Updated Project Report

1. Project Title
Managing Change from the Middle-Out

2. Project Leaders
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3. Achievement of Milestones

1st Quarter

Conduct audits of successful change projects at the Universities of Gloucestershire (UofG) and Southampton Solent University (SSU). Establish a series of meetings with post 92 Universities to establish how they use middle managers in the process of strategic change. Set up a series of up-skilling and refresher workshops for middle managers. Establish Solent and Gloucestershire year-long strategic change groups.

Outcomes

A pilot survey took place across both UofG and SSU with a total of just under 50 surveys completed. This pilot survey provided a thorough understanding of the key types of change projects undertaken by middle-managers (scale 7,8,9,10 on the national framework pay scale) at both Universities.

Following consultation with Dr Paul Gentle (LFHE Project Lead) it was agreed that a national survey was the best way of gaining a thorough picture of the positives and negatives of how middle-managers perceived their role in managing change projects. By providing access to the LFHE data-base Dr Paul Gentle ensured that nearly 200 responses were received. It was agreed that this survey, as it was a detailed questionnaire, and national survey would remove the need to conduct a year-long change project at SSU and UofG.

The data from this survey is rich and detailed and provides significant insights into the motivations and challenges faced by middle-managers in implementing change in HE. The results from this survey will be published in academic papers and an article will be submitted to appear in the LFHE Engage publication.
In September 2011 change up-skilling workshops were held at SSU (19th September) and UofG (30th September) with over 50 delegates attending the 2 workshops. The workshops were facilitated by Dr Paul Gentle and exposed delegates to a range of simple change tools that they could use in their practice. The feedback from delegates on the workshops was overwhelmingly positive.

2nd Quarter

Conduct the interviews with post 92 HEIs. Run the series of refresher and up-skilling workshops with University middle managers. This too includes sessions on how to create digital stories. Have the first meeting of the year-long strategic change groups.

Outcomes

It was agreed with Dr Paul Gentle that a follow-up workshop with delegates from both SSU and UofG would be a useful way of assessing how the tools had been used. The workshop would also enable the project team to identify if middle-managers required further support to be confident in how they used the toolkit. It became clear after the September up-skilling workshops that the project would focus, not on year-long projects, but instead prioritise the up-skilling of middle-managers in using tool kits as a vehicle for managing and implementing change.

On 24th February 2012, 18 middle-managers from SSU and UofG came together to share their experiences of using the toolkits. The day highlighted some significant issues in terms of putting a spotlight on identifying the critical success factors in enabling middle-managers to become confident in using tools with their teams in implementing and managing change.

Again, it was agreed that a project video would deliver the key outcomes of the project better than a digital story. The final video is currently being edited and will be forwarded to the LFHE once completed.

3rd Quarter

Write up the post 92 HEI interviews. Complete the digital stories of the refresher and up-skilling workshops. Continue to run the year-long pilot strategic change projects.

Outcomes

See commentary in 1st and 2nd Quarters above regarding the agreed changing project focus and priorities. Stage 2 of the up-skilling workshops were completed at the University West of England 24th February 2012. At this workshop much of the filming for the production of the project video took place.
Analysis of the 200 questionnaires took place.

4th Quarter

Collate the data on the differing stages of the project and reflect on the learning that has taken place for each institution in using middle managers to deliver change. Identify successes and failures and opportunities to build on the critical success factors of the project.

Outcomes

Critical success factors of the project have been:

- The development of a change management questionnaire for use with middle-managers in HE. This questionnaire was piloted and was well received by those who completed it and could be used to gain greater sectoral data.
- The key messages from the questionnaire are too many and varied to summarise in this short report (a fuller outcome will appear in a future LFHE Engage article and hopefully in a journal article)
- A major outcome of the project is the value of the pilot change up-skilling workshops as a vehicle for building the confidence of middle-managers in working with their teams in managing and implementing change
- The project video provides evidence of the key messages gained from the up-skilling workshops
- The value in collaboration between the UofG and SSU in running change management projects

4. Dissemination and Outcomes

The learning potential provided by the sector of the post 92 HEI audit, workshops and year-long pilots and peer learning in terms of the role of middle managers in leading strategic change are significant and we would seek to communicate this in a variety of ways including:

- Digital stories uploaded to the Leadership Foundation and Change Academy websites – this has been replaced by a Project Video which is currently being edited and will be sent to the LFHE
- An article submitted to the Leadership Foundation magazine Engage – this will follow in due course and will provide details of the outcomes of the national survey
- A project dissemination roundtable – this has not happened
- Keynote presentation at LF events to be arranged
- Possible research paper – this will follow in time
5. Financial Breakdown - Outcomes

Will be provided with the final report but all spending is on track re the original bid but with a focus on the newly agreed priorities.

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