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**An initiative by SingHealth Cluster Communications and “Building & Strengthening Communications Professionals in Academic Medicine” workgroups.**

## Introduction

### What this is about

A survey of SingHealth communications staff to assess their opinions on matters pertaining to their communications career in SingHealth.

### Why do this?

- To plan relevant and effective strategies that can enhance the SingHealth communications profession and staff's career development.
- As part of SingHealth Cluster Communications' “Building & Strengthening Communications Professionals in Academic Medicine” initiative.

### 5 survey focus areas

Induction, development, mentorship, job attachment and job rotation.

## Methodology

The survey, which comprised 18 questions spanning 5 categories, was rolled out to all SingHealth communications staff via an online platform.

It garnered a 70% response rate from the staff group.

## Results

### I) INDUCTION

*Enhancing induction programmes to better equip and empower new communications hires.*

- 66% felt that existing induction programmes do not sufficiently address needs of new communications hires.
- Top 3 new activities proposed for inclusion in induction programmes:
  - Visits to hospitals, national specialty centres and polyclinics
  - SingHealth orientation briefing for all staff
  - Buddy system within departments
- Respondents highlighted useful information that should be provided to new communications hires:

#### Public Healthcare 101

- Singapore's public healthcare system, SingHealth, institutions
- Common abbreviations
- Challenges and culture
- PHMC

#### Who's Who

- Who's who and who does what
- Org chart, directory and useful contacts
- Institution/dept functions

#### Branding & Identity

- Branding, CI, logo identity, messaging
- Mission, vision, values
- Corp videos, templates, guidelines
- Overview of key collaterals and comms platforms

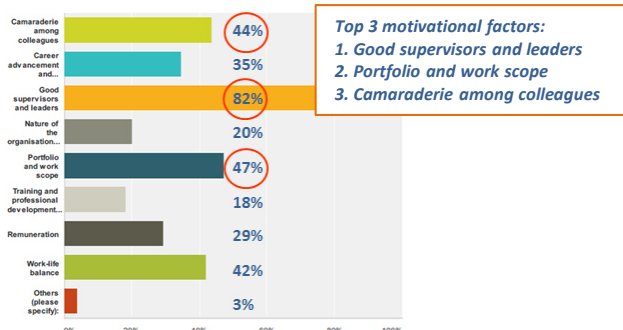
#### Practical help

- Buddy system across institutions
- Resource person (rotation basis) in department

### II) DEVELOPMENT

*Developing communications professionals on personal and professional levels.*

- Top 3 factors that motivate communications staff in their work:



- Ranking of most important areas for professional development:
  - Practical work knowledge and skills
  - Leadership and management skills
  - Career guidance
  - Interpersonal skills

- Ranking of most useful types of staff development approaches:

- Coaching by supervisor
- On-the-job training
- Training courses
- Short job attachment and rotation

### III) MENTORSHIP

*Raising and equipping communications leaders through mentorship.*

- 71% felt that a 1-year mentorship programme would be ideal for development.

- Respondents shared why a mentorship programme would be beneficial:

#### Counsel and advice

“A confidante whom I can consult, seek advice if there's any work related issues.”

#### Stand on shoulders of giants

“...personal feedback and guidance from someone who has been there, done that.”

#### Insight, understanding, connections

“...the mentor, being a more experienced staff member, has valuable insights into the nature of the job and the organisation.”

#### Skills and knowledge

“Shadowing mentor in terms of technical know-how and interpersonal skills.”

#### Personal & professional development

“Learn from a mentor who can guide me in my professional, career and personal development.”

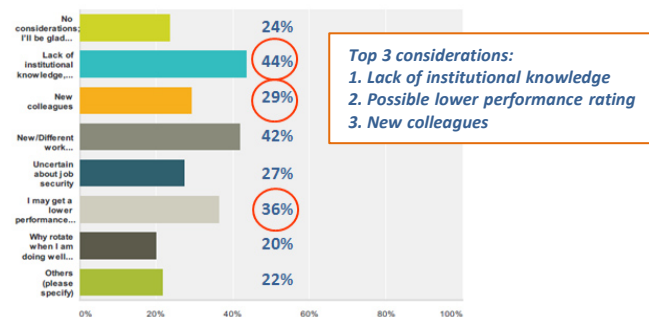
- Top 3 qualities that respondents desire in a mentor:



### IV) JOB ATTACHMENT AND V) JOB ROTATION

*Increasing communications exposure through job attachment (shorter duration) or job rotation (min. duration of 6 months) at another SingHealth institution.*

- 42% felt that a job attachment and 49% felt that a job rotation would be useful for their professional development. The remaining respondents indicated “maybe”, depending on factors such as job duration and scope.
- Top 3 considerations on rotating to another SingHealth institution's communications team:



## Conclusion

Based on the survey results, the “Building & Strengthening Communications Professionals in Academic Medicine” workgroups introduced new initiatives and recommendations to address staff's needs in the areas of –

- Expertise:** Hiring, selection, induction and orientation
- Talent:** Mentorship, attachment, rotation
- Synergy:** Shared focus, resources and expertise among staff

The recommendations were subsequently presented to and approved by Group CEO, as well as by Cluster HR and COO domain groups. They are currently in the implementation phase and are being rolled out according to a planned timeline. For a start, the communications mentoring programme and work attachment scheme were recently rolled out to staff in July 2014.