Working at Cornell

Intro to EDOs

What is an EDO?

Experiential Development Opportunities (EDO) are basically "hands-on" training experiences.

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EDOs are typically short-term experiences or project-based assignments:

Skill Development:
where you can learn new skills to enhance work similar to your current level of responsibility.

Leadership Development:
where you can gain experience in a role with advanced or broader responsibilities compared to your current position.

EDOs are posted in Workday similar to internal job availabilities.

This enables managers to efficiently tap a university-wide talent pool of proven and motivated staff; while providing an innovative way for employees to pursue practical career and skills development.

Why Participate in an EDO?
Benefits for Employees

An EDO is an excellent way to gain practical experience, invest in your career, and demonstrate your initiative and abilities. An EDO can open doors to new career opportunities, and make your current work more enjoyable. Consider an EDO if you’d like to:

- **SKILLS**: Gain new experiences to position yourself to take on a different or supervisory role.
- **CONFIDENCE**: Build self confidence in your own skillset.
- **NETWORK**: Build bridges to other departments and see what working in a new department would be like.
- **ENGAGEMENT**: Re-engage by contributing in different ways.
- **EFFICIENCY**: Learn how other colleagues handle projects similar to your current job.

Benefits for Managers

- **SKILLS**: Participants expand and gain new skills that can benefit your team.
- **FLEXIBILITY**: Increase staffing levels during peak times or for special projects.
- **EFFICIENCY**: Tap into an already proven university talent pool.
- **STRATEGIC**: Develop current staff to meet future department goals.
- **ENGAGEMENT**: Provide job variety for staff to increase engagement and productivity.
- **REWARD**: Recognize valued staff by supporting their career development ambitions.
- **NETWORK**: Build bridges to other departments to create and reinforce interdepartmental collaboration.

Types of EDOs

**Rotational Assignments:**
Temporary assignments aimed at providing flexible cross-training, leadership development, and knowledge-sharing opportunities for employees. Rotational assignments allow staff members to gain a better understanding of other areas and processes of the organization, and expand relationships with other employees.

**Stretch Opportunities:**
Assignments or projects that go beyond your regular role, causing you to stretch outside your comfort zone. It’s a challenge by definition, but also an opportunity to learn new skills and demonstrate to supervisors an interest in advancing your responsibilities. A stretch opportunity might be presented to you by a manager who asks you to take on additional responsibilities in the case of a colleague who takes another position or goes on leave. Or you might request a stretch assignment by asking to manage a volunteer or intern; turn around a struggling project; or organize an event.

**Job Shadowing:**
Spend time working with another staff member to gain a greater understanding of their role and expertise. If you’re interested in moving into a different career area, this is an effective way to learn what you’ll need to know, and see firsthand if it might be a good fit.

**Volunteering:**
Is there a particular project that interests you, which no one else seems to be doing? For example, perhaps a department newsletter isn’t being published anymore. If you’re interested in developing graphic design or writing skills, volunteering to take on such a project could be a good way to get practical, hands-on experience. You might even combine it with one of the other learning opportunities above. Speak with your supervisor to make sure your efforts are aligned with department goals.

For more details: Experiential Development Opportunity Descriptions (pdf)