

Published by Pinellas County Human Resources. Issues for previous months are found at [www.pinellascounty.org/hr/leadership](http://www.pinellascounty.org/hr/leadership). Any employee may request a new issue be emailed each month by [subscribing to Leadership Notes newsletter](#).

OCT 2019

## Spreading the Wisdom

What is all the talk about social capital?

[Dictionary.com](http://Dictionary.com) states that the definition of social capital is “the interpersonal relationships, institutions, and other social assets of a society or group that can be used to gain advantage.”

We hear about networking and the importance of building relationships in workgroups and organizations. What does this really mean, and how do we measure the health of the relationships? How do we influence social capital as a positive leader?

Let’s look at the employee lifecycle.

### Attraction/Selection/Orientation of a New Employee

- Do we have jobs advertised in a way that promotes interaction and the importance of collaboration with others within the organization as well as the public?
- Are our workgroups operating in a way to include the newcomer and entertain new perspectives?
- Is everyone focused on helping the newcomer, and supporting their needs for orienting to a new team?
- Is the new employee provided with information to be able to effectively fulfill the duties of their role; and do they have feedback on whether they are hitting the mark?
- Are there opportunities for the new employee to provide input on processes and fully use their capabilities in their new role?

### Retention and Talent Development

- As a leader, it is important to share information across, up and down the organization. Do you model and encourage sharing knowledge and wisdom?
- Do we make sure we are passing along information that is important organizational knowledge? Many are retiring with a huge amount of knowledge in their heads. Are we collecting and retaining this information while the people are still here?

- Are workgroups set up and working in a way that we benefit from sharing knowledge, leading to better decision-making and more options created by more people providing input?
- Is competition healthy, meaning do we all celebrate when something goes well (share the credit) and debrief/learn from challenges (refrain from blame)?
- Are opportunities for development shared to give all successfully performing employees a chance to learn and grow?

### Promotion and Succession Planning

In addition to technical skills needed for positions, it is just as important to assess the whole package of employees in every position. The areas that contribute to success in any position (along with the technical qualifications) are interpersonal skills and self-awareness.

- A. Technical Skills – For current and future needs of the position
- B. Interpersonal Skills – Negotiation, conflict management, communications, customer service, and problem solving
- C. Self-Awareness – Does the individual have an accurate understanding of their strengths, weaknesses, impact on others and abilities to understand differences in people?

In our current employment environment, there are more open positions than qualified people to fill them. In order to remain a viable employer of high performers, we need to focus on what will set us apart as a desirable employer. Every researcher in the field of organizational psychology will share that workplace culture is the most attractive part of any job search. This means we all play a part in creating the positive experience in all phases of the employee life cycle.

This reinforces the adage we often heard in our elementary years ... “plays well with others.” Take that a couple of steps forward ... “shares knowledge and seeks input from others.”