evaluation needs to have numerical ratings? Diane agreed that using numbers can seem negative. Brody said that there is an MOU that requires employees to receive an overall rating, because certain benefits are tied to having at least a Satisfactory rating. Carolyn said that some evaluations also have O, E, S, N ratings that aren't numerical, but still give a sense of what employees need to work on.
- *Action item: Yovana and Carolyn will do the following to edit the performance evaluation: 1) work the competency language back into the form; 2) keep the rating scale at 4 levels; 3) work on different ways to label each scale, so that doesn't seem too punitive; 4) develop consistent language throughout the document.*
- In closing, Natalie suggested that everyone in the group look at the link to San Mateo's model for tools that managers and supervisors can use.

Additional Meetings

Next Meeting: February 25, 1:30-3:00

Future agenda topics

- **Performance evaluation development**