

Successful Transitions: Best Practices for OSU Units Undergoing Reorganization

Organizational changes are part of the landscape of meeting the business needs at OSU. Leaders need to be well equipped to help their employees successfully adapt to these changes. Poorly executed reorganizations cause major disruptions in the workplace that can diminish employee morale, reduce employee engagement, lower productivity, and increase employee turnover (PSYRES 2011). Loss of productivity and the ongoing recruitment of new employees further generates needless financial losses and stress at all levels of the university.

The Benefits of Thoughtful Change Management During Reorganization of University Departments and Units

- Retention of top talent
- Maintenance of employee engagement and productivity during transitions
- Building of positive relationships and morale
- Promotion of transparency and clear communication of university expectations
- Increased accountability
- Demonstrated person-centered leadership
- Reduction of employee turnover
- University cost-savings

Succession and Communication Planning

Business plans should include information about succession planning of workflow, job positions and transition management support for employees. Effective plans typically include the following:

- Ongoing, inclusive opportunities for employees to provide input at all stages of change
- A review and inclusive discussion of expected changes in work flow, processes, and customer service
- Address needed changes in funding streams for all restructured or new units
- A review of job positions and descriptions, if applicable (consult with Classification & Compensation 7-5426)
- A review of how positions may be reorganized - Consideration should be given to employee tenure in organization, classification guidelines regarding the effects of any proposed changes to employee benefits and/or job descriptions, and any potential effect on contract renewals or changes
- Consultation with Employee Relations (7-0632) prior to any discussions with employees or implementation planning related to their positions
- How news of the reorganization will be communicated to all parties who will be impacted by the change, including: University administrators, employees, students, customers and stakeholders.

Transition Management Support

All plans to address organizational change should provide information about how supervisors, employees and students will be supported through the transition. Examples of support through OSU include: Supervisor and leadership training provided by the Leadership Development Project, Office of Human Resources (<http://hr.oregonstate.edu/parent-unit/leadership-development-project>); individual and supervisory assistance via Employee Relations (<http://hr.oregonstate.edu/about-us/detailed-unit-listing/employee-and-labor-relations>); and individualized and group support on conflict management and transitions management through the University Ombuds Office <http://oregonstate.edu/ombuds/>.

Additional Resources:

Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change, by William Bridges

Exploring the Link Between Restructuring and Employee Well-Being: http://archiwum.ciop.pl/zasoby/PSYRES_book.pdf

The Change Cycle: <https://changecycle.com/change-cycle/>