

Building Esprit de Corps in your Faculty

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CSE

CSE- A Case Study

- Anecdotal Evidence
 - Big advantage: Starting from scratch (1968)
 - Greatest Challenge: Continuous growth (1 FTE per year on average over 35+ years)
- Not a recipe for success
 - You don't "mandate" esprit de corps
 - You don't impose a culture
- Some helpful hints (hopefully)

Early Years Defined the Culture

- Small Faculty → Collegiality
 - Social gatherings (ski outings, “pit party” etc.)
 - Open door policy (all fac. offices have same key)
 - Collaboration among subdisciplines
- Motto: “Hire someone better than ourselves”
 - Or “Hire someone to better ourselves”
 - new area vs. consolidation of strength, diversity
 - How to fit in important in the hiring process
 - Did not hire a “superstar” because of personality concerns

The Challenge of Growth

- Integrating, mentoring, and advising new faculty
 - Very serious “friendly” reviews from year 1 on
 - Sharing of expertise (e.g., grant writing)
 - No administrative load for junior faculty
- Lack of space required sacrifice from “old” faculty
 - Common misery (not recommended!)
 - No “jealousy”
- Large infrastructure grant involving almost all faculty

In Two Words: Remove Barriers

- Hierarchical
- Physical
- Discipline-wise

No Pulling Rank

- No rank hierarchy unless mandated (promotion and tenure)
- Involve junior faculty in all important decisions
 - Hiring (one person, one vote)
 - Executive Committee (elected)
 - Teaching review of Senior Faculty
- Total consensus not required but “large majority”
 - Can be draining but worthwhile
- The Chair must communicate, communicate, communicate
 - Some decisions are (must be) unpopular

No Segregation Between Subfields

- No formal “group”
- Mixing of offices
 - By rank and by subfield
- A fair amount of co-advising of graduate students
- A fair amount of co-sponsored cross-discipline quarter-long seminars

Social Interactions

- Monthly Faculty Lunch
 - Half-social, half-“work” (e.g., review of subfield)
- Celebrations
 - Annual holiday party (skits)
 - Etc.
- Involve graduate students and staff
 - Work hard – Play hard

Conclusion

- Quoting from Lou Gerstner
“You can’t simply give a couple of speeches ... and declare that the new culture has taken hold. You can’t mandate it, can’t engineer it. What you *can* do is create the conditions for transformation. ...In fact, in the end, management doesn’t change culture. Management invites the workforce itself to change the culture.”