

EG - You Belong

Employee Experience Strategy



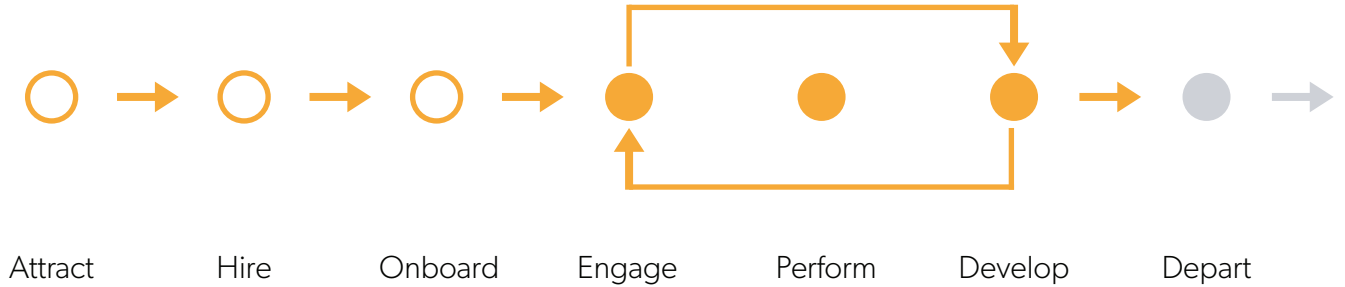
EG - You Belong

Employee Experience Strategy

Introduction

As East Gwillimbury continues to grow, it is critical to examine how the organization will interact with its people at each stage of the employment relationship.

The Employee Experience Strategy, EG - You Belong, maximizes individual and team performance at each of the seven stages of the employee life cycle. More importantly, the Employee Experience Strategy focuses on how staff feel about working with East Gwillimbury. It is intended to illustrate *how* the municipality will work towards building a culture of belonging, where staff feel accepted, included, heard, connected to co-workers, proud of their work and the organization, and where people can grow their career in the way that works for them.



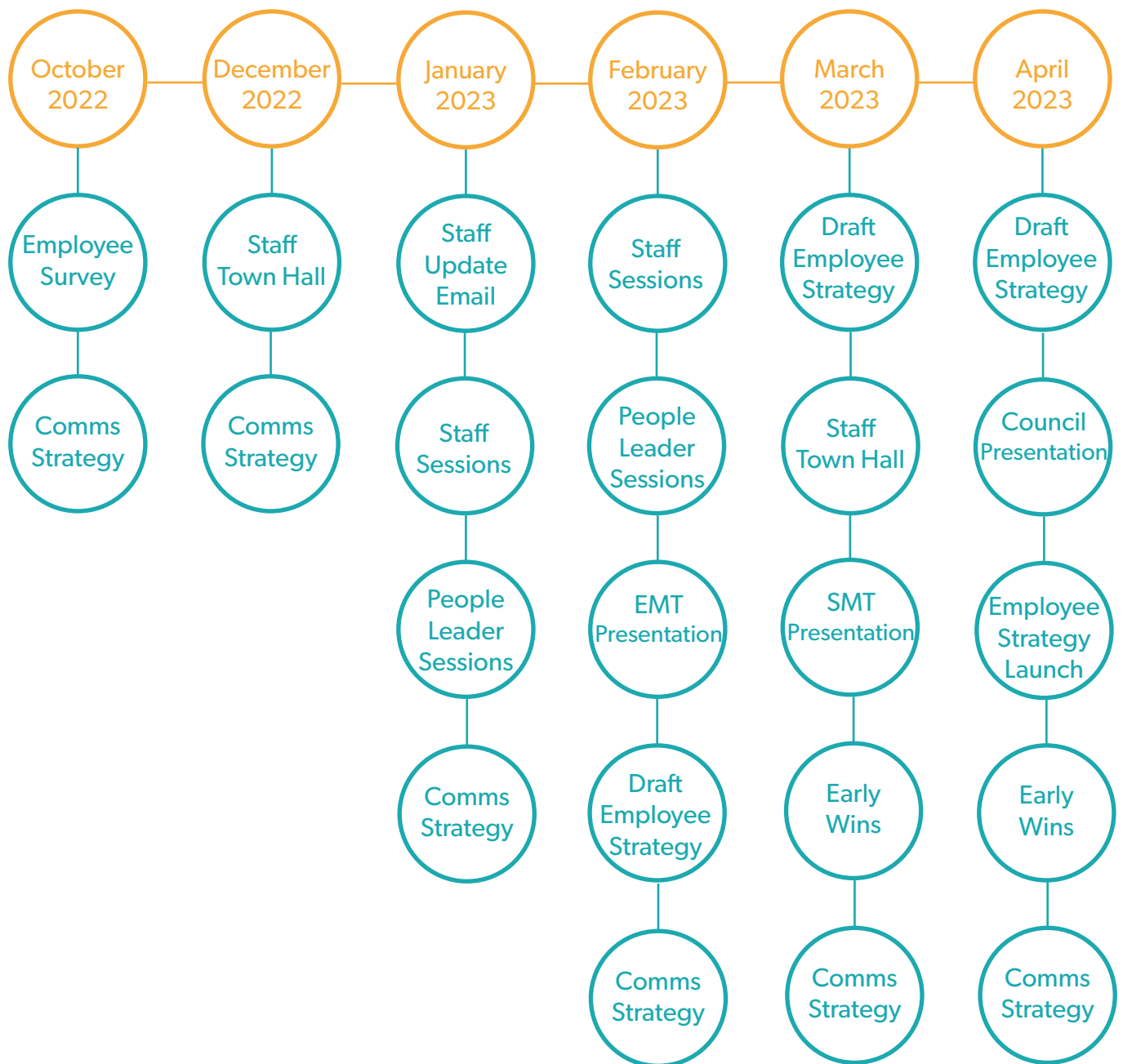
Strategic Workforce Planning



Background/Timeline

At the time of finalizing the strategy in May 2023, East Gwillimbury had 185 full-time positions, including library staff. There were approximately 140 part-time/seasonal staff plus 66 paid-on-call firefighters.

The Town's Employee Experience Strategy was developed based on a variety of feedback opportunities with staff. Each touchpoint was designed to gather feedback from staff regarding their overall thoughts and feelings as an employee of the Town.



HR Review (mid 2022)

The first feedback opportunity was a Human Resources (HR) Review, which was conducted in Q2/3 2022.

The objective of the HR Review was to assess the areas of strength within the Branch, identify opportunities to optimize and/or improve service, undertake a comparison of HR structures with similar municipalities, and identify current trends and best practices in HR management.

As part of the review, the external consultants reviewed resource levels and structure of comparably sized municipalities experiencing similar growth and conducted a literature review to determine current trends. The external consultants conducted interviews with leadership teams, Members of Council and HR staff.

While HR staff were widely recognized for being highly knowledgeable and responsive, several opportunities for growth were identified. This included:



Recruitment

Process, communication, onboarding



Performance Planning

Formal program, automation, reminders, training



Policies

Updated, new, accessible corporate policies are needed



Engagement

More support to promote a stronger culture that reflects EG values and encourages Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



Training

Consistent method of recording mandatory training

2022 Employee Survey

The second feedback opportunity was the Town's Employee Satisfaction Survey which took place in October 2022. An Employee Engagement Survey is an opportunity to gauge how employees feel about the organization in which they work. The Town used an independent third party to ensure employee identity and privacy was protected.

This was EG's fourth engagement survey, with previous surveys completed in 2011, 2015 and 2018. The survey included all Town employees and gathered feedback about a variety of engagement areas (noted in the chart below).

In 2022 the participation rate was more than 94%.

Area	2015	2018	2022
Benefits and Compensation	3.14	3.53	3.39
Individual Recognition	3.58	3.57	3.47
Team Recognition	N/A	3.62	3.58
Performance Management	3.55	3.45	3.17
Training and Organizational Development	3.92	3.61	3.61
Healthy Work Environment	4.12	4.05	3.83
Supervisor	4.14	4.21	4.26
Colleague and Team Cohesion	4.01	3.98	4.12
Leadership (EMT and SMT)	3.47	3.65	3.67
Organizational Communication	3.65	3.81	3.85
Employee Involvement	3.30	3.65	3.70
Corporate Culture	N/A	3.99	3.94
Modernization	N/A	N/A	3.14
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	N/A	N/A	3.90
Overall Satisfaction	3.97	4.06	4.06

2022 Employee Survey

After the survey was completed, initial results and high-level data was shared with all staff at a Town Hall in December 2022. A commitment was made at that time, to host additional sessions to share departmental specific data and to identify key priority areas for follow up.

To coordinate the development of the Employee Strategy, an internal working group comprised of HR and Communications was established. The group compiled the qualitative and quantitative data from the HR review, employee survey, and feedback sessions to identify the key priorities and themes for the Strategy. These themes were then presented to the extended management team for validation and to develop initial potential action items.

The working group used the data from the engagement exercises to further develop the strategy and action items. The draft strategy was shared at a Staff Town Hall and with Council in April 2023 with a commitment to launch the Strategy in May 2023.

The Employee Strategy aims to address the employee experience and includes ongoing communications with Town employees. Ensuring that staff feel engaged in the process and are aware of the steps being taken is an integral part of ensuring the Strategy's success. Measurement is another critical component of the Strategy. This will be done through reports to Council on the results of the initiatives as well as feedback from the next employee engagement survey which is planned for two to three years from now.



Link to the Strategic Plan

The 2022 to 2026 Strategic Plan was created based on the feedback from Council, residents, and staff. Each strategic priority and its corresponding key deliverables showcase the Town's commitment to ensuring residents, businesses and staff can thrive.

The EG staff team is a key factor in the Town's ability to provide high-quality programs, services, and amenities that residents rely on. As we look to build a sustainable, economic, and resilient future for EG, we must also consider the people who provide the programs and services every day.



Every key Strategic Plan deliverable is not possible without EG staff. Who maintain, plan, and build infrastructure, find solutions to modernize services, and look for ways to connect the community. Ensuring EG remains a great place to live, work and play is a collaborative effort and both strategies outline how it will be accomplished.

EG's first Employee Experience Strategy considers all Strategic Priorities with a special emphasis on ways we can support a culture of municipal excellence now and in the future. Together with an engaged staff team we are committed to creating a positive environment, where we celebrate our accomplishments and give employees the resources required to thrive.

Words Matter

Throughout the journey of developing the Strategy, certain words and phrases were adopted because of their importance. The word “experience” was included in the “Employee Experience Strategy” as it speaks to the journey that begins when a potential employee applies for a position then goes through a selection process, is hired, receives an orientation and progresses through their career. Each element of that journey is an experience and it is important for the Employee Experience Strategy to reflect each component of the employment journey.

The second term that was used with intent is the Employee Experience Strategy title, “EG – You Belong”. The title conveys the organization’s commitment to creating a safe workplace where everyone feels seen for their contributions, connected to co-workers, supported, and proud of their work and the organization.

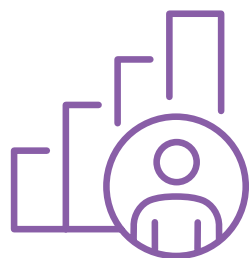
EG - You Belong - Themes

Based on the various feedback opportunities, the following themes emerged for the **EG Employee Experience Strategy, EG – You Belong**:



Your experience:

Wellness,
compensation and
benefits



Your career:

Development and
growth



Team EG:

Working together



Our commitment:

Communication,
rewards and
recognition

EG - You Belong – Supporting Pillars

Supporting these themes is a commitment to modernization, policy development and equity, diversity, and inclusion. Modernization explores how processes and technology can be improved so that everyone can access HR services and information faster and easier. It's about building information systems that work together and promote self-service to the greatest extent possible.

Policy development ensures that policies and procedures are up-to-date, and that everyone has access to the information they need to make informed HR related decisions.

Each of the EG – You Belong themes, is linked with the town's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Framework which sets out the principles of engagement, education, and expression and help to build a culture of belonging.



Your Experience: Wellness, compensation and benefits

This theme reflects the need for stronger mental health support in the organization and a review of compensation and benefits.

The survey results identify a number of opportunities where wellness, compensation, and benefits can be reviewed to ensure EG provides up-to-date support for staff.

Compensation

- Undertake a market compensation review (for full-time positions)
- Undertake a part-time salary review
- Update worktime policies (Lieu time, Hours of Work, others)

Benefit Review

- Conduct a review of all benefits including the availability of psychotherapist services
- Provide benefit information sessions for all staff
- To reflect the EDI lens, explore parental leave top-up and incorporate costing in the budget process

Mental Health and Wellness

- Partner with a mental health serving agency to develop a mental health training and development program for people leaders and staff
- Improve online mental health supports
- Plan and schedule de-escalation training for staff
- Implement the Health and Safety Excellence Program

Accessibility

- Complete the Multi-year accessibility Plan
- Roll-out mandatory AODA training for all staff



Your Career: Development and growth

Joining an organization is a significant life event and deserves an investment of time, resources and funding to ensure that the onboarding, training, and development are considered carefully for each new member of Team EG.

This starts at the very beginning of the employment cycle when a vacancy is identified. Even before a position is posted, careful consideration should be given to the responsibilities the staff member will undertake and the skills and competencies that are needed for the position.

This theme focuses on how we will support staff throughout the hiring, onboarding, and career development process.

Onboarding

- Develop a comprehensive onboarding program for new staff with content for each stage of the onboarding process (offer acceptance, pre-job start information, individual orientation, quarterly group sessions)
- Create an onboarding and offboarding digital form so all applicable departments are aware of incoming and outgoing staff

Career Development Review (performance)

- Transition the current Performance Appraisal system to a Career Development Review approach which includes appropriate training for people leaders and information sessions for staff on the approach.
- Create supporting Career Development Review documents
- Introduce training/support for people leaders on how to have career development discussions with staff
- Utilize ADP to automate career development plans and merit increases

Training and Development

- Create learning streams for all staff:
 1. Health and Safety
 2. Mental Health and Wellness
 3. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
 4. Leadership
 5. Corporate (IT, Finance, Communications)
 6. Job specific
- Participate in the Northern Six (N6) RFP for Training Curriculum Design and Delivery which will address some of the learning streams
- Conduct a review of the Learning Management System to determine if the system meets the needs of the organization



Team EG: Working together

The Team EG theme describes how we work with each other within teams and between departments and the leadership approach we adopt.

It is important for people leaders to be equipped with information, skills, and knowledge to better support their teams. This means adopting a consistent approach for cascading information through the organization, providing more leadership training opportunities for people leaders, and applying an EDI lens to reflect diversity of thought and perspectives.

Management Supports

- Organize annual “Management Days” – bringing together all people leaders for an annual development day
- Develop a catalogue of team building resources (online tools, external consultants)
- Establish an onboarding module for new people leaders
- Address staff capacity: For new capital projects – identify all resources required (including IT, Finance, HR, Communications) – to support the project
- Establish a leadership development program
- Develop a succession planning framework

Report on HR Metrics

- Promote transparency through the development of HR Metrics reports which will be shared with SMT/EMT/Council on a semi-annual basis

Governance

- Establish terms of reference for the Extended Management Team (EMT) so that there is a common understanding about the role and importance of EMT
- Establish terms of reference for the Senior Management Team so that there is a common understanding about the role and responsibilities
- Initiate department reviews and implement recommendations as needed

Division Name Change

- Change the division name of “Human Resources” to “People and Culture” to reflect a more collaborative, inviting relationship and better integrate Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

HR Policy Review

- Flex Work Arrangement
- Code of Conduct
- Dress Code Policy
- Lieu policy
- Others



Our Commitment: Communication, rewards and recognition

Through a comprehensive rewards and recognition program, EG will honour and recognize years of service, notable achievements, kindness to each other and the community we serve and outstanding team efforts.

Communicating with staff is a critical part of the EG - You Belong Employee Experience Strategy. Through the pandemic, virtual staff town halls were introduced and now hybrid staff town halls are scheduled at least once every three months. With EG - You Belong, the hybrid staff town halls will focus on one or more of the themes and post town hall communications will be shared with all staff.

Other forms of communication will also emerge. For example, the potential for a quarterly EG - You Belong newsletter will be explored, and there will be further work on how the Microsoft suite of products can be used to increase and improve communication.

Recognition

- Reinststate years of service awards
- Develop a rewards and recognition program for workplace accomplishments. The program will include formal awards as well as a range of electronic acknowledgements/thank you etc.

Communications

- Continue with staff town halls with opportunities for staff to provide feedback and suggestions on topics
- Promote and support the Employee Plus Team
- Identify and develop an online communication platform
- Identify a single digital source for internal communication



EG You Belong – Phased approach

Each of the themes identified in the EG – You Belong Strategy is complex and some components will take a few years to be fully implemented. A phased approach will be used to identify and measure success. Each phase is approximately one to three years in length and at times the phases will overlap. In general, it is envisioned that the strategy will roll-out in the following way:

Phase One

Complete market compensation review (part-time)

Update HR policies

Explore maternity/parental leave top-up

Focus on mental health programs and supports

Complete the multi-year Accessibility Plan

Implement New Career Development Review program (formerly Performance Reviews)

Initiate new learning streams for all staff

Contribute to development of an N6 Training Program

Address staff capacity

Enhance employee communications

Develop HR reports for SMT and Council

Initiate department reviews as needed

Reinstate Years of Service Awards

Phase Two

Complete market compensation review (full-time)

Continue to update HR policies

Conduct a comprehensive benefit review

Develop an onboarding program

Continue to develop learning streams

Participate in the N6 Training Program

Implement management supports such as training days, team building supports, onboarding tools

Develop a rewards and recognition program

Phase Three

Continue to update HR Policies

Participate in the N6 Training Program

Develop and implement a leadership development program

Develop a succession planning framework





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