Employee Engagement

Tamara Deuser
Assistant Vice President, Research Operations
Arizona State University

Heather Clark
Assistant Director, Proposal and Negotiations
Arizona State University

NCURA Region VI, Spring Meeting
April 15-18, 2012
Today’s Learning Objectives

• Gain insight on the importance of employee engagement
• Learn about strategies for improving employee engagement
• Hear how others have addressed issues with successful management of employees
What is employee engagement?

**Employee Engagement** /emˈploi-ē enˈgājmənt/

A measurable degree of an employee's positive or negative emotional attachment to their job, colleagues and organization which profoundly influences their willingness to learn and perform at work. Thus engagement is distinctively different from employee satisfaction, motivation, and organizational culture.
Why is it important?

Engaged employees:

- Are empowered to advance the organization
- Volunteer for opportunities to increase experience
- Focus on success of their team rather than individual advancement
- Are proactive in identifying and solving problems utilizing their first hand knowledge and experience
Employee perspective

What’s in it for me?
Employee Needs

- Understanding of evaluation process
- Structure
- Fair and honest
- Involvement
- Exposure
- Direct and frequent feedback
Employee Framework

Employee framework components

- Performance
- Skills/experience/credentials
- Demonstrated capability in functional areas
- Organizational commitment
Performance

• Ability to perform tasks, job duties and special projects relative to peers
Employee Framework

Skills/experience/credentials

• Degrees earned

• Years of related experience

• Specialized credentials (CRA, PMP, etc.)

• Active engagement in targeted learning/studies in support of functional areas
Employee Framework

Demonstrated capability in functional areas

- Development of proposals and budgets
- Review of proposals and budgets
- Negotiation of awards and contracts
- Negotiating sub-awards
- Verification and activation of accounts
- Invoicing/financial reporting
- Change management
- Specialized reporting
- Costing issues
- Audit management and response
- Training (formal and on-the-job)
- Process improvement
- Quality control
- Analytical competence
- Sub-award invoice processing
- Volunteers to assist with projects
Career Progression

- Standardized between central office and units
- Leveled playing field
- Increased options for advancement
- Decreased poaching
- Allows for understanding the depth of research administration
## Career Progression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Research Advancement</th>
<th>ORSPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Research Adv Specialist</td>
<td>Grant &amp; Contract Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Research Adv Administrator</td>
<td>Grant &amp; Contract Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Research Adv Administrator, Sr.</td>
<td>Grant &amp; Contract Officer, Sr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Research Advancement Manager</td>
<td>Grant &amp; Contract Officer, Principal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Career Progression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Advancement</th>
<th>ORSPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify funding opportunities</td>
<td>Advice on pre-award issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal development services</td>
<td>Support, institutional review and submission of proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and financial execution</td>
<td>Review, negotiate and execute incoming agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary interface with faculty and researchers</td>
<td>Award change management, financial reporting/invoicing, cash management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fair & Honest

• Salary and other reward structures must be fair
• Transparency is key
• Sensitive to the individual but committed to the organization
Involvement

The tale of two reorganizations...
Exposure

• People need to learn from experience, the more they see the better

• Visibility is important for organizational advancement
Created employee engagement ninja team

- Conducted an employee engagement survey
- Ninja team summarized results and prioritized issues
- Increased visibility and communication around key challenges
Employee Engagement

Overall, I am satisfied with my job.

- Strongly Agree: 36%
- Agree: 43%
- Neither Agree nor Disagree: 12%
- Disagree: 5%
- Strongly Disagree: 4%
Employee Engagement

My supervisor treats me as a professional and values my work.
My team is collaborative.

- Strongly Agree: 43%
- Agree: 42%
- Neither Agree nor Disagree: 9%
- Disagree: 4%
- Strongly Disagree: 2%
Employee Engagement

There is a defined career path for me in which I can advance.

- Strongly Agree: 9%
- Strongly Disagree: 11%
- Disagree: 24%
- Neither Agree nor Disagree: 22%
- Agree: 34%
Other thoughts

- Very inexpensive
- Intrinsic rewards are more important than extrinsic
- Happy people are productive people