

2018 - 2020

**OUR
PEOPLE
OUR
STRENGTH**

**WE ARE SO PROUD OF THE
WORK THAT OUR EMPLOYEES
DO EACH DAY, AND WE KNOW
THAT THEY DO IN FACT MAKE
A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN
THE LIVES OF OUR CITIZENS.**

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OUR PEOPLE OUR STRENGTH

Looking back on the 2015-2017 *Our People, Our Strength* plan, many improvements and successes were achieved. The results from the 2014 Employee Engagement Survey were used as a benchmark to help determine success of the key actions identified for the 2015-2017 plan. Here is what we achieved:

1. ENGAGED EMPLOYEES

| KEY ACTIONS | MEASUREMENT | RESULT |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a corporate-wide employee engagement survey approximately every 3 years and report out results • Provide departments with the resources and tools to improve employee engagement • Implement actions to increase employee engagement corporately and departmentally • Review and refresh current employee recognition programs, developing new programs where necessary and providing supervisors and managers with tools to recognize work achievements • Recognize employees as a key stakeholder to engage and inform across all corporate and departmental activities by maintaining consistent, high-value internal communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee engagement survey results • Employee participation in and feedback on recognition programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall job engagement increased 3.1% • Overall organizational engagement increased 6.0% • Team recognition increased 15.1% and recognition increased 7.7% • Awards of Excellence program launched in 2014: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2014: 22 nominations 2015: 28 nominations 2016: 21 nominations 2017: 24 nominations • 39% increase in long service recipients who attended recognition event from 2012 to 2017: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2012: 42% 2013: 43% 2014: 79% 2015: 77% 2016: 62% 2017: 81% • Organizational communication satisfaction increased 12.2% |

A “COUNTY THAT EMPLOYS PEOPLE WHO MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE” IS A DYNAMIC PROCESS.

2. TALENT MANAGEMENT

| Key Actions | Measurement | Result |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and refresh recruitment and onboarding processes, utilizing new tools and approaches to increase the accuracy and reliability of hiring decisions Develop and implement a “check in” process with new hires to seek regular feedback during the first year of employment Strengthen the exit interview process to ensure information collected is used in a meaningful way Develop and implement a succession management program that identifies key leadership positions and potential successors Investigate the opportunity for a formalized corporate mentoring program Develop a comprehensive leadership program for current and aspiring leaders Review and refresh the current performance management program Provide the extended management team and all staff with a variety of career development tools | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turnover rate Feedback related to the employee onboarding processes Percentage of positions filled internally Percentage of performance appraisals completed Employee engagement survey results related to career development opportunities Participation in and feedback on various career development initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual voluntary turnover rate remains steady at approximately 5% EMT/SMT vacancies filled with internal candidates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2015 = 40% 2016 = 57% 2017 = 71% Opportunities for career development increased 8% Training & development opportunities increased 3.3% Competency Framework developed in 2015 and refreshed in 2017 Corporate learning & development program launched in 2016 called Oxford Grows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2016: 425 registrants, 28 sessions offered 2017: 387 registrants, 31 sessions offered Refreshed and launched a competency-based performance appraisal document 99% of non-union performance appraisals completed in 2016 and 2017 |

3. EFFECTIVE LEADERS

| Key Actions | Measurement | Result |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and refresh the current online supervisory training program for new leaders Develop a comprehensive leadership program for current and aspiring leaders Implement a more comprehensive performance management program for leaders; investigating options such as 360 degree appraisals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee engagement survey results related to satisfaction with extended and senior management teams Interest in and feedback provided on leadership programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction with SMT increased 8.8% Satisfaction with department director increased 7.6% Satisfaction with direct supervisor increased 5.7% Each member of SMT and EMT completed a 360 degree assessment 60 applicants for 20 spaces in the 2015/16 Future Ready Leadership program 28 applicants for 18 spaces in the 2016/17 Future Ready Leadership program 100% of Future Ready Leadership participants would recommend the program to a colleague |

4. SAFE AND HEALTHY WORKPLACES

| Key Actions | Measurement | Result |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to maintain the highest standards in meeting and exceeding occupational health and safety legislation Maintain and continue to promote the Employee & Family Assistance Program Continue to develop and promote various wellness initiatives Support staff by allowing them the flexibility needed for the demands on them outside of work, while maintaining high service levels Maintain comprehensive, cost-effective benefit plans, while providing additional flexibility to meet the varying needs of employees Provide supervisory support, information, and training on mental health in the workplace Maintain a respectful and inclusive work environment for all staff by strengthening practices related to respect in the workplace | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee engagement survey results related to health, safety, wellness, work life balance, etc. Number of WSIB claims filed / injury frequency rates Participation in Employee & Family Assistance Program Participation and feedback on various wellness initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible Work Arrangement program launched in 2016; 127 employees approved for a total of 215 arrangements Impact of job on personal life increased 4.2%; however, remained as an area of opportunity in the 2017 survey results Harassment & Discrimination in the Workplace Policy revised in 2017. 6 complaints resolved between 2015 and 2017 Approximately 400 employees attended 3 annual wellness fairs 111 employees participated in the stair climb challenge 200 employees participated in the 2016 health challenge 97 employees participated in the 2017 step challenge Physical safety declined 1.6% |

Moving forward: Our People, Our Strength 2018-2020

The initial *Our People, Our Strength* plan was developed and released following the 2014 employee engagement survey. This plan was a framework that outlined key actions that the County aimed to accomplish between 2015 and 2017 to ensure that we were able to attract, retain, and develop the highest quality staff that were capable of meeting the current and future needs of our organization. The plan identified four focus areas and associated key actions to strengthen our workforce and ensure we have the capacity and talent required to meet current and future needs. The *Our People, Our Strength* plan aligned with the corporate strategic plan, as the four focus areas supported one or more key objectives under the Employer of Choice strategic direction.

In 2015 Council refreshed the corporate strategic plan and amended the “Employer of Choice” strategic direction to “A County that employs people who make a positive difference,” which outlines the following:

6. i. A County that employs people who make a positive difference - Attract, retain and develop the highest quality staff through:

- Management and organizational excellence
- Open communications, dialogue and understanding
- Vibrant and challenging career opportunities
- Progressive policies and practices

We are so proud of the work that our employees do each day, and we know that they do in fact make a positive difference in the lives of our citizens. This strategic direction is intended to ensure that we continue to strengthen our ability to attract people who will make a positive difference, and retain and develop the employees we already value.

Employees at Oxford County deliver essential public services to our residents. The talent, dedication, and hard work of all employees are the foundation of our local government

and its quality services. Ensuring we have a strong people culture that recognizes and values employees is critical to our continued success.

Early in 2017 we undertook a second employee engagement survey, as well as a corporate learning and development assessment. The results of both the survey and assessment, as well as other organizational best practices, have informed the refreshed *Our People, Our Strength* plan 2018 – 2020.

The results of the 2017 survey showed us that engagement levels had improved over 2014, which is a positive result and can be partly attributed to the key actions achieved over that time period, such as a refreshed recognition program, learning and development opportunities through Oxford Grows, our Future Ready Leadership program, and flexible work arrangements.

However, the results also demonstrate new opportunities that need to be addressed. Many of the opportunity areas that emerged from the 2017 survey are work-life issues that need to be examined and discussed on a departmental and divisional level, as the opportunities identified through the survey vary by work group.

As discussed in the initial *Our People, Our Strength* plan, being a “County that employs people who make a positive difference” is a dynamic process. Organizations are constantly changing to adapt to both external and internal needs – Oxford County is no exception. For this reason, working towards this strategic direction is an ever evolving process, in which we implement progressive policies and practices, review and amend as necessary to meet our ever changing work environment. Along those same lines, we expect an adaptable workforce that has the capability and desire to change and grow whenever necessary.

EMPLOYEES AT OXFORD COUNTY DELIVER ESSENTIAL PUBLIC SERVICES TO OUR RESIDENTS

WHAT IS OXFORD COUNTY'S REFRESHED OUR PEOPLE, OUR STRENGTH PLAN?

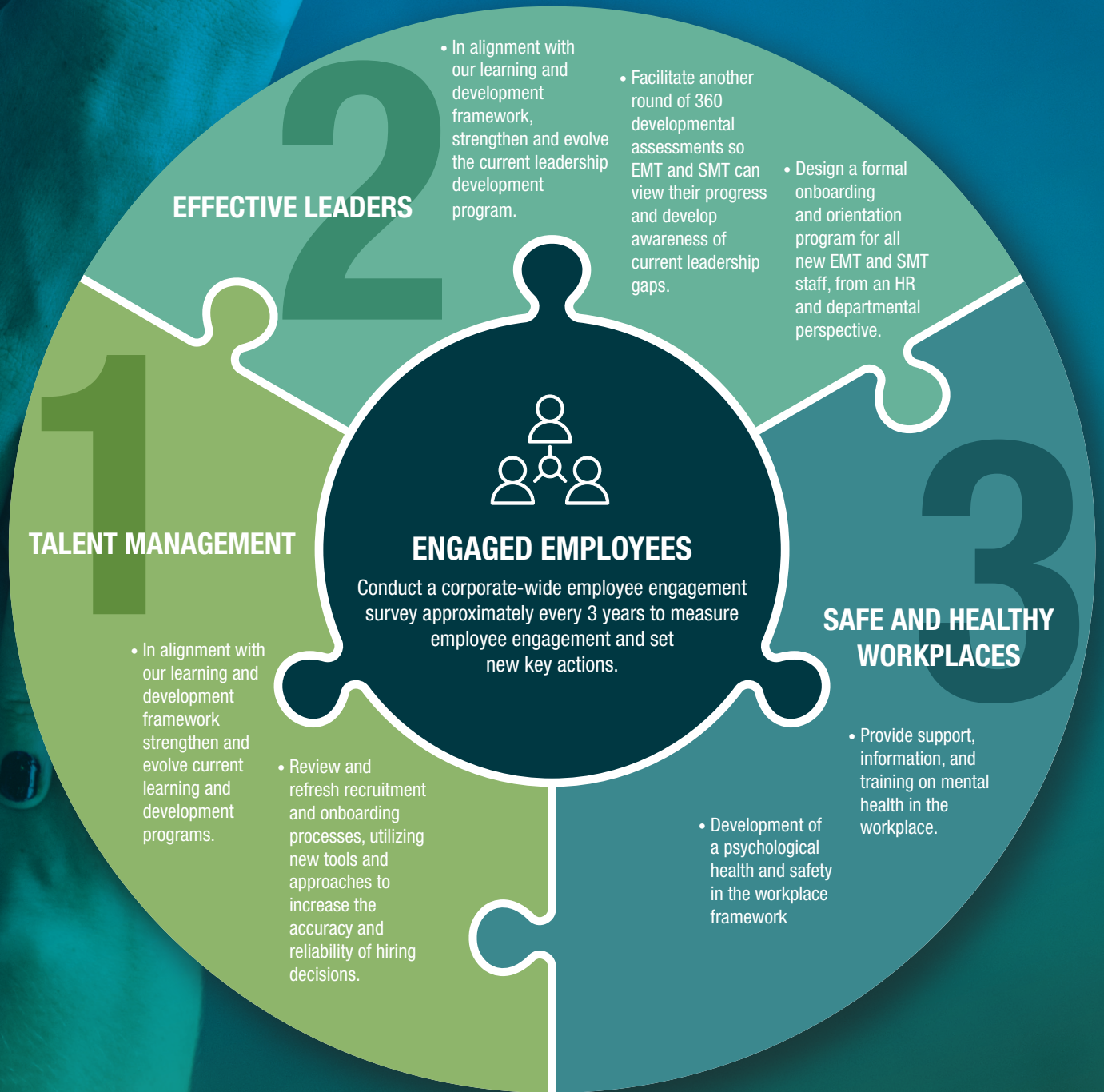
The refreshed *Our People, Our Strength* plan 2018 – 2020 continues to be our corporate strategy for working towards a County that employs people who make a positive difference.

This plan is the second of its kind for Oxford County, and follows the results of our second employee engagement survey. The results of the survey showed that the County had increased organizational and job engagement levels over 2014, which is a positive result. The survey also presented us with new opportunity areas that require focus and effort to further increase our levels of employee engagement.

In this refreshed plan, the four focus areas have been amended slightly, with employee engagement being an outcome of each focus areas. New key actions have been set under each area based on the 2017 employee engagement survey results, the learning and development assessment, and other best practices.

The 2017 employee engagement survey revealed many opportunities to improve areas of employees work life that need to be addressed on a departmental and/or divisional level, since a one size fits all approach would not work across the organization. Along those lines, key actions that are specific to a department or division are not included in this plan; however, the organization is committed to supporting those initiatives on a more individualized level.

2018-2020 KEY ACTIONS



2018-2020 Focus Areas Detailed

Engaged employees are involved, proud and committed to their work and to Oxford County.

Being a public service, it is essential that our employees are proud of their work, committed to the County, and satisfied with their overall quality of work-life. Research shows that an engaged workforce leads to higher levels of service, and ultimately greater citizen trust and confidence in our organization.

Engaged employees are an outcome of the other three focus areas and will be measured by overall employee engagement survey results related to job and organizational engagement.

1

TALENT MANAGEMENT

Talent management is a deliberate approach to attract, retain and develop people who have the skills and abilities to meet current and future organizational needs and objectives.

With an aging workforce, it is more important than ever to manage our talent, and ensure we are set up to attract and retain a high-performing workforce. Over the next 10 years, approximately 25% of our current workforce is eligible to retire with an unreduced pension. In addition to that, over the next 10 years, approximately 45% of our leadership team (Senior and Extended Management Teams) are eligible to retire with an unreduced pension.

Given these projections, employee attraction, retention, and development are critical to our continued success.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Review and refresh recruitment and onboarding processes, utilizing new tools and approaches to increase the accuracy and reliability of hiring decisions through:
 - Utilizing our HRIS (human resources information system) applicant tracking system
 - Increasing the role of competencies in recruitment and onboarding processes
 - Exploring the use of assessment tools in the recruitment process to ensure hiring success
 - Providing hiring managers with resources and tools to effectively fill vacancies with the most qualified staff
 - Designing a more formal and fulsome onboarding program for new staff, from a Human Resources and departmental perspective
- In alignment with our learning and development framework (Appendix A), strengthen and evolve current learning and development programs through:
 - Continuing to expand and promote Oxford Grows by varying course topics and offerings
 - Creating learning paths for all job classifications to identify mandatory and/or recommended training
 - Offering alternative learning and development delivery methods, such as online learning, quick reference guides, and recorded sessions
 - Implement a course approval process and a commitment to action to ensure courses taken align with staff and organizational needs, and goals are set to apply learnings back at work
 - Implement higher levels of learning and development evaluations to assess behaviour/learning back on the job

HOW WILL WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

- Turnover rate
- Feedback related to employees onboarding processes
- Percentage of performance appraisals completed
- Employee engagement survey results related to career development, and training and development opportunities
- Participation in and feedback on various career development initiatives, including Oxford Grows opportunities
- Number of learning paths created and implemented

2 EFFECTIVE LEADERS

Leaders who have the skills and knowledge to build a high-performing organization that has quality programs for effective delivery of County services.

The Senior and Extended Management Teams play a key role in leading and engaging our employees to successful outcomes both departmentally and corporately. It is crucial to have effective leaders who are skilled in motivating and developing their staff.

KEY ACTIONS:

- In alignment with our Learning and Development Framework (Appendix A), strengthen and evolve the current leadership development program, which could include:
 - Mandatory training for all of the Extended Management Team, using the data derived from the 360 assessments
 - Continued learning and development opportunities for emerging leaders
 - Introducing a more fulsome individual development plan document/tool for use by emerging and current leaders
 - Knowledge sharing initiatives such as coaching, mentoring and networking cafes
 - Refresh current succession planning practices
- Design a formal onboarding and orientation program for all new Senior and Extended Management Team staff, from a Human Resources and departmental perspective.
- Facilitate another round of 360 developmental assessments so Senior and Extended Management Team staff can view their progress and develop awareness of current leadership gaps.

HOW WILL WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

- Employee engagement survey results related to satisfaction with Senior and Extended Management Teams.
- Interest in and feedback provided on leadership programs.
- Feedback provided regarding onboarding and orientation programs.
- 360 development assessment feedback.

3 SAFE & HEALTHY WORKPLACES

Workplaces that are safe and contribute to overall employee well-being so that employees are productive and effective in their work and personal lives.

Safe and healthy employees are productive employees, who are continually working towards achieving organizational goals. Providing safe and supportive work environments leads to overall employee well-being, which has positive outcomes for the employee, department, and County overall.

KEY ACTIONS:

- In support of our overall workplace health and safety program, focus on the development of a psychological health and safety in the workplace framework and begin implementation of program elements.
- In support of holistic well-being, focus on providing supervisory support, information, and training on mental health in the workplace.

HOW WILL WE MEASURE PROGRESS?

- Employee engagement survey results related to health, safety, wellness, psychological safety and workload stress.

Roles and Responsibilities

CAO AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM (SMT)

- The CAO and Senior Management Team have endorsed this plan, and will ensure the necessary actions are supported, that progress is regularly monitored, and that the key actions are achieved.
- The Senior Management Team members will hold management teams accountable for action planning strategies to address the opportunities identified in the 2017 employee engagement survey on a departmental and divisional level.

EXTENDED MANAGEMENT TEAM (EMT)

- The Extended Management Team members will support and assist in implementing the actions outlined in the plan within their divisions.
- They will ensure that employees on their teams are aware of the plan, how the actions will be implemented, the progress being made, and the key actions achieved.
- Extended Management Team members will work with their teams to set departmental and/or divisional action plans to address areas of opportunity specific to their teams/divisions.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Human Resources will play a significant role as the steward of the plan and will design and develop corporate programs and tools to support its implementation.
- Human Resources will work closely with departments to help support and facilitate the successful implementation of the identified actions and report out to measure progress towards key actions.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT TEAM

- The Employee Engagement Team will monitor the implementation of the actions in the plan and provide input to ensure corporate actions are consistent with the intent of the plan.
- The team will provide insight and feedback from a departmental perspective regarding the progress of the plan.
- The team will also act as the learning advisory group outlined in our Learning and Development Framework.

EMPLOYEES

- Employees will take measures to review the plan and understand the action items identified and how those items may impact them. They will be open to change and provide input and feedback when requested through focus groups, surveys, and online communications.

Looking ahead

We have now completed our second employee engagement survey and a learning and development assessment and are committed to implementing new key actions to address areas of opportunity to ensure we continue to have the ability to attract, retain and develop the highest quality staff. The County plans to complete an employee engagement survey approximately every three years to measure progress being made in our corporate strategic direction of a County that employs people who make a positive difference.

Appendix A

Learning and Development Framework

Oxford County's Learning and Development Framework is a forward-looking document which sets out how the County will deliver and approach learning and development throughout the organization. The primary objective for developing this framework is to demonstrate our commitment to employing people who make a positive difference through effective learning and development programs.

This framework will enable us to:

- Develop the next generation of leaders
- Enhance the skills and capabilities of employees across the organization
- Refocus the way learning and development is delivered within the organization
- Deliver on strategic goals and priorities

The structures, systems, practices and processes that ensure overall effectiveness of the learning and development function is referred to as Learning Governance. By establishing a Learning Governance model, Oxford County can improve learning for the entire organization and better focus the learning efforts being made throughout the County. Best practice in learning organizations is to create a learning and development governance model with a three-tiered approach.

OUR MODEL

ALL EMPLOYEES

The governance model exists to serve the learning and development needs of all employees. Employees contribute to the learning and development initiatives throughout the organization at any level of the model. Feedback, suggestions and input is encouraged by all employees and can be shared with direct supervisors or through any of the tiers as established by the governance model.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee consists of the Senior Management Team and is responsible for providing strategic direction on major learning projects and key learning initiatives, and recommending learning budgets to County Council.

THE LEARNING ADVISORY GROUP

The Learning Advisory Group is responsible for identifying organizational learning needs, changes in priorities, and aligning learning and development needs to organizational strategies and competencies. The Employee Engagement Committee will act in this capacity for the organization.

LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

The Learning Implementation Team consists of the departmental learning specialists from Woodingford Lodge and Paramedic Services and HR learning team members. This team is responsible for developing, delivering, managing and measuring corporate learning programs.



Learning
Advisory
Group



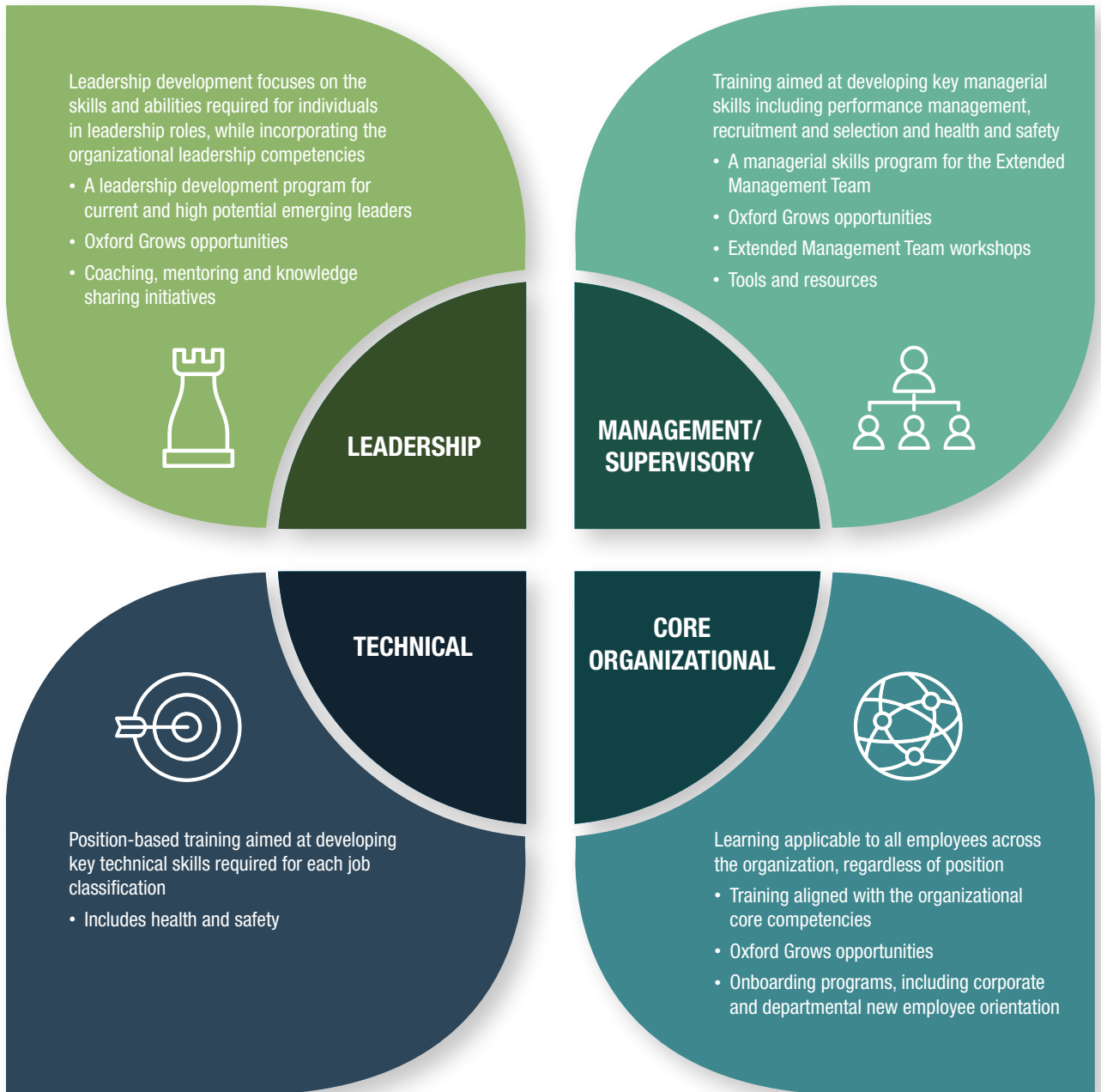
All
Employees



Steering
Committee



Learning
Implementation
Team



The *Learning and Development Framework* organizes learning into four key areas: leadership, management/supervisory, technical, and core organizational. Employees may receive training in one or all key areas, depending on their role. Learning paths will exist across the organization to further clarify and guide the learning and development required for each job classification.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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