

Sheffield Hallam University

Cultural Transformation at Sheffield Hallam University

Background

- ▶ Over 28,000 students
- ▶ In excess of 3,000 staff
- ▶ Sixth largest University in the UK
- ▶ Among the leading 'modern' Universities in the UK

In 1998 the Vice Chancellor published a White Paper which set a new direction for the University.

In 2004 the University decided to bring the 'library function' or Learning Centre (LC) and the 'technology department' or Communications and IT Services (CIS) together into one unit in order to provide an improved level of service to both students and academics at a lower cost.

There were 220 in the LC and 110 members of staff in CIS and, they had a combined annual budget of £10m, looked after 6,000 PC's, 100 servers, 400 databases, and 1,000,000 books.

In order to achieve this integration effectively it was decided that the culture aspects of the merger should be explicitly managed and, if possible, a 'new' integrated culture developed.

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Methodology

Values were measured using a web based tool at an individual and organizational level, asking staff to select their top ten values for themselves personally, and then for the current and desired organisation.

These values were then plotted against seven levels of consciousness. Once the values were measured, workshops were held with staff to discuss the results and develop action plans. These workshops then resulted in a one year transition plan being put together from the output of the numerous sessions.

The plan was to move the two departments towards a single, agreed future state taking account of people, processes, technology and the desired culture

It should be noted that although the values assessment was a key component of the overall process, the subsequent workshops and planning played a more significant role, as did the management team's motivation

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Results

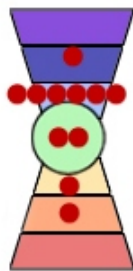
The assessments were done first of all on managers and supervisors, and then on the two departments and the results were analyzed in a number of ways. When the desired organisational values for the two departments were compared they showed a remarkable degree of alignment with eight out of ten being identical and one of the remaining two being very close

Personal

1. Honesty (76)
2. Humour/fun (69)
3. Reliability (58)
4. Commitment (50)
- 4=. Positive Attitude (50)
6. Adaptability (47)
- 6=. Caring (47)
8. Enthusiasm (45)
9. Balance (home/ work) (44)
10. Co-operation (42)
11. Making a difference (42)

PL = 11-0
 IRS (P) = 7-3-1
 IRS (L) = 0-0-0

Current Culture

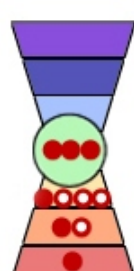


1. Bureaucracy (71) (L)
- 1=. Customer Satisfaction (71)
3. Hierarchy (60) (L)
- 3=. Teamwork (60)
5. Work overload (55)(L)
6. Cost reduction (51)
7. Information Sharing (44)
8. Continuous Improvement (40)
9. Professionalism (36)
10. Empire Building (34)(L)

PL = 6-4
 IROS (P) = 0-1-5-0
 IROS (L) = 0-1-3-0

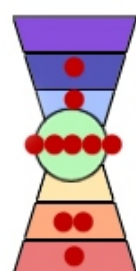
0 Matches

Desired Culture



1. Customer Satisfaction (81)
2. Employee Recognition (60)
3. Commitment (59)
4. Adaptability (53)
5. Continuous Improvement (51)
6. Information Sharing (49)
7. Teamwork (46)
8. Employee fulfillment (44)
9. Employee wellbeing (43)
10. Accountability (42)

PL = 10-0
 IROS (P) = 2-3-5-0
 IROS (L) = 0-0-0-0



2 Matches

LEGENDS

Underline = PV & CC match
 Red = PV, CC & DC match
 Red = CC & DC match
 Blue = PV & DC match

P = Positive
 L = Potentially Limiting
 (hollow dots)

I = Individual
 R = Relationship
 O = Organization
 S = Societal

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Results of measuring the values of the combined CIS and LC departments

There were a number of potentially limiting values in the current organisation's culture. Research has shown that limiting values cost organisations in lost efficiency, which in this means that their removal will lead to a more productive department.

The IRS and IROS show the spread of both positive and limiting values across the individual, relationships, organization, and society. The IRS index (7-3-1) shows the respondents are people-oriented as shown by three "relationship" values and one "societal" value. The IROS index for the desired culture (2-3-5-0) shows that the organisation wants a notable increase in "relationship" type values compared to their current cultures. They also want a focus on "individual" type values. The employees desired a greater connection with each other and the people with whom they come in contact.

There being no matches between personal and current cultures is a sign that the staff are not bringing what they value in themselves to their work and this is seen as limiting both their own and the organisation's potential. The four matches between current and desired culture indicate that there are some things they want to keep from the present. In the desired culture the two matches from personal indicates that they would also like to bring more of themselves to their work in the future.

There were differences in the two groups in the current culture with CIS indicating reluctance to share information, which was the opposite for the LC, overall though there were six matches and this was seen as a significant foundation on which to build.

This plan covered the creation of a new, combined department with a new brand and identity, new structures and processes, and a new management team.

- ▶ Cost of the overall programme was £286k over two years
- ▶ Savings were £120k in year one
- ▶ £370k in year two
- ▶ £500k thereafter
- ▶ Employer of the Year (Times Higher Education)

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Summary

The significant success of this initiative lies in the fact that everyone benefited, from staff with enhanced careers and a greater feeling of belonging, students with a better service, academics with more facilities, and the University as a whole in reduced costs and a proven ability to take on such significant projects whilst maintaining the day to day operations.

The process described in this case study is important in its own right but also has value in many other areas over and above how it was used here to bring together two parts of a larger organisation. It is useful in mergers and acquisitions, in major change initiatives, in leading disparate groups such as technology operations and systems development teams etc. In fact, its greatest value would be in its use in ensuring that new technology and systems are fully integrated into organisations and their benefits are realised.