



# Higher Education, Higher Expectations

## A Case Study for HR Department Revitalization

### INTRODUCTION

As a state agency partially funded by the state government, the industry of higher education has had its budget belt tightened considerably. While employees were tasked with doing more, efficient solutions were needed to be effective without adding headcount and the costs associated.

### CLIENT:

The Human Resources Department of a state college in Florida with 10 campuses, approximately 3000 employees and more than 64,000 students enrolled annually.

### CRITICAL FACTORS

- Lack of College-Wide Trust in the HR Department
- Inefficient HR Processes
- Lack of Staff Expertise & Proficiency
- Reduced College Budget Mandating Economies of Scale

### SOLUTIONS

The client brought Wendy Sellers, MHR, MHA, SHRM-SCP, SPHR in as the Subject Matter Expert in HR. An initial assessment was conducted via one-on-one interviews with every member of HR. The recommendations (Phases 1, 2 and 3) were agreed upon and implementation began immediately.

Additional services provided by the consultant included recruitment assistance, temporary gap fill assistance for the head of Human Resources while in search for qualified candidates and development of realistic, train-the-trainer educational modules to develop or improve upon management skills college-wide.

Concerns regarding risk in the areas of health insurance, FMLA, retirement plans and other benefits led to a search by the consultant for a qualified candidate to properly manage the benefits department.

***“The most important thing to do if you find yourself in a hole is to stop digging.”***

*Warren Buffett*

### CONSULTANT

Wendy Sellers, *The HR Lady*

# SOLUTIONS & RESULTS

## PHASE 1: BUILD A STRONG INFRASTRUCTURE

*(FY 2017-2018)*

Interactive, realistic HR business training was conducted monthly on a formal basis for all members of the HR department. Five committees were developed amongst the HR department which included additional members external to HR - representing the customers of HR. These five committees developed aggressive goals for which 90% were achieved within 9 months.

A sampling of the goals included streamlining complicated processes, updating non-compliant forms, developing department metrics and accountability for those metrics, developing a department mission and vision statement and immediately resolving HR challenges which affected more than one HR sub-team.

The department that formally operated in silos came to understand that working together to solve problems was more effective and satisfying than placing blame or ignoring the problem altogether. Sub-teams within HR were re-organized as needed with positions eliminated saving the college money. Intense coaching & mentoring was implemented for high potential employees.

**DRIVING CHANGE THAT DELIVERS RESULTS**

## PHASE 1 RESOLUTION

Trust in Human Resources cautiously improved as college-wide employee and management challenges were resolved in a timely manner. HR was granted a seat at the decision-making table (Executive Leadership Council).

# SOLUTIONS & RESULTS

## PHASE 2: FOCUS ON THE CUSTOMER

*(FY 2018-2019)*

The consultant initially focused on employee relations training for select employees who expressed interest and passed training assessments, developed complaint intake processes and coached a (new role) full time, dedicated Employee Relations Specialist.

A college-wide Employee Engagement survey was conducted for all employees. The feedback provided invaluable information and led to the development of ten intimate focus groups whose diverse members will assist in clarifying survey feedback and become ambassadors on the campuses to provide suggested solutions to Human Resources and the Executive Leadership Council for consideration.

**DRIVING CHANGE THAT DELIVERS RESULTS**

### **PHASE 2 RESOLUTION**

Trust in HR drastically improved college-wide. HR is now a go-to-source for managers who are in need of advice on how to address employee challenges. HR is also a trusted go-to-source for employees who are in need of assistance with resolving issues with their team or supervisor or another employment concern.

# SOLUTIONS & RESULTS

## PHASE 3: THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC PARTNER

(FY 2019-2020)

The consultant intends to assist in the creation and implementation of a robust college-wide "Pay-For-Performance" management system as a long-term strategy.

Metrics developed in Phase 1 and 2 will be used to track and report on key performance indicators for the HR Department. A focus will move from training on management skills to Leadership Development of all customers (employees) college-wide.

### GOALS

- Eliminate college wide mindsets related to "this is the way it has always been done here."
- Put managers in the decision-making seats.
- Be an employer of choice for top talent.

## DRIVING CHANGE THAT DELIVERS RESULTS

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*“Wendy is an exceptional HR professional. She communicates directly and succinctly, and knows how to train, motivate and lead employees through organizational change. I have worked with Wendy for over a year now and often turn to her for HR advice. I highly recommend her for consultation, department turn-arounds, and public speaking engagements.”*

Vice President, St. Petersburg College

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### CONTACT THE HR LADY

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