



ND Child Welfare Supervision

THE "OTHER 10%"

As a Child Welfare Supervisor, your official job description may include a multitude of tasks: directly supervise staff, train new staff, schedule and assist with agency coverage, supervise data collection, work with Administration on planning and evaluating rules and training, and the list goes on. What many job descriptions don't entail is the "Other 10%" that is also included.

The "Other 10%" is unfortunately a large percentage of what you do in every day and while it says only 10% of your time should be spent doing these "other tasks" it consumes a great deal of your time, your focus and emotions some days. It is laying at night worrying if every decision you were a part of, in the 80+ cases you supervise, were the right ones. It is listening to staff who need to vent about their ever growing "to-do" list even when your own "to-do" list is a mile long. It is being the one to ask staff to modify how they do their jobs thanks to changes in policy, rules and statutes when they have just mastered the "old" way. It is putting on a smiling face and promising staff that "everything will be okay" and then doing everything that you can possibly do to make sure that is true.

The "Other 10 %" can also be enjoying those milestones with your staff, and encouraging them to reach their goals. It is beaming from ear-to-ear when a child who has been waiting, is adopted into their forever family and you know they will be loved. It is also coming to work every day knowing that with each family, each decision you make, you are doing the best you can to make a difference in your small part of the world.

What you need to know is that you are making a difference-EVERY DAY. Yes, you are busy, and most days feeling overwhelmed, but you are showing up, and you do make a difference!

"A good leader inspires people to have confidence in their leader. A great leader inspires people to have confidence in themselves."

Anonymous

adapted from: OCWTP The Forum "What's in a Job Description?" February 2015



THE IMPORTANCE OF RETENTION OF WORKERS IN CHILD WELFARE

Pull Factors: Why do People Stay?

1. Characteristics of the worker:

- Education & Training to do their job
- Sense of Mission & Investment
- Desire to help
- Self – efficacy

2. The Nature of the Work:

- Realistic job preview- They knew what the work would entail before hire.
- Match/"Goodness of fit" with the work
- Found the work challenging
- Diverse Tasks
- Autonomy/Decision making

3. Co-Workers:

- Need for affiliation- they feel like a team
- Supportive & Competent- they can rely on each other

4. The Workplace- Agency Climate:

- The agency has a clear vision and mission
- Affirmation and Recognition for quality work
- Learning organization- they value training and model that throughout

5. The Agency and Community

- Community engagement
- Positive perception of the agency

6. Supervision:

- Practice Support- it is okay to make mistakes as you learn

- Learning Support- opportunities are provided to learn and expand knowledge base
- Mentoring is present and is a part of the daily work
- Emotional Support

Push Factors: Why do People Leave?

1. The job does not meet the expectations
2. Mismatch between the person and the role
3. Mismatch between the person and the organizational culture
4. Insufficient opportunities for growth and advancement
5. In sufficient recognition or appreciation
6. Conflict with direct manager/supervisor
7. Dissatisfaction with pay.
8. Stress.
9. Lack of work and life balance
10. Loss of confident in the organization, particularly the leadership.

National Child Welfare Workforce Institute in Chapel Hill, North Carolina





RESOURCES FOR SUPERVISORS

Conduct a "Stay Interview"

Find out what will keep a worker in their position. Below are some suggestions for questions in a Stay Interview. Share the questions with the worker prior to the interview. One idea is to incorporate some of these questions into your yearly evaluation as a way to gauge worker satisfaction and what could ideally be different and prevent turnover in staff.

1. What will keep you here? What might entice you to leave?
2. Are we fully using your talents and skills?
3. What would you like to be doing a year from now?
4. Give an example of one or two incidents that will make you want to stay on this job.
5. What about this job makes you either jump out of the bed or hit the snooze alarm?
6. If you were to win the lottery and resign, what would you miss most about this job?
7. If you had a magic wand, what one thing would you change about this work team?
8. What would be the one thing about working here that would cause you to leave if it changed?

Adapted from: National Child Welfare Workforce Institute. (2017). Leadership Academy for Supervisors: Learning Culture Strategies. Albany, NY: University at Albany.

Additional Resources

Did you know that workers who experienced inconsistencies between agency practice and training were nearly five times more likely to leave their job early? Did you know that each additional family case assignment a worker received in the first week of practice increased their odds of departure by 10%. For more information click here: [Preventing Early Departures](#)

"Positive people create more positive people around them." How do we boost morale during times of constant change? Encouraging and modeling a positive outlook during difficult times is extremely important. For more information click here: [Boost Staff Morale](#)

You are not the only one that should be invested in retention of workers. To find out how peer support can be an influencing factor in whether a worker departs prematurely, click here: [Peer Support and Workforce Retention](#)

How do we build resilience in workers? To find out more about how to keep workers motivated and supported, click here: [Worker Resilience](#)

For more information on resources for supervisors and workers in the child welfare workforce, click here: [the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute's website.](#)

Child Welfare Supervision is published by the UND Children and Family Services Training Center under the sponsorship of the Division of Children and Family Services, North Dakota Department of Human Services. It is intended for all supervisors of Child Welfare in the State of N.D. Comments should be directed to the Children and Family Services Training Center.

