

CLASSIFIED/WAGE STAFF WORKING GROUP

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS:

Lisa Hess - Program Administrator, Office of Equal Opportunity
Jake Krug - Administrative Assistant, College of Integrated Science & Engineering
Debbi Long - Senior Administrative Assistant, Advancement
Sandra Purington - Senior Administrative Assistant, Writing, Rhetoric & Technical Communication
Jason Saunders - Consultant, Human Resources
Malcolm L. Taylor - Alumnus

WORKING GROUP CO-CHAMP

Kathy Lubkowski, lubkowka@jmu.edu

TITLE: Staff Community Resource Connections

PROBLEM: Community Connection and Staff Feedback

Building relationships and a sense of community and belonging are important parts of employee retention. Currently, no identified, organized efforts are in place to connect a classified or wage new-hire with community resources and contacts at JMU and in the greater Harrisonburg/Rockingham area.

RECOMMENDATION:

Part of the faculty onboarding process includes a routine welcome/orientation email from Human Resources (HR) listing campus community resources and information. This process can be paralleled with relatively minor adaptations to be applicable and impactful for new classified and wage employees.

RATIONALE

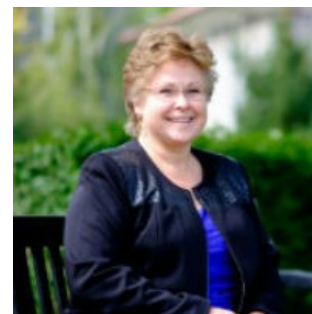
Adapting the faculty version of this welcome email from Human Resources is an adjustment on current processes that carries the potential to create high-impact results. While many staff positions are filled by “locals” JMU may not be as integrated with the local community as we would like. Transitioning to a job on campus can be challenging, and those early welcoming messages and JMU community networking efforts are crucial in establishing connections, community, and a sense of belonging.

Success Metrics on next page

**WORKING GROUP
LEADERSHIP**



Chuck Flick
Leadership Council



Kathy Lubkowski, WG CC



Jason Randall, WG CC

SUCCESS METRICS

The primary metric could be a *self-evaluation survey* developed in collaboration with campus scholars and/or a student/class project to develop, promote, administer, and evaluate the results. The survey in which new employees will have an opportunity to assess their sense of belonging and community connection at regular interval(s). This concept is in line with a “Stay Interview” as opposed to an “Exit Interview”.

Goals: build relationships, enhance engagement/feeling of belonging, encourage connectedness and employee satisfaction with focus on improving retention; to orient / transition new employees to connect with their HR consultant.

Ideally, reaching out at the 6-month employment milestone will not only provide an opportunity to offer feedback, but will also allow time to address any issues in a timelier manner. Currently at the one-year and three-year anniversary, HR benefits sends an automated email with additional leave information. These communications could also be used to share links and resources in a more direct way.

Any automated effort connected to service date/s will require some IT resources to automate delivery of the survey tool.

Survey Topics / Questions should include:

- Adequate, appropriate training / mentoring
- How well-equipped you feel to do your job?
- Other applicable survey questions used within the university
- Include a prompt for an opportunity to speak with someone from HR directly for follow-up conversation
- How well do you feel supported in your work environment?
- Are resources available to you?

Strategies and Concerns:

- Anonymity -- If issues are raised, follow-up can be limited if responses are anonymous.
- Confidentiality must be explained clearly to staff to encourage honest responses and reporting.
- Disclosing who receives this information and how it is used might help participation rates
- Incentivizing participation with a small on-campus benefit, such as a coffee coupon or other token gift, will likely result in a greater quantity of valuable data.