

POLICY

Flat structure mutual support and feedback

In our flat structure, we have created a "Buddy system" where each team member acts as a buddy to another. This aims to ensure that we don't lose the good bits of management, and that we all feel supported and able to hold ourselves accountable. The buddy system is closely related to our feedback processes...

04.09.23

Info

Overview

This is a accountability / group structure / performance management / personal and professional development / staff supervision and reviews / wellbeing support policy that's been



used for 1–3 years by a self-managed / flat charity with 05–14 people and a turnover of £500k+.

Policy details

Type:	Policy
Used for:	1–3 years
Policy areas:	<div><div>Accountability</div><div>Group structure</div><div>Performance management</div><div>Personal and professional development</div><div>Staff supervision and reviews</div><div>Wellbeing support</div></div>
Known legal issues:	No

Organisation info

Name:	Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll) < https://www.weall.org >
Type:	Charity
Structure:	Self-managed / Flat
People:	05–14
Turnover:	£500k+

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Policy



Each [team member] regularly meets with the buddy assigned to them (each [team member] is someone else's buddy, creating a 'circle' of support), to help them reflect on their progress towards their work goals, professional development goals, and addressing barriers to them. **Buddies** are responsible for scheduling their meetings, at regular intervals. 30 minutes every two weeks is recommended.

How we support each other

In our flat organisational structure, there are no hierarchical or managerial relationships. Read this guide to learn about WEAll's unique organisational structure. We have developed a "Buddy Circle": each [team member] has a designated Buddy who supports them in the pursuit of their goals. The purpose of the Buddy relationship is to:

- Hold space for conversations about progress towards goals, celebrations of successes and reflections on challenges
- Support each other with strategies for lifting pressure and signposting support (where the Buddy isn't ideally placed to give it themselves)
- Check in with how their colleague is doing, both in terms of work flow and as a whole person. The recommendation is that Buddy meetings take place at least monthly, although they can be more frequent if both people agree this would be valuable. The current Buddy circle can be found [here](#).

How we share feedback

In pursuit of our values, [Team members] should offer ongoing feedback to each other in a transparent and non-judgemental way. This means addressing any challenges with work or relationships as early and as openly as possible, and it also means celebrating each other as often as possible. In addition to this, we also see value in a periodic feedback collection process, which goes deeper and helps all of us strengthen our good practices and identify areas of development where relevant. We operate this deeper process of collecting honest feedback via surveys within the [staff] team, shortly before our in-person strategy retreats. All [Team members] are asked to complete a short survey about each other [team member], reflecting on their work, behaviours and what we valued about them during that period. The survey also includes questions about which of our values the [team member] most embodies and why. The purpose of this process is:

1. To celebrate successes and affirm individual and collective strengths within the team, so that we can build on them.
2. To identify things that would benefit from attention – perhaps that is a focus on behaviour or practice change, or targeted learning and development.

During our retreats, we will each get a chance to reflect verbally on the feedback we have received and discuss any next steps as a team. People

may also wish to follow up directly with colleagues about specific feedback.

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