WSAC Onboarding Project

**Agency:** Washington Student Achievement Council
**Partners and Customers:** Recently hired or transferred state employees; all agency staff

**Project Impact**
WSAC created a structured employee onboarding process, resulting in cost avoidance savings due to improved new hire retention (estimated at 82 percent) and improved productivity (estimated at 70 percent).¹

**Impact to Washingtonians:**
Alignment of culture, processes, and resources. New employees adopt smoothly for full integration into the agency; increased morale. All staff members are positively impacted. Operational efficiencies that include accurate and timely processes of payments/distributions for customers and colleges.

**Project Summary**
WSAC’ s onboarding processes have varied across divisions. New employees sometimes felt they were under-informed about agency culture, processes, and resources, which could negatively influence readiness or efficiency as they learned about the agency and the role of their position.

**Problem Statement:**
Previously, about 25 percent of new or transferred hires received orientation using a structured onboarding plan, compared to our target of 100 percent, which we wanted to reach by January 2018.

**Improvements made:**
In December 2017, the agency implemented a consistent agency-wide approach to orient new or transferred employees to the organization’s culture, processes, and resources. The new onboarding process aims to familiarize all new and transferred employees with the goals of the agency, and to provide them with the necessary skills, knowledge, behaviors, and tools to become effective contributors to agency work.

The process also includes designating an ambassador, a current staff member who is coached in being a mentor and first point of contact for new employees. Ambassadors welcome new staff and provide a brief agency overview prior to formal orientation with human resources staff.

Implementing the new onboarding process involved several specific improvements:
- Established the ambassador role and process.
- Developed checklists for new employees, supervisors, human resources staff, and ambassadors.
- Created overarching culture and connection plan.
- Implemented three-week check-in with all new staff members.

¹“The True Cost of a Bad Hire,” Brandon Hall Group
Strategic Lean Project Report

Project Results (Efficiencies & Improvements Leading to Cost Avoidance Savings)

Safety

Since December 2017

→ New staff are educated in all health and safety matters and oriented to health and safety resources

Cost

Since December 2017

→ Staff are welcomed with the necessary equipment, materials, and information to do their work accurately and efficiently from their first day

Quality

Since December 2017

→ All staff have the same information and resources to support and improve work products and processes

Time

Since December 2017

→ Incoming staff are ready to begin their new position on the first day

Customer Satisfaction

In July and December 2017, twelve newly hired staff members participated in surveys regarding the project. 100 percent said they were extremely satisfied with the final version.

→ Staff are happy with the newly created plan

Employee Engagement

Since December 2017

→ New staff are familiar with agency goals and are better equipped with the tools and information to work well with others

Additional project documents – here (will create a PDF of the folder on the intranet)

Next steps: survey to supervisors to measure the effectiveness of the checklists

Project Details

Date improvement project was initiated: 4/1/2017

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Report reviewed and approved by: Rachelle Sharpe, Deputy Executive Director

Reporting Period: July through December 2017