6 Staffing the CMC for Success

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Librarians, paraprofessionals, and student workers employed in the curriculum materials center (CMC) require specialized skills to assist preservice and in-service teachers and faculty. As technology continues to drive changes in services, CMC staffing plays a vital role in delivering new technology-driven services while maintaining traditional ones. This chapter discusses the development of a CMC staff whose members possess unique skills necessary to deliver services successfully based upon the following factors: determining staffing needs, reviewing existing staffing patterns, creating new job descriptions and competencies for future services, developing a long-range staffing plan, hiring technology- and team-driven staff, retaining staff, utilizing performance evaluation as an effective staffing tool, and valuing the CMC staff.

Curriculum materials centers (CMCs) face a serious transition in the twenty-first century, a transition that involves examining staffing to assess roles, perspectives, competencies, and experiences in determining position needs today while planning to meet future challenges. The complex and expanded roles of libraries and librarians, the expansion of services, and the ubiquity of technology project that libraries, including CMCs, must anticipate the need to provide the most advanced technological access to a wide array of digital resources without losing sight of the basic commitment to print resources. When examining the history of CMC staffing, it is clear that over time duties have progressed from anticipating

the needs of face-to-face users, all roughly the same age, for print resources to predicting the expectations of multigenerational users for socially networked digital or electronic resources in an information-rich society. (Jakubs, 2008).

From the first formally organized curriculum laboratory in 1922 (Nevil, 1975) to the 303 curriculum labs in institutions of higher learning by 1969 (Ellis, 1969) to thousands of CMCs in the twenty-first century (ACRL, 2009a), user needs and expectations have changed drastically, influencing the staffing necessary to meet present and future needs and expectations. CMCs have experienced numerous changes that have directly impacted services, impacting staffing in turn. Changes over time from print to electronic materials, from face-to-face communication to social networking, and from manual to digital technology have greatly influenced CMC services and resources, requiring significant changes in staffing roles to meet patron needs. Generational analysis of today's workforce and students, who include Traditionalists (born 1922–1945), Baby Boomers (born 1946–1964), Generation Xs (born 1965–1980) and Millennials (born 1981–2000), substantiates that learning styles, work ethic, and communication vary significantly among the generations based on ever-changing technologies and advancements of society (Dols, Landrum, & Wieck, 2010). With such differences and changes, staffing the CMC effectively becomes even more crucial to its success.

In order to staff the CMC with the future in mind, planners must anticipate users' needs and analyze the staff competencies required to meet those needs, developing new staffing models as necessary. The mission of providing excellent information service to patrons has not changed; however, technology has added new dimensions to the mission (Lipow, 1997). Flexibility is the key to successfully staffing the CMC, but unless staff members possess critical job competencies to perform the quality and type of services expected by patrons, high-quality services will be unavailable (Spiegleman, 1997). Realizing that technology is driving change across the entire range of library services, CMCs are faced with the need to rethink existing staffing patterns to develop staff-

ing competencies and models that directly address current needs, yet are flexible enough to accommodate future needs (Youngman, 1999).

Analyzing job requirements and competencies, developing new staffing models, and hiring from outside of the profession are factors to consider in order to successfully prepare for the future. It is the responsibility of library and CMC administrators to review current position duties, considering competencies and skills needed in the CMC based on user needs and services. When applicable, core competencies for all levels of staff should be adjusted, recognizing that the CMC may need to employ types of staff other than just librarians and professionals. In cases where CMC staffing is limited to one position or a shared position, administrators must acknowledge that services for CMC patrons will be limited and interrupted. Therefore, it is extremely important to utilize the national support that is available while developing key partnerships with faculty and students in the educational institution's college or department of education. National support and partnerships can be effectively utilized to justify full-time CMC staffing. The recently approved *Guidelines for Curriculum Materials Centers* (ACRL, 2009b) and *A Guide to the Management of Curriculum Materials Centers for the 21st Century* (Carr, 2001) are resources that provide national support to document needs of the CMC. These two resources show that CMCs can influence faculty's delivery of information and students' learning experiences, which in turn critically impact future classroom teaching and learning processes. Partnerships enhance the voice of the CMC. Oral and written communication from faculty and staff are powerful in supporting the need for CMC staffing. While the CMC can offer enormous opportunity in supporting the education of our future teachers, such opportunity is not available without the support and direction of specialized staffing.

When justifying additional CMC staff, it is important to remember that in order to meet the challenges of an ever-changing profession, it is crucial that staff members have the flexibility and adaptability to acquire new skills. For this reason, it is vital to monitor position vacancies in order to remain abreast of trends in CMC services and structure

(ACRL, 2002). Administrators are faced with staffing challenges that include predictable and unpredictable staffing needs when planning for the future. According to the *Guidelines for Curriculum Materials Centers* (ACRL, 2009b), there are three key areas for which CMC staff is responsible:

- Administration: mission/goals, budgeting, personnel, facilities, promotion
- Services: reference, instruction, distance education, faculty liaison, outreach, production
- Collections: development, access, assessment

Staffing to address these areas is mandatory if the CMC is to adhere to standard guidelines. Predicting staff needs is based upon the extent of services and collections as well as the number of users each CMC serves. Unpredictable staffing needs are based upon the continuously ever-changing, ever-more-complex technological environment demanding that staff constantly learn and adapt to new technologies (Metz, 2010).

Not only do CMC administrators face predicting future staffing needs, but they encounter staffing challenges resulting from economic downturns, budget collapses, retention issues, outsourcing of processes, and shortage of available professionals due to competition and the growing numbers of retirees. Even with the predictable and unpredictable staffing needs in conjunction with challenges, CMC staffing in the twenty-first century is a vital component of the overall success of the budgeting, services, and collections of the CMC and is accomplished by determining the number of needed positions, by reviewing and improving the hiring process, and by emphasizing retention and performance evaluation in order to project the value of the CMC staff.

Determining Needed Staff Positions

To initiate the process of determining needed staff positions of any given CMC, three factors must be analyzed:

- the vision, mission, and strategic planning of the center
- dynamic factors within and outside the center in comparison with other peer institutions

- the physical location of the CMC in relation to the university

Analyzing the CMC vision, mission, and strategies provides direct insight into what the CMC projects for the future, what it currently does, whom it serves, and how it plans to accomplish the service now and in the future. The vision stretches the capabilities and enhances the image of the CMC, projecting what the CMC wishes to become in the future. The mission defines what the CMC is doing currently, why, and for whom it exists.

While the mission determines the resources and services needed based upon users, strategic planning encompasses written strategies that address achieving the mission with direct impact on the vision. Strategic planning includes setting goals, establishing criteria, and measuring actions. Consistently reviewing the vision and mission statements provides the ability to implement strategic planning that addresses the number (staffing level) and types (competencies and capabilities) of CMC staff members necessary to implement goals effectively now and in the future (Bechet, 2000). A simple example explains the importance of analyzing these statements. A given CMC serves a state university that produces the highest number of teachers in that state. The college of education within this university places preservice teachers for internships in thirty-eight public school systems in its region and enrolls the highest number of distance education students on the campus and in the state university system. The campus offers graduate programs through the doctoral level. The CMC serves a total of 3,000 education students and more than 40,000 in-service educators in the university regional community. In addition, the CMC serves an early childhood program that produces a high number of directors and teachers for preschools and early childhood education programs. The vision is to serve as a national model for other CMCs to emulate. The CMC mission statement says that the center facilitates teaching and learning initiatives by providing resources and services to educators at all levels within the university's regional community. Strategic goals include developing and maintaining an accessible, current birth-to-grade-12 collection; conducting reference and instruction services; providing outreach to the college of education,

area schools, and educators; and supporting educators with technology and equipment for production purposes.

In addition to strategic goals that directly relate to the vision and mission, there are strategic goals that address other community and campus user needs and expectations that are not the primary functions of the centers, but nevertheless are services rendered due to the location and nature of the collection as well as partnerships formed by the university and center. These services include addressing the needs of homeschoolers, area PK–12 students, faculty members' children, and university preschool laboratories. In order to accomplish the strategic goals, competent and adequate staffing must be available to perform the quality and type of services determined through strategic planning based upon patron needs (ACRL, 2002). Seven full-time CMC staff and twelve student employees are necessary to accomplish the strategic goals and mission of this center. Commitment from library and campus administrators, dedicated support from the college of education faculty, and CMC goals addressing needs and expectations of preservice and inservice educators have played a major role in the justification for CMC staffing at this institution.

Establishing the direction of the CMC based on the vision, mission, and strategic plan provides the basis for analyzing the staffing needs by reviewing basic indicating factors that provide insight into determining the number and type of staff positions. Maintaining vital statistics of indicating academic and CMC factors can justify the need for additional staff for the center. Statistics in the form of readily available data are real and supporting evidence that can be used to reduce the disparity between actual staff and predicted needed staff; however, educating campus and library administration solidifies support for the CMC and helps justify the center's budget. The academic and CMC factors listed in figure 6.1 reflect indicating factors that correlate and support the number and types of staff positions (Burger, Clark, & Mischo, 1999). Statistics on the academic factors listed in figure 6.1 are maintained by the university and are readily available upon request. Analysis of numbers of programs, students, faculty, degrees, accreditations, and rank-

ings provides standard factors that CMC administrators rely upon to determine and predict present and future needed services, collections, and resources. When these statistics are combined with indicating CMC factors, a wealth of data is available to validate and support the needs of CMC staffing. Centers located in the academic library setting will require staffing different from those housed outside of that environment. Hours of service for the center are not to be determined by the number of staff members available to cover the hours, but rather, within budgetary guidelines, by the needs and schedules of the patrons.

Figure 6.1. Academic and CMC factors

Academic Factors	CMC Factors
• Number of university programs and partnerships served • Number of faculty served by above-determined programs and partnerships • Number of students served in above-determined programs and partnerships • Level of university degrees offered (undergraduate degrees, certifications, master's degrees, doctoral degrees) • Recognition of university programs (national or state rankings) • Accreditation standards	• Location of center (Is it in academic library, branch library, or campus education department?) • Square footage of center • Circulation statistics • Cataloging needs/statistics • Size and type of collections • Service desk statistics • Hours of service • Collection development needs/statistics (weeding, volumes added per year, maintenance of the collection, etc.) • Services offered (instructional sessions, individual consultations, workshops, professional development for faculty, outreach services, production services, tours, distance education services, bibliographies, etc.) • Presence nationally, regionally, at state level, and locally • Equipment/technology services
(Adapted from Burger, Clark, & Mischo, 1999.)	

Indicating factors for determining the number and types of staff positions needed. Additionally, the type and number of patrons being served and the level of service offered at the center's reference desk are key to the types and number of positions needed to effectively operate the center. Circulation and cataloging statistics provide data regarding the use and access of materials and resources. Interlibrary loan services, reserve statistics, checkouts, renewals, and in-house statistics of CMC collection usage are all vital in substantiating needs of the center. Comparison of CMC circulation statistics with the overall academic library circulation statistics may prove helpful in supporting staffing. For example, if circulation statistics indicate that a CMC located within the academic library is circulating more than 40 percent of the entire academic library circulation, then such a statistic must be highlighted and accented, showing that the materials and resources within the center are needed, valued, and used by patrons. Staffing is needed to catalog materials for immediate access. If cataloging is centralized, then CMC cataloging staffing is not necessary.

CMC administrators must insist that knowledgeable professionals instruct and assist patrons in the use of the curriculum collection as well as developing, maintaining, and promoting the collection. Other factors of consideration in determining staffing are square footage of the center in conjunction with size and type of collections. It may be necessary in the vision of the center to include growth in staffing if expansion of the center is predicted. Also as important are future services needed based upon the increase in number of patrons and the ever-changing technology. CMC services range from basic reference desk services to instructional services for students, faculty, special groups, individuals, and community patrons with more specialized services that include technology, outreach, production, distance education services, and more. It is true that if you build a collection and promote it, patrons will come and investigate it. However, if knowledgeable staff members are available to assist patrons and instruct them in the use of the collection, then patrons will use it, embrace it, and tell others about it. As technology has impacted nearly every facet of librarianship, it is a definite indicating

factor that directly affects staffing. As current and future technological services are advancing, technology is driving change across the entire range of library responsibilities, making staffing a key component to the support of technology-based services. Basic use of technology is normal in today's world; therefore, the job of the CMC staff to provide instruction in the integration of technology into the classroom and beyond is a standard expectation (Youngman, 1999).

Staffing has a major impact on the national, regional, state, and local presence and performance of the CMC. While it is possible to maintain a presence with minimal staff, the level of acceptable performance of the CMC in meeting patron needs will suffer when staff members are away participating in planning, conference presentations, and professional development unless there are sufficient staff members to maintain quality services. Once indicating factors (figure 6.1) are considered and analyzed, it is helpful to review peer institutions, examining staffing of CMCs in institutions with similar framework, enrollment profile, size, and settings as well as programs and degree offerings. In most cases, comparison of staffing in peer institutions strengthens and supports the case for staffing requested by the center.

The physical location of the CMC directly impacts the determination of staffing. Most CMCs are located within the academic library or within the academic education department or are a branch of the academic library. For CMCs located within the academic library, crosstraining and one-stop service desks are considered economic and consistent means by which regular library staff can cover the curriculum collection as well as the general collection. However, CMCs are specialized collections that demand knowledgeable professionals to meet the needs of users who expect assistance with subject-specific inquiries. Curriculum collections located in the academic library setting are most effective when the CMC provides a specialized service desk. Such presence emphasizes the validity and value of the collection and its users by library administration. The quality of services provided by knowledgeable professional staff determines the volume of usage and retention of users of the curriculum collection. Users requiring subject-specific resources and

services quickly recognize whether professionals or staff members possess the necessary knowledge and experience to provide the desired and expected level of services, which determines continued usage. Assigning CMC staff to cover dual job roles within library collections other than the CMC must be avoided whenever possible. Such assignments, where responsibilities and focus encompass vast and varied collections, limit the effectiveness of the staff member in providing quality services for subject-specific patron needs. Additionally, the development and maintenance of the collection may suffer when staff is overloaded and overworked. In a study conducted by Teclehaimanot and Patterson (1992), the lack of qualified CMC staff (professional and support) was cited as one of the factors representing the greatest barrier to the future of CMCs. CMC administrators must obtain and retain the support of campus and library administrators to overcome this great barrier.

A major consideration when staffing a branch or a center housed separately from the academic library is security. The presence of security impacts the safety of the center, which determines hours of operation and usage. If the center is isolated from a main facility that provides security, then hours of operation are limited based on the high traffic patterns of building use and the ability to provide the acceptable level of security. Limitations placed on a CMC due to the lack of adequate staffing and security directly influence the access and services provided. Such limitations are directly linked to budgeting, which plays a primary role in the total staffing of the CMC. As academic library budgets decrease, the demands and competition for funds increase. For the CMC to be highly competitive in the budgeting process, it is essential to develop a staffing plan or time line to justify and forecast needs. This plan demonstrates to the administration the needs of the CMC and the direct relationship linking proper staffing to the achievement of strategic goals. A staffing plan is not a one-time request that is submitted or presented to administration in the hope that funding will be available, but rather a long-range plan developed based upon the implementation and consideration of the CMC's vision, mission, strategic planning, indicating factors, allocations, and funding. The plan strategically incorporates

current and future staffing needs, recognizing new positions and competencies that will be vital in accomplishing the vision, mission, and goals of the center as traditional and technology-driven services change to meet patron needs. Within the staffing plan, emphasis is placed on the integration of new staff competencies into existing positions as needs change. The plan must be concise, clear, and detailed, demonstrating the need for new staffing and justifying the positions based upon strategic planning and statistical and peer data as it relates to the level and quality of services expected and needed by patrons (Burger, Clark, & Mischo, 1999). The long-range staffing plan serves as a tool for administration to project and plan for timely changes in CMC staffing. The CMC administrator must be prepared to implement staffing changes based upon the plan as they are considered and approved while realizing that adjustments may need to be made.

Determining Allocation and Funding for Needed Staff Positions

Once the necessary number and type of CMC positions have been determined by considering the indicating factors in figure 6.1, requesting allocations is the next step. Based upon job responsibilities and competencies, requests are formulated for faculty (professional), staff (support), and student or volunteer positions. New positions requested may be part-time staff members who become full-time as funding becomes available, additional full- or part-time professional or support staff members, additional student employees, or approval of a volunteer policy to allow competent professional or support volunteers to legally assist the center. Positions may be filled through new hires, promotions, work reassignments, use of contract staff, or other resources (Bechet, 2000). Professional positions include and address competencies such as administration and supervision of the center; collection development; reference, research, and technology services; instruction; outreach services; cataloging; and national, regional, and state presence. Support positions involve circulation, copy cataloging and processing, limited reference services, stacks management, production services, tours, student employee

supervision, supply inventory, displays and exhibits, and gathering and compiling statistics. Student employee positions cover a range of competencies based upon student experiences. Graduate and undergraduate education students possess more experience in the field of education, enhancing their skills to serve in the CMC. These student positions will support duties including compiling and updating bibliographies, acquisition title searching, peer training, processing materials, reading shelves, pulling faculty-requested titles, and assisting generally with location of materials. Other student employee positions include such tasks as shelving materials, stamping new and discarded materials, recycling, shifting collections, reading shelves, simple catalog searching and locating materials, assisting with production services, and performing circulation duties.

While it is difficult to obtain funding for new staffing, a well-developed staffing plan enables the CMC administrator to communicate staffing needs for a given time period to the higher levels of administration. Once the staffing plan is presented, discussion can begin on its feasibility and implementation. Adjustments may be necessary, but openness and flexibility are instrumental in acquiring position allocations In order to provide the desired staff positions for the CMC, money must be available to fund them. Funding is a determining factor that affects full-time and part-time allocations. Budgeting may require that a position initially be temporary, changing to permanent part-time or full-time status when additional funding becomes available. Positions may be moved from other departments or areas to accommodate needs. In some cases, volunteer assistance can be considered as an option when funding is limited or not available. Even though university policy usually mandates that liability insurance be provided for volunteers, volunteers can be utilized at a minimal cost. The hiring of volunteers requires careful review of individual skills and experience in relation to the job competencies required by the CMC position. This will ensure a positive experience for the volunteer and the CMC. A volunteer position must be carefully considered before he or she is accepted for a volunteer position. "Free" assistance that is irrelevant to the CMC's mission and goals may not be needed or helpful.

Scheduling regular meetings between deans and CMC directors provides an avenue for continued discussion and updates of the direct relationship between CMC staffing and current and future services. During meetings, continued justification of needs must be supported by statistics, data, and strategic planning that is measured or evaluated based on the performance and accomplishment of the center's goals and objectives. Even with hard evidence to support CMC staffing needs, allocations for positions and adequate funding remain a major concern for CMC administrators (Teclehaimanot & Patterson, 1992). Key elements in implementing the staffing plan include remaining focused on the vision, mission, and goals of the center; understanding that staffing the CMC appropriately is a long-range goal; educating and informing administrators of CMC achievements and accomplishments; and continuously reviewing the plan.

The Hiring Process

When a new staffing position is allocated and funded, the hiring process begins by creating a job description based upon competencies needed to perform the responsibilities of the position. Once the approved job description is available for posting, advertising and recruiting for the position play an important role in determining the number of candidates available for interviewing. Upon the completion of the interview process, the appropriate candidate is chosen, which, at that point, the orienting of the new candidate begins. The hiring process is the means by which the staffing plan becomes a reality. Terrence Mech (1989, p. 63) states, "Personnel are the critical resource in any professional activity because the quality of work depends on the qualities of those hired." A deliberate process that creates efficient and effective models to identify, recruit, and hire top candidates is essential. Streamlining the inclusion of required and preferred qualities in the job description, with major emphasis on the development of competencies, is a key element in acquiring competent candidates for a position. Flexibility in job descriptions is essential in expediting the process. Responsibilities and qualifications remain an essential piece of the job description; they are just

more broadly defined and more compatible with the reality of a technology-driven, changing environment. Hiring based on traits essential for the success of the CMC, in contrast with hiring based on a limited set of stated skills, allows the CMC administrator to consider attitude, values, cultural fit, and ability to adapt to change rather than just specific skills, which candidates can learn once they are hired. Experience is certainly a factor that should not be ignored; however, it is not a reliable indicator of an individual's ability to adapt, thrive, and make substantial contributions to the CMC (Raschke, 2003). The process of creating new job descriptions is an excellent opportunity to review and revamp the job descriptions of existing staff. A chance to rethink staffing patterns allows for analyzing current circumstances to determine the best arrangement for future staffing and services (Youngman, 1999). In advertisement and recruitment, the use of technology has proven effective in allowing organizations such as CMCs to overcome time, geography, space, and budget limitations in dissemination of job openings and information. The reduction in cost, quick distribution, and efficient management associated with electronic advertising and recruitment make them invaluable tools. Avoiding the traditional advertising and recruitment processes reduces the hiring process time, which could determine the difference between hiring a desirable candidate for the CMC position and losing the candidate to another job posting (Raschke, 2003).

Preparing for candidate interviews is a crucial stage in the hiring process. A considerable amount of time can be spent prior to and during the interviewing process. The length of time that libraries spend from the interview of the first candidate to the selection and contacting of the successful candidate averages forty-one days. This time does not include gathering initial applications, analyzing cover letters and resumes, or checking references, which must all be completed prior to interviewing; therefore, it is extremely important to improve the steps leading to interviews. CMC administrators must reduce the number of members on search committees, use technology to communicate with potential candidates, limit in-person search committee meetings by working independently to review and rank resumes, favor initial quick telephone and

e-mail reference checks to formal written ones, and review applications as they arrive rather than waiting for an arbitrary deadline to begin the reviews. Streamlining the review process is essential because during this time candidates are anxious to hear from hiring institutions as they begin to develop their own list of possibilities (Raschke, 2003).

The job interview is a powerful component in the hiring process and must be carefully planned and implemented efficiently. Presentations, role-playing, responses to given CMC scenarios, solutions offered for specific CMC work situations, and answers to selected interview questions are all effective techniques used to assess candidate qualifications, trainability, adaptability to change, and speed of learning to perform job tasks (Guion, 1997). The inclusion of behaviorally based questions is of paramount importance in identifying specific characteristics and behavioral traits that the search committee feels are essential to the position and the CMC. Such questions allow candidates to accentuate specific experiences and examples demonstrating their ability to handle given situations. Employing such varied questions allows members of the search committee to gain insight into the behaviors that candidates utilized as they explain their reactions or solutions to the given situations. The interview provides an opportunity for the search committee and candidates to discover if their backgrounds, experiences, talents, skills, and interests are aligned to the position and the culture of the CMC. The search committee must realize that candidates are conducting their own interviews of the search committee and the CMC; therefore, the CMC culture, vision, mission, strategic planning, customer service model, and any other outstanding components must be presented to candidates clearly, concisely, and in a positive manner. Technical qualifications of the position must be explained, allowing candidates' responses, backgrounds, and experiences to be determining factors in the hiring process. Once the search committee has conducted all interviews and is satisfied that all elements of the interview process have been addressed and assessed, the committee reviews each candidate, noting all information collected during the hiring process to determine the best candidate for the position. A matrix listing required and preferred qualifications is

a helpful tool in recording, reviewing, and assessing each candidate during and after the interview. Using such a tool allows the search committee to record fairly and consistently the traits of each candidate, providing information that can be retrieved and reviewed after each interview.

Once the search committee has selected the candidate for the CMC position and all hiring requirements have been addressed and approved based on institutional hiring policies and guidelines, the person should be contacted with the job offer. The length of time from the offer to acceptance of the job is determined by several variables including type of position, salary, negotiations, availability of the candidate to begin employment, and availability for funding the position.

As the logistics are finalized, the CMC administrator prepares for the arrival of the employee, devising an orientation that will address the needs of the employee and the employer. The orientation of employees to the CMC is the initial step in retention. The purpose of orientation is to reduce the anxieties of the new employee; to provide the employee with a deeper understanding of the CMC history, culture, vision, mission, and goals as well as the physical facilities and arrangements; to explain job expectations in relationship to overall operations of the CMC; to review the evaluation tools that will be used to assess the employee's performance; to discuss training and professional development opportunities; to establish personal goals in relationship to strategic planning; and to address day-to-day operations and policies of the center. Orientation processes vary in length from several days to several months. It is important to devise an orientation that is directly related to the position and the culture of the CMC. General topics are addressed with all new positions; however, each position will have specific areas in which new employees need specialized guidance. Well-developed orientations for new employees show the commitment and value placed on the new CMC position. The assignment of a mentor can further demonstrate commitment and value.

The investment made by the CMC in any position search and hiring decision is substantial; therefore, the hiring process must be flexible, thorough, and timely. The process leading to the identification and hir-

ing of top candidates has challenges, but the ultimate goal is finding and retaining a candidate whose talents, trainability, adaptability, flexibility, and personality are compatible with the needs of the CMC (Raschke, 2003).

Retention of CMC Staff

Due to the time and effort required to secure funding for CMC staffing, retention of the employee and the position is indispensable. Quinn (2005) reported that meeting employee needs must be considered as a major factor in the retention of employees. According to the American Management Association's survey of best retention practices of organizations cited by Musser (2001), six factors are important to all employees:

- mentoring
- networking
- career and learning opportunities
- interesting work
- good benefits
- balance between work and home life

In most cases, mentoring is a mutual relationship involving the pairing of similar individuals. In the CMC, such a pairing may not be easy to set in place due to the limited size of staff; therefore, assistance from outside the CMC may be needed to develop a mentoring relationship. A mentor assists the new CMC employee in understanding the unwritten rules, organization, and culture of the CMC. Preferred CMC communication styles, the importance of socializing, in-house policies, acceptable norms, and creating the balance between work and home are all important factors in which a mentor assists a CMC employee. When developed and implemented properly, mentoring always produces a win-win situation. Networking provides the opportunity for the new CMC staff member to become acquainted with internal and external coworkers, faculty, students, and other patrons. One simple example of initiating the networking process is inviting the new CMC employee to lunch once a month. While lunch is a simple gesture, it is a powerful statement of inclusion in a team-driven environment. In today's workplace where

continuous learning is essential, career and learning opportunities serve as retaining measures to increase performance, productivity, and satisfaction of employees. CMC administrators benefit from offering and allowing new training and continuous professional development, which not only increase performance, but enhance the value and confidence of each employee. Interesting and motivating work reminds employees that they are an integral part of the organization. When the new CMC staff member joins the team, interesting work is the catalyst for increased productivity. Metamorphosing ordinary tasks into challenging and enjoyable duties is vital in retaining the new CMC employee and adding meaning to work. While some employers consider good job benefits to be health insurance, retirement benefits, or other similar monetary gains, a good majority of employees have been known to stay with an organization just based on the fact that a flexible schedule allowed them to have a better balance between work and home life (Musser, 2001). If the CMC is truly committed to retaining the new employee, there must be continuous and sustained efforts to show that the employee is valued rather than periodic activity or set benefits (Musser, 2001).

Performance Evaluation of CMC Staff

Evidence of major contributions from CMC staff should be observed through job performance; therefore, a formal performance evaluation must be conducted at least once a year with an interim review mid-year for faculty, support staff, and student positions. While evaluation procedures and processes will vary among faculty, support staff, and students, evaluations are useful in achieving strategic goals and meeting the needs and expectations of patrons. Supervisors are responsible for performing evaluations for each CMC employee, both full- and part-time, in a regular and timely manner. The performance evaluation is viewed as a positive procedure with purposeful benefits to the employer and the employee. It is an opportunity for the supervisor and employee to review and update job descriptions and competencies that clarify job expectations as well as review personal goals and accomplishments. The performance evaluation is documented using statistics and measurable

criteria that provide an avenue whereby the employer reviews strengths, weaknesses, areas of achievement, and areas for improvement. This process allows a time of open communication between the supervisor and employee to measure performance by comparing actual results to expectations. Additionally, it is an opportunity to reward employees who exceed expectations as well as motivate employees to strive for outstanding performance. In some cases, the performance evaluation serves as documentation of improvement, when needed, or in making decisions regarding demotions, disciplinary actions, and dismissals (East Carolina University, 2004).

The performance evaluation process begins when the supervisor and the CMC employee meet within the first thirty days of employment to develop a work plan. The work plan is reviewed and updated annually. It is a specific course of action outlining job competencies, responsibilities, employment dimensions, expectations, and methods and sources for measuring the actual results. A standardized rating scale is used to determine the performance level based on the documented actual results. Once the work plan has been developed, a day-to-day monitoring or tracking by both the CMC staff member and the supervisor begins based upon the measuring sources as agreed upon in the initial meeting.

New employees are evaluated once during and at the end of a probationary period, usually six months from the initial hiring, to ensure that job competencies are understood and being met. The probationary period is separate from the first annual performance cycle. During the probation term, new employees are given an opportunity to discuss their job competencies and expectations with their supervisor in order to reach a level of acceptable proficiency prior to the end of the probation term. The probation term serves as a time of learning and comprehension of job competencies. Additionally, this term provides the supervisor an opportunity to observe and make recommendations, if needed, to the new employee on improving performance and adjusting to new job expectations. If the employee is not able to perform at an acceptable level, then the supervisor can dismiss the employee prior to the position becoming permanent. While dismissal of a probationary

employee is not the desired outcome, it is necessary when a newly hired candidate is unable to perform the job competencies at an acceptable level.

If the probationary term ends successfully, the employee becomes permanently hired. An annual performance evaluation cycle begins, which includes an interim review every six months with an annual final review at the end of each year. The interim review serves as a midpoint informal discussion between the supervisor and CMC employee regarding progress toward each of the established competencies, expectations, and dimensions (required tasks or duties). Since the interim review is informal, the supervisor communicates to the employee the overall level of performance to date, recording only the date the meeting occurred, topics discussed, and any additions to or deletions from the work plan. A formal rating is not given at this point of the performance cycle. Feedback and communication during the interim review are important elements to encourage acceptable performance.

During the annual or final review, the supervisor and employee meet to review the employee's actual performance as it compares to established expectations and measurable results. The supervisor and employee discuss each competency in conjunction with the dimensions or general scope of the job duties as well as expectations in order to determine the overall performance rating. It is vital that open discussions occur so that the CMC employee understands and has input into their final performance overall rating for the year. Documentation is written on a formal appraisal instrument indicating the actual results based on the established measurement scale. The CMC employee is given the opportunity to make comments on the document as well. Both the supervisor and the CMC employee sign the appraisal to validate that the rating has been discussed and the evaluation was held. If there is a disagreement on the given rating, the employee may write comments on the final appraisal in rebuttal (East Carolina University, 2004).

CMC staff should be highly encouraged to develop three to four personal goals annually. Brian Tracy (2002) states in his book, *Focal Point*, that the difference between successful and unsuccessful people

is the way they think. Successful people know what they want and how to obtain it based on their personal goals. Personal goals are simply a way to motivate CMC employees to contribute to the overall success of the center. Successful centers are composed of successful people. For this reason, personal goals should support the vision, mission, and strategic goals of the center. These goals are related to job competencies and are relevant, attainable, timely, and measurable. Setting personal goals establishes direction, productivity, and professional growth, which can play a key role in the success of the employee and the center.

Finally, it is extremely valuable and important to provide continuous skills development and job enrichment in order to increase CMC employee performance. Professional development and training provide increased CMC effectiveness by raising individual competencies among support staff as well as faculty. It allows staff exposure to innovative technology and future trends so that they can better prepare themselves and the center to meet patron needs (Lo, 2008). Such opportunities are formally written in an employee work development plan and personal goals agreed upon between the supervisor and employee. Regardless of the technique, professional development and training are essential if CMC staff members intend to develop and enhance their work-related knowledge, skills, and attitudes to meet future changing technologies and services.

Valuing the CMC Staff

It will take months or even years to secure the number and type of positions needed to efficiently operate a successful CMC. Regardless of the size of the CMC staff, valuing each individual member of the center is crucial in maintaining a motivated, team-driven, self-empowered staff with high morale. Motivating employees changes with the times. Studies report that motivation affects behavior which is directly linked to individual needs and that motivation is not a fixed trait, but varies in relationship to age, gender, employment status, occupational category, and income. Keeping this in mind, several overall factors motivate employ-

ees: interesting work, sympathetic understanding relating to personal problems, good working conditions, full appreciation of work done, and a feeling of inclusion in decision making (Wiley, 1997). Unappreciated employees are more likely to search for other employment, resulting in departures that cost thousands of dollars in recruitment, hiring, and training. Absenteeism, tardiness, and lack of motivation abound in undervalued staff; therefore, it is always important to show employees that their contributions are valued. Topper (2009) reports the findings of a survey by the Foundation for Enterprise Development (http://www.fed.org) showing that employees ranked personal congratulations from their supervisor as their number one choice for recognition, with a written note as second, out of sixty-seven potential forms of recognition that were offered to them for doing a good job.

CMC supervisors can motivate staff by regularly reminding them of the importance of their work in achieving the vision, mission, and goals of the center. While teamwork is important in the success of the CMC, valuing the part played by each individual is also important because involvement in the achievement of the center's vision, mission, and goals produces a sense of ownership and contribution. Employees who regularly receive positive feedback regarding their contributions are motivated to seek ways to accomplish even more for their employer (Quinn, 2005). Additionally, administrators must communicate to CMC staff that their work is highly appreciated and that patrons need them more than ever during these ever-changing technological times. Administrators who engage everyone in the mission of the organization and generate a shared vision for success indirectly inspire staff to do their best (Topper, 2009). Engagement is accomplished by developing an effective CMC team whose individual members feel ownership of the accomplishments of the center. Ownership increases morale, allowing staff to realize the influence of empowerment and involvement. Staff involvement enables employees to contribute to continuous improvement and the ongoing success of the center. In a highly effective CMC team, all staff members share in the decision making, an openness that leads to collaboration built on trust and respect, an understanding of the relationship between

personal and CMC strategic goals, and a mutual agreement that everyone is important. Each CMC staff member realizes that he or she has an important role in fulfilling and contributing to the overall mission of the CMC. Employees in today's workforce, regardless of their position, must continue to work on their knowledge, skills, competencies, and experience in a changing and sometimes unpredictable environment. Through motivation, teamwork, empowerment, and involvement, staff members develop the ability to dynamically apply their skills to an ever-changing environment, making them even more valuable and essential to the success of the CMC (Metz, 2010). It is crucial that staff members realize their value; this is accomplished by communicating recognition of their accomplishments, providing a team environment in which they understand their purpose and contribute to the overall achievement of strategic goals, supporting them in the challenges that arise in their personal lives, creating good working conditions, and giving them input into decision making.

Summary

CMCs have been a valuable resource for teacher education in America for over a half a century (McGiverin, 1988), and staffing the CMC is an integral part of its overall success. Throughout the history of education, the classroom teacher has been viewed as the primary element in the teaching/learning process. Melvin Alston (1969) notes that the continual development and integration of CMC services and resources into teacher education has proven to be a second factor in the teaching/learning process, contributing significantly in the development of competent teachers.

The quality of CMC services and resources is directly linked to the staffing of the CMC. As technology advances, forcing new services to emerge, challenges in adding and maintaining CMC positions must be addressed to accommodate future changes (Youngman, 1999). Types and number of positions are determined based on the direction of the CMC, analysis of key influential factors, physical location, allocations, and funding. A CMC staff plan projects the needs of the center based

on long-range goals and future trends. Once the plan has been approved and has administration support, the hiring process focuses on creating job descriptions and competencies, interviewing, hiring, and orienting the new employee. While the hiring process is an integral part of CMC staffing, it is important to recognize that retention of staff is just as valuable for the CMC in maintaining and developing competent staff members. While performance evaluations serve as means of retention by offering staff members an avenue of open communication to continually improve job performance, developing and accomplishing personal goals and continuous job enrichment through professional development and training opportunities provide additional securities in the retention of staff. Highly trained staff members who fully understand their role in the overall CMC mission possess the ability to perform at a level of satisfaction allowing them to feel confident in their performance at work. Confidence produces pride, which increases retention of employees.

In conclusion, one of the most important aspects in the retention of staff lies in valuing the CMC staff. Motivation, teamwork, and self-empowerment together produce high morale in the work environment. To further cultivate the value of CMC staff, a genuine attempt to listen to, implement, and compliment staff input must be continual and sincere (Quinn, 2005). By reviewing the historical perspective and analyzing current needs in order to prepare for the future, CMCs realize that staffing transitions of the twenty-first century can and must be met in order to effectively and successfully meet the ever-changing needs of patrons.

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