



Growing Leaders, Amplifying Voices: Building a Stronger Workforce from Within

BY PHIG PARTNERS



SHAPING TOMORROW'S PUBLIC HEALTH TODAY.



BY US, FOR US: CENTERING EMPLOYEE VOICE TO DRIVE DEPARTMENTAL ENGAGEMENT & IMPACT

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CITY OF EL PASO – DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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SESSION OVERVIEW

- Why employee voice matters
- City of El Paso DPH's approach to employee engagement
- Lessons learned and tools you can use
- Interactive reflection and takeaways

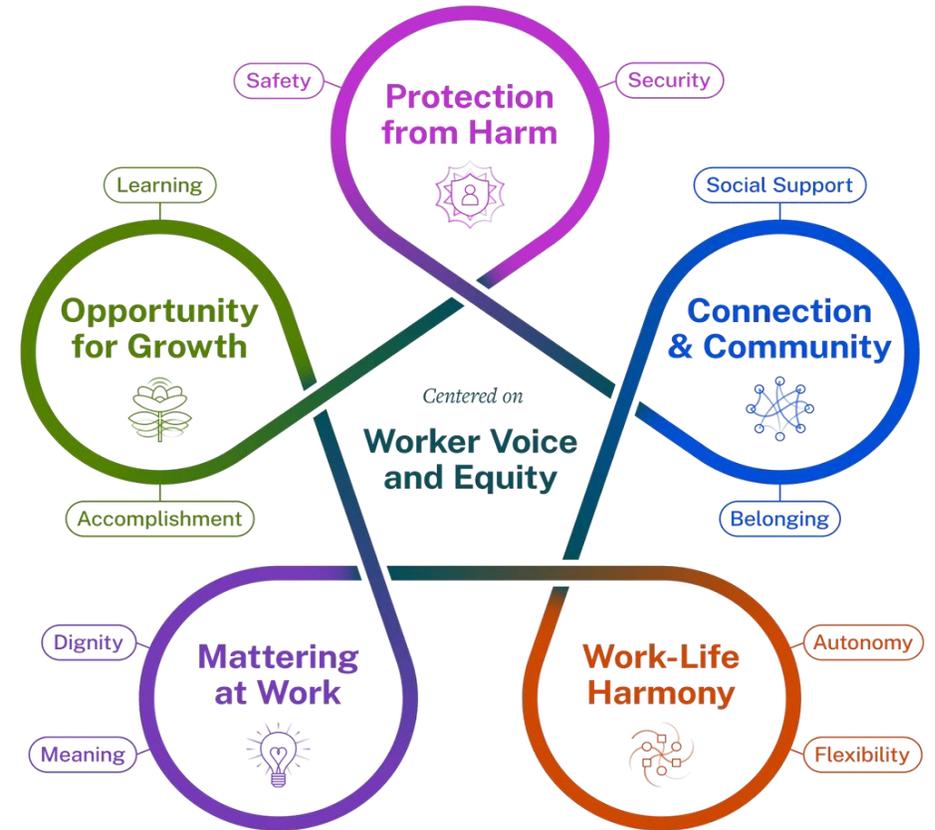


LEARNING OBJECTIVE

By the end of this session, participants will apply inclusive engagement approaches and communication strategies that elevate employee voice, foster a culture of shared ownership, enhance transparency, and sustain motivation across multidisciplinary teams.

WHY CENTER EMPLOYEE VOICE?

- Higher engagement = higher performance and retention
- Builds trust and psychological safety
- Encourages innovation and agency



LISTENING IN PRACTICE

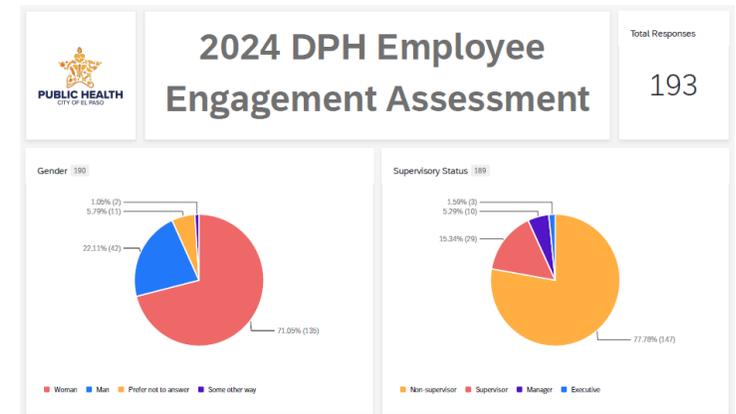
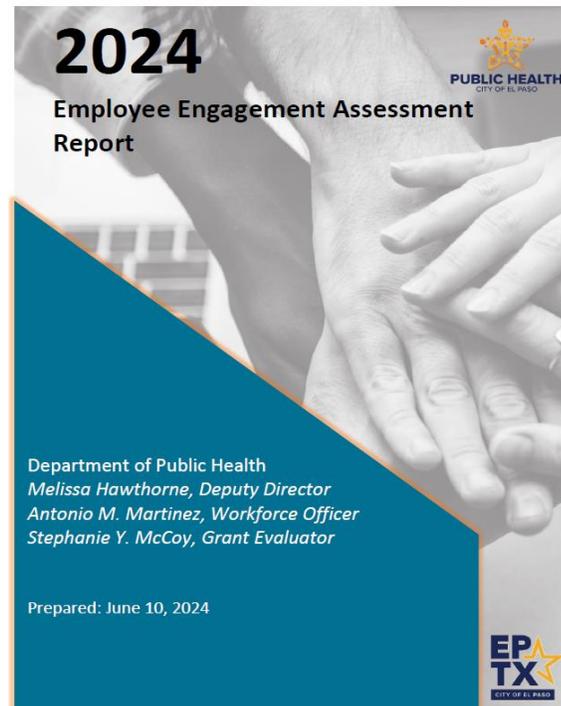
2024 DPH Employee Engagement Assessment (EEA)

- 193 staff participated, 72% participation rate
- Results highlighted three priorities:
 1. Increasing and improving communication
 2. Enhancing training and professional development
 3. Continuing to foster collaboration across programs

ASSESSMENT TO ACTION

Continuing Conversations

- Discuss EEA results, engage workforce in problem-solving
- Ensure ongoing communication and transparency through PHIG Quarterly Calls
- Open calls for all employees to share perspectives



ASSESSMENT TO ACTION

Collaboration & Progress Monitoring

- **Co-create an employee engagement plan with an interdisciplinary workgroup**
- Provide updates on the workgroup and employee engagement plan in future PHIG calls

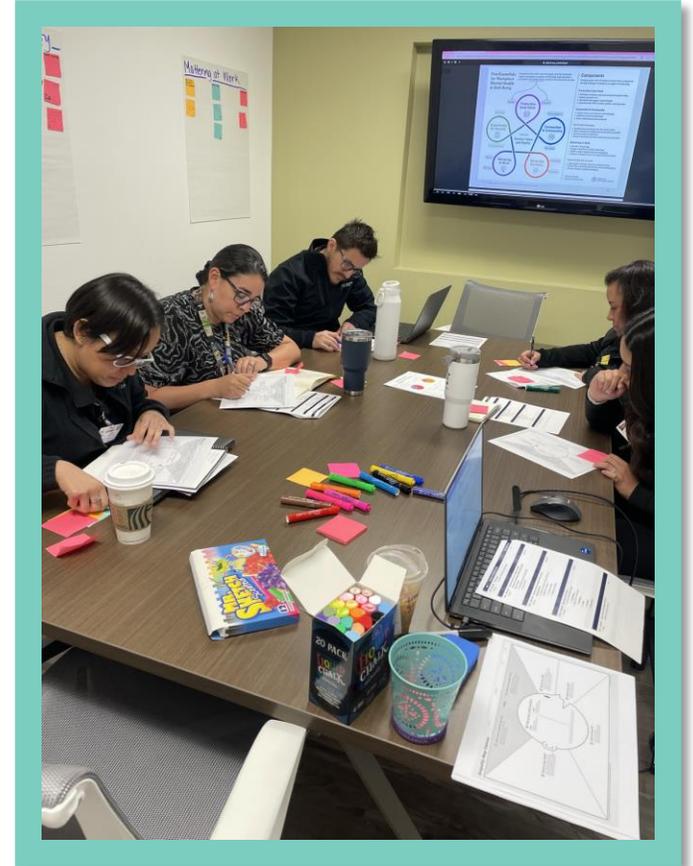
WORKGROUP RECRUITMENT

- Application for a 12-month commitment
- Criteria included people who could commit to:
 - 1-2 hours/month for meetings
 - 1-2 hours/quarter for team-building (optional)
 - 4-6 hours/month for project work
- Scoring and selection processes
 - Initial review
 - Double-blind review
 - Final selection



MEMBERS & STRUCTURE

- Staff across levels and disciplines
- Rotating meeting roles
- Workgroup values and expectations
- Design thinking strategies and activities
- Resources for offline collaboration



KEEPING THE MOMENTUM

- Celebrating incremental wins and resiliency
- Reinforcing shared goals and values at workgroup meetings
- Communicating consistently, not just when there's a crisis

LESSONS LEARNED

- Invest in building team culture and expectations
- Meet people where they are, maintain flexibility
- Co-creation builds ownership, even with simple tasks

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

- Team charters and inclusive meeting templates
- Resources for offline collaboration
 - Microsoft Whiteboard
 - Google Jam Board
 - Lucid Chart
- Design thinking activities
 - Gallery Walks
 - Empathy Mapping
 - Mind Mapping



People and Roles

- **Team Members**
 - Yumi Dorame - Data Analyst, PHIG
 - Roman Garcia - Field Epidemiologist, Epidemiology
 - Annett Gonzalez - Nurse Practitioner, TB & STD
 - Edith Gutierrez - Nurse Practitioner, TB & STD
 - Gaby Herrera - Program Coordinator, HEP
 - Tony Martinez - Workforce Officer, PHIG
 - Stephanie McCoy - Grant Evaluator, PHIG
 - Jamie Rocha - Health Educator, HEP
- **Rotating Meeting Roles**
 - Scribe
 - Timekeeper
 - Icebreaker
 - Closing Activity



Common Goals

- Build trust to identify priorities and deficiencies within the department.
- Enjoy the developing process, have fun!



Values

- **Guiding Principles**
 - U.S. Surgeon General's Framework for Workplace Mental Health & Well-Being
- **Group Values**
 - Accountability
 - Mindfulness
 - Open-mindedness
 - Honesty
 - Dependability



Group Agreements

- **Accountability**
 - We are responsible for our words and actions
- **Mindfulness**
 - Respectful to others' experiences and opinions
 - Being present
- **Having an open mind**
 - Employee-centered approaches
 - Representing all employees
- **Honesty with tactfulness**
- **Dependability**
 - Helping and supporting each other



Logistics

- **Communication**
 - No emails
 - Utilize Teams Group Chat
- **Decision-Making**
 - Having group discussion first
 - Unanimous voting
- **Meeting Frequency & Duration**
 - Monthly, in-person
 - 1-1.5 Hours



Outcomes

- **How do we measure success:**
 - Surveys
 - Open-ended questions
 - Trigger words
 - Testimonials from internal staff, community members, and clients
 - Recognizing great work from individuals and teams



PUBLIC HEALTH
CITY OF EL PASO

Team Name: DPH Employee Engagement Workgroup



DPH Employee Engagement Workgroup Meeting			
Program/Division:	PHIG	Scribe:	Tony
Date:	05/09/2025	Timekeeper:	Yumi
Time:	1:00-2:00 PM	Icebreaker:	Annett
Location:	Innovations Room	Closing Activity:	Edith
Workgroup Purpose: By March 2026, the workgroup will co-create at least three employee-driven strategies to improve communication, professional development, and collaboration across our public health workforce.			

Workgroup Values



Accountability



Mindfulness



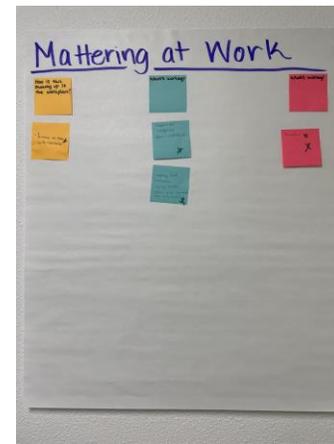
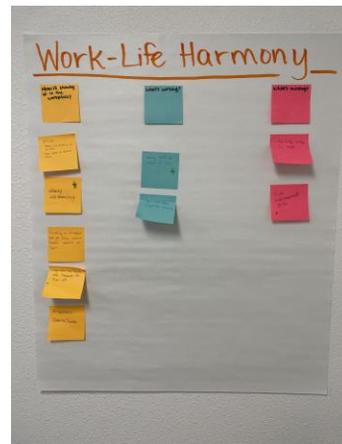
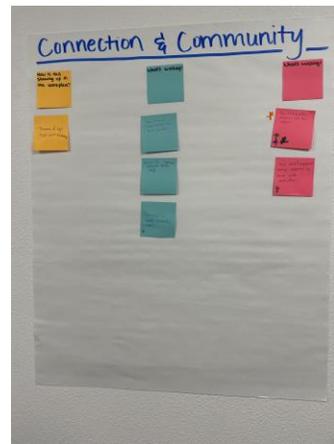
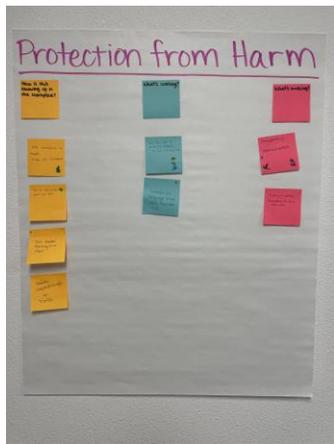
Open Mindedness



Honesty



Dependability



Brainstorm - U.S. Surgeon General's Framework for Workplace Mental Health & Well-Being.

How is this Essential showing up in the workplace?

What's working?

What's missing?

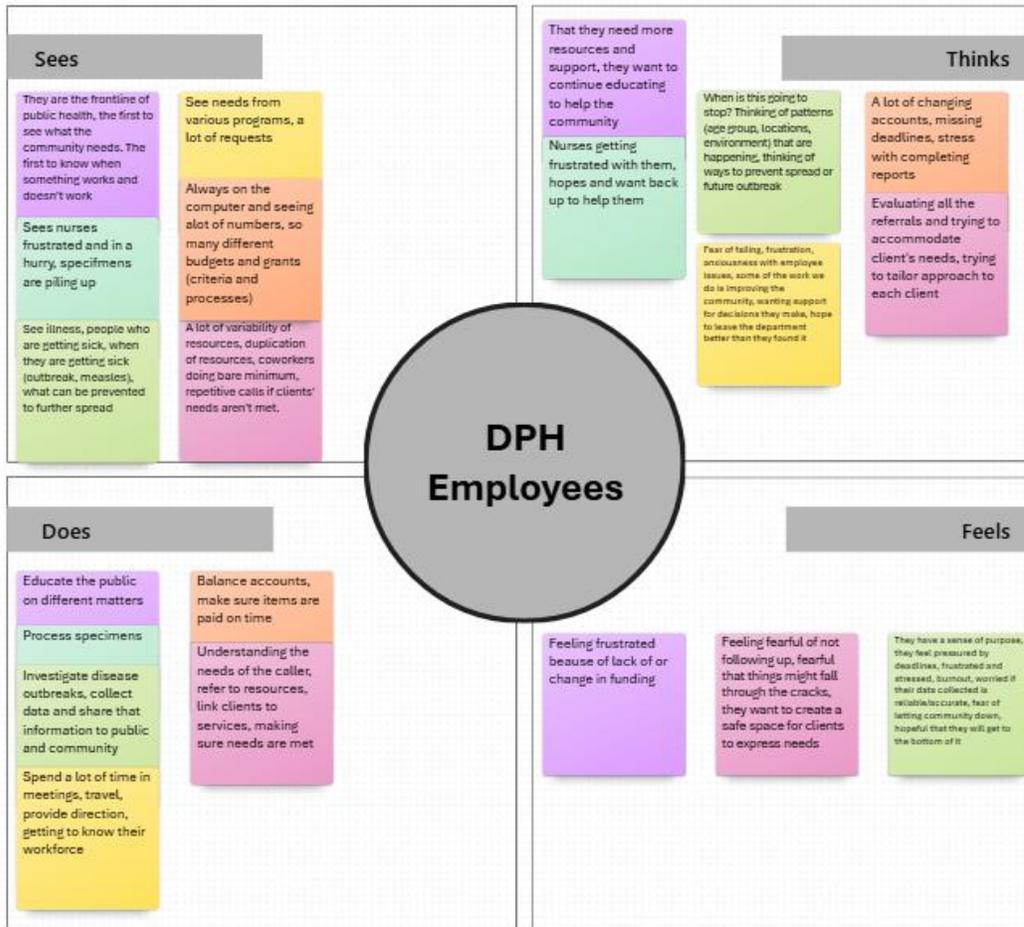


Add a star if a post-it resonates with you or stands out to you.

Protection from Harm	Connection & Community	Work-Life Harmony	Mattering at Work	Opportunity for Growth										
<p>Off available to staff. Code of Conduct. </p> <p>We are sharing the good and the bad. </p> <p>Team members checking in on others. </p> <p>Safety walkthroughs and drills.</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>	<p>Some team teams are practicing employee the best way they can. </p> <p>Team makes an encouraged to take sick days when sick. </p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>	<p>Transparency and communication. </p> <p>A balanced leadership. Accommodating but still on track leader.</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>	<p>Presence of high trust work relationship. </p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>	<p>Some teams are supporting each other during this time.</p> <p>Part of agency routine group meetings.</p> <p>Teamwork is creating incremental wins. </p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>	<p>Team building within programs and other programs. </p> <p>More staff engagement among programs to bond with each other. </p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>	<p>It's not. People are checking out of work. Some people are absent at times.</p> <p>Adding telecommuting. </p> <p>Creating a schedule and patient flow when staff leaves at 5pm.</p> <p>Supervisors are flexible with team makes on time off. </p> <p>Zero harmony. Drama/ossip.</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>	<p>Having staff go home on time.</p> <p>Supervisors make supported decisions. </p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>	<p>No fully remote for staff.</p> <p>Time management skills. </p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>	<p>Decisions are made with teammates. </p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>	<p>Supervisor recognizes team and individuals. </p> <p>Keeping staff motivated. Making awards. When they finish book presentations. </p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>	<p>Recognition. </p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>	<p>There is limited room to grow career wise. Trainings are available to improve skills.</p> <p>Promoting EP Learners and Linked in Learning. </p> <p>Leadership training for all. </p> <p>Training opportunities: Conferences and EP Learners.</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>	<p>More people are trained or possibly trained.</p> <p>Team members use TAP. </p> <p>Peer-to-peer mentoring informally. </p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>	<p>Opportunity for other clinic staffs to engage in committees/team meetings. </p> <p>No clear advancement opportunities.</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p> <p>Add Post-it</p>

Empathy Mapping - DPH Employees

How might we increase engagement among DPH employees by addressing needs, barriers, and opportunities?



Health Educator

Fiscal Accountant

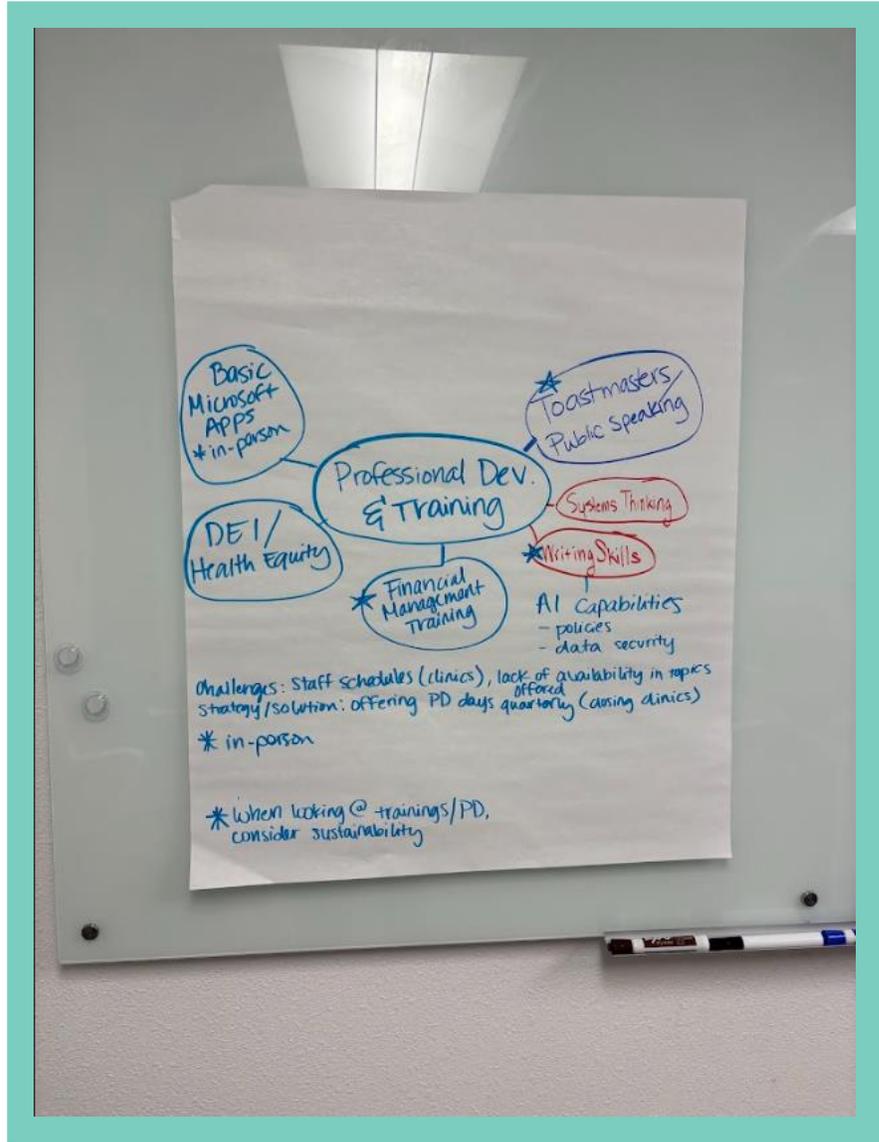
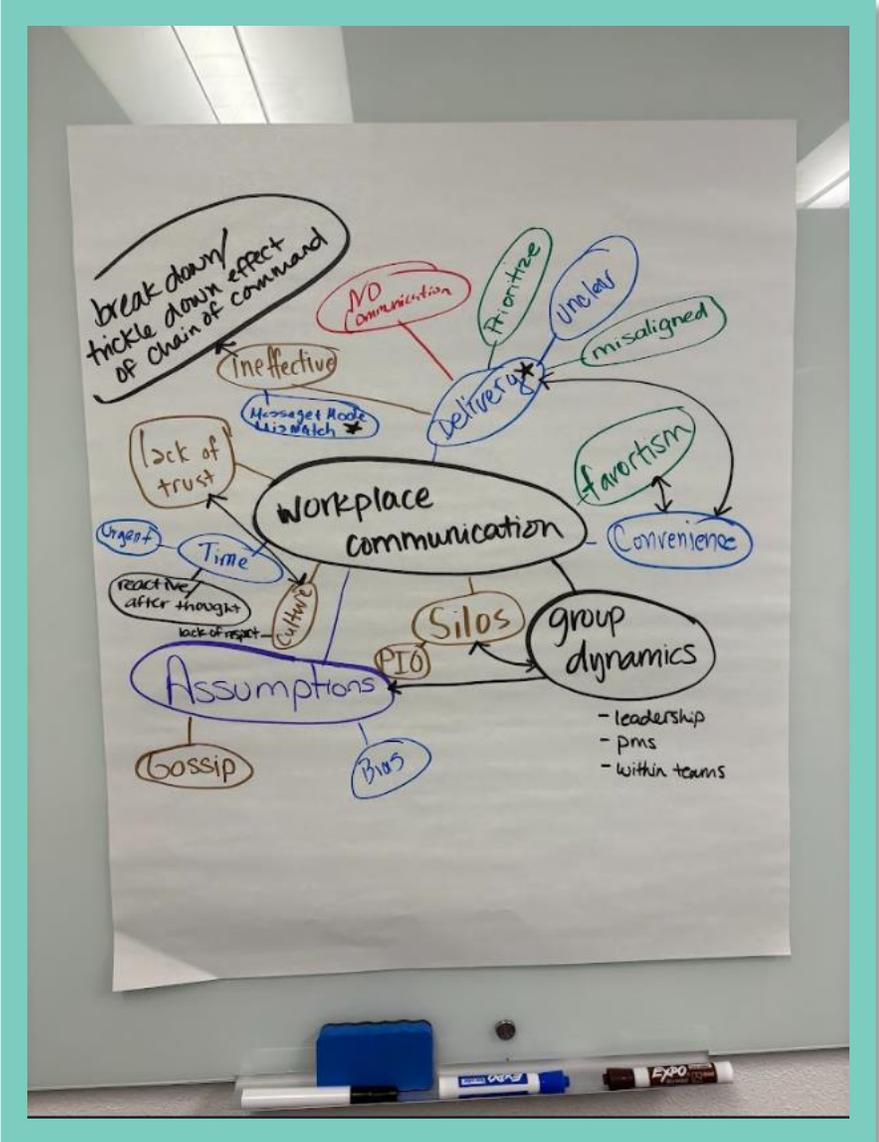
211 Call Taker

Program Manager

Leadership

Lab Tech

Epi



THINK – PAIR – SHARE

Think (1 minute)

At your seat, reflect on:

- What is one current challenge your team/organization is facing?

Pair (4 minutes)

Turn to a partner and discuss:

- What is one way employee voice could inform or solve that challenge?

Share (5 minutes)

3-4 pairs share what they discussed



FINAL THOUGHTS

Centering employee voice isn't just about listening. It's about responding with **care** and **clarity**.

THANK YOU!

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Leading the Way Leadership Program

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What is Leading the Way (LTW)?



- An 8-month initiative
- Cultivates emerging leaders through dynamic professional development.
- Develop, connect, and challenge Department of Public Health (DPH) managers to grow and improve key leadership skills while building strong, effective professional networks.
- Guided by the theme “Iron Sharpens Iron”
 - Rubbing blades (experiences, knowledge, strategies)
 - Forging alliances (networking, building relationships),
 - Making edges (competencies, skills) sharper and more efficient.

Driving Innovation in Public Health Leadership



- Explore creative problem-solving and continuous improvement
- Implement innovative leadership approaches

Building a Strong Public Health Foundation



- Strengthening leadership competencies through self-awareness and teamwork
- Enhancing collaboration and networking across the agency
- Results-Based Accountability (RBA) framework to drive measurable, sustainable improvements
- Completing the Associate Public Manager(APM) certification for supervisory and management skills



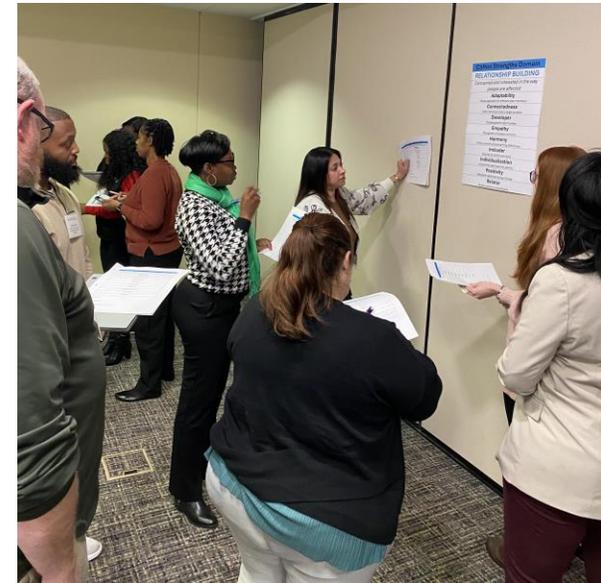
APM in South Carolina

- South Carolina Department of Administration offers an APM certification cohort program to all state agencies
- "Interesting coursework and practical work-related discussions geared toward state government processes will help you acquire the skills and knowledge you need to be a successful supervisor in today's changing workplace."
- Allotment based on the number of employees
- LTW participants receive all APM training and certification through the Department of Administration PLUS their additional courses

Leveraging Strength-Based Leadership for Growth



- Apply personal strengths to improve influence and team engagement
- Build resilient, adaptive leadership strategies



Peer Networking & Collaborative Projects



- Peer connections built during this phase become lasting support systems.
- Direct impact on internal agency collaboration and workforce development culture
- Team Presentation Project



Team Project Topics

- Taking Care of Our Future – A Discussion on Teen Mental Health
- Quality Assurance & Evaluation in Public Health
- Building Bridges to Remove Barriers
- Maternity Mortality – Preventable Tragedies/Unacceptable Losses

Thank you!

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