



NEW YORK HEALTH FOUNDATION: Improving the state of New York's health

## Breaking the Cycle: Strategies to Support Staff and Minimize the Impact of Staff Transitions



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## House Keeping

- We are recording today's session
- Please introduce yourself in the chat box
- Please use the chat box for any general comments or questions
- Chat me privately if you want to ask a confidential question.
- The presentation will be sent out with a link to the recording in the next few days.
- Thank you for joining us today!



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## Today's Agenda

1. Overview of NYCON
2. The impact/costs of staff turnover
3. Understanding the drivers of voluntary turnover
4. Overview of 5 strategic focus areas for retaining staff
5. The importance of learning from exit interviews
6. Strategies for recruiting new staff



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## Cost of Staff Transition

### Financial

- Losing an employee can cost up to 1.5 - 2 x an employee's salary (National Leadership Alliance)
- Lack of staff means you can't draw down grants or earn revenue

### Mission

- Loss of institutional knowledge and experience
- Time is poured into hiring & onboarding and away from the mission

### Staffing

- Remaining employees are left with more work
- Other employees begin to consider a change, leading to more turnover



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## Key Drivers of Voluntary Departures

- Lack of opportunity for upward mobility/career growth
- Compensation/benefits
- Dissatisfaction/disengagement with organization or org. culture
- Burnout/vicarious trauma
- Dissatisfaction/disengagement with current leadership
- Lack of professional development
- Pursuit of education
- Family situation
- Career change
- Retirement



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## Drivers of Dissatisfaction with Organizational Culture

- Unsustainable workloads/expectations
- Inadequate training
- Feeling unappreciated or unsupported
- Lack/loss of personal connections with colleagues
- Lack of connection to mission
- Perception that core values are not embraced or practiced (e.g. DEI, social/environmental justice, pay equity, fairness)
- Lack of communication, transparency or staff engagement
- Lack of support/flexibility



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## Core Factors to Staff Retention

1. Effective Communication and Technology Resources
2. Supportive Supervision and Evaluation
3. Mindful Staff Development
4. Commit to Building a Positive Organizational Culture
5. Compensation and Benefits



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## Effective Communication & Technology Resources

- Facilitate regular communication with all employees up and down from management and across all program divisions.
- Establish opportunities for staff to engage in creative discussions and dialogue. Relationships matter.
- Promote transparency and openness around decisions wherever possible
- Survey and/or engage staff regularly in planning and decision-making, where appropriate
- Assess and provide staff with the tools, technology, training, and IT support they need to effectively and efficiently conduct their work – program delivery, reporting, communication, etc.
- Establish, follow, and review standard operating procedures and guidance documents so staff have a foundation to build on



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## Supportive Supervision & Evaluation

- Recognize that evaluations are only one part of the supervisory process, but an important part of setting, achieving, and monitoring expectations as well as empowering staff.
- Define what good performance and success looks like and ensure that these objectives are communicated, realistic, and aligned with the skills of your current staff.
- Learn what kind of supervision your staff need to thrive
- Consider how factors such as historical trauma, racism, discrimination, and culture impact supervisees' experiences of their work and relationships.
- Do not be afraid to hold people accountable for poor behavior or performance.



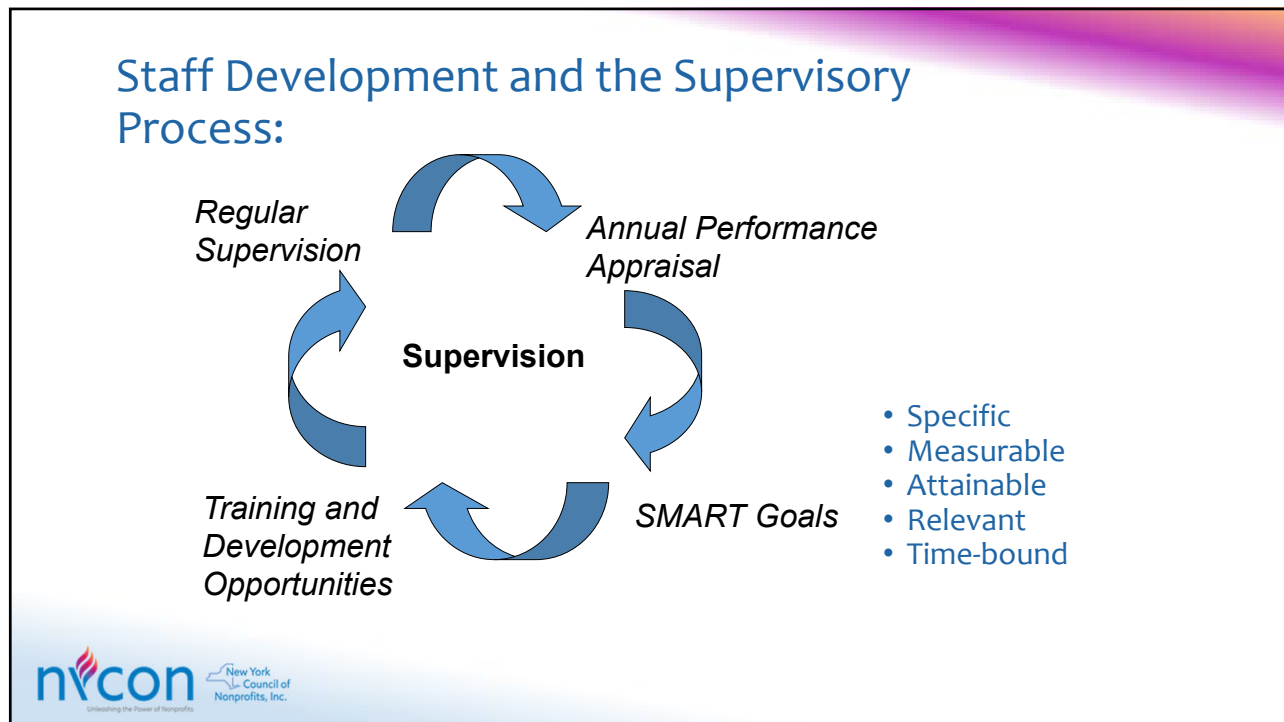
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## Mindful Staff Development

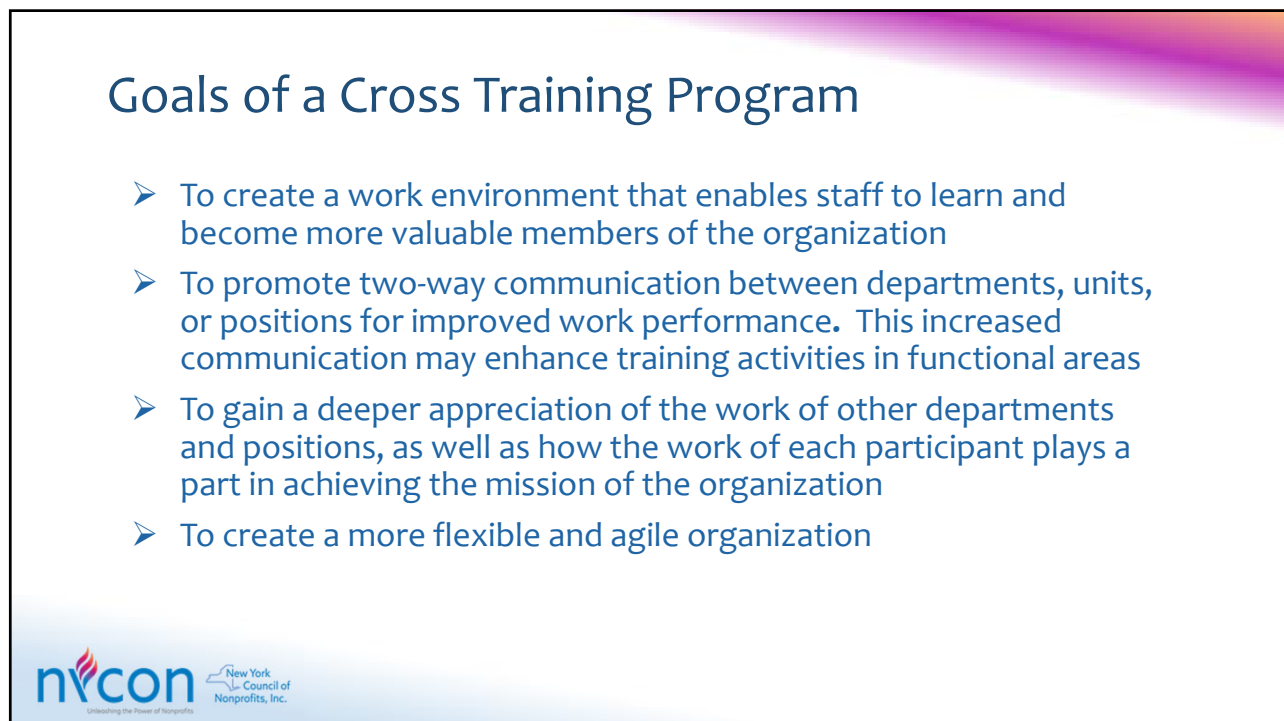
- ✓ Use the supervision and evaluation process to identify staff development and training opportunities and strategies- for individuals, teams, and the agency as a whole.
- ✓ Invest in middle management- they are critical to building strong teams, implementing policies, and supporting staff
- ✓ Provide supervisory training
- ✓ Include mentoring, coaching, and cross-training
- ✓ Promote opportunities for peer learning and develop staff “experts”
- ✓ Develop and protect your staff development budget and ensure resources are equitably distributed



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## Staff Development through Mentoring

- Mentoring is about a relationship between two people, usually with the mentor being more experienced/senior
  - Can be internal to your organization or with external mentor
- Mentoring focuses on career development through
  - Skill and experience building
  - Sharing of insights and ideas
  - Evaluation and constructive feedback
  - Candor, trust, and confidentiality
- Can be informal or incorporate a formal curriculum
- Can deepen impact of cross-training
- Can support broader Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategies



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## Commit to Building a Positive Culture

- Reinforce the mission and practice shared values.
- Work to build an organization that is more inclusive and equitable.
- Create a safe space. Do not tolerate abusive or disrespectful behavior.
- Strengthen your onboarding and orientation program.
- Offer a flexible schedule and/or remote or hybrid work, where appropriate.
- Celebrate and recognize performance and express appreciation
- Establish and communicate expectations and listen when staff need to set limits on productivity
- Provide opportunities for staff to learn new skills, work collaboratively, and develop professionally.
- Engage in trauma informed practices.
- Identify resources and practices to support wellness: EAP, flexible time off, self-care etc.



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## Reassess and Be Creative with Compensation & Benefits

- Consider a compensation study to benchmark wages and identify gaps in equity and fair pay
- Have the board develop a long-term compensation strategy
- Be transparent with your budget
- Make concrete efforts to grow resources over time through sustainability planning and fundraising for staffing
- Consider bonuses or incentives when possible
- Survey or interview your staff to find out what is important to them about the make-up of their total compensation



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## New Retirement Law

- NYS has a new mandated retirement program requirement for employers with 10+ employees, that have been in existence for 2+ years, and have not offered other qualified retirement plans.
  - NYS has set up a Secure Choice board where employers can enroll and private firms are also entering the marketplace.
  - Employees shall initially be enrolled at a contribution rate of three percent of their wages (though they may voluntarily elect to modify their contribution level), and payroll deductions for such contributions shall not begin until after the 30th day after an employee has been enrolled in the program.
  - Employers are not required to contribute to the program.



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## Conduct & Learn from Exit Interviews

- Exit interviews are a unique opportunity to strengthen your mission and the effectiveness of your nonprofit.
- Identify a neutral staff member to champion and conduct exit interviews.
- Schedule exit interviews as soon as you know that an employee will be leaving. It doesn't need to be on the employee's last day.
- Use a consistent set of questions for all staff exit interviews.
- Invite the employee to provide feedback on their experience, including the quality of supervision, adequacy of compensation, whether their talents and were skills used appropriately and what they liked and didn't like about working at the nonprofit.



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## Finding Employees

- Take time to develop an overall recruitment strategy
- Treat applicants like customers and consider past applicants
- Develop an employee referral/incentive program
- Create compelling job descriptions
- Prioritize DEI efforts and ensure your review process is bias-free
- Pro-actively identify and share with niche and local networks
- Be creative - use videos and social media to tell your story
- Be proactive in searching resumes- Indeed, Linked In, etc. to target "passive" candidates
- Tap into networks (e.g. sororities, educational programs, professional, etc.)



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## Discussion and Questions

Please share in the chat one of your take-aways that you would like to act on.



Thank you for joining us today!



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