

*Student
Financial
Assistance*



Financial Partners Channel

Employee Development Plan



Statement of Purpose

This document was prepared by the Employee Development team for the Financial Partners Channel of Student Financial Assistance (SFA). It represents the results of the Analysis and Design phase of the Employee Development initiative.

During the Analysis and Design phase, the Employee Development team focused on:

- Assessing the current state of Financial Partners
- Implementing quick win programs
- Identifying areas for future improvements

Financial Partners employees were engaged in all Employee Development activities, including the Organizational Assessment, Visioning activities, the Change Agent network, and communications.

The next phase, Implementation and Delivery, will focus on implementing improvement programs that allow Financial Partners to make strides towards achieving its vision.



Overview

Vision and Mission

Organizational Assessment

Change Agent Program

Communication Strategy

Employee Development Best Practices

Action Plan

Appendix



Overview - Context for Change

Within the context of SFA's evolution into a Performance Based Organization (PBO), the Financial Partners Channel is continuously facing challenges and opportunities.

Shifts in organizational strategy, leadership, and structure are each major transitions for a workforce to achieve. As the organization continues to evolve, it is important to ensure the employees are equipped to adapt to the changing environment. The timeline below illustrates several of the major changes that have occurred within the FP Channel over the last two years.





Overview - Initiatives

The goal of the Employee Development initiative is to support the workforce through the Transformation. This is done by identifying improvements relevant to FP staff. Activities conducted during the Analysis & Design phase include:

- Defining Where We're Going
 - **Visioning** - Members of the Financial Partners leadership team engaged in a series of strategic planning activities to define the future course of the FP Channel. Key values that emerged were a strong commitment to improving partner satisfaction while maintaining fiduciary responsibility. During the Implementation phase, the Vision will be rolled out to all Financial Partners for refinement and feedback.
- Asking Employees What They Think
 - **Organizational Assessment** - 70% of the FP Channel completed the Organizational Assessment to identify what is working well within FP and where improvements could be made. Feedback was anonymous and confidential. Results from the Assessment will be used to determine improvement programs for the FP Channel.
- Establishing an Information Base
 - **Change Agent Program** - The Change Agent Program was designed to involve key stakeholders in the Transformation. During the launch of the program, FP HQ and Regional Office Directors were selected to serve as Change Agents. This group will be expanded during the Implementation phase.



Overview - Initiatives

- Giving People the Information They Need
 - **Internal and External Communications** - Due to the immediate need to communicate in the Analysis and Design phase, mechanisms were established for communicating with internal and external audiences to keep everyone informed about the Transformation.
- Putting Best Practices to Use
 - **Employee Development Best Practices** - This will include a draft of the SFA Skill Model highlighting functional, managerial, and professional development areas often found in organizations with visions centered around customer service.
- Determine Next Steps
 - **Action Plan** - The Action Plan is based on feedback from the Organizational Assessment. It provides recommendations for how to improve areas which were rated as needing the most improvement by employees in the Organizational Assessment (i.e. Teamwork & Empowerment and Leadership). In the Implementation phase, teams will focus on designing and implementing programs to address these areas.



Overview - Transformation Process

There are three steps to the transformation process: Stage, Launch and Sustain. The transformation activities identified within each of these steps served to set the stage, involve leadership and employees in the change process, and ensure continued momentum.

2000 February March April May June July August September Fiscal Year 2001





Overview

Vision and Mission

Organizational Assessment

Change Agent Program

Communication Strategy

Employee Development Best Practices

Action Plan

Appendix



Vision and Mission - Visioning Best Practices

The process of determining the Vision and Mission of an organization can be complicated. The FP Channel leveraged best practices in following the exercises outlined below to determine their strategy.

Strategic Intent



Defining a strategic intent encourages organizations to select a primary area of focus instead of being “all things to all people”. Organizations choose a primary “value proposition” (Operational Excellence, Partner Understanding, or Product Leadership) and maintain industry standards in the others.

Vision and Mission Statements



Vision and Mission statements provide purpose, unity and direction for the organization. Successful Vision and Mission statements are developed with key stakeholders, and are well communicated.

Action Planning



With the major components of the organizational strategy defined, organizational departments or work-teams engage in action planning to determine steps they will take to achieve the Vision. These plans are tracked and revisited periodically.

Performance Indicators



In order to measure the progress of the transformation, organizations determine Performance Indicators, or metrics, that will allow them to ensure growth is on-track and to overcome obstacles.



Vision and Mission - Strategic Intent

Organizations select one of the value propositions below as their primary area of focus. Partner Understanding was chosen as the strategic intent for the FP Channel. The leadership team also stressed the need for Operational Excellence in the FP Channel.

Operational Excellence

- Value discipline = best total cost
- Operational goals = minimize costs, standardize, simplify, centralize, reliability
- Products = limited product variety and customer segmentation
- Culture = zero defects, efficiency
- Structure implications = team focus, end-to-end focus, strong audit function, unit focussing on standards
- People = tight management; people are dependable, trainable & team players
- Measures = process metrics



Strategic Intent

Partner Understanding

- Value discipline = best solution
- Service goals = customer relationships, partnering, experts at customer's business
- Culture = client oriented, service culture
- Structure implications = account team focus, decentralized
- People = responsive, consultative, effective communicators
- Measures = profitability, customer satisfaction

Product Leadership

- Value discipline = best product
- Innovation goals = product leadership, cultivate market demand
- Culture = invention and development, entrepreneurial, high performance teams
- Structure implications = Fluid organization, team focus
- People = creative, proactive, eccentric
- Measures = product introductions, time to market metrics



Vision and Mission - Statements

The FP Leadership Team worked to crystallize their strategic thinking into these distinct statements. These statements are in DRAFT form, since they have not been shared with the rest of the organization for review.

In order for a Vision to be accepted and embraced by the organization, its employees must be engaged in the process of developing it. Visioning activities were halted within Financial Partners for Union approval. The next step in Visioning will be to conduct focus groups to gather employee feedback, insight, and suggestions on the Vision and Mission.

Financial Partners Mission

Our Mission is to help put America through school by leveraging the power of the financial markets through public/private partnerships to ensure access, maintain integrity, and promote best-in-business practices.

Financial Partners Vision

We seek to develop strategic alliances by listening to and understanding our partners and simplifying processes. We will be known for fairness, knowledge, effectiveness, and integrity and driven by the success of our partners.



Overview

Vision and Mission

Organizational Assessment

Change Agent Program

Communication Strategy

Employee Development Best Practices

Action Plan

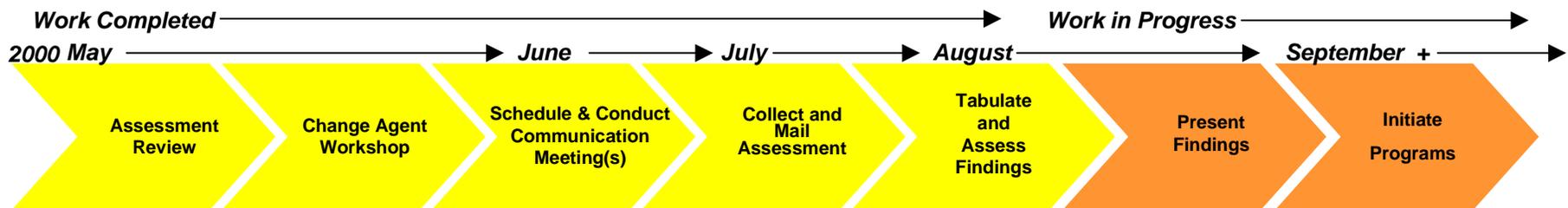
Appendix



Organizational Assessment - Overview

The purpose of the Organizational Assessment was to involve employees in diagnosing areas for improvement within the FP Channel throughout the process.

- 58 Organizational Assessments were completed and tabulated, a 70% response rate
- Feedback was collected in the following six categories:
 - Motivation
 - Communication
 - Customer Service
 - Teamwork and Empowerment
 - Performance Rewards and Training
 - Leadership



✓ FP Leadership reviewed the Assessment prior to distribution.

✓ Change Agents were given all the necessary materials to distribute the assessment and communicate its purpose to their staff.

✓ Each of the Change Agents met with their staff to explain the assessment, distribute it to their staff, and field questions.

✓ Assessments were collected and mailed to a third-party vendor for tabulation.

✓ 58 Assessments were tabulated. Results will be published in late August-early September. Based on the findings, improvement programs will be recommended.

• The Change Agents will present findings and recommendations to their staff.

• Programs will be Implemented to “fill the gap” in identified problem areas based on the assessment. FP will coordinate with other channels on programs where needed.



Organizational Assessment - Overview

The Organizational Assessment compliments other agency initiatives. The purpose of the Organizational Assessment was to identify improvement areas important to employees in the FP Channel.

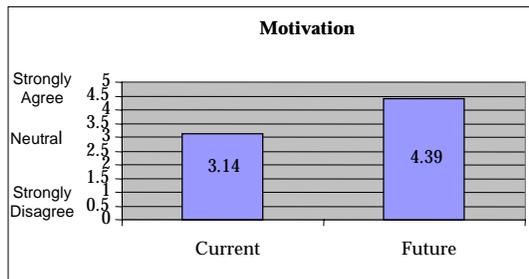




Organizational Assessment - Motivation

The FP Channel said motivation is important for future success, yet they rated motivation as currently being neutral (neither good nor bad). However, employees' comments reflect the opposite - motivation is difficult to maintain due to a lack of trust in leadership.

Assessment Results



“Employees’ Comments”

- *“Financial partners has lost momentum it had built...”*
- *“The current atmosphere is dishonest (upper mgmt.)”*
- *“Lack of trust and leadership at upper levels”*
- *“Regional atmosphere much better than HQ. Region listens; HQ does not.”*
- *“Motivation is difficult to maintain with HQ mgmt constant criticism and micro-management.”*
- *“Uncertainty about the future .”*

Best Practices - Motivation

- Types of Motivation:
 - Extrinsic - Sources of motivation “external” to the individual
 - Examples include: Pay Raise, Bonus, Vacation, Employee Rewards, Recognition Programs, Praise
 - Intrinsic - Sources of motivation “internal” to the individual
 - Examples include: Pride, Ownership, Personal Growth, Challenge, Interest, Seeing the “Big Picture”
- Social Motivators - Most people share many of the same “needs” or motives, but the strength of the individual needs varies for different people.
 - Need for Achievement - Achieving unique results and reaching self-initiated standards, are major sources of reward.
 - Need for Affiliation - A person with a high need for affiliation is concerned with establishing, maintaining, or restoring positive emotional relationships with others.
 - Need for Power - Gaining influence within their environment, maintaining control, gaining status, and avoiding positions of weakness are major sources of reward.

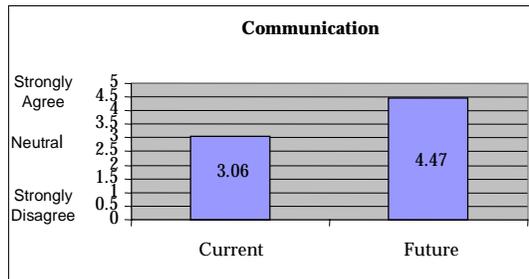


Organizational Assessment - Communication

All findings indicate that employees feel ill-informed and uncertain of the future of the FP Channel. Employees are concerned about transformation due to a lack of information and involvement at all levels.

Best Practices - Communication

Assessment Results



“Employees’ Comments”

- “Staff are not aware or informed of changes in leadership style and focus, and are concerned about the future of FP initiatives.”
- “Communication is one-sided. Any communication from DC is half the story and suspect.”
- “Often hear about important changes from our partners, before I am told from ED.”
- “An atmosphere needs to exist where people feel free to express ideas and ask all questions necessary for better understanding, without undue criticism.”

- The Communication Strategy is the blueprint for all communication work. It is completed by addressing the following questions:
 - Objectives - Why is the communication and involvement program necessary and what is it intended to achieve?
 - Benefits - What issues will be critical to the success of communication? What barriers exist?
 - Stakeholder - What stakeholders will be affected by the change?
 - Vehicle of Communication - What channels of communication and feedback are available, and acceptable, within the organization?
 - Measuring the effectiveness of the communication strategy - How will the communication be assessed to ensure it is sufficiently proactive and clearly understood?
- The Communication Plan addresses “how” an organization achieves its communication strategy
 - Communication Purpose - Explains why communication is needed.
 - Target Audience - Describes who will be affected by the change, and who needs to be informed about the change.
 - Vehicle - Discusses channels of communication and feedback that are available, within the organization, and describes the effectiveness of the communication vehicle that will be measured.
 - Timing - Describes the timing and frequency of communication activities.
 - Sender - Describes the appropriate person(s) to be delivering the message.
 - Message - Describes what is to be communicated.

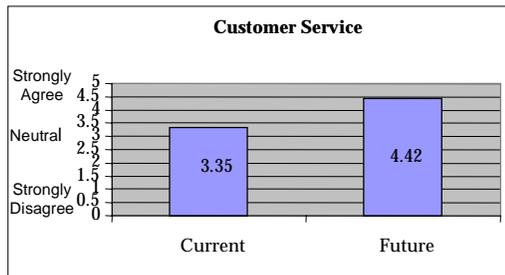


Organizational Assessment - Customer Service

Employees feel that there is room for improvement in understanding their partners' business and how FP business units relate to their partners. Becoming a "Partner Understanding" organization requires a service culture built on partnering and customer relationships.

Best Practices - Customer Service

Assessment Results



"Employees' Comments"

- "Our focus has shifted away from customer service to our partners and back to old-style federal oversight. We've lost the initiative here."
- "Since we are oversight, what our partners feel they need may not be what we think they need causing a conflict of agreement. Also, timing is an issue."
- "We listen but don't always respond in a timely manner to issues brought forth from staff and GA's."
- "No defined participation with partners. Lack of understanding of how we partner with organizations that we are to oversee."

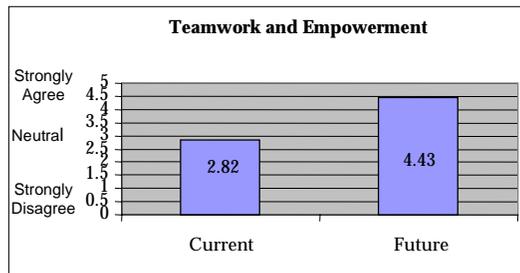
- Adopting a customer-driven approach to managing customer relationships and building customer equity requires organizations to build a set of integrated Customer Relationship Management (CRM) capabilities. These best practice capabilities include:
 - Customer Insight - Know customers better than they know themselves
 - Customer Offers - Give customers what they want, not what you want to give them
 - Customer Interactions - Personalize each customer experience, every time
 - High Performing Organizations - Win the war for talent by attracting and retaining the best people
 - Enterprise Integration - Connect the pieces, linkages across the organization and outside its own four walls
- Research based on interviews with hundreds of executives across six industries clearly show which CRM capabilities have the most impact and how much they can contribute to the bottom line. Highest-impact capabilities across industries include:
 - Customer Service
 - Motivating and rewarding people
 - Converting information into insight
 - Attracting and retaining people
 - Building, selling and service skills



Organizational Assessment - Teamwork and Empowerment

The greatest need for organizational improvement was in the area of Teamwork among business units, with the management team, and across the channel. Teams that are geographically disbursed have unique challenges, requiring frequent communications and empowerment of individuals.

Assessment Results



“Employees’ Comments”

- *“It appears that units are autonomous and go out of their way to be such.”*
- *“I do not feel each member of the financial partners is being allowed to utilize their expertise, skills and financial background in an optimal manner.”*
- *“I have taken risks with new ideas only to be told that everything must be approved in advance, that before I do anything I must get permission.”*
- *“Management wants involvement in all decisions. Micro-management does not delegate to regional management.”*

Best Practices - Teamwork and Empowerment

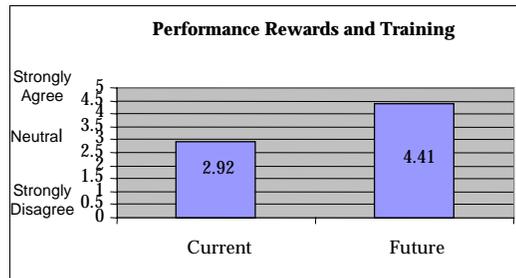
- By better aligning skills to work teams, the FP Channel could benefit from work teams, achieving the following:
 - Faster turnaround time
 - Improved productivity and adaptability to change
 - Greater employee involvement and ownership
 - Higher employee moral
 - Increased skill development
- Characteristics of High Performance Teams:
 - Commitment to Common Goals - Team members value the goals of the team and hold each other accountable for outcomes.
 - Complimentary Skills - Team members have balanced mix of skills and have focus on problem solving.
 - Open Communication - Ideal teams have members with diverse skills who feel comfortable challenging each other to get to the best idea.
 - Establish Ground Rules - Teams come to consensus on how they will operate and feel comfortable with the climate of the team.
 - 6-8 Members - Studies show this number results in optimal performance. Commitment to the team decreases as number of members increase.
- Empowerment comes from trusting employees skills and abilities and allowing them to take risks.



Organizational Assessment - Performance Rewards/Training

According to employee responses, training offers employees the ability to provide quality service, the opportunity to be recognized, and the chance to be motivated. These components were viewed as missing within the current FP Channel.

Assessment Results



“Employees’ Comments”

- *“I am sick of this upward mobility program when people with no education or talent get a promotion every year just so they won’t go to the union. Whatever happened to earning your job? I sure worked hard for mine!”*
- *“The most talented and committed workers left.”*
- *“I feel my computer skills to perform current and future job performance have not been addressed or enough time and training given.”*
- *“We need individual skills assessment programs which encourages and supports workers in improving skills and gaining new skills in a changing business environment.”*

Best Practices - Performance Rewards and Training

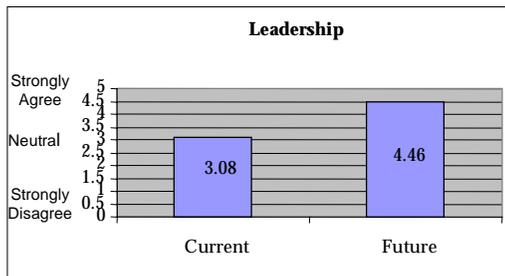
- Reward strategies are vital in retaining employees and improving employee performance. Rewards are divided into the following five categories:
 - Cash and non-cash - Combining cash and non-cash reward is most effective in improving employee performance.
 - Short-term and long-term - Short-term rewards are better for measurable results associated with productivity. Long-term rewards are better for consistency, leadership, loyalty, integrity, and value.
 - Recognition rewards - Recognize employees for going above and beyond expectations.
 - Timeliness of Rewards - Reward should follow performance.
 - Employee sense of control - Employees need to understand the connection between rewards and company values. A sense of control can be enhanced by offering training in areas that are rewarded.
- Training enables employees to feel secure in their positions and provides a sense of motivation in high-performance organizations:
 - Skills Assessment - Capabilities and skills needed to support the organization unit’s performance goals, tied to business outcomes.
 - Personal Development Plan - Captures an individual’s development needs and career aspirations as well as an action plan to address these needs through training, role experience, and self-development.
 - Training Curriculum - Comprehensive list of training courses matched to business need and baseline skill model.



Organizational Assessment - Leadership

This assessment was taken during a time when leadership was in transition. Consequently, employees expressed the need for stability, direction and commitment from leadership.

Assessment Results



“Employees’ Comments”

- *“Management at the regional and Headquarters levels do not make use or appropriate decisions on a CONSISTENT basis because management does NOT consult NON-management staff nor allow non-management staff to be a part of the decision making process or a part in the actual decision making.”*
- *“Loss of ‘leadership’ has degraded our management skills beyond comprehension.”*
- *“Need to know more about decision-making process in headquarters.”*
- *“I feel comfortable with our managers, but it is the current emphasis on oversight which limits our relationships with the community.”*

Best Practices - Leadership

- Leadership requirements for building a high-performance government organization involve several critical dimensions, including:
 - **Vision:** Leaders must have a vision of the organization’s future and communicate it effectively.
 - **Commitment:** Leaders must be committed to making wholesale changes in the culture and processes of the organization and to sticking with those changes.
 - **Inspiration:** Leaders must be able to inspire those they impact to want to become a high-performance organization.
 - **Ability to facilitate change:** With effective leadership, good ideas can penetrate established organizational mindsets and transform them.
- Organizations foster strong leadership throughout the workforce by:
 - Encouraging desired behaviors through rewards, incentives, and promotions
 - Providing leadership and management coaching and training
 - Putting a few strong leaders in visible positions to serve as role models



Organizational Assessment - Employee Feedback

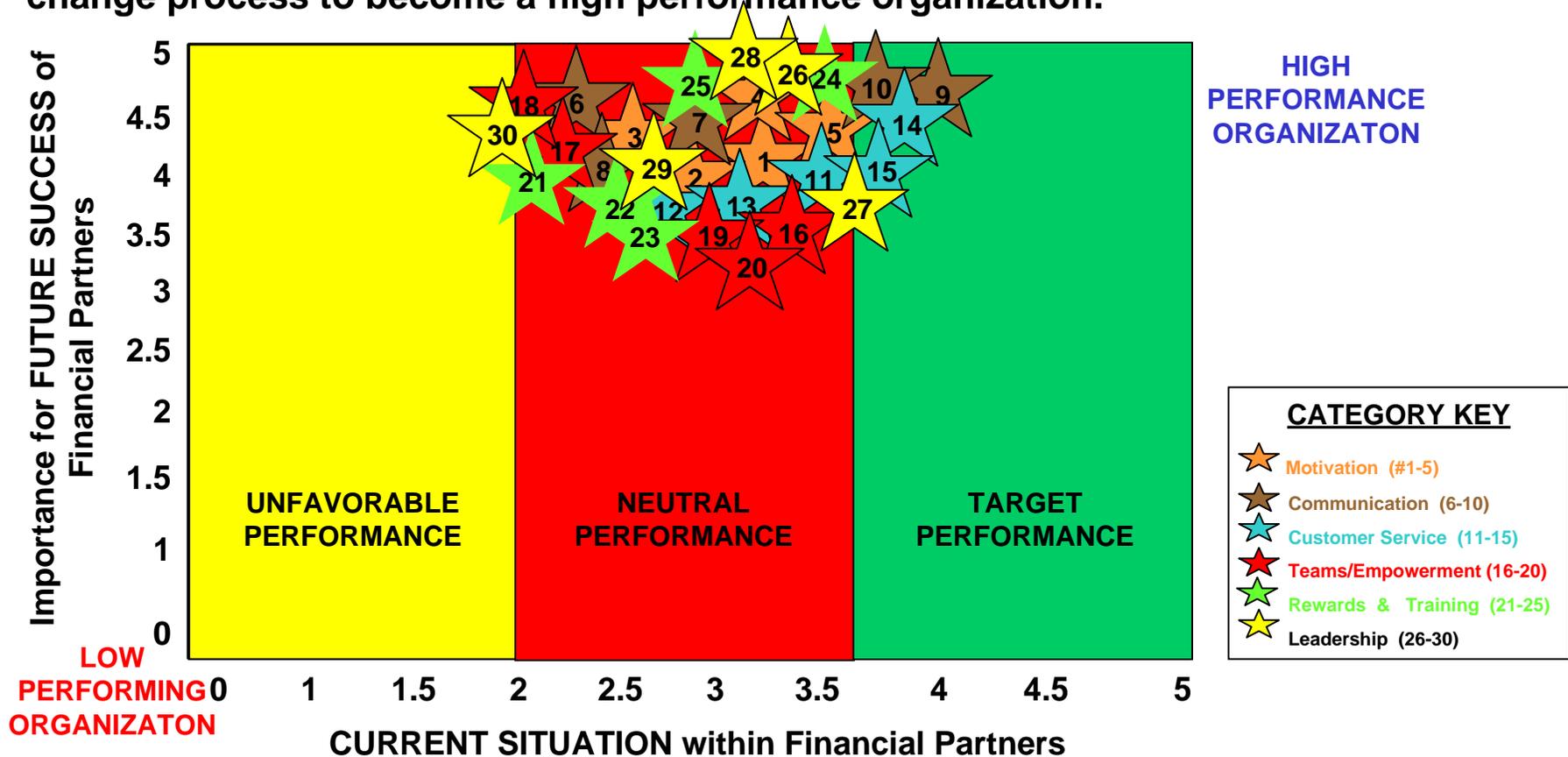
Employees responded to open-ended questions about their experience in FP.

- What employees LIKE about working in FP
 - PEOPLE/PARTNERS - Employees enjoy working with co-workers; regional management; and interaction with partners
 - FLEXIBILITY - Employees are motivated by their flexible hours; pay; and work atmosphere
 - NEW BUSINESS - Employees expressed satisfaction in the potential for interesting work; team environment; opportunities; new direction
- What employees would LIKE TO CHANGE about working in FP:
 - MANAGEMENT - Employees did not like that only team leads and above are included in the change process; lack of strong leadership and new GM; lack of fairness and trust
 - COMMUNICATION - Employees commented that information and decisions are not being filtered down to all levels of the organization; share information with ALL employees
 - HR PRACTICES - Employees noted poor hiring processes; unfair job pre-selection; old Position Descriptions; they've expressed wanting more training, and reward incentives
- Ideas for Improvement:
 - MANAGEMENT - Employees suggested a clearer definition of roles; selecting qualified managers; providing training to develop mentor skills to groom successful subordinates
 - COMMUNICATION - Employees recommended requesting their input on operations; ensure everyone is informed of changes; quarterly off-site meetings; making employees feel heard
 - SKILL INVENTORY - Employees suggested assessing skills and cross-training



Organizational Assessment - Histogram

As indicated by the histogram, employees feel that all six elements measured by the assessment are critical to the success of the future organization. It also indicates that the transformation efforts have begun to fill the gap from the current situation to the desired future state and should continue along the change process to become a high performance organization.





Overview

Vision and Mission

Organizational Assessment

Change Agent Program

Communication Strategy

Employee Development Best Practices

Action Plan

Appendix



Change Agent Network - Approach

Change Agents serve an important role in the change process. They relay communication messages and champion the transformation.

- Change Agent Selection Process
 - The FP Leadership Team was selected to communicate the transformation and advocate change.
 - In the implementation phase, volunteers will be selected to serve this role based on their ability to demonstrate leadership skills, involvement on modernization projects, and supporters of the change process.

- Current Change Agents
 - Anna Allen
 - Ann Marie Cimino
 - Mirek Halaska
 - Cameron Ishaq
 - Frank Ramos
 - Jack Reynolds
 - Roberta Russo
 - Linda Stoddard
 - Katrina Turner

- Change Agent Program Next Steps
 - Share findings of the Organizational Assessment with all FP employees
 - Develop and administer a communication tool to announce new project initiatives to select team members
 - Provide awareness around communications, both internally and externally to partners
 - Engage employees and union to create a sense of “buy-in” to changes through the transformation process



Overview

Vision and Mission

Organizational Assessment

Change Agent Program

Communication Strategy

Employee Development Best Practices

Action Plan

Appendix



Communication - Communication Strategy

To become a successful PBO, a communication strategy is necessary to keep employees and stakeholders apprised of the changes that are occurring, keep them involved in the process of change, and help them become contributing members of the organization's continuous improvement process.

- **Objective**
 - The FP transformation communication effort seeks to ensure all employees are informed about the changes, how their current roles and responsibilities will be affected, and how to better service their customers.
- **Audiences**
 - Audiences should be defined carefully and communication vehicles customized to their preferences so that each audience receives concise information in an easily accessible format.
 - Internal Audiences includes communications only within the FP Channel, e.g. FP employees, project teams, etc.
 - External Audiences includes all of SFA and FP partners, e.g. Union, GA's, Lenders, etc.
- **Benefits**
 - Through routine communications, employees will feel informed and engaged in the change process. Benefits will include “buy-in” on the changes, and increased motivation and productivity levels.
- **Stakeholder**
 - Stakeholders include external customers with a vested interest, e.g. GA's, Lenders, State Agencies
- **Vehicle of Communication**
 - Vehicles used include: Off-Site, Working Sessions, E-mails, Staff Meetings, Workshops, etc.



Communication - Internal Communications Plan

The purpose of the Internal Communication Plan is to keep the FP Channel informed about the Transformation. The plan addresses the following objectives: messages that need communicating, vehicles to share information, multiple audience groups, communication can be initiated by any level of the organization, and timing needs to be appropriate to the message to realize intended impact.

COMMUNICATION	VEHICLE	TARGET AUDIENCE	SENDER	TIMING	STATUS	COMMENTS
Transformation Overview	Staff Meeting	All FP Employees	Change Agents	May-June 2000	Complete	Union held process of periodic updates
Organizational Assessment & Overview	Staff Meeting	All FP Employees	Change Agents	May-July 2000	Complete	Union held process of dissemination
Initiative Progress and Achieved Milestones	Bi-Weekly Summary Status Reports	All FP Employees	Mod Partner and Project Teams	Bi-Weekly	On-Going	Plan to add to FP Intranet Site
Initiative Status, Issue Identification, and Action Items	Team Leads Status Meeting	Team Leads	Mod Partner and Project Leads	Weekly	On-Going	Plan to add to Meetings bi-weekly
Transformation Updates, Project Highlights, FP Spotlights	FP Newsletter	All FP Employees	Content Manager	Quarterly	In Development	Production through AC



Communication - External Communications Plan

The External Communication Plan seeks to keep the community informed about the Transformation. Electronic vehicles were selected to ensure timely messages and limitless access by partners. Challenges have been advertising the use of this medium to the community and control of changes to the website.

COMMUNICATION	VEHICLE	TARGET AUDIENCE	SENDER	TIMING	STATUS	COMMENTS
Transformation News, Forms, News Releases, Channel Updates	GA/Lender Intranet Site	GA/Lenders	Content Manager	Monthly Updates	On-Going Posting in Progress	Utilization rate by External Audience is currently low
Organizational Updates and Channel News	Web Portal Internet Site	SFA Employees and External Partners	Mod Partner and SFA Channels	Projected for release October 2000	Development begins Jan 01'	New vehicle of communication
Transformation Updates	InStep Newsletter	All SFA Employees	SFA Communication Office	April 2000 - Monthly Updates	On-Going	Plan to make access internet based
Organizational Updates and Channel News	Intranet	All SFA Employees	Mod Partner and SFA Channels	July 2000	Development in Process	New vehicle of communication



Overview

Vision and Mission

Organizational Assessment

Change Agent Program

Communication Strategy

Employee Development Best Practices

Action Plan

Appendix



Employee Development Best Practices

Best Practice research indicates that one of the most critical steps in successfully transforming an organization is to ensure employees basic needs are met first. Employees are interested in how the change affects them. HR is participating with FP leadership to draft a Skill Catalog to assist in identifying development opportunities for employees.

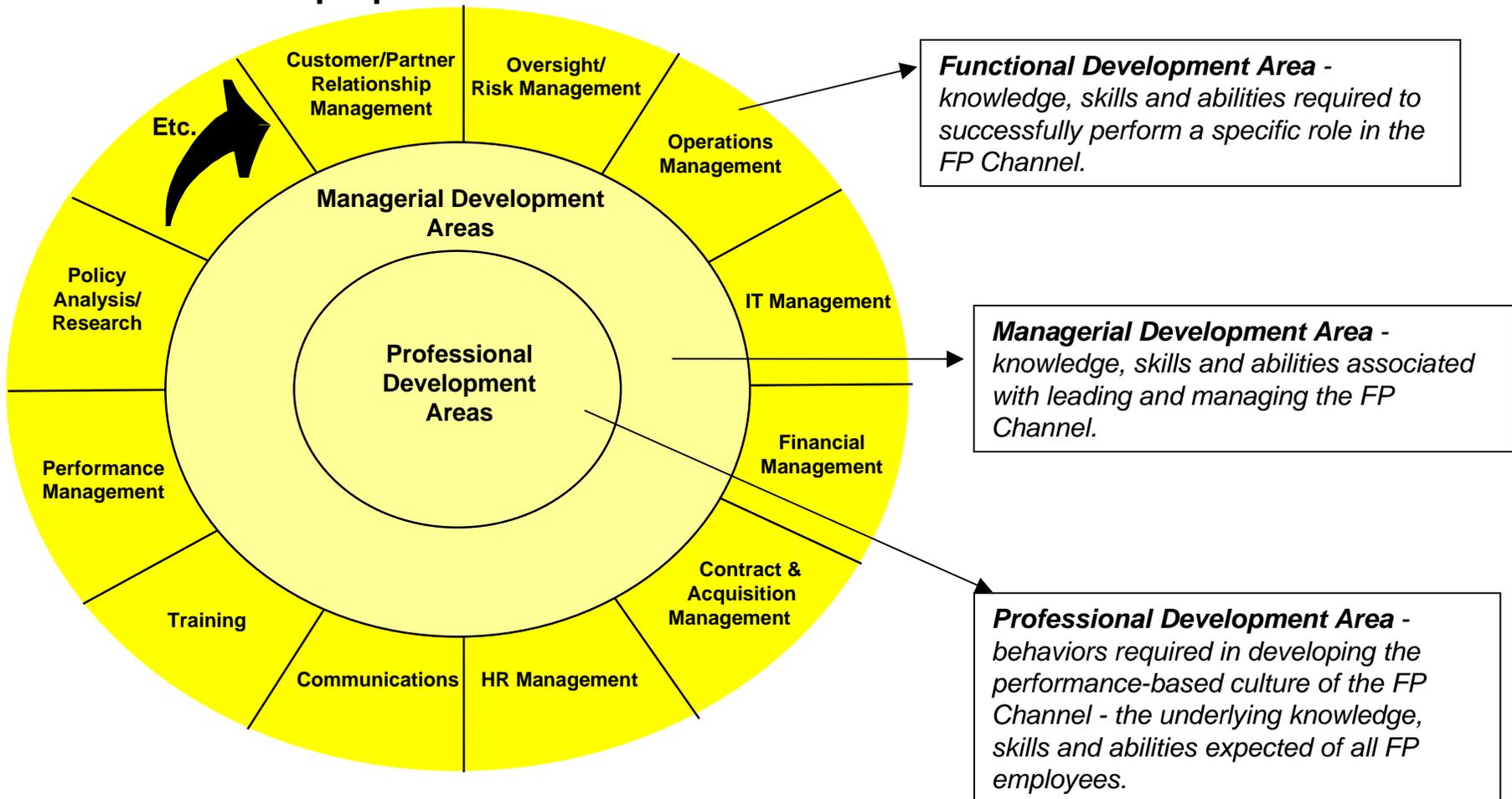
- Value of Defining Desired Skills
 - Helps to identify the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to succeed in a given role
 - Provides a tool to help identify employee development needs
 - Provides a framework for employees training and on-going professional development opportunities
 - Helps align employee job and performance expectations with the organization's goals and objectives

- Developmental Opportunities Process Model
 - The model consist of four components: Job Descriptions, Skill Catalog, Performance Appraisal, and Personal Development Plan (PDP)
 - This model indicates that Job Descriptions serve as an input to the Skill Catalog to assist in developing PDP's and to use as input for the Performance Appraisal process



Employee Development Best Practices

The Skill Model is a grouping of associated knowledge and abilities required to perform a role that supports a customer focused organization. The diagram below describes the proposed Skill Model for SFA.





Employee Development Best Practices

The Skill Catalog, currently being developed by HR, will be the collection of the knowledge and abilities required to perform the roles within SFA.

The following example profiles a selection of development areas required to fill a roles within the FP Channel:

Professional Development Area

- SFA Business Knowledge
- Customer Service Orientation
- Technology Literacy
- Goal/Results Orientation
- Continuous Learning and Improvement
- Professionalism
- Interpersonal Communication

Managerial Development Area

- Visioning
- Leadership
- Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Project Management
- Communication
- Employee Development

Functional Development Area

- Payments and Processing
- Technical Assistance
- Planning and Budgeting
- Risk Modeling
- Oversight and Compliance
- Customer Relationship Management
- Office Administration



Overview

Vision and Mission

Organizational Assessment

Change Agent Program

Communication Strategy

Employee Development Best Practices

Action Plan

Appendix



Action Plan

The Action Plan is designed to help FP look at next steps in the Development and Implementation Phase of the transformation process based on findings from the Analysis and Design Phase.

- Based on the Organizational Assessment findings, work conducted with the Vision and Mission, and Best Practice research, immediate key areas to focus on for the Development and Implementation Phase include:
 - Customer Service
 - Having a ‘Partner Understanding’ vision requires a deeper understanding of the partner
 - Leadership
 - Employees want role models they can trust, who openly communicate, and reward
 - Teamwork and Empowerment
 - Employees work well in small teams, but still do not see the FP Channel as a team
 - Communication
 - Communication has begun, but needs to be strengthened with leadership support

- Long-term areas of focus that will be integrated into the immediate action items include:
 - Motivation
 - Employees are looking toward their leadership team for support and commitment
 - Performance Rewards and Training
 - HR and SFA University are teaming up to address performance and training issues



Action Plan - Achieving the Mission and Vision

With recent Union approval of the Financial Partners organization, the FP Channel is able to “launch” its new Vision in conjunction with its new organization. The FP Leadership Team determined the next steps for sharing the Vision with the organization during a recent planning session.

- Objectives
 - Motivate employees by achieving their buy-in and enthusiasm about the Vision
 - Communicate the finalized Vision internally and externally
 - Track progress towards the Vision and continuously modify it to meet the needs of the partners and employees



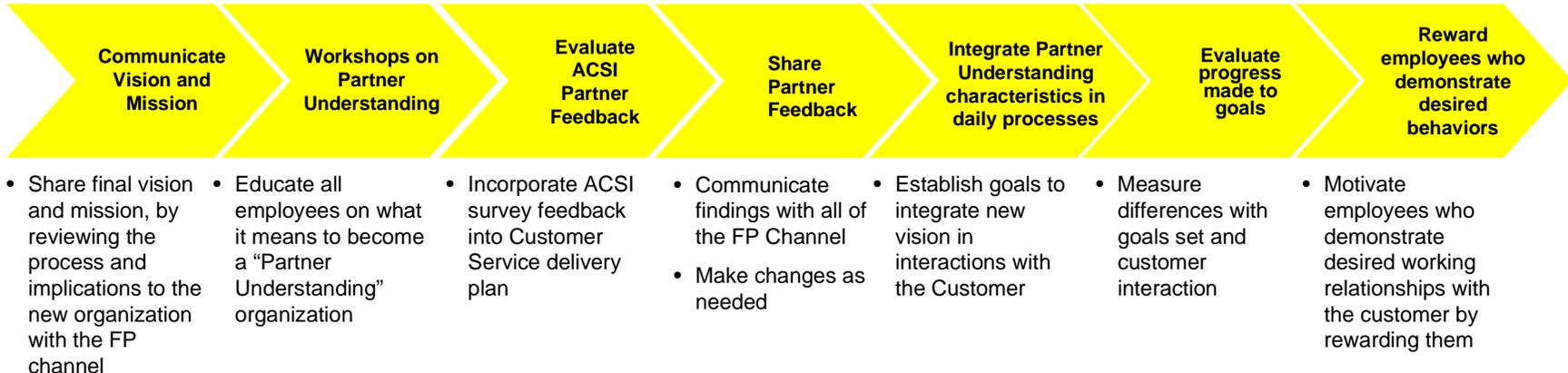
- Announce exciting organizational updates and All Hands conference call on 8/31
- Share the approved organization, new Vision, FY01 Performance Plan items, and FY01 Transformation Projects with FP Channel
- Field employees’ questions related to the Vision and other organizational items
- Review/incorporate employee feedback into Vision
- Inform employees that feedback has been incorporated and Vision is finalized
- Publicize Vision internally by printing and distributing brochures and posting to Intranet
- Publicize Vision externally by posting to Portal
- Determine Performance Indicators that support Vision and track progress
- Revisit Vision periodically and compare to customers’ and employees’ expectations of FP



Action Plan - Customer Service

By adopting a ‘partner understanding’ vision, the FP Channel has the opportunity to operate as a best in business organization.

- Objectives
 - Educate FP employees on what it means to be ‘Partner Understanding’, and how it is integrated into the FP channel new organization
 - Understand what it means to truly “partner” with the community by better understanding their needs and their business
 - Motivate and reward employees who exhibit partner understanding





Action Plan - Leadership

Employees expressed needing a sense of security in their leadership team. Leaders whom keep them abreast of the changes, demonstrate trustworthy qualities, and whom they aspire to be like.

- Objectives
 - Demonstrate commitment to change at the leadership level, starting with facilitating the Vision as part of the FP culture
 - Change in leadership culture to an environment that openly communicates change and listens to and rewards new ideas
 - Encourage desired behaviors, by demonstrating a sense of unity and teamwork at the leadership level



- In staff meetings, share that the vision and mission was approved, the process in determining the best direction for the organization, and next steps
- Approve communication strategy and plan
- Incorporate communication as a valued principal in the new organization
- Support Change Agent Program by selecting volunteers that demonstrate a commitment to the new organization
- Allow Change Agent team to play a critical role in the transformation
- With new GM, bring leadership team together for an off-site to review components of operating as a high performance leadership team
- Based on leadership workshop, develop “learning contracts” to work on key areas of improvement as individuals and as a team
- Institute a rewards program among the leadership team and employees for reaching milestones and demonstrating desired behaviors
- Improve overall organizational success by supporting necessary training, using the tools available through the competency catalog



Action Plan - Teamwork and Empowerment

Employees rated their individual project teams as positive working experiences, however, they do not feel that the FP Channel as a whole works well together. There is a need to begin developing a sense of unity and team environment within the project teams.

- Objectives
 - Incorporate tenants of a true team environment within the FP Channel
 - Create working teams based on best practice characteristics of high performance teams to improve employee moral
 - Empower employees by supporting skill development and decentralizing decision making





Action Plan - Communications

Progress has already begun in the way of developing a communication strategy and plan. Next steps will include selecting champions to communicate messages both internally and externally and finding ways to motivate employees.

- Objectives
 - Gain approval and support from leadership team on communication strategy and plan
 - Expand Change Agent and Content Manager roles to include responsibilities as communication champions and facilitators
 - Improve internal and external communications to motivate employees



- ✓ Draft strategy developed
- Approval of strategy by senior management

- ✓ Draft communication plan developed
- Approval of communication plan by senior management

- ✓ Directors serving as Change Agents
- Ask for Volunteers for the Change Agent role
- Expand program scope

- ✓ Tony Magro serving as acting Content Manager
- Select a Content Manager - requires an understanding of the channel's overall business

- ✓ Set up regular All-Hands meetings as a vehicle for communication.

- ✓ Acting Content Manger has begun to address external issues
- Make better use of the GA/Lender website
- Look for additional ways to communicate

- Find ways of rewarding employees for demonstrating desired communication behaviors



Action Plan - Transformation Approach

The following transformation approach provides a history of what has been accomplished in the Analysis and Design Phase, what is projected for the development and Implementation phase and best practice recommendations for continuous improvement.

Stage & Launch Transformation		Develop New Organization		Sustain New Organization	
Analysis & Design		Implementation & Development		Continuous Improvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set the direction for the transformation • Identify and launch initiative and projects • Educate executives and front-line employees about the transformation process and specific initiatives • Determine strategic direction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the transformation • Secure and mobilize committed network of sponsors, change agents, and advocates • Assess current organizational state and opportunities for improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align transformation strategy and organization culture • Pilot programs and transformation initiatives • Assess and remove barriers • Team building training and activities • Customer service assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine rewards, measures, and feedback systems to encourage desired behavior • Practice leadership behavior • Celebrate milestones along the transformation • Develop and implement training plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit Vision and Mission • Measure communication progress • Re-evaluate current organizational assessment • Measure employee skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-examine partner needs • Re-examine employee needs • Re-evaluate rewards and recognition system • Measure team progress



Overview

Vision and Mission

Change Agent Program

Organizational Assessment

Communication Strategy

Employee Development Best Practices

Action Plan

Appendix