Strengthening Office Associate Support Through Collaborative Capacity Building

A 2025-2026 WELD Project for University of Wyoming Extension

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

Office associates are essential to UW Extension, supporting educators, serving our communities, and ensuring the smooth operation of county offices.

This project seeks to strengthen support by identifying needs and developing practical, sustainable solutions for onboarding, peer connection, and professional development.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- **Identify strengths and gaps in current support**
- **Engage office associates in co-creating solutions**
- **Develop practical resources and structures**
- **Build a sustainable framework for ongoing support**

PROJECT PROCESS

Needs Survey → Office Associate Working Group → County Coordinator Feedback → Themes Identified → Resource Development → Pilot

COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

Through surveys, meetings, and ongoing feedback, we are creating solutions with and for office associates.

METHODS

Survey
Baseline experiences and support needs

Discuss
Needs, challenges, and potential solutions

Engage
Supervisor perspective and buy-in

Develop
Tools shaped by stakeholder feedback

Evaluate
Feedback and continuous improvement

KEY FINDINGS

Consististent Onboarding
Clearer expecations and conisistent tools can help new office associates navigate their roles with greater confidence.

Peer Connection
Opportunities to connect, ask questions, and share knowledge can strengthen relationships and reduce isolation across offices.

Clear Resources
Easy-to-find guidance and clear points of contact can help staff find answers and navigate Extension more effeciently.

Professional Development
Practical, role-specific learning opportunities can support continued growth, confidence, and effectiveness.

CAPACITY BUILDING FRAMEWORK



CURRENT PROGRESS & NEXT STEPS

COMPLETED

Working Group Established
Office associate voices shaping solutions

Onboarding Checklist
Developed and provided to country offices.

Newsletter Section
Front Desk Features launched

IN PROGRESS

Revamped Take 5
Peer support meetings planned for rollout

Online Training Update
Updating existing content to be prectical and accessible

Who-to-Call Guide
Creating a quick-reference resource for support.

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

23	11	24	6
Survey Responses	Working Group Members	Extension Offices Supported	Working Group Meetings

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SCAN TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WELD