

Belonging in Practice

- Acceptance of self and others – allow space for mistakes
- Shared culture and backgrounds matter (people, food, celebrations)
- Cohorts for peers build community
- Co-creation and shared decision-making spaces with feedback loop
 - “Adults don’t always have to give options to fix but instead should listen and build trust. Be approachable. Don’t be dismissive (i.e. you are too young to know...).”
- Messaging and language in physical space, on documents, and in processes can send positive or negative messages to youth
 - “Wearing an ankle monitor meant everyone looked at me and stayed away from me.
 - I ditched PE because it was especially bad in gym clothes.”
- Non-transactional interactions
 - “When my teachers check in to see how I’m doing, it makes me feel good.”
 - “They treat me like a human being and not just a student.”



Meaning-Making in Practice



- Autonomy and choice: you can vs. you should
 - “Adults get fixated on certain groups of students in either good or bad ways. That’s where all the attention goes.”
- Identify and reflect on your values
- Messaging makes a difference – i.e. academic probation letters
- Training such as Imposter Phenomenon to normalize feelings (for staff and young people)
 - “Sometimes imposture syndrome looks like you thinking you’re “faking it till you make it” when indeed you are already making it and everyone else can see it but you.” Shaunie, AmeriCorps member

— The Imposter Syndrome —



Wellbeing in Practice



- Technology and phones can boost wellbeing and hurt wellbeing; need help setting boundaries
 - “It soothes me to move away from my phone for a little bit and pamper myself and others.”
 - I don’t like when others aren’t listening because they are on their phones.”
- Achieving balance in everyday life boosts wellbeing: work, school, family, friends
 - “If one thing goes wrong and you’re in a bad spot, things start to cycle and swirl.”
- Barriers to wellbeing: time, hustle culture, and lack of access to wellbeing resources and natural spaces (Youth and Young Adult Wellbeing Report, 2023)

“A sense of accomplishment is wellbeing. To be accomplished and to be consistent about something.”

“It’s hard when adults don’t understand life outside of school. They didn’t offer flexibility when I needed it most.”

“Adults need to remember things and follow through.”

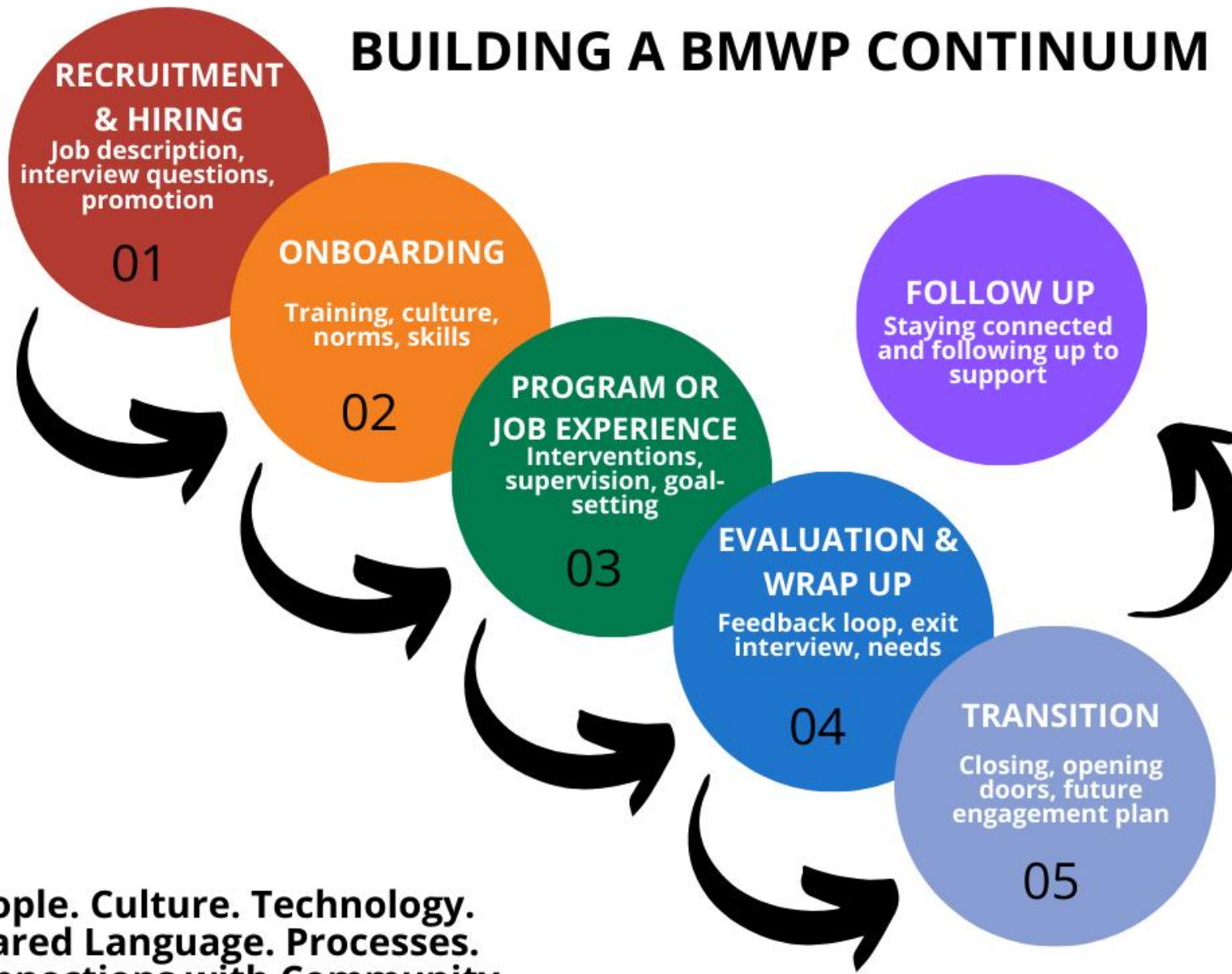
Purpose in Practice



- Accomplishing things and being recognized matters
- Time for reflection
- Permission, safety, and options to explore
 - “I don’t want to go to college and maybe some adults expect this to be the case. TikTok influencers talk about having a degree and not being able to make money and still working at McDonalds.”
- Cultivation/Maintaining vs. “Finding” to alleviate pressure
- Expression of purpose through family, culture, and community
 - “Teaching my little siblings what’s right and what’s wrong. Being someone they can look up to. That feels like purpose.”
- Developing (and naming) skills through social experiences or cohorts



BUILDING A BMWP CONTINUUM



**People. Culture. Technology.
Shared Language. Processes.
Connections with Community.**