

Strategies to retain, recognize, and reward Clinical Trials Office Team Members

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Background

During 2019-2022, the Clinical Trials Office (CTO) of Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center (LCCC) at Georgetown University experienced a 61% average staff turnover, seeing 100% turnover in some functional areas. The Lombardi CTO sought to formalize onboarding, training/education, and professional advancement of CTO staff in order to recognize and reward staff members, while progressing to higher levels of job responsibility, increase job satisfaction, and retain skilled CTO staff members.

Goals

1. Recognize and reward CTO staff who demonstrate the required elements of the Career Advancement Plan (CAP)
2. Provide staff with clear career trajectory
3. Increase job satisfaction for CTO team members
4. Improve onboarding, training, and education for CTO team members
5. Retain skilled CTO team members



Members of the Lombardi CTO Team, May 2022

Solutions & Methods

Analysis of Staff Exit Interviews & Staffing

2022 Exit Interviews (n=24)
Likert-Scale Rating: 1, Poor to 5, Excellent
Training: "Average" M=3.1 (STD 1.3)
Career Growth: "Average" M=3.0 (STD 1.1)

2022

Training and Onboarding

JAN: Open to Recruitment
CTO Training & Education Manager

MAR-DEC: Collected Exit Interview Data for Lombardi CTO Team Members

- **Recruited, Hired, Trained:**
28 Team Members
86% Backfill, 14% New Positions
- **Average Onboarding Time:** 4-6 months

2022 Average Turnover: 35%

2023

MAR: Assessed & Updated Lombardi CTO Foundational Training and Onboarding

MAY: Deployed Condensed 8-week Lombardi CTO Foundational Onboarding/Training

SEP: Hired Lombardi CTO Training & Education Manager + Further Refined Foundational Onboarding/Training

OCT: Deployed Refined Foundational Onboarding/Training Curriculum + Continuing Education Curriculum

2023 Average Turnover: 15%

2024

2024 Average Turnover: 7%
Average Onboarding Time: 2 months

Lombardi CTO Career Advancement Plan (CAP)

Q4 2021: Continued discussions with Medical Center Senior Leadership regarding CAP

APR: Lombardi/CTO Leadership presented strategy and plan for Lombardi CTO CAP

MAY-AUG: Lombardi/CTO Leadership reviewed all current positions/salaries, cross walked with HR provided job profiles, & adjusted as necessary

AUG-SEP: Lombardi CTO Administrative Director developed CAP, reviewed with Lombardi Leadership

OCT: Lombardi/CTO Leadership present CAP to Medical Center Senior Leadership

DEC: Lombardi/CTO Leadership + HR reviewed proposed CAP

JAN: HR Grading/Compensation Reviewed & Approved Finalized CAP

MAR: Launch of Lombardi CTO CAP + Formation of CAP Committee

MAY: 1st round of Lombardi CTO CAP Promotions

Refined CTO CAP to decouple recognition bonus to increase ability to recognize CTO team efforts in real-time

NOV: 2nd round of Lombardi CTO CAP Promotions + Lombardi/CTO Leadership updated CTO CAP

JAN: Inclusion of volunteerism within CAP + updated to rolling submission process

MAR: 3rd round Lombardi CTO CAP Promotions

Outcomes

- Lombardi CTO and Human Resources leadership reviewed, and adjusted as necessary, all position descriptions to ensure standardization and accuracy of job profiles, grading, and compensation
- Successful deployment of the Lombardi CTO CAP
- Increased levels of promotion of Lombardi CTO team members initiating CAP, across all levels
- Increased staff retention with a 20% average staff turnover in 2022/2023, reduced to <5% in 2024 (<10% vacancy)

Lessons Learned

Prior to implementation of this plan, there was a lack of key requirements for job satisfaction and staff retention within the Lombardi CTO. The Lombardi CTO CAP helped to mitigate high levels of staff turnover ($\geq 20\%$), in conjunction with a formalized Lombardi CTO training and education program.

Future Directions

1. Refinement of professional behaviors and activities for well-rounded CAP applicants (e.g., volunteerism),
2. Plans for additional levels of achievement with increased staff retention,
3. Continued efforts to synergize onboarding, training, continuing education, and CAP activities
4. Formalized staff satisfaction surveys

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