

Creating Career Progression Within CTO Regulatory Department Despite Organization Structural Restraints: the Senior Regulatory Compliance Coordinator Role

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1. Background

Indiana University Human Resources launched a new job framework redesign in 2021. The redesign aimed to modernize the university's classification structure and organized jobs into consistent functions, families, roles, and levels. While the reorganization streamlined roles and responsibilities from a university human resources perspective, several research roles within the IUSCCC Clinical Trials Office (CTO) found themselves without a clear path of career progression if they had the desire to remain within the same department. Specifically, the CTO regulatory team was comprised of eight regulatory compliance coordinators (RCCs) and one regulatory team manager without any direct upward mobility. Despite their job satisfaction, staff retention became a struggle when staff sought career growth and were met with the restraints of organizational structure. To retain quality staff and offer career growth, a senior RCC role within the regulatory department was created with higher level responsibilities while remaining within the existing job framework.

2. Goals

- Incentivize staff retention while also fostering career development within the Indiana University Human Resources job framework
- Create senior regulatory compliance coordinator role
- Define higher level responsibilities that would differentiate the senior role from the junior role

3. Solutions and Methods

- Identified deserving members of regulatory team that were eligible for promotion and could handle higher level responsibilities
- Outlined additional duties, tasks, and responsibilities of new senior role
- Submitted justification for senior role to director of operations of IUSCCC Clinical Trials Office and Indiana University Human Resources to obtain final approval

4. Outcomes

The senior RCC role was first approved in 2022 with an additional senior position approved in 2025. Thus, making the CTO regulatory department a two-tiered team. The creation of this role allowed for the following responsibilities for tenured staff: they may serve as a mentor, advisor, educator, and resource to less experienced research compliance staff; perform quality checks and may serve as project lead on assigned special projects. Focus on job satisfaction as well as career development within the role has led to staff retention. We now have our most tenured regulatory team to date.

5. Lessons Learned and Future Directions:

As the IUSCCC CTO continues to grow, the two-tiered team model allows the regulatory manager to focus on implementing new projects and initiatives while appropriately delegating certain tasks and projects to the senior role. The creation of a structured peer-to-peer mentoring program, especially for new employees in orientation and training has provided a robust support system for junior RCCs throughout their career with the CTO regulatory team. The addition of the senior RCC role has motivated current junior RCCs to pursue promotion to the senior role. This motivation has inspired them to expand their education by pursuing clinical research professional certifications and encouraged them to take on more challenging studies that involve complicated start-up logistics. Plans to expand the role into continued auditing of new systems and processes. This can provide greater oversight during times of systems change.