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- Foundation

## FOUNDATION

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Welcome to the People Plan

Algonquin College has a clear mission: To transform hopes and dreams into lifelong success.

It is a bold ambition for all of us as we help our students, young and old, build careers, lives and communities. Our mission is not limited to the learners who occupy our classrooms or learn through our digital channels. It is also the College’s singular objective for everyone who works here. That’s why we have built this People Plan. Like the new Strategic Plan – 50+5 – that inspired it, this plan is meant to be iterative; as we learn, we will adapt and revise. But it is a first step – a good one, we anticipate – toward articulating the actions we must take as a college to turn our hopes and dreams as employees into lifelong success.

This People Plan is also a first for Algonquin College on two fronts: it is the first People Plan we’ve ever had, and it is the first of several documents that will help us to achieve our 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. We are confident this People Plan will help advance us on the path of becoming the leader in personalized, experiential learning and an exceptional employer. What does it mean to be an exceptional employer? First, it means charting a course for the development of our people and creating an environment to achieve success – all of us. That’s what this People Plan starts to do. Being an exceptional employer also means being open to feedback, listening – really listening – to ideas and concerns and then doing something about them.

We listened to the results of the 2015 employee engagement survey and the recommendations of the employee task forces that studied those priorities, and this Plan includes actions in response. The results of the 2017 employee engagement survey confirm that we are focused on the
right actions, for the actions address specific themes that have emerged again, including:

• Providing information and resources to help employees manage their careers with the College

• Holding people accountable for performance and results and recognizing contributions

• Providing performance feedback to enhance performance and career growth

In 2017-18, as in past years, we will involve employees in identifying what can be done to address issues that impede engagement. We will also focus more specifically at the team level by engaging in conversations to better understand and develop meaningful action plans at both the departmental level and at the college-wide level. Our commitment to the engagement of our employees is an ongoing commitment.

Our employees are proud to work at the College and are proud of the role they play in contributing to the lifelong success of our learners. Employees have told us they want to have personally-satisfying and engaging work experiences and careers. They have told us what is important to them – through the employee engagement survey, during the President’s Listening Tours, Employee Task Forces and during consultations that took place in developing this plan – and we have given considered thought to their input in identifying the actions we will take over the next five years.

You will notice the People Plan echoes themes reflected in the Strategic Plan, themes also voiced by employees over the past year as we sought input. The themes are those of innovation, personalized development and continuous improvement, with a focus on improving core processes and programs through streamlining and building on what we have in place rather than creating new. We made a conscious decision during planning to select fewer more impactful actions that will measurably move the College forward and build the foundation for 50 more years of success.

The People Plan is prefaced by our People Promise, a series of aspirational statements that reflect employees’ expectations of the College, and the expectations our managers have of themselves in leading and developing teams. These statements, which surfaced during discussions with various individuals and groups, are consistent with our core values of Caring, Learning, Integrity and Respect.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Jensen
President and CEO

Cathy Frederick
Vice-President, Human Resources
About this People Plan
1.1 Guiding Principles in Developing the Plan

In the eight months it took to build this plan, we used a set of guiding principles to keep us focused and on track. We will continue to apply them as, together, we implement this plan.
01. ENGAGING EMPLOYEES

Our employees have been eager to participate in activities that contribute to the College’s success and influence the direction taken on issues that matter to them. Employees at all levels had the opportunity to share their perspectives during Town Halls, when the emerging themes were shared, and again when the Findings Report was shared on myAC.

Additional consultations were held with Deans, Directors, Chairs and Managers to ensure the actions identified would measurably move the College in the right direction.

The 12-member, cross-college, People Plan Advisory Committee met regularly to review results of data analyses, discuss findings, assist in prioritizing the themes and recommendations and shape and vet the resulting action plan.

02. EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION-MAKING

Qualitative and quantitative data from a number of sources were assessed and informed the actions in this Plan. These included:

- Recommendations of the task forces that considered the employee engagement priorities from the 2015 survey
- Interviews and consultations with people managers at all levels
- Human resources strategy risks identified by the College Enterprise Risk Management Committee

- The results of the Human Resources strategy audit commissioned by the Board of Governors
- Human resources business process and program data

03. LIVING DOCUMENT

The People Plan is the first of several enabling plans for the Strategic Plan, 50+5, and the actions identified are based on the information we have today. The world is not static and the College environment is certainly not static. The action plan has to be responsive to issues and challenges we are going to face over the next five years and, for that reason, we will periodically review it and refine it, if necessary, to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the College.

04. ALIGNING WITH THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The People Plan has a direct line of sight to our Strategic Plan goals. This was achieved through the use of a cascaded planning methodology that identified the core people capabilities and systems needed to achieve each Strategic Plan goal. Once this was complete, the themes that emerged from data analysis and the recommendations of the employee task forces were assessed in terms of their impact on our ability to achieve the strategic goals, and their alignment with the needed people-capabilities and systems. This exercise resulted in a list of priority actions that are reflected in the People Plan.
1.2

About us

We are more than 1,300 full-time and 2,400 part-time employees at the end of the 2016-17 fiscal year.

• We are more than 1,300 full-time and 2,400 part-time employees at the end of the 2016-17 fiscal year.
• We are a mature employee group: most of us are older than 40.
• Many of us who are part-time have been working with the College for 10, 15, and 20 years or more.
• We employ several hundred of our own students every year in a variety of roles.
• Part-time employees are an important talent pool for full-time positions, and are often successful in becoming full-time employees in the Support and Academic groups. Over the past three years, 52 per cent of those hired into full-time Support positions
came from the part-time group, while the comparable statistic for the Academic group was 88 per cent. During that same period, most full-time Administrative positions were filled with mid- or late-career external candidates.

• The annual rate of turnover in full-time employees is just under 5 per cent, due mostly to retirements.

• The Ontario Colleges of Arts and Technology (CAAT) Pension Plan projects that 50 to 60 employees will retire in each of the next three years, based on analysis of the College’s retirements since 2012.

• We need to further our understanding of the diversity within our workforce and whether we are fully taking advantage of the diversity of talent found in the labour marketplace.

• Since 1999, we have raised more than $1.3 million for United Way and had an impact on the lives of 4,600+ community members.
1.3

Our People Promise

People come to work at Algonquin College, and continue their careers here, because they have a strong commitment to service, life-long learning and helping our clients, the learners, become the leaders of tomorrow.
The People Promise affirms that the College will:

- Engage the strengths of our employee community in support of our mission to transform hopes and dreams into lifelong success.

- Offer learning and development opportunities that will further employee performance and professional growth.

- Build a vibrant, resilient and diverse workforce, as well as foster an inclusive workplace culture that values the unique strengths of each employee.

- Provide caring, insightful leadership.
Plan Overview

The People Plan actions reflect specific themes that emerged during the planning process:

- Provide employees with the tools and skills-building experiences necessary to build innovative programs and practices
- Readily connect pools of internal and external talent with opportunities
- Enable employees in choosing their career paths by making available information, resources, and opportunities
- Provide employees with insightful performance-enhancing feedback
- Facilitate a personalized, experiential learning approach to acquiring new skills
02.

AREAS OF FOCUS

The Core of the People Plan
Over the course of the next five years we will focus on three areas of priority:

✓ Attract, develop, value, support and celebrate an exceptional learner-driven workforce

✓ Build a learning workplace that is respectful, diverse, inclusive and healthy

✓ Increase the capacity and capability of our learning organization through innovation and continuous improvement
STRATEGIC FOCUS #1:

Attract, develop, value, support and celebrate an exceptional learner-driven workforce

There is a popular anecdote about working at NASA in the 1960s that goes like this: Ask the janitor what his job is and he will say “to put a man on the moon.”

Algonquin College exists to transform the lives of learners and we all have a role to play, whether it’s teaching, keeping our facilities clean or hiring talented employees. Our learners must be at the centre of everything we do. To this end, we will attract, develop, value, support and celebrate an exceptional learner-driven and learning-focused workforce with the skills needed to deliver on our mission, mandate and strategic plan.

We are all accountable for our work, and we must ensure managers and supervisors have the skills, tools and support to manage performance and give employees the feedback they need to continuously improve. Responding to the 2015 and 2017 engagement survey results, we will support development of high-performance teams and people, by providing additional resources to assist in performance and career conversations and introducing a simplified, streamlined performance discussion process for Part-time employees.

In 2017-18, we will undertake a review of the employee performance development framework to identify opportunities to enhance the process, resources and tools for employees and managers.

A formal departmental-level orientation will be introduced for all new employees, to immediately position them for success. This orientation will supplement the current College orientation, and will be modeled on practices already in place in some departments.

In addition, an orientation module will be introduced for new managers (those who are new to the College and those who are promoted from within) to support them during the early, critical months of assuming their roles.

We will connect people with opportunities by providing employees with the ability to create and post their professional profiles. Managers will be able to post temporary opportunities that could be as short as several hours or weeks, and up to four months, conduct a search of employee professional profiles and select candidates based on the results of the search.
We will support Chairs in meeting anticipated program needs by identifying and continually refreshing pools of qualified candidates for Part-time faculty opportunities.

We will provide employees with information and resources to assist in managing their career paths at the College, housed on a virtual Career Hub on the HR webpages. Initially, the Employee Career Hub will hold a set of career mobility principles, guidelines for a new informal job-shadowing process and samples of responsibilities and credential requirements for frequently posted positions. Other resources will be added over time.

We will introduce online and blended learning delivery into the leadership and management learning programs to provide broader access to internal professional development programs for enhanced performance and career growth.

We know that our senior leaders need to get better at engaging employees in order to build trust and foster collaboration. We will strengthen our leadership bench strength by introducing a 360-degree performance feedback process for senior leadership positions, along with the opportunity to consult with a performance coach in order to prepare a personalized development plan based on the results.

We will update our leadership succession planning framework and monitor the development of a strong cadre of potential internal successors for leadership positions. This will provide focused, purposeful competency growth experiences for identified individuals and provide the College with an in-house pool of experienced talent for future leadership opportunities.

We will continue to monitor and take action on employee engagement priorities. We will build on the learnings of our employee-led Tiger Teams experience to study and recommend action on the priority issues surfacing in the 2017 Employee Engagement survey. We will act quickly on those recommendations.

As with the 2015 survey results, we will develop and monitor College-wide and departmental-employee engagement plans. Furthermore, we will start using pulse surveys to ensure we remain on top of issues that have an impact on employee engagement.

We intend to become the role model for other employers in providing valuable skills-building work terms for our Co-op students. Our current framework to employ Co-op students will be refined, and additional tools will be given to managers to optimize the experience of Co-op students within departments.

**MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

- Leadership roles filled by internal candidates
- Student satisfaction with internal Co-op work term
- Completion of performance discussions
STRATEGIC FOCUS #2:

Increase the capacity and capability of our learning organization through innovation and continuous improvement

Every employee at Algonquin College has the ability and deserves the opportunity to improve the way we work so that we can focus as much time as possible on enhancing the learner experience.

That’s why we will foster an innovative workplace culture and support the operationalization of our strategic focus on quality and innovation by adapting Lean management principles to the post-secondary education environment. This will give us a common lens, language, and tools for implementing improvements to our programs and practices, to advance collaboration across groups and departments. Initial training has already begun and will continue over the next several years, with an increasing focus on applying the methodology and tools and building our in-house expertise.

We will also provide employees an opportunity to connect and share best practices through the creation of Communities of Practice.

In 2017-18, we will take a significant step forward in streamlining many human resources and financial processes with the introduction of the enterprise resource planning software, Workday.

Workday will give employees immediate access to information, such as the ability to view their vacation and sick-leave banks and pension information. It will also allow the submission of leave requests, and direct access to applications for opportunities. Managers and teams will have increased access to data and reports necessary for evidence-based decision-making.

The second phase of Workday, scheduled for implementation in 2018-19, will streamline the registration process for employee-learning programs and create a record of employees’ learning completion as well as other professional development opportunities.

By 2020 we will have a College-wide core competency framework in place and use it as the integrating foundation for our talent processes and programs. We will review and update the current leadership competency framework with the competencies needed to achieve our mission, mandate and strategic plan, and identify the behaviours associated with each competency for professional, faculty and other roles at the College. We will then use the competencies in employee recruiting,
selection, performance development, and learning, to provide us with a solid and integrated foundation for moving forward.

**MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

- Learning investment as a % of payroll
- Time to hire employees
- User/client satisfaction with HR processes
STRATEGIC FOCUS #3:

Build a learning workplace that is respectful, diverse, inclusive and healthy

Respect for people is a central principle of everything we do. We will continue to build a respectful workplace and inclusive workplace culture, one that values the unique strengths of each individual, and take action to support employee resiliency and wellness.

Change is a constant in the current post-secondary environment. Our ability to adapt to change — in the way we work and the way we interact with each other — will become an increasingly important determinant of success. As well, significant planned change is on the near-term horizon. The Innovation Centre, Workday and a new Learning Management System, are but few of these planned changes. We will introduce a standardized, scalable change-management methodology and tools that will become part of the way we approach business transformation projects at the College. The methodology — which will be used initially in the implementation of Workday — will be customized for the College and available to assist managers in leading projects and supporting teams through change.

We will continue to conduct scans of workplace issues and, starting in 2018-19, conduct internal and external research into employee wellness indicators and best practices, in order to enhance the resources in place to support and promote employee wellness.

We will focus on increasing our proficiency in finding solutions to issues before they become serious problems through evidence-based problem-solving discussions with our union locals, and implementing practical solutions to recurring issues.

In 2017-18, we will extend the use of our Employment Equity Self-Identification form to Part-time employees and external applicants so we gain an informed understanding of the diversity in our workforce. We will also conduct a review of our human resources programs and practices to identify impediments to workforce diversity and inclusion. The insights from these activities will assist in developing a strategy to strengthen the diversity and inclusiveness of our workplace.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Workforce diversity
- Resolution of issues tabled by the union in problem-solving sessions
- Employee wellness
03.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

How will we be different five years out?
2017 - 2018
Accomplishments

WE WILL HAVE:

✓ Framework to employ Co-op Students
✓ Workday Phase I implemented and adoption support underway
✓ Employee Career Hub
✓ Lean strategy defined; additional training and supporting tools deployed
✓ College-wide and Departmental plans based on 2017 employee engagement survey results
✓ Pre-screened talent pools for PT Faculty
✓ 360-degree performance feedback and coaching for the College executive team
2018 - 2019
Accomplishments

WE WILL HAVE:

✓ Workday Phase II (Professional development module) implemented and adoption support underway
✓ Orientation module for new managers
✓ Performance-feedback tool for PT Admin and Support
✓ Pulse surveys on employee-engagement issues
✓ Process for matching internal candidates with short-term (<4 months) assignments
✓ Standardized scaleable change-management methodology and tools
✓ Online and blended learning methodologies introduced into leadership and management Professional Development
2019 - 2020
Accomplishments

WE WILL HAVE:

✓ Core competency framework refined for management role levels
✓ Departmental orientation framework in place
✓ Updated succession planning framework
✓ Workforce diversity and inclusion strategy
✓ Wellness assessment and updated resources
✓ 360-performance feedback and coaching for Deans and Directors
2020 - 2021
Accomplishments

**WE WILL HAVE:**

- Core competency framework expanded to non-management role levels
- Performance feedback tool for PT Academic
2021 - 2022

Accomplishments

WE WILL HAVE:

✓ College core competencies used in talent recruitment, selection, performance development and learning processes