



Voice of the Sector Findings



Persona overview

Example personas...



Gen Z Employee



Hiring Manager



Program Manager

What is a persona?

A persona is a representation of a typical type of employee inclusive of their motivations, pain points, working styles, sentiments, and preferences. Specific activities and characteristics can vary by persona.

Why is this important?

Personas show key elements of how each employee experience is defined. They uncover characteristics, motivations, and challenges, assisting in informed decision-making by accounting for how individuals think, what they feel, and what they desire, helping determine where focus should be taken advantage of. The output of the personas directly feed into the recommendations / opportunities identified for the sector.

How can organizations use this?

Personas should often be revisited and refreshed to:

- Identify areas that are critical to what matters most to your workforce
- Communicate recommendations and the rationale behind it
- Determine priority recommendations for the sector in collaboration with system partners and make justified decisions

Interpreting stakeholder personas

To **represent unique feedback**, we heard from key stakeholder groups and developed **representative personas** to personify current state experiences. These personas are:



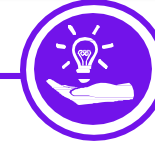
Representative

a semi-fictional archetype of a group of people; a representative sample of the workforce



Commonalities

shared experiences based on similar identification, behavioral attributes, or community affiliation



Narratives

human-like stories segmented into relevant and meaningful narratives that describe the journey



Non-exhaustive

an indicative view of a predetermined subset of a broader, intersectional population of individuals



Patterns

illustrates the red thread of need across defined groups to identify the structural patterns that help or hurt



Snapshots

reflect a point in time influenced by the current environment and existing programs and support systems

Persona recommendations overview

Each persona has 2 slides to tell their story. The **first slide introduces the persona**, and the **second slide provides recommendations tailored to each persona**, detailing suggestions gathered from focus group discussions.

Introduction to the Persona



Meet Jeremy

Motivations

- Work alongside motivated co-workers
- Enhance employee engagement and retention through effective onboarding

Pain Points

- Manage logistics such as spacing and staffing for onboarding
- Make constant updates to trainings due to frequent changes in programs
- Secure funding towards onboarding programs and employee trainings

To My Manager

What I wish you knew

We have unclear responsibilities that lead to confusion about task ownership, such as identifying the point of contact for missing new hires.

To My Leadership

One takeaway

Our leadership needs to ensure that new staff are equipped with the resources and skills they need to be successful in their roles; they need to encourage and support employees to participate in trainings.

Onboarding and Training Specialist

Jeremy is an onboarding specialist working to improve the onboarding experience within the LA Homelessness Services Sector. Jeremy wants to increase employee engagement and ensure employees feel valued and welcomed in their organizations.



Thinks

How can we ensure the training provided is directly applicable and beneficial to actual job responsibilities?

Feels

Optimistic about providing sensitivity training (e.g., trauma informed care, DEL, harm reduction etc.) across the organization

Wants

To roll out surveys and collect data to establish correlation between structured onboarding and retention

HOW WE CAN HELP:

- Develop role-specific onboarding and training tracks to cater to the unique needs of different personas
- Build sector-wide collaboration for sharing onboarding resources, training materials, and best practices

“ Crafting an orientation program that equally serves all roles, from services staff, while emphasizing company culture and tools, has proved to be challenging ”

Motivations

Key drivers that attract individuals to work in the sector

Management Needs

Expectations and support required from managers and leaders to ease their job responsibilities

Pain Points

Challenges or difficulties experienced while working in the sector

Sentiments

The ‘Thinks’, ‘Feels’, and ‘Wants’ individuals have about their roles, total rewards, organization, etc.

How the sector can improve

Suggested improvements that will increase employee morale and overall work experience

Persona Recommendations

Recruiting Lifecycle

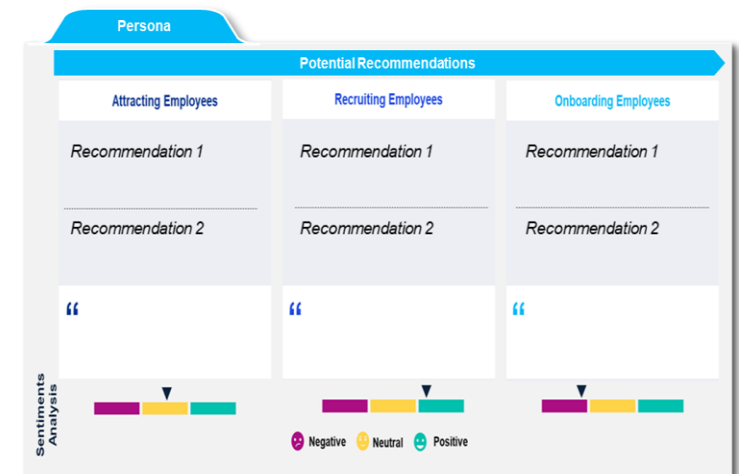
The recommendations listed span the recruiting lifecycle, covering attracting, recruiting, and onboarding

Direct Quotes

Each set of grouped recommendations is accompanied by a direct quote mentioned during the focus group discussions

Sentiment Analysis

Provided for each set of grouped recommendations which summarizes the overall feelings (negative, neutral, positive) of each persona regarding the specific lifecycle stage



**Note: Recommendations were formed from respective Focus Group participants. The repetition of potential recommendations reflects key themes we heard across multiple participant personas.*

Meet Riya



Motivations

- Help others and serve the community
- Impact decisions that benefit others
- Advocate and support through outreach
- Personal connections

Pain Points

- Lengthy recruitment process
- Lack of job-specific training
- Lack of sensitivity trainings
- Over-reliance on administrative work as compared to actual job to support unhoused people

To My Manager

What I wish you knew

Regular check-ins with my manager and general sector knowledge on how to work with clients (e.g., trauma informed care, de-escalation, mental health intervention trainings etc.) would make me feel supported.

To My Leadership

One takeaway

The older generation is retiring, and we learn from them. Our generation is moving away from the sector towards sustainable jobs. To tackle this challenge, offering flexible schedules, allowances, or career growth opportunities will attract and retain talent.

Gen Z Employee

Before joining the sector, Riya noticed there was a lot of bureaucracy around how to access services related to homelessness. She was attracted to the sector because of her **passion to make a difference, help her community and positively impact decisions being made to reduce homelessness**. Riya is interested in jobs such as Case Managers, Program Managers, Grants, and Communications.



Thinks

My peers and my voice can push the sector narrative and attract new minds and thoughts into the sector



Feels

Getting more students involved in volunteering, from high schools to colleges could help break down some stigma and create awareness about the sector



Wants

To understand the potential risks and level of on-the-job training required to interact with those experiencing homelessness

“ I love my organization and coworkers and the work itself, but don't see how I **can grow** or keep up with the **cost of living** without switching jobs ”

HOW WE CAN HELP:

- ✓ Increase **self-care perks** (e.g., wellness, discounts/coupons, pet care) would help towards employee retention
- ✓ Create **visibility into career paths** and progression opportunities for new employees entering the sector

Potential Recommendations

Attracting Employees

Rebrand Jobs

Re-brand your job postings within the sector to attract the young generation. Use welcoming language such as *“If you want to make a difference and support the community, apply for this job”*

Provide Benefits & Allowances

Provide self-care perks and micro allowances such as wellness coupons, massages, paid parking, discounted tickets, food allowance, and pet care to attract Gen Z employees

“ Increase sector **outreach through social media, flyers** etc. With social media, we can learn more about the sector and day-to-day job tasks

Recruiting Employees

Invest in Technology

Assess existing technology and invest in recruiting tools and technology to make the recruiting process easier and user-friendly especially for Gen Z candidates who have grown up around technology

Support Internal Talent Mobility

Enable internal talent mobility by leveraging transferrable skillsets (e.g., grant writers may be a good fit for communications as they could directly impact the messaging and trajectory of the type of people they target as donors)

“ **Job fair worked well** for me. I spoke with both the CEO and the hiring manager, and they found a job that was good fit for me within the organization

Onboarding Employees

Develop Career Paths & Progression

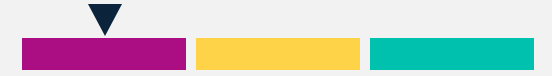
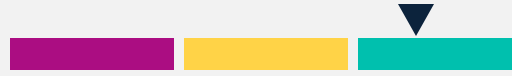
Establish clear horizontal and vertical career paths across your “difficult to retain” roles and provide autonomy for employees to own their careers

Deploy Custom Onboarding Programs

Deploy in-person peer learnings/cohort trainings/buddy programs for Gen Z employees towards sector knowledge, job-specific and sensitivity trainings as lot of employees come in as fresh graduates and require training

“ Onboarding needs to be revamped and should have more **in-depth training on the specific role** we are in, so we come better prepared to serve our clients

Sentiments Analysis



Negative
 Neutral
 Positive

Meet Alex



Motivations

- Provide service to vulnerable populations
- Empower individuals
- Provide community to individuals
- Dedication to social justice

Pain Points

- Manual processes
- Unmatched pay with expectations
- Limited funding for training and capacity building
- Unclear job responsibilities

To My Manager

What I wish you knew

My team needs career visibility, with clear pathways for growth and development, alongside effective performance management systems to enhance motivation, align with organizational objectives, and increase productivity.

To My Leadership

One takeaway

We will need more funding to build our workforce pipeline which includes attracting, training & developing employees in sector.

Hiring Manager

Alex is a manager at a prominent homeless service provider and has over a decade of experience in the social services sector. He has a desire to **make tangible differences in the lives of the homeless population**. A typical day involves managing staff concerns and support, overseeing pay and benefits, and helping ensure compliance with policies / contracts, all while navigating funding limitations and staff burnout.



Thinks

How can I support my team better to prevent burnout and help ensure their success



Feels

Overburdened due to the overlapping responsibilities between HR, Recruiters, and Hiring Managers



Wants

A benefits package that is more inclusive and meets the needs of our potential and current employees

“ Consistent

communication across all organization levels has been the most helpful in **adapting programs and schedules** to meet the needs of our team ”

HOW WE CAN HELP:

- ✓ Utilize **motivational interviewing**, a communication technique that empowers individuals (i.e., PWLE, BIPOC) to believe in themselves, make a change in their lives and support re-entry into the workforce
- ✓ **Provide guidance** to prioritize trainings, support staff who cover graveyard shifts, set **performance expectations** etc.

Potential Recommendations

Attracting Employees

Secure Funding

Identify innovative methods (e.g., sponsor relationships, grant applications, etc.) to secure funding to enable competitive compensation and help hiring managers attract more talent

Offer Increased Benefits

Provide affordable benefits with enhanced health insurance, employee assistance programs, educational incentives, and flexible work hours to attract potential candidates and boost retention

“ Candidates will **not be attracted** to the sector if we do not have a **benefits package or compensation** that meets employee needs

Recruiting Employees

Communicate with Candidates

Establish standard protocols for candidate communication throughout the recruitment process, clearly outlining the roles of HR and hiring managers

Promote from Within

Encourage the advancement of talent by developing career paths and succession plans to identify, upskill, and ultimately promote talent internally

“ Individuals who can **learn and adapt**, **communicate well**, and have **transferrable skillsets** have increased chances of getting hired in the sector

Onboarding Employees

Integrate PWLE into the Workforce

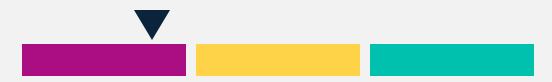
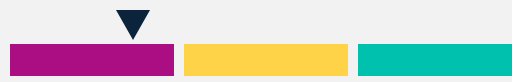
Help ensure hiring managers have the right tools and resources to encourage PWLE and integrate them into your organization's workforce by helping them understand the soft skills, workforce etiquette, getting to work on time, clocking in and out, etc.

Provide Technology Training

Familiarize new hires with the tools and software they will be using day to day so that they are set up for success from Day 1

“ The **training team** and **hiring manager** should be **working alongside** each other to standardize onboarding and share training responsibilities to give new hires a more consistent experience

Sentiments Analysis



 Negative  Neutral  Positive

Meet Emily



Motivations

- Desire to give back to the sector
- Personal/lived experience
- Compassion and empathy towards the sector

Pain Points

- Lack of trust in the recruitment process
- Inability to offer competitive compensation packages
- Inaccurate hiring forecasts due to absence of headcount planning
- Stigma about working in the sector

To My Manager

What I wish you knew

There should be standardized guidelines between Hiring Managers and my team to reduce time to hire. This will improve the candidate experience while reducing the overall burden on managers.

To My Leadership

One takeaway

There are benefits to invest in recruiting tools, technology, and data resources. With the right resources, we can identify and engage with top talent more effectively and improve our recruiting efforts.

Recruiter

Emily is a Recruiter at a homeless service provider and has been with her organization for the last 2 years. She is motivated by **finding candidates who are not only skilled, but also passionate about serving the homeless population**. She seeks to leverage her background in talent acquisition and Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to modernize and improve the recruitment practices in the sector.



Thinks

How can I improve the visibility of open roles and attract more candidates to apply for the roles



Feels

Hiring managers should be trained to recruit effectively and improve overall candidate and hiring manager experience



Wants

To hire candidates with skillsets including emotional intelligence, resilience, empathy, and language proficiency

“ To attract the right talent, we **need to offer more than just a paycheck**; we **need to market the organization and its benefits to attract candidates** ”

HOW WE CAN HELP:

- ✓ Build and showcase an **attractive employer brand** with a focus on the impact we make in the community
- ✓ Develop a **relationship with the talent pool** through social media, universities and create awareness around the sector

Potential Recommendations

Attracting Employees

Reflect Accurate Job Descriptions

Develop a standardized job description template outlining qualifications, key activities, KPIs, skills, competencies and **key benefits for each role**

Build Relationships with Talent Pool

Proactively recruit and increase **awareness about the sector** through social media, universities, schools, workforce centers, career counselors and communities

“ Improve **employer brand** by **increasing outreach** and **create more paid internship opportunities** to attract talent

Recruiting Employees (1)

Develop Recruiting KPIs

Manage and **improve the recruitment efficiency with data** by developing KPIs such as time to hire, cost per hire, time spent with candidates, reasons for offer declines, quality of hire, etc.

Strengthen Interview Process

Include **scenario-based interviewing questions**, role plays, case studies and psychometric assessments in interview process to help ensure role-person fitment

“ Include **job shadow / onsite visits** as part of recruitment process so candidates can clearly understand the job responsibilities

**Recruiting Employees (2)

Deploy Headcount Planning

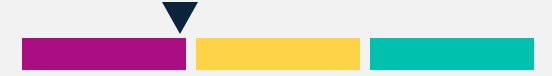
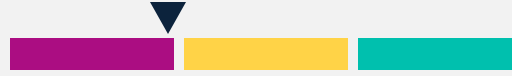
Plan for workforce needs proactively by partnering with finance, program leads to **get visibility into your headcount needs** and secure funds accordingly

Provide Support for Hiring Managers

Develop clear delineation of roles and responsibilities in the recruitment process including guidelines to **train hiring managers to recruit and interview effectively** improving both candidate and hiring manager experience

“ Hiring candidates who have same **characteristics** as many of our clients will bring empathy into our service delivery

Sentiments Analysis



🟡 Negative 🟡 Neutral 😊 Positive

**Note: Since Recruiters typically have minimal involvement in onboarding, this part of the lifecycle has not been incorporated for this persona*

Meet Caleb



Motivations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create impact by empowering marginalized communities• Help others make meaningful changes in their lives• Help ensure everyone is treated with dignity and respect
Pain Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Burden of local commute in LA• Role expectations are not properly defined and leads to emotional burnout• Long and strenuous onboarding process due to no structured orientation program in place

To My Manager

What I wish you knew

Reducing education requirements for entry-level programs roles may expand our talent pools, however we need to train new hires with sector knowledge, resources and their role.

To My Leadership

One takeaway

Implementing standard guides for knowledge sharing across agencies would facilitate collaboration, promote consistency, and help ensure that essential information is readily accessible to all sector organizations.

Program Manager

Caleb is a committed program manager who leads a dedicated team in the LA Homelessness Services Sector. He is driven by a strong motivation to **create meaningful and impactful social change within the community**, with the end goal of ending homelessness in Los Angeles. Caleb handles a faucet of responsibilities within his role, including managing program funds, overseeing recruitment efforts, maintaining compliance with regulations, securing grants, and more.



“ Social work is **counter intuitive**, and it takes a lot to act **opposite of our natural thoughts and tendencies**. We normally hear **negative comments** during times of burnout ”

HOW WE CAN HELP:

- ✓ Create **designated safe spaces to hold discussions with peers without managers present** to help alleviate work-related pressure
- ✓ Start **burnout prevention trainings and coaching programs** to proactively work through times of burnout

Potential Recommendations

Attracting Employees

Provide Designated Safe Spaces

Provide external mental health benefits and safe spaces for employees, specially PWLE to decompress without managers present to help reduce work stress

Showcase Upskilling Opportunities

Showcase the opportunities for professional growth to potential candidates in each organization (e.g., leadership trainings, job-specific trainings, etc.)

“ Visibility into different programs across the agency to understand the program mission and narrow down interest areas was very helpful

Recruiting Employees

Reduce or Remove Degree Requirements

Reduce or remove educational requirement for entry-level roles to widen the sector talent pool and move towards skill-based hiring across the sector

Create Interview Questions Guide

Create standardized, role-specific interview questions guide for hiring managers to help ensure consistency for candidate evaluation in the hiring process

“ Role specific skills can be taught. Increase focus on soft skills, problem solving, volunteering, outreach, and passion for the work

Onboarding Employees

Define Role Boundaries

Clarify scope of job responsibilities for new employees (e.g., if it's required to take clients to the grocery store, medical appointments, etc.) during their onboarding and establish key points of contact to address any questions

Develop Training Programs for Employees

Implement burnout prevention trainings and coaching programs, case notes training, policies / contracts, general LAHSA rules and regulations and role-specific trainings to support employees

“ I helped to create training programs for case management teams in my organization and have received feedback from tenured employees that they wish this program existed when they started

Sentiments Analysis



Negative Neutral Positive

Meet Cynthia



Motivations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make a difference and leave a long-lasting impact• Drive efforts to reduce homelessness in LA• Reduce barriers to support unhoused individuals
Pain Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of structured training for my role and responsibilities• No flexibility in work schedule as a working mother• Unrealistic client caseload causing burnout• Limited resources and information available for me to be successful

To My Manager

What I wish you knew

Consistent support and guidance from my manager is important to overcome barriers, such as having to earn our clients' trust and encountering different protocols.

To My Leadership

One takeaway

With the constant policy and program changes from our funders, we are not provided the right guidance to stay on track with our program.

Case Manager

Cynthia is a Case Manager who joined the sector 3 years ago with some case work experience. She is a working mother and usually caters to between 20-25 clients. **Due to understaffing at her agency, she currently has 38 clients and is stressed.** On a day-to-day basis, she is mostly onsite, checking in with clients, providing them resources, driving clients to medical appointments, documenting case notes, etc.



Thinks

Job shadowing and hands-on training would be beneficial in gaining the necessary skills and knowledge for my role



Feels

There is no degree program that prepares you to serve as a case manager; skills needed for this job are best learned through on-the-job experience



Wants

To alleviate the loss of valuable information due to team members leaving the organization

“ When I was first onboarded, I was the only case manager on my team and **struggled to provide the necessary resources and information** to support my clients. To perform my job effectively, I had to seek help from my coworkers in other teams ”

HOW WE CAN HELP:

- ✓ Share highlights of **homeless services success stories** to help change the **public stigma**
- ✓ Establish a **knowledge management system** and **FAQs** for case managers

Potential Recommendations

Attracting Employees

Market the Case Manager Role

Create "Day in the Life of a Case Manager" videos to help individuals that come from different backgrounds understand the role better

Change Public Perception About the Sector

Highlight sector success stories, create awareness about daily struggles and focus on the impact that the sector creates in the community to help change the negative perception

“ How I think about the sector versus the public is very different. I think about helping individuals at the lowest point in their life whereas the public looks at drug addicts, dirty streets etc.

Recruiting Employees

Communicate Clear Job Responsibilities

Share real-life examples and case studies to help candidates clearly understand the case manager role and expectations. Create clear and consistent job descriptions to articulate day-to-day tasks

Recruit for Skillsets

Determine skills needed to be successful as a case manager and enable skills-based hiring without focusing on degrees and focus on transferrable experiences for entry level positions

“ I came in from hospitality and did not understand the job listing. Additional context and background would be helpful to translate the job into a real-life scenario

Onboarding Employees

Strengthen Knowledge Management

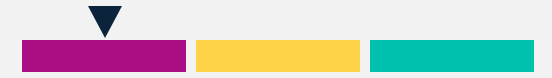
Build a sector-wide knowledge management system to share onboarding resources, training materials, and leading practices

Provide Job-specific Training

Provide more hands-on job specific training for case managers focusing on crisis intervention, trauma informed care, burnout and stress, case notes, daily tasks etc.

“ Almost every on-the-job activity comes with its own protocol that case managers are expected to know and follow, which is a major source of frustration and increase in workload

Sentiments Analysis



Negative
 Neutral
 Positive

Meet Jeremy



Motivations

- Work alongside motivated co-workers
- Enhance employee engagement and retention through effective onboarding

Pain Points

- Manage logistics such as spacing and staffing for onboarding
- Make constant updates to trainings due to frequent changes in programs
- Secure funding towards onboarding programs and employee trainings

To My Manager

What I wish you knew

We have unclear responsibilities that lead to confusion about task ownership, such as identifying the point of contact for missing new hires.

To My Leadership

One takeaway

Our leadership needs to help ensure that new staff are equipped with the resources and skills they need to be successful in their roles; they need to encourage and support employees to participate in trainings.

Onboarding and Training Specialist

Jeremy is an onboarding specialist working to improve the onboarding experience within the LA Homelessness Services Sector. Jeremy wants **to increase employee engagement and help ensure employees feel valued and welcomed in their organizations.**



Thinks

How can we help ensure the training provided is directly applicable and beneficial to actual job responsibilities



Feels

Optimistic about providing sensitivity trainings (e.g., trauma informed care, DEI, harm reduction etc.) across the organization



Wants

To roll-out surveys and collect data to establish correlation between structured onboarding and retention

“ Crafting an **orientation program that equally serves all roles, from leadership to direct services staff**, while emphasizing company culture and tools, has **proved to be challenging** ”

HOW WE CAN HELP:

- ✓ **Develop role-specific onboarding and training tracks** to cater to the unique needs of different personas
- ✓ **Build sector-wide collaboration** for sharing onboarding resources, training materials, and leading practices

Potential Recommendations

Attracting Employees

Acknowledge Work-Life Balance

Enhance commitment to work-life balance by updating policies to offer flexible work locations and working hours

Highlight Leadership Buy-in towards Success

Hold leaders accountable for adequately equipping new staff with the necessary tools to be successful in their roles and promote leadership participation in training programs (e.g., facilitate trainings, share personal experience, etc.)

“ Provide existing and new managers **people management trainings** to improve leadership skills throughout the organization

Onboarding Employees (1)

Increase Resource Collaboration in the Sector

Share knowledge, and training and onboarding materials amongst sector organizations to reduce duplication of efforts and promote consistency

Cross-train Across Other Departments

Develop a program to offer new hires opportunities to shadow across other departments, understand different roles and programs in the agency and gain knowledge on overall operations

“ Leaders need to **encourage** and **give dedicated time** to employees to participate in trainings more often

**Onboarding Employees (2)

Create Executive-Specific Onboarding

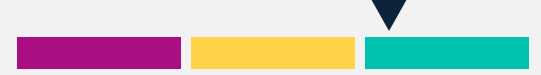
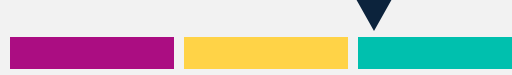
Train HR/onboarding specialists to onboard senior leaders/executives who are often not provided with any organization context and background

Continue Follow-Ups with New Hires

Provide new hires with a comprehensive 90-day onboarding plan that outlines key milestones. Establish regular check-ins during the first 1 year to support new hires and collect feedback to improve onboarding programs

“ Teams who were provided a more **structured onboarding** said they were set up for **success when they joined**

Sentiments Analysis



 Negative  Neutral  Positive

**Note: Since Onboarding Specialists typically have minimal involvement in recruitment efforts, this part of the lifecycle has not been incorporated for this persona*



Meet Amber

Motivations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward for work • Compassion for the sector • Give back to the society
Pain Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectation for HR to handle all communication with candidates; lack of manager accountability • Lack of mental health resources • No visibility into career paths • Inconsistent onboarding programs

To My Manager

What I wish you knew

We want to work alongside our case managers and program managers to develop targeted career paths and professional development programs for our employees.

To My Leadership

One takeaway

A flexible work schedule (e.g., summer Fridays, 9/80 schedule) has proved to work well in some sector organizations and helped towards attracting, retaining, and engaging employees.

HR Representative

Amber is an HR Representative for a leading organization in the LA Homelessness Services Sector. She **understands the needs of the employees in her organization and strives to get them the resources they need to be successful in their role.** Amber is actively engaged in all of the HR functions at her organization, including recruiting, onboarding, talent development and more.



Thinks

Standardizing the application and assessment process would help by creating a centralized model where candidates are evaluated, hired, onboarded, and trained



Feels

Job fairs, employee referrals and participation in community events have proved to be effective recruitment channels



Wants

To connect with others in the sector outside my organization to collaborate, share pain points, and enhance the people management practices

“ My organization is making an **intentional effort** to make onboarding and orientation an **ongoing training experience** instead of limiting it to 1 day to make new hires feel supported and set them up for success ”

HOW WE CAN HELP:

- ✓ **Define clear accountabilities** between Hiring Managers, Recruiters, and HR (e.g., reference checks, follow ups, etc.)
- ✓ Provide **mental health resources and enhanced benefits** such as wellness days, personal flex days, debriefing sessions etc.

Potential Recommendations

Attracting Employees

Provide Livable Wages

Increase compensation to offer a living wage that considers the high cost of living in LA where the average income to remain above the poverty line and live comfortably is just above \$76,000

Offer Flexibility in Work Schedule

Get creative in offering flexible work hours (e.g., 9/80 schedule, offer an additional day off each month, offer personal flex days such as sick days, day off for employee birthdays, wellness days, etc.)

“ Work-from-home or hybrid schedules have **increased flexibility for back-office**, but it's made it harder to attract candidates for **direct service roles that are mostly onsite**

Recruiting Employees

Expand the Interview Panel

Modify the interview process to offer candidates the opportunity to meet and engage with multiple teams and leaders during the interview stages instead of conducting all single panel interviews

Build Career Pathways

Build career pathing framework for all roles and provide employees with visibility around vertical and lateral career progression opportunities

“ We primarily leverage **Indeed as the preferred recruitment channel** to fill open positions today

Onboarding Employees

Formalize Onboarding

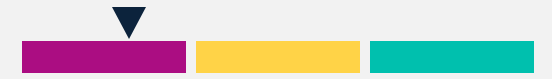
Standardize onboarding by incorporating a buddy system, 30-60-90-day reviews, on-the-job trainings, along with a welcome email with day 1 information and required documentation

Collaborate Sector Wide

Create a cross-agency, sector-wide HR network for sharing resources, successful strategies, and areas of improvement, advancing people management practices across the sector

“ HR should be conducting **follow ups** at the **30-day, 6-month** and **1 year mark** to measure and improve the overall new hire experience

Sentiments Analysis



🟡 Negative 🟡 Neutral 😊 Positive



Meet Laine

Motivations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfillment through having a meaningful impact on social change and equity initiatives • Desire to create a culture where diversity is not merely tolerated but celebrated
Pain Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear policies and documentation to be signed during orientation • Disparity between the commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and its actual implementation • Internal resistance toward fully embracing DEI values

To My Manager
 What I wish you knew
 Even though I am not client-facing, I would greatly benefit from a thorough onboarding program, with regular check-ins, to feel more supported and confident in my first few months.

To My Leadership
 One takeaway
 There is a need to transform our commitment to DEI efforts into practical policies that truly embrace our organizational values, with our leadership setting the example.

DEI Coordinator

Laine is a DEI Coordinator and has been working in the LA Homelessness Services Sector for 3 years. Laine's journey into the sector involved her belief in social justice, equity, and the desire to create a diverse culture. As someone who has navigated the complexities of the sector, she brings a **unique blend of enthusiasm for supporting others and a drive to foster an inclusive environment** for all the employees in her organization.



Thinks

Empowering staff to form any employee resource groups (ERG) will drive inclusivity and self-determined support systems



Feels

More DEI trainings (e.g., anti-racist trainings, LGBTQ+ trainings, hiring biases training, etc.) will boost employee morale



Wants

To be an advocate for fair pay, offer self-care forums, and provide stipends (e.g., bilingual, harm reduction champions, etc.) for all employees

“ Creating an **inclusive culture** requires more than just intention; it demands **consistent practice** and **reinforcement** ”

- HOW WE CAN HELP:**
- ✓ Offer inclusive spaces by supporting **employee resource groups** and encouraging employees to share diverse experiences
 - ✓ Integrate **DEI principles** into **recruitment and onboarding processes** to promote transparency and inclusivity

Potential Recommendations

Attracting Employees

Offer Inclusive Employee Perks

Include DEI benefits such as allowing name changes for employees to encourage gender inclusivity (e.g., email, badges), inclusive health insurance options, incentives for learning more than one language, etc.

Market Employee Resource Groups

Promote participation in Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), which are a supportive environment for employees to share diverse experiences, and emphasize the organization's commitment to an equal opportunity policy

“ Highlight **DEI initiatives** as part of your **employer brand** to show commitment towards an inclusive work environment

Recruiting Employees

Design Unbiased Interview Questions

Design interview questions that specifically evaluate a candidate's job-related abilities to help reduce unconscious bias during the interview process

Include DEI Principles in Recruiting

Incorporate DEI principles in the recruiting processes by diversifying sourcing channels, providing unconscious bias training for hiring teams, and help ensure job descriptions are inclusive and appeal to a broad range of candidates

“ Candidates should be asked **what “pronouns” they use** from the beginning of the recruitment process to help **ensure inclusive communication**

Onboarding Employees

Support DEI Initiatives

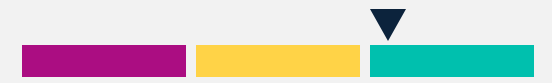
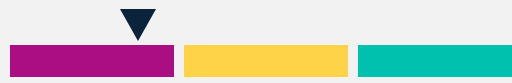
Advocate and actively support initiatives like ERGs, establish more roles dedicated to DEI, enforce policies for an inclusive culture, hold regular DEI-focused discussions, etc.

Require DEI Trainings

Deliver trainings to all employees on unconscious bias, cultural perspectives, laws and regulation related to diversity, harm reduction, anti-racist training, LGBTQ+ training, etc.

“ Include **DEI trainings as mandatory modules** for all roles to help create an equitable environment where every voice is heard and respected

Sentiments Analysis



Negative
 Neutral
 Positive

Meet Crystal



Motivations

- Contribute to the community
- Support individuals in achieving stability
- Assist individuals in re-entering and reintegrating into the society

Pain Points

- Limited mental health and wellness support for staff
- Insufficient resources to deal with high stress and exposure to trauma for mental health staff
- Inadequate compensation and support for living expenses

To My Manager

What I wish you knew

Mapping out a calendar schedule for different sites and clients at the time of onboarding would be extremely helpful towards managing my time and balancing priorities.

To My Leadership

One takeaway

Employee success and a culture of growth comes from leadership financially investing in employees. Travelling stipends and housing subsidies will be a great support for us.

Mental Health Specialist

Crystal is an empathetic and resilient mental health specialist working within the LA Homelessness Services Sector. **With a past that includes overcoming personal hurdles, Crystal brings personal experiences into her role.** Crystal navigates the complexities of mental health care with a focus on substance abuse, offering support through recovery bridge housing and outreach services.



Thinks

It is important to be emotionally and mentally stable to deal with all the trauma and stress everyday



Feels

The mental health knowledge and policies from 5 years ago do not apply today (e.g., looking at harm reduction instead of abstinence)



Wants

Mental health staff to receive more support, better job-specific training, and adequate compensation to help ensure personal stability and professional effectiveness

“ While we focus on **helping individuals get the resources** they need to survive, like housing and food, it's important to remember that **we also need support along the way** ”

HOW WE CAN HELP:

- ✓ Conduct **mental health retreats**, guided meditation programs, invite wellness coaches to discuss key stressors in the sector
- ✓ Enhance knowledge in **general safety and marginalized groups** to better support all clients and staff 21

Potential Recommendations

Attracting Employees

Offer Stipends

Support employees by offering stipends such as housing stipends and travel stipends / mileage reimbursements to support day to day challenges and make ends meet

Promote Wellness Resources

Showcase perks for wellness resources such as wellness days, guided workshops and provide access to external mental health and wellness coaches (without manager presence) to address sector-specific stressors

“ Include an overview of your organization’s **employee wellness** investment and commitment in **job postings**

Recruiting Employees

Include Diverse Interview Panelists

During interviews, help ensure the interview panelists represent diverse backgrounds to represent organization’s commitment towards diversity (e.g., representation across different ages, races, ethnicities, etc.)

Encourage Interviews across Various Departments

Making department / group interviews a part of the hiring process enables candidates to find a team where they can not only excel but also learn about the various programs and departments to help ensure the right fit

“ The **group interview with multiple departments** helped me in choosing the program and role that I **was most aligned to**

Onboarding Employees

Walkthrough Scope of Responsibilities

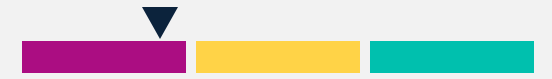
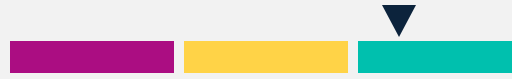
Provide a preview of different job responsibilities with the new hires including schedule, different job sites, time management during onboarding to provide support and ability to plan work schedules

Provide Professional Development Funds

Allocate a set budget for each employee towards professional development or trainings that can be used for career planning and growth

“ Without providing the **proper tools** and **training** on day-to-day responsibilities, the workload tends to be more **overwhelming and triggering**

Sentiments Analysis



Negative Neutral Positive

Meet Tyler



Motivations

- Want a better life for family
- Treated like a family member at my organization
- Give back to the organization that gave me another chance

Pain Points

- Deal with emotional triggers when working with clients
- Lack of compatibility compared to my peers
- Need for improvement in soft skills to work with others
- Technical barriers regarding commonly used technology

To My Manager

What I wish you knew

Providing support and training to lived experienced employees can boost the morale for our population in the work environment, leading to high satisfaction and productivity.

To My Leadership

One takeaway

Implementing therapy assessments to help gauge the level of trauma myself and other employees with lived experience may be experiencing during onboarding will increase retention rates.

People with Lived Experience (PWLE) Employee

Tyler is an individual who has lived experience with homelessness and previously was incarcerated. **He volunteered for his current agency for a month and was offered an opportunity to become a full-time employee.** Working in the LA Homelessness Services Sector gave Tyler a second chance to get his degree and re-enter the workforce to grow his career.



Thinks

Promoting lived experience as a skill will help reach our population better since we all share that experience and can support each other



Feels

There should be a trainer for PWLE during onboarding for paperwork, administrative tasks, and guidance on ways of working



Wants

On-site therapy services offered to help alleviate the job triggers for PWLE and enhance mental health

“ My manager was a bully, and I come from the streets where we fight. It is difficult for me to maneuver political dilemmas and **no one taught me how to navigate the business world** and work with others ”

HOW WE CAN HELP:

- ✓ Establish **lived experience employee resource groups (ERGs) or multidisciplinary teams** towards knowledge sharing on the sector culture
- ✓ Provide **training sessions led by individuals with lived experience**, covering soft skills, Crisis Prevention Training (CPT), re-entry into work culture, office politics, and self-care

Potential Recommendations

Attracting Employees

Market Lived Experience as a Skill

Highlight lived experience as a skill to attract more candidates; PWLE employees can understand real-life, on the ground needs of clients, to whom they can personally relate

Lead with Empathy

Emphasize the organization's supportive culture to align with prospective candidates' desire for a workplace that understands and respects their life experiences

“ PWLE programs helped me with opportunities to **volunteer** for the sector and then eventually, this led to a **part time job from an organization**

Recruiting Employees

Leverage PWLE Recruiting Channels

Use PWLE specific recruitment channels or programs, such as PLACE*, LA Rise, Friends Outside, and Homeboys Industries, apart from popular job websites (e.g., Indeed, Zip Recruiter)

Remove or Reduce Educational Requirements

Consider to remove or reduce educational requirements wherever possible on job descriptions to help expand the talent pool and move towards skills-based hiring based on experience

“ PWLE have **unique experiences** that equip them with **skill sets** beneficial to be **effective case managers**

Onboarding Employees

Incorporate Lived Experience Led Trainings

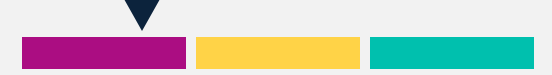
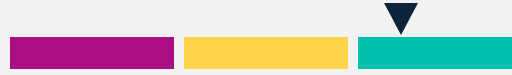
Provide training sessions led by individuals with lived experience covering technology, re-entry into the work environment, self-care, office politics, and how to work with others in a professional space

Guide Managers to be more Supportive

Train managers to support and believe in newly hired employees, helping ensure a work environment that prioritizes growth and learning

“ Provide a **PWLE specific trainer** to support PWLE employees on soft skills, crisis prevention training (CPT), work culture, etc.

Sentiments Analysis



Negative
 Neutral
 Positive

*Note: PLACE refers to Preparing Los Angeles for County Employment



Meet Amira

Motivations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be part of the solution for homelessness • Driven to create change • Belief in the power of community and assistance reciprocity
Pain Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic bias during the hiring process • No influence in changing existing policies and regulations to support the BIPOC population

To My Manager

What I wish you knew

We need to see that behavior is shaped by experiences and we really need to know the population of people we're serving, instead of relying on preconceived notions of what we think it is.

To My Leadership

One takeaway

The presence of People of Color in leadership positions is necessary. It not only inspires but sets up our organization and sector to break the systemic barriers in place and showcases a pathway to leadership for all.

Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) Employees

Amira's journey into the sector was ignited by her **experience in volunteering with her local church homeless program, where the realities of homelessness community moved her**. She noticed individuals who suffer from homelessness, but did not have the resources and opportunity to end it. This experience propelled Amira into seeking a career in the sector to do her part in ending homelessness.



Thinks

The sector should hire for skillsets such as volunteering, outreach, and passion instead of educational requirements and degrees



Feels

No training made me feel like I was thrown into a challenging situation without guidance, setting me back in an already difficult field



Wants

Standardize the recruitment process and training for hiring managers to conduct candidate interviews

“ Becoming an entry-level case manager wasn't difficult due to the high turnover in the role. **The greatest barrier as a BIPOC individual** came, when I applied for a **higher-level supervisory position** ”

HOW WE CAN HELP:

- ✓ Implement strategies to **promote talent from within** the organization to **increase diversity in leadership** roles.
- ✓ **Increase inclusivity in hiring practices** by modifying job description language , white labelling of resumes, valuing soft skills, etc.

Potential Recommendations

Attracting Employees

Include Employee Referrals

Enhance and promote employee referrals to bring in a sense of community and encourage the hiring of more diverse candidates. Provide financial incentives to employees if the referral is hired to the agency

Showcase BIPOC Success Stories

Showcasing the presence of People of Color in leadership roles can inspire confidence among candidates towards their potential growth within the organization

“ Agencies should be mindful of the language they use when creating job descriptions for different roles across the organization

Recruiting Employees

Focus on Skills During Hiring

Implement strategies to reduce bias in the hiring process and value nontraditional experiences like volunteering, previous outreach or advocacy experience, part-time jobs and life experiences

Establish Career Paths for BIPOC Employees

Develop distinct career paths tailored specifically for diverse demographics, including BIPOC employees to help ensure career development, and boost diversity in leadership roles

“ There is no horizontal movement within programs. Once you start in a program, you have to wait a long time to move up vertically and grow within your agency

Onboarding Employees

Highlight Work Environment and Culture

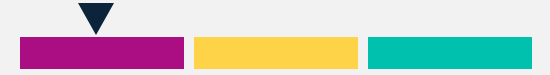
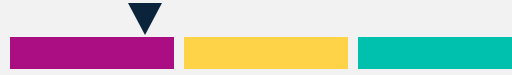
Pair new hires with mentors who can offer guidance on navigating the workplace environment and culture, support their professional development, provide insights into the organization's DEI efforts, etc.

Develop Culturally Inclusive Onboarding

Enhance onboarding processes by providing details about the client demographics served, enabling new hires, especially those without sector-specific experience, to develop an understanding and create connections with the population they serve

“ Developing a staggered onboarding schedule instead of attempting to cover all topics simultaneously drives learning retention

Sentiments Analysis



🟡 Negative 😐 Neutral 😊 Positive