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The Higher Education Workplace

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CUPA-HR Online

For hot topics in HR and higher ed news highlights, bookmark the Knowledge Center home page: www.cupahr.org/knowledgecenter. Most visited pages so far this year have been Job Descriptions, Policies/Procedures/Plans Toolkits, Early Retirement Incentives (Buyout) Programs, and the FLSA Toolkit.

Looking for an opportunity to meet with other higher ed HR professionals in your state or region? Our upcoming events page is updated as soon as chapter and regional events are announced: www.cupahr.org/upcomingevents. Summer and fall events are being planned now.

A Word From the President and CEO

Multiple Regression Analysis and the Cost of Doing Business

By Andy Brantley, CUPA-HR President and Chief Executive Officer



Budgets are tight and I know the last thing you want to hear me say is that you need to invest millions of dollars to put your organization on the cutting edge of the latest technology to help manage processes and transactions. You also don't want to hear me say that you must become a guru of multiple regression analysis to effectively analyze all the HR and employee data in your current enterprise systems. For all I know, you MIGHT need to invest millions in technology and go back and take that refresher course in statistics, but let's focus on approaches that leverage technology that you may already have in place or that is easily accessible.

Gone are the days when most institutions could afford to staff HR so that the department could provide the high-touch, one-on-one service that was much more common 10 to 15 years ago. I know that many institutions have had to make some very difficult staff reduction decisions over the past 18 to 24 months. Allison Vaillancourt and I have received lots of great, positive feedback regarding the "Doing Less With Less" article that we wrote for the last issue of *The Higher Education Workplace*. Our ability to leverage technology, particularly the technology that we already have in place, is absolutely essential to helping us do less with less while increasing HR's contributions to our institutions.

What processes in your organization are the most labor intensive and why? I was recently talking with Jane Federowicz, director of human resources at Rosemont College (and CUPA-HR's national treasurer), regarding her institution's recent implementation of an applicant tracking system. Rosemont is a very small college, but the process of collecting, distributing and reviewing applications was draining institution resources and killing lots of trees. Lesson here for all of us — a routine task that is easily managed by technology should never be managed by people.

The economy has created tremendous workloads for many of our higher education employees. A relatively simple and straightforward implementation of applicant tracking software for Rosemont College has significantly improved the experience for applicants and for those involved in the selection process. I know that the majority of our institutions now use some form of applicant tracking. If you are not already doing so, I strongly encourage it. Ask providers to help you demonstrate the return on any initial investment that may be required.

Another question: What are you doing with the data in your information systems? If the answer is "nothing" or "very little," shame on you! Do you track and evaluate any of the very basic institutional workforce measures related to position vacancy trends, turnover or workforce costs by department or area? Do you know the true cost of your employee benefits programs and how these costs compare to those offered by other institutions? Do you know how the salaries of your faculty and staff compare to those of your peer and aspiration institutions? These are key data that need to be evaluated on a regular basis.

Speaking of salary tracking (here comes the plug!), CUPA-HR's online DataOnDemand (DOD) tools for our salary and benefits surveys can help you quickly and easily assess what's happening in higher education and compare that to your own institutional data (more than 1,500 of your higher ed peers are currently using DOD to help them evaluate critical institution data regarding faculty and staff salaries and benefits). And our new benchmarking survey lets you compare some of your core workforce data with data at other institutions.

Effective use of technology is a challenge for all of us ... even for your CUPA-HR national office staff. I hope you find the articles and information in this issue helpful as you strive to provide the strategic leadership needed to effectively and efficiently manage your higher education workplace.



Andy Brantley | CUPA-HR President and CEO

ACLU, AAUP, NCAC File Brief Urging Court to Reinstate Professor Fired From University of Colorado

The American Civil Liberties Union, ACLU of Colorado, American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and National Coalition Against Censorship (NCAC) have submitted a brief to a Colorado court of appeals arguing that the University of Colorado should reinstate a tenured professor who was terminated from his job for “exercising his right to free speech.”

After he was fired for research misconduct in 2007 from the teaching post he had held at the University of Colorado for many years, Ward Churchill sued the university and its board of regents, alleging that he was

unconstitutionally terminated because of a controversial and unpopular essay he had written concerning the events of September 11, 2001. In April 2009, a Colorado jury agreed that Churchill had been wrongly fired, but awarded only \$1 in damages. In July of that same year, a judge denied Churchill’s petition to be reinstated to his job and vacated the jury’s verdict, determining that the university does not owe Churchill any financial compensation. Churchill is appealing that decision to the Colorado Court of Appeals.

Higher Ed Faculty, Staff Finding Limited Opportunities for Advancement

According to HR Solutions, Inc., only half of those working in higher education have favorable opinions on promotions/career advancement opportunities at their institutions. As part of a three-year study, HR Solutions surveyed approximately 133,750 faculty and staff members from 38 different institutions concerning 19 separate dimensions ranging from job stress to training and development to productivity/efficiency and several others. Of the 19 areas measured, one of the lowest-scoring dimensions included that of promotions/career advancement; only 51% of faculty and staff members surveyed had favorable opinions on this topic.

Thirty-seven percent of respondents said that promotions at their institution are based on performance; 33% believe that job promotions at their institution are fair and objective; and 32% said they are satisfied with their future prospects for promotions.

Interestingly enough, while the faculty and staff members surveyed do not see themselves moving forward on paths

toward promotions, they have observed themselves progressing in terms of professional knowledge and skills. Seventy-five percent of respondents said they work at an institution that provides them with the opportunity to improve their professional knowledge and job skills. Seventy-seven percent answered either “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” to the statement “My job responsibilities contribute to my professional development.”

“Institutions need to be aware that while many faculty and staff members see themselves progressing in their individual development at work, they do not see opportunities for promotions or career advancement,” says HR Solutions Chief Executive Officer Kevin Sheridan. “Research has consistently shown that career development acts as a key driver in promoting engagement. In order to keep faculty and staff engaged and productive, institutions need to provide them with visible opportunities for advancement.”



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Senior-Level Administrative Salaries Stagnant for First Time in Decades

According to results from CUPA-HR's 2009-10 Administrative Compensation Salary Survey, for the first time in more than 25 years the majority of institutions surveyed gave no salary increases to senior-level administrative staff. Approximately two-thirds of responding institutions gave no salary increases in 2009 and about two-thirds of incumbents received no increases. A small subset of these actually gave or received a salary decrease.

Survey results indicate that the median salary increase in 2009 for senior-level administrative staff was 0% (as our other salary surveys found, the same was true for mid-level administrative staff as well as for faculty members). As Table 1 shows, of the 57,089 paired salaries examined, only 36% showed a salary increase, with the median increase being 3%; 55.4% showed no change in salary; and 8.3% showed a decrease in salary, with the median decrease being 6%.

These findings reflect the salaries of 77,186 job incumbents in public and private institutions nationwide. Salaries were reported by 1,280 institutions for 280 selected positions, mostly at the director level and above. Salaries were reported in 11 job categories: Senior Executive Officers; Chief Functional Officers; Academic Deans; Academic Associate/Assistant Deans; Academic

Affairs; Business and Administrative Affairs; Human Resources; Information Technology; Athletics; Student Affairs; and External Affairs.

The median base salary for a CEO at a single institution ranged from \$165,950 at associate's institutions to \$375,000 at doctorate-granting institutions. Other executive salaries, a selection of which is shown in Table 2, reflected similar differences based on institution type. The highest paid deans were those in the areas of medicine, dentistry and law, while the lowest paid deans were those working in occupational studies/vocational education, instruction and special programs.

In light of the economy, we also asked respondents if they expect to be authorized to fill/add more or fewer vacant/new positions this fiscal year compared to last. Across the board, less than 1% expect the number to be "significantly more" and only 10% or less expect the number to be "somewhat more," with the larger percentages associated with faculty. Compared to last year's results, however, there is a reduction in the percentage expecting fewer authorizations and an increase in the percentage expecting authorizations to remain about the same. The latter increased on average by about 6%, indicating a degree of stabilization in hiring.

TABLE 1
% of Paired Salaries With Decreases, No Change and Increases 2009 to 2010
CUPA-HR 2009-10 Administrative Compensation Salary Survey

| | Changes in AdComp Salaries 2009 to 2010 for Paired Salaries | N of Paired Salaries | Median Change: All Responding Institutions | Median Change: Public Institutions | Median Change: Private Institutions |
|-----------|---|----------------------|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Decreased | 8.3% | 4,752 | (6.0%) | (6.5%) | (5.0%) |
| No Change | 55.4% | 31,608 | | | |
| Increased | 36.3% | 20,729 | 3.0% | 3.5% | 3.0% |
| Total | 100.0% | 57,089 | | | |

TABLE 2
Median Base Salary of Selected Positions
CUPA-HR 2009-10 Administrative Compensation Salary Survey

| | Doctoral | Master's | Baccalaureate | Associate's | Overall |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|-------------|-----------|
| CEO Single Institution | \$375,000 | \$248,842 | \$225,200 | \$165,950 | \$243,150 |
| Chief Academic Officer | \$265,056 | \$166,500 | \$139,256 | \$115,341 | \$160,000 |
| Chief Business Officer | \$228,762 | \$162,168 | \$141,550 | \$108,667 | \$158,100 |
| Chief Investment Officer | \$200,000 | \$127,004 | \$184,000 | \$109,180 | \$175,000 |
| Chief Development Officer | \$224,441 | \$143,000 | \$130,000 | \$93,812 | \$142,161 |
| Chief Information Officer | \$192,000 | \$114,123 | \$100,658 | \$97,557 | 119,267 |
| Chief HR Officer | \$145,248 | \$92,920 | \$82,407 | \$89,128 | \$98,990 |
| Chief Student Affairs Officer | \$183,476 | \$125,000 | \$105,970 | \$101,945 | \$121,613 |
| Chief Diversity Officer | \$128,775 | \$86,128 | \$83,175 | \$69,739 | \$97,749 |

“The economy has definitely had a dramatic impact on the higher education workforce,” says CUPA-HR President and CEO Andy Brantley. “Layoffs, furloughs and benefits changes have unfortunately been widespread this year. The data from this and our other salary surveys confirm that the majority of the higher education workforce has not received a salary increase this year and that many of our colleagues have actually had their salaries decreased due to budget cuts and furloughs. My hope is that college and university leaders are going out of their

way to acknowledge in some capacity the great work of key performers who are helping ensure institution success during these difficult and challenging times.”



To order results for the 2009-10 Administrative Compensation Salary Survey or any of our other salary surveys, go to “Surveys” on CUPA-HR’s home page (www.cupahr.org) and click on “2009-10 Salary Surveys: Order Now.” To download a free Executive Summary of any survey, click on “Surveys Home.”

Recent Headlines of Note

Here are some recent higher ed-related headlines that made us stop and read. Just visit each website and search for the article title.

For Students at Risk, Early College Proves a Draw – The New York Times (www.nytimes.com)

U.S. Colleges Court Hispanic Families Using Espanol – The Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com)

For-Profit Colleges Change Higher Education’s Landscape – The Chronicle of Higher Education (www.chronicle.com)

UNH President Says Change or Go Under – Boston.com (www.boston.com)

Not So Private Professors – Inside Higher Ed (www.insidehighered.com)

The Community College Spinoff – Inside Higher Ed (www.insidehighered.com)

Voluntary Retirement Incentives

Duke University's Success Story *By Kyle Cavanaugh*

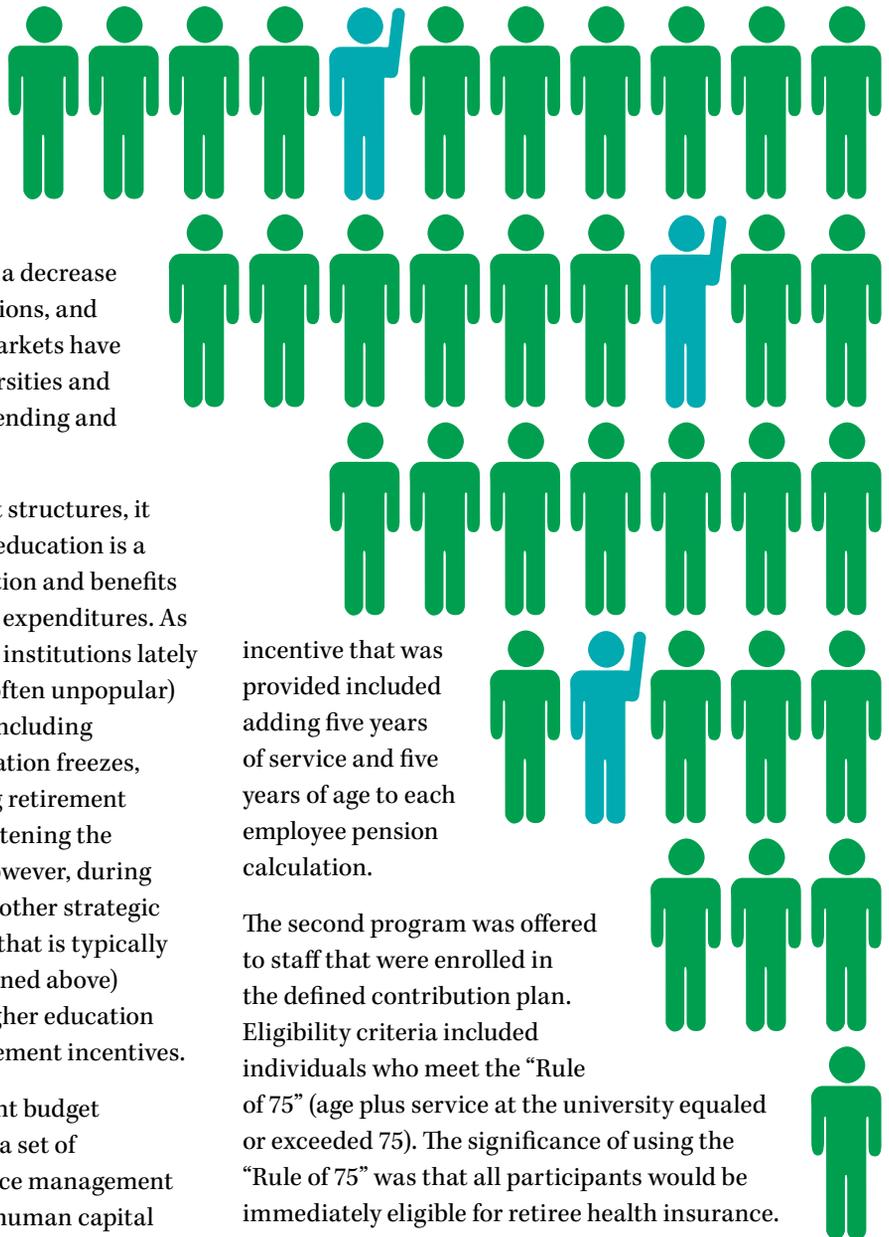
The past year has proven to be one of the most difficult time periods in recent memory for higher education. Significant decreases in state appropriations, elevated pressure to increase tuition and fees, escalating healthcare and utility costs, a decrease in unrestricted philanthropy contributions, and the meltdown of the global financial markets have required both public and private universities and colleges to significantly adjust their spending and consider other revenue sources.

As institutions look closely at their cost structures, it quickly becomes apparent that higher education is a labor intense industry, with compensation and benefits accounting for 40 to 65 percent of total expenditures. As drastic times call for drastic measures, institutions lately have been forced to take a number of (often unpopular) actions to reduce these expenditures, including implementing hiring freezes, compensation freezes, furloughs and pay reductions; reducing retirement contributions; reductions in force; shortening the workweek; and curtailing overtime. However, during the past two years, the utilization of another strategic workforce management initiative (one that is typically seen as less abrasive than those mentioned above) has been gaining momentum in the higher education workplace — the use of voluntary retirement incentives.

Like many institutions facing significant budget challenges, Duke University developed a set of comprehensive and integrated workforce management initiatives to strategically manage the human capital aspect of necessary cost reductions. A central component of these initiatives was two separate voluntary staff retirement incentive programs. And they've been wildly successful.

The Programs

The first program was offered to eligible staff within Duke's defined benefit plan. Eligibility criteria included individuals who had at least 10 years of university experience and were over the age of 50. The actual



incentive that was provided included adding five years of service and five years of age to each employee pension calculation.

The second program was offered to staff that were enrolled in the defined contribution plan. Eligibility criteria included individuals who meet the “Rule of 75” (age plus service at the university equaled or exceeded 75). The significance of using the “Rule of 75” was that all participants would be immediately eligible for retiree health insurance. The actual incentive that was provided included a lump-sum taxable payment equaling two weeks’ compensation for each year of service up to a maximum of 26 weeks or a total cap of one year’s salary.

Both programs had defined start and end points and required participants to separate from the university by a designated date.

Results

The defined benefit retirement and incentive plan was offered to 826 employees, with 295 individuals accepting the offer. The defined contribution retirement incentive plan was offered to 198 employees, with 89 accepting. Both programs significantly exceeded expectations and when combined represented approximately \$25 million in potential reoccurring savings through the reduction of nearly 400 positions.

Communication Is Key

Each program was announced through a variety of communication channels including town hall meetings, websites and internal publications. Local media did news stories on the programs, which helped increase their visibility and facilitated interest.

Each eligible participant received an individualized packet, which included cover memos outlining the program; an individualized calculation of his or her retirement incentive; an FAQ sheet; a data set delineating the number of people, by age and position, included in the incentive versus those not included in the program; a formal press release; and an enrollment form. Group

and individual sessions led by HR staff were held across campus for those who were interested in learning more about the opportunity.

It Worked For Us

As colleges and universities across the nation continue to navigate increased financial pressure, the need to strategically manage their workforces is becoming increasingly important. Although there are a variety of workforce management initiatives that can be implemented, each one carries potential risks and must be thoroughly assessed before implementation.

After reviewing all of our options, we found that a retirement incentive program (or in our case, two programs) was the best way for Duke University to reduce costs while maintaining morale across campus and mitigating legal vulnerability. It worked for us. Could it work for you, too? 

Kyle Cavanaugh is vice president of human resources at Duke University. He can be reached at kyle.cavanaugh@duke.edu.

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Oklahoma City Community College's Business Advisory Project

Looking to increase efficiencies and improve services for its 20,000 students and 1,400 employees, and without the money to spend on big-budget change, Oklahoma City Community College (OCCC) recently launched an initiative designed to enhance utilization of its existing information technology systems. The project has generated considerable enthusiasm on campus — from employees to campus leadership — and has evolved into a major three-year IT plan for the school.

Ken Tagawa, CUPA-HR's chief learning officer, recently sat down with Gary Lombard, OCCC's vice president for human resources, and Vicki Gibson, the school's vice president for information technology, to discuss the initiative, called the Business Advisory Project.

Ken: How did the Business Advisory Project come about?

Vicki: I had been at OCCC for about eight years as a faculty member, then as the department chair for the computer science and computer-aided technology programs. I was then hired as dean over the academic division of information technology before being asked to serve as acting vice president for IT.

As a systems user, I often found myself frustrated when trying to get the various technologies to cooperate and do what was needed. So when I took on the VP job, I knew I could do something about that frustration (which I'm sure others were experiencing as well). I and another campus administrator, our vice president for student services, had heard about the "business advisory process" wherein an organization works with its technology vendors to re-examine its systems and software to determine if they could be better utilized to meet emerging organizational needs. We thought this approach might work for OCCC. And so began our journey.

In late 2008, we brought together a group of about 80 employees from across campus — from assistants to directors — to talk about our enterprise resource planning (ERP) system and to solicit input on how we could improve their experiences as system users and help them become more efficient. We created a list of things

that needed to be done within and to our ERP system to streamline processes and enhance efficiencies.

One of the things we recognized pretty quickly was that our training on the use of our ERP system had mostly consisted of one person telling another person how to use it; we had no formal training sessions in place. And we found that certain processes — personnel action forms, electronic workflow, eliminating shadow systems and paper — weren't working well at OCCC. We presented this information to the president's cabinet in January 2009, along with our business advisory project plan, and they enthusiastically bought into the project.

I then talked with our system vendor about the issues we were having, and I asked what they could do to remedy the situation. They said, "Let's take a look at how well you're using what you have now." We got down to some pretty operational things — which screens we most often used; what reports we needed; what types of information we needed to gather. After these discussions, they concluded that most everything we wanted was available through the software that was in place. We just had to utilize it better.

Ken: So tell us about the scope of the project.

Vicki: Based upon our preliminary discussions, we set three goals for this project: (1) supporting student success; (2) doing more with less; and (3) improving business processes. We've formed several committees to work on various aspects of the project. Our vendor issued a report in June 2009 with a series of findings and recommendations. Highlights of those are as follows:

- Medium to high use of one of our integrated enterprise systems, which has components for student services, financial aid, finance, advancement and HR, exists across the institution.
- Departmental staff members are motivated and anxious to automate additional processes.
- New IT products have been evaluated and purchased in the past few years.
- OCCC enjoys an impressive culture of advanced planning and preparation.

Community College Corner

- OCCC enjoys an impressive level of executive commitment to increased use of technology.
- A help desk request system should be implemented so that users can document and track requests.
- Currently minimal partnership exists between the vendor and OCCC.
- Increasing the number of department power-users (and backups) should be a key priority.
- Power-users need training in rule-writing, query and communications management.

Taking our goals and our vendor's findings and recommendations into account, we laid out a three-year plan. We are currently in the middle of the first year of the plan, and we're using this inaugural year to concentrate on what we call "fix-it training." We brought in our vendor to train our people to use the systems and screens properly and fully. What we realized was that many of the issues and frustrations we had been experiencing were related to human error and were correctable through training.

In year two, our plan is to move toward connecting and interfacing our primary data systems. We will move to a sequel server database later this year which will make data management and integration among the various components easier.

Gary: I'll comment on some of the specific things we've worked on. Our first concentration was on all aspects of student services — the bursar's office and billing, financial aid, admissions and registration — and how we could automate these areas. We then looked at our applicant tracking system (ATS) to see if there was a way to feed the data from that system to our compensation system once an individual had been brought on board (there was).

We implemented the ATS three years ago and no longer accept paper documents. Everything is submitted electronically and if we need supplemental information like transcripts or resumes, we send out electronic requests. For background checks, we use a vendor that has partnered with our ATS provider, which has allowed for the integration of the two systems.

Last summer, we implemented an electronic timesheet system and switched to a bi-weekly payroll. This web-based system allows employees to complete their timesheets online and supervisors to approve the timesheets electronically. This system has created several efficiencies, including sending electronic reminders to employees who

have not yet submitted their timesheets and to supervisors who haven't signed off on the timesheets.

Currently we're working on an electronic adjunct appointment process. The system is designed so that once a department identifies a potential employee and enters information into the system, that activity then triggers a background check. Once the adjunct is appointed, the system will create a contract electronically, cutting down to five minutes a process that takes nearly an hour when done manually.

We've also moved to an electronic student refund process. We no longer manually cut refund checks (over 20,000 per year). We now electronically deposit students' funds directly into their bank accounts. The savings realized for the bursar's office has been equal to roughly one FTE.

Another ambitious project: we're working to convert nearly 40 years worth of paper documents into an electronic format (which we've already done for all student records and financial aid documents).

Ken: I know it's early on in the three-year timeline of the Business Advisory Project, but have you already begun seeing positive outcomes?

Gary: We've not yet been able to quantify cost savings, but we have seen a tremendous impact on time savings. And employee morale has been terrific. Our employees know these streamlined processes we are implementing are helping to make them more efficient, and they appreciate that.

Vicki: The OCCC community — from the students all the way up to the president's cabinet — seems to be more receptive to change. There's a spirit of "Why not? Let's give it a try!" And from an IT perspective, we're learning to listen to our users. It's become more of a team effort for us, and we're now thinking more about service and how we can help our campus community be the best it can be.

Gary: We've been extremely pleased with the progress we've made so far and are looking forward to what the next two years will bring! 



In March, Gary Lombard and Vicki Gibson presented a webinar on OCCC's Business Advisory Project. To access the archived program, visit www.cupahr.org/webinars.

Reporting and Analytics?



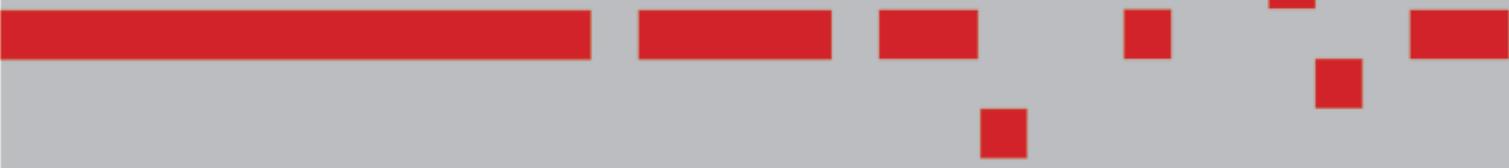
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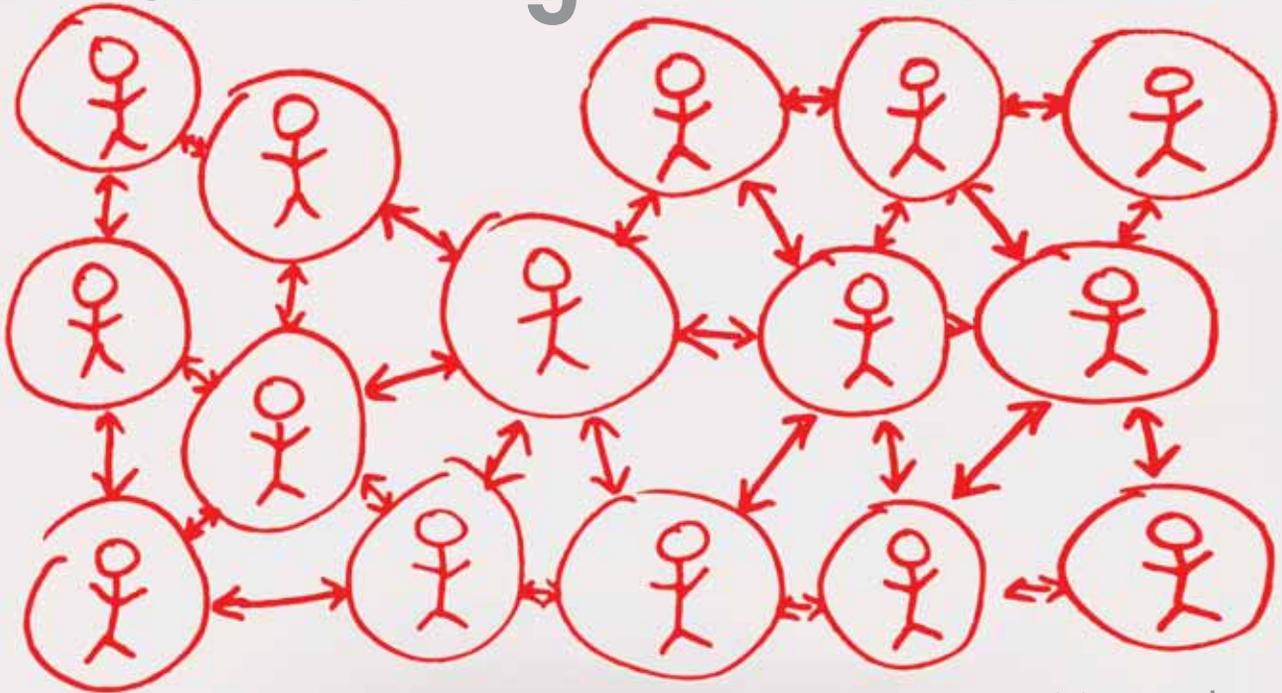
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Connecting the Masses



By Missy Kline

On any given day, several hundred employees of Auburn University's College of Agriculture, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES), and the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station (AAES) are spread out among 80 locations across the state of Alabama. Some are in the classroom, some are in the office, some are in the lab, and some are quite literally "in the field." As such, finding innovative and inexpensive ways to keep them connected to one another and to home base is a priority. The people who make this happen are the staff members of the ACES/Ag Information Technology Office, located on Auburn's campus. This office provides IT services to ACES, Auburn's College of Agriculture and AAES.

Auburn University's College of Agriculture consists of eight academic departments with 18 academic majors and minors, has an enrollment of nearly 1,000 undergraduate students and 300 graduate students, and employs more than 160 faculty members and several hundred staff.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System operates as the primary outreach organization for the land-grant functions of Alabama A&M University and Auburn University. With offices in all 67 counties in Alabama, ACES offers research-based educational programs in

the areas of agriculture; forestry, wildlife and natural resources; urban affairs; family and consumer sciences; economic and community development; and 4-H and youth development.

The Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station consists of 15 research centers throughout the state. Several hundred people (all of whom are official employees of either Auburn University or Alabama A&M University) work for ACES and AAES.

The ACES/Ag IT office has come to utilize a variety of technologies to connect employees of these three entities and to promote teamwork and collaboration between and among them.

Videoconferencing

Videoconferencing plays a big role in bringing together College of Agriculture, ACES and AAES employees. This videoconferencing technology is made possible by dedicated high-speed Internet lines going from Auburn University to 42 sites around the state of Alabama. There are nine locations on the Auburn campus alone that have dedicated videoconferencing equipment like large-screen televisions, web cameras and microphones. Among other things, Auburn's HR office uses videoconferencing to deliver regularly scheduled training throughout the year

to employees all over the state. This training method saves both time and money in that HR employees don't have to travel to provide training to ACES and AAES employees.

The IT office provides any College of Agriculture, ACES and AAES employee who asks for one with a web camera. This allows employees to participate in group meetings even if they are unable to physically be at one of the dedicated videoconferencing locations. Personal webcams also allow employees to conduct spur-of-the-moment meetings with colleagues across the state. Additionally,

the use of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and blogging," says Davis. He notes that those within the IT Office, as is typical, were the early adopters of social media and use it with regularity. Additionally, Auburn's College of Agriculture has an active Facebook page. However, it's taking a while for it to catch on with ACES and AAES.

"The ACES organization as a whole does not have a Facebook page, but some individual program topics and county offices do," says Anne Adrian, associate director of the ACES/Ag IT Office. "We're trying to

In 2009 alone, among Auburn's College of Agriculture, ACES and AAES employees, 1,657 meetings were held via videoconferencing (for a total of 2,334 meeting hours), and close to \$600,000 in cost savings was realized from the reduction of travel expenses.

videoconferencing enables employees of ACES and AAES to participate remotely in Auburn's master's program tailored specifically for Extension professionals. "Web cameras are so inexpensive these days," says Jonathan Davis, director of information technology at the ACES/Ag IT Office. "If providing a \$20 webcam to an employee saves him from regularly having to travel to different counties for meetings (in which case the university incurs the cost of gas, meals, lodging, etc.), then it's really a no-brainer. The ROI of providing webcams to employees is phenomenal."

From 2008 to 2009, the number of videoconference meetings doubled and time spent in these meetings tripled. In 2009 alone, among Auburn's College of Agriculture, ACES and AAES employees, 1,657 meetings were held via videoconferencing (for a total of 2,334 meeting hours), and close to \$600,000 in cost savings was realized from the reduction of travel expenses associated with traditional face-to-face meetings.

"Our employees are really starting to catch on and realize how efficient and productive videoconferencing can be, and the institution is starting to see some significant cost savings by utilizing this technology," says Davis.

Social Media

The ACES/Ag IT Office has recently begun to advocate for the use of social media as another way to keep employees connected and engaged. "We are really encouraging

show the various ACES offices how important it is for them to be where their customers are. 4-H is a prime example. 4-H programs are geared toward those 18 and under; the 18-and-under age group is one of the largest segments of the population using social media; therefore, it would only make sense that ACES 4-H offices have a presence on Facebook, MySpace and Twitter." Another example Adrian mentions is economic and community development. "If you're working in this area, you need to be on LinkedIn making connections with community and business leaders," she says.

Davis and Adrian would also like to see more employees experimenting with blogging, especially researchers. "Short of publishing, which is no easy task, what better way to get your findings out and spark discussion than to write or contribute to a blog? It's so easy and takes so little time," says Davis.

Web-Based Collaboration

Another collaborative tool used by College of Agriculture, AAES and ACES employees is Microsoft SharePoint. SharePoint is a collection of software elements that includes web browser-based collaboration functions, process management modules, search modules and a document-management platform. SharePoint can be used to host websites that access shared workspaces, information stores and documents, as well as host defined applications such as wikis and blogs.

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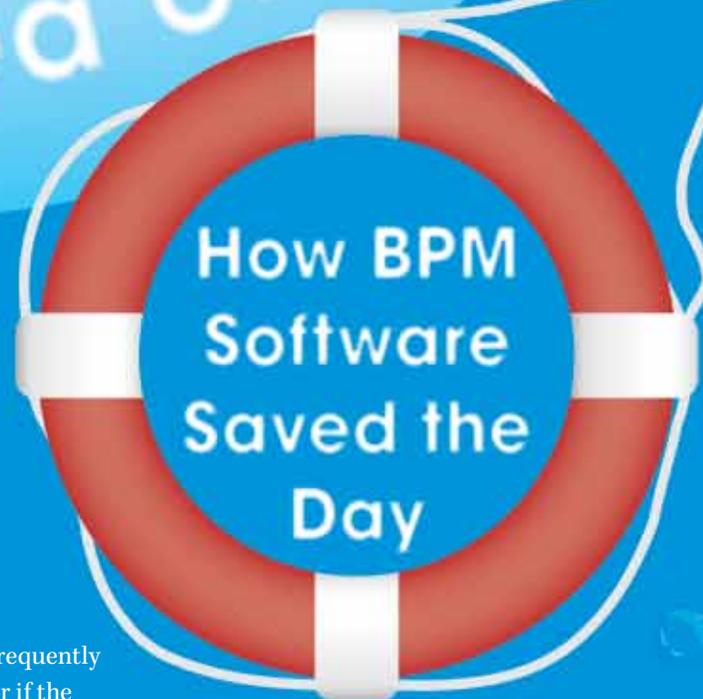
DROWNING

in a Sea of Paper

Much has been written in the last decade about human resource professionals adding value to the organizations they serve. A quick survey of *CUPA-HR Journal* articles in recent years produces titles such as *How HR Leaders Can Add Value to an Organization* (Smallwood and Ulrich, Fall/Winter 2006), *HR as Partner: Building Strategic Partnerships on Campus* (Connally and Neuman, Spring/Summer 2006), and *Transforming the Human Resources Department Into a Consulting Organization* (Vaillancourt, Spring 2003), just to name a few. The premise of such articles is that there is much more we as higher education human resources (HEHR) professionals should be doing for our campuses than regulatory oversight and transactional processing.

These articles and success stories provide valuable information that can help any motivated HEHR professional attain similar success. But, as much as HEHR professionals may want to migrate away from transaction-based activities, we still own the payroll and benefits processes. While these processes are not sexy and don't add value, per se, to the organization, they are nonetheless necessary and therefore deserve the same amount of time and attention that we spend on the more strategic aspects of our jobs.

In other words, we need to work to make these processes and transactions as seamless and efficient as possible. After all, on payday, the thousands of employees who were paid properly don't call to compliment you on that fact; you hear from the handful of people who didn't get paid properly, and rightfully so. If processing errors occur too



frequently or if the errors are not corrected in a timely manner, the credibility of your department will suffer no matter how much value you may be providing your campus in other areas.

By Stewart Mixon

Thus, I would contend that an HEHR department must first master the processes it owns so that it can then focus its efforts on the higher level functions it should be providing. In their article *How HR Leaders Can Add Value to an Organization*, Norm Smallwood and Dave Ulrich list 11 critical organizational capabilities that HR leaders should work to create in order to add value to an organization. Three of these organizational capabilities — speed, efficiency and innovation — are applicable to any of HR's processing activities.

Having served three different research universities, the complaint that I have repeatedly heard from campus department representatives is that it takes HR too long to process many of its transactional-based activities. The HR staff is often perceived as capable, and many of the value-adding functions are well received, but the lack of speed, efficiency or innovation in the processing arena adversely impacts the reputation of the department. When drilling down into the causes of these delays, technological limitations and the lack of automation are most often cited as the problem.

Solutions to these challenges can take a number of forms. We can devote more FTE to the processing function (but if our goal is to add value, this is probably not the best use of our resources).

We can streamline the process (a worthy endeavor), but the process most likely is built around technology, and that technology may be driving the inefficiencies of the process. That leads then to the potential of replacing the older technology with more functional technology. While that may provide much needed relief, the cost of enterprise resource planning replacements are significant, and given the current economy, prohibitive for many colleges and universities.

But before we scrap the whole idea of process improvement, there is another solution that might prove beneficial — business process management software.

Business Process Management Solutions

In simple terms, business process management (BPM) is the understanding, visibility and control of business processes. Since business processes span people, applications, business events and organizations, as an initial step, there is a discovery process to gain agreement on who is engaged in a process and how that process currently functions. The data collected in this discovery is used as the basis for determining where and how the process can be improved.

However, simply documenting the process is not enough. The real value of BPM comes from gaining control over the process and making it work for you. Applying a quality, cost-effective BPM software solution can help to optimize the process and give you, the process owner, a view into

how the process is operating, where bottlenecks are occurring and provide you with process metrics that can be used to resolve customer satisfaction concerns. But perhaps the greatest benefit to a more efficient and effective process is increased staff productivity that may allow you to redeploy your human resources to more value-adding activities.

BPM can significantly reduce the amount of time it takes to complete HR processes; it can substantially increase the efficiency of the processing team; and it certainly provides an innovative approach that will allow you to become the master of your processes. If Smallwood and Ulrich are correct when they state that speed, efficiency and innovation can help create value for your campus, then BPM is a solution whose time has come.

In simple terms, business process management is the understanding, visibility and control of business processes.

Medical University of South Carolina's Story

The Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) is a state-supported, stand-alone academic healthcare center located in Charleston, South Carolina. Established in 1824, it is the oldest medical school in the southeast and is made up of three major entities — the university, the Medical University Hospital, and University Medical Associates (our faculty practice plan). The MUSC enterprise employs approximately 11,000 people and has a student enrollment of 2,500.

Over the course of many years, MUSC had become a “best of breed” IT environment. In simplistic terms, that meant that a campus department could identify an IT solution to meet some established need, then go out and purchase that solution with little regard to how the new product would interface with other systems on campus. There was an expectation that our IT contractor would develop the interfaces along with any technical support the new system may require. Given these exponential expectations that were placed upon our IT professionals and their limited staffing, there were few interfaces actually established. Thus, the purchasing free-for-all resulted in an environment where many disparate systems existed with little electronic data sharing capability in place.

In perhaps the most significant example, one of our colleges invested millions of dollars in a large front-end shadow system developed by a local start-up company. This shadow system provided the college's departments with a wide range of functionality not available in central systems, and the local start-up group provided a level of service unmatched by other IT providers. In essence, the college was able to develop a system to its specifications that met its widely varying needs.

Due to its enhanced functionality, the system was adopted by other colleges and the hospital even though there was no executive decision designating it as the official front-end system for the enterprise. For a number of reasons, the division of finance and administration (to include the department of human resources) was the one major entity on campus that elected to not use the system.

In that there was no official approval, an interface between front-end and back-end systems was not attempted. As a result, this "electronic gap" between the two systems created administrative challenges for HR. Once college representatives were ready to submit a processing request to HR, the departments had to print out their electronic forms and mail them to the central offices via campus mail. When the request was more time critical, couriers hired by the colleges hand delivered these transactions.

Once received in the central HR office, the paper forms sat in a queue until a processing staff member had time to work the request, generally a three- to four-day delay depending on the work volume. Since both systems have parallel databases that at one time were not routinely reconciled, the information in the two databases rarely matched. That would generally result in the HR processing staff member discovering an error in the information submitted that had to be corrected before it could be entered into the HR system.

In an effort to be service oriented, HR staff members took it upon themselves to correct many of these errors, especially if correcting the error enabled an employee

to be paid properly for that payroll deadline. Over time, a number of the originating departments came to rely upon the HR staff to correct their errors and didn't bother reconciling the data prior to sending it to HR. Thus, an 85 to 90 percent error rate in the processing of HR transactions was commonplace.

To compound the challenges, HR did not have a good system to document receipt of requests via mail or

courier. Thus, the campus department representatives frequently complained about their uncertainty of the status of their request. Since the highest volume of activity occurs around payroll deadlines, status concerns caused a spike in telephone calls to the HR staff to determine if requests had been received. If a request contained

errors that prevented it from being completed, a good deal of finger pointing and blame would result.

Some simple solutions, such as forms revisions and the implementation of a simple login system for the receipt of forms, were implemented to assist HR staff. But it was apparent that the manual processes were actually driving the functionality of the department and were adversely impacting the reputation of the department. While there was a strong interest in moving away from these process-based activities, there was not a concerted effort to develop automated solutions to do so.

The Charge

Given HR's service needs, we challenged our IT provider, a unit that had been in-sourced, to find appropriate solutions that would allow HR to automate the manual and cumbersome processes. The charge given the IT team included the following parameters: the solution had to be financially affordable given our budget exigencies; the solution had to establish interfaces between disparate computer systems so data could easily be shared between systems; the solution had to enhance current HR capabilities, to include enhanced reporting capabilities and workflow for the HR department; implementation of

BPM can reduce the amount of time it takes to complete HR processes; it can substantially increase the efficiency of the processing team; and it certainly provides an innovative approach that will allow you to become the master of your processes.

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Bye Bye BOB

By Curtis N. Powell

As the cost of providing healthcare benefits continues to increase at double-digit rates, employers are constantly looking for ways to manage the growing expense. The answer for Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute — a private, technological research university located in Troy, New York, serving roughly 6,000 undergraduates and 2,500 postgraduate students — came in the form of an online, self-service employee benefits enrollment system. This automated system, in place since 2008, has not only helped reduce the institution’s administrative costs related to benefits management, but also has improved the benefits enrollment process.

Paper Overload

Prior to implementing the employee self-service and online enrollment systems, Rensselaer had an extremely paper-intensive process for benefits enrollment. New hires that were eligible for benefits were presented with a box of materials including guides, forms and directories — fondly named “BOB” for Box of Benefits. Imagine a cutting-edge technological research university providing to its newly hired faculty and staff an 18” by 14” box (weighing more than 15 lbs.) of benefits materials!

Fifteen-pound BOB aside, the benefits enrollment process itself was a daunting task — for the employee and for HR. BOB contained 12 separate forms that the employee needed to complete and return to human resources. The benefits staff then reviewed each form, scanned each form and e-mailed the form to the appropriate benefit carrier. Staff also manually entered all data into the HRIS. Employees wanting to change their benefits had to wrestle with attending on-campus informational sessions, completing forms, and delivering or faxing completed forms to the HR office.

Many of the forms we received were incomplete or had wrong information, resulting in our benefits staff spending hours calling, e-mailing and meeting with employees to address the required changes. If the forms were processed with the benefits carrier, correcting the changes took days and was even more time consuming.

It had become quite obvious that our paper-intensive benefits enrollment process was error prone and expensive to administer and maintain.

Changing the Way We Do Business

Addressing the administrative errors, dealing with customer dissatisfaction, and requiring benefits staff to work long hours to address complaints or process enrollments signaled a need for change. The division of

human resources first implemented a self-service system for employees to review their benefits online. Once that was deemed a success, we then implemented an online benefits enrollment system.

When an employee enrolls online, the automated enrollment system's calculator informs the employee how much will be coming out of his or her paycheck to cover the costs of selected benefits. The software program

Imagine a cutting-edge technological research university providing to its newly hired faculty and staff a [15 lb.] box of benefits materials!

The first step in implementing the online enrollment system was to convene staff from our IT division and HR office and develop a request for procurement to solicit vendors whose systems met Rensselaer's needs (including concerns for data security). The team, after interviewing several vendors, selected a vendor that demonstrated a proven record of implementing online enrollment systems with sound reporting and security protocols.

This online, interactive benefits enrollment system allows Rensselaer employees to enroll in medical, dental, life, long-term disability and accidental death and dismemberment benefits online from anywhere in the world. In addition, the self-service benefits portal allows them to view their personal information, manage their benefits and update personal data 24/7.

The bottom line is that utilizing a fairly inexpensive, routine technology has revolutionized Rensselaer's benefits enrollment and administration systems.

Cost Savings and Greater Efficiencies

The automated enrollment system, which serves more than 2,300 employees on two campuses, costs less than \$100,000 a year. The benefits have been tremendous: new employees aren't expected to lug around a 15 lb. box of paper; new faculty and staff can now enroll 24/7 from any computer anywhere in the world; and the institution no longer incurs the cost for printing forms, brochures, boxes and setting up informational sessions.

Under the new system, employee complaints have been reduced from approximately 5% of our population to less than .05%; benefits-related calls have been reduced by nearly 80%; and terminating ineligible employees has become quicker and easier. Having an electronic recordkeeping system has reduced storage space; security of our benefits data has improved; and our vendor relationships have improved significantly (because they are actually getting paid on time!).

virtually eliminates errors — the program self-audits, automatically correcting miscalculations and alerting the employee to discrepancies on forms. Information entered by the employee is transmitted directly to carriers and to the HRIS payroll system, eliminating keystroke errors by HR. For the division of human resources, web-based enrollment makes drawing data and preparing reports a timely and efficient activity.

HR now has one accurate, current, authoritative database of benefits information that includes dependent data and beneficiary designations. And because the provider retains the data on Rensselaer's server, Rensselaer owns the data. This means that, if the need arises, we can move to another benefits carrier without questions about data ownership.

The Greatest Testament

Rensselaer has employees around the globe — Thailand, London, Rome, Haiti. With an automated benefits enrollment system, these remote employees can read benefits guides and complete and submit forms from wherever they are during the enrollment period. Some of our employees have even signed up for benefits from their PDAs. Whether faculty members are in Shanghai, China; New Orleans, Louisiana; or on the Rensselaer campus in Troy, New York, enrollment is quick and easy.

Perhaps the greatest testament to our system's convenience and ease of use? Rensselaer had 100% enrollment this past year. Every single eligible person signed up, without pushback. Now how many institutions can say that?

(And, if you were wondering, nobody misses BOB.) 

Curtis N. Powell, SPHR, is vice president for human resources at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He can be reached at powelc2@rpi.edu.

SOCIAL MEDIA

By Deirdre Honner

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I recently sat down to interview a candidate at Calvin College. As part of the introduction, I offered her a copy of the job description. “Oh, I don’t need it,” she said. “I have a copy of the job description on my phone.” *I have a copy of the job description on my phone.* Those words still rattle around my head when I think of how quickly things change. Does anyone even use paper anymore?

I believe we work in one of the most exciting times in history, specifically as it relates to technology, transparency and communication. We have at our fingertips a multitude of unique and interesting tools to connect and collaborate, to learn and share. And these tools can be an excellent way to establish and maintain connections with our current and emerging workforce. When I consider how we used to engage with our audiences, I recall a primarily passive model of expecting interested parties to seek us out — throwing information out there and expecting people (applicants, students and faculty) to find us.

That model is fading, replaced by tools actively pushing out information and updates. These tools allow us to connect with our target audiences on their turf — be it a netbook, smart phone, RSS feed or Twitter stream. While

there is still a need to maintain static web information and resources, we must create the proper blend of active and passive communication. And many social media tools can help us do just this.

Social Media Might Work For Us, But How Do We Use It?

I was somewhat disappointed to see the results of a recent CUPA-HR/Sibson Consulting, A Division of Segal, survey looking at the use of electronic communication and social media in colleges and universities (see p. 28). Feedback indicated that although a majority of respondents have at one time or another used key social media applications, they do not do so on a regular basis. It was encouraging to see that 76% of those surveyed do see potential for social media. But 33% aren’t sure how it applies to their institution. So where do we start?

Understanding how to use social media is the first step. While understanding the technology is imperative, users also need to identify their target audience and understand and respect the social rules pertaining to each tool. As of late February, Wikipedia had a list of 180 social networking sites, and each day more are being added. I advocate for and use primarily three: Twitter, Facebook

and LinkedIn. Knowing how Twitter works and the people it can reach is key; equally important is respecting the Twitter communities and the collective notion of sharing. Instead of just taking from or advertising in

goes unanswered. Once you decide to invest in the tools, ensure that you have adequate time and staff to continue the conversations in the communities.

We have at our fingertips a multitude of unique and interesting tools to connect and collaborate, to learn and share.

the community, participants are expected to contribute to the body of knowledge pulsing through the Twitter stream. Understanding LinkedIn and Facebook rules and responsibilities are equally important for effective use. As for the audience, the first question needs to be, “Who do you want to reach and what do you want to communicate?”

Once you’ve established a presence on any social networking site, it’s important to provide adequate resources to maintain that presence. Nothing looks worse than a Twitter account without recent activity or a LinkedIn invitation or Facebook fan page request that

So now that we’ve covered the basics of how to use social media, let’s explore some of the things it can be used for, particularly in an organizational setting.

Social Media as a Recruiting Tool

Social media can be a significant and important tool in an organization’s talent acquisition process. The outreach process for hiring is typically a blend of passive recruiting — HR websites, job boards, state unemployment sites, and even Craigslist (all hoping that the passerby will stumble upon a job announcement). However, active recruitment — sending out targeted content to job seekers — is an equally important component of a recruitment strategy.

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Twitter is an emerging resource for broadcasting jobs and reaching top talent quickly. Major companies (not only the “techie” companies you would expect, like Intel, Google and Microsoft, but also companies like Expedia, Hershey’s and the Securities and Exchange Commission) are using Twitter to advertise jobs. And Twitter allows users to determine how information reaches them. Some companies’ Twitter followers can choose to have the

Connecting With the Campus Community

Facebook, considered by some to be scandalous in the workplace, is used at Calvin College to connect with current employees, students and the campus community as a whole. Staffed by the communications and marketing team, Calvin College’s Facebook fan page highlights Calvin faculty, staff, alumni and friends. It also provides a way to stay current on college events. Fun and less formal

As of late February, Wikipedia had a list of 180 social networking sites, and each day more are being added.

companies’ tweets sent via SMS directly to their phone or PDA. For example, when there is a sale at Dell computers, I get a text message. Imagine the convenience of having your posting delivered right to an applicant’s phone.

LinkedIn is a terrific way to reach large audiences as well. Through groups and company pages, employers can create an entire profile with ways to reach people internally and externally. Calvin College lists current employees, key statistics and common job titles on its LinkedIn page. Applicants can research the college from a professional perspective before applying for a position. And LinkedIn also allows job postings, for a cost.

RSS feeds are another economical and streamlined way to connect with applicants. RSS is short for “Really Simple Syndication” and can deliver content directly to an RSS feed reader, most notably Google Reader. For

than the college’s website, the fan page is a way of building community through stories, most notably the recent “cold weather dunk” by the president, the provost and college vice presidents, who all found themselves jumping into the Seminary pond in February (not just any February, mind you, but a Michigan February!). The college’s dining services also uses a fan page to advertise menus, interesting eats and special events.

Professional Networking

Aside from the massive potential social media applications have for our HR departments and institutions, they also can help us stay connected professionally. No doubt we have terrific professional associations, but I recommend broadening your contacts and networks to include some of the amazing bloggers writing about HR issues.

Social media can be a significant and important tool in an organization’s talent acquisition process.

organizations that have the ability to translate website postings into an RSS format, applicants or interested parties will have the notifications delivered directly to the feed reader. There are multiple uses within HR for RSS feeds, including job postings, events, benefits updates, provider changes and training/learning opportunities, both on campus and off.

One of my favorite contacts is Lisa Rosendahl, HR officer for the Veterans Health Administration. By day, Lisa runs a busy HR office. But at night and on the weekends, she is a busy blogger, Twitter presence and mother. Named one of the top 25 bloggers by Fistful of Talent, Lisa’s approach to social media and networking is delightfully charming, sometimes serious and always humble. She is active on Twitter and Facebook and even has her daughter writing as well. Her blog, Simply Lisa, explores the use of collaboration

tools in the workplace, effective leadership and managing work. And she does it well. If not for social media, Lisa and I most likely would have never connected.

I recently connected with a local HR professional on Twitter. She was looking for contacts in the area to help another colleague with some recruiting needs. As a result of my conversation with her, I was introduced to a representative from a local business. We set up a time to talk and I then connected him with Calvin College's career services department. As a result, he is now working with student employees and interns from Calvin. I also connected him with our business department so he could network with faculty and present to the business classes. Small connections, to be sure, but these tweets, introductions and discussions resulted in benefits to both our college and our community.

Steve Boese, another social media friend, is deeply entrenched in technology. He is currently the director of Products, Community & OnDemand Services for Knowledge Infusion, an HR consultancy in Minnesota, and authors the Steve Boese HR Technology blog. He also teaches a class on HR technology at Rochester Institute of Technology in New York. It is the first class in the history of the school's master's program that requires hands-on experience and exposure to key technologies. His students

are on Twitter, are required to test social networks, and blog on HR topics. These students will soon be taking this academic and practical knowledge to the HR workplace and will be expecting to use these tools in their daily work.

You'll Never Know If You Don't Try

Although I'm a strong and vocal advocate for the utilization of social media for business purposes, I do realize that it can weaken boundaries. Lines blur. Identities collide. I have applicants direct messaging me on Twitter asking about jobs. I have employees contacting me on Facebook with questions. It's easy to get lost in the noise created by these current and emerging tools.

So where's the line? I don't know yet, but I do know that avoiding these technologies is not the answer. So my advice to you? Start small, learn your way around a few social media sites, connect with some current and emerging leaders and give social media a chance to revolutionize the way your institution communicates to the masses. 

Deirdre Honner, SPHR, is the associate director of human resources at Calvin College. When not working, she can be found blogging at www.thehrmaven.com or twitter.com/thehrmaven. She can be reached at dhonner@calvin.edu.

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Social Medi@

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The research firm eMarketer projects that by the end of 2010, Twitter will have more than 18 million registered users in the United States alone. As of October 2009, LinkedIn had 50 million visitors worldwide. Facebook currently has an estimated 400 million users worldwide. As staggering as these numbers are, there are still a great many organizations that are reluctant to explore the potential uses of social media as a business or communication tool.

CUPA-HR and Sibson Consulting, A Division of Segal, recently surveyed 148 CUPA-HR members about their personal and institutional use of 12 types of electronic communication and social media, including e-mail, instant and text messaging, Wikis, RSS feeds, blogs, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. A majority (87 percent) indicated they are constant users of e-mail, and many use some of the other technologies fairly often as part of their work. For example, 35 percent are regular or constant users of Facebook, 67 percent use Wikis and 48 percent use blogs at least occasionally.

A majority of the respondents have used key social media applications, but at this point most are passive users of the technology — they access and view information, but

Need to create a social media policy for your institution?

Start by looking at what others have done! In CUPA-HR's Knowledge Center, you'll find several links to higher-ed specific social networking policies. You'll also find a link to a list compiled by blogger Doug Cornelius (who specializes in compliance and business ethics) of social media policies from 150 companies operating in various industries, including nonprofit, education, finance, government, healthcare and many more. Log in to the Knowledge Center at www.cupahr.org/knowledgecenter, select "Toolkits" from the menu, click on "Policies" and then click on "Blog, Twitter and Social Networking."

do not actively publish content to the various applications. Two social media applications where many respondents have been active are Facebook, where 49 percent have posted a status update a few times or more, and blogs, where 43 percent have posted comments a few times or more.

Most survey respondents answered “I have no idea” when asked how often their institutions use Facebook, blogs, wikis, Twitter, LinkedIn, listservs and other “non-traditional” communication methods to reach faculty and staff and to communicate with people outside the organization (prospective students, alumni, donors, etc.). Although there was no specific question regarding institutions’ use of social media to reach students, some respondents did comment that their institutions are using social networking for this purpose.

Three-quarters of survey respondents said they see social media’s potential for business use, but many are not sure how it applies to their institutions. Roughly 46% of

respondents said their institutions have a strategy for using social media, are developing such a strategy, or need one.

All in all, the survey results suggest that institutions’ use of social media to reach their employees has either not been explored at all or is in its infancy. However, as has been proven by the few institutions that have already implemented comprehensive social media strategies, social networking tools can be a valuable add-on to an institution’s communications approach, creating the opportunity for conversation and collaboration at all levels, building communities of interest and fostering a sense of affiliation with the campus community. 

 You can access the full survey report at www.sibson.com/publications/surveysandstudies/socialmedia.pdf.

Visit CUPA-HR’s social media page at www.cupahr.org/socialmedia/ to learn how we’re using Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook to keep you informed on news and topics relevant to higher education and to help you stay connected to your higher ed HR peers.

Blogs of Note Here are some blogs we recommend:

Simply Lisa
<http://www.lisarosendahl.com>
Lisa Rosendahl on leadership, growth and HR.

Steve Boese’s HR Technology
<http://steveboese.squarespace.com>
HR technology, teaching and a little barbecue.

The HR Maven
<http://www.thehrmaven.com>
Human resources — don’t drown.

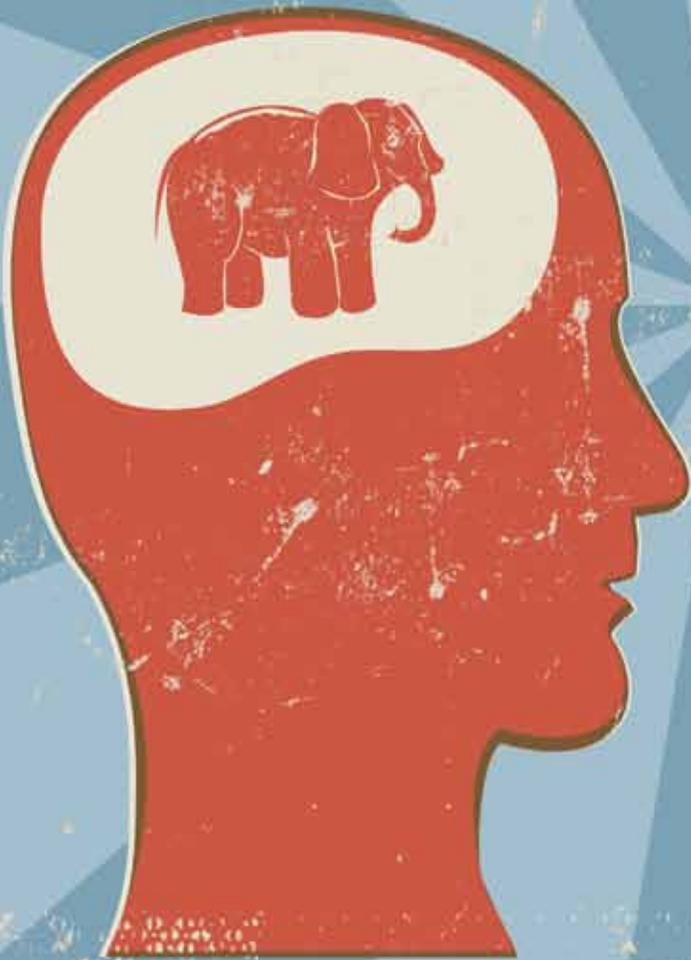
Changing Higher Education
<http://www.changinghighereducation.com>
Major changes occurring in the world are redefining the metrics of excellence for higher education.

Confessions of a Community College Dean
http://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/confessions_of_a_community_college_dean

A veteran of cultural studies seminars in the 1990s moves into academic administration and finds himself a married suburban father of two.

Twitter Streams We Follow Here are some active “Tweeters” we follow:

CUPA-HR President and CEO Andy Brantley ([AndyBrantley](#))
CUPA-HR Chief Learning Officer Ken Tagawa ([kentag](#))
CUPA-HR ([cupahr](#); [cupahr_surveys](#); [cupahr_chapters](#))
Steve Boese ([SteveBoese](#))
The HR Maven ([thehrmaven](#))
Mark Milliron ([markmilliron](#))
Mark Coldren ([mcoldren](#))
Allison Vaillancourt ([VaillancourtA](#))
Gardner Campbell ([GardnerCampbell](#))
Larry Wilson ([LarryHR](#))
American Council on Education ([ACEducation](#))



The Power Struggle in the Senate: The Use of Cloture and Filibuster

By Josh Ulman and Christi Layman

The Senate rules which allow for unlimited debate became famous (or infamous, some might say) with the 1939 film “Mr. Smith Goes to Washington,” starring Jimmy Stewart. In the film, Stewart plays an idealistic freshman senator appointed to fill the seat of a late senator. After taking office, he becomes distraught over the actions of another senator and tries to delay consideration of a bill by occupying the Senate floor with a filibuster for 24 hours before finally collapsing from exhaustion. Although

the movie’s filibuster scene was somewhat “Hollywood-ized,” it really wasn’t *that* far off the mark at the time. Thankfully, unlimited debate is now a thing of the past as new cloture rules have been adopted.

History of Cloture and Filibuster

Filibuster, which means “pirate” in Dutch, has been used in the Senate since the 1850s to attempt to block or delay Senate action on a bill or other matter. Initially,

a filibuster was used in both the House and the Senate due to the belief that there should be unlimited debate in Congress. Over time, as the size of the House of Representatives grew, use of the filibuster was limited to the Senate.

In 1917, after the 64th Congress expired without finishing its work, due in large part to filibusters, President Woodrow Wilson demanded the Senate adopt a cloture rule to allow for a vote on closure of debate. He said

Dramatic epic filibuster speeches are now history, as current Senate rules restrict each senator to one hour of debate.

“the Senate of the United States is the only legislative body in the world which cannot act when its majority is ready for action. A little group of willful men, representing no opinion but their own, have rendered the great government of the United States helpless and contemptible.”

Just four days later, the Senate called a special session of the 65th Congress and adopted a cloture rule (Rule 22) to break a filibuster. Initially the rule required a two-thirds vote to end debate while still allowing each member to speak for an additional hour before a final vote on the measure would take place. Then in 1975, the Senate changed the rule requiring a smaller majority of three-fifths of the Senate to invoke cloture, normally 60 votes, and limiting consideration of a pending matter to just 30 hours of additional debate before a final vote.

While the rules may have changed, the drama surrounding the filibuster remains a persistent part of American politics — as most recently demonstrated by the debate over healthcare reform.

Senator Strom Thurmond set the record for the longest individual filibuster when he spoke for 24 hours and 18 minutes against the Civil Rights Act of 1957. However, Thurmond’s and other dramatic epic filibuster speeches are now history, as current Senate rules restrict each senator to one hour of debate.

Healthcare and the Modern Filibuster

While the rules may have changed, the drama surrounding the filibuster remains a persistent part of American politics, as most recently demonstrated by the debate over healthcare reform. On June 30, 2009, a federal court declared Al Franken the winner of the Minnesota Senate race — providing Democrats with a 60-vote majority in the Senate and the largest majority in Congress since 1978. With Franken’s victory, Democrats

could overcome filibusters without any Republican votes. Many Democrats hoped their large majority would allow them to finally push healthcare reform through Congress.

President Obama ultimately signed healthcare reform, his top legislative priority, into law on March 23, but even with large Democratic majorities, it wasn’t easy. Congress began focusing on healthcare legislation during the summer of 2009. As the debate moved forward, it became clear that Democrats intended to move the reform bill without Republican support. In early November, the House narrowly passed its bill by a vote of 219-215, with only one Republican supporting the bill and close to 40 Democrats voting against it. Several days before Christmas, Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) secured the votes from all 60 Senate Democrats for cloture, and the bill passed on Christmas Eve morning without support from any Republicans.

Many members of Congress and the public, however, objected to the bargains Reid struck to obtain some of the votes, most notably to the deal struck with Senator Ben Nelson (D-NE), which became known as the “Cornhusker Kickback.” Press reports indicated that Nelson had agreed to be the one to cast the 60th vote in exchange for \$100

million in funding for Nebraska Medicaid. Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA) also was criticized for reportedly agreeing to vote for the bill in exchange for similar funding for Louisiana.

The criticism of the deals, as well as polls showing most Americans did not support the healthcare reform proposal, called into question whether Reid would be able to muster the 60 votes needed to pass the bill that would come out of conference. Conferences are used to resolve the differences between House and Senate versions of a bill. Formal conferences involve participation by both parties. Democratic leadership opted for an informal conference instead, and excluded Republicans. Closing Republicans out of the conference made Reid's task all the more difficult, as it increased the negative press about the healthcare proposal.

When Democrats lost a special election for the Senate seat in Massachusetts in January, it was clear Reid would not have the 60 votes he would need for a second vote in the Senate to approve the final bill that would come out of the informal conference with the House. Democrats were forced to try to get around the 60-vote requirement by having the House pass the Senate bill without changing it and then using the budget reconciliation process as a means to make changes to the Senate bill after the president signed it into law.

Scott Brown and a Renewed Need for Bipartisanship

On February 4, Massachusetts Republican State Senator Scott Brown was sworn into office in the U.S. Senate, filling the seat that had been held for the past 47 years by the late Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA). Brown shocked the

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Social Media Emerging as a Crucial Campaign Tool

A recent study by the Emerging Media Research Council examining the use of social media in the Massachusetts 2010 Senate Special Election showed that Republican Scott Brown was able to overcome an early fundraising disadvantage and a lack of name recognition through the use of social media.

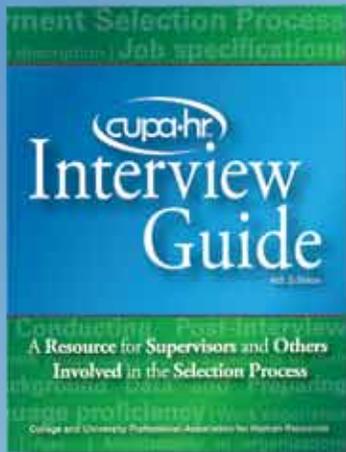
The study showed that Brown received 10.6 times more Facebook fan page interactions and views of uploaded videos on YouTube than his challenger, Democrat Martha Coakley. Brown had five times more Facebook friends and three times the followers on Twitter than Coakley. Through the use of social media, Brown's name recognition increased from 51% of likely voters on November 12 to 95% on January 14. Brown also effectively used his network of friends through social media to publicize a "money bomb" fundraising blitz on January 11 that raised \$1.3 million. The study also explained that Brown's website highlighted social networking channels and featured a Twitter feed, while Coakley's website spotlighted a blog that only received a few comments by supporters. Brown's campaign clearly shows the growing importance of social media as a crucial campaign tool.

Initially, Democrats had the early edge on the use of social media in political campaigns after President Obama used it in unprecedented ways to connect with

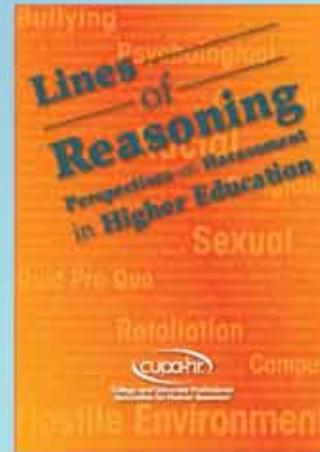
his voters. On Election Day 2008, Obama had four times more Facebook supporters and 20 times more Twitter followers than John McCain. Obama used social media as a primary tool in his campaign, while McCain's campaign seemed to overlook its importance until it was too late. After losing the presidency in the November 2008 election, Republicans have apparently learned the importance of utilizing social media and have become even more effective than Democrats at connecting with voters on certain platforms.

A recent study called "Twongress: The Power of Twitter in Congress" by Mark Senak of international communications firm Fleishman Hillard found that Republicans have aggressively begun to use Twitter to connect with voters and supporters, while their Democratic colleagues have mostly not taken advantage of it. Senak found that Republican House members have sent out 529% more tweets than Democrats. Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) has the most followers of any senator and House Minority Leader John Boehner (R-OH) has the most followers of all his Republican colleagues. Senak also looked at "clout and influence" using a formula measuring the number of followers against the number of tweets and the number of times the member of Congress is retweeted by others and found that Sen. Jim DeMint (R-SC) wins that prize.

Need Resources for Interviewers and Harassment Training Facilitators? CUPA-HR Has Them...



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Interview Guide: A Resource for Supervisors and Others Involved in the Selection Process

The selection process can be a legal minefield. Help participants navigate those legal challenges with CUPA-HR's *Interview Guide*, a revised and reformatted best-seller.

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Overheard in the Forums

Here are some of the queries that recently generated discussion in CUPA-HR's online forums (including the CompSIG listserv):

Administrative expenses associated with the new 403(b) regulations are becoming clearer. Has anyone historically been passing plan expenses to participants? How do you plan to fund the increased plan expenses?

Our university is in the processing of developing a formalized staff promotion policy (to include salary increase recommendations). Do any of you have such a policy in place at this time that you are able/willing to share?

Does anyone have a policy on I-9 requirements for federal work study students maintained in financial aid being "shared" should the student become a wage employee of your university? Is your HR office responsible for the completion of all I-9s?

When employees get stipends funded from external sources, do you give the employee the full amount or do you reduce to some degree to cover the college's benefits cost (i.e. FICA and pension)?

The number of alumni representing various benefit and financial companies asking for access to staff has become a difficult situation to manage. The Advancement Office and HR are working together to develop a policy and guidelines to better respond to requests. Does anyone have a policy they could share?

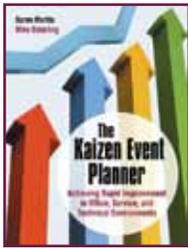
We have not lifted a salary freeze for this fiscal year, and we'd like to know other institutions' practices this year. Did you freeze salaries? If you did freeze salaries, will it be for the entire year? How many months did you freeze salaries if not for the entire year?

We want to change our current terminology of "distance learning." What name does your institution use to describe your distance learning, online learning or online education?

Could you tell me if you conduct background checks on all employees including part-time and full-time faculty? If you do not run background checks on all employees, what positions/departments do you run them on?

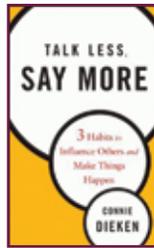
CUPA-HR's forums have several focus areas, including benefits, compensation, employee relations, organizational development, wellness, recruitment, selection and retention, and more. To access the forums, log in to the Knowledge Center at www.cupahr.org/knowledgecenter, click on the "Forums" menu tab, click on "All Forums" and then subscribe to the forums in which you'd like to participate.

Recommended Reading



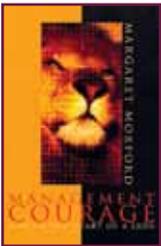
***The Kaizen Event Planner: Achieving Rapid Improvement in Office, Service and Technical Environments* (by Karen Martin and Mike Osterling)**

Geared toward continuous improvement professionals and leadership within the office areas of manufacturing, the service sector and knowledge-worker environments, this book provides the methodology and practical tools for generating measurable results, while building a motivated workforce and laying the foundation for continuous improvement.



***Talk Less, Say More: Three Habits to Influence Others and Make Things Happen* (by Connie Dieken)**

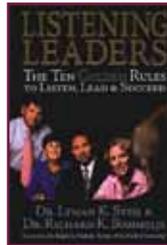
Communication is the single greatest challenge in business today, but it takes just three habits to conquer it. This book will help you achieve more — more time, more positive outcomes, more rewarding relationships, with less — less wordiness, less tune-out, less frustration. *Dieken is a keynote speaker at this year's Southern Region Conference.*



***Management Courage: Having the Heart of a Lion* (by Margaret Morford)**

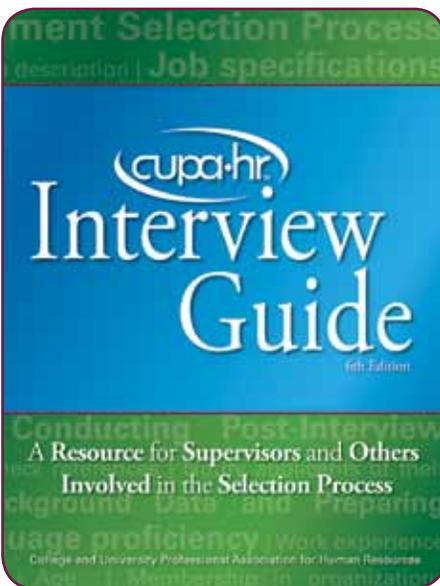
Become the manager you've always dreamed of becoming — the kind organizations dream of hiring and for whom employees dream of working.

Morford was a keynote speaker at this year's Midwest Region Conference.



***Listening Leaders: The Ten Golden Rules to Listen, Lead and Succeed* (by Lyman Steil and Richard Bommelje)**

As leaders listen, individuals, teams, organizations and societies thrive. When you embrace and engage the priceless rules of highly effective listening leaders, you and everyone you lead will profit in extraordinary ways. *Bommelje is a keynote speaker at this year's Southern Region Conference.*



Featured Book

Interview Guide: A Resource for Supervisors and Others Involved in the Selection Process

CUPA-HR has revised and updated its best-selling *Interview Guide for Supervisors*. The 6th edition provides an overview of key employment-related legislation with specific emphasis on the do's and don'ts in order to decrease the likelihood of mistakes that result in adverse legal action against the institution. The new guide also includes pre-employment selection process suggestions and several applications to help managers with various parts of the selection process.

To order the new *Interview Guide*, visit www.cupahr.org/bookwr.



CUPA-HR Featured Events

April 2010

April 29-30: Arkansas Chapter Conference – Bismarck, Arkansas

April 29-30: Illinois Chapter Conference – Chicago, Illinois

May 2010

May 5-7: Eastern Region Conference – Washington, D.C.

May 13-15: Southern Region Conference – Tampa, Florida

June 2010

June 4: Utah Chapter Conference – Salt Lake City, Utah

June 18: Southern California Chapter Conference – TBD

July 2010

July 9-11: Association Leadership Program – Nashville, Tennessee



We're constantly adding to our calendar of events – chapter meetings, region conferences, just-in-time webinars and more. Visit www.cupahr.org/conferences/upcomingevents.asp for a full listing.

Movers and Shakers

Degrees

Hazel Watson, HR information specialist at Duquesne University, received her master's degree in business administration in December from Carlow University.

Moves

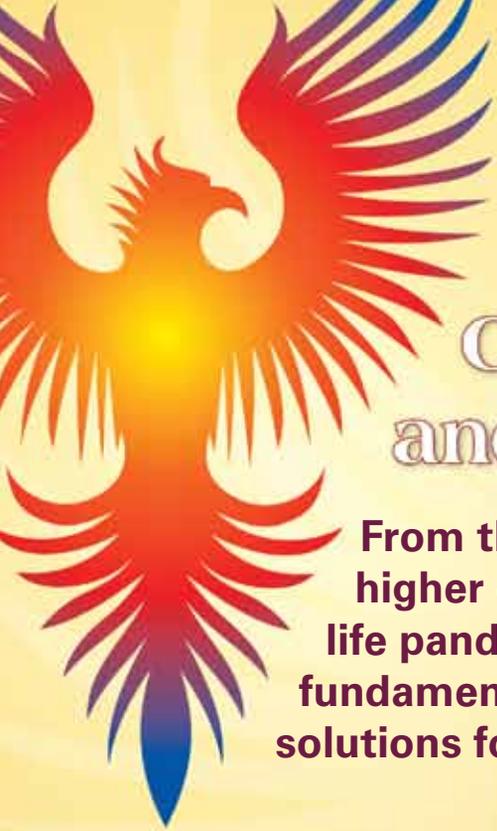
Alan Chesney recently joined Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland, as the director of human resources. Chesney came to Washington College from the University of Tennessee, where he served as executive director of HR.

Recognition

Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Training Delivery Guide was named Best Product 2009 by Training Media Review.

Been promoted? Retiring? Moving to another institution? Received an award?

Send your announcements to communications@cupahr.org.



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Connecting the Masses

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“Aside from videoconferencing, SharePoint is probably the most widely used collaborative tool among employees,” says Davis. The SharePoint content management system enables teams to set up their own internal websites complete with document libraries, wikis, lists (contacts, website links, resources, etc.), shared calendars and more. “SharePoint provides to all team members quick and easy access to all the resources, materials and information for any given project,” says Davis. “Since more often than not team members are scattered around the state, SharePoint is an invaluable tool.”

A Win-Win

Given the complexities of the employee situation at Auburn’s College of Agriculture, ACES and AAES —

that is, faculty, staff and researchers spread out among so many different locations around an entire state, but needing to be in constant contact due to the nature of their work — keeping them all engaged and connected is a difficult task, but one Davis and Adrian and the rest of the IT Office staff embrace. With a few easy, relatively inexpensive enhancements to these three entities’ technological capabilities, the IT Office has certainly done its due diligence in helping encourage collaboration and promote interaction among hundreds of employees who might not otherwise be in contact (not to mention saving Auburn University hundreds of thousands of dollars in the process!). 

Missy Kline is managing editor of The Higher Education Workplace magazine. She can be reached at mkline@cupahr.org.

Drowning in a Sea of Paper

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the solution had to be accelerated to help meet immediate needs; and the solution should result in enhanced efficiencies allowing HR staff to devote more time to value-adding, customer service concerns.

Introduction of Business Process Management and Implementation of BPM Software

After homegrown efforts to create interfaces and reconcile disparate databases met with limited success, our IT group focused its attention on finding a software solution that could be purchased. While this effort was underway, another group was looking at the feasibility of replacing our ERP system. At MUSC, that made sense in that our ERP system was implemented in the mid 1990s and lacked many of the latest technological advances that would assist us in automating processes.

The inherent challenge in replacing the ERP was the cost. A formal request for information was launched and produced responses from the typical ERP providers. What became readily apparent through this process was that the latest, greatest ERP systems would cost a significant amount of money that was not readily available at that time. Additionally, the implementation timeline for a new

ERP ranged from one to two years. That timeline was not especially appealing because HR needed to respond more quickly to the customer service complaints than an ERP replacement would afford. Finally, as the evaluation process unfolded, it was evident that a new system would not eliminate all of the disparate systems that were in place at MUSC. If the shadow systems were not all going away, especially the front-end system being used by the majority of our campus departments, then the interface problems were likely to remain.

Ultimately we were introduced to and ended up purchasing a BPM software application. The application we chose cost only a fraction of what an ERP replacement would have cost us, and the implementation timeline for process improvement was months rather than a year or more. But perhaps the most prevailing reason the BPM application appealed to us was its ability to interface disparate computer systems and to move data easily between those systems.

As part of this data flow, the business rules that govern the processes are imbedded into the application. Thus, conceptually, it does not matter what software solution we deploy — front-end, back-end or peripheral application — these disparate solutions can be plugged into the BPM software with relative IT ease, and our processes

with the associated business rules remain unchanged. Additionally, if and when a business rule needs to be changed or if the process itself needs to be modified, it can be done within the application without requiring a significant amount of reprogramming.

Implementation Successes

As we deployed the BPM software application, strategically it was the goal to target one of the highest volume processes, a calculated risk to be sure. But, if successful, it was my opinion that the success would positively capture the attention of the campus and spur additional process change. Given that strategy, the first project that was chosen was the labor distribution process in the grants and contract accounting area. The existing process was generating an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 forms per month, simple requests were taking between three and four days to complete, and more complicated requests were taking three to four weeks or longer to complete.

A virtual project team was established and included representatives from our campus departments, our central offices, the third party IT developer of the front-end system, an implementation specialist from the BPM software vendor, and members of our in-house IT staff. The team mapped the existing process, identified its strengths and weaknesses, and developed the logic for the new automated process.

After approximately four months of work, the new process was launched. What once took three to four days to complete can now be accomplished in seconds. What used to take three to four weeks can now be accomplished in days. Where we once had an 85 to 90 percent error rate, with edits in place and thresholds that have to be met, the error rate is down to a manageable 2 to 3 percent. Where we used to receive 2,000 to 3,000 forms per month, we now receive less than 1,000.

Perhaps the biggest win for HR and grants and contracts accounting staff is that 65 percent of the forms received no longer require any staff review. The electronics work

such that the request is routed from the front-end system into the BPM software application, first passing an edits threshold. The form is then electronically reviewed against the imbedded business rules. Upon meeting pre-established parameters, the request is routed to the back-end system and the transaction is completed without any staff time required. Staff members who once had to sort through all the forms can now be redeployed to do other, more value-adding activities. Workflow is also in place to route the more complicated requests to appropriate staff members for review when business rules dictate such.

The BPM effort at MUSC has been a significant success. We are now working on our fourth process change and

Where we once had an 85 to 90 percent error rate, [with our new BPM software] the error rate is down to a manageable 2 to 3 percent. Where we used to receive 2,000 to 3,000 forms per month, we now receive less than 1,000.

have experienced similar efficiencies with the implementation of each change. Significant reductions in state appropriations and our focus on dealing with the resulting budget exigencies have delayed our progress during the last two years, but the campus community remains engaged

in the BPM activities and we continue to receive good support from all IT providers and parties involved in this initiative. MUSC may eventually replace its ERP system and eliminate the front-end system, but the successes of the process changes and the capabilities of the software should make BPM viable for years to come.

Fundamentally, BPM and the resident software is enabling HR to generate faster processing times, reduce the amount of paper used, significantly improve efficiencies and bring much needed innovation to its processing functions. Without question, it is a solution that is helping HR add value to our organization, and that makes it well worth the time, effort and investment. 

Stewart Mixon is chief operations officer for Medical University of South Carolina and a past president of CUPA-HR. He can be reached at mixonsa@musc.edu.

The Power Struggle in the Senate

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nation by winning the January 19 special election with 52 percent of the vote and defeating favored Democratic State Attorney General Martha Coakley. Brown became the 41st Republican for the 2nd session of the 111th Congress, ending Democrats' supermajority and their ability to overcome filibusters without the support of at least one Republican senator.

With Brown's election, Democrats now need at least one Republican vote to pass any major legislation. The current political climate (with Democrats holding large majorities in both bodies of Congress) had already placed significant political power in the hands of moderate Democratic senators like Ben Nelson of Nebraska and Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas. Now with the need for at least one Republican senator's support, moderate GOP senators like Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins of Maine and George Voinovich of Ohio will also be central players.

However, Democratic leadership is sure to face challenges in securing support of these moderates. In the last few months, President Obama's approval rating has dropped at times below the 50 percent mark, and the generic congressional ballot has consistently favored Republicans by a few points. As a result, moderate senators from either party may be hard pressed to vote with Democratic leadership in close votes on controversial issues. A perfect example is the February 9 vote on the president's

controversial nomination of union lawyer Craig Becker to the National Labor Relations Board. Democrats were only able to muster 52 votes — eight short of the 60 they needed for cloture, with moderate Democrats Lincoln and Nelson voting against Becker and several others failing to vote. Due to the Senate's inability to approve Becker's nomination, President Obama circumvented the confirmation process by making a recess appointment of Becker on March 27.

The Future of the Senate

With ominous predictions for the Democratic majority in congressional elections this fall, Democrats will have to prove to voters in the coming months that they deserve to keep their majority. If they are able to get Republican support for their ideas on major pieces of legislation and avoid filibusters, they may be able to prove their critics wrong. However, as we learned from "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington," the power of the minority and the filibuster should not be underestimated. There is one thing to be certain of though — no matter which party wins the majority on November 2, the strategic use of cloture and the filibuster to gain control in the Senate will continue for generations to come. 

*Josh Ulman is chief government relations officer for CUPA-HR. He can be reached at josh@ulmanpolicy.com.
Christi Layman is manager of government relations for CUPA-HR. She can be reached at christi@ulmanpolicy.com.*

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