

Notes from Strategic Planning with Human Resources and Payroll
Wednesday, July 23, 2008

Attendees: Charlene Ashburn, Sherri Bays, Sally Beckworth, Miguel Martinez-Serena, April Morales, Kelley Riddle, Cindy Taylor

Assisting with the planning session: Mary Billings (logistics), Kathie Gilbert (facilitator)

Session began with participants identifying the following Ground Rules to guide discussions during the day:

Ground Rules

1. Ask questions
2. Attack issues, not people
3. Ask for what you need
4. Everyone participates
5. Stay on task
6. Respect each others' opinions
7. Look for solutions; be proactive
8. Have fun – laughter encouraged
9. What is said in the room stays in the room
10. Listen with an open mind
11. Don't be defensive; use constructive criticism
12. Keep in mind the auditing rules/requirements (e.g., separation of duties)

Expectations for the Session

- Resolve issues affecting the department
- Prioritize what needs to be done
- Realize how important organization is within the department
- Understand and identify the ways we can improve
- Be proactive in what we learn from SWOOT and today's activities
- Analyze work processes, identify problems, and propose solutions
- Look at underlying issues that may rest outside the department – consider possibility of resource reallocations
- Evaluation of tasks and duties in the department

Group Work using the compiled SWOT identified the information in the tables below as the most significant strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Strengths			
Good Internal Communication and Camaraderie	External Communication Skills (“People Skills”)	Strong Work Ethic	Internal Workflow Process (contract requests)
Coverage between HR & Payroll	Prompt Action to Matters	Knowledge of Policy & Procedures	Effectiveness of Contract Request Spreadsheet & Scanned Contracts
	Internal Customer Service	New Employees; Interaction with New Employees	
		Strong Interdepartmental Relationships	
		Directors Knowledgeable in Banner Implementation	
		Quality People	
		Job Dedication & Initiative	

Strength Strategic Challenges

1. Build off strengths to work on identified weaknesses
2. Utilize institutional memory and understanding that can be applied to new or problem situations
3. Think and speak openly and with fresh eyes; be open to change

Weaknesses				
		Balance Cross-Training with Accountability Regarding Attendance	Lack of Proactive Approaches because of Lack of Resources (time, missing personnel, etc.)	No written procedures manuals
		Frequent Absences	Reduce Mistakes by Paying Closer Attention to Detail	Make Work Processes Efficient through Better Organization
Fear of Change,	Lack of Training	Loss of	Unable to locate	Utilize Banner

Defensiveness	(Banner, Work Processes, Policies)	Employees & Knowledge Base	paperwork	Capacity Better
	Acknowledging Responsibility as a Supervisor in Other Departments	Loss of Employees Knowledge/ Succession	Lack of Support of HR/Payroll Policy and Procedures	
	Payroll/HR Tolerate Other Departments Lack of Responsibility		Work Overload	
	Limitations of Training			

Weakness Strategic Challenges (number in parentheses indicates number of top five challenge votes received)

1. Ensure that department employees have the knowledge to do their jobs efficiently and effectively (4)
2. Balance cross-training efforts and responsibilities with accountability regarding attendance (coverage versus responsibility) (4)
3. Identify root causes of issues that support a proactive rather than a reactive approach to issues (3)
4. Evaluate department organizational structure and responsibilities within the organization
5. Explore new/additional options for contract issuance (4)
6. Evaluate costs and benefits of more extensive Banner and other technology options (3)

Opportunities		
Professional Development	Positive Interaction	Advanced Usage of Technology
Utilizing Academic Departments	Continuous Communication	Broaden Use of Banner – Utilization of Banner Capabilities
Taking Classes	Involvement in Campus Activities	User Friendly Forms
Training	Improve Departmental Interactions	Implement Electronic Forms
Flexibility for Taking Classes	HR/AQIP Team Review Polices Review Organization Review/Define Policies	

Opportunities Strategic Challenges

1. Implement additional campus professional development/training opportunities (e.g., Banner, orientation, etc.) (2)
2. Expand number of interactions with other units on and off campus
3. Expand use of technology to improve efficiency and simplify processes
4. Review on an on-going basis policies and procedures for currency, redundancies, inconsistencies, needed changes (e.g., definition of family) (3)

Threats		
Mandated Additional Duties	HR/AQIP	Lack of Understanding & Negative Perception of HR & Payroll Departments
Lack of Workforce versus Increased Workload	Outsourcing HR/Payroll Functions	Lack of Communication with Other Departments
Lack of Training	Turn over in Staffing on the Campus	
Leaving Office Unattended	No Succession Plan	

Threat Strategic Challenges

1. Identify mechanisms by which to address mandated additional duties/activities
2. Improve perception of HR/Payroll on campus (2)
3. Develop mechanisms for coverage when primary person is out of office or busy elsewhere (continual operations)
4. Succession Planning (never identified how to describe this one)

Following initial voting the following three items, with four (4) votes each were identified as priority challenges to be addressed in the coming year:

SC1: Ensure that department employees have the knowledge to do their jobs efficiently and effectively.

SC2: Balance cross-training efforts and responsibilities with accountability regarding attendance.

SC3: Explore new/additional options for contract issuance.

Added to these were the following items with 3 initial votes each:

SC4: Identify root cause(s) of issues that support a proactive rather than a reactive resolution of the issue(s)

SC5: Review on an ongoing basis policies and procedures for currency, redundancies, inconsistencies, needed changes (e.g., “immediate family”)

Following the determination of challenges that were priorities for the departments, two groups developed action plans for SC1 and SC3 which they will continue to hone and work on until accomplished.

Parking Lot of Issues to be further discussed:

1. Self-assessment of Progress
2. Shared file – Payroll/HR plus Business Affairs Office
3. Eliminate small dollar amount contracts that require HR director’s signature
4. Review and revise entire contract procedure