

Ad-Hoc Committee on Cost-Savings – Staff Senate Meeting Notes

Dr. Twombly presented to Staff Senate on the charges for the committee and requested ideas for cost-savings and/or efficiency, as well as their opinion for the survey process.

IDEAS

Recruitment & Entertainment Costs - Staff & Faculty should consider reducing the cost of meals by including fewer people or identify less expensive options for guest visits. The university should contract transportation to and from the airport, so reduce spending or encourage staff and faculty transport students and guests to reduce the cost of transportation. Look at the in-direct and direct costs of recruitment.

Sustainability Practices – Look at options across campus to reduce electricity costs (LED lighting, manual shut off during off-hours, and motion sensor installation for classrooms and office spaces). The university should invest in Solar Power Options across the University and especially for new construction. Although the front-end cost is high, the savings and efficiency in the long-term will be cost effective.

The University should ACTIVELY push Reduce – Reuse – Recycle as a way to become more efficient and reduce waste. Stop printing materials and start utilizing the website more for recruitment and outreach. This will not only save time and resources, it will help develop skillsets that are needed (web development and graphic design).

Improving Social Capital – Improve messaging from top down (Bold Aspirations was given as an example), to provide all university members a core message or value system that is communicated consistently at all levels. Look for opportunities to increase merit beyond financial benefits. Boost moral by providing opportunities to build the KU brand/Community. Encourage staff and faculty at all levels be listened to and their input valued.

Quality Control – Develop error systems that oversee communication/processing systems to reduce notification error which leads to a break-down in processes due to notification reliance without quality control. Example given: Many systems across campus have electronic routing (work orders, finance, student services) that relies on people being notified in order to move a process forward. When those notifications have errors there is no way from someone in the chain to know the process has stalled. Develop stronger processes which reduce notification reliance and build staff confidence.

Departmental / Unit Audit – Look at what you do in your unit (daily, weekly, monthly, annually) and identify outdated or unnecessary practices that would reduce the work load. Identify priorities as a unit and put your resources towards those priorities (eliminating waste and redundancies). “Stop doing things this way, because we have always done them this way.”

Messaging – The constant message of reducing costs has made us less efficient. If the cost savings agenda were off the table, efficiency may increase.

Increase efficiency by increasing morale, enhancing organizational commitment, and reducing turnover. Employee turnover is costly in terms of search for and training of new employees. Following

were some recommended ways to increase morale, enhance organizational commitment and reduce turnover.

Incentives & Benefits – The University should identify waste and see if they could reduce that waste or use it to incentivize staff and faculty. One example was to determine the amount of food that is wasted each day and reduce meal costs or provide meal tickets to staff to reduce food waste. Another option is for the Lied Center or other venues on campus to allow staff free or reduced admission to shows that have seats available up to the day of the event. If the seat is going to remain open, it would be better to fill it and not make money than to have it go empty and not make money. Look at longevity benefits related to ticketed events or parking.

KU Advocacy - Make an effort to increase benefits if raises are not approved or in addition to raises and negotiate to build community and connection to the University. Related to incentives, the university should pursue partnerships with the community to encourage additional benefits across the community (discounts) to incentivize KU employees to invest in the greater Lawrence Community while providing a benefit to staff and faculty (CSA is a good example of this).

Flexibility – Office should encourage flexible schedules to help reduce energy and parking needs while continuing to meet the requirements for their position (especially helpful for administrators). Give staff the option of working remotely one day a week.

SURVEY OPTIONS

The Survey should be brief and sent out to all constituencies. Pairing the survey with smaller group discussions or targeted interviews may provide more substantial ideas.