

'ACTION CONVERSATIONS:' REPORTING TEMPLATE

Date, Time, and Place of Conversation: Thursday, September 25, 2014

Duration of the Conversation: one hour – 12 noon to 1:00 p.m.

Conveners: Sarah Blakeslee, Annette Heilesen, Sandra MacNevin

Moderator: Annette Heilesen

Recorder: Joanne Davis

Number of Participants: 8 participants, including facilitator and recorder

Type of Participants: staff, managers, and retiree

Theme # 5 – Staff Renewal

The major ideas / proposed actions / implementation steps/ assessment of priorities emerging from this conversation are:

1. Professional Development:

- Staff noted that it would be helpful for units to keep manuals in their offices to help training of new hires, particularly since many long-term employees of the University have left the University and the knowledge and history that they have is not available to new staff coming on board. Office manuals would be helpful to new hires as an important resource. It was noted that putting together manuals takes a lot of time and staffing resources, so perhaps some centralized manuals might be accessible to all staff. Another suggestion is to back fill and cross train while the experienced employee is still working. This would also help when staff go on vacation or are out due to illness.
- It was suggested that a pool of temporary/emergency hires be kept on file in Human Resources and when there is an opening in a department, then a temporary employee might be brought in as an ASA or ASC to back fill the position.
- Staff noted that they would like to see more mentors to help them with their professional development.

- Staff noted that there should be some way to bring together ASA's and ASC's to share resources and knowledge of their jobs.
- It was also suggested that there should be better communication with regard to what training is available on campus.

2. Technological Tools to Support Staff:

- Staff suggested that new hires be provided with assistance in locating the resources to help them with business processes. A suggestion was made that online centralized forms also have links to the appropriate policies and procedures. It was noted that staff would benefit from a centralized link to have access to all updated information (e.g. updated forms). Staff noted that employees often use "Google" search engine in order to access web pages as this search engine brings up the forms needed, while the campus search engine does not often bring up the most updated form/results.

3. Staff Wellness

- Staff noted that there used to be a program for employees to join together at lunch time for staff wellness events. It was noted that having programs that involve running, Tai Chi and other exercise programs at the lunch hour were not effective due to the time limitations, however staff would like to see some kind of programs at the lunch hour that focus on other wellness events and or presentations.
- It was suggested that Kinesiology students lead group events or presentations.
- It was suggested that Leisure and Recreation provide pedometers for employees as they have in the past.
- It was suggested that another idea is to hold campus competitions with some kind of recognition for the winner(s), perhaps launching these kinds of events at the beginning of the Fall semester.
- It was also suggested that Environmental Health and Safety visit all departments and make recommendations for ergonomics awareness for staff employees – and that there should be a top-down commitment for this process so that managers support this process. In the long run, it was noted, this keeps staff healthy.

4. Building Community as Part of Staff Renewal

- Staff noted that campus morale needs improvement and suggested that more events be held on campus to bring together campus constituents from various divisions and units.
- It was recommended that funds be made available to support programs on campus similar to the “Koffee and Kudos” and the “Caught Being Awesome” programs.
- It was also note that some campuses, such as U.C. Berkeley, bring in keynote speakers to address different topics of interest to staff employees, and that this would be one way to bring employees from different departments together for additional networking and is one avenue to improving morale on campus.