STAFF CHALLENGE:
INTERACTIVE ONBOARDING USING BEANSTACK

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WHAT IS ONBOARDING?

- Different from Orientation or Training
- Can be referred to as “organizational socialization”
- Starts before the new employee’s first day
- Should last 3 to 12 months
- Webinar: The Library Employee Journey: From Recruitment to Onboarding and Life-Long Learning
  - https://www.nicheacademy.com/blog/the-library-employee-journey
Disorganized onboarding makes the organization look disorganized.

Help employees quickly become a contributing member of your team

Increases employee confidence, commitment and integration into workplace culture

Greater employee engagement

“Employee engagement is the emotional commitment the employee has to the organization and its goals.” –Forbes.com
WHAT THINGS AT YOUR LIBRARY MAKE NEW EMPLOYEES GO...?
MY OBSERVATIONS

- Assumptions about a certain level of knowledge
  - MLIS programs can be very different depending on the University
  - All libraries and all communities are not the same

- Few individuals who hold institutional knowledge.
  - Bottle neck for information, creates concerns for succession planning
  - Opportunities for favoritism, workplace cliques, and bias to impact employee success

- Organization of digital files is unique to each library

- Lack of documentation: procedures, expectations about work and organizational culture
WHAT IS BEANSTACK?

- Interactive reading challenge platform
  - Allows libraries to create challenges for patrons and staff
  - Challenges can be based on reading, reviews, or activities
  - Gamification features: rules of play, scoring points/earning badges

- When starting with the platform the Admin goes through a “Beanstack New Client Setup Challenge”
  - Step by step challenge to launch your site: Meet the Client Success Team, Review Beanstack Resources, Setup Site Options, Setup Staff Accounts; etc
BEFORE BEANSTACK...THEN AHA!

- The Struggle
  - People learn differently
  - Frequent questions on where to find resources.
  - Stuck in the weeds

- Beanstack, the solution?
  - Engagement and Empower
  - Self-Paced
  - Progressive steps/knowledge
HOW IT WENT & WHAT I LEARNED

- Staff using Beanstack reported liking the experience!
- Fewer questions on where to find documents
- Conversations felt more productive
- Staff were more confident in job execution
- More talk about higher level topics
BEANSTACK STRATEGY

- Start broad, move to specific
  - Things every employee needs to know > Things staff in this department need to know

- Brainstorm (Expect to forget things and don’t number your badges!)
  - Information needed to succeed at each job duty? (i.e. collection development, information desk, program planning, etc)
  - Define expectations around a minimum level of knowledge (i.e. Storytime standards, special collection parameters)
  - What cultural values do you want to institute? Define them in practical ways.

- Document
  - Start with the most important things an employee needs to feel successful

- Update!
  - Keep up with changes. Link or provide a path to living documents.
Beanstack is not a substitute for talking to and training your employee

- Managers should have a New Employee Checklist
- Information should still be reviewed together & regular check-in meeting scheduled

Practical experience

- Schedule time for them to observe colleagues on the desk and in programs
- Ask staff to help walk the new employee through certain processes
- Schedule meetings for staff to interact with other departments and learn how your departments work together
- Schedule time for them to observe legacy programs or help with key services, even if that will not be their main roll
- Are there opportunities for them to participate in outreach or otherwise get to know the community?
I have contacted Beanstack about using their platform and this way. They asked for a list of what might be needed to make Beanstack more functional.

- Premade badges geared toward library onboarding and/or a way to easily make badges within Beanstack
- Ability to assign challenges to specific users
- Dashboard specific to staff challenges
- Easier way to see ongoing challenges v.s. short-term challenges
- More Challenge specific badges to than just “Completion”, like “you completed the collection development level!”
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