ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS TRACK:

New Faculty Cohort

Univ. of Missouri Extension Megan Martin (Administrative Skills Track)

New faculty members are encouraged to participate in cohort training at MU Extension. This training is designed to assist new faculty who are hired within the same 6-month period to become successful and effective in their positions and to develop positive, supportive relationships. Cohort training, along with other professional development functions, is an important part of the position as an Extension employee. It consists of three sessions, one every 2-3 months over the first year of employment. Cohort sessions are designed and implemented by the cohort training team in collaboration with Extension faculty and administrators.

Successful War Stories of County Directors---Life in a New Frontier

Pamela Jacobs, Julie Mumbower, Ginger Boas and Doug Harlan (Administrative Skills Track)

Illinois County Extension Directors will share their experiences from Illinois’ recent state-wide reorganization. The session will cover information on developing and administering a multi-county Unit which will include leadership lessons learned, major program identification; hiring staff; based on Unit program are as, initiating and developing sustainable programming. In addition, maintaining and increasing both public and financial support within the new organizational structure will be highlighted. Presenters will also showcase successful Unit team development.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS TRACK:

Riding for the Brand – The Rest of the Story

Jim Whitt (Leadership Skills Track)

A Tactical Approach to Building a Rapport with Elected Officials and Stakeholders

Rose Fisher Merkowitz and Treva Williams (Leadership Skills Track)

Serving as a leader in the Extension organization provides many opportunities to showcase strategies to address needs of local residents. Why is it important to tell this story? Residents are voters and elected officials want to know how Extension makes a difference in the lives of potential voters. Because Extension is supported through county, state and federal funds it is critical to develop relationships with elected officials at all of these levels. This workshop will focus on strategies proven to be successful in working with elected officials at any level of government. Working with local government officials is critical because without this level of funding the county Extension program would cease to exist. Funds from this level are leveraged in order to secure additional funds whether through the traditional tax payer funding streams or the more challenging area of grants and contracts. State and federal legislators may not be as accessible as county elected officials however developing a working relationship with their aides can open doors and lines of communication. These individuals can become the advocate and voice for Extension. As professional, if we are not able to talk directly to the legislator, we must build a communication stream with the aides in the manner which best meets their needs, often requiring we be able to provide concise impacts with a short deadline. Successful relationship building with elected officials takes time and effort. For extension professionals and volunteers who build the relationships with legislators, aides, elected officials and key stakeholders in the community, the benefits will far outweigh the significant amount of time and effort. Building the relationship is just the beginning – maintaining the relationship is vital for long-term rapport.

When Generation Collide in Extension

Carol LaFaver (Leadership Skills Track)

Generational differences provide history, creativity, and variety to the workforce. Unfortunately, multiple generations in the workforce can also lead to conflict. In this workshop we will focus on generational cohorts in the Extension system and how to deal with generational conflict when it occurs.
Navigating Difficult Conversations

Nate Arnett, Jeff King, Kayla Oberstadt (Administrative Skills Track)

All professionals encounter “difficult” conversations from time to time. These high stakes dialogues can be pivotal in one’s life and career depending on how they are handled. In this session, “Navigating Difficult Conversations,” participants will learn what conversations fit the context of “difficult” and why. They will leave the session with a toolkit of knowledge and strategies on how to best handle these challenging conversational situations. “Difficult” conversations come up in everyone’s life; on the job, at home, and in important relationships. These conversations can be framed around a range of topics, and some must be handled more delicately than others. The skills taught during this session will be a valuable asset to professionals of any age, position, and years of service. Communication and conflict resolution skills are critical to maintaining relationships and getting positive results. Providing employees with conflict-resolution skills can also be cost-effective. Research shows that 60-80% of all difficulties in organizations stem from strained relationships between employees, not from deficits in individual employees’ skills or motivation (Dana, 2005, Kreisman, 2002). Additionally, the typical manager spends 35-40% of his or her time dealing with workplace conflicts. That’s one to two days every work week (Washington Business Journal, 2005). Effective organizations need employees that know how to communicate when it matters most.

Participants in this session will be guided in navigating a “difficult” conversation through an interactive process that will engage them in group discussion and direct facilitation by the presenters. The presenters will share the content of the session through PowerPoint slides and aided through media visuals. Individual stories and specific encounters will be shared to give examples of what a “difficult” conversation looks and sounds like. Since these dialogues can vary in content and severity, the presenters will select examples that are relevant to the audience which may include work-related and personal conversation themes. The goal is to determine when the dialogue becomes “difficult” and share ideas and strategies on how best to face the situation.

At the conclusion of this seminar, participants will be equipped with the knowledge necessary to navigate their own “difficult” conversations successfully. This session will be essential to enhancing your communication and conflict resolution skill set and strengthening your leadership capabilities.

Empowering Extension’s future leaders: A strategic approach to on boarding Extension professionals

Karen Argabright, Grahm Cochran (Administrative Skills Track)

Many factors contribute to new Extension professional’s level of competence and how quickly they are able to function at a high level in their roles. Many new Extension professionals are coming to Extension to pursue a career change. Ages and experiences vary from fresh out of college to post retirement. In order to get these diverse individuals functioning competently in their roles, Extension organizations need to be strategic in creating and implementing innovative approaches to training and development of new professionals. In research vernacular, the learning and adaptation processes employees go through when entering a new organization or job role is referred to as organizational socialization. The employee matures with the organization during the socialization period and learns to cope with the contextual demands and expectations of the new situation.

Onboarding, considered synonymous with socialization among practitioners, is a strategic and practical approach utilizing the theoretical foundations of socialization research.

Successful and proactive onboarding approaches follow the four C’s: Compliance, Clarification, Connection, and Culture. The manner in which an organization leverages these building blocks of the four C’s defines the organization’s overall strategic approach to onboarding. A proactive approach includes a framework that goes beyond compliance and clarification and into finding new and innovative ways to establish reciprocal connections between the organization and employees and supporting them as they assimilate into the culture of the organization. Through a strategic onboarding approach Extension has the opportunity to re-vamp, re-energize, and re-invent new ways to train, support, develop, and empower the next generation of Extension personnel.

The goal of this session will be to share our experiences in developing and early stages of implementing Ohio State University (OSU) Extension’s strategic onboarding process for new Extension professionals. Initiated July of 2012 the project has been built from the ground up focusing on the following objectives:

- Welcome and acclimate the new employee to OSU Extension & their immediate work environments
- Engage new employees in their job and OSU Extension
- Equip the new employee with the resources and knowledge to excel
- Build lasting relationships to enhance productivity and job satisfaction

Our focus was on creating a holistic and sustainable onboarding process designed to support and guide new employees as they enter the organization. An onboarding model was developed depicting the collective nature of what it takes for successful onboarding within OSU Extension.

Five components were identified as essential to address within the onboarding process, they include (1) Prior to start (2) Orientation & Compliance, (3) Training, (4) Support Resources, and (5) Interpersonal Support. An Onboarding Design Team was established to further guide the creative development and implementation of the associated strategies within each component. Support for this project among all levels of personnel within OSU Extension has been exceptional. The first major event, the New Employee Welcome Festival, was an outstanding success. Forty-five new employees from across the state came together for a day of interactive activities during a resource fair and engaging discussion during informal sessions on OSU Extension core competencies. A similar method used to develop and implement a strategic onboarding approach for new professionals could be applied within any Extension organization.

Through a presentation, interactive discussion, and activity, participants will:
- Learn about a proactive and strategic approach to onboarding
- Learn how OSU Extension has specifically utilized this approach
Situational Awareness: What Is It and Why Does It Matter

Jennifer Buckingham (Administrative Skills Track)

Extension professionals find themselves in diverse environments, from meeting with a farmer in his fields, or going to the fair, to attending a large political gathering, and everything in between. 4-H Educators are especially aware of the safety of the youths they are entrusted with. Educators are exposed to potentially dangerous situations every day and with the skills to spot trouble, they can help ensure their own safety and the safety of those they’re with. These simple skills could save a life: learn how to read your surroundings, body language, and speech patterns to determine what you should do. Find out how to avoid danger, how to measure a threat, and take action if it’s needed. Exercises on how to listen to your intuition, think critically about your environment, and defend yourself and others will be taught hands-on. Come away with important skills that you can use immediately and teach to others.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS TRACK:

Riding for the Brand – The Rest of the Story

Jim Whitt (Leadership Skills Track)  Missouri

Teamwork: Trusting, Leading, Communicating

Lisa Kaslon, Keith Niemann, Linda Boeckner (Leadership Skills Track)  Platte

This workshop is founded on these principles:
- Teams exist to produce results.
- Teams are a living system—they have a relationship with members and other teams.
- Team members want to be on high performing teams and want to contribute.
- Teams can excel—they are creative, resourceful and whole.

Due to budget reductions, organizational compression and the inevitability of continued change, infusion of trust, respect and support is vitally important for teams. This workshop is rooted in the belief that individuals within the team are vital to the effectiveness of the team, and teams are critical to the success of the organization. The experiential activities assist team members in the development and understanding of their distinctive identity and strengths.

Public Private Partnership – Strategic Thinking/Practical Application

Dave Ulferts  Big Blue C

Public Private Partnerships – a dynamic learning opportunity on the fundamentals of identifying, developing and fostering Partnerships to assist Extension Professionals in maximizing their impact. Areas of emphasis include defining Partnerships, a practical approach to identifying new partners and expanding existing partnerships as well as understanding the essential aspects of successful partnerships. Participants will leave with a better understanding of how Public Private Partnerships can be used and strategically aligned to further Extension’s impact. You will leave this session with applicable Public Private Partnership tactics that can be put into practice immediately.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2014  Session #3  9:30 – 10:45 am

ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS TRACK:

What is in Your Coaching Toolbox

Carol LaFaver (Administrative Skills Track)  Big Blue A

Coaching employees and colleagues require having the right tools at hand, which leads to the question—What tools do you have in your toolbox? In this workshop we will discuss and use several types of tools that can be used to help in coaching and facilitating. You will also walk away with several tools that you can start using immediately.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS TRACK:

Leading Your Team to the Future and Beyond

Denise Ryan (Leadership Skills Track)  Missouri

This workshop will allow participants to go much deeper into the topic of leading their offices through change. You’ll learn:
- How to keep your staff and volunteers excited and engaged without spending a lot of money.
- How to create an office where enthusiasm is high
• How to think in new ways and generate new ideas. We know we can’t keep doing the same things in a constantly changing world.

You’ll also get a list of tough questions to ask yourself to help your office move to a higher level of excellence. To the future and beyond!

The 5 Choices to Extraordinary Productivity
Lisa Kaslon (Leadership Skills Track)
Franklin Covey’s The 5 Choices to Extraordinary Productivity is a process that will dramatically increase your ability to achieve life’s most important outcomes. Supported by science and years of experience, this solution not only produces measurable increase in productivity, but also provides a renewed sense of engagement and accomplishment. The barrage of information coming at us from multiple sources coupled with the demands of our careers, are overwhelming and distracting. The sheer volume of information threatens our ability to think clearly and make wise decisions about what’s important. As a result of this work session, you will:

Learn how to better filter vitally important priorities from distraction so you can make a real contribution.
- Define your desired outcomes for your most important professional and personal roles to get motivated to achieve extraordinary results.
- Learn the planning systems that lead to you feeling more accomplished virtually every day.
- Create a “productivity engine” by optimizing Outlook.
- Implement the “5 Energy Drivers” to consistently recharge mental and physical energy.

Best Practices in Leadership for Multi-County Extension Managers
Margaret Larson and Shari Spoelman (Leadership Skills Track)
This workshop is intended for multi-county or district directors/coordinators who have responsibilities in Extension Field Offices.

Objectives:
- Participants will learn about best practices related to communications with key stakeholders.
- Participants will share best practices related to leadership qualities of multi-county operations.
- Participants will ascertain if they would like to develop a resource/vehicle to stay connected to share best practices on an ongoing basis.

Regardless of title, Extension Professionals who are in a multi-county management role have many challenges and opportunities which draw upon their leadership skills. In this session, best practices of middle management will be discussed and a discussion regarding next steps will be held. Good leadership skills are important for Extension Professionals, but perhaps most important for those in these positions who, by definition, wear many hats and play a role in so many facets of the organization. It is necessary that these individuals provide leadership in communication with staff at all levels, volunteers, funders, and other stakeholders. In addition, marketing and promotion of Extension activities and value requires participation of all staff with leadership from the middle manager. And, while many operational processes are determined by campus offices, it takes effective local leadership to work with staff to determine best practices which fit the local culture, work team and capacity.

Presenters will use the Turning Point Technology Clicker System to determine what roles and practices are most common with those attending the session. This information will allow the presenters to guide discussion and encourage the group to share and discuss relevant best practices, in addition to the examples and concepts shared by the presenters. Information from the recent study on Skills and Attributes of 21st Century Extension Professionals will provide a basis for discussion of best practices as they relate to the necessary leadership in hiring processes and professional development opportunities. As a final piece of the session, a discussion will determine what next steps might be most effective for sharing of ideas regarding issues related to working as managers in multi-county situations. Civil rights audits, financial audits; human resources are a few of the topics that may be addressed.

Leadership in Dealing with Difficult Multicultural Discussions
Dionardo Pizana (Leadership Skills Track)
As individuals and organizations work to support and develop inclusive environments, it has become increasingly clear that many people are interested in learning ways to use their voices to interrupt hurtful or oppressive behaviors they witness or are directly impacted by. Oftentimes the desire to address these situations is met with the realities of not having much practice or confidence with how to handle these situations, the real understanding of how unsafe the environment is to address the behavior or comment, the power dynamics between the individuals involved in the situation, whether or not to the messenger will be discounted if visible anger is involved when addressing the situation or the belief that nothing will change even when the situation is addressed. Whether these barriers are real or perceived, they can be formidable obstacles to overcome and can stand in the way of individuals or groups wanting to create more affirming and just environments and build authentic relationships across differences.

In this workshop, Leadership in Dealing with Difficult Multicultural Discussions, we will engage participants in an interactive experience grounded in adult learning principles. Participants will learn how our memberships in target and non-target groups influence if, when and how people choose to use their voice to address and take part in difficult multicultural discussions. They will explore the role that tension and anger can play in relationships and environments, and learn how positive approaches to confrontation can lead to more transformative conversations. Participants will explore the notion of beloved community – which Martin Luther King, Jr. described as a way to transform people and relationships – and create communities grounded in reconciliation, friendship and human dignity. Dr. King warned in his Letter from Birmingham Jail that well-meaning people are often drawn to a “negative peace” which is the absence of tension. This negative peace promotes the status quo and presents barriers to positive change. He encouraged instead movement toward “positive peace” which is the presence of justice. Positive peace and social justice demand a commitment to staying in dialogue with people across differences, even in the inevitable face of disagreements, misunderstandings and conflict. Participants will develop and practice positive confrontation and effective responses to case study scenarios and will be given feedback by the facilitators and other participant. This workshop will assist participants interested in developing competencies to become more authentic and purposeful agents for change that can be applied to the process of creating more affirming and just communities.