



PRINCIPLE FOUR RESOURCES

CAREER PATHWAYS AND ROLE SPECIFIC CHALLENGES

Ensuring team members are equipped to handle the unique challenges careers in elder care present, and that they're developing long and short term goals will help you maintain and grow your team.

Development plans help team members see the organization's investment in their short and long term career goals, ensuring team members have an understanding of the many opportunities to contribute to the organization's mission and long-term vision. These plans can be time-consuming and require team members to spend time away from caring for residents as they work on their plans or meet with supervisors. But the investment is paid back considering the cost of turnover and the positive impact on morale of demonstrating investment in a team member's career growth.

It's equally important to build comfort with challenges specific to working with elderly people, such as resident death. Difficult topics are too often avoided in residential elder care settings but staff often handles or witness these painful life transitions. Working in long-term care poses other challenges such as providing 24 hours/7 days per week care or working with three or four different shifts of staff. As a result, leadership needs to dedicate time to collect feedback from all team members related to position challenges. They should also offer solutions, tools and resources to remedy or mitigate the challenges. This outreach and preparation will go a long way in helping team members feel appreciated.

STAGE OF EMPLOYMENT	TOOL (with links)	DESCRIPTION OF TOOL
Orientation	Training: working in long term care <u>FIND HERE</u>	This training introduces team members to the many career opportunities within long-term care and communicates how the organization will assist them with their professional growth and development goals. This training also helps team members learn more about other departments within the organization and may help a team member understand how their work impacts the broader organization. Organizations should also consider using this training during an onsite career night or during a guest speaking engagement at a high school.

STAGE OF EMPLOYMENT	TOOL (with links)	DESCRIPTION OF TOOL
Onboarding	Career pathways <u>FIND HERE</u>	<p>This tool provides a visual overview of the employment opportunities within the field of long-term care regardless of setting. The tool is organized by common functional area of support, and includes common position titles, a basic description of the role and general qualifications. The tool also incorporates leadership proficiency levels as discussed in the tool <u>Leadership Competencies</u> (principle 5 resources) as a way to facilitate the development of leadership within the organization. Organizations are encouraged to customize the chart to align with the job titles and position requirements of the organization.</p>
Onboarding	Team member development plan <u>FIND HERE</u>	<p>This tool is an example of a team member development plan. If deployed across the organization, the template will help identify individual and department skill and knowledge gaps, focus on leveraging individual strengths, provide structure to improve performance, and help management see the development vision and understand the budgetary costs. Furthermore, the tool also incorporates management accountability in the form of development check-ins and status updates.</p>
Onboarding	Mentor activity: job shadowing <u>FIND HERE</u>	<p>This activity allows a mentee to explore a specific area of interest by offering structured time to observe a team member perform their work duties and ask questions related to the role</p>
Orientation	Training: role specific challenges <u>FIND HERE</u>	<p>This training talks about the transition of being a new hire and the things that team members may find are difficult in their role, and the things that are challenging about other roles in the department. The outcome of the training is to have a better understanding of how individual roles impact the role of others and how the team can work better together to minimize one another's challenges.</p>

STAGE OF EMPLOYMENT	TOOL (with links)	DESCRIPTION OF TOOL
Orientation	Training: grieving the passing of a resident <u>FIND HERE</u>	One of the most common challenges cited by team members, regardless of their role within an organization, is coping with the death of a resident. This tool provides tools and resources so that team members have a better understanding of how they may feel, the symptoms of grief, what to expect, resources available, and ways to interact with the family. It offers some tools on what may help a person grieve and how to help team members grieve.
Onboarding	Training: developing SMART professional development plans <u>FIND HERE</u>	This training discusses the purpose of team member development plans, provides basic guidance on how to create a development plan and trains team members how to develop SMART Goals and Development Plans.
Organization wide process	Training: body language and relationships <u>FIND HERE</u>	This training provides perspective on how individuals, when frustrated by role-specific challenges, may display or exhibit their frustrations. The training also provides examples of how team members can approach these situations to gather understanding and work together in finding a solution.

These resources should help you maximize your team's career growth and ensure they're prepared for the unique challenges and opportunities that come with a career in elder care.

LeadingAge Illinois is here to help.
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