



# Building a Path: Investing in Career Development for Health Center Staff

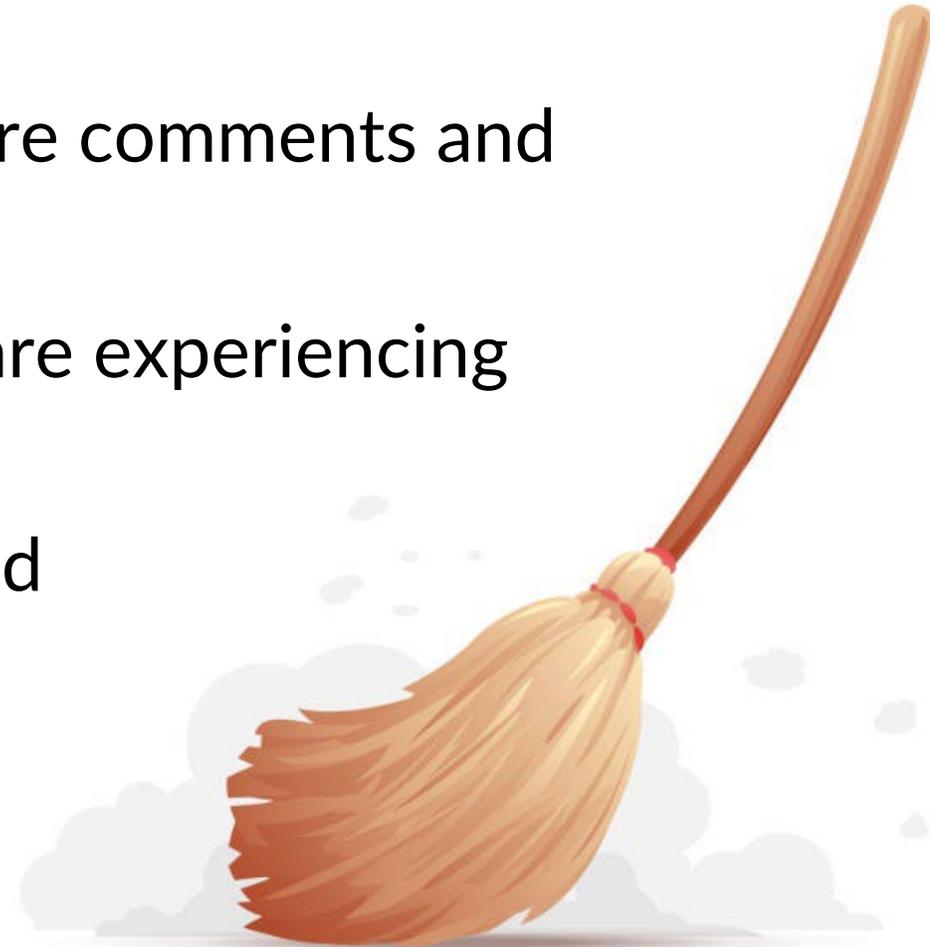
Workforce Professional Development Series: Session 3  
Thursday | November 20, 2025 | 3:00 – 4:00 PM ET

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# HOUSEKEEPING



- This session is being recorded. The **recording and slides** will be provided to all registrants.
- Use the **chat box** to ask questions or share comments and thoughts.
- Send a message to **Mariah Blake**, if you are experiencing technical difficulties.
- Please complete the **evaluation** at the end of the session.



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# STAR<sup>2</sup> CENTER TEAM



**SUZANNE SPEER**  
Vice President of  
Workforce  
Development  
[sspeer@clinicians.org](mailto:sspeer@clinicians.org)



**DR. MICHELLE  
FERNÁNDEZ GABILONDO**  
DSW, MSW  
Director of Workforce  
Development  
[mfernandez@clinicians.org](mailto:mfernandez@clinicians.org)



**MARIAH BLAKE**  
MPA  
Associate Director  
of Workforce  
Operations &  
Compliance  
[mblake@clinicians.org](mailto:mblake@clinicians.org)



**SYDNEY AXELROD**  
MA  
Associate Director of  
Workforce  
Development  
[saxelrod@clinicians.org](mailto:saxelrod@clinicians.org)

# WORKFORCE IS THE FUEL

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A health center with a **full tank** identifies workforce as an essential organizational issue, invests in appropriate operational and staffing resources, and has some key features...



# Core Components

Data-Informed  
Workforce Plan

Effective  
Compensation  
Structure

Organizational  
Norms Focused  
on Engagement

Tested  
Recruitment &  
Retention  
Strategies

Health  
Professions  
Training Program

Chief Workforce  
Officer

High-Functioning  
Managers

Policies &  
Procedures that  
Support HC  
Mission & Values



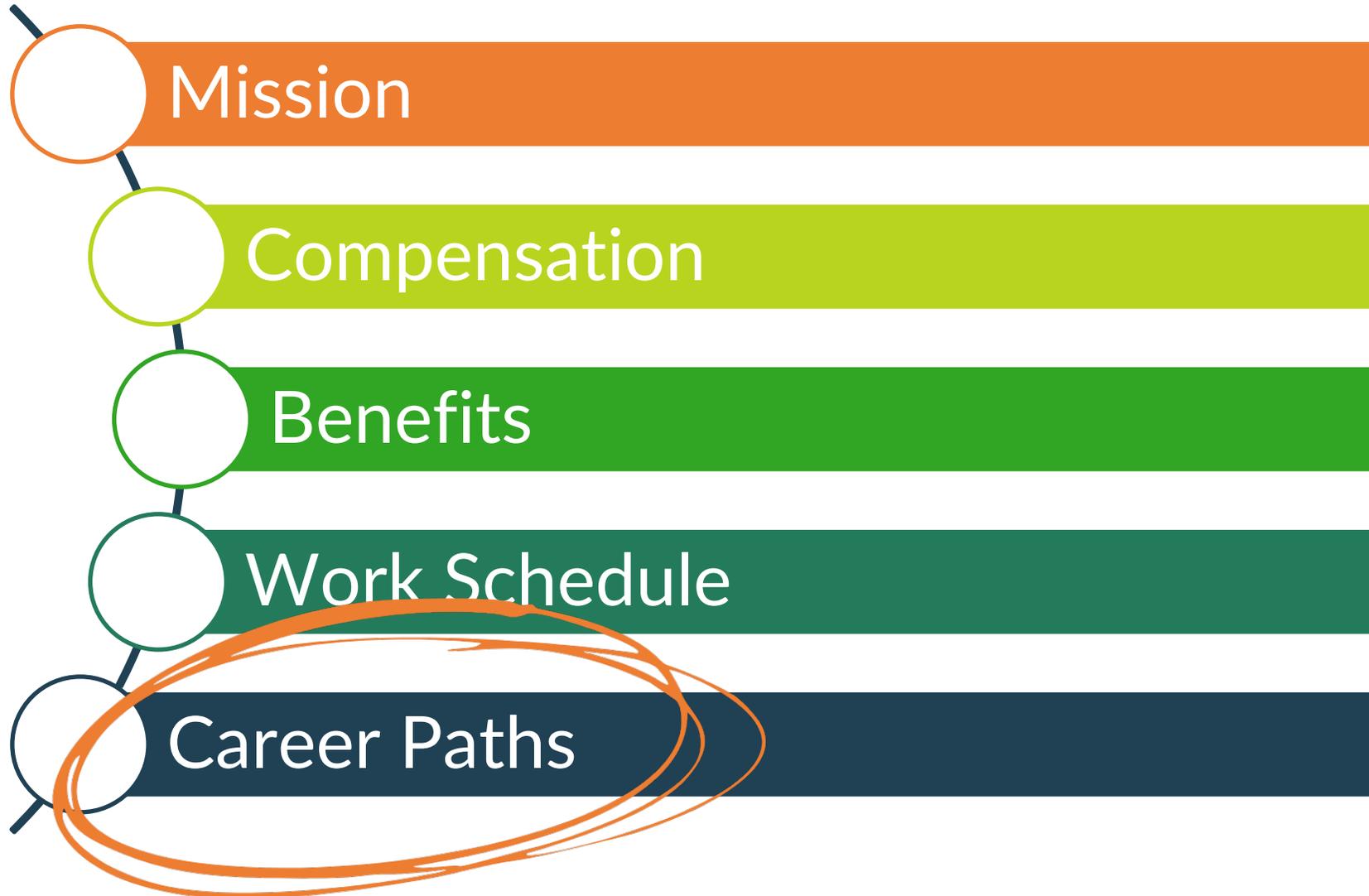
# Components of a Comprehensive Workforce Plan



HP-ET Plan

# RETENTION PLANNING

## Key Areas



# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## Strategies to Consider



- Career Pathways
- Advancement Opportunities
- Talent Development
- Leadership Training
- Succession Planning
- Health Professions Education & Training (HP-ET)



# CAREER PATHWAYS

Make Them Available and Accessible



Staff are often more likely to stay with an organization if there are opportunities for **professional growth and advancement**



# DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

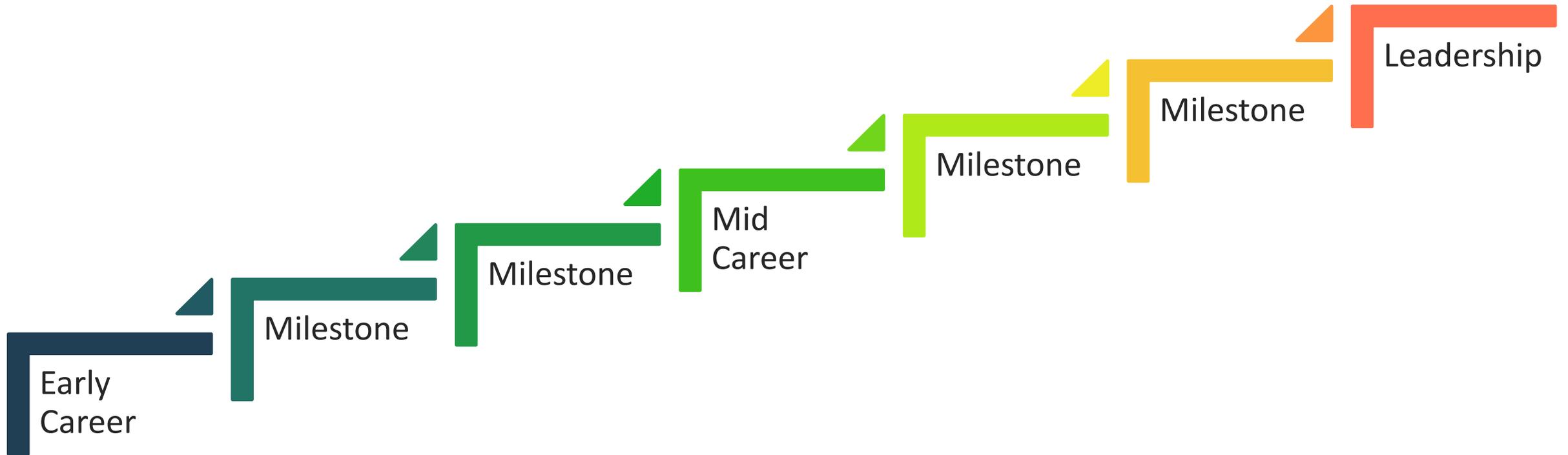
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- Provide professional development, continuing education, and mentorship
- Remember, experience is as important as education
- Invest in career pathways that train employees for the successful achievement of leadership positions

# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## Map Out the Process



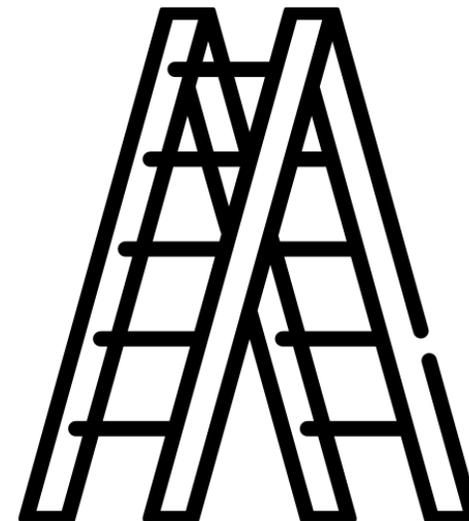
# CAREER PATHS VS. CAREER LADDERS

## Definitions



*Career paths* encompass varied forms of career progression, including the traditional vertical career ladders, dual career ladders, horizontal career lattices, career progression outside the organization and encore careers.

*Career ladders* are the progression of jobs in an organization's specific occupational fields ranked from highest to lowest based on level of responsibility and pay.



Source: [SHRM](#)  
Images: [Flaticon](#)

# CAREER PATHWAYS

## Key Steps



**The only way to prepare your organization for the future of work is by putting skills at the center of your strategy.**

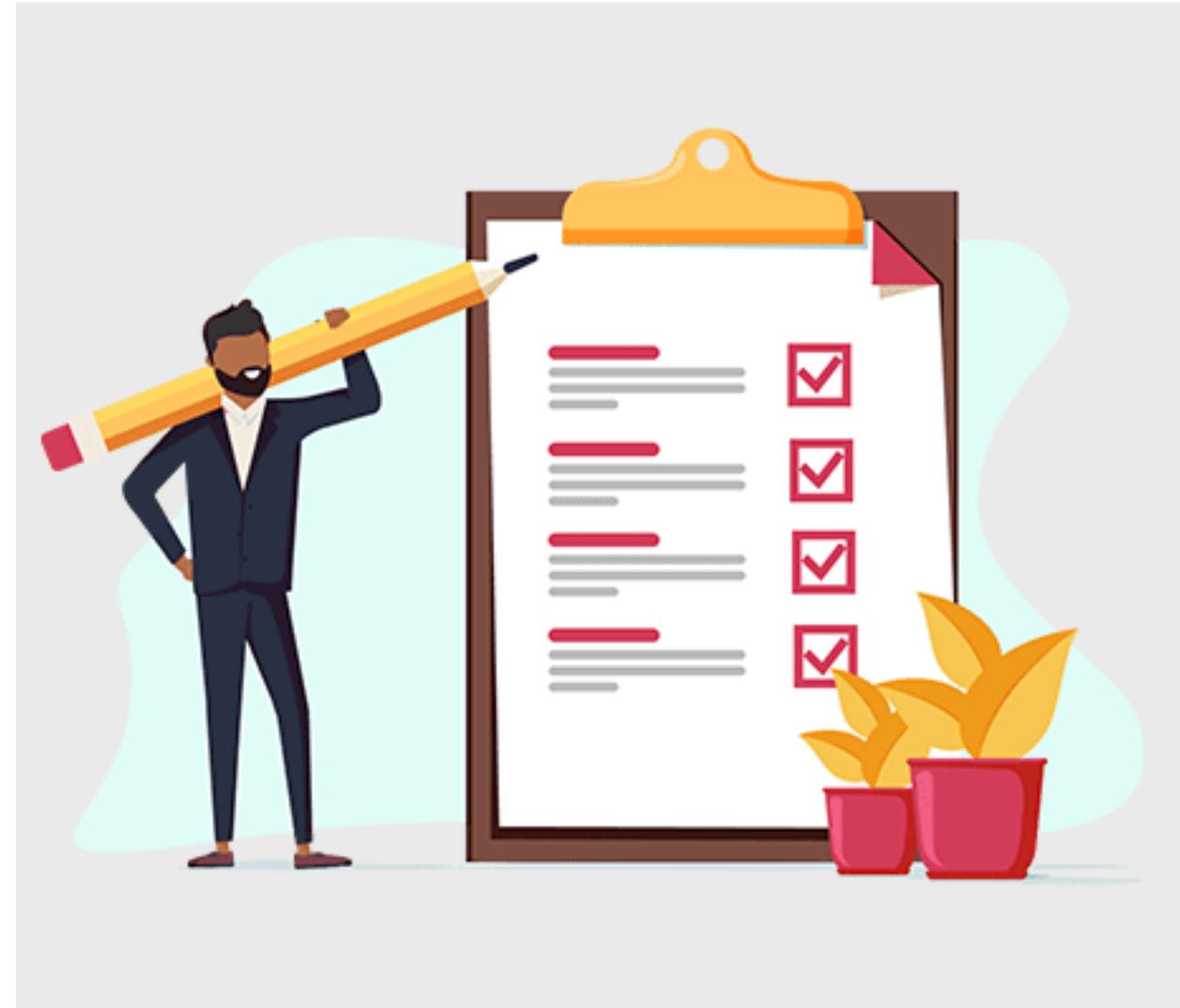
Source: [Gloat](#)



**UPSKILLING**

**CROSS-SKILLING**

**RESKILLING**

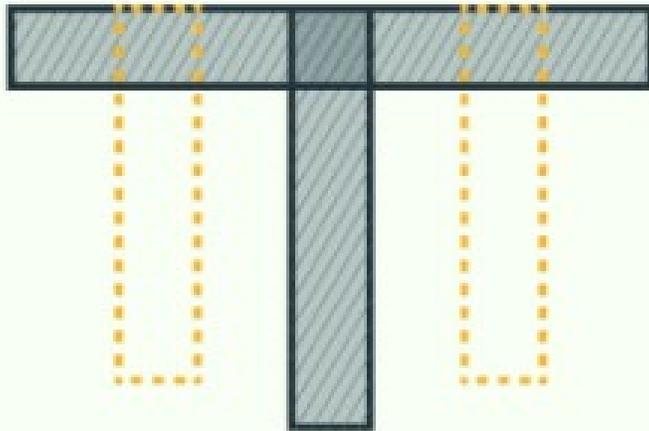


# SKILL-BUILDING STRATEGIES

Reskilling, Cross-Skilling, Upskilling

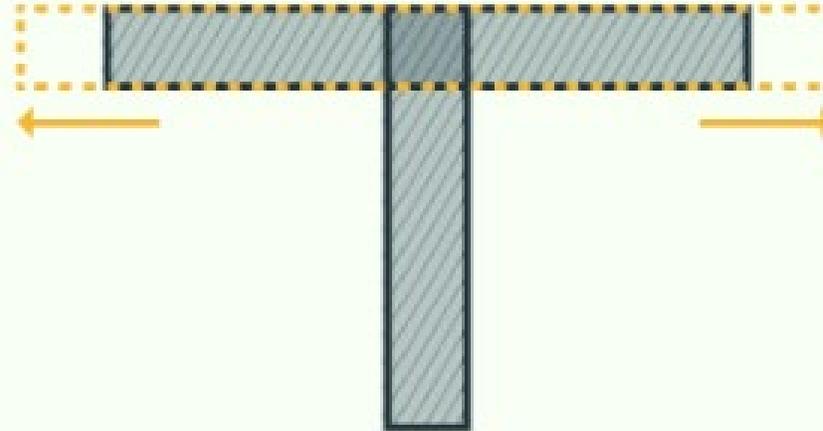


Reskilling



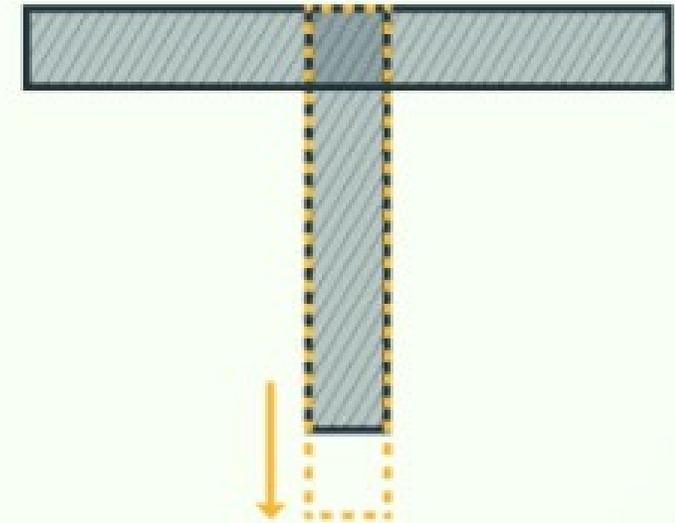
**Reskilling:** equipping staff to switch lanes and move into new roles

Cross-Skilling



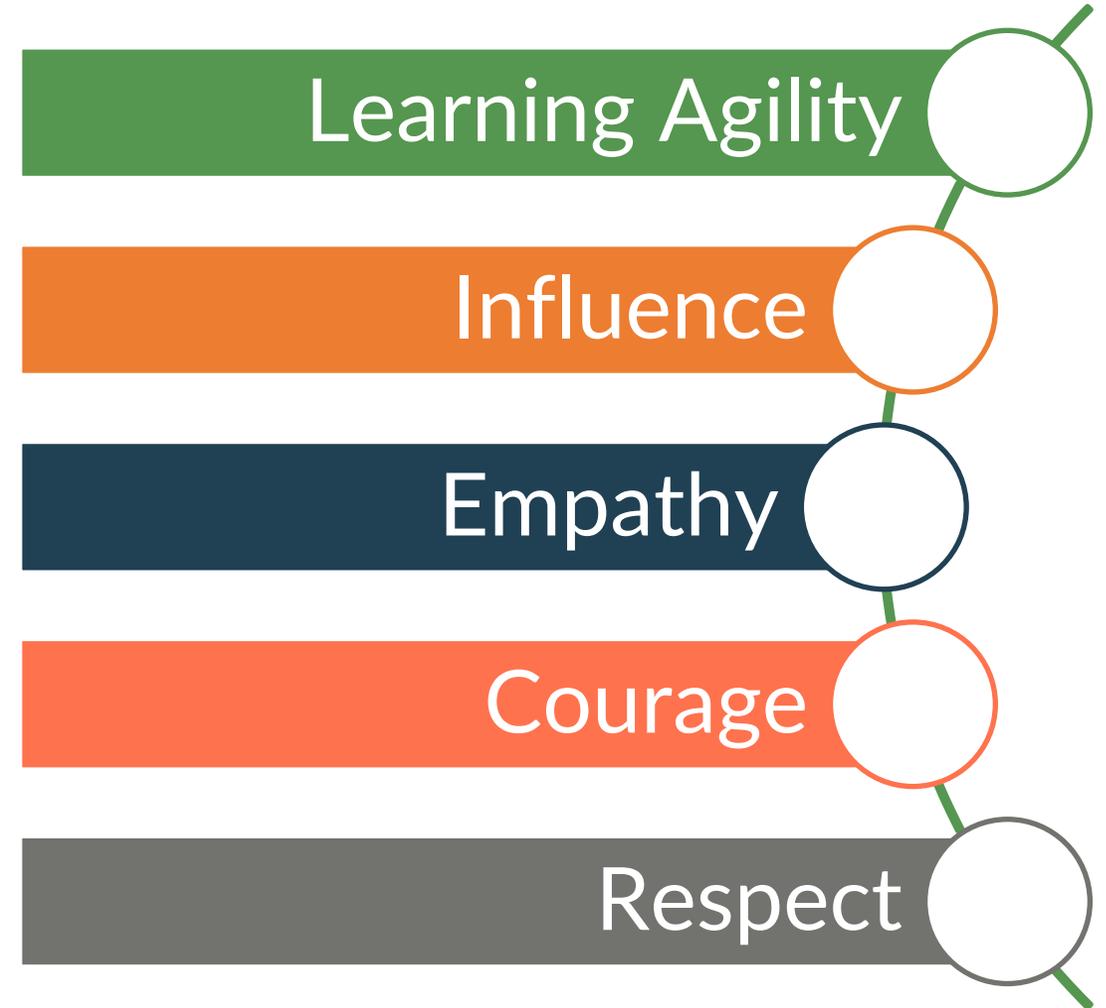
**Cross-skilling:** develop skills that are valuable across multiple functions

Upskilling



**Upskilling:** increase knowledge and develop new competencies related to current position

# LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS



# HP-ET TO “GROW-YOUR-OWN”

## Benefits & Return on Investment (ROI)



- Increased employee satisfaction and retention equals less turnover
- Positive economic impact to community
- Less time to fill open positions
- Greater access to care
- Increased efficiency



\* Nearly 60% of medical residents practice within 100 miles of their residency program and more than half stay in the same state.

# PATHWAYS PROGRAMS

“Growing Your Own”



The variety of Pathways Programs is vast and can cover a range of roles, including:

- Community health worker (CHW) training programs
- Medical assistant (MA) training programs
- Internship and externship rotations for clinicians
- Imbedded primary care residency programs
- Mental health field placements
- Dental assistant (DA) training programs





## CONTEXT & CONCERNS

- Staff time commitment/added workload
- Finding partners
- Accreditation
- Leadership buy-in
- Adequate staffing
- Adequate learner pool
- Cost

## REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

- Different requirements for different programs
- Building partnerships vs going it alone
- Increased staff/resource demand
- Time to ramp up and see results

# DESIGNING CAREER PATHWAYS

## The Value of Human-Centered Design



### Inspiration

How to better understand people and engage them in the process



### Ideation

Generate ideas, test, identify opportunities, and refine solutions



### Implementation

Make the design available and maximize its impact



# INVEST IN THE WORKFORCE



## Turnover is **EXPENSIVE!**

\*Calculate your health center's turnover costs by using the [STAR<sup>2</sup> Center Financial Assessment for Provider Turnover Tool](#)

As leaders, ask yourselves:

- What's the actual cost of turnover?
- What's the cost of a provider vacancy?
- How much does it cost to recruit?
- How much money is your organization losing to these workforce issues?
- How can you better invest money to retain staff and minimize losses?

# QUESTIONS



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