Proposal: Staff Engagement, Training and Development

Engineering Staff Advisory Council (ESAC)

Employee Engagement Committee (EEC)

Success is not from following those rowing in the wrong direction,

it is following those who have the passion and innovation to move forward.

PROPOSAL: Engagement, Training and Development
ENGINEERING STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL (ESAC)
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE (EEC)

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ESAC EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE
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ENGAGEMENT MISSION STATEMENT

Employee engagement involves all A&M Engineering employees actively working together to define and enhance our culture. Engagement is more than a one-time training, it is a commitment to work together to build an environment that strives on continuous improvement by developing skills through learning opportunities, and reinforcing mutual respect among all A&M Engineering employees.

OBJECTIVE

The proposal objective is to seek support for the development, coordination, implementation, and maintenance of an employee engagement initiative for all A&M Engineering employees. The employee engagement initiative will merge training and development opportunities to support learning as a shared experience among functional groups; resulting in a blend of job satisfaction and commitment, and leading to improved performance, productivity and feelings of empowerment.

SECTION I: SURVEY RESULTS

A. Review of Survey Results

Over 350 support staff responded to a survey conducted at the 2015 Annual ESAC Staff Workshop. The following areas of interest were identified: technical, skill specific, software and system specific; and of these, the following list includes the top three requests that rated the highest:

1. **TECHNICAL**: project management, proposal writing and time management
2. **SKILL SPECIFIC**: communication, conflict resolution and emotional intelligence training
3. **SOFTWARE:** Excel, LaserFiche and PowerPoint
4. **SYSTEM SPECIFIC**: CONCUR, FAMIS and MAESTRO

SECTION II: ENGAGEMENT, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

A. Functional Group Engagement

Form employee functional groups, identify a moderator for each group, and schedule routine engagement opportunities.

Engagement through a functional group structure encourages employees to share best practices, experiences, and establish consistency in approach to processes while building a network among peers who perform similar functions. In alignment with A&M Engineering's effort to efficiently combine resources, the functional group structure will align employees with similar functions through various engagement activities. (See page 4).

It is recommended to have routine webinars, led by a leadership coach, to engage the functional groups together and focus on team-building, motivation, morale, and respect. Each functional group will have a designated moderator who is responsible for offering support to the group by keeping them engaged and informed of upcoming professional development opportunities.

It is proposed to bring the leadership coach to the May 2016 ESAC Staff Workshop. The leadership coach can then tie in the year-long trainings in to a "wrap-up" session at the workshop.

B. Technical Training

Proposal Writing

The Engineering Research Development Office has been consulted to offer a five-part proposal and grant writing series. Additional training in this area will be offered as deemed necessary and/or requested by employees.

Project Management

Employees will have the opportunity to develop the skills to plan, monitor, and execute a project in a timely manner. Example of topics offered by Texas A&M Office of Project Management: Project Management and Leadership, The Project Manager as Communicator, and others.

Time Management

Many employees find themselves multi-tasking which can at times seem overwhelming and stressful. Offer training that focuses on effective planning, goal setting, and managing deadlines as a means for employees to control their time efficiently.

C. Skill Specific

Communication

Effective communication is necessary in improving teamwork, decision making and problem solving. Provide opportunities for employees to develop skills for improved communication, leading to fewer conflicts and enhanced engagement.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution training will be available to both supervisor and employee, although the format may differ. Supervisors will have training in a facilitating type role, learning how to identify, address and handle conflict; whereas, the employee will learn through identification of feelings, listening and communicating as a way of seeking a solution. Reducing conflict promotes a respectful work environment.

Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

Texas A&M Engineering and TAMU have individuals with expertise in the area of Emotional Intelligence (EQ). By utilizing their expertise, and connections to other leaders in this area, EQ will be a key element in meeting the goals of enhancing our culture and encouraging engagement from all employees.

For this portion of the engagement to be successful it is recommended to begin with top level administrators and work in defined groups. Therefore, the following is proposed:

- Engineering Administration (Vice Chancellor and Direct Reports). Suggested session: 2 hours.
- College of Engineering Department Heads and TEES Center Directors. Suggested session: 2 – 4 hours.
- Supervisors, Department/Division Chief of Staff Positions. Suggested session: 2 – 4 hours.
- General Employees. Suggested session: 2 – 4 hours. Available throughout the year.

D. System and Software Specific

System specific training of the most commonly used work systems (CONCUR, FAMIS and MAESTRO) were requested by employees. Trainings for these systems are already offered through a variety of options. The need for additional training will be monitored and coordinated as needed.

Software specific training is currently available through a variety of local and online vendors. An effort to bring training in the areas most commonly requested (Excel, LaserFiche and PowerPoint) by employees as indicated in the survey will be further researched.

E. Leadership Development

Leadership training will provide the tools to enhance the skills at various levels including employees new to their position who aspire to reach a leadership position as well as individuals in an existing role as supervisor, manager, director or other position that requires overseeing employees. We envision a program that provides opportunities for employee growth to enhance the culture and increase engagement. This will include building the foundation for promotion and growth with the end product including a personal leadership and development plan.

Of the 125 respondents who identified as serving in a supervisory role, 75% expressed an interest in training to advance their knowledge and skills in a leadership position. The following training was rated highest, but is not limited to these topics:

1) Motivating and rewarding employees
2) Effective Coaching
3) Conflict resolution
4) Team-building

Taken into consideration will be a partnership with TEEX and TTI in their established leadership programs.

F. Engagement Calendar

A tentative schedule of engagement and training opportunities has been developed. Working in coordination with A&M Engineering employees the calendar will be modified as needed to ensure employee's needs are met. (See page 5).

SECTION III: REQUEST

In addition to asking for monetary support of the employee engagement initiative, we seek endorsement from A&M Engineering administration of this employee engagement initiative. This endorsement will send a message to employees that participation is essential in building an environment that strives on continuous improvement, learning, and development while enriching our culture.

Monetary request includes the following:

1) Funding in the amount of $500 per staff employee, to meet the initial goals of the employee engagement initiative is requested. This funding will be used for expenses associated with engagement, training and development, offerings.

2) Funding to support dedicated staff to oversee, identify, coordinate and implement the employee engagement initiative for A&M Engineering staff. This individual will work closely with the volunteers of the ESAC Employee Engagement Committee.

3) As the engagement initiative is ramped up a needs analysis will be done to determine future funding levels.

FUNCTIONAL GROUPS

To align employees with individuals who have similar tasks, roles, and responsibilities, title codes will be slotted into the appropriate functional group from the list below:

- Division Director
- Facilities/Property/Inventory
- Research Assistants (work for PIs)
- Research Engineer/Research Associate
- Information Technology
- Communications/Marketing/Web Page
- Advising
- Travel/Accounts Payable
- Payroll/HR
- Technician/Machinist
- PostDocs
- Administrative Support
- Program Coordinator
- Events Coordination

ENGAGEMENT CALENDAR (tentative)

2015

July   Upon confirmed support from administration, begin marketing campaign.
Seek moderators for functional groups
Conduct bid process for outside vendors.

August   Functional Group Leaders Engagement Webinar
Proposal and Grant Writing (Grant Proposals 101)

September   Functional Group Webinar (1)
Proposal and Grant Writing (Budget Bits)

October   Conflict Resolution (Half Day each for General and Supervisor Specific)
Proposal and Grant Writing (Finding & Responding to Funding Opportunities)
Project Management (Four ½ day sessions)

November   Functional Group Webinar (2)
Proposal and Grant Writing (Review Process)

December   Conflict Resolution (Half Day each for General and Supervisor Specific)
Proposal and Grant Writing (Review Process)

2016

January   Functional Group Webinar (3)

February   Conflict Resolution (Half Day each for General and Supervisor Specific)

March   Functional Group Webinar (4)

April   Conflict Resolution (Half Day each for General and Supervisor Specific)

May   Functional Group Webinar (5)
ESAC Staff Workshop

ESAC Employee Engagement Initiative Budget

Budget Item	Cost Per Item	Quantity	Annual Total	Description
Functional Group Engagement Sessions and Group Meetings	500.00	9.00	4,500.00	Working with a leadership coach/engagement specialist, offer a series of group webinars (3 webinars 3 time year) and discussion group meetings to network, exchange ideas and knowledge, and share best practices and begin building an environment of collaboration.
On-Site Engagement Session	6,000.00	1.00	6,000.00	Onsite Engagement Session: Accentuate engagement activities of Functional Groups with on-site sessoin. Includes speaker fee, meals, travel and accommodations of presenter.
Operating Budget For FG Sessions	19,500.00	1.00	19,500.00	Meals, training materials, incentives used as part of Functional Group events and webinars. (9 events / 500+ Staff)
Professional Development & Training Courses			-	
Conflict Resolution	3,600.00	8.00	28,800.00	Offered as half-day sessions with separate focus on supervisor specific and employee to employee conflict.
Improving Interpersonal Commication Skills	3,600.00	2.00	7,200.00	Offered Fall & Spring Semester
Emotional Intelligence Series	500.00	8.00	4,000.00	Speaker Fees
Step-by-Step Guide: 12 Steps to Project Management (Includes Goal Setting and Time Management)	1,000.00	15.00	15,000.00	TAMU Office of Project Management: Offered Fall and Spring
Professional Development Coordinator	50,000.00	1.00	50,000.00	Staff support responsible for organizing and managing training initiative. ($50K base plus fringe)
			-	
Totals	84,700.00	45.00	135,000.00	