A Managerial Guide to Creating Meaningful Work

Overview

During unique circumstances such as university-required work from home managers may seek opportunities to identify meaningful work for employees, even if it may look different from their normal day to day duties. This guide includes a number of suggestions that managers may explore during such circumstances.

Suggestions for Creating Meaningful Work

- **Remote Problem Solving** – Create small teams to solve a work-related problem through Microsoft Teams. Teams will take time to research (individually or collectively) and form possible solutions to be reported to the supervisor at the end of a defined period. These problems would come from supervisors who are working on long term plans or responding to evolving issues on campus.

- **Online Professional Development Training Courses** – Assign relevant professional development courses to employees through SkillSoft, the Professional Development Pathways Program (online courses only), or other relevant resource sites. Some possible topics:
    - Customer Service
    - Communication Skills
    - Conflict Resolution
    - Diversity and Inclusion
    - Collaboration and Team Building
    - Compliance (HIPPA, FERPA, Title IX, etc.)
    - OSHA
    - Food Service Safe

- **Research, Read, and Respond** – Assign specific readings (or broad topical areas for research) related to the employee's job (i.e. sanitation, food safety, etc.) and then provide a given timeframe for the employee to respond with their reflection of the reading (e.g .a ranking of 5 highlights and any suggestions for implementation in their work). Follow-up via phone to discuss recommendations or ideas.

- **Read Professional and/or Wellness Books** – Assign relevant books, other readings, recorded presentations, etc. addressing the employee's area of work or general wellness. Require notetaking and/or reflection responses (e.g. biweekly responses) and host a discussion via phone.
    - Helpful tip: There are many ebooks and audio books in SkillSoft's library.

- **Draft or Update Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)** – Assign an employee(s) to edit, draft, and/or update standard operating procedures, employee manuals, or other in-house documentation relevant to the employee's job. Email, video, and phone conferencing can all be used in addition to online collaboration tools such as OneDrive if multiple employees' input is needed. Computer accessibility may be required.

- **Review Manuals for Work Equipment** – Assign a review of manuals or standard procedures for equipment used in the employee's job. Ask the employee to respond with suggested improvements in operations of those procedures or create training quick sheets for new users.

- **Read Reference Materials Bargaining Unit Positions –** Ask employees to read reference materials for other bargaining unit positions for which they may interested in testing for in the future. This also helps to benefit the university to have employees ready to fill gaps in the higher skillset trade positions when retirements happen.