



Career Climbers Cohort

Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK)

Origin: The NIDDK Career Climbers Cohort was developed as an opportunity for new staff, who were at a similar point in their career, to have a group they could learn and grow with over the course of the program. In addition, the FEVS results indicated that staff were looking for professional development opportunities. The cohort would provide an opportunity for newer staff members to develop professional skills that they can use as they acclimate to new career tracks.

Description: The NIDDK Career Climbers Cohort is a program that brings together staff who are new to their role in NIDDK and want to learn about what it takes to be a star performer within the organization. The cohort has a limited number of slots and involves a 90-minute meeting every 3 weeks for 6 sessions. Session topics include: Going Above and Beyond, Connecting with the Mission, Navigating Past Hurdles, Managing Up, Effective Networking and Building Relationships.

Target Audience: Cohort members are new to their role in NIDDK – in their position less than 18 months – and are early in their professional career (GS-12 and below).

Program Resources: Program Overview, Sample Emails, Action Plan, Lesson Plans, Handouts and Case Studies.

Results: Cohort participants have reported increased collaboration between offices because participants are required to network with each other. Additionally, the cohort has encouraged a culture shift within NIDDK staff to take smaller steps towards a larger goal through the use of the action planning worksheet.

Point of Contact: If your organization is interested in adopting this best practice and you have additional questions or feedback, please contact the NIDDK Executive Office at (301) 496-5765 or via email at niddkexecutiveoffice@niddk.nih.gov.