
Leadership Development Program

Overview

The Leadership Development Program is an exciting initiative developed by the Department of Workforce Services, Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and Arkansas Transitional Employment Assistance Board to address succession planning and career advancement issues at the agencies.

Purpose

- 1.) Succession planning
- 2.) Career advancement

Participants in the 18-month program attend two-day classes every other month and learn about various agency-related topics including presentation skills, the legislative process, laws and regulations, budget and the Workforce Investment Act. Each employee is required to complete a project plan that could impact a department, division or improve a program or service.

Eighteen employees participated in the first leadership class, and 33 percent have received management-level promotions.

Nomination Process

To be selected for the program, employees must have completed or currently be enrolled in a leadership training program such as the Certified Employment Manager Program, Certified Public Manager Program, Arkansas Governmental Manager Program or Arkansas Governmental Finance Manager Program. An employee can also be considered based on knowledge, skill and experience.

Division directors accept nominations from interested employees. Nominations must include a resume, listing of education and work experience, and a 200-word summary on benefits employees hope to gain from the program. Division directors review and make recommendations to the agency directors.

Kahler Measurement/Experiencing Excellence Seminar

Classes, Topics and Activities

Doyle Herndon, a master-level instructor, conducts each class using *The Leadership Challenge* textbook written by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. Division directors and staff as well as private sector employers and guest speakers also make presentations and participate in class discussions.

Class topics include the following:

- Presentation skills
- Teamwork
- Legislative process
- Agency laws
- Budget programs
- Labor Market Information programs
- Workforce Investment Act
- Arkansas Workforce Centers
- Unemployment Insurance Program
- Transitional Employment Assistance Program
- Information Technology
- Mentoring, networking and diversity
- Communication and mediation
- Customer service

Mentors

Each participant is assigned a mentor from senior management (normally a division director) who provides coaching, advice and counsel throughout the program. Mentors attend various sessions of the program and keep in contact with the person they are mentoring.

Projects

Each participant is required to complete a comprehensive written project plan that has the potential to impact a department, division, or improve a program or service. Participants are required to prepare and present an overview of their project plan to senior management. Five projects submitted by the first leadership class were selected for implementation.

- New Staff Enhanced Orientation Program
- Digital Recording of Unemployment Appeal Hearings
- Digital Document Storage and Sharing in Unemployment Appeal Hearings
- Development & Implementation of Arkansas' Interactive Career/Lifestyle Budget Calculator
- Employer Charge Unit/Combined Wage Unit

Contact Information

For more information about the Leadership Development Program, please contact Kaye Lewis, the DWS training manager, at (501) 682-1710.