



Enabling Workforce Sustainability

Assessment Tool for Workforce Sustainability

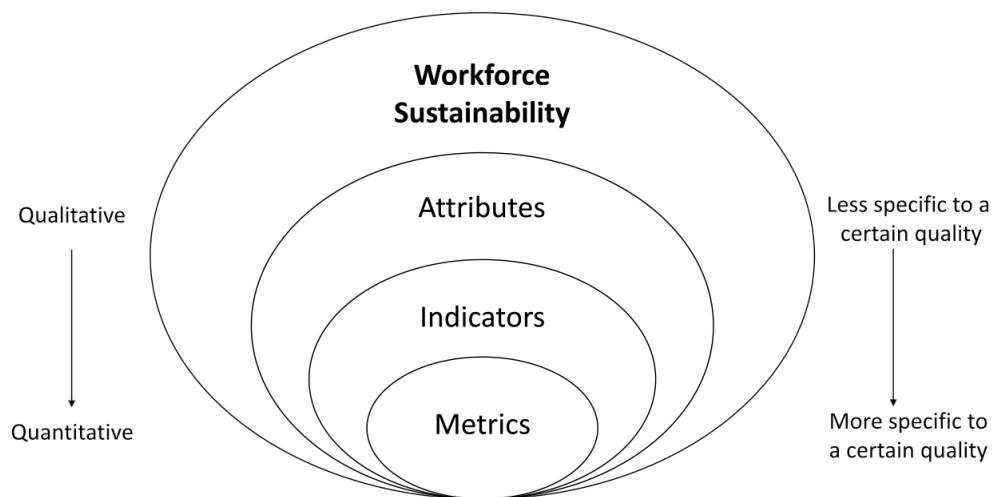
HRL workers are expected to provide numerous student support services with minimal advance training or personal support for the tolls these encounters take on the personal lives of staff. This impacts job satisfaction, retention, turnover, and overall well-being.

A sustainable workforce is vital for the longevity of an industry such as campus housing and residence life that must respond to internal factors as well as external ones such as public health crises and economic downturns. By establishing a tool to assess the impact of factors that contribute to the workforce sustainability in their departments, organizations can begin to implement and manage structures to create a better work culture that both protects and optimizes the productivity and contribution of their workforce now and for the long-term.

ACUHO-I will create an assessment tool for housing and residence life departments to utilize as a self-study and staff development resource and by the profession broadly to study, quantify, and investigate trends and phenomena with respect to workforce sustainability in HRL.

Framework

This study is focused on the perspective of workers and what they feel is needed to make them more sustainable. It prioritizes understanding what the workforce needs now to ensure that it can perform now and meet future needs to perform. This tool build from the research of Karakhan, Gambatese, and Simmons' "Development of Assessment Tool for Workforce Sustainability," (2020). The research questions are (1) what are the important attributes of workforce sustainability and what are their levels of influence on achieving workforce sustainability, and (2) what are the indicators and metrics that can be used to assess each of the identified workforce sustainability attributes?



A conceptual model for workforce sustainability with three levels of components. From "Development of Assessment Tool for Workforce Sustainability" by Ali A. Karakhan, John Gambatese, and Denise R. Simmons ©ASCE



The elements of this model are defined as:

- **Attributes:** the foundational qualities and characteristics of workforce sustainability;
- **Indicators:** practices, procedures, and policies that reveal the presence and level of each attribute within the workforce, and which can be used to assess and improve each attribute and, as a result, the overall level of workforce sustainability; and
- **Metrics:** measurement units and scales used to measure the extent or degree to which the practices, procedures, and policies (i.e., indicators) are actually implemented in practice within an organization to maintain and/or improve workforce sustainability.

Furthermore, the attributes of workforce sustainability are defined as:

- **Nurturing (Development):** The extent to which workers feel supported, encouraged, educated, and trained in their work and as individuals.
- **Diversity:** The extent to which the workforce is diversified and inclusive with respect to personal characteristics (e.g., gender, experience, race, social status, education, etc.) and to which diversity is integrated into and promoted within the workplace.
- **Equity:** The extent to which workers feel treated and compensated fairly compared to other workers and evaluated fairly without discrimination with respect to personal characteristics, employment level, payment, workload and responsibilities, promotion, and work opportunities.
- **Health & Wellbeing:** The level of workplace health, safety, security, and contentment that workers feel and experience subjectively and objectively during and after work operations within their work career and beyond* (NIRSA)
- **Connectivity:** The degree to which workers feel connected, and willingly desire to connect, to peers, fellow employees, and management through open channels and two-way communication, and feel engaged in the operations, leadership, planning, and decision-making process.
- **Value:** The extent to which workers feel that they and their families are valued, respected, appreciated, and recognized by others in the workforce and the organization, financially and emotionally, for their work performance, contributions, and loyalty.
- **Community:** The extent to which workers feel they are accepted by, share similar interests with, and have camaraderie and cohesiveness in growth and achievement together with others in the workforce, with the organization, and with the industry as a whole.
- **Maturity (Competence):** The extent to which workers have and/or gain leadership, responsibility/accountability, and competence in social, technical, environmental, and economic terms with respect to work performance, cooperation, problem-solving, collaboration, idea-generation and innovation, and work involvement and integration.

Process

AT CAMPUS HOME. LIVE!

- **Verify and Quantify Workforce Sustainability Attributes:** Respondents will be provided with the opportunity to share if there is room for improvement and suggest additional qualities and characteristics to include in the description of the attributes.
- **Weigh Influence of Attributes:** Participants will be asked to provide a rating, based on a 5-point Likert scale, of the level of influence that each attribute should have on workforce sustainability. The rating ranged from 1 to 5 where “1” indicates “low influence” and “5” indicates “extreme influence.”

NEXT STEPS

- **Identification of Indicators:** The workgroup will collaborate to identify applicable indicators for each attribute that can be used to assess and improve certain characteristics and qualities with respect to the attributes. Indicators can take the form of practices, procedures, policies, or other means implemented by an organization/employer or the workforce itself to sustain a high level of nurturing, diversity, equity, etc. The implication will be that high levels of these attributes lead to improved workforce sustainability at various levels from team to division, university, and industry levels.
- **Determine Level of Influence of Each Indicator:** The same criteria and process for weighing attributes will be used.
- **Create Assessment Tool:** In partnership with ACUHO-I research, the work group will create a tool and establish a group of test departments to apply, assess, and validate the developed tool. The validation study would confirm the accuracy and utility of the tool and identify potential areas of improvement in the tool if needed.