3 Essentials to Creating an Award-Winning Professional Development Program

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Presenters

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Introduction

Fostering Employee Engagement and Retention in Higher Ed

Observations from a white paper by Thomas Tonkin, Ph.D.
Survey Background

- 467 Respondents
- 15 Closed-ended questions
- One opened-ended question

So, what are you doing...?

What programs/incentives does your institution use to improve employee engagement? (Please select all that apply)

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<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Very High - Staff</th>
<th>Very Low - Staff</th>
<th>Very High - Faculty</th>
<th>Very Low - Faculty</th>
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<td>We don't offer engagement incentives.</td>
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<td>Recognition Programs.</td>
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<td>Team building exercises/events.</td>
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<td>Mentoring/coaching.</td>
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<td>Leadership development opportunities.</td>
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<td>Extracurricular activities (clubs, interest-based groups)</td>
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☒  Significance Found
What’s the one thing your institution could do to improve student outcomes through employee engagement?

$ ≠ Everything
Professional Development Is Key To Building Engagement and Retention

There’s more to come...

• A whitepaper is currently available with more comprehensive summary.
• Infographic available in early 2017
• Would you like to learn more? Please reach out to bmasterson@csod.com
3 Essentials to Creating an Award-Winning Professional Development Program (in Brief)

• Get buy-in at every level and prepare the culture for change
• Establish a strong foundation by creating core competencies
• Develop the learning opportunities that reinforce core competencies

Snapshot of SHSU

• Established in 1879, located in Huntsville, TX
• Seven colleges & one satellite campus
• Over 20,000 students from 60 countries
• Undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral degree programs—both traditional and online
Snapshot of SHSU (cont’d)

- 1250+ staff, 900+ faculty (full/part-time)
- Recognized as a “Great College to Work For” from 2010 - 2016
- Vision: “To be the Best at Educating the Next Generation of Professionals”

Professional Development: Can We Afford it?

- Corporate employers consistently invest more
- Does this make sense?
- We’re in the education business
- Shouldn’t we know more about teaching and learning?
- Many experts are our employees
- Create the climate and “they will come”
Audience Poll #1

What constraints are you experiencing at your university in creating a professional development program?

a. Lack of budget
b. Lack of executive support
c. Not enough staff/not the right staff
d. Need to change the culture – never done anything like this before
e. None – we have all we need in the way of resources, support, and/or culture

Our Origins Story

- Human Resources was tasked with creating a Professional Development Program for the staff/managers “from the ground up.”
- Challenges:
  - Culture change
  - Small budget
  - Small staff (two team members)
  - Short timeline (1 year)
Staff Professional Development Program

• Created to support one of SHSU’s Strategic Plan goals:
  • To foster “a lifelong learning environment in support of a diverse faculty and staff who are excellent scholars, educators, and professionals” [emphasis added]
  • Aimed at employee retention, maximizing employee potential, and enhancing effective leadership

Staff Professional Development Program (cont’d)

• Recognizes diverse learning styles and needs of our staff employees
• Helps grow the workforce for the future
• Helps close the gaps between where we are and where we want to be
Indicators of Success

• Received the *Texas Higher Education Human Resources Association (THEHRA)* Innovation Award for 2014

• Received national recognition in both 2014 and 2015 from *Chronical of Higher Education* “Great Colleges to Work For” (Career/Professional Development Programs category)

Indicators of Success (cont’d)

• Featured in the College and University Professional Association-HR (CUPA-HR) *Higher Education Workplace* magazine fall 2015 issue

• Annually, employee satisfaction rating is averaging 99% overall for our Learning Academies’ ILT sessions
The 3 Essentials (in Depth)

Get Buy in at Every Level

Key Takeaway:
Prepare the culture for change
Getting Buy In

Briefed senior executives to get buy-in

Focus Groups created champions in key departments

• Tip: be sure to use the inputs from your focus groups or this can be a double-edged sword
Getting Buy In

• Marketing: Created branding for Learning Academies
  • Branding used for all advertising/promo/swag
  • Branding used for introductory slide in each class

Getting Buy In (cont’d)

Marketing, marketing, marketing!
• Used multiple approaches to generate excitement
• Voluntary town hall meetings attended by 400+ employees
• Mass e-mails
• Today@Sam (online news) articles
• HR website
• Brochures and flyers
• Pres. Hoyt video
Establish a Strong Foundation

Key Takeaway:
Create Core Competencies and Accountability

Establish a Strong Foundation (cont’d)

• Approved by the university’s administration
• As of Jan 2014 – Implemented minimum requirements policy for professional development
  • Eight hour minimum for staff
  • Twelve hour minimum for managers
• Performance factor on employee appraisals
• Reinforced importance of professional development for staff employees
Establish a Strong Foundation (cont’d)

Required hours can be met a variety of ways

- Internal: SHSU instructor-led training, departmental trainings, online classes, compliance training
- External: Education, conferences, seminars

Establish a Strong Foundation (cont’d)

- During summer 2013, HR invited managers and staff from every division to attend various focus group meetings
- Invitees represented every division at SHSU
  - Small (6-8 members) meetings scheduled over two weeks
Establish a Strong Foundation (cont’d)

• Activities:
  • Brainstormed staff training needs
  • Discussed barriers to success
  • We had 300+ suggestions from the focus group members to act on

Establish a Strong Foundation (cont’d)

• Members invited, not commanded, to attend
• Conducted an “affinity exercise” to categorize 300+ responses from focus groups
• Benchmarked best practices of Baylor University and the United Nations
Establish a Strong Foundation (cont’d): Affinity Process

We turned THIS:

Into THIS:

Sample: Manager Skills Affinity Process
Establish a Strong Foundation (cont’d)

Output: Core Competencies for SHSU

**SHSU Definition:**
“The interpersonal skills, knowledge, and attributes that distinguish and define excellent performers.”

- Ensured competencies addressed specific areas identified by the focus groups
  - These areas were prioritized in our program
  - Communicated the core competencies at every event we hosted
Establish a Strong Foundation (cont’d)

Core Competencies:
• SHSU’s staff is...
  • Committed to SHSU’s Vision & Mission
  • Innovative in thinking
  • Effective in communications
  • Accountable for ourselves and to others
  • Dedicated to life-long learning
  • Efficient in operations

Establish a Strong Foundation (cont’d)

Core Competencies:
• In addition, our managers...
  • Support the strategic plan
  • Provide leadership
  • Empower others
  • Comply legally and ethically
  • Manage performance
  • Build trust
Core Competencies Matrix

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<tr>
<th>GAPS</th>
<th>Developing Leadership Skills</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Core Competencies-Manager</td>
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<td>Support the Strategic Plan</td>
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Develop the Learning Opportunities

Key Takeaway:
Reinforce the Core Competencies
Develop the Learning Opportunities: Learning Academies@SHSU

• Curriculum needed to enhance Core Competencies

• Created Learning Academies
  • Management Academy (2014/15)
  • Training University (2014/15)
  • “So You Want to Be a Manager” track (2015)
  • “Leading the Sam Way” (2016)
  • “Come for Coffee” (2016)

Develop the Learning Opportunities: Learning Academies@SHSU (cont’d)

• Curriculum includes both instructor led training (ILT) and online classes
  • Vendor e-library
  • Online professional development books
Develop the Learning Opportunities:
Learning Academies@SHSU (cont’d)

• Management Academy –
  • Designed for SHSU managers who supervise staff employees; taught primarily by SHSU leaders/SMEs
  • “So You Want to Be a Manager” track added in 2015
  • Each course at least 2 hours long

• Training University – ILT classes taught by subject matter experts
  • Designed for staff employees; managers wishing to enhance skill sets may also attend
  • Some classes taught by Employee Assistance Program representatives
  • Each course 1.25 hours long
Develop the Learning Opportunities: Learning Academies@SHSU (cont’d)

• Budget Savers
  • Enlisted subject matter experts (SMEs) to teach classes
    • University’s professors
    • Staff subject matter experts
    • State agency employees (Ex: Texas Workforce Commission Civil Rights Division)
    • Agency-contracted Employee Assistance Program (EAP) instructors
  • Only 1 outside vendor service purchased
  • Budget for small speaker gifts (university mug, for example)

Develop the Learning Opportunities: LMS

Courses centralized into a Learning Management System (LMS)

• Training from outside HR (procurement, payroll, IT, departmental, etc.)
• Online compliance training
• Transcripts, certificates of completion, manage subordinates’ training
• Instructors manage rosters, create/copy sessions for registration
Develop the Learning Opportunities: LMS (cont’d)

- Users can add external training to transcript
- Each class, online or ILT, tied to a core competency
- Addition of a performance appraisal module supports creation of career paths based on core competencies

Develop the Learning Opportunities: E-Learning Library

- HR acquired an e-Learning Library for online training
- Supplements and expands on ILT training
  - 3000+ courses available through the LMS
  - Provides hundreds of hours of just-in-time training to fit users’ schedules
Audience Poll #2

Where will you start?

a. Get buy-in from senior leadership
b. Implement policy to require yearly professional development
c. Add professional development to employee performance appraisals
d. Conduct a needs analysis/training gap analysis to focus efforts
e. Create core competencies and tie them to curricula

The Program Up to Now

As of Jan 2014:

• 2150 individual attendees have completed one or more courses in the Learning Academies
  • Average 99% of participants satisfied
  • 99% more than satisfied
  • 12 graduates of full Management Academy
The Program Up to Now (cont’d)

• Online e-library
  • 824 unique users completed a total of 4056 courses

Going Forward

Year 4
  • Come for Coffee series (Expert Q & A)
  • Professional Skills Certificate
  • New Managers’ Boot Camp
What We Have Learned

Develop ground rules:
• Limited staff and a small budget -- think creatively regarding how to manage the program.
• Supervisors schedule the workload with understanding that professional development is a requirement for all staff employees.
• Allow external training to be added by the employee.

What We Have Learned (cont’d)

• Contract for the best support service you can afford for your LMS
• Get senior executive support
• Market, market, market!
• Be prepared for the workload
More Information

Further info on SHSU HR Professional Development and Training Website
  - http://www.shsu.edu/dept/human-resources/training/index.html
  - Learning Academies Brochure
  - Town Hall Charts
  - Training University Flyer
  - Management Academy Flyer
  - FAQ sheet
  - Tutorials

Q & A time!
Q & A

Don’t forget to submit your questions to our presenters.

How? Click on the Q & A tab at the top of the presentation and select Ask New Question.

Thank you for joining us today!
Thank You!

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