Resolution 3: Enhancements to the Cornell University Onboarding Process

Abstract: The sponsors of this resolution seek positive change in the Onboarding experience for Cornell University staff of all levels.

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Whereas, Cornell University employs over 7,500 benefits eligible staff on 5 different campuses and various extension operations throughout New York State and beyond, and

Whereas, Cornell University hires/promotes nearly 1,000 new benefits eligible staff annually between ten colleges, eight schools and myriad departments and divisions spread throughout these campuses, colleges, schools and various extension operations, and

Whereas, Cornell’s onboarding have a very limited number staff that are solely responsible for welcoming and educating these staff to and about the University’s benefits, policies and many more aspects of University work, and

Whereas, current central onboarding experience is a one-hour (or more) meeting with the Onboarding team to finalize benefits and get an introduction to other systems (noting that additional time is made available if requested), and

Whereas, Cornell University relies on both central and local Human Resources organizations to coordinate with the hiring, onboarding and retention of the over 7,500 staff in addition to over 1,000 new hires/promotions annually, and

Whereas, staff members changing employee status often miss information in the transition which can greatly impact one’s sense of belonging and desire to remain at Cornell University, and
Whereas, Forbes Magazine\(^1\) states that more than four-and-a-half-million people quit their jobs in 2021, and despite the available jobs far outnumbering employable people, employers will have to compete to “not only recruit new employees, but to retain those that they already have”, and

Whereas, individual areas employ a variety of homegrown and purchased technology solutions, tracking mechanisms, onboarding requirements and other aspects of the welcoming experience, and

Whereas, benefits change as staff continue their careers over time; including paid time off, vacation balances, retirement contributions, educational opportunities, dependent care tuition reimbursement and more, and

Whereas, Indeed.com\(^2\) identifies that a “buddy system” (herein referred to as a “Belonging Ambassador”) can connect new employees with peers and colleagues to help welcome new employees, boost confidence, increase productivity and improve retention, and

Whereas, a Belonging Ambassador\(^3\) system can be staffed by volunteers and can include a formal documented process that outlines the Belonging Ambassador’s responsibilities and content to be discussed in the new employee’s first few months at Cornell University, and

Whereas, a Belonging Ambassador system would encourage the new employee to share tips, tools, knowledge, and techniques they learned from previous work experience with the goal of incorporating new ideas and technologies that enhance the organization, and

Whereas, Cornell University has a mission to focus our collective efforts on creating a campus community where individuals from diverse backgrounds and life experiences can both contribute and thrive. ([https://diversity.cornell.edu/belonging](https://diversity.cornell.edu/belonging)).

\(^1\) Carosa, C. (2022, January 28). Consider this before being a part of the 'great resignation'. Forbes. Retrieved February 1, 2022, from [https://www.forbes.com/sites/chriscarosa/2022/01/27/consider-this-before-being-a-part-of-the-great-resignation/?sh=5e2457e775b5](https://www.forbes.com/sites/chriscarosa/2022/01/27/consider-this-before-being-a-part-of-the-great-resignation/?sh=5e2457e775b5)

\(^2\) Indeed for employers. (2022). Creating a Buddy System in the Workplace Retrieved February 1, 2022, from [https://www.indeed.com/hire/e/info/buddy-system?gclid=Cj0KCQiAw9qOBhC-ARIsAG-rdn4jAwxSw5xWg1Fc7HeKEuSPzbtQp2OEknSP22AaKDM9D0fOheRFMosaAn5jEALw_wcB &aceid=\(^2\)](https://www.indeed.com/hire/e/info/buddy-system?gclid=Cj0KCQiAw9qOBhC-ARIsAG-rdn4jAwxSw5xWg1Fc7HeKEuSPzbtQp2OEknSP22AaKDM9D0fOheRFMosaAn5jEALw_wcB &aceid=\(^2\))

Be it therefore resolved, Cornell University should seek to enhance the onboarding experience and to extend it to a minimum of a one-year program of engagement with new employees and employees experiencing a change in status.

Be it further resolved, Cornell University should look to utilize a standardized technology system that would allow easy access to required, recommended and quality of life resources and information for all staff members throughout their career at Cornell University.

Be it further resolved, Cornell University should seek to implement a Belonging Ambassador system to connect staff with peer colleagues to help orient them to Cornell University processes, systems, and landscapes.

Be it further resolved, a Belonging Ambassador system should serve as a model for knowledge sharing and the incorporation of new ideas, technologies, and enhancements for the organization.

Be it finally resolved, that Cornell University should prioritize, in terms of both financial and time investments, the onboarding and retention of current and new staff members to ensure that operations can effectively attract, hire, and retain a talented diverse pool of team members to Cornell University.

Respectfully Submitted,

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