

World Café at the HR Strategy Forum

During the World Café session at the HR Strategy Forum in February, 2018, participants of the café were challenged to think of answers to a number of questions regarding the challenges and opportunities for the sector. Scribes captured conversations, results were collected and analyzed and the information was compiled into a number of key themes for each question. For each question, we listed the top 3-4 answers that were given. Here are some of the findings from the group discussions:

Question 1. What are new and modernized ways agencies can use to recruit and retain staff?

Recruitment

- Expanding the range of student placement opportunities beyond DSW programs and focus on other college programs e.g. nursing, PSW, etc.
- The needs of individuals are changing, thus our jobs are changing. We need to recruit and hire more broadly, and not just continue our current hiring practices.
- Target high school/college students early to build awareness, interest and establish champions for the sector

Retention

- Offer more opportunities for growth and fulltime positions.
- We need to understand young job seekers and their goals. The jobs we offer need to align with the lifestyle they want.
- We need to be able to offer employees things that will ultimately enhance their work experience that is more than just their day-to-day work. E.g. opportunities to develop their leadership skills.

Question 2. What are the challenges and opportunities for HR and the workforce in the DS sector moving forward? What are some ways to ensure sustainability of the work of the DSHR strategy in the future?

Challenges & Opportunities

- Compensation is an issue that leads to many employees having to work multiple jobs. This can lead to stress and eventual burn-out.
- The sector is hungry for staff and recruitment is a challenge. Most positions are part time or casual, which lack stability and are not “desirable”. This leads to a lack of reliability in staff.
- There is a lot of opportunity for the sector because people love what they do in this field. There should be more leadership development and training

Question 3: What are the training priorities of the DS sector moving forward?

- Leadership training for all staff, especially middle management.
- Training in person-centred skills
- Community development training so we can build relationships across sectors.
- Conflict resolution training

Question 4: What are the challenges and opportunities for agencies in supporting their middle managers?

- Middle managers who are internally recruited/hired lack skills and training that are not necessarily translated when they move from a direct support role to a manager role. Internal

hiring should incorporate appropriate coaching and training. There is an opportunity here for knowledge sharing and cross agency training.

- Large workloads on middle managers results in them missing out on opportunities for growth and personal/professional development.
- Stagnant salaries for middle management positions and succession planning have also been problematic