

PROGRESS REPORT

Chancellor's Committee on Campus Morale

FOR CHANCELLOR FRANCE CÓRDOVA

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Attachments

Recommendations Generated from Staff Morale Survey
Results and Solicited Campus Comment

<http://morale.ucr.edu/pdf/recommendations.pdf>

Morale Leadership Model (v.05/20/02)

http://morale.ucr.edu/pdf/morale_model.pdf

Timeline – CCCM Target Completion Periods

<http://morale.ucr.edu/>

CHANCELLOR'S COMMITTEE ON CAMPUS MORALE

History

The Chancellor's Committee on Campus Morale (CCCM) was conceived and approved by Chancellor Orbach at a meeting of the Chancellor and Staff Assembly (SA) in Fall, 1999. The CCCM was formed in order to explore and report on the factors affecting employee morale at UCR. The focus of the CCCM is on universal issues affecting all campus employees.

Mission

Identify and recommend positive actions in the pursuit of excellent employee morale.

Survey and Recommendations

In order to explore the factors affecting employee morale, the CCCM developed and distributed a survey to staff on campus. Survey questions were selected by the Committee based upon review of similar surveys completed at other colleges and universities. Human Resources personnel and unions were provided an opportunity to review and comment on the survey questions list.

In an effort to ensure the objectivity of the survey results, the Committee contracted with The Resource Group (TRG), an independent survey company. TRG evaluated the draft survey, recommended survey methodology, and performed statistical analysis of the returned survey forms.

Survey results were immediately presented to Chancellor Orbach. Based upon the survey results, a list of recommendations was developed and presented first to Chancellor Orbach and then to employees via a Staff Assembly general meeting and Scotmail. Additional staff input was also requested at this time. As a result of this request, a single issue regarding campus parking was added to the list of recommendations.

A list of the CCCM recommendations can be found in Attachment 1. This list has not changed significantly since the original presentation, but our desired approach has evolved. This is explained below.

PROGRESS TO DATE

Communication

Computer Workstations: Associate Vice Chancellor of Computing and Communications Charles Rowley offered immediate support for improving electronic communication for staff and has been a significant force in identifying a funding source, providing achievable options, and purchasing the necessary equipment for a pilot workstation. Locations for additional workstations have been identified. Others assisting with this effort include Assistant Vice Chancellor for Marketing and Strategic Communications Kathleen Peach, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Human Resources Barbara Cooper, Senior Human Resources Analyst Sue Anderson, Administrative Budget Officer Cheryl Sautter, Director of Computing Support Services Larry McGrath, and Office Manager Bonnie Mediano along with members of the CCCM.

Director of Housing Andy Plumley has enthusiastically supported the efforts for improved communication by volunteering his unit as a pilot location for the first workstation. Sue Anderson, with input from Plumley and McGrath, has completed a bilingual needs assessment survey for Housing staff; distribution of the survey is expected within 2 weeks. Anderson will

utilize the results from this survey to develop a Housing training program for persons with limited computer skills.

Information Sharing: Chief of Staff Diane Martin has facilitated an increased distribution of information regarding critical campus issues to campus personnel (e.g., budget). Campus response to the increase in communication has been overwhelmingly positive. Effective correspondence is especially critical during these challenging times. It is now possible, via Service Enterprises, to obtain and mail to a list of those without email accounts. Service Enterprises Manager Dallas Johnson was instrumental in providing this service.

Morale Web Site: In an effort to update the campus on Committee activities on their behalf, the CCCM Web site was developed. Initially, Executive Director of Marketing and Media Relations Jack Chappell, and then AVC Kathleen Peach have contributed to maintaining this Web site. The site is located at: <http://www.morale.ucr.edu/>.

Staffing Level Determinations

To the best of the Committee's knowledge, no analyses or metrics exist at OP or on any other campuses for evaluating appropriate staffing levels. However the UCR EVC is working to conduct such an analysis and to establish a metric for the campus. We strongly support this analysis. The Committee believes that we must extend our limited understanding of staffing levels, not only because of staff concern about overload, but because we must better understand organizational objectives and how well they are being met. This sort of analysis should include comparative statistics for large units, both on this and other campuses, and should also include studies of individual departments to place staffing levels in the needed context of departmental aims, objectives, resources, and performance.

Mediation

The morale survey as well as numerous comments received by the CCCM from staff indicates a mediation program is widely desired and supported by staff. Approximately 73% of staff believe an impartial conflict mediation program should be available to employees. Less than 4% disagreed. The CCCM strongly supports filling this critical need and believes that in order to be successful, all parties with a vested interest in mediation must be invited to actively participate in the development of a mediation program (e.g., Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, Student Conduct Coordinator, Ombudsman, Academic Senate, Staff Assembly, Human Resources, etc.).

PROGRESS AT OTHER CAMPUSES

Staff morale is an issue at most UC locations. Several UC locations have conducted morale surveys. UC San Diego and UC San Francisco both presented the results of their surveys at recent Council of UC Staff Assemblies (CUCSA) meetings. Results of a Los Alamos National Laboratory survey were presented at a Regents meeting. Notably, many of the critical issues are common to all of the locations. While UC employees are proud of UC and their contribution to UC, they are often frustrated by what they perceive as poor communication from their supervisors and campus administrators.

What may ultimately be the most important factor in the success of morale improvement programs is the involvement of the highest levels of administration. This is being done at UCSD, UCSF and LANL. All have top-level administrators championing their morale improvement efforts (e.g., Assistant Chancellor, Vice Chancellors, etc.). The CCCM is

interested in extending this approach to all of the recommendations. UCR has already had measurable success with this approach in its efforts to improve campus communication.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRESS

Emphasize Performance Management

Despite its obvious value to the work process and to employee morale, many employees do not have current job descriptions, and do not receive feedback on their performance. The Committee proposes that efforts be made to assure that employees at all levels have current, accurate job descriptions; that they discuss with their supervisors and have in writing realistic goals and performance standards, and that they receive and discuss feedback on their job performance on an informal and ongoing basis and in addition to the formal annual review as required by UC and campus policy. We recommend that performance appraisals include development plans to sustain or improve employee performance.

These basic actions are known in the field of training and development as “performance management” and are widely trained throughout business and government. Training in performance management is also available at UCR through Human Resources. We recommend that UCR’s leadership emphasize the elements of performance management, and that all Deans and Vice Chancellors make sure that the process is followed within their units. Supervisors who need training should be encouraged to take advantage of the services offered by Human Resources, and Human Resources should continue to reexamine its offerings to better meet the new campus emphasis.

Regular Assessments of Campus Morale

The CCCM recommends that campus morale be assessed on a regular basis. These assessments are a basic step in understanding the general condition of employees and allow administrators at various levels to make better-informed decisions regarding the management of the campus. Faculty should be included in these assessments. We believe that regular assessments of campus morale (also being planned at some other UC campuses) represent a managerial “best practice.”

These assessments may take several forms, but we suggest that a written survey be conducted every two years, with focus groups in the intervening years. Since we are still in the formative stages of this process, we suggest that focus groups be conducted in Spring of 2003, followed by a survey. (In spring it will have been two years since the prior assessment.)

Improving the Culture

The changes the Committee recommends fall under the more encompassing goal of changing the organizational culture. By this we mean a change in characteristic patterns of interaction between supervisors and supervisees and in the overall tone of relationship between administration and staff. The culture at UCR is complex and not easily described, but there are two features that we believe are particularly relevant to morale. The first is an individualism that tends to see important work as coming only from individual effort and so tends, often unintentionally, to devalue teamwork. The second is the belief that the university is so unique as an organization that it can learn little from outside its walls. This belief may account for a certain disregard for current management theory and practice that tends to permeate administrative offices.

What our survey showed is that staff perceive a large distance between themselves and administrative leadership at UCR. (We suspect it is not all that different among faculty, but we

will rely on future surveys to address that issue.) We believe that this perceived distance is related to aspects of the culture that place a low value on teamwork, communication, and employee-involvement; all of which are harmful to morale. The culture as it exists allows a fair amount of both traditional “command and control” as well as “laissez-faire” styles, both of which easily foster a sense of distance between management and staff and management and faculty, along with the sense that “they don’t care.” We suggest that top leadership actively engage the issue of management style, and that they discuss what kind of management culture they have at present and what kind they want.

We are not saying that UCR should try to import a corporate management culture—our governance and mission are obviously different. We do suggest that, like many of the best corporations, UCR pay close attention to what kind of management culture it wants and how it either supports or undermines its vision. Increased attention from leadership in the form of discussion and committed action will lead to constantly improving management practices throughout the campus; these practices will be based on improved communication and participation among all employees. We trust that this ongoing culture change will decrease the sense of distance between administration and staff, and administration and faculty, solve many morale problems, and significantly increase our ability to fulfill our mission.

Endorsement

The Chancellor’s Committee on Campus Morale reaffirms its dedication to UCR, its mission, and its employees. We believe the Committee can best serve the campus community through continuous evaluation of campus morale. We request the Chancellor’s endorsement and support.