

LUOMA ACTION TEAM #8 NEW EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Team Members: Matt Gardner, Derek Hughes, Julie Lutz (coach), Julie Myers, Mike Nordby, Greg Rathert

Executive Sponsor: Kent Hanson, President, Anoka Technical College and Anoka-Ramsey Community College

Team Advisors: Jay Nelson, Chief Human Resources Officer, & Dee Anne Bonebright, Director, Systemwide Training

Resource Team: Talent Management Steering Committee, onboarding subcommittee

Team Charge: Develop an onboarding program that creates a welcoming and inclusive environment during the first year for new faculty and staff.

- 1) Develop a proposal for in-person and online new employee orientation by December 2015. It should include a model describing essential elements of an onboarding program and examples of best practices (for example, scripts, agendas, toolkits, web sites, etc.);
- 2) Identify one or more elements of the proposal to be developed and ready for implementation in June 2016;
- 3) Present findings to the system HR community and provide resources for other institutions to develop similar programs.

Onboarding is often seen as a tool to enhance retention, but it has many other potential benefits. Successful onboarding programs introduce the culture of the organization which can create a more cohesive environment where all employees are working towards common goals. By creating personal connections, onboarding can support and enhance an employee's performance.

The team began by determining the strategies and goals for our project. Next, through our research, we identified characteristics of successful onboarding programs, discovered the current landscape at the colleges, and defined the challenges by interviewing staff and a survey of new faculty members. For each of the challenges, we devised a list of recommendations. After we gave our initial presentation to our sponsors mid-year, they provided further direction for refining our project. We continued work on those suggestions and met last month to present them with our handoff recommendations.

Throughout this year, we learned many valuable lessons:

-Action learning is an interesting process for solving problems, but can be a challenge to implement. While it is helpful to have one person reflecting on the work of the group, it can take longer to move the project forward. However, it likely gave us a broader range of workable solutions for our project.

-We learned online meetings posed some challenges, but were often necessary and our in-person meetings were more productive.

-The team was most productive when all members could attend, which became increasingly difficult during the spring semester. Sharing the experiences, perspective and knowledge of all team members

-Employee onboarding development was an interesting and challenging project to solve. We are grateful that our team had compatible work styles and a diverse collection of strengths, experiences, and perspectives to call upon.