Employee engagement has become a top priority for organizations. The term refers to an employee’s individual involvement and satisfaction and enthusiasm for work. Research on employee engagement has shown it to be associated with productivity, customer satisfaction, job burnout, absenteeism, and turnover. Managers play a vital role in influencing the engagement level of employees. One key driver they influence is job burnout. While there are several strategies that can be employed to address job burnout, research administrators are in a prime position to influence professional development, a key factor in motivating employees. Of their teams.

The objective of this poster is to provide a case study of strategies used to implement an action plan to increase employee engagement among team members of the Institute on Multicultural Health (IOMH) at Henry Ford Health System (HFHS) in Detroit, Michigan. HFHS is one of the nation’s leading health care providers. The System’s academic and research work culminated in more than 1,500 published abstracts and papers in 2013. HFHS ranks first among Michigan health systems and fourth compared to the State’s medical schools in research funding from the National Institutes of Health (approximately $61 million).

IOMH is primarily comprised of physicians/clinical professionals, public health professionals, and support staff. It’s mission is to: (1) Conduct research, quality improvement and demonstration projects focused on health/healthcare disparities; (2) Develop community-based initiatives that work towards sustainable solutions for health/healthcare equity; (3) Provide training to enhance culture competence of employees, researchers, providers and leaders to build organizational capacity in efforts to achieve healthcare equity.

Results

• Employee engagement surveys were administered:
  – October 2008 (Baseline)
  – April 2010 (Year 2)
  – April 2012 (Year 4)
  – October 2014 (Year 6)

• Very little change (-0.03) was observed between Baseline and Year 2 in the GrandMean score; however there was a meaningful change (0.21) when comparing scores for the development item.

• The GrandMean score increased by 0.79 and the development item score increased by 1.1 at Year 4 when compared to Baseline.

• Similarly an increase in the GrandMean score by 0.83 and in the development item score by 1.3 was observed at Year 6 when compared to Baseline.

Discussion

• As the focus on engagement and development increased overtime, both scores on overall engagement and development increased.

• As Research Administrators roles continue to evolve, their ability to influence engagement and development of their teams will be critical.

• Research Administrators are often tasked with the management of human resources for members of the research team. This should include ongoing engagement and professional development.

• Providing ongoing professional development for members of research teams increases team members capacity to possess the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve desired research outcomes which is essential to a research departments ability to respond to challenges during decreases in funding and changes in research priorities.

Measures

• Impact of employee engagement and professional development strategies employed by the IOMH director and manager were measured using the Employee Engagement Gallup Q12® Survey conducted among all Henry Ford Health System employees which was administered by Gallup Consulting.

• Overall workgroup engagement was measured by the GrandMean, an average of the 12 workgroup engagement items asked on the survey.

• Impact of professional development was measured by the workgroup engagement question item assessing development.

• The survey was administered during October 2008, April 2010, April 2012, and October 2014.

Strategies

• Created new department goals, aligned with the strategic vision of the System, based on the strengths and interest of team members.

• Discussed results of engagement surveys and collaboratively developing action/impact plans to improve engagement.

• Held in-services on recognizing individual team member strengths (i.e., Clifton StrengthsFinder 2.0, team building exercises).

• Incorporated ongoing discussions of career goals with team members.

• Provided ongoing opportunities for professional development.

• Monitored team members progress towards meeting professional development goals.

• Developing individual staff profiles based on team members strengths to help determine best fit when assigning new tasks and roles.

• Incorporated impact planning as a discussion item for every meeting.

Recommendations

• Place a focus on professional development of your research team (i.e., principle investigators, administrators, evaluators, coordinators, research assistants and support staff).

• Carryout regular organizational assessments of engagement.

• Incorporate professional development as a part of your department budget.

• Staff positions and develop your research teams in alignment with career goals, organizational strategic vision and research priorities.

• Have members of your research team assess their strengths and help them create a plan to meet them.

• Identify and create training opportunities that are a best fit with your research team members goals and organizational research priorities/needs.

• Have ongoing conversations with members of your research team; monitor their progress towards enhancing their knowledge and skills and provide regular feedback in regards to their professional development.

Citations


