

6.3 Interview Assignment

I met with our institutional training officer and a functional unit manager. With the functional unit manager, we discussed a lack of teamwork between case managers. She agreed there was some division, but it was more dependent upon the individual and individual relationships. She believed staff morale, work ethic, and a lack of leadership were the problem. Training was not a viable solution to fix the problem, as we already have received the training and tools, they were just not being utilized by everyone. She believed better leadership, communication, and accountability were good solutions to the problems, but with low morale, and no buy-in, case managers do not really wish to work as team. Working on communication skills and leadership skills could help with these barriers.

The institutional training officer discussed with me the issues of a gap between administration and line staff. He believed there was an issue, but this was decreasing some with the use of our new Corrections Way training and ENGAGE meeting process. The problem is administration not realizing what happens on the line and vice versa. He believed working together more and admin staff visiting every area and every person would help with this. Training could be an option to increase communication and realization, but it is more of a refresher needed than a learning plan. Everyone could benefit from learning more about this topic. There are barriers with time, staffing, and understanding. Admin staff sometimes forget where they came from. We need to find the time and make time to break away and go see staff.

We also discussed a lack value and teamwork between departments. He agreed this was an issue, more so than anywhere else he had ever worked. ENGAGE and Corrections Way were helping with this, but not that much. The problem arises from us getting in our own shell and staying busy with our own work that that is all we focus on. Teambuilding training and communication basics training were possible solutions. He also believed more social events, shadowing of other areas, and trying to see the

big picture could help as well. Everyone could benefit from these solutions. Again, time and staffing were barriers, as well as onboarding. Many new officers are quickly adapting the negative attitude of seasoned staff. To combat these, we need to expand our vision as individuals, see how what we do affects others, be more accepting of mistakes, and recognize and celebrate success. This also includes celebrating others who may have received a promotion or award we wanted for ourselves.

Teamwork Workshop Learning Proposal

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Teamwork is the most important part of any successful workplace. Every staff member is needed for the institution to run seamlessly. Without even one person, the institution could face issues with productivity, hostility of offenders, and even lower staff morale. Each department believes they could run the place without any help. Custody believes non-custody caters to offenders and non-custody believes custody tries to create problems. Without better teamwork and communication, morale will remain low and a division will always exist.

The learning plan will be provided to all corrections staff. Everyone can benefit from learning the roles of other departments and how each intersects with another. Administration will also benefit as they will be reminded of the role positions play within the institution and how they can help staff in those roles. Line staff will benefit from learning the roles and responsibilities of administrative staff as well.

Prison culture is unique and slow to change. Historically, behavior while one is incarcerated was the focus. Order was maintained in any fashion needed. Now the Department is focused on reentry into society and providing offenders the tools to be successful. This has hindered some staff relationships. Custody believes they are there only to enforce the rules and maintain order. Offenders should do what they say no matter what. Non-custody has shifted their focus to motivating offenders to do better, explaining right from wrong, and teaching correct behavior. This has caused a rift between the two sides. Administration contributes to this rift by setting different goals for each group and assigning tasks outside of job roles, impeding on staff cohesion.

A gap analysis was conducted on the issues of teamwork between custody and non-custody and the division between administration and line staff. It was discovered these gaps do exist and need to be addressed to all staff. Barriers exist in achieving the goals, one being time. Corrections is a busy environment. Even when staff are scheduled for training, it is not guaranteed they will be able to attend. It depends on if staffing levels are met. Staffing levels have been critical for some time now and have led to custody working overtime and non-custody working in a custody post. The willingness of staff to learn

and work as team could also hinder our goals. Administrative staff sometimes forget where they came from and forget the work that must be completed for a goal to be met.

To achieve our goals, we must combat these barriers. The institution can be placed on a modified lockdown for the days of the training so staff can attend. Offering the training on different days will also help with time and security as the institution will not have to be locked down for consecutive days. Timekeepers will need to ensure staffing levels are met by accepting volunteers to work the custody posts or utilizing the mandatory overtime list. A modified lockdown will be useful as well. Willingness to change and work as a team must come from within the individual. Administration being on board and utilizing the training will help line staff see a change and become more willing to change. A reminder of the roles and responsibilities will assist everyone in understanding and bridging gaps.

The learning solution is team building training with an emphasis on communication, department roles, and valuing each other. This training will help staff learn how to better communicate with each other. Communication is key and without it, operations do not run smoothly and effectively. They will learn the roles of the various departments and how that affects their own responsibilities. Learning the responsibilities of other departments will help learners understand how that department plays a part in making the institution run smoothly and how they can help that department be successful. This learning plan also works to instill a sense of value for each department and each role staff plays. Knowing you are valued will help build staff morale and allow staff to find their purpose.

The first goal is to understand the roles everyone plays. Some staff members do not realize how important the role of another is and how it affects their everyday work life. Understanding the roles and discovering what would happen if that role was eliminated will help the audience appreciate that department. They will also learn how they can assist that department in being successful.

The second goal is effective communication. When communication is lacking or non-existent, every department suffers. In this goal, participants will learn how to communicate effectively and the

benefits of effective communication. Various communication styles will be discussed and how best to communicate with each style. They will also discover how their communication can affect someone else's mood, role, teamwork, and communication.

The third learning goal is working together as a team to achieve goals and why being a team player matters. Here, participants will learn the benefits of working as a team as well as the possible consequences if they do not. Real-life examples will be given. Participants will work on their team building skills to increase their teamwork and understanding. They will work in various groups and scenarios to see how being a team player helps make the institution a success while also learning how lack of teamwork can hinder operations.

The fourth learning goal is learning to value each other and how to communicate appreciation. When people do not feel value, morale and security are lowered and work becomes sloppy. Staff find it hard to realize their purpose when they feel taken for granted. Participants will work towards learning ways to better communicate appreciation and why it is important. Ways to increase appreciation will be provided along with participants examining how often they praise and encourage staff. Exercises will be completed to work on these skills and job aids provided on ways to express appreciation.

This training will be provided in a workshop, classroom format. For the workshop to be successful, members from every department will need to be involved in each session. Having members from every department allows for each participant to receive a better understanding of how that department affects their job duties and how they can help that department. Administrative staff may need to participate in more than one session so they can be represented and hear the feedback from participants.

The workshop will be led by an outside instructor so no bias occurs. Ideally, this instructor would be outside of the department entirely. This may not always be practical, however, so instructors from other institutions or the training academy may be utilized if necessary. The instructor will serve as a guide to the participants. They will provide the information and guide participants to the answers rather than

providing them. Participants will be in charge of their own learning and encouraged to discover and construct new meaning from the material.

The instructor will evaluate the learning through the exercises to ensure comprehension. Surveys at the end of the course will be provided to evaluate the effectiveness and the material. Follow-up surveys will be given throughout the following months to track any changes made as well as the usefulness of the material. Change in staff morale will be monitored by the institutional training officer through direct observation and interviews conducted with randomly selected staff.

Constructivism is used in this workshop. Constructivism is about creating new meaning from experience. The experiences provided in the workshop will give participants new material and allow them to construct their own meaning. They will work to transform their learning and current practices into a teamwork model. They will learn together as a group and grow together throughout their journey.

Social cognitivism is also utilized. The main goal to learn the new behavior of teamwork and the role they play in the teamwork model. They learn about the roles others play and interact with others to create a teamwork model. They observe the behaviors of others through the exercises to help increase their learning. The instructor serves as a guide for participants. All these factors assist the participants in learning from their social setting and how to utilize their new learning.

The Department needs a change in its employee culture. For far too long employees have been focused on their own role and have been reluctant to work as a team. This learning plan provides the framework for a teambuilding workshop that will help bridge this gap. Employees will learn about the roles of other departments, how and why each role is important, communication skills, how to work as a team, and how to value others. This learning plan aims to diminish the division between custody, non-custody, and administration, and help the department move forward as one team. Teamwork can change the negative prison culture we currently face and increase morale and security for everyone.

6.5 Presentation



Teamwork

Why it is needed in the Department of Corrections



Teamwork is something you hear about all the time, but yet you do not see often in your day-to-day work. What if all that changed?



Why is lack of teamwork of problem?

- Increased staff assaults & uses of force
- Lower staff morale
- Decreased feeling of appreciation
- Decreased desire to work
- Lower staffing numbers
- Increased overtime



Lack of teamwork can be devastating for any business, but especially for the department and its employees. Without teamwork, we leave ourselves vulnerable to an offender game. We increase the chances of staff assaults, uses of force, and contribute to lowering staff morale.

With low staff morale comes a terrible work environment. We create an atmosphere where you feel you can't trust anyone and sometimes you don't even want to come to work. You feel lonely, stuck in your box, feeling like you and your opinions and work don't matter. It leads to lower staffing numbers and increased overtime since staff do not wish to stay working here and some do not want to even interview.

No one should ever feel this way. We should work together to accomplish our shared goals, listening to each other, and encouraging each other to do the best you can. With teamwork comes a better working environment for all.



So how can we fix this problem? By working together each and every day.

Working together helps us achieve our goals, maintain safety and security, and shows we are a combined force to the community and to the offenders. With teamwork, we all stay on the same page, knowing what is happening in the institution and what we need to do to continue and/or improve those efforts.

Increasing our communication will also help us solve the problem. Lack of communication can present a divided front to the offenders. Offenders are able to get away with things that compromise our safety and the security of the institution. We all have the shared goal of coming home every day. Communicating with each other will help us achieve that goal.

Showing your appreciation for the work someone does is by far one of the greatest solutions. We often tell people we do not feel appreciated and valued in our job. But how can we ever expect that to change if we don't tell others the same thing? Show your appreciation to others for what they do. Tell me "thank you" and encourage them when they are feeling down. We are all working together, not individually.

Often we do not know everything a department is responsible for and we don't consider the consequences of not having that department. By understanding the roles and responsibilities every department plays, we can increase our teamwork. You may find a way to do things better, but without knowing who is responsible for something, we can't fix the issue.

What we need to do

- Increase knowledge
- Increase understanding
- Increase communication skills
- Increase teambuilding skills



So what do we need to do to achieve this? We need to increase our knowledge and understanding of each other, the various departments, and ourselves. We need to work on learning how to work with people who have a different personality from us. We need to increase our understanding of what each department and staff member does so we know how we could help them. We need to learn about ourselves and see what is holding us back from working as a team. We need to work on better communication skills. Understanding how others communicate is as important as understanding how we communicate. Learning to work as a team and building our teamwork skills will help us to make teamwork an everyday habit.

Benefits of teamwork

- Operations run smoothly
- Better communication
- Achieving the mission
- Value



Teamwork makes a business run smoothly. Without it, things could come collapsing down around us. One person cannot do everything, as much as we would like to think we could. We need each other, now more than ever. The culture is beginning to change within the department and we could be the example for the rest of the state. Teamwork will help bridge the gaps we see between the different departments and it will help us to be more successful.

With teamwork, we can keep operations running smoothly and effectively. This increases safety, security, and staff morale. Smooth operations also means less animosity, less uses of force, and less paperwork all around.

With teamwork come better communication. Better communication allows us all to know and understand what is happening in our work and ways we can work together to fix it. Lack of communication has always been in issue. Working as a team will help us to better communicate with each other and bring us closer together in our professional relationships.

Improving lives for safer communities is our mission in DOC. Teamwork is the best way to achieve this goal. With teamwork, we not only improve the lives of the offenders, but also ourselves. We create a safer work environment and home environment since we are working together to rehabilitate the offenders.

With teamwork also comes value. We should always strive to value each other and show our appreciation for others. This does not happen in DOC often, but with teamwork, we could turn that around. Who doesn't want to hear they are doing a good job more? Working as a team provides you more opportunity to hear this as well as tell someone else.

How to solve the problem

- Teambuilding workshop
- Teambuilding exercises
- Self-evaluation
- Feedback



So how can achieve all of this? Through a teambuilding workshop! Teambuilding skills are created when we get to know each other and understand what the other person needs. Throughout this workshop, you will learn:

- The roles and responsibilities of each department and how it affects you
- How to increase your communication and communication styles
- How to work together as a team and why it matters
- How to value each other and why this is so important

The workshop is comprised of learning, job aids, self-examination, and group exercises. You learn together and with each other, not on your own. A member from each department will be present in each session so you receive a well-rounded knowledge and group. You will also be able and encouraged to provide feedback to the other departments of changes they could make to help increase teamwork.

Goals of the teamwork workshop

- Better understanding of roles and responsibilities
- Effective communication
- Teambuilding skills
- How to value and show appreciation



What are we going to get out of this learning solution?

- Better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each department and how their role affects our job
- How to effectively communicate with each other and how we communicate ourselves
- How to work together as team and continuing working as a team after the workshop
- How to show you truly value and appreciate a person's role and how to communicate this effectively

Achieving these goals will help us work as team and become one force.

What do we need to know to make it work?

- How to effectively communicate
- How you can help other departments
- How to be a team player
- How to show appreciation



To create a successful team environment, you need to work towards mastering the skills learned in the workshop.

To effectively communicate eliminates any doubts in a conversation. It helps each person to understand exactly what is happening, how to fix it, and the role they will play. Communicating with each other is an important start, but making sure we communicate effectively is what will turn everything around.

Knowing the importance of the roles every person plays shows us what would happen if we didn't have that person. We can learn how to make their jobs easier while they work on making ours easier too. We know how we can help them be successful.

Imagine what could happen right now



Remember what happened at Crossroads a few months ago? Their offenders created a largescale disturbance, shutting down operations for hours and destroying millions of dollars in state property. Short staffing contributed to this, yes, but imagine how things could have been better if they had this workshop. Imagine if something like that happened right now here at SECC.

DOC employees are often disgruntled, unappreciated, and have no desire to come to work. But what if that changed? What if you helped start that change?

What could happen if we started working together as one rather than separate departments? What if we communicated more with each? What if we said “thank you” a little more often?

Imagine what could be



Our offenders would not be so upset like those at Crossroads because they would know exactly what is expected of them and the consequences they could face. Every department sharing a common goal would show the offenders we are one. You would not have to worry about someone backing you up because you would have the comfort of knowing they have your back.

Employees would be happier, feel good about doing their jobs, have a sense of accomplishment at the end of the day, and would even want to come back tomorrow.

We can be the example for the state. We can show them how to prevent uprisings and how working as a team makes work a better place to be. Using the skills learned in this workshop, you could change someone's life. You can help ensure everyone goes home safely at night and wanting to come back the next day. After all, that is what we all want, right?