

Basic Employee Management for Weatherization Directors

Effective Strategies for Managing Stress

- Recognize the signs of stress and fatigue
- Strengthen your peer network
- Use paid time off (PTO)
- Take breaks
- Focus on overall wellness (physical, emotional, spiritual)
- Delegate some of the management responsibilities or on-call duties
- Disconnect from work (when not on-call)

Areas of Employee Work Performance that Benefit from Coaching

- Organization
 - Paper and digital files
 - Tools, equipment, and vehicles
- Client interactions
 - Maintain professionalism: a balance of friendly, compassionate care without overpromising
 - Encourage peer learning. For example, a staff member who has good rapport with the client takes the lead in communications for that particular job
 - Provide training on compassion fatigue and ways to combat it
 - Help staff calm down from difficult client interactions
 - Help them identify solutions
 - Role play
- Improve communication between field and office staff
 - Offer “ride-alongs” – increase office staff understanding of field staff work and promotes client connection
 - Identify technical training opportunities for field staff

Build A Culture of Care and Promote Good Mental Health

- Be a role model
- Encourage open discussion
- Maintain an open-door policy
- Invest in your employees’ development
- Acknowledging accomplishments
 - Meeting tight production targets
 - Handling of special cases
 - New certifications
 - Share positive client feedback

Characteristics of Successful WAP Employees

- Compassion for individuals and families with limited income
- Cultural competency: ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures
- Maintains safe work environment
- Understands and follows written policies and procedures
- Commitment to continuous professional development
- Curious to learn about the technical aspects of the work
- Respectful of the sensitivities of entering clients’ homes and asking difficult questions
- Able to maintain confidentiality
- Resilience and ability to avoid “compassion fatigue”

Essential Practices of Effective Coaching for Improving Performance

- Start with the positive – what went well
- Focus on the performance and not the person
- Ask open-ended questions
- Provide strategies
- Invest in training of non-technical staff who frequently respond to client concerns
- Emphasize core values that guide client interactions: patience, professionalism, and courtesy
- Have a policy about when to escalate an issue
- Encourage setting realistic expectations and not over-promising
- Manage progress and accountability

Training for Success

- Track certifications and ensure timely renewal
- Mandate training in accordance with the Grantee's Training and Technical Assistance (T&TA) plan
 - New employee training
 - Current technology training
 - Remedial training
 - Required safety training
- Provide opportunities for staff initiated professional development
- Monitor and enforce quality and production for work assignments

- Regularly inspect the work
 - On-the-job training
 - Training-focused quality checks
 - Formal Quality Control Inspector (QCI) visits
 - Mentoring
- Analyze data and track trends
 - Client complaints
 - Quality Control (QC) data

Motivate and Retain Good People

- Recognize staff for ideas and contributions
- Acknowledge accomplishments
- Share positive client feedback
- Foster frequent, open communication among staff
- Offer professional development opportunities
- Create a healthy work environment
- Invite employees to develop and improve policies (creates ownership)
- Distribute work fairly
- Cross train staff to relieve monotony and make covering shifts easier
- Offer progressive time off packages that allow staff to recover from stressful weeks
- Encourage staff to use PTO to recharge
- Provide regular pay increases to reward performance (as budget allows)

