Honor Differences. Cultivate Belonging.

Staff Session

Building a Community of Dignity and Respect
September 13, 2022

Facilitated by Workplace Learning and Development
Introduce yourselves and include:

- Your position
- How long you have been working at UMass
- A couple of non-work facts about yourself
Belonging in the Workplace

Today’s Objectives

- What is “Belonging in the Workplace”
- Reflect on how belonging exists now for you and others
- Identify ways to foster belonging in the workplace
- Identify what we need to improve our sense of belonging
- Determine “What can I do” to help people feel they belong?
Belonging in the Workplace

- **What**: Day-to-day experiences where we feel our contributions are valued to help achieve the organization’s goals.

- **How**: Our sense of belonging is influenced by how organizations can foster diverse, equitable, and inclusive communities for us.

- **How**: It’s in the informal and formal interactions where a sense of belonging occurs.

- **Who**: We each have a responsibility and role in fostering a sense of belonging.

```
How we experience belonging is unique to each of us.
```
Why?

Employees are more likely to:
  • be engaged in their work
  • feel loyal to their organization
  • stay at their job
### Sense of Belonging by Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>To no extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate students</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate students</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff (Excluding A&amp;F)</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>To no extent</td>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>To a great extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feel like you belong?</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have a good support network?</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have a mentor(s) or role model(s)?</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feel like you can openly share your point of view?</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the aggregate, a vast majority across all four populations (around 90%) report feeling like they belong to the UMass Amherst community at least “to some extent.”

- Individuals who identify as women, non-binary, trans, gender questioning, LGB, “another” sexual orientation, or having a disability are among the least likely to report a strong sense of belonging.

- The percent who feel like they don’t belong at all exceeds 20 percent for some social identity groups.

- To varying degrees, Black, Latinx, and Multiracial individuals are less likely than White individuals to feel they belong “to a great extent” or “to some extent.”
Reflections and Discussion

- Does this data feel accurate to your experiences in your role, unit or department? Why or why not?

- To what degree do you think you know your colleagues’ sense of belonging?
Creating a Sense of Belonging

- Comfort
- Connection
- Contribution
**Comfort:** feel comfortable at work, including being treated fairly and respected by colleagues and leaders.

“I am valued for who I am, my background and beliefs. I can bring my authentic self to work.”

**Connection:** feel have meaningful relationships with coworkers and teams, and are connected to the organization’s goals.

“I am a part of something larger than myself. I provide support and am supported by my workplace community.”

**Contribution:** feel you contribute to meaningful outcomes; have understanding how your strengths and talents help to achieve common goals.

“I (we) add value by bringing unique skills and strengths to meaningfully contribute to shared purpose and goals.”
**Comfort:** feel comfortable at work, including being treated fairly and respected by colleagues and leaders.

- Share your work stories - powerful way to influence people’s sense of belonging.
- Understanding another person’s story can dissolve interpersonal barriers.
- Seek understanding and clarity around what individuals need to feel they belong and respond with empathy.
- Establish unity by connecting remote/on-site employees’ responsibilities to the collective organizational vision and goals.
- Champion initiatives by people from historically marginalized groups and communities.
- Help employees succeed by aligning their work to their strengths and interests and removing obstacles.
Comfort

1. What already exists?

2. What is a gap or what needs to change?

3. What can you work on for yourself or your department to create improvement?
Connection: Feel have meaningful relationships with coworkers and teams, and are connected to the organization’s goals.

- Create clarity on the connection between individuals work and organizational goals
- Create more social bonds/connections through team informal and formal interactions
- Consider how will remote teams gather for the purpose of building connections
- Bring groups together to solve specific problems outside their day-to-day work
- Develop formal and informal mentor relationships
Connection – Positive Work Culture

A culture that prioritizes the well-being of employees, offers support at all levels within the organization, and has policies in place that encourage respect, trust, empathy, and support.

In positive psychology, research explores the positivity ratio – the positive vs negative emotion ratio

A ratio of 3:1 is good for daily flourishing and success.

Effects of Positive Practices on Organizational Effectiveness, 2011, Kim Cameron et all
Connection - Relationships

- Build trusting relationships with a mentor or manager
- Trusting relationships allow employee to openly bring viewpoints without hesitation, and encourage healthy discussion.
- Prioritize trust, respect, gratitude, and integrity in our work lives
- Positive Relationships are one of the most significant predictors of overall well being.
- Relationships = connection = a greater sense of belonging.
Connection

1. What already exists?

2. What is a gap or what needs to change?

3. What can you work on for yourself or your department to create improvement?
Contribution: feel you contribute to meaningful outcomes; have understanding how your strengths and talents help to achieve common goals.

“I (we) add value by bringing unique skills and strengths to meaningfully contribute to shared purpose and goals.”

- Consider how you can ensure everyone has the opportunity to contribute.
- Be clear about how decisions will be made.
- Having the space to openly bring viewpoints without hesitation, encourage healthy discussion, and feel connected with team members.
- Frequently celebrate colleagues’ successes and offer dedicated support through challenges.
- Find opportunities to express daily gratitude to those you work with (thank you notes, meeting spotlights, etc.).
Contribution - Meaning and Purpose

People who reported more meaning and purpose in their work:

- Were more likely to thrive in the workplace
- Feel a greater sense of belonging when they believe the work they do is significant and contributes to overall mission
- Are more energized, engaged, and excited about the future
- Have a greater sense of overall wellbeing, resulting in greater productivity and increased job/work satisfaction.

Adapted from
“Creating a More Human Workplace Where Employees and Businesses Thrive”, SHRM, 2016
“Why Does Belonging at Work Matter”, SHRM 2020
Contribution

1. Does your current work contribute to your sense of meaning and purpose?

2. Does something need to change? What?

3. How does the work you do at the University tie into your sense of belonging at the University? How can you increase your sense of belonging?
Conclusion

- The 3 C’s of creating a sense of belonging -
  - Comfort
  - Connection
  - Contribution

We each have a responsibility and role in fostering a sense of belonging.

Being mindful of our own actions can influence how others perceive their sense of belonging.
Your Individual Commitment

- Name
- University mailing address

Example:

Paul Papierski
Workplace Learning & Development
303 Goodell
Your Individual Commitment

I will help foster a sense of belonging at my workplace in these ways:

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________
"We are like islands in the sea – separate on the surface but connected in the deep."

Williams James

Thank you

Workplace Learning & Development
wld@admin.umass.edu
545-1787

Paul Papierski
Melissa Scheid Frantz