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Certified Public Manager Project

**Training and Development Toolbox
A Proposal**

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STATE DOCUMENTS

Project Goal and Problem Statement

The Center for Education, Quality and Assessment (CEQA) provides human resource, organizational development and quality services for South Carolina state government. CEQA's services include providing technical assistance and capacity building to agencies' training and development programs and staff.¹

During the past several years a pattern has emerged in technical assistance requests. Agencies lack an organized approach to training and development (T&D) functions (needs assessment, philosophy, policy, guidelines, advisory panels, training plans, and developmental programs for supervisors and managers). Approximately two to three requests are received each year. Two CEQA program managers (Kuehner and Burdyl) have the primary responsibility for response.

In discussions with Kuehner and Burdyl, this CPM candidate discovered technical assistance requests are responded to immediately. However, the approach to providing T&D function assistance is infrequent and inconsistent. Kuehner and Burdyl collaborate on a request by request basis from notes and various training needs analysis tools. There is no established protocol.

¹ South Carolina Budget and Control Board, Human Resource Catalog, fiscal year 1998-1999.

The *goal* of this project is to complete a proposal for the development and implementation of a consistent protocol for technical assistance requests regarding T&D functions. The desired state is a plan to design and develop a flexible Training and Development Toolbox. Flexibility is essential for establishing and maintaining relationships with the state agencies and organizations CEQA serves. Ideally, the toolbox will be a resource for CEQA customers to independently develop training and development functions or work with CEQA in a facilitative process for development. Part of CEQA's goal is to help agencies develop. Toolbox is a way to assist them with T&D. It will provide a consistent method to assess where they are and identify gaps with best practices. It will include models, plans and potential solutions.

Management supports the process to work towards a consistent method of service delivery. They provided their notes, professional journals and various tools. The proposal will be submitted for managerial approval by May 1999.

Cause Analysis

Over the past three years, an increased number of state agencies and organizations have sought CEQA's assistance with setting up

T&D functions and determining what their T&D areas should look like in terms of;

- the role of T&D
- philosophy
- policy
- guidelines
- process
- needs assessment
- training plans
- supervisory and managerial development
- infrastructure

Not all requests for services include CEQA functioning in a facilitative capacity throughout the process. Some requests have been for a “do-it-yourself” guide or self assessment approach the agency could complete independently. A consistent approach and supporting policies is necessary because of agency turnover in T&D and the potential for turnover in senior management due to cabinet form of government.

CEQA lacks a consistent method to respond to the requests.

Kuehner and Burdyl ~~have~~ *share* primary responsibility for T&D requests. A

consultation appointment is scheduled with the requesting agency's senior management team. The senior management team is guided through a process to develop a philosophy and the beginnings of an agency T&D plan. Both Kuehner and Burdyl use different assessment tools and models. In essence, each time there is a request for consultation services in T&D planning, a labor intensive customized service is developed. Agency senior management teams (with varying commitment levels) are making T&D decisions by consensus. It would more appropriate for senior management to provide direction to the effort and to involve key managers.

The Office of Human Resources' (OHR) is shifting its focus to providing consultation service. The Development of Statewide HR Functions section of the Working Plan states Goal 1 is , "OHR staff will works as consultants and partners with agencies to assist them to attain their own optimal levels of performance from their HR functions".² Toolbox development supports the Working Plan accomplishing three of the 11 objectives for the goal. The objectives are:

(1) Identify and define benchmarks and bests practices for HR.

² South Carolina Budget and Control Board, Office of Human Resources, Working Plan, July 1, 1997 – June 30, 2000, Revised June 12, 1998.

- (2) Develop methods (which may include instruments) to assess the current level of performance/effectiveness of agency HR functions.
- (3) Consult with agencies in assessing where they are by helping them to compare themselves to established benchmarks and in implementing improvements.

Data Collection

Step 1. Clarifying Data Collection Goals

CEQA lacks an observable process for providing T&D consultation. The method used to collect data up this point has been personal interviews with Kuehner and Burdyl. Both provided various tools and professional journal articles. Each uses a different method in providing T&D consultation based upon the details of individual consultation request, current T&D functions in the agency and agency size. No customer or quantitative data is available at this time.

Step 2. Operational Definitions

Training and Development Toolbox: (working definition) A method and resource package for T&D Development. Will be further defined with customers and stakeholders.

Training: Concentrates on a gap between current level of employee performance and the desired level of performance.

Development: Concentrates on the enhancing jobs by enhancing employees.

Step 3. Focus on Key Elements of the Problem

Potential for stratified data. Collect data by conducting focus groups and researching current literature in the following demographics to determine if it impacts the requests;

- ❑ needs assessments (process stages)
- ❑ agency size
- ❑ category
 - ❑ training
 - ❑ development
 - ❑ education
- ❑ type of service
 - ❑ consultation
 - ❑ product

South Carolina's organizations and agencies vary in size. Some may have less than 100 employees while others operate with more than 5,000 employees. Size impacts agencies' ability and capacity to deliver training internally. The type of service requested impacts CEQA's capacity to provide the service. Capacity is minimally effected by requests for a self assessment guide. A request for

consultation and/or assistance requires one or more professional staff members for an unspecified period of months.

Step 4. Data Collection

Develop open ended questions for use with customer and stakeholder groups. Compare customer and stakeholder requests with current service delivery practice. Also, compare data with T&D best practices. Data sources include:

- agencies receiving T&D consultation services in the past three years
- current customers
- Human Resource Advisory Panel
- Training Consortium
- agencies with established T&D functions
- CEQA staff

Data sources for best practices in T&D include;

- ASTD
- NAGTAD
- South Carolina State Library

Step 5. Continue to Improve

Monitor professional literature for trends in T&D. Seek customer feedback on service delivery.

Planning and Implementation

Note: This plan will include estimated amounts of time (days, weeks, and months) for each task. Specific dates will be added once the proposal is reviewed and accepted by CEQA management. Many tasks will occur simultaneously.

Tasks

1. Collect process notes, other resources and conduct personal interviews with Kuehner and Burdyl (1 week)
2. Research best T&D practices (3 weeks)
 - 2.1.1. State Library DISCUS on line
 - 2.1.2. NAGTAD
 - 2.1.3. ASTD
 - 2.1.4. Info-Line
3. Visit state agencies with established T&D functions (3 weeks)
4. Interview agencies who received T&D consultation services
 - 4.1. Identify agency and contact person (2 days)
 - 4.2. Prepare interview questions (1 week)
5. Compile all data (point of measurement) (2 weeks)
6. Conduct focus groups
 - 6.1. Identify customers and stakeholders for focus groups (1 week)
 - 6.2. Develop focus group questions (1 week)

6.3. Secure dates and locations (3 days)

6.4. Conduct focus groups (1/2 day per group)

6.5. Compile data (point of measurement) (8 weeks)

7. Analyze & compare all data (point of measurement) (2 weeks)

8. Begin first draft of Training and Development Toolbox (3 weeks)

9.1. Research copyright issues (as necessary)

9. Identify and establish a review panel composed of CEQA, customers and stake holders (1 week)

10. Distribute draft to review panel (point of measurement) (1 week)

10.1. Revise as necessary (1 week)

10.2. Distribute final draft (1 week)

10.3. Prepare camera-ready copy for state print shop (1 week)

11. Develop marketing plan and tools for Training and Development Toolbox as a stand-alone resource or with facilitative consultation (2 weeks)

Resources

Human - Primary developer, graphics artist

Facilities – Affinity room 906 or Pavilion

Equipment – personal computers, flip chart stands, copier

Materials – flip chart pads, markers, index cards, spray mount

Obstacles

Since few requests have been received for assistance with T&D functions, data for past practices does not exist. CEQA management supports the development of this proposal and the goal to work towards a consistent method to deliver a Training and Development Toolbox. There is always a potential for disagreement on philosophy, content, tools, models, etc. Every effort will be made to create a win-win environment as the Toolbox begins to take shape. Scheduling interviews, focus groups, advisory panel etc. is another potential obstacle. Copyright permission may not be obtainable.

Evaluation

As a first step in evaluation, the final product will be compared to the goal. The Toolbox is a service and difficult to objectively evaluate. It will be compared to methods recognized as best practices. It will also be tested with agencies for individual use and with facilitative consultation services. The Toolbox will become a value added service. Following implementation, agencies receiving services will be monitored as they develop or enhance T&D functions. Feedback will be used to keep the service current.

Agencies receiving the service will be contacted 1 year from the end of the service. The purpose of the contact will be to determine if the Toolbox is being used; yes or no. Overtime, if the toolbox is being used, an evaluation tool could be developed to determine effectiveness.

Bibliography

South Carolina Budget and Control Board, Human Resource Catalog, fiscal year 1998-1999.

South Carolina Budget and Control Board, Office of Human Resources, Working Plan, July 1, 1997 – June 30, 2000, Revised June 12, 1998.