

PART TWO

Staffing and Workplace Issues

Summary and Group Notes

Summary

High-Impact, Agency-Controlled Strategies

Across all five topic areas, deputies identified actionable steps with the greatest potential impact and that fall within the agency's immediate control:

- Strengthening staff culture and encouraging team-building
- Improving internal communication
- Setting and reinforcing clear expectations
- Using structured HR and performance tools
- Employing strengths-based management
- Conducting intentional one-on-one and team check-ins to support well-being
- Hosting staff retreats
- Offering professional development and training opportunities
- Creating manageable workloads through program adjustments and/or prioritization

Challenges Outside Agency Control

DDs underscored that many significant challenges—such as compensation limits, hiring constraints, statewide benefits structures, broader political pressures, and the personal circumstances of staff—may lie outside the deputy's or agency's power to change. These external forces strongly influence morale, performance and retention, limiting the effectiveness of internal strategies alone. Lower-impact ideas (e.g., small morale boosters, hybrid work options, occasional perks) were viewed as helpful but insufficient for addressing deeper structural issues.

Value of Peer Connection and NASAA

Participants emphasized how meaningful it was to share challenges with peers who understood their realities. The session allowed them space to release tension, find validation and receive support. A number of people expressed appreciation for having NASAA staff in the room. Several noted that when difficult news arises (e.g., grant cancellations or declines), having context and explanation prevents undue alarm and helps frame decisions more constructively.

Group Notes

These notes reflect participants' varied experiences with what is and isn't possible in their states, so similar topics may appear in both "within our control" and "outside our control" categories. What one person can influence—such as salaries—may be outside another's purview.

1. Attrition &/or Recruitment Challenges

High Impact + Within Our Power	High Impact + Outside Our Power
Solutions, ideas, strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salary increase• Staff culture	Solutions, ideas, strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change with legislation Constraints, challenges, contributing factors <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Laws, \$\$, political environment
Low Impact + Within Our Power	Low Impact + Outside Our Power
Solutions, ideas, strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tuition waivers• Remote work• Room for advancement (in between w/in and outside of our power)	Solutions, ideas, strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Part-time workers with no benefits

2. Supporting Staff Well-Being and Morale

High Impact + Within Our Power	High Impact + Outside Our Power
<p>Solutions, ideas, strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff well-being is ongoing work • Survey staff • Include staff professional development in the strategic plan • Staff check in time and leadership check in time on well being • Addressing workload • Staff values exercise & document • Strengths based management • Clifton StrengthsFinder assessments and use (SC) • Cohorts for support (peer support or affinity-style groups) • Being vulnerable as leaders <p>Constraints, challenges, contributing factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining and supporting a connected culture • Isolation -> remote or hybrid challenges 	<p>Constraints, challenges, contributing factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating and navigating federal policy
Low Impact + Within Our Power	Low Impact + Outside Our Power
<p>Solutions, ideas, strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural time (protected time for cultural or personal well-being needs) <p>Constraints, challenges, contributing factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time off • The rebirth of silos in the workspace 	

3. Limited Political Acumen & Political Resentments

Written in the center of the axis was a reminder that “Nothing is what it seems”.

High Impact + Within Our Power	High Impact + Outside Our Power
<p>Solutions, ideas, strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education / training to address lack of experience • Remind yourself of why you are here. Create art! • Everyone calm down • Attending advocacy meetings / conferences • Documenting for the moment / Need to remember • Time for an HR intervention • Cheat sheet of how to talk/respond in public • Polite subversion • Reiterating policy • Maybe you need to explore other job options 	
Low Impact + Within Our Power	Low Impact + Outside Our Power
<p>Solutions, ideas, strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide context <p>Constraints, challenges, contributing factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaining • Run away 	<p>Solutions, ideas, strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are not putting anything here because it's a waste of time and bandwidth • Do or don't—there is no try.

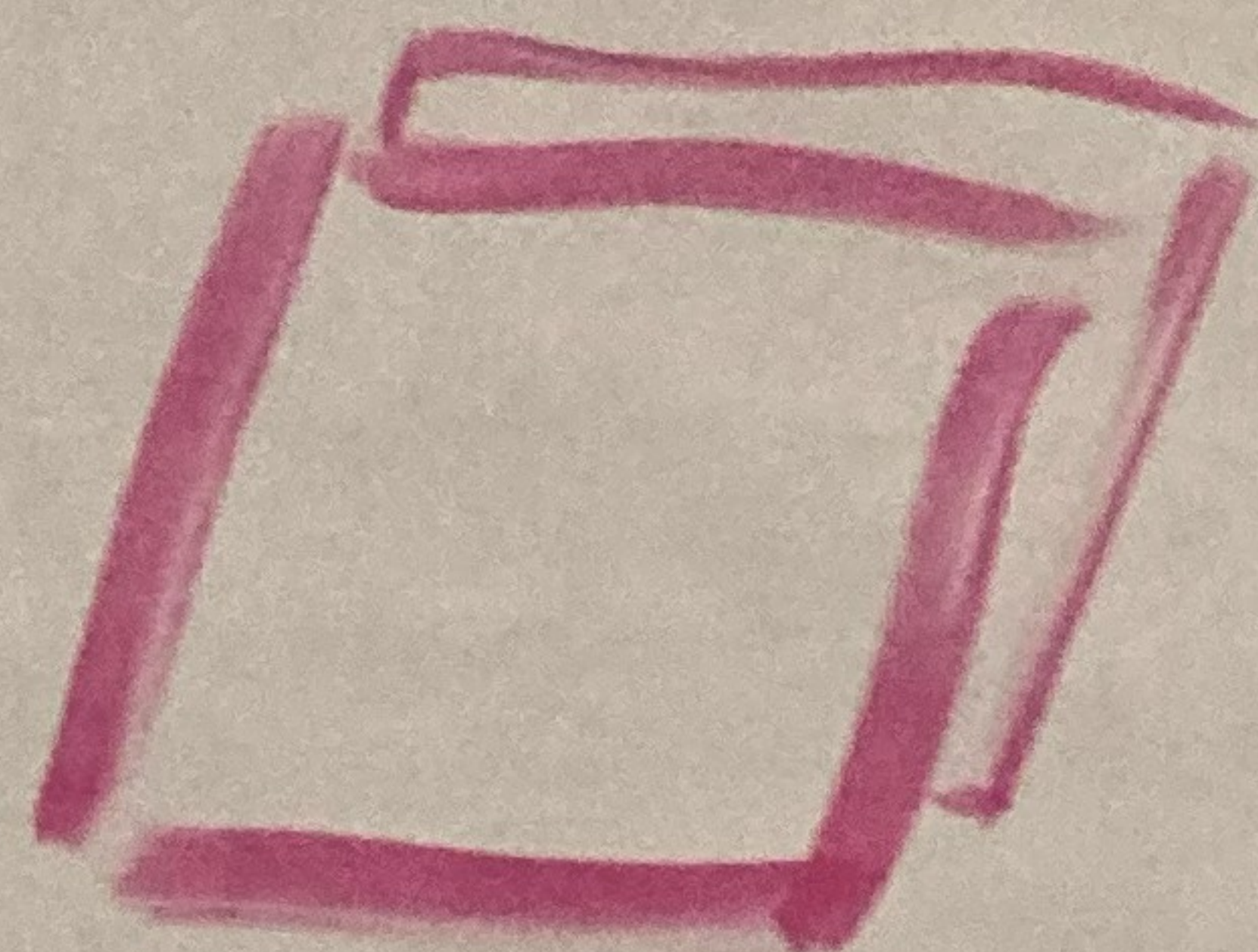
4. Performance Challenges

High Impact + Within Our Power	High Impact + Outside Our Power
<p>Solutions, ideas, strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courageous conversations • Clear expectations • Start HR behavior/performance plan • Staff PD (professional development) focused on trust & connection • Trust building • Celebrate/brag activities from staff to commission/council • They find a different job <p>Constraints, challenges, contributing factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remote worker feels outside of team • Newbie understanding of government vs non-profit and leaving the “front line” 	<p>Solutions, ideas, strategies</p> <p>The speed of trust (Covey)</p> <p>Constraints, challenges, contributing factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senioritis/“short-timer syndrome” • Cognitive decline (age and/or medical) • Extenuating family factors • Family obligations overtake work • “Poisoning the well” • Willfulness • Inconsistent hours worked • Can’t keep up with workload • Limitations of government processes, i.e., firings, etc. • The difference between performance and conduct and how conduct impacts performance
Low Impact + Within Our Power	Low Impact + Outside Our Power
<p>Constraints, challenges, contributing factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of motivation and growth • Benefits are not sufficient 	<p>Solutions, ideas, strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual “re-onboarding” to set common expectations <p>Constraints, challenges, contributing factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistency

5. Staff Fatigue & Burnout

High Impact + Within Our Power	High Impact + Outside Our Power
<p>Solutions, ideas, strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubric for new ideas • Modeling fun • Staff retreat • Sunsetting programs • Reframing strategic planning • Creative voluntary organic teambuilding • Tech (Salesforce, AI) 	<p>Solutions, ideas, strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire new, more staff • Pay / compensation
Low Impact + Within Our Power	Low Impact + Outside Our Power
<p>Solutions, ideas, strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Fridays, holidays, exercise leave, etc. • Hybrid / remote work • Panel changes 	

PINK-



CONSTRAINTS,
CHALLENGES,
CONTRIBUTING
FACTORS

GREEN-

SOLUTIONS, IDEAS
STRATEGIES

TOPIC: ATTRITION &/OR RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES

HIGH IMPACT

△ w/ Leajs

Salary increase

Low \$\$\$ Political Env.

Staff Culture

WITH IN OUR POWER

Tuition waiver

Remote work

Room for advancement

OUTSIDE OF OUR POWER

PT under 3hrs no benefits

LOW IMPACT

TOPIC: SUPPORTING STAFF WELLBEING and MORALE

HIGH IMPACT

STAFF Well being is ongoing work there is no one solution

STAFF Checkin Time - Leadership Checkin Time
Well being

staff values exercise document

ONCE A MONTH "ON FRIDAYS" Professional Dev. for STAFF - Time OFF Programs
Dealing with mental fatigue & Burnout

Defining Supporting Connected Culture

Communicating federal policy (9000000)

Survey staff

Addressing workload

Clifton Strengths finder

Cohorts for Support

WITHIN OUR POWER

isolation
↓
remote or hybrid challenge

Being vulnerable as leaders

Strengths Based Management

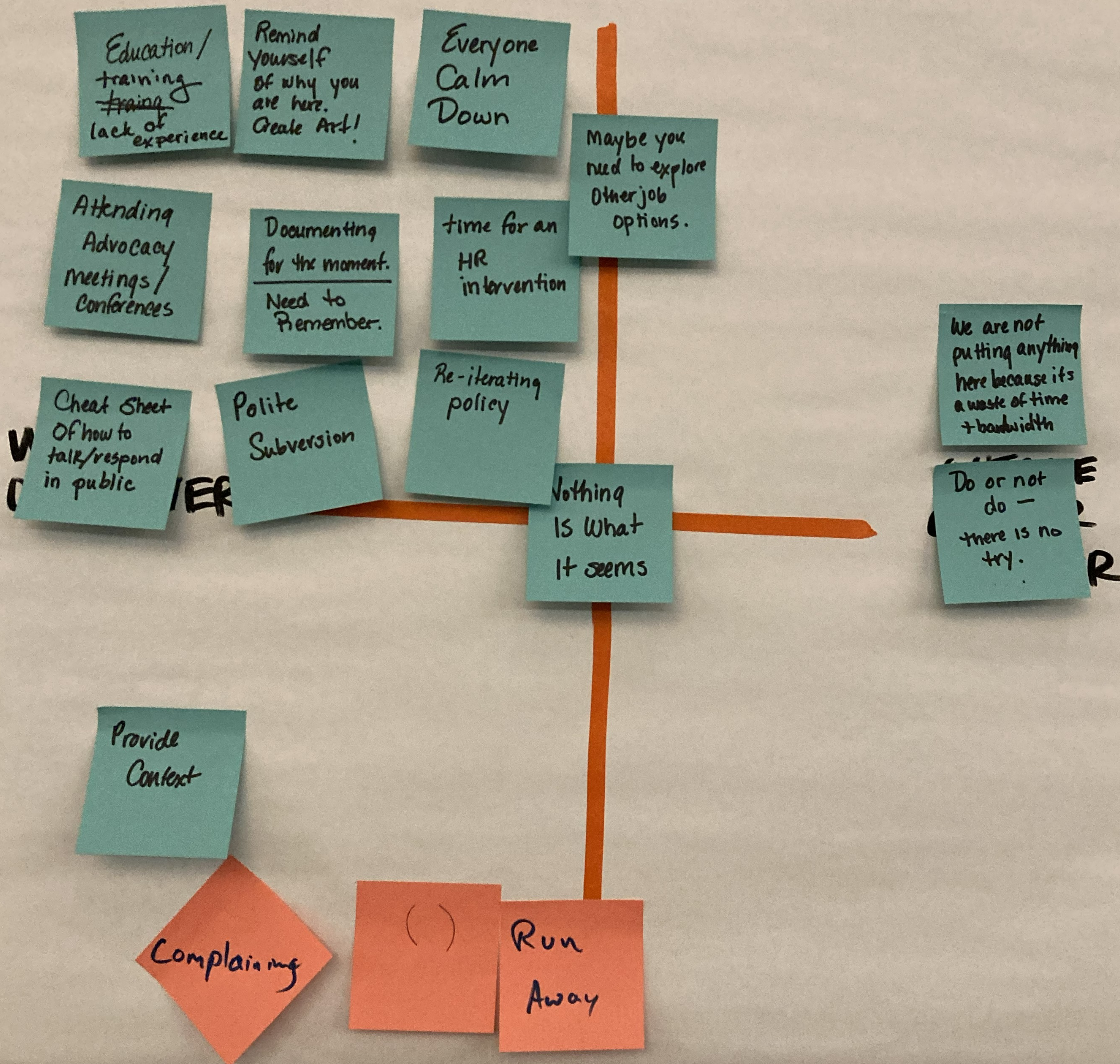
Cultural time

Time Off

Rebirth of Silos in the work space

TOPIC: LIMITED POLITICAL ACUMEN POLITICAL RESENTMENTS

HIGH IMPACT



LOW IMPACT

TOPIC: PERFORMANCE CHALLENGES

HIGH IMPACT

family obligations
Overtake work

Extenuating family factors

cognitive decline (age and/or medical)

senioritis/ "short-timer syndrome"

CLEAR expectations

Start HR Behavior/ Performance Plan

Courageous Conversations

Staff PD focused on trust + connection

WILLFULNESS

The Speed of Trust - Covey

Trust Building

They Find a Different Job

Celebrate/Brag Activities from Staff to Commission/Board

OUR POWER

OUTSIDE OF OUR POWER

Can't keep up w/ workload

Inconsistent ~~work~~ hours worked

Promote worker feels outside the team

Newbie understand the gov't vs. nonprofit leaving the "front line"

Annual "re-boarding" to set common expectations

diff bet performance + conduct + how conduct impacts performance

if gov't

Inconsistency

Lack of Motivation & Growth

Benefits are not Substantial

LOW IMPACT

TOPIC: STAFF FATIGUE / BURNOUT

HIGH
IMPACT

Rubric
for new
ideas

Reframing
Strategic
Planning

Hire
new, more
staff

Modeling
Fun

Sunsetting
Programs

Staff
Retreat

WITH IN
OUR
POWER

Tech
(Salesforce,
As etc..)

Pay

OUTSIDE
OUR
POWER

Creative
Voluntary
Organic
Team building

Summer
fridays,
holidays,
exercise
leave etc.

Panel
Changes

hybrid/
remote

LOW
IMPACT