

2016 NACSA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Getting Where You Need to Go: Building Staff Capacity

As much as you may believe in the value of developing your team, doing so in a thoughtful, meaningful way can be challenging—particularly with our ever-growing do-to lists and the non-stop pace of authorizing. Staff development is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor; you must understand each of your team members and his or her unique needs to ensure that true growth is taking place. We'll provide you with a framework for staff development that meets your team members where they are at, so that they can get where they need to go.

Session Title: Getting Where You Need to Go: Building Staff Capacity

Session speakers: Rich Haglund (Illinois Network of Charter Schools)
Bonnie Holliday (State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia)
Mary Bradley (Office of Innovation and Incubation, Chicago Public Schools)

Context: This session was held as a hybrid of a panel with Q&A and group discussions. The objectives of the session were as follows:

- Assess your/your office's strengths and weaknesses when it comes to staff and organizational development.
- Describe the key elements that form the foundation of any development effort.
- Implement strategies for team member development based on his/her needs.
- Recognize the connection between individual and organizational development.
- Identify approaches for organizational/succession planning.

Key Takeaways: The key takeaways from this session are:

1. **It is critical to have the foundational processes and structures in place that form the foundation of performance management and therefore staff development/capacity.** For example, clearly defined roles and responsibilities/job descriptions, a thorough and thoughtful orientation and onboarding process, employee goals, performance evaluations, etc. You can (and should) use these basics as ways to develop staff – they don't cost much money – just time.
2. **Staff development is not just about sending people to training.** It should be a thoughtful process that starts with beginning with the end in mind and developing staff with purpose/intention. What are the objectives of development? Going to training is just one means to an end. You need to think about what the "end" is before you determine the best ways to get there. Look for ways to develop staff in



the current context of your work environment – participating on different teams, being cross-trained, taking on additional responsibilities incrementally, etc.

3. **Do not neglect thinking about the organization as a whole.** If we're developing people well, it is likely that they will leave. That's okay! But you need to have a contingency plan. Make sure that you have some form of succession plan. You should be able to answer the question, "Who would replace X in Y role if X were to leave?" for all positions within your organization. An example of a nine-box succession planning grid was provided to participants. Relatedly, always be mindful of your recruitment pipeline. How are you building your pipeline and recruiting and selecting? Bonnie shared how her office draws highly on graduate level interns from local universities to augment their full-time staff, which has become a great source of candidates when they do have an open position.

Additional Resources: The speakers for this session are available via phone/email if you have questions or want more information:

Mary Bradley
Executive Director, Innovation & Incubation, Chicago Public Schools
773-553-1530
Mbradley15@cps.edu

Rich Haglund
Chief Operating Officer, Illinois Network of Charter Schools
312-690-2714
rhaglund@incschools.org

Bonnie Holliday
Executive Director, State Charter Schools Commission of Georgia
404-656-2837
Bonnie.holliday@scsc.georgia.gov

Additionally, feel free to contact NACSA's Vice President of Talent & Engagement for help in this area:

Kasey Miller
312-376-2367
kaseym@qualitycharters.org

Finally, the following online resources may be useful to you:

Harvard Business Review Online – www.hbr.org

The Management Center – <http://www.managementcenter.org/>