

Professional and Personal Development Learning Kit

Cost-effective methods for employee training and development

Employee training and development needs to be aligned with the organization and the County's values, goals and objectives. When selecting employee training and development methods, it is important to remember the learning process. There are many ways for learning opportunities to occur, including:

1- On-the-job experience

Committees

- Committees are an every-day activity in any organization. They can be effective learning tools, with the right focus.
- Committees made up of staff from different areas of the organization will enhance learning by allowing members to see challenges from different perspectives.

Critical incident notes

- Day-to-day activities are always a source of learning opportunities; successes as well as fabulous flops.
- Select the best of these learning opportunities and write up critical incident notes for others to learn from. One idea may be how a customer complaint was handled effectively. Write a brief summary of the incident; identify what worked or what did not and, the resolution.
- Discuss the critical incident notes with the others and identify the areas for improvement and what will assist other employees who encounter similar situations.

Field Trips

- Provide employees with an opportunity to visit the other sites.
- This helps gain a better understanding of the full range of programs and customers each area serves.
- Field trips to other organizations serving a similar clientele or with similar positions can also provide a valuable learning experience.

- Prior to visits, the employee(s) should develop a list of questions to ask/answer or a list of things to look for.
- Upon employee's return, employees should schedule time to report out (formally or informally) with a presentation to their Manager, Supervisor, Department Leadership Team or other staff, identifying what was learned, how it can be applied to the organization and this will enhance their individual learning experience.

Stretch Assignments

- Once an employee has mastered the requirements of his or her job and is performing satisfactorily, s/he may want greater challenges. Consider assigning stretch assignments. (MOU language to ensure the employee is NOT working "out of class" should be considered).
- Which duties to assign should be decided by the employee and his/her Manager/Supervisor. If this involves staff from another unit, division, or department approval from the appropriate Manager or Department Head is required.
- These assignments give the employee an opportunity to stretch past his/her current abilities. For example, a stretch assignment could require the employee to chair a meeting if they have never done it before.
- To ensure a good learning experience the Manager should discuss techniques, approaches etc. before assignment and follow up after to discuss what went well and what could have been improved.
- Upon employee's return, employees should schedule time to report out (formally or informally) with a presentation to their Manager, Supervisor, Department Leadership Team or other staff, identifying what was learned, how it can be applied to the organization and this will enhance their individual learning experience.

Job shadowing

- If an employee wants to learn what someone else does in our organization the employee can follow that person and observe him/her.
- Usually the person doing the shadowing does not help with the work that is being done.
- After the employee job shadows, the employee should schedule time to report out (formally or informally) with a presentation to their Manager, Supervisor, Department Leadership Team or other staff, identifying what was learned, how their increased knowledge assists them in their everyday work or benefits the organization.
- If this involves staff from another unit, division, or department approval from the appropriate Manager or Department Head is required.

Learning alerts

- Newspaper articles, government announcements and reports can be used as learning alerts
- Prepare a brief cover page which could include a short summary and one or two key questions for your employees to consider. Then circulate the item
- Include the item on the agenda of your next staff meeting for a brief discussion

Teaming

- Two employees agree to help each other learn different tasks. Both employees should have an area of expertise that the co-worker can benefit from
- The employees take turns helping their co-worker master the knowledge or skill that they have to share
- Guidelines and expectations will be developed with the employees on a case by case basis.

2- Relationships and feedback

Coaching (Informal)

- Coaching is the relationship between an employee and an experienced manager.
- The role of the coach is to demonstrate skills and/or to give the employee guidance, feedback, and reassurance while s/he practices the new skill or their daily tasks.

Mentoring (formal)

- Mentoring is similar to coaching. Mentoring occurs when a senior, experienced manager provides guidance and advice to a junior employee.
- The two people involved have usually developed a working relationship based on shared interest and values.

3-Classroom training

Courses, seminars, workshops

- These are formal training opportunities that can be offered to employees either internally or externally. A trainer, facilitator and/or subject matter expert can be brought into our organization to provide the training session or an employee can be sent to one of these learning opportunities during work time.

- The Information Technology Division of General Services currently has “Nugget” training available to staff who would like to access online learning opportunities.
- If self-study hours are conducted during the work day and not associated with a billable project, employee must receive prior authorization from their Manager/Supervisor
- Cost would need to be considered and approved by Manager/Supervisor.

4-Off-the-job learning

Conferences and forums

- Employees can attend conferences that focus on topics of relevance to their position and the organization.
- Upon their return, employees should schedule time to report out (formally or informally) with a presentation to their Manager, Supervisor, Department Leadership Team or other staff, as a way of enhancing their individual learning experience and as a way of enhancing the organization.
- Conferences and forums enhance leadership and team work skills.

Networking

- Some professional specialties have informal networks designed to meet the professional development need of the members. Members meet to discuss current issues and to share information and resources.
- Schedule adjustments will be considered on a case by case basis.

Courses offered by colleges or universities

- Many colleges and universities offer courses relevant to employees in the non-profit sector. Employees may attend these classes on their own time or within the guidelines of the MOU. Our organization may give time off to attend.
- Tuition reimbursement may be available for successfully completed courses. Employee should discuss this with their Manager/Supervisor.

Professional Associations

- Professional associations, like networks, provide employees an opportunity to stay current in their chosen field
- These may require initial and on-going training courses as well as certification and recertification. It should be determined if the association is required by their job description and duties. If not, cost would need to be considered and approved by Manager/Supervisor
- Schedule adjustments will be considered on a case by case basis.

Self-study

- Self-paced independent reading, e-learning courses and volunteer work all provide learning opportunities. The employee engages in the learning activity by choice and at his or her desired pace of learning.
- If self-study hours are conducted during the work day and not associated with a billable project, employee must receive prior authorization from their Manager/Supervisor.

Research and Development (R&D)

- R&D is essential to business growth and innovation. R&D is encouraged in order for the organization to have a competitive advantage.
- R&D is expensive and should be carefully considered to ensure organizational benefits.
- R&D hours should be monitored closely.
- Dedicate a set amount of hours that an employee can dedicate to a project that is of interest to them. This project does not necessarily have to be directly related to their current position or assignments. It should however be something that will bring value to the department and organization.
- Project idea should be presented to the employee's Manager for discussion and approval. At conclusion of the hours or project, the employees should present the idea, results, and the possible benefits to their Manager, Supervisor, Department Leadership Team or other staff.

5 - Yolo Training Academy

<http://insideyolo.yolocounty.org/index.aspx?page=182>

Yolo County has its own training academy which offers a variety of training including training which is mandatory for each employee. To access the Yolo County Training Academy go to InsideYolo and you can access the following:

Online Registration

- Register for Class
- Cancel Class
- Training History
- Print Certificate

Talent Development Toolkit

- Training Opportunities:
- CAL-ICMA Coaching Program (**possible costs to consider**)
- Development Plans
- Mentoring Program

Online Training Offerings

- Current Available Training (Yolo Training Academy)
- Safety Incentive Videos

Mandatory Training for Employees

- Sexual Harassment Prevention
- HIPAA
- Ethics
- Disaster Service Orientation
- Injury and Illness Prevention Program

6 - Yolo Employees Succeed (YES) - COMING SOON!

In addition to Yolo Training Academy, Yolo County has a Talent Development Workgroup who has been chartered with many things including “Employee Engagement”. As more information becomes available regarding Employee Engagement and activities associated to this charter this section will be updated.