

President's Council on Culture

Meeting Notes

May 11, 2020

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting

1:00-2:00pm

Attended: Barry Braun, Catherine Douras, Ellen Fisher, Wayne Hall, Pam Jackson, Sue James, Carmen Rivera, Ashley Wilbanks, Emily Wilmsen, Ann Claycomb, Joyce McConnell, Kelly DiMartino (*City of Fort Collins*)

Introductions

- Each group member shared their name, department & role within the University
- Kelly DiMartino
 - Deputy City Manager of the City of Fort Collins
 - Has an MBA from CSU & is in charge of the Baldrige Program (operational excellence, rooted in culture)

Kelly's Presentation: Our Journey to Excellence, Creating a Culture of High Performance (City of Fort Collins)

- History of City's Baldrige journey
 - Darin Atteberry (city manager) initially launched the Baldrige journey at the City of Fort Collins
 - Darin's thought of "I believe local government can be great" was not necessarily a widespread belief, this created motivation for the City.
 - The idea of "Trust Us" as a local government created a need for the City to be more data informed/driven.
 - Baldrige is a framework (looks at seven different categories: leadership, strategy, customer, knowledge transfer, workforce, operations, results)
 - The City had a significant amount of good going on (initiatives, etc.) but still not everyone was driving towards the same goal. The Baldrige helped with this.
 - The Baldrige framework was chosen by the City because it is customer focused, it is a best practice, and is cost effective. The feedback report is also very helpful, as it becomes the basis for improvement.
 - Specific results: volunteers, business engagement
- Leading an Excellence Journey
 - The City realized that in order to deliver world class municipal services that they needed a great culture and a great strategy to achieve great results.
 - Having both a great culture and a great strategy is vital.
 - The foundation is around vision, mission, and values.
 - Implementation of this needs vision clarity about where we are going, alignment of resources to that vision, and then create systems that support that. This sounds simple but there is a lot of depth to it!
- Bringing Culture to Life

- Baldrige asks you to articulate what your leadership system is, how does your organization operate? How do you make decisions? How do you drive alignment?
- City's leadership system starts with community & city council and goes to strategic planning then goes to alignment of resources then goes to operational execution then to individual contributions then to results & learning then to improve & validate. Culture is in the middle.
- Examples of transformational aspects of the City, challenging change initiatives that have helped bring culture change to life:
 - New Employee Orientation: moved from decentralized approach to more of a centralized approach by having employees realize they were first, part of the overall city organization and then part of whatever individual team they were joining. This created a significant amount of change. New employees meet with Darin or Kelly to engage in conversation about culture (mission, values, vision) using the 'we, it, I' model (the 'it' - is the work meaningful? The 'we' - Do you genuinely care about the people you work for? The 'I' - Are your personal needs being met?, if you have all 3 it will likely be the best place you've ever worked)
- Creating Systems – Strategic Focus on Results
 - The City has created great systems that tie the strategic objectives in the strategic plan to budget offers that get funded (all have a direct tie) and all have metrics attached. See examples [here](#).
 - Monthly reviews help to institutionalize this (executive team & department heads)
 - This needs to be in leadership conversations so that people know that it is valued.
 - They City has put into place a community dashboard to show key Outcomes.
 - Prosci uses ADKAR Change Management Model (Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, & Reinforcement, they each build on each other) emphasizes that there are three things needed for successful change management:
 1. Strong executive sponsorship
 2. Strong project management
 3. Strong change management
- Lessons learned by the City
 - It is all about being intentional (embracing and utilizing framework, about a culture of continuous improvement, appreciating the value of mentors, focusing on culture *and* strategy, acknowledging value is in the journey, not an award)
 - When you start this journey, you are in it for the long haul.

Discussion/Q&A following Kelly's presentation

- Initially, how did you identify Baldrige as the best system for culture change? and

- do you think it would translate well into a higher education institution? (Joyce)
- The City started Baldrige after following local community folks who had experience with Baldrige (President & CEO of UCHealth mentored Darin & encouraged exploring Baldrige)
 - After looking at several other frameworks/systems and comparing them, the City came back to Baldrige and committed.
 - Kelly does belong it would be applicable for a university. Doing at an entire system level is much harder than at a college level. Healthcare & education systems are the most prominent utilizers of Baldrige, which allows for a variety of different mentors.
- How big is your workforce? (Sue)
 - 1400 classified employees and double that when you account for hourly & seasonal employees
 - How do you balance giving priority to caring about the people in your organization against being data driven? (Barry)
 - This is the million-dollar question!
 - Operational excellence and culture of innovation is not about *more*. It is about having the right people there, being caring & compassionate. When hard decisions have to be made, adhering to values is important. Striking the balance is possible.
 - Valuing people and caring for them goes a long way in a strong culture, as does leadership.
 - What were the paths of greatest resistance you faced in implementing this and transitioning through this journey to create a new system? What did the barriers look like? (Pam)
 - There were two primary areas of resistance when talking about metrics/strategy maps:
 1. People did not have the desire to make the change (had a lot of other work going on, were overwhelmed)
 2. Knowledge (people didn't know *how* to make the change and figure out the strategic metrics)
 - These challenges might be bigger for us at CSU (since we are more decentralized than the city & have a larger number of employees) but that does not make it unsurmountable. (Sue)
 - Do you think of any key tactics you used to get the managers on board for new employee orientation? (Sue)
 - Persistence!
 - We phased it in, persistent but not brute force.
 - Focus groups with hiring managers (clear with non-negotiables)
 - A culture of strategy has been created, there is often a big disconnect between strategy, tactic, goal, etc. Are there specific educational activities that you did to teach people what constitutes a strategy and how does that get incorporated to culture? (Ellen)
 - At the end of the day, language matters a lot. We agreed on what a definition meant for us.
 - Each category has a team that facilitated the conversation about how it would be

applied to the organization and it got shared with the entire team. This is how we got our ultimate approach.

- Monthly reviews for budget offers are vital to institutionalizing things, can you speak About this more? (Sue)
 - People were hesitant to show anything that was not green, had to teach people it was ok for areas to be yellow or red. We helped them make it safe.
 - People had to be taught that everything should be tied to a strategic metric, tracing the path from their work to a specific outcome was tough at first.
 - People need to get used to having processes and systems where there were not any before. (Emily)

- Kelly offered to help make connections and explore resources through other team leads at the City of Fort Collins, or herself.

Next Meeting: Monday June 8, 2020 at 1pm, Microsoft Teams