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 Excellence Success Stories – UNT Human Resources

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 Human Resources.

Number of People in Department: 22

Engagement Mean Score: Direct Reports - 4.69, Department Roll Up - 4.54

Interview: Executive Director of Campus HR, Katy McDaniel

Interesting Facts: The team has “Motivational Mondays” where every Monday someone on the team shares a motivational quote or sometimes a video to start the week off on a positive note.

Katy has been a director of HR for 2.5 years, previously Katy worked as an HR Manager and interim director for 3.5 years.

How often has your team talked about engagement?

Katy McDaniel: Engagement is a regular focus. We spend a lot of time collaborating and coaching departments across the entire campus on engagement as well, so it’s embedded in our work. We take a deep dive into our scores and we analyze the areas we’ve made progress in, which tells us what we’re doing is effective. In areas where we have seen a decrease from prior year scores, regardless of the percentiles, we examine those areas where we can do better. Once we figure out our top and low areas we have a committee of people collectively come together and figure out what our two focus areas for the year are. The committee then gives a presentation of recommendations to the whole team on action items to improve, and then the whole team comes together to discuss priorities to focus on. So, it is a collective commitment for every single person to engage in intentional activities to get us there.

I think one of the misconceptions about employee engagement is that it’s up to the leader, but the truth is, that everybody plays a role. We visit engagement and discuss it at least on a monthly basis - the truth is -
if you don’t keep it as a priority and keep it at the forefront of your discussions, because it’s not one of those outputs in your work, it’s easy to let it slip.

**What do you feel has been the one thing you or your team has implemented to improve team engagement levels?**

**Katy McDaniel:** If I had to select only one thing that I think has been paramount in our engagement levels, it is the sense of community that we have established in the team. Our team is built on the foundation of collaboration and communication. If you walk through our work area any given day you’ll see that the team is constantly talking with each other, they bounce ideas off each other, they pick each other up when the load’s heavy or when somebody’s going through a personal challenge.

The biggest factor for a sense of community is relationships. As a leader, I think it is important that you intentionally encourage the development of those relationships among your team. I encourage peer-to-peer development, such as coaching staff on different situations based on each other’s past work environments and work situations. Every monthly staff meeting we have a fun fact to identify similarities or learn new things about each other. Questions are aimed at trying to kick off those special bonds. Everybody needs that person at work that they can vent to, everybody cares about a sense of community, so I try to cultivate a good environment.

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

**Katy McDaniel:** Q1 “I know what is expected of me at work.” Our team grew and previously centralized services and resources were deployed to the campuses and so that affected everybody’s role. What we’ve really been working on since February is alignment and clear communication about job responsibilities and expectations, cross-training, and development in roles. So, we’re focusing on fostering a high level of cross-collaboration, breaking down any silos, and understanding of what each function does.

Our other focus is Q5 “Someone at work cares about me as a person”. We have new teammates so we need to capitalize on opportunities just to show the team that they are cared about as people. We have also had a larger focus on diversity and inclusion and learning around what someone in my office called, “our journey to racial literacy”, exploring topics like colorism and culture appropriation. One of the things that I’ve talked about is that I want you to have a place that is a great place to work so you can bring your whole self to work.

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

**Katy McDaniel:** Be intentional, engagement is not an item we can check off the to-do list. As a leader, it is important to set the tone and establish the “WHY”. It is not about the score on the survey, it’s about being a great place to work. I lead by the golden rule, “what is the ideal environment I want to work in and what do I not want.” Once your team understands why engagement’s important and what your vision is, it’s incumbent on the leader to keep the conversation going. Make sure that time is set aside for specific activities, show that you are in support of those engagement activities and eventually, it takes a little bit of time, but it becomes part of the culture of the team - that is the only way you move the needle.

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**

**Managing Remote Workers**
The workplace is changing rapidly. A large and increasing number of employees work remotely. Given the impact of the pandemic, the increasingly global nature of today’s organizations, and improvements in collaboration technology, this trend is likely to keep gaining momentum. By improving your ability to manage off-site employees, you will help ensure that your team is cohesive and productive.

Our goals during this session are to:
1. Discuss the benefits of remote working
2. Identify the tools that must be in place for the remote working relationship to be effective
3. Describe the role that trust and communication play in the success of a remote working relationship
4. Review strategies to help supervisors deal with common challenges associated with remote work

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: 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
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

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