

ABSTRACT: 2015 ELAM Institutional Action Project Poster Symposium

Project Title: The Implementation of a Novel Executive On-Boarding Leadership Program

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Background, Challenge or Opportunity: At Morehouse School of Medicine, we saw an opportunity to better prepare our newly appointed department chairs and administrators for their new leadership positions. We previously noticed that newly appointed leaders faced challenges that could be overcome, if addressed within the first 8-weeks of their start date. Immediately addressing those challenges would result in our new leaders feeling more empowered in their new roles, developing more collaborative interactions with units outside of their own, and developing goals for their unit that align with the school's mission and strategic plan.

Purpose/Objectives: The purpose of this project is to implement an effective on-boarding program for newly appointed executive leaders that will position them early in their tenure for success. We notice that there are two major obstacles for new executive leadership in academia: (1). A lack of familiarity with the administrative, research and clinical units of the institution, which impedes the ability to make immediate broad-based and collaborative decisions, and (2). A lack of mentorship to guide the leader in their new role. Our executive on-boarding process is designed to address both of these factors to ensure that the new leader is supplied at the very beginning of their position with the resources they need to execute well-informed decisions in both strategic and operational goals of their unit.

Methods/Approach: This program is a pilot initiative for Morehouse School of Medicine. It has been adapted from the publication, "Executive Onboarding: Ensuring the Success of the Newly Hired Department Chair", Ross et al, *Academic Medicine*, Vol. 89, No. 5, May 2014. I have modified and enhanced the process to be applicable for all levels of senior leadership in academia. Our process includes:

- A 6-week orientation
- Assignment of 3 mentors: an Orientation Navigator, a Peer Mentor and a Transition Mentor
- Completion of a pre-, post- and retrospective (for new leaders who were hired internally) survey
- Quarterly mentorship progress reports and a more comprehensive report at the end of 12 months
- An abridged version of the orientation (for new leaders hired after completion of the last and prior to the start of the next session)

Outcomes and Evaluation Strategy: We are currently evaluating the project with a survey that assesses the participants' comprehensive knowledge of the institution before and after completing the program. In addition, quarterly evaluations of the progress of the mentoring relationships are completed. The expected outcomes for the new leaders, which we also evaluate, are:

- (1). Greater familiarity with all units of the institution at the completion of the 6-week program
- (2). Increased collaborations with other units (internal and external to the institution)
- (3). Enhanced leadership skills developed through the mentoring relationships
- (4). Enhanced levels of cohesiveness and teamwork with other senior leaders