

Leadership Task Force: Process Improvement Subcommittee

Executive Summary

I. The Charge:

- A. Examine the culture of process improvement on campus.
- B. Identify areas or methods for improvement.

II. Approach to Task:

- A. Met bi-weekly from fall 2005 through the February 2006 Campus Conversation.
- B. Identified processes that had been reviewed within the last three to five years and what could be gained from these completed process reviews.
- C. Evaluated existing communication systems for information distribution and collection, including the applicability and currency of such information.
- D. Discussed at length mechanisms to embed an environment of continuous review in the campus culture.
- E. Compared numerous process review techniques and how they could be implemented on campus to review processes from departmental functions to campus-wide processes.
- F. Sought and gained feedback from the Campus Conversation.

IV. Findings & Recommendations:

- A. The subcommittee believes the success and ability to generate a culture of continuous process review at UNI is dependent on the following key elements.
 - 1. Championed at our highest level – the President and his Cabinet.
 - 2. Current documentation and easy access is mandatory, as is a mechanism for regular feedback and dissemination of information.
 - 3. An expectation that students, faculty, and staff take advantage of available tools for the betterment of their position/duties or activities on campus.
- C. The Process Improvement Subcommittee realizes the creation of such a system is a long-term commitment and requires continual effort.
- D. UNI needs to be intentional in the creation of a continual process review mindset and culture.
- E. Recommendations
 - 1. Use Diagnostic Approach to Determine What Needs to be Improved

- a. Encourage all departments to generate and solicit a tool for feedback of processes. Possible mechanisms to gather data could include:
 - i. Survey to “customers”.
 - ii. Focus groups.
 - iii. One-on-one discussions.
 - iv. Targeted meetings with established groups.
 - b. Establish expectation for all departments to engage in diagnostic activity.
 - c. Groups evaluating procedures should include representation from all practical impacted groups campus-wide.
 - d. Training in process improvement should be provided minimally at the dean/director/department head (DDDH) and vice president levels. Training methods could include:
 - i. Formalized training in process management (Lean, Kaizen, Six Sigma).
 - ii. Practical application as part of other training programs.
 - e. Perform assessment of process changes, i.e., measurement of success.
2. Evaluate Existing Committees and Their Structure, Particularly Those with Broad Impact
- a. Establish ongoing need for existing committees and determine that representation is appropriate and broad based.
 - b. Encourage “term” appointments with rotating membership to continually infuse new ideas and provide opportunity for participation to a larger number.
3. Improve Dissemination of Information, Particularly Items Significant to Performing Our Duties
- a. Share information widely with focus on impacted and relevant groups.
 - b. Consider the creation of a single University calendar with all University events.
 - c. Determine mechanism to continually solicit feedback on suggestions and provide output, to include rationale for decisions made and not made. (Refer to recommendation for on-going campus conversation from Leadership Task Force - UNI Culture: Embedding a Leadership Model at UNI.)
4. Embrace the Idea of Continuous Process Review at All Levels of the University
- a. Part of evaluation system/process.

- b. Consider as part of candidate review, record of self-initiation and career improvement.
- c. Leaders have responsibility for asking the questions of staff, i.e., better, easier, faster.
- d. Employees have the mandate to suggest ideas.
- e. Publicize “success stories” and promote benefits of process review.
- f. Share resources across departments/divisions.

Members of Leadership Subcommittee: Process Improvement

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