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| **To** | Michael Harwood, Campus Planning and Facilities Management |
| **From** | Leah Rausch, Institute for Policy Research and Engagement |
| **SUBJECT** | **quest for the best session two summary** |
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Campus Planning and Facilities Management (CPFM) wants to understand and enhance the experience and effectiveness of the approximately 300 employees within the Division—a project CPFM is calling “Quest for the Best.” The “Quest for the Best” seeks to identify key issues and strategies to improve the culture of collaboration and customer service at CPFM.

The Institute for Policy Research and Engagement team members conducted ten focus groups with approx. 30 CPFM staff members. CPFM and IPRE leadership began the session by sharing project objectives, agenda, and ground rules. Participants were then divided into three small groups representing a mix of departments. Within each small group, IPRE team members moderated a discussion to respond to three questions:

* What should CPFM keep doing?
* What should CPFM start doing?
* What should CPFM stop doing?

Each small group identified top themes from each of the three questions to report out to the larger group. Finally, participants voted on their top “theme” from each question. This memo summarizes the top themes from the first session. Appendices I-III provide full session notes; Appendix IV provides the top themes and results of the dot voting process.

# Key Themes

Participants identified several strengths as well as opportunities for improvement within CPFM. Some groups felt some departments cultivated a supportive culture and appreciated increased opportunities for team building and social events. Participants requested more opportunities to inform changes made at CPFM, especially those directly affecting them. Some indicated there were not adequate boundaries between CPFM and the rest of campus, allowing for compromised standards and inefficiencies. Participants indicated there are significant opportunities to improve communication within the department, especially when deciding to take on new projects or during the recent employee layoffs.

## What should CPFM keep doing?

* **Creating a culture of supportive management:** Participants noted that management’s “open-door” policy allowed them to resolve issues directly. Participants also expressed appreciation for supervisors who do not over-monitor or micromanage their work. They view themselves as experts in their own field requiring minimal supervision. Other groups mentioned weekly meetings as an effective tool to keep everyone on the same page. In some departments, supervisors ask “what should you do in this situation” which encouraged input from different workers.
* **Offering team building and social gatherings:** Participants highly valued team-building events and social gatherings. Nearly all group members expressed their satisfaction in the quarterly team-building activities such as kickball, picnics, and holiday parties. Members noted how they were able to socialize with people they would otherwise not see at the events. There also seemed to be a consensus that staff enjoyed their colleagues and crews.
* **Keeping specialized work in-house:** Group members felt there were enough tradespeople already working within CPFM that it would be efficient to keep work in-house rather than hiring outside contractors. The groups did not provide a specific example of this situation.

## What should CPFM start doing?

* **Invite employee input on changes:** Group members expressed frustration in the pace of change and the lack of input they had on changes directly affecting their departments. Members felt employee involvement in the process and prioritization would result in more acceptance and less resistance. Participants also felt some tasks they receive from upper management do not make sense given on the ground conditions. Group members felt that decision making bodies are not conferring with crews, leading to changes that are not practical or end up being changed later. Specific changes referenced include the reorganization of shops and the implementation of AIM.
* **Establish boundaries between CPFM and Campus:** Group members felt leadership needs to start enforcing campus standards and not allowing the “customer” to dictate the project. The group stated there needs to be clearly defined roles and boundaries, which should be developed with input from employees and enforced by management. Some participants felt this attention to outside influence led to standards being ignored or sudden changes to schedules. Participants felt this resulted in inefficiency, employee frustration, and at times, safety hazards.
* **Improve communication within the department:** Participants felt there were opportunities to improve communication between crews and decision-makers. Some indicated they don’t always receive needed information prior to shift starting and that there should be more opportunities for information-sharing. Participants suggested that improved communication could increase the effectiveness of work assignments. When those making assignments have a “short list,” it’s common for the wrong person to be called for the wrong type of job. Some felt management does not always take the time to get to know individual skill sets.

## What should CPFM stop doing?

* **Letting people go without recognition**: One group shared anecdotal evidence of a group of five people who were dismissed from their jobs over email. In the email they were not referred to by name but by position. Two in the group had been at UO for many decades and were not given any kind of celebratory send off or acknowledgment of their service. Another group referenced feeling like a “cog in the machine” and a desire for more recognition generally of team members.
* **Taking on inappropriate projects:** Participants felt the organization said “yes” to projects without the correct professionals in the room. This results in over-commitment and putting people into roles without expertise.

## Additional Comments

The small groups identified other top themes from their discussions, including:

* **Prioritization of certain buildings for maintenance:** Participants felt maintenance issues, especially in certain buildings, are building up and create difficulties in upkeep. Some felt this would only be worse in another decade, providing an example of the steam heating system.
* **Opportunities to use more updated technology:** Participants specifically referenced time sheets, leave and vacation requests, and computer access as opportunities to improve technology and use.

# Appendix 1. Table 1 Notes

* Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?
  + Weekly meetings – it helps with communication.
  + Open communication with facilities has been good.
  + In last few weeks, people asked “what should you do in this situation” which has allowed workers to add input in decisions that managers make.
  + Supportive management. Very supportive of what people
  + Keep night construction crew
  + Managers brings people together through team building – specifically the quarterly event (Not universal)
* Start – What should CPFM start doing?
  + Supportive management
  + Better communication across departments. Make sure the message gets across, and it has been going on for along time. Management is busy with their department but does not communicate with each other.
  + There are a lot of new people and it has made communication more difficult.
  + It can be better to provide communication via mouth to mouth versus email
  + Scope of work and job titles should be better defined. Some projects are taken on that should not be. Example – carpentry. There are many types of carpentry. Management do not always know the skillset of the people on the ground.
  + It’s a well-rounded crew – but deciding who gets (if that exists) the job doesn’t always align with the job
  + Sharing information across department and being responsive. Make changes happen and take actions. It’s a relay race. Would like to have other folks respond with urgency across departments because sometimes it can hold be up. Feels like a lot of requests are put on the back burner. Prefer to have a communication (email) trail.
  + Improved tech support
  + Leadership does not always include workers in decision process. Brief people about the available trainings. Expand invitation list to trainings.
* Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?
  + Construction shop – they should stop taking on projects that should not have been taken on. Too many different trays required. Things did not show up on time, there was not an on-site manager
  + Metal shop – does not look like a metal shop. They got rid of the metal shop and did not tell anyone
  + Carpenter shop and wood shop are filled and there is not a lot of space to work
  + Communication seems to be the silver bullet.
  + Stop restricting access to information. Trying to share data and do not want to duplicate. You can’t always give people access to data.
  + There are 10-15 years ahead issues that facilities is not always thinking about. Heating system is based on steam, and the University needs to get rid of it. Look a little more long-term compared to be short-term. Make things different.
  + Disincentive good workers – good workers are often compiled with more work.
  + Bad workers get out of work
  + Gold duck – depends on who your supervisor

# Appendix II. Table 2 Notes

* Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?
  + Doesn’t feel department is effective. Nothing to keep doing.
  + Communication
  + Standards
  + Quarterly activities (kick ball, holiday party) // Team building activities
  + Keep doing more work inhouse because trades people
  + Monthly newsletter
  + Pre-work meeting – only chance to share information
  + Staff hear things during the shift. Prefer to keep the graveyard shift
  + Classes (safety trainings) should be kept at night
  + Employee allowances for safety, shoes, clothing, work shirts. Input on clothing options
  + Being able to speak to anyone. The open-door policy. Used it all across the campus
  + Great customer service center. Reaches out across all campus departments
* Start – What should CPFM start doing?
  + Improve communication. Management needs to provide “correct” information. Not speculative info.
  + Happens on grave-yard shift. Info that reaches them has been skewed.
  + Make sure information distributed evenly
  + Appreciate the level of improvement we are trying to achieve
  + Need to prioritize the improvements rather than rapid-fire implementation.
  + Reorganizing the shops and implementing AIM was too much
  + Invite employee input on changes that will directly impact our ability to do their jobs.
  + Will have more acceptance
  + Customer/client assume our expertise and roles. CPFM has overextended
  + Defining roles and responsibilities.
  + Defining boundaries between campus and CPFM
  + Start enforcing campus standards. Tell campus “how this is how we are going to operate”, don’t let it slide
  + No boundaries between the two
  + We should be driving the bus
  + We cave a lot to the customer
  + Need strong leadership to say we will enforce these standards and seek input on creating them. Not suggestions, what we are doing.
  + When management tries pilots changes, it needs a time limit before its implemented on a permanent level
  + Custodian specific, let them have equipment for other “roles” so they can do. Be given floor equipment. If we all had equipment, we would do it more incrementally
  + Four-day work weeks during the summer (custodians)
  + Allow people to leave when they finish their jobs and still get paid.
  + Do more town halls to showcase operations.
  + Meet with building managers quarterly already
  + Hourly a meet and greet for the campus community
  + Allowing employees to tour projects we are working on
  + Lost and found box so people know they can come to “us” (custodians)
  + Uniform/same equipment. Employees are “stealing” from one another because some are better than others.
  + Award system when people would return big items. RECOGNITION.
  + Coming from upper management. Note from management (hand-written). Announced at pre-work meeting
  + Employees looked forward to it.
  + Make sure everyone has the appropriate tools to do their jobs
  + Enhance buy-in to help people when understanding larger-picture
* Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?
  + Stop allowing users to dictate projects
  + Users on campus “going rogue”
  + Depending on who the customer is, the standards can go out the window
  + Everything scheduled then high-up person puts request and it reshuffles the order
  + A lot of asbestos tile. Required to reseal. Let CPFM seal their floor. Don’t let customer say “no”
  + Stop showing favoritism toward certain users
  + Management doesn’t say anything about why people are away/how long.
  + Making them to wait to turn in their keys. Tell them a time period when they can turn their keys in.
  + Anyone can write an email to complain. Need some type of protocol to say something to a supervisor and have them email. They get a lot of frivolous emails.
  + Management to stop passing the buck to someone else. Management should answer questions.
  + Stop changing our department name. Cost saving on decals
  + Stop doing leave slips
  + Stop making major changes without input from employees
  + Anyone can make a call-log request. The building manager should be the one making the request.
  + Custodial deficiency report. When door unlocked. Need to streamline process
  + Waste a lot of time moving people from office to office. Three years, 4 offices.
  + Let employees know if someone passes away.
  + Some have to do two time cards. It’s redundant
  + When asked to contact people, we are asked to call people. Prefer a radio in a central location in a building. Can’t reach manager or coordinator. BROADEN our communication

# Appendix III. Table 3 Notes

* One word to describe your ideal work environment
  + Harmonious
  + Stable
  + Fun - 2
  + Happy
  + Peaceful
* Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?
  + Independence – continuing allowing minimal oversight of work
  + Respect self-responsibility
  + Events: Team building/moral raising: Bowling & pizza - 2
  + Prompt response to maintenance issues and general issues
  + Molding AIM – Facilities Management System
  + Time and work orders
  + Continue training on the system
  + Respect from supervisor
  + Lots of out-of-work support
* Start – What should CPFM start doing?
  + Improved communications
  + Give advanced notice on work changes
  + Certification for preventative maintenance on large machinery
  + Job specific training
  + Continuity of work processes
  + People do things differently from sector to sector/job to job, makes it difficult to perform job tasks
  + Teams within buildings
  + Start using electronic time keeping system
  + No paper timesheets
  + Start updating equipment
  + Preexisting buildings are not being kept up to date
  + Manage equipment – training employees to use equipment
  + Provide refreshments for early morning meetings
  + Computers for maintenance to log times and automate requests
* Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?
  + Stop reducing staff numbers and capabilities through eliminating positions as people fall out
  + Triplicate carbon copy form for vacation days – leave request
  + Automate vacation days – electronically
  + Maintenance doesn’t have access to computers
  + Letting users in other departments dictate how to business
  + Increases costs of projects when people override preexisting processes in departments
  + Employees were let go that were here for many years – felt that
  + Informal emails that do not refer to people by names but through position title
  + More respect towards people – individuals are being treated like a cog in a machine
  + Inconsistency with hiring and firing – leads people to believe that upper administration does not know what they are doing
  + Prioritizing buildings maintenance is leading to inequality in building conditions and difficulties with upkeep

# Appendix IV. Dot Voting

* Continue
  + Culture of supportive management – no micromanagement (8 votes)
  + Employee relationship building – morale raising events (7 votes)
  + Keeping work in-house (4 votes)
  + Gathering feedback from people on the ground (2 votes)
  + Promptness in addressing maintenance concerns (1 vote)
  + Open communication, especially around safety (1 vote)
* Start
  + Better define boundaries between CPFM and the rest of campus (9 votes)
  + Better cross-department / cross-campus communication – responsive communication (8 votes)
  + Include classified team members in design meetings – take advantage of on-the-ground expertise (3 votes)
  + Use updated electronic technology (2 votes)
  + Long-term planning (1 vote)
  + Internal communication (0 votes)
  + Prioritizing / being thoughtful about shorter-term change (0 votes)
  + Job improvement programs (0 votes)
* Stop
  + Reducing staff (7 votes)
  + Allowing users to dictate the project – users need to be appropriately involved (6 votes)
  + Creating inappropriate tasks – involve people in decision-making (6 votes)
  + Handle layoffs or staff changes more thoughtfully (3 votes)
  + Doing things without feedback (3 votes)
  + Restricting access to information (2 votes)
  + Making change for the sake of making change (2 votes)