Making Work Suck Less: Employee Engagement Strategies during COVID and Beyond

Presented by
County of Santa Clara
Social Services Agency

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What are you hoping to get out of today?

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What to Expect from Today’s Presentation

- Context about why we focus on employee engagement
- Background on how we built readiness, infrastructure, and capacity
- Highlights of specific programs, tools, and resources that can be used to in your own organizations to support engagement
## Employee Engagement: Why Should We Care?

“...the involvement and enthusiasm of employees in their work and workplace”

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<th>If employees are...</th>
<th>Then it leads to...</th>
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<td><strong>ACTIVE COMMITMENT</strong></td>
<td>Employees plan to stay and recommend the organization to others</td>
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<td><strong>PERSONAL SIGNIFICANCE</strong></td>
<td>Employees feel valued and are enthusiastic about their work</td>
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<td><strong>CONFIDENCE IN THE FUTURE</strong></td>
<td>Employees believe in the future of the organization</td>
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EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND WELL-BEING SURVEY

USING DATA TO INFORM STRATEGY
CLOSING THE FEEDBACK LOOP

2021 Employee Engagement & Well-Being Survey Results
Using Data to Improve Engagement and Well-Being at SSA

Engagement Rates Have Significantly Increased Since 2019

Overall Engagement

Engagement Index Questions

Feels valued

Enthusiastic about my job

Intention to stay in department

Would recommend SSA to others

SSA operates effectively

Intention to stay at SSA

Recommendations to Improve the Work Environment

Drivers of Engagement

Creating time and space for all staff to engage in professional development activities

2-way communication between agency leaders and staff at all levels

Telework/flexible schedule

Staff appreciation & recognition

Current Strategies:
  • Virtual High fives/Kudos Boards
  • Announcements in emails, staff meetings, newsletters/bulletins

Clear and consistent communication

Current Strategies:
  • SSA Voice/Chats
  • EEWB Newsletter

Staff trainings & coaching

Current Strategies:
  • Mentoring Program
  • Leadership Development Program
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT & WELL-BEING: THE SSA APPROACH

Implementation:
Building Readiness, Infrastructure, and Capacity
Employee Engagement & Well-being
2019: Let’s Get To Work
SSA Extended Executive Leadership Team
ENGAGEMENT:
LINKED TEAMS TO SUPPORT THE WORK

SSA Staff and Departments aka “Experts”

SSA Employee Engagement & Well-being Team

Executive Leadership Team
KEY “PILLARS” OF ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Ensure Communication  Nurture Professional Growth & Development  Focus on Recognition

Promote Health & Wellness  Foster Healthy Relationships
Employee Engagement and Well-Being Theoretical Framework

Employee Engagement is...

- Supporting staffs’ curiosity to continuously grow and develop (*Compassionate, Innovative*)
- Creating a culture to intentionally include staff voices at all levels to inform design and decision-making for continuous improvement (*Responsive, Innovative*)
- Creating an environment within SSA for equitable, open, and trusting communication for staff at all levels (*Responsive*)

Employee Engagement Outcomes

- Connection
- Feeling valued
- Retention
- Others

Short-term outcomes
- Improved client satisfaction & experience

Long-term outcomes
- Improved individual, family, community outcomes

SSA Culture, Systems, Structures: How We Engage
EXAMPLES OF ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES:

• SSA Voice Videocast
• SSA Mentoring Program
• Teleworking
• Employee Wellness
SSA Voice Segments

- Polling & Menti Questions/Surveys
- Announcements
- Virtual High-5 Segment
- Special Guests and Programs
- Dialogue with SSA Executive Leadership
SSA Voice Data

96% - Aware of the SSA Voice
69% - Participated in SSA Voice
93% - Effective venue to communicate
92% - Would recommend to others
The SSA Mentoring Program
BENEFITS

- Increase Morale
- Retention in Social Services
- Staff Feel Valued
- Staff Prepared for Today
- Staff Prepared to Tomorrow’s Leadership Opportunities
- Introduce Staff to New Opportunities throughout the Agency
- Partnering with the Labor Unions
- Supports Coaching
Instant Recess
TELEWORK

• Culture change

• Engagement data improvement

• Evaluation of telework/engagement strategy
More EEWB Strategies

• SSA Speaker Series
• Trivia Tuesdays
• Seasonal celebrations/events
• Employee Recognition
  • Virtual High Fives
  • Kudo Boards
  • Years of Services Celebrations
• Engagement and Well-Being Newsletter
• 360 Feedback Surveys
• Human Centered Design Projects (P3)
• Leadership Development Program
KEY “PILLARS” OF ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

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Promote Health & Wellness  Foster Healthy Relationships
Key Takeaways

1. An engaged workforce has positive impacts on many organizational outcomes;

2. Building organizational readiness and capacity is essential for building successful engagement strategies;

3. Measurement, monitoring, evaluation, and closing the feedback loop are key to ensuring that strategies are responsive and effective
THINGS TO CONSIDER FOR YOUR COUNTIES

- How is engagement viewed at your agency?
- What current activities and strategies has/is your organization providing that attends to staff engagement and/or well-being?
- Who is leading those efforts or strategies?
- What data is currently collected that can provide some information about employees’ overall satisfaction or perception about your agency/department?
- What are some next steps you can take back to your County?
Thank you for joining our session.

We hope you were engaged!

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