

The Oregon Employment Department Management Team convened for a 2-day retreat in November to learn, share ideas, and strengthen connections. Prior concepts around growth and fixed mindsets, diminishers and maximizers, and performance mindsets [were reinforced in a review prior to the retreat](#) and throughout the two days, in addition to the introduction of new competencies and resources. Managers developed a deeper understanding of the agency values of Integrity, Respect, and Community and how their own personal values align. A key outcome of the activities and discussions led to an understanding of how to embed our values and operating principles into daily interactions, decision-making and problem-solving.

The Oregon Employment Department seeks to provide a positive, safe, and learning environment where employees are included and engaged. The retreat provided learning around what it means to be a learning organization and how to promote an engaged environment, both from the perspective of employees and managers. We invited [Linda Cohen](#) to join us as our keynote speaker to help inspire us and provide tangible approaches for our leaders to practice kindness in daily interactions. Linda is a “kindness catalyst,” speaker, and author and was able to provide our management team with memorable ways to create a culture of engagement and positivity.

Through team building activities, future visioning discussions, and personal reflection, managers were provided with a consistent perspective of their critical role as leaders, and also gained effective strategies and tools to carry the learning forward to their teams.

