Balancing the Immediate vs. the Important, being strategic while finding solutions

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How do we be more leaderly and act strategically

John’s first day – July 7, 2008

- Fifdoms
- People soldering motherboards
- No vision or mission
- Survival game
- Hundreds of jobs in service request queue not being met
- Had talented individuals doing untalented things

Theme – REAL SIMPLE – technology made easier – if we keep things simple, people will choose to use it and then we may be able to find the time to innovate

Once the REAL SIMPLE was understood, things started to happen. John had full support of leadership – very important. John got direction from leadership:

- Needed to have a great opening
- have great classrooms
- PS Harrisburg had to be the “gem of campuses”

Effective Leadership

- Select projects that add value
- Manage relationships with staff, folks above and below – first day, meet and greet the custodians
- Think beyond the immediate and focus on what matters in the long term

Rate yourself:

- Are you more than a manager or doer – Are you providing leadership to your team?
- “polleverywhere.com” – texting polls

Worthy investments of time:

- Website – reflects services not silos
- Communicate with faculty/staff – service request form
- Central repository
- Use technology not invented by PennState – good to explore other Web 2.0

Ask the tough questions

- Are you more cost effective or provide vastly superior service than the cloud or other providers?
- If no, then why are you doing it?
- Else, does it really matter?
- Are there more important things your staff could be doing now?

Concentrate on core services that add value and get rid of those that are commodities and find others that can do high end stuff

Relationships are Everything

- Build relationships
- Earn trust – come through on things – when people ask, do it – find solutions
- Provide solutions
- Communicate Honestly
- Being empathetic

“Ho”isms

- Say “hello” or “good day” – goes a long way
- Use term “best practices” instead of ‘rules, policies or regulations”
- There are empathetic ways to say “no”
- Everyone appreciates a donut
- Make nice-nice with the union guys/girls – include them in your decision making process when appropriate
- Don’t do Shlock – don’t skimp what you do, do well
- Not “do more with less” – do “different with less”
• Keep mission/vision simple and understandable
• Get Faculty/Staff support for initiatives when appropriate, feasible and mutually beneficial

Things for you
• Adopt defensive calendaring
• Delegate non-essential and operational tasks
• Spend more time listening
• Ask tough questions – ask “why”
• Dialogue and Debate, not consensus
• Maintain prioritized lists
• Walk away from email – depend on “f2f” time
• Be a presence – take frequent walkabouts
• Carefully choose the “hill you want to die on”
• Leave the office at a reasonable time