

WAYS TO ASSURE THAT PERSONNEL INPUT IS CONSIDERED IN ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION MAKING

Assumptions that provide the foundation for these actions...

1. We are committed in assuring that employees would not fear that their opinion or perspective would be 'remembered' or retaliated against;
2. We recognize that it is important to build trust among those we are representing;
3. As leaders of an organization, we accept the responsibility of representing those who report to us;
4. We believe that by involving employees in discussion, idea generation, problem solving of issues and concerns in meaningful ways our organization will be strengthened;
5. It is important to be proactive as well as reactive in addressing organizational issues;
6. If and when possible, we should communicate the nature of the input that was received, how the feedback was used in the decision process and the decision(s) or outcome(s). This 'double loop' will hopefully strengthen trust and ownership.
7. We accept the responsibility to set the stage for positive conversations in individual discussions as well as 'group settings'. We need to remind employees that our goal is to continuously improve the organization and learn from our actions. *Voicing concerns* with the intent to influence organizational change should not be considered the same as *negativity*. There should be room in the dialogue for contrary opinions or perspectives that may not match our own. (Whining is different!)

Listed below are strategies that are currently established in our organization. We encourage strengthening existing processes and activities. (See notes for considerations.

1) The Presidents of the professional associations meet quarterly with the Director for dialogue. OEAA, ESP, OEPA, CES.

Questions are developed by committees and the Board of each organization and are taken to Keith. Reports are given to the board on the responses at the next meeting.

Considerations:

1. Could and should these dialogue sessions include more than the director?
2. Should more open dialogue be encouraged to eliminate a 'question/answer' format?
3. Should the organization seek input from these representatives about issues and topics?
4. Could teams come up with questions for dialogue and bring those to network?

2) County Chair District Roundtables

Considerations:

1. Do employees have opportunity to add items to the agenda for discussion?
2. Is dialogue open and individuals not judged for having unique or oppositional viewpoints or concerns?

3) County Chair Sounding board: Group of five identified persons which meet regularly to discuss issues brought to their attention by other unit chairs in their district.

Considerations:

1. Who is represented?

2. How are the persons selected?
3. How often do they meet?
4. How are they getting input from others in their district?
5. Is two way communication working?

4) Open Forums - Fireside chats with the Administrative Leadership Team (Keith, Barb and Nikki)

Considerations:

1. Create an environment for open dialogue:
2. Create a non-threatening way to bring topics to the table for discussion:
3. Allow time for open and in-depth dialogue:
4. What will happen with ideas and concerns expressed?
5. Consider ways to have 'open dialogue' opportunities at Annual conference, district conferences, district conference, GO Bucks, etc.

5) Open Door Policy:

OSU Extension Administrators and members of the Leadership Network have an open door policy and welcome interaction with staff

6) District specialists come together with program AD's

Considerations:

1. Do things concerns related to programming get reported back to cabinet or network?

7) District specialists meet with District Directors

Considerations:

1. Do issues and concerns raised get communicated back to cabinet or network?

8) Organizational surveys and research:

Reports from masters thesis and doctoral research related to the organizational structure.

Considerations:

1. Do these reports get shared with network?
2. Do these reports get shared with everyone in organization?
3. What is done with the findings and recommendations?

9) Communiqué - allowing for a response to one-way communication processes or dialogue about decisions/policy changes that are communicated to staff to assure there is understanding of rationale and level from which mandate is generated.

10) Invite representative employees to network/cabinet meeting to provide input and explore options when appropriate. This expands opportunity for additional perspectives and also provides an option for gaining ownership by the organization.

11) Advisory Committees - various program and organizational advisory committees exist to provide feedback and input into decision making.