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Certified Public Manager Project
Process Improvements for Training and Leave Systems
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Process Improvements for Training and Leave Systems

PROJECT GOAL

Develop a process or method for training and leave systems that is accessible and user friendly for all employees by FY 98/99.

Desired state: The new systems will allow employees to request leave and verify training in a more efficient manner.

The proposed changes should generate an overall cost savings to the agency of at least 10% from current expenditures.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

LEAVE SYSTEM

Currently employees fill out a leave statement, forward to supervisor for approval and forward to Human Resource for coding. The form is a triplicate form, which costs 11.5 cents. Human Resources currently devotes approximately 4 hours per month to coding and running individualized leave forms. Our project will explore a faster more efficient method for employees to process leave. Communication with each employee to explain any new process will occur within each division.

Background Legislation:

HR Regulation 19.703.02 states "granting of leave shall be in writing and approved by proper authority". A legal interpretation indicates that approval does not have to be by

signature. Our new e-mail system that will have individualized PIN numbers will ensure confidentiality.

Background Research:

Other agencies (Revenue, Vocational Rehabilitation, Budget and Control Board and Archives and History) are exploring automating the leave systems. Primarily these systems have been stalled because of data systems problems and the need to press on with other priorities. Clemson University currently has an automated leave system and it has worked well for them.

TRAINING

Training has been done on a piecemeal basis in the past. Often employees were unclear on training needs and overall agency needs. Our project will examine developing a consistent, standardized method for maintaining training records. The new method will give employees and immediate view of their training record with courses taken and required courses needed. Included within the training component will be a communication session with each employee to explain the training needs of the agency and to seek input and individual training wants and needs.

Background Research:

The Department of Revenue, Clemson University and Retirement Systems all have developed detailed career development and training plans and can serve as models for our systems.

Background Progress:

In the fall of 1996, a management retreat was devoted to training needs in the agency. A defined training plan was developed for each program area. Communication with each employee gathering their wants and needs will be done within the months of November and December.

Link to Agency Goals/Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan was recently revised. The following key issues and strategies were developed that support the project components.

1. Improve communication channels.
2. Simplify and combine procedures and forms.
3. Build greater depth within staff.
4. Develop individual training plans for each employee.

CAUSE ANALYSIS

With our cause analysis, our intent was to define the current situation and to localize any conditions, and in short narrow the focus of the problem. We established that an appropriate method would be to use an affinity diagram for grouping our ideas. Affinity diagrams are useful in allowing a team to creatively generate a large number of ideas/issues and then organize and summarize natural groupings among them to understand the essence of a problem and breakthrough solutions. We had established that to get at the root cause of any problem, we needed to ask why five times. An affinity diagram

provided an excellent tool to explore the problem. The affinity diagrams in Attachments I & II represent our efforts. Our flowcharts attached in Attachment III and IV outline our review of the current state. Data collected from our current leave administrator indicates a time factor of 10 seconds per transaction with a monthly leave transaction number of at least 200 documents with from 2 to 10 transactions on each transaction. This represents a time factor of 66 minutes per month and translates to a cost of \$16.90 for staff time.

Implementation Plan

Our implementation plan can generally be characterized in the following three general areas. I. Communication, II. Education and III. Evaluation. In order to clearly see the criticality of each of these areas, the following review is necessary.

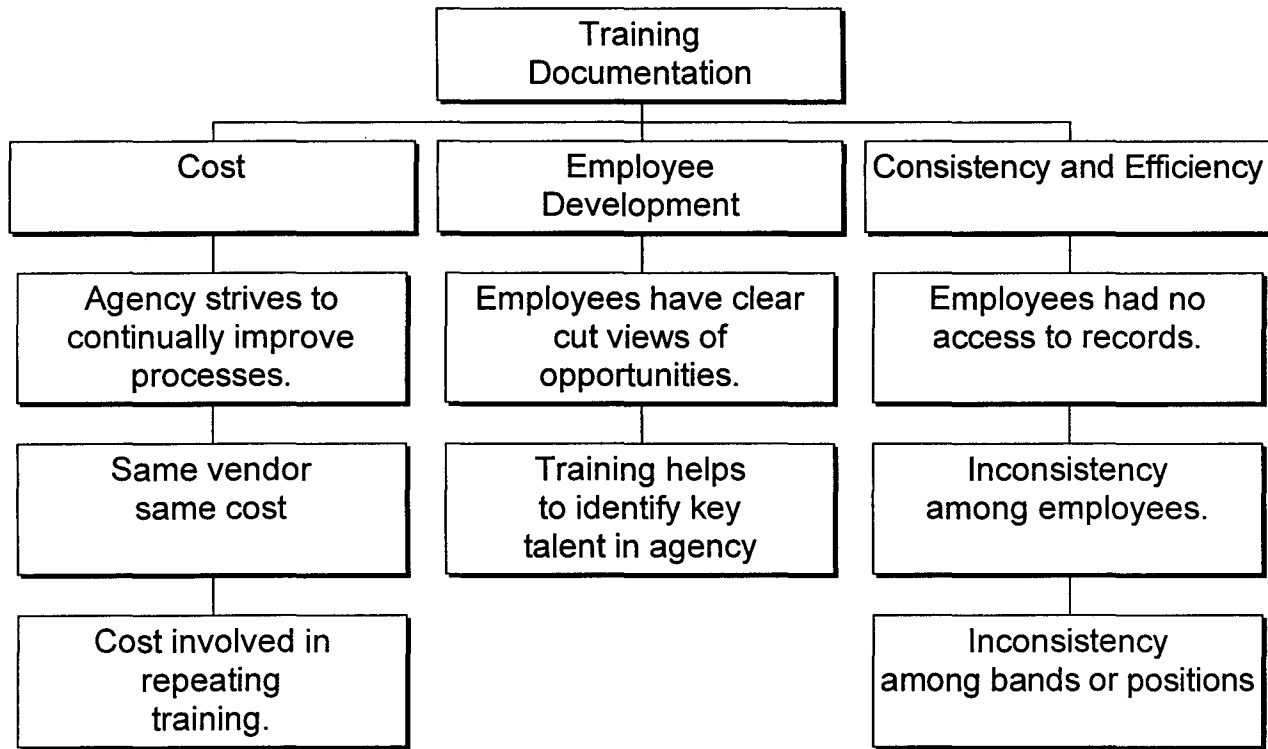
- I. **Communication:** We must ensure that all parties, employees, supervisors are informed on the training components and the automated leave components. We will standardize our communication efforts between all divisions so that all supervisors and employees receive the same information. We will involve 2-way communication and provide a method to receive feedback from participants on how proposed changes affect them. There are two primary obstacles we anticipate encountering while implementing these new changes. Currently many of the staff is not computer literate and secondly the system changes need to be established as a priority with IT staff. We are undergoing a complete overhaul with our hardware and software and all employees will be going through training on the new systems. We know this training will be priority for the IT division and will improve computer skills. However, the

proposed automated systems compliment the IT changes taking place in the Authority.

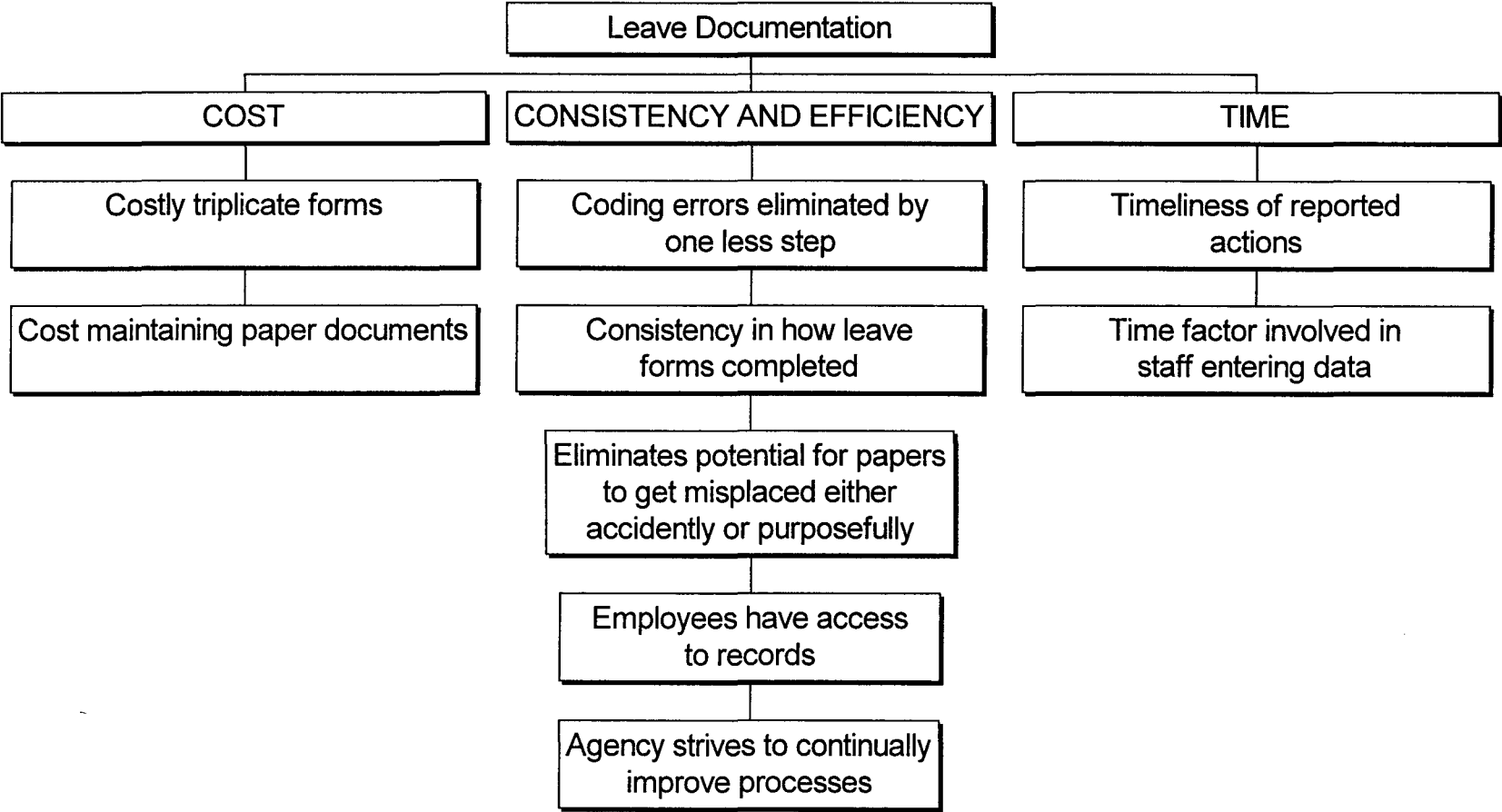
II. Education: Employees and supervisors must not only be informed on the projects but also educated on the benefits to them. Cost savings, time saving measures must be clearly spelled out. Employees and supervisors must learn their role in each process and understand the criticality of completing their role. Therefore these new processes will be incorporated into the Authority's standard operating procedures.

III. Evaluation: No project can be truly measured for success without a clearly defined evaluation method. The attached survey instruments will serve as evaluation tools for the project. In an effort to continue the process improvement we will survey at least annually. Attachments VII & VIII. We anticipate cost savings with the following-- costs associated with printed leave slips and staff time. Approximate cost per month (\$23.00 slips + \$16.90 staff time = \$39.90). We also anticipate cost savings in not repeating employee training. At least 2 or 3 courses per year are repeated due to poor record keeping. The cost of each course is currently between \$150 and \$500.

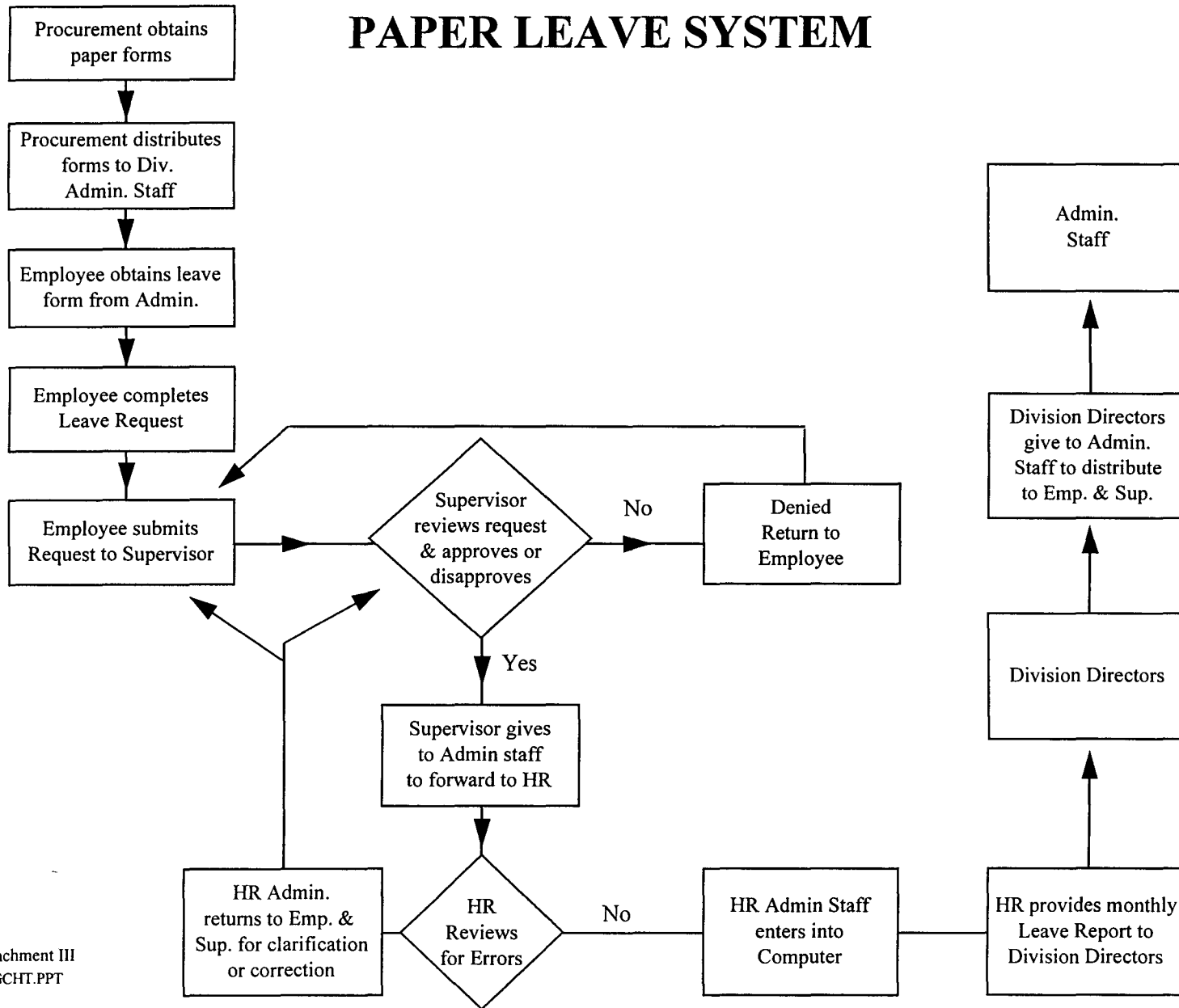
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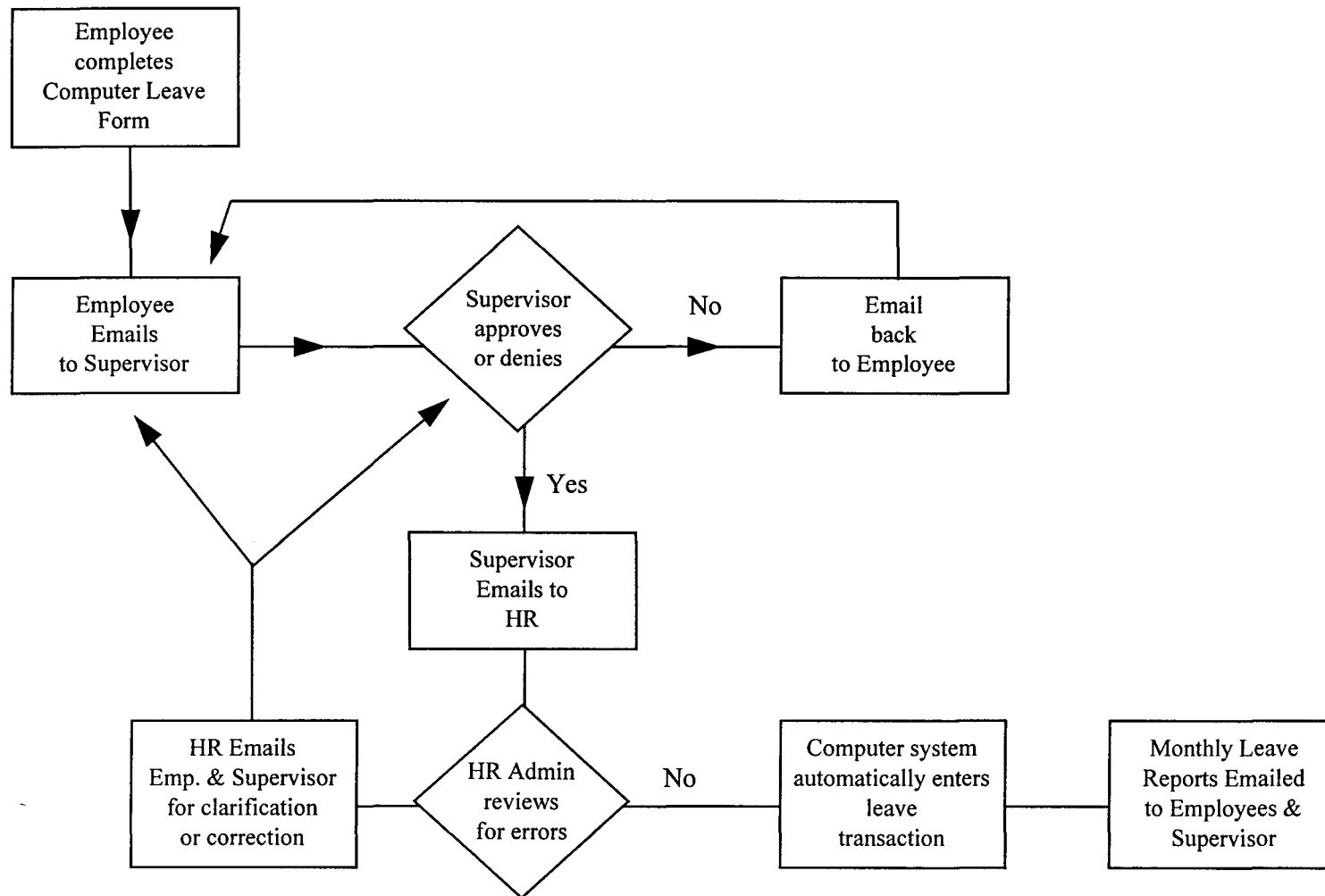
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PAPER LEAVE SYSTEM



COMPUTERIZED LEAVE SYSTEM



Time Chart: Training Plan

<i>Goals</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Accountability</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Evaluation Tool</i>
Establish Training Needs	Meet with managers	Management Team	October 15, 1996	Evaluation after 2 years
Develop Automated training system	Purchase training system.	IT Director HR Staff	March 30, 1997	System has no kinks.
Share new automated training	Meet with departmental areas.	HR Director	January 31, 1998	Survey Instrument Fall
Overview of training plan	Personal visits with employees.	HR Director	February 28, 1998	Spot checks for clear understanding among employees
Employees have taken required courses.	Schedule with internal trainers and OHR.	HR Director	October 31, 1998	Review each plan for completion.

Time Chart: Leave

<i>Goals</i>	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Accountability</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Evaluation Tool</i>
Develop automated leave slip.	Review other agency methods.	HR Staff	October 31, 1997	New form is in place.
	Develop leave form.	IT Staff	October 31, 1997	
Share automated system with employees	Visit individual departments.	HR Staff	November 30, 1997	Employees have no problems with new system.
Develop leave system to be forwarded via E-mail.	Develop process with IT staff.	IT Staff	July 1, 1997	System suffers no delays in recording leave
		HR Staff		
Pilot New Leave via E-mail	Rental Assistance serves as pilot department.	Rental Asst. Director	July 1, 1998	No problems with Posting leave. Survey instrument October 1998.

Training Data Survey

Do you feel that your training records have been adequately maintained?

_____ Yes _____ No

Do you feel the training required reflects what training is necessary to do your job?

_____ Yes _____ No

Do you now know what courses you should take in the future?

_____ Yes _____ No

Do you have approximate time frames for taking those courses?

_____ Yes _____ No

What would you like to see on your training record?

Now that you have an individualized training record, do you feel that you are better able to plot your personal career development?

_____ Yes _____ No

Leave Slip Survey

Do you like the present method for requesting leave?

Yes No

Is it clear to you how to complete the leave form?

Yes No

Would you like to transmit your leave slip for approval of your supervisor via E-mail?

Yes No

Would you like to be able to access your leave statement immediately?

Yes No

If your leave slip was automatically forwarded to your supervisor for approval, should we automatically re-route it if it has not been verified after 3 days?

Yes No

Would you like to have a notification to warn you when your leave has lapsed below 5 days?

Yes No

Would you like to have a reminder on your leave record that you need to take leave because you are in jeopardy of losing it?

Yes No

What suggestions do you have for improving the leave process?
