



## Iowa 4-H Youth Staff Peer Group Research

### Why join a new youth staff cohort:

- Provide a network of support and guidance to new county youth staff
- Increase county youth staff retention by providing a connection network
- Provide a safe learning environment for county youth staff
- Provide support to 4-H and positive youth development

### Benefits to share with Extension Council's

- Help new county youth staff to be successful in their role
- Establish staff relationships that create a sense of connection, cohesiveness and competency
- Recognize experienced youth staff who excel in performance and programming
- Increase county youth staff retention
- Build statewide cohesion for 4-H positive youth development

### Literature Review:

- 1. Peer relationships can provide a source of intrinsic reward for the employee, can buffer job-related stress, and can reduce job dissatisfaction and turnover (Kram & Isabella, 1985)**

Kram K & Isabella L (1985). Mentoring alternatives: The role of peer relationships in career development. *Academy of Management Journal*, 28, 110-132.

[https://sph.bu.edu/insider/images/stories/resources/Literature/Kram\\_Mentoring%20Alternatives.pdf](https://sph.bu.edu/insider/images/stories/resources/Literature/Kram_Mentoring%20Alternatives.pdf)

- 2. Implications of Maintenance and Motivation Factors on Extension Agent Turnover – Strong**

“Administrators and faculty of land-grant universities ought to work jointly in providing superior stages of success, acknowledgment, and satisfaction of occupational duties to faculty members, whether tenured or not. If experienced faculty guided or advised less experienced faculty members by focusing on collaboration and cooperation, these objectives may be achieved (Nestor & Leary, 2000). If support team members (mentors, colleagues, and immediate supervisors) were taught to discern agents' necessities, the usefulness of this model will be enhanced in supporting agents with planning and implementing a program, evaluation of job duties, and their development as professionals (Zoller & Safrit, 1999).”

<http://www.joe.org/joe/2009february/a2.php>

- 3. Peer Relationships: Key Factor in Retaining Mid-Career Women – Madell**

“A [2012 Society for Human Resource Management \(SHRM\) study \[PDF\]](#) found that relationships with co-workers are the top relational factor for retention for U.S. employees.



Similarly, MOVE found that peer relationships are disproportionately important for women in accounting during the first 7 years of their careers. So for women who are sorting out whether they will push for partnership, their satisfaction is partially shaped by their relationships with co-workers—especially women at the same life stage. This means that feedback gathered from social/peer networks also plays a big role in job satisfaction.”

“Clever refers to this phenomenon as the “glass silo.” “What happens at work does not stay at work,” says Cleaver. “It becomes part of the daily flow of peer sharing. Perceptions of workplace fairness, opportunities to advance, pay equity, work-life balance—all that stuff is shared laterally and through social media networks, and amplifies employees’ perceptions.”

She adds that employers used to have at least a reasonable hope that workplace practices and culture would largely be shared within the company, but not so much outside. “Ten years ago, where would you share that information?” Cleaver asks. “Now, inside employer information is currency for any individual who wants to gain access to salary data, the inside scoop on interview questions, and company micro-news, such as how job descriptions are evolving. Employers live in “glass silos”: their reputations are out of their hands, and everyday decisions and culture, broadcast through social sharing, shape workplace reputation.”

<http://www.theglasshammer.com/news/2013/06/12/peer-relationships-key-factor-in-retaining-mid-career-women/>

#### **4. Job Satisfaction and Commitment of 4-H Agents – Bowen**

“more experienced agents who may be mentoring younger agents could use this information to help increase younger agents' job satisfaction and organizational commitment.”

<http://www.joe.org/joe/1994june/rb2.php>

#### **5. Supporting Professional Growth Through Mentoring and Coaching – Kutilek**

“The authors would encourage implementation of mentoring and coaching within not-for-profit organizations as a means of employee support. The Group 3 of Extension professionals improved their overall leadership effectiveness as Extension professionals as a result of participating in the ALR. No other significant differences were found within the post-leadership effectiveness scores. However, based upon the collection of qualitative data, we have identified certain desirable features and are integrating them into our programs.

- Peer coaching is more successful over a shorter time frame, i.e., less than 4 months.
- A follow-up system is needed for coaches and mentors after a 3 to 5 month period to prompt their continued interaction with the employee or protégé.
- Stipends have not been expected or necessary for the mentors or coaches.
- Peer coaches have appreciated the use of a suggested outline or handbook as they work with the employees.”

Kutilek, L. M., & Earnest, G. W. (2001). Supporting professional growth through mentoring and coaching. *Journal of Extension* [On-line], 39(4) Article 4RIB1. Available at:

<http://www.joe.org/joe/2001august/rb1.php>



## **6. The Hudson Employment Report: Why People Walk: 2005 Retention Initiatives Report**

“While a certain level of turnover is to be expected and even encouraged, employers may be overlooking other crucial strategies that affect their retention of top talent. First, they may have to recalibrate their expectations to reflect declining organizational tenures. Because half of the workforce plans to switch companies within the next five years anyway, companies who can extend an employee’s tenure by one additional year stand to dramatically reduce turnover costs. The cost to replace an employee varies dramatically, but some estimates put that number to be as high as 150% of that person’s salary.

Our data suggests that organizations might improve retention if they effectively address key retention issues other than compensation and benefits.

Companies who ranked low on opportunities for advancement and manager relationships had the highest incidence of employees who were actively seeking another opportunity.

Mentoring programs, 360 reviews, job rotation and leadership training are just a few of the mechanisms to address these factors.

Organizations can also take further action to help improve retention by engaging employees for feedback. While only 36% of companies conduct internal surveys to find out the pulse of their employees, a majority of workers say they would participate if given a chance. In fact, 72% of those whose companies offer surveys say they always participate. Employees can provide valuable feedback on what you do well and where you can improve, but you have to ask.”

<http://us.hudson.com/Portals/US/documents/White%20Papers/Hudson-employee-retention-initiatives.pdf>

## **7. Keys to Successful Mentoring Relationships –Byington**

Mentoring is an effective method of helping inexperienced individuals develop and progress in their profession. Extension staff have many opportunities to mentor volunteers and other community partners. The keys to establishing a successful mentoring relationship include creating a relationship of trust, clearly defining roles and responsibilities, establishing short- and long-term goals, using open and supportive communication, and collaboratively solving problems.

<http://www.joe.org/joe/2010december/tt8.php>

## **8. Enhancing Extension Employee Coaching: Navigating the Triangular Relationship – Franz**

A successful coach knows the difference between coaching, mentoring, and supervising. Coaching focuses on the individual and his or her context, with little advice or counsel given by the coach who may not be in the same occupation as the coachee. A mentor, on the other hand,



holds the same occupation as the employee and treats the mentee as a friend who garners advice and counsel from the mentor with more experience in and perspective on the occupation. Finally, the supervisor focuses on the employee's fit within the organization. The needs of the organization are privileged over the employee in this relationship (Parsloe, 1992).

<http://www.joe.org/joe/2008october/tt1.php>

- 9. Peer mentoring = A process where there is mutual involvement in encouraging and enhancing learning and development between two peers, where peers are people of similar hierarchical status or who perceive themselves as equals.**

McDougall M & Bettie R (1997). Peer mentoring at work: The nature and outcomes of non-hierarchical developmental relationships. *Management Learning*, 28, 423-437.

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