

Project Details

Title Succession Planning: A Model for a Sustainable Future

Status COMPLETED

Category 5-Leading and Communicating

Updated 09-26-2013

Timeline

Reviewed 10-04-2013

Planned Project Kickoff

Created 12-14-2010

12-13-2010

Actual Completion

Last Modified 12-03-2013

12-03-2013

- 1:

Describe this Action Project's goal in 100 words or fewer:

- A:

The primary goal is to create the models, documents, and processes for smooth transitioning into new and vacated positions. The project will address planned transitions and emergencies, internal and external promotions, training for new positions, and funding.

- 2:

Describe briefly your institution's reasons for taking on this Action Project now -- why the project and its goals are high among your current priorities:

- A:

In the past three years, JJC has faced unprecedented growth and a high rate of turnover among faculty and administrators in particular due to retirements, planned departures for other positions, and unexpected emergencies. The growth in enrollment has led to new positions throughout the college as well. No succession plan exists to address these changes in a systematic way. The issue has also been raised as an Opportunity for Improvement in the Feedback Reports for the JJC Systems Portfolio, submitted in 2004 and 2008. The United States Workforce demographics identify a critical need for organizations to develop and monitor ongoing succession planning processes.

- 3:

List the organizational areas -- institutional departments, programs, divisions, or units -- most affected by or involved in this Action Project:

- A:

Human Resources
Senior Leadership Team
Administrative Council
Department Chairs
Board of Trustees

- 4:

Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve:

- A:

Hiring and Training of All Employees
Determining emergency replacements and interim positions
Promoting from within JJC
Mentoring
Supporting continuing education
Supporting and providing professional development
Budgeting
Recommending new or amending existing Board Policy

- 5:

Explain the rationale for the length of time planned for this Action Project (from kickoff to target completion):

- A:

Three years are needed in order to complete this extensive project, as follows:

YEAR 1 GOALS:

- Form Committee and Subcommittees for Project
- Identify Key Areas to Address
- Assign Task Forces
- Conduct Monthly Meetings and Maintain Angel Website
- Conduct and Share Research—Best Practices, Data, and Leadership Competencies
- Draft JJC Succession Plan Policy

YEAR 2 GOALS:

- Continue to Conduct Monthly Meetings and Maintain Angel Website
- Complete JJC Succession Plan Policy
- Determine Best Practices for Succession Planning and Begin Design for JJC
- Identify Funding Sources
- Clarify All Processes for Determining Needs, Creating and Reviewing Position Descriptions, Documenting a Professional Development Plan
- Create a Template for Handbooks, Organizational Charts, Report Forms, Exit Interviews with Departing Employees, and other Planning Documents

YEAR 3 GOALS:

- Continue to Conduct Monthly Meetings and Maintain Angel Website
- Complete and Implement all Relevant Documents for the Process

- 6:

Describe how you plan to monitor how successfully your efforts on this Action Project are progressing:

- A:

The yearly goals stated above indicate the types of documentation to be prepared and implemented to monitor success. Overall, success will be monitored through the following:

1. Planned monthly meetings with agendas, subcommittee reports, and minutes.
2. Electronic Angel Website for posting all working documents, including agendas, minutes, articles, plans, and data.
3. Completion of the JJC Succession Planning Policy, organizational charts, gap analyses, planning documents, and procedures.

- 7:

Describe the overall "outcome" measures or indicators that will tell you whether this Action Project has been a success or failure in achieving its goals:

- A:

The final outcome should be a set of documents identifying all policies and procedures for succession planning. Dissemination throughout the college, training in the processes for implementing and updating, and active use of the documents and processes will be the key indicators.

- **Project Accomplishments and Status**

- A:

In order to move forward with a comprehensive plan there were foundational processes that were reviewed, updated and/or improved. The Human Resources Department made significant progress in key areas to support the committee's long-term planning and goals.

In order to plan for employee development and succession the Human Resources Department embarked on several initiatives.

- **Compensation Study:** *a thorough review of positions and pay equity campus wide.*
- **Position Description Review:** *a transparent process that allowed all employees to conduct an audit of position descriptions and ensure they accurately reflect the work being done. The method by which this was done allowed all employees to plan an active role in updating this critical information.*
- **HR Webpage and Portal Redesign:** *an intentional effort to provide clear information to employees as the website and JJC Portal provides a mechanism to enhance transparent communication. All of the reviewed position descriptions are located on the Portal. This allows all employees access to review positions.*

- **Age & Gap Analysis:** *this is a significant part of succession planning. The institution reviewed the age and potential gaps that will occur as a result of employee attrition. This was critical information in order to continue moving forward and assessing succession needs/plans.*
- **Emergency Succession Plan:** *the emergency succession plan was created to serve as a guide should the institution loose critical members of senior leadership.*
- **Performance Appraisal Pilot:** *_supporting the research and evaluating the needs of a future leadership program to support succession Human Resources conducted a pilot to assess the utility of the new performance appraisal system. This new system and process will help campus leaders better assess and articulate the training needs of employees that will support success planning. This will serve as the vehicle to provide feedback to employees about opportunities to advance within the community college system.*

Leadership Program: *a significant accomplishment for the year is the continued refining and development of the new leadership program for JJC employees. Set us a cohort model the leadership program will offer employees "module" courses leading to a certificate. Individuals seeking advancement can complete the modules and use the certificate for advancement when positions become available. The certificate provides a credential that speaks to the employee's commitment to the institution and desire to advance.*

• R:

This action project has many commendable goals around personnel at the college. They address all the processes around hiring and promoting both faculty and staff. These goals exemplify HLC Category 4 Valuing People. Many valuable initiatives have taken place since this project began; most done to understand where the college is now in the marketplace, and where it will need to be to compete for talent in the future. It is understandable that this project will be ongoing for the foreseeable future. This project lies at the heart of the administrative function of the school, and has the potential to make a major change to the school's identity. It has been active for 33 months as of this writing, and while many initiatives have been undertaken, it's unclear how many more are needed before participants will consider the project complete. The original completion date is December of 2013.

• 2:

Institution Involvement

• A:

This project is led by and supported by Human Resources. In the development stages of an institutional succession plan it is necessary to have support from senior leadership and the Board of Trustees. This initiative has that support. The motivation is evident by the efforts of Human Resources to evaluate and improve processes that inform the campus community of their desire to support employees. All of the efforts listed above illustrate the intent to support and advance employees.

The committee continues to be made up of a diverse cross-section of employees that provide updates within their functional units. As an institution that has undergone significant changes in senior leaders this project continues to focus on the employees and that provides mode for communication.

- R:

The leadership of this action project is logically with the Human Resources department. The committee working on this is made up of a diverse cross-section of employees that provide updates to their respective units. What is not clear is how this cross-section of employees was determined, and what other formal communication channels exist that provide information about this action plan to the college community as a whole. While diverse representation on the committee is desirable, and typically makes for richer discussions and higher quality decisions, rarely is a committee's membership sufficient for communicating at the institutional level. Attention to this area would strengthen Joliet Junior College's activities in the AQIP Category 5 Leading and Communicating.

- 3:

Next Steps

- A:

This is an exciting time for this project as the Executive Director of Human Resources advocated for the project and received budgetary support to continue moving the leadership program forward. The goal is to launch the first cohort of the leadership program in January 2014. This will allow the team to assess its successes and address any issues before the fall 2014 cohort is launched.

- R:

The leadership program is an innovation that could help quickly identify several current employees who are interested in moving into different roles within the college. While this program could not replace a robust hiring process, it does provide a common basis of understanding for those who participate.

- 4:

Resulting Effective Practices

- A:

The work that has been completed has tremendous value and is replicable at other institutions. As mentioned in question #1, an institution has to evaluate their own processes and determine what they are willing to do to support employee advancement. Succession Planning can be philosophical; and, for some institutions worth the investment to retain talent by supporting their advancement.

- R:

This first leadership cohort is expected to begin in January of 2014. If successful, it could serve as an 'effective practice' that may be of interest to other institutions by sharing how various aspects of the project developed. It may be worthwhile to consider how participants may safely share both positive and negative experiences in, and around, the leadership program.

- 5:

Project Challenges

- A:

Funding

One of the significant hurdles to launching the leadership program has been overcome. The funding for this initiative was critical.

Continued Support from Senior Leadership

As JJC has new senior leadership coming in it will be necessary to help them see the full potential and vision for the Succession Planning project.

- R:

New administrators joining Joliet Junior College will have a unique perspective, having moved through the Human Resources process so recently themselves. It may be useful to share the current vision of succession planning, as well as learn from them and their experience in joining the JJC community.

OUTCOMES

1. What is the primary reason for closing for project?

The AQIP team was assembled to start considering the possibility of succession planning. This was not a "typical" practice within higher education. A considerable amount of energy went into understanding the research and reviewing the literature regarding the opportunity to provide succession planning for community college employees.

The project is ready to be closed as an official AQIP Action Project because the team has operationalized the vision. The College has an understanding of what we have as an institution in terms of processes and policies and is now able to move forward with an implementation.

2. What aspects of this project would you categorize as successful?

There are a number of successes that have occurred as a result of launching this project. In addition to the following list it is necessary to mention the continued support and dedication to make this action project work. It required courageous

conversations during a period of economic uncertainty and an unrelenting commitment to the employees collaboration from all departments. The following items are a few of the major success.

- a) Compensation Study: *a thorough review of positions and pay equity campus wide.*
- b) Position Description Review: *a transparent process that allowed all employees to conduct an audit of position descriptions and ensure they accurately reflect the job duties and functions. The method by which this was done allowed all employees to plan an active role in updating this critical information. During the employees annual performance employees are now required to answer on the performance form whether any changes in their job duties.*
- c) HR Webpage and Portal Redesign: *an intentional effort to provide clear information to employees as the website and JJC Portal provides a mechanism to enhance transparent communication. All of the reviewed position descriptions are located on the Portal. This allows all employees access to review positions.*
- d) Age & Gap Analysis: *this is a significant part of succession planning. The institution reviewed the age and potential gaps that will occur as a result of employee attrition. This was critical information in order to continue moving forward and assessing succession needs/plans.*
- e) Emergency Succession Plan: *the emergency succession plan was created to serve as a guide should the institution lose critical members of senior leadership and Dean's level.*
- f) Performance Appraisal Pilot: *supporting the research and evaluating the needs of a future leadership program to support succession, Human Resources conducted a pilot to assess the utility of the new on line performance appraisal system. This new system and process will help campus leaders better assess and articulate the training needs of employees that will support success planning. This will serve as the vehicle to provide feedback to employees about opportunities to advance within the community college system. All aspects of the performance appraisal.*
- g) Leadership Program: *a significant accomplishment for the year is the continued refining and development of the new leadership program for JJC employees. The Cohort model leadership program will offer employees "module" courses leading to a certificate. Individuals seeking advancement can complete the modules and use the certificate for advancement when positions become available. The certificate provides a credential that speaks to the employee's commitment to the institution and desire to advance.*
- h) Allocated Budget Dollars: *dedicated dollars has been allocated for the training of new managers.*
- i) Policy: *successful board approval of a succession plan policy and procedures.*

3. What aspects of this project would you categorize as less than successful?

Our timeline needed to be adjusted as the work on the foundational items was critical. This is not necessarily being unsuccessful in the completion of the project. It simply delayed the launch of the leadership program. However, with foundational items in place the team can continue to move forward and see this project through.