HUMAN RESOURCES at OSU: RECOMMENDATIONS and RESPONSES

Objective and Scope

Baker Tilly was engaged to review Oregon State University's current HR structure; explore models and approaches to delivering HR services at similar higher education institutions; identify recommendations for how best to deliver HR services at OSU; and provide the recommended roles and responsibilities, qualifications and attributes of the university's next chief human resources officer.

A steering committee comprised of campus leaders provided oversight to this effort. In this evaluation, Baker Tilly conducted 24 one-on-one and focus group interviews with over 150 faculty and staff and considered their experience with the delivery of HR services at similar institutions. In addition, Baker Tilly performed a review of documentation including central and business center HR policies, procedures, surveys, position descriptions and strategic initiatives.

Strengths

Baker Tilly noted universal commitment within the OSU community to develop a more holistic human resources function within OSU. For example, university HR stakeholders want to capitalize on the opportunity to implement best practices, and staff are passionate and committed to partnering with university academic and administrative management to provide excellent human resource services.

Recommendations and Response

Baker Tilly has recommended changes to ensure that the basic human resources management needs of the university are met and for OSU to have an effective and strategic approach to human resources management institution-wide. It is recommended that the university:

1. Ensure that the chief human resources officer (CHRO) is positioned as a strategic leader and is given appropriate authority to drive specific strategic results.
2. Clearly define effective HR reporting lines and increase collaboration between HR functions within the business centers and central HR.
3. Clarify and value the roles that all staff, offices, and departments provide relative to HR services across the organization. Align required competencies with those roles which support execution of human resources strategy and move away from a purely transactional approach.
4. Ensure that HR policies are developed with all key stakeholders in mind; that distributed HR service delivery is understood and embraced; staff are trained; and that policies are consistently and correctly applied.
5. Utilize data and trend analysis to make decisions, change approaches, set priorities and redesign technology to effectively support HR functions and human resource management decisions.

The interim vice president for finance and administration, in collaboration with the steering committee, has identified the hiring of a new CHRO and organizational redesign as the first priorities to achieve. This foundation will enable management and staff within HR to prioritize and identify ways to implement and capitalize upon recommendations three, four and five.

What happens next?

After considering the consultant's recommendations and in consultation with the steering committee, university administration is changing the organizational structure of the human resources function as follows:

- Human resources professionals in the business centers will become a part of -- and have a direct reporting relationship -- within the Office of Human Resources, and will continue to collaborate with Business Center finance professionals to provide human resource services.
- Human resources managers within the Business Centers will continue in their current roles serving the same academic and administrative units, but will carry the new title of Human Resources Business Partnership Managers.
- HR Business Partnership Managers will report to and have the support of a newly created Director of HR Business Partnerships, who will report directly to the CHRO.
- HR Business Partnership Managers will have the support from experts in the major functional areas of HR to provide the full range of human resources services to their academic and administrative partners.
- Business Center Managers will focus their direct oversight on their finance and accounting responsibilities, while continuing to collaborate with the human resources professionals throughout the organization to help ensure seamless operations.

These organizational changes will become effective February 1, 2017.

This change to a HR Business Partner model will help clarify roles and provide core HR services seamlessly to colleges and departments, while also serving to provide strategic partnerships on larger-scale human resources matters.

We are identifying a facilitator to partner with human resources leadership to plan and execute the transition. By Feb. 1, we will update position descriptions for HR and Business Center staff and organize regular functional meetings to foster collaborative work. As a part of this work, we will immediately begin a review of the processes for hiring adjunct faculty and student employees in order to streamline these processes to better serve the university.

Additionally, we are convening a search committee, led by Susan Capalbo, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, to conduct the search for the new chief human resources officer. We will work to ensure that the new HR leader will be seated as soon as possible.

What if I have more questions?

- Contact your supervisor, the Office of Human Resources or the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Administration for more information.
- We will continue to share information with the community throughout the process.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Oregon State doing in response to the recommendations?
- Change our structure so that all human resources personnel, including those in business centers, will have a direct reporting line to the new chief human resources officer (CHRO).
- Hire a CHRO who will be a strategic leader and will employ a holistic human resource management approach.
- Establish the position of Director of HR Business Partnerships, who will oversee the HR Business Partnership Managers that are located within Business Centers.
- Rename Business Center Human Resources Managers to become HR Business Partnership Managers, reporting to the Director of HR Business Partnerships. They will continue to serve as HR consultants to academic and administrative units, and offer a full range of HR solutions that support organizational goals and meet compliance needs.

What are the benefits of these changes?
- It ensures that core HR services are seamlessly provided; allows for a collaborative HR management approach; and positions HR to serve as a strategic partner on larger-scale human capital matters.
- It clarifies roles and responsibilities, allowing for more effective results.
- Ensures policies and procedures are developed with input of key stakeholders, and that data and technology are used to support HR policies, decisions and priorities.

What does this change mean for me?
- Business Center human resources professionals will continue to be co-located within the Business Centers working collaboratively with the Business Center finance professionals to meet needs.
- HR Business Partnership Managers (formerly human resources managers) will continue to be the point of contact for deans, directors and managers.
  - If higher levels of consultation are needed, the Director of HR Business Partnerships, along with the CHRO will provide support.
- People directly impacted by the structural change will have updated position descriptions and realigned qualifications. Salaries for current staff will not change.

What happens next?
- The structural changes will become effective February 1, 2017
- We are forming a search committee for the new CHRO, who will be seated as soon as possible.
- We are identifying a facilitator to partner with human resources leadership to plan and execute the transition in an orderly way. By February 1, we will update position descriptions for HR and Business Center staff and organize regular functional meetings to foster collaborative work.
- We will immediately begin a review of hiring processes for adjunct faculty and student employees to streamline and make those processes more effective.
- Over the longer term, we will review the effectiveness of HR policies and processes and improve our use of information technology to meet goals.