Communication Strategies for Department Administrators

Team 6°
June 23, 2011
Paulette Malcolm, Diane Gauthier, Donna McCarty, Laura Harrington, Pat Fraser
Presentation Outline

1. Project Scope
2. Business Management Services
3. Background Information/Current Environment
4. Research and Information Gathering
5. IntelliResponse
6. Communication Strategies
7. Recommendations
8. CALM Experience
Project Description

Project Scope:

Department Administrator Training Program

Communication Strategies for Department Administrators
Project Description

Project Objectives:

• Access to Information

• Existing Training and Communication

• Staff Engagement and Information Sharing
Business Management Services
Business Management Services

- Meeting with BMS – training programs available
- Accessibility & awareness an issue
- Training Format:
  - In person (Oracle training)
  - Workshops (Financial Administrators’ Forum)
  - Online
  - [http:www.mcmaster.ca/bms](http:www.mcmaster.ca/bms)
Research and Information Gathering

Joint Training Committee Survey

- Survey of CAW Local 555 members to gauge employees access & participation in training & professional development
- Employees want training relevant to their jobs (cheque requisitions, expenses)
- Employees prefer in-class instruction, some online or a combination
- Many employees too busy to take courses
Research and Information Gathering

Financial Administrators’ Forum

• April 7, 2011
• 150 Attendees

• Goals:
  • Provide knowledge and motivation
  • Foster relationships
  • Promote continuing education
Financial Administrators’ Forum

Focus Groups Results

Most common frustrations:
1. Searching for up-to-date info/data
2. Finding the right contact person
3. Time required for processing transactions
4. Repetition (data entering)
Financial Administrators’ Forum

Potential Solutions

• Improved communication
• Easy access to information
• Process/flow recommendations
• Future improvements
Financial Administrators’ Forum

Survey

• Questions were based on preferred training formats, resources currently used
  • 114 completed surveys

Survey Results:

• 88% use the University website as a primary source of information
• 79% call the relevant department for help
• 71% ask a colleague
• 79% are interested in Lunch & Learn sessions
Financial Administrators’ Forum

Message

• Easy-to-navigate websites
  • Reduce telephone inquiries
  • Ease frustration

• Forum for information sharing
  • Regularly scheduled opportunities for discussion and networking
IntelliResponse

- IntelliResponse is a web-based “Answer Suite” database that was developed specifically for higher education institutions
- Q & A platform
- Delivers quick, effective and approved answers
IntelliResponse

• McMaster is one of more than 100 higher education users in North America
• Currently utilized in four departments
  • Registrar’s Office
  • University Technology Services
  • School of Graduate Studies
  • Human Resources
IntelliResponse
IntelliResponse

http://salesdemo.intellireponse.com/mcmaster/
IntelliResponse

Associated Costs

• Annual license fee of $35,000 (shared by subscribing departments)
• One-time QuickStart™ Fee of $7,500
• SmartSource™ Annual Fee of $7,500 (optional after 1st year)
Recommendations

1. BMS should implement IntelliResponse

Why?

- One centralized location on the website for easy and quick access to consistent and correct answers
- Links to training modules & the Administrative Lunch & Learn programs
- Reduction in phone calls and emails
- Increase in staff and employee satisfaction
- Monitor questions - streamline processes through identification of commonly asked questions
6° with Gord Arbeau
‘Ask McMaster’ Icon

- Collaboration with Office of Public Relations
- One visual identity for the ‘Ask McMaster’ icon
- Quick Implementation
‘Ask McMaster’ Icon

Adopt a standard ‘Ask McMaster’ icon
Welcome to Ask McMaster

Ask McMaster is a tool designed to aid future and current students, faculty and staff in finding answers quickly to frequently asked questions about admission, tuition, registration; or financial or human resources administrative policies and procedures.

The tool is easy to use. Just choose the most appropriate area for your question and type a complete question in that box and press Enter (e.g., if you are seeking information about what are the undergraduate admission requirements, choose the box titled UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS). An answer will be displayed along with other related information.

**Tips for using Ask McMaster:**
- Ensure that you are using the correct box for your question.
- Use a complete sentence and keep it simple.
- Ask only one question at a time.
- Do not use quotation marks
Recommendations

2. Standardize the ‘Ask McMaster’ icon & create “Ask McMaster Landing” page

Why?

- Icon easily recognized by all
- Landing page provides a central resource for easy access to information
- Icon available from McMaster Home Page creates visibility
Communication Strategies

- President Deane’s discussion forum with The Management Group (TMG)

- Ensured our communication strategy was aligned with the broader McMaster’s vision and the President’s message
6° with President Patrick Deane
Communication Strategies

Lunch and Learn Sessions

- 79% of financial administrators polled said they would be interested in a L&L
- Other examples: SGS at Mac
- Externally: Toronto, Calgary, Queen’s, Waterloo, Manitoba, UBC
Administrative Lunch & Learn Pilot

- June 6, 2011
- Developed a logo (Thanks Rand!)
- Presenter: Cynthia Shanahan, Director, Purchasing Resources
- 41 attendees
Join us for a Lunch and Learn session about the:

Dell Purchasing Contract

Including a “Show and Tell with Dell”
Presented by Cynthia Shanahan, Director of Purchasing Resources

Monday, June 6, 2011, 12:00-1:00 pm
HSC Room 1A4
Bring your lunch, coffee and cookies will be provided
Space is limited, register online at mcmasterall.eventbrite.com
Administrative Lunch & Learn Pilot

Feedback

- 78% rated the session as excellent
- Timing lessons
- Suggested a certificate of attendance be provided
Recommendations

3. Initiate a series of ALL sessions monthly from Sept – May

Why?

• Communicate existing procedures and policies
• Foster a greater sense of community among staff
• Create a consistent opportunity for two-way information sharing and dialogue
• Increase staff engagement and satisfaction
Project Recommendations

1. IntelliResponse

2. ‘Ask McMaster’ Icon and Landing Page

3. Administrator Lunch and Learn (ALL) Sessions
Conclusion

- Stakeholder buy-in
- Generic model
- Minimal resources required

These three manageable recommendations in alignment with the broader University goals
Acknowledgements

- Project Champions: Barb Campbell and Susan Mitchell
- Nancy Gray
- Cynthia Shanahan
- Gord Arbeau
- Rand Mclvor
- Wanda McKenna
- Andrew Esteves, IntelliResponse Inc.

Special thanks to all the others who have helped us along our journey!
CALM Experience

• Favourite part
• Most difficult
• Most rewarding
• Greatest hope for this work
• Greatest accomplishment
• CALM cohort
Thank you