Improvements Can Happen Quickly

Significant improvements can happen in a short time! Just ask the hardworking team that recently reworked several processes at the Dee Events Center.

Based on a suggestion made by Larry Fields and Dave Maxson, the custodial crew formed a partnership with the Dee Events Center. The outcome was a cross-functional team made up of custodial and Event Center personnel. This team reworked three processes in a five-week period.

- Protection of the Event Center flooring. Purchased a durable tarp to replace the carpet that usually protects the floor.
  - Old process took 6 people 3 hours to lay out carpet. New process will only take 2 people 1 hour.
  - Injuries will be reduced because tarp is easier to handle.
  - Storage space will be freed up because tarp takes less room.

- The custodial process. Defined a routine custodial process that identifies daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly tasks. In the past, custodial work was conducted sporadically.

- Management of cleaning equipment. The Center didn’t have the required equipment to get the custodial work accomplished. The proper equipment was reallocated from other areas. Now they have the equipment to do the job better.

Team Recommends 20 Changes To Improve PAR Process and Form

Over 10,000 Personnel/Payroll Action Requests (PARs) are processed each year at WSU. With that much paper floating around, it seems like a great opportunity to improve the way the system operates!

That's exactly what a team of individuals, representing eight different areas, thought too. After meeting for over a year, the group recently recommended 20 changes to the PAR process and form. All of the PAR Team recommendations have been approved by the Quality Council and an Implementation Team has been established.

All of the information gathered from the users of the PAR system and the statistical data highlight the need to make significant improvements in the hourly, workstudy and adjunct areas. Such changes with the salaried PAR system did not seem necessary. Some of the concerns and suggested changes include:

- Too many versions of the PAR form in use, creating confusion for users.
  (1) All pre-printed versions of the PAR form should be eliminated.
  (2) The approved standard version of the PC-based PAR should be used.

- Not all WSU users are familiar with the PC-based PAR program.
  (1) The PAR program should include a help screen to assist users in completion of the PAR.
  (2) The proposed secretarial handbook should contain a section regarding preparation of PC-based PARs.

- Users find "action code" choices confusing/unclear.
  Action codes should be revised on the recommended PC-based PAR.

- Not all separating employees go through the employment release process, resulting in potential overpayment and loss of property.
  The employment release form and clearance instructions will be printed on the PC simultaneously with the separation PAR.

- Users find some fields of information difficult to obtain.
  (1) Some fields will be completed by Human Resources (HR) and/or Payroll instead of the department.
  (2) Some fields will be removed from the PAR form because they are obtained from other documents by HR and/or Payroll.
  (3) Some fields will be expanded.
  (4) The phone numbers for HR and Payroll will be included in the heading of the PAR form.

- It is unclear what each signature on the PAR represents or if all signatures are necessary.
  (1) The preparer’s signature line will be eliminated and the PAR program will be modified to print preparer’s name and extension.
  (2) Signature requirements will be identified.
  (3) Deans and department heads should assign a professional level designee to approve PARs in their absence.

- There are many employees who prepare PARs who are not totally familiar with the PC PAR system or the PAR process. In addition, there is no training program in place to educate new employees regarding these issues.
  (1) Two training programs will be provided: PAR Orientation Training and PC-Based PAR Employee Training.
  (2) The University Policy and Procedure Manual should be reviewed and updated to coincide with current practices and with these recommendations.

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