Date: July 1, 2016

Action Planning Tips for Managers and Supervisors

UC Davis Health System has identified the survey item, “I get the training I need to do a good job”, as one of two items of focus for the organization based upon the results from our last staff engagement survey in September 2015. The other survey item being focused on is, “The person I report to is a good communicator”. This document provides tips related to the employee training topic that you may find useful in your action planning and discussions with your teams. We will be conducting our next staff engagement survey in April 2017.

Staff Engagement Survey Item:  I get the training I need to do a good job.
Survey Domain:  Organization
Survey Theme:  Growth and Development

Understanding the Issue:  For employees to be committed to their organization, they must also feel that the organization is committed to their training and development. Employees may not always recognize the training they receive as actual training. For example, they may not perceive one-on-one training to be just as “real” as formal classroom training even though it can be more effective. Another challenge to overcome is the reluctance some employees will have stepping out of their normal work routines to participate in their training and development. Some adults just seem to have an aversion to anything remotely related to classrooms, exercises and evaluations! The paradox is that even if the employee has consciously not taken full advantage of available training and development (their choice) or workload/schedule (their choice) has limited their participation, they may still sense that the organization is not committed to their training and development. Your employees may not be aware of available training and development resources or of alternatives which may overcome perceived barriers (e.g., temporary shift assignments, online self-study training, and on-site seminars).

Improvement Ideas:
1.  Have a group discussion with your employees to understand what prompted their responses to this item. Ask employees to discuss the following questions:
a. What is their understanding of existing training opportunities?
b. What types of training activities do they believe are missing?
c. What specific training opportunities would they like to have?

Their answers to these questions will give you an indication of their understanding of what is currently available and what issues are important to them.

2. Consider developing a training mentorship program within your work group. Identify employees with proficiency in specific skills and ask them to provide training to employees with corresponding training needs. (Note: This technique is often as satisfying to the mentor as to the trainee.) UC Davis has a mentoring toolkit as a resource available at:
   http://sdps.ucdavis.edu/toolkits/mentoring/index.html

3. Implement regularly scheduled “brown-bag lunch” training sessions by inviting people with specific skills to present information on topics your employees identify as areas where further training would be beneficial.

4. Review your scores on the Manager Domain items, especially focusing on those pertaining to the feedback you provide and your supportiveness in training (if applicable on your survey). If your scores are relatively low or if you have a relatively large number of employees responding unfavorably to these items, consider developing a personal development plan to improve the type, amount, and frequency of feedback you provide your employees and/or your role in their training.

5. Review your work group’s scores on items related to career development. If your scores are relatively low or if you have a relatively large number of employees responding unfavorably to career development items, you may want to consider combining your discussion regarding training with career development opportunities.

6. Invite Human Resources’ Training and Development (734-2676) to come in and provide a learning session focusing on training opportunities, courses, individual development plans and other topics relevant to training within the organization.

7. Explore your organization’s support for external training and development opportunities for your employees. Many times, continuing education opportunities are made available when a manager and employee(s) together “make the case” to senior management by providing information to describe a specific training opportunity. UC Davis Health System offers a tuition reimbursement program for career staff known as Staff Tuition for Education Program (STEP); information is available at:
   http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/hr/training/tuition.html

8. Create flexible-work options to allow employees to take classes or outside training, even if your organization cannot fund them. This approach is most effective when employees identify a specific educational opportunity in which they would like to participate.
9. Keep a training log for each employee that includes all the training they receive: formal, one-on-one, self-study, etc. This can help employees recognize the atypical forms of training. Each employee can access the formal training they have taken via the UC Learning Center through their training transcript. Managers also have access to view their training transcripts.

**Reminder:** UC Davis Health System will be conducting our next staff engagement survey in April 2017.