The Organizational Development & Engagement (ODE) area of Human Resources provides learning and development opportunities to promote employee engagement. ODE staff aim to help create a productive and successful organization that uses best practices to attract, develop and retain employees.

Engagement Encouragement

Engagement Excellence Success Stories – UNT System ITSS Telecom Services

The last step in the Engagement Action Planning Journey is to Spotlight success. To keep momentum, teams should celebrate small wins towards reaching team goals. To spotlight UNT World’s success, ODE is running a series called Engagement Excellence Success Stories. This series spotlights departments across UNT World that are actively doing things to improve their team’s engagement levels. Each success story will show different avenues in which teams can focus on engagement outside of taking the annual Gallup Survey.

This week ODE would like to spotlight UNT System ITSS Telecom Services.

**Engagement Mean Score:**
- Direct Reports: 4.81,
- Department Roll Up: 4.61

**Interview:**
Telecommunications Manager, Edward “Bryan” Daniel

**Interesting Fact:** Most people on the team have been a part of the department for a decade or more.

The ITSS Telecommunications team consists of three specialty areas: voice communications, cabling infrastructure, and administrative support and contracts. Bryan has been managing the team for 2.5 years and states that the team’s genuine respect for each other’s expertise and dedicating time to having honest conversations contributes greatly to their team’s engagement.

How often have you talked to your team about engagement?

**Bryan Daniel:** We don’t intentionally talk about engagement- it is something that in my observations has been the DNA of my team even prior to my arrival. So, in many ways, engagement seems organic- a by-product of how we work and treat each other daily.

What do you feel has been the one thing you or your team has implemented to improve team engagement levels?
Bryan Daniel: Team huddles, at least once a week we have a full team huddle but just a chance to share what’s on our plates, talk openly about our challenges. If the agenda is light, it becomes more informal, it allows us to talk about ideas and socialize. During remote work, it’s been crucial to have. Most of our huddles usually start off business and ends informal with a lot of sarcastic humor.

Our teams enjoy one another, they really do like being around one another. There is a lot of trust and value for one another built-in. So, we have conversations and they are not always happy conversations but we feel comfortable talking things out as a group. As a supervisor I think that is super important, having that feedback loop there…it’s not just communication, we often use the word communication, but we’re having conversations and to have those honest conversations that respect and trust have to be there.

During COVID we had to drastically change how we operated- extended hours, rising to challenges of a new directive from leadership- sometimes that can be hard- so we have talked as a team about how can we rise to this challenge- even when hitting a brick wall. Sometimes it’s an individual having trouble with a specific task or sometimes it’s an ask of the team in general that was tough, we have had to figure out ways to work through it.

I have a mix of individuals who have been here a long time- some core and common characteristics that they all have are that they respect each other and they respect each other’s area of expertise. When we have an individual who is overloaded, other people will pitch in and help without any prompting from myself as their leader.

Is there an element of engagement your team is focusing on improving now?

Bryan Daniel: I am trying to be more intentional about providing more consistent feedback at the individual level when it comes to the individual growth with a specific role that they play within the team.

What advice do you have for other teams across UNT World about improving the level of engagement on the team?

Bryan Daniel: I don’t know if it’s much about advice. When I joined my team, I tried to accentuate what was already existing in the culture. We are not just communicating, we are listening. People use “good communication” a lot, but its conversations- it implies that we are listening, we are trying to act upon it. If you can create a platform within your team where that’s the intention. It is not just top- down, but it is a feedback loop. We are trying to meet a need and solve a problem together. Sometimes the team will come to me and present challenges to me but we are figuring it out together. Conversations take time, it takes dedicating some time to it and some follow-up.

If you have any questions, send an email to Organizational Development and Engagement at ode@untsystem.edu.

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**Featured Webinar of the Week**

**Engagement Action Planning**

An Engagement Action Planning session is an important next step that every team should have following a review of their engagement survey results. This session will review what engagement means, demonstrate a few ways to conduct an engaging conversation with your team, and review how to create an action plan based on those conversations.

**Our goals during this session are to:**
1. Learn the key concepts of employee engagement and be able to articulate those concepts to others
2. Discover how to effectively prepare for a productive engagement discussion with your team
3. Identify helpful communication techniques to encourage transparent dialogue during the engagement action planning session.
4. Discuss strategies to keep your team focused on engagement after the action planning session is over

**Featured 5 Minute Wisdom**

The ODE 5 Minute Wisdom Podcast is available on Spreaker, Spotify, and Apple podcast platforms.

CLICK HERE to view all of our podcasts on the ODE website.

**ePAR**

Electronic Payroll Action Request Training

Do you need to know how to submit an ePAR (electronic payroll action request)? Not sure when an ePAR is required, or where to go access the ePAR system? ePAR is the method to enter and/or update employee and position details in the HR/Payroll system.

This training will cover:

- What is an ePAR?
- When is an ePAR used?
- Demonstrate how to create: Salaried hire, hourly hire, employee change within, termination, vacant position change

**Live Training**

Please see our upcoming live trainings via Zoom below:

**Introduction to ePAR**
**When:** Tuesday, June 29, 2021 • 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM  
Thursday, July 29, 2021 • 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

**Online Training**

Please access the on-demand trainings now available via UNT World Learning for an introduction to the ePAR process and several of the most commonly-used tasks:

**Introduction to ePAR**
Salaried Hire  
Task Hire  
Hourly Hire  
Employee Change in Department  
Termination
Vacant Position Change

**FLUID Training**

Employees will have tile-based access to personal information, payroll, benefits, employee resources, etc. In addition, the new Fluid platform will give you the ability to personalize tile location, and is easier to navigate on mobile devices.

These courses will provide an overview of the *Employee Self-Service* home page, *Manager Self-Service* home page, and time and labor functions in the new PeopleSoft Fluid environment. At the conclusion of these courses, users will know:

- What is Fluid
- Important terminology
- How to access and navigate the platform
- How to use Time and Labor functions

**Employee Self-Service**
**Manager Self-Service**
**Time and Labor Training for All Employees**
**Time and Labor Training for Supervisors and/or Timekeepers**

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**Family Medical Leave / Sick Leave Pool**

**Parental Leave Training**

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides certain employees with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year. Sick Leave Pool provides up to 720 hours of paid leave for catastrophic injuries or illness. Parental Leave provides up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for birth and adoption for those who do not qualify for FMLA.
Join us to learn more about these leave types and what you as a supervisor/manager need to know and do.

In this session you will cover:

- What is Family Medical Leave, Sick Leave Pool, Parental Leave?
- Who is FMLASource?
- What is My Role as a Supervisor?
- What is Human Resources Role?
- What Responsibilities do my Employees Have?

Please see our upcoming Live Trainings Via Zoom below:

**Manager Overview of Family and Medical Leave, Sick Leave Pool and Parental Leave**

*When:* Tuesday, July 13, 2021 • 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM