

## **BIO**

Heather Poff, a native of Bluefield, West Virginia, received both a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology and Business Communications and a Master of Science degree in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from Radford University, Radford, Virginia. After leaving the university, Heather joined the business world where she has worked in Human Resources since 1998. She was first employed by Kidde, a company that produces fire extinguishers, smoke and fire alarms, and carbon monoxide alarms.

Heather was later employed by Foot Levelers, a custom orthotics manufacturer in Roanoke, Virginia, as the Vice President of Human Resources. While maintaining her job at Foot Levelers, Heather earned a Master of Business Administration degree from Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia.

Heather joined Princeton Community Hospital in Princeton, West Virginia as the Human Resources Director in January 2012. She is responsible for the human resources, nutrition services, environmental services and laundry functions.

## **Topic**

Staff development and Succession planning

### **Staff Development**

It is essential that organizations develop current staff's skills to keep up with today's ever changing environment and expectations. However many organizations feel they do not have funding to devote to staff development. Ms. Poff will discuss the importance of developing current staff and the cost effectiveness of doing so. Ms. Poff will offer suggestions regarding effective staff development tools and strategies in addition to discussing methods she has used and is currently using to develop staff.

### **Succession planning**

Ms. Poff will discuss succession planning strategies and tools that she has used to implement effective succession planning in her roles at the organizations at which she has been employed.

Turnover is expensive for organizations in terms of overtime, lost productivity, etc. With key roles in supervisory and management positions, another factor is the time that it takes the new incumbent to get up to speed and be able to perform the necessary tasks at a similar level as the former incumbent. That is why succession planning is essential.

Succession planning allows an organization to identify individuals interested and suited for advancement opportunities. Once identified, offering needed additional training will enable those employees to step into an advanced position, better equipped to handle the new role and responsibilities, resulting in smoother transitions and less lost productivity when these changes in key personnel occur.