

Principles for Building a Strong Workforce

1. Create and implement a workforce plan.
2. Practice “continuous workforce improvement.”
3. Provide wages and benefits commensurate with educational requirements and level of responsibility.
4. Include clients and their family members as providers and workforce educators.
5. Train all medical and social service staff to assess and treat persons with behavioral health conditions.
6. Increase diversity within the workforce.
7. Systematically recruit individuals to join the workforce (and “start young”).
8. Systematically retain workers in their jobs and in the workforce.
9. Identify essential workforce competencies and use them to inform hiring, orientation, staff development, promotions, and performance reviews.
10. Use teaching methods that are evidence-based (and stop torturing workers with methods that are ineffective).
11. Adopt computer-assisted instruction and distance learning as teaching aids.
12. Update the content of training programs and curricula frequently.
13. Teach all members of the workforce about mental health AND addictions.
14. Prepare workers to function in teams.
15. Supervise and support workers.
16. Develop career ladders for worker advancement.
17. Continually develop the skills of supervisors, managers, and leaders.
18. Strengthen your human resource and staff development infrastructure.
19. Document, evaluate, and share workforce improvement strategies.
20. Advocate for additional resources to strengthen your workforce.

