The Road Less Traveled: Staff-Driven Re-org

Brian Hoyt
Jeannie Zappe
Keelan Cleary
Rob Guissanie
Melissa Rycroft
Lisa Veloz

Bucknell University
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- Private liberal arts university located in central Pennsylvania
- Predominantly undergraduate
- 3500 students and 1200 faculty/staff

http://www.bucknell.edu
About Our Organization

- **Information Services & Resources (ISR)**
  - Formed in 1997
  - Merged traditional library and computing services into one IT organization

- 94 staff in the organization
  - 1/2 involved in Technology Support
  - 1/3 involved in work redesign
So why a re-org in the first place

- Rapidly expanding technology
- Overworked staff
- Repeated miscommunications with clients
- Repeated miscommunications internally
- Frustration: *We knew we could do better*
Brian’s Top 10 Reasons for Doing a Staff-Driven Re-org

- Because the ISR culture would not allow it happen any other way
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The ISR Culture

The ISR Values

- We value our role in the mission of the university.
- We value exceptional customer service.
- We value a collaborative work environment.
- We value leadership throughout the organization.
- We value a healthy work environment.
- We refuse to let each other fail.

http://www.isr.bucknell.edu/About_ISR/values.asp
The ISR Culture

- The ISR collaborative work environment

- We focus on customer service as the big picture.
- We base our relationships on trust.
- We thrive on communication.
- We do “the right thing.”
- We get the right people together at the right time.
- We make decisions by consensus.

- We believe that collaboration is built on appropriate involvement.
- We encourage development and growth.
- We are all leaders.
- We recognize accomplishments.
- We lead by example.

http://www.isr.bucknell.edu/About_ISR/Collaborative_Work_Environment.asp
Guiding principles

- Design from the customers’ perspective.
- Determine key processes, work activities.
- Design work from those processes.
- Address “people needs” first, then other system changes later.
- Maintain focus of attention on work that really makes a difference to customers.
- Streamline or eliminate unnecessary handoffs.
- Match people to work (talents, interests, capabilities, etc.).
- Build in ongoing assessment.
Desired Outcomes

- External desired outcomes:
  - No black holes – we can’t let anything fall through the cracks;
  - Happier customers;
  - The process needs to promote trust in ISR;
  - Clients want
    - faster problem resolution (as many “same day” as possible);
    - the ability to submit and track their problems;
    - a seamless, reliable interface;
  - Clients need/want/expect convenience;
  - Need to move away from the notion that developing self-sufficient users is our answer for more reasonable staff workloads.
Desired Outcomes

- Internal desired outcomes:
  - Happier staff;
  - Staff skills and talents should be matched with needs;
  - Internal efficiencies must be achieved at the same time we improve external ease-of-use;
  - Flexibility and an appreciative approach are key;
  - People need the tools to do their jobs, including access, hardware, software, infrastructure, communication venues, etc.;
  - ISR technical staff needs to develop a common understanding of service standards;
CIOs Desired Outcomes

Give me:

- Happy clients
- Happy staff
- Staff who don’t preach client self-sufficiency
- Saying “no” less often and more thoughtfully
- No black holes

“I stayed the hell out of the way”

-- Gene Spencer – AVP of ISR
Envisioning our new org

- Envision what could be
- Decide what should be
- Implement what can be
- Continuously improve
The 80% rule
We made it

August 12, 2003
So you want try it?
Important rules to follow

- Everyone involved has a voice.
- Create win-wins wherever possible.
- Customer service is big picture.
- Keep focus on goal.
- Include don’t exclude.
- Inspire, inspire, inspire.
- Collaborate, collaborate, collaborate.
- Communicate, communicate, communicate.
- Remember the process is like riding a roller coaster.
Some guiding principles

- Get the right people together
  - Lots of conversations about the work
  - Ask “What do we do well?”
- Design from customer’s perspective
  - Focus on work that makes a difference to customers
- Determine key systems and define work from there
  - Small groups focusing on how the work should get done
  - Streamline the work
Some more guiding principles

- Match people to the work
  - Druthers – “If you had your “druthers” what would you do in ISR?”
  - Create work groups
  - Let the people doing the work build processes

- Build in ongoing assessment

- Continuous improvement

- Brian’s barrowed golden rule—
  - Progress over perfection
Some final thoughts

- Focus on what is currently being done well.
- Remember it is about the “customer” and then the staff--and not about you.
- Don’t underestimate the power of a “road trip” as catalyst to get your staff to think outside of the box.
- Don’t underestimate the power of empowering your staff to build and own the processes they do their work by.
- The adventure has been worth every bit of the effort.
Thank you!

- **Contact Information**
  - Keelan Cleary – cleary@bucknell.edu
  - Rob Guissanie – rguissan@bucknell.edu
  - Melissa Rycroft – rycroft@bucknell.edu
  - Lisa Veloz – lveloz@bucknell.edu
  - Jeannie Zappe – jzappe@bucknell.edu
  - Brian Hoyt – bhoyt@bucknell.edu

- **Web Address**

  http://www.isr.bucknell.edu/About_ISR/Staff_Presentations