Assignment: Paper #2

Organizational Wellness and Sustainability

Mock Program Intervention

SW 643: Distant Learning

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Humboldt State University
Introduction

The Department of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) of San Bernardino is an organization that provides various services to senior citizens, disabled adults, and even some disabled minor children. All of the services offered are aimed at helping these vulnerable populations to remain in their homes, live as independently as possible, and reach their fullest potential. In order to relay these services, DAAS must rely on the hundreds of employees that go to work each day in various cities throughout the county to get the job done. Therefore, it is in the best interest of the stakeholders including recipients of DAAS services as well as the organization itself to employ dedicated, hard-working employees, that take pride in what they do. Even more important, is that DAAS is able to cultivate and retain these employees. This proposal works to address DAAS’s ability prepare new employees for their positions, support its current staff, and retain its employees.

Name or Program

The IHSS Employee Success Program

Overview

Recently the Human Resources Department for Human Services has been questioning seasoned employees about how they can work to retain staff in the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) department. The DAAS Employee Success Program will work exclusively at providing extra support to DAAS’s IHSS employees. The Employee Success Program will accomplish this by training new employees, and putting support systems in place that allow current employees to continue job development and growth.

Target Population
The target population would include all level of IHSS staff including seasoned employees as well as new employees. New hires would automatically become part of the Employee Success Program while in training, while current staff would have the option to volunteer or participate in the Employee Success Program.

In order to successfully begin a pilot program, the Employee Success Program would need approximately 7-10 current employees in order to implement training goals. Participation in the Employee Success Program would be voluntary. If chosen to participate, the employees would work at training new employees, follow-up with new employees for comprehension, and develop job growth development plan with current employees.

There are currently four units of employees working with IHSS to provide services to the community. Each unit consists of approximately 12-15 social workers that are supervised by a Supervising Social Worker. In order to successfully mentor new employees, the program would require at least one social worker from each unit to participate. This employee would act as a trainer and be required to model DAAS expectations for employees by:

a. Preparing new employees on what to expect in the field
b. Model thorough Zero-Based assessments in client’s homes
c. Assist new employees to input client information into CMIPS IV and write a complete narrative based on the most up to date expectations from Quality Assurance

The next level of support offered for new trainings would be at the supervisory role. In addition to the “trainers”, the Employee Success Program would ask that two supervising social workers participate. One Supervising Social Worker should be from an intake unit, and the other should be from a carrier unit in order to address and questions or issues that may come up across the spectrum. Supervising Social Workers will review select cases with the new hire present for
thoroughness, provide feedback, and answers questions that the new employee may have. This will also give the supervising Social Worker the opportunity to address any discrepancies that may come up, especially in regards to program policies and procedures.

Lastly, the IHSS Employee Success Program would ask at least one administrator work with IHSS employees. The role of the administrator would be to help mentor IHSS employees to set and meet their professional goals as Social Workers.

**Description of Program**

One current predicament of DAAS has been its ability to retain social workers in the IHSS department. When social worker’s quit it creates strain on multiple levels especially on other social worker’s who must then increase their own caseload until another social worker can be brought to the team which can take months. While the Human Resources Department has had good intentions in interviewing seasoned employees in an attempt to begin solving its problem, it is also important to work with the staff that it wants to retain: the new employees themselves.

The IHSS Employee Success Program hopes to fill the gap by making sure all stakeholders are involved in the process of professional development and growth. When more employees at various levels are involved, the likelihood of miscommunication and misunderstanding can be reduced. At the same time, employees at all levels will be communicating the same message and working together which will allow more opportunities for all new employees to meet DAAS expectations as guided by their supervisors and administrators which allows for efficiency.

Once new employees have completed training and passed their probation period they will be offered the opportunity to continue in the Employee Success Program to work to set their own professional goals. This allows administrators, supervisors, and staff to not only work together,
but also have knowledge of the expectations and desire of one another. This is especially important as it relates to staff. When administrators and supervisors are aware of their staff’s goals they are also more able to advocate on behalf of their staff. For example, they can then communicate their own ideas of what incentives can be set in place to meet the needs of their staff. The goals of the IHSS Employee Success Program will be to:

1. Prepare employees to be successful in the field with clients and to learn the appropriate follow-up procedures necessary to regarding input of date and case narratives.
2. Create an environment conducive to success and professional growth
3. Retain new and current employees by providing opportunities for professional growth and allowing time for employees to participate in activities that would assist employees in meeting their goals set in their professional growth plan

**Proposed Outcomes**

1. Ensure all new employees will achieve a “Meets Expectations” across the board during their first official review
2. Find ways to compensate trainers and supervisors who act as a mentor to new employees
3. Have a regular system in place that strategically works to create a team environment and also help cultivate DAAS culture that helps to incentivize that all employees be successful at their current job while simultaneously working to elevate themselves professionally

**Implementation Supports**
In order for the IHSS Employee Success Program it will be necessary for various levels of support and participation. Both Human Resources and IHSS staff must agree that employee retention is a problem that can be solved. Both departments must value the employee as a whole, and agree that job satisfaction depends on positive support, being given the tools to do a good job, and incentivizing the training process for employees who help train new employees. Participants at the administrative and supervisory level must support the job development goals of its staff and allow time for them to meet their needs.

**Barriers for Implementation**

Possible barriers include the willingness of current staff to participate in assisting new employees. Further barriers include the ability and willingness for human resources to negotiate a stipend (something similar to a bilingual stipend) for employees who are training and helping to develop new employees. Lastly, another barrier would be finding a way to organize curriculum and potential community resources that is easy for a new social worker to navigate. IHSS social workers work with a unique client population with unique needs. It will be important for social workers to find information when they need it in an easy way when they are following up with a client after an assessment.