



Change Management: Effect on Employee Morale

Business and Operations
Advisory Committee
8 May 2012

Office of Information and Resource Management

Administrative Services
Human Resource Management
Information Systems
Chief Information Officer



Elements of Change

- Planning
 - Broad context
 - Specific action plans
 - Assessment of potential impacts
- Communication and Training
- Implementation
 - Impacts: who, how, reality & perception
 - Moving from new to established
- Assessment
 - Modification as needed





NSF Context for Change

- **Federal environment**

- **Federal employees “taking it on the chin”**

- Pay freeze; bonus and incentive award reductions
 - Continuing rumors of hiring freeze, benefit changes
 - Budget pressures (travel, conferences, equipment, contractors, etc.)

- **Increasing demands for accountability**

- ARRA reporting, extension to other requirements
 - GPRA Modernization Act of 2010
 - Efficiencies



NSF Context for Change (2)

- **Scientific environment: Need for more**
 - Interdisciplinary
 - Transformative research
 - Reach for societal benefit
 - International components
 - Diversity, broadening participation
 - Career/life balance



Change in nature of work



Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey

- Government-wide administration, now annually
- NSF administers to all full-time employees
 - Special provision for temporary employees, IPAs
 - Starting in FY 2011, breakout by directorate/office
 - Response rate: 55% in FY10, 63% in FY11 (government-wide is ~50%)
- OPM provides basic analysis, comparison to federal government
- Partnership for Public Service creates “Best Places to Work” rankings



NSF Context for Change (3)

- Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Results
 - High satisfaction compared to rest of government: telework, health and wellness programs
 - Low satisfaction compared to rest of government: workload
 - Continuing issues: workload, fairness in performance management and recognition, communications (particularly from leadership), effective management of diversity & inclusion
 - Steady decline in overall satisfaction with NSF work environment



Change and Employee Morale at NSF

- Change is a constant at NSF
 - Planning, communications, training add to **workload** for those involved in initiating change.
 - Absence of planning, communications, training adds to **workload** on implementation of change and exacerbates **continuing issues** and **decreasing satisfaction**.
- As a learning organization, NSF needs to examine past change efforts for
 - Lessons learned on change impacts
 - Creative strategies for producing positive outcomes



NSF Action Plans

- Accentuate the positive
 - Telework
 - Pilots on telework approaches
 - Enhancing remote access
 - Updated training for managers and employees
 - Automated telework application
 - Tracking of time spent in telework
 - Career/Life Balance
 - Career/Life Balance Fair communicating full range of health and wellness opportunities at NSF
 - Expanding flexibilities in hours of work



NSF Action Plans (2)

- Obtain more detailed information
 - Disaggregate results
 - By directorate and office in FY2011
 - By type of appointment in FY 2011
 - By division (where possible) in FY 2012
 - Create NSF-specific questions to clarify areas for improvement (for FY 2012 FEVS)
- Use the more detailed information
 - Share effective practices
 - Develop plans at level of directorate or office
 - Address situations where issues are more pronounced in specific populations within NSF



NSF Action Plans (3)

- Provide more internal support in key areas
 - Enhanced guidance and discussion among supervisors around performance management
 - Enhanced training for supervisors around performance management, diversity and inclusion, and labor relations
 - Enhanced training opportunities for all staff; emphasis on individual development plans
- Enhance mechanisms for communication (Weekly Wire, IdeaShare, new InsideNSF)
- Enhance capability for collaboration (SharePoint tools; training on working in teams; virtual meetings)



NSF Action Plans (4)

- Draw on external sources that can provide assistance
 - The research literature
 - Advisory Committees (e.g., B&OAC)
 - Contractors, where appropriate
 - Non-profit organizations (e.g., Partnership for Public Service, NAPA, etc.)
 - OPM



Changes Underway – Some Examples

- **Efficiencies**
 - Modified approach to bonuses and incentive awards
 - Mobile devices
 - Changes to Independent Research & Development
 - Panels: refreshments; virtual panels
 - Travel: less travel; greater use of non-refundable tickets
- **Systems**
 - webTA – web-based time and attendance system
 - SharePoint updates
- **Programmatic**
 - Revisions to merit review criteria
 - INSPIRE, CREATIV, SAVI, etc.



Moving Forward...

- **To Sustain Morale in an Environment of Change**
 - Improve communications throughout NSF
 - Keep everyone in the loop
 - Address Workload Issues
 - Continue/increase career-life balance initiatives
 - Streamline processes
 - Use of technology
 - Focus on the future, rather than the past
 - Ensure appropriate levels of training for staff and supervisors
 - Look for “win-win” approaches that enhance the reality and perception of fairness



NSF Would Like to Know

- How the AC members have addressed issues around employee morale in change management strategies, with a focus on effective practices for maintaining or enhancing morale;
- What experience AC members have with the impact of change on workload and perceptions of workload; are there strategies for minimizing the impact of change on workload?
- How AC members recognize and reward those who embrace the challenge of change when resources for doing so are scarce.