

# AGENCY INNOVATIONS RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

## A Human Workplace

### VALUE STATEMENT

To **shift workplace cultures** from fear-based to love-based leadership, teams, and organizations where **real value is delivered** and improvement happens continually out of **care for people.**



### BEST PRACTICES



#### Relish differences.

Embrace the fact that humans are varied, complex and infinitely fascinating! Appreciate each person's innate value. Accept and make it the norm to welcome differences.



#### Pay attention.

When that unplanned request for time happens stop what you are doing and pay attention. Put down your device. Turn your chair away from the screen. Look the person fully in the face.



#### Create safety.

Make it safe for your team to try, to maybe mess up, to learn, and to grow. Meet people where they are at. Help out by guiding others to understand the bigger picture and to learn how to approach things.



#### Be genuine.

Being human-centered starts with being authentic, whether you're a leader or other team member. Stop the impression management. Don't try to act some part. Instead be real.

We need time with each other. We need to schedule time with team members for communication and connection. And we also need to be ready to give time when it's not scheduled.



#### Give time.

Listen to understand. Listen without defending or explaining or jumping to solutions. Listen without preparing your response. Listen to learn.



#### Listen well.

Of yourself. Of others. To be aware of yourself seek feedback. You have to really pursue it to actually get it, and then intentionally receive it, reflect, and learn. Observe, ask questions, and listen.



#### Be aware.

Giving such honor comes from a deep belief that each and every person is worthy of respect. Find out what others mean by honor and respect, then "do to others as they would want you to do".



#### Express honor.

### DO TODAY

*At your next meeting do a check-in. Ask the question of each person before the meeting starts, "how are you doing in this present moment?"*

### DO THIS MONTH

*Read one blog post and one research article on psychological safety at [www.makeworkmorehuman.com](http://www.makeworkmorehuman.com).*

### DO THIS YEAR

*Host a human workplace event using the "Guide for Hosts" section at [www.makeworkmorehuman.com](http://www.makeworkmorehuman.com).*

*A Human Workplace is a program of Results WA. If you have any questions about these best practices or would like more information on this topic you can contact Renee Smith, Director of Workplace Transformation.*

## AGENCY INNOVATIONS FEATURE

# A Human Workplace at Recreation & Conservation Office

I recently sat down with Kaleen Cottingham and Scott Robinson of the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). Their job satisfaction scores have been in the mid 80's or higher for three years straight. I wanted to find out how they help make RCO a great place to work.

Scott says you have to have a compelling mission. Communicate it everywhere from the job posting to the all-staff meetings. RCO wants people who want to work there, "hire for attitude, you can train them up for almost everything else." All things being equal, they will pick the candidate who loves being outside, hiking and camping. This hiring philosophy means the people that come to work for RCO are passionate and believe in the work. Leadership makes sure to talk to their people about how they connect with the mission and vision to keep that connection.

Earning the trust of their employees and community is another strongly held value. Respectful relationships have built their positive culture. People feel the benefits when they go out into the community. Scott thinks Kaleen is the reason their people are treated so well when they go out into the world. "She really builds the relationships out in the community to make that happen." Kaleen pushes back and says, "Or...maybe I'm treated so well because they are doing such an amazing job out there."

They make sure to provide room for people to be their authentic selves at work. That tone is set from the top. Scott says it is important to "walk around with your head up". You have to consider the things that are influencing people's lives. Do your best to provide people with the resources, time and space to process changes. Kaleen displays her true personality every day and does not make excuses for being herself. Their authenticity sets the tone to make it safe for others to show



up as they are, not as they imagine they should be.

RCO takes actions big and small to support people. Taking care of people is a high priority for them. They have brought in grief counselors to help their people deal with an unexpected event. Kaleen has installed a webcam in her office so she can mentor a team member across the state. These are just a few samples of how they operate.

RCO admits that they have the "luxury" of being a small agency. They know that in a larger agency their style could be a challenge. Yet, there are pieces that each of us can take away from how they do things. If you get the opportunity to visit RCO, take it. You may get to meet Spencer, the seagull who sits outside Kaleen's office, or hear about the upcoming pizza party (because Kaleen did not want to cook), but one thing is for sure--you can come as you are.



If executive team members bring their **real selves to work** then you get more **diverse ideas and better concepts**. This will also lead to **Happy, healthy staff that work hard for each other!**

### STATEWIDE RESOURCES

- [www.MakeWorkMoreHuman.com](http://www.MakeWorkMoreHuman.com)
- <https://www.makeworkmorehuman.com/blog/lets-be-human-centered>
- DES Courses
  - Managing Stress in the Workplace
  - Creating Psychological Safety through Conversations
  - Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change
  - Motivational Interviewing

### INDUSTRY RESEARCH

- Stanford's Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education
- Brené Brown: The Power of Vulnerability
- In Harvard Business Review by Emma Seppala: Why Compassion is a Better Managerial Tactic Than Toughness
- [Fostering Innovation through Psychological Safety with Dr. Amy Edmonson](#)
- [There is Work Life Outside your Inbox](#)

*Is your agency doing something innovative? Contact Emily Beaulieu (OFM) to be considered for an Agency Innovations presentation.*