

Employee Assistance Available from SMU Human Resources

The following report is primarily in response to issues raised from the Staff Advisory Council survey. The Employment and Professional Development Sub-Committee met with various individuals from the SMU Department of Human Resources and presented the concerns that were addressed. This gives a status report of various initiatives under way that can assist staff.

1) Salary/Benefits/Cost of Living/Merit raises (Compensation & Benefit)

- a. "HR is Listening" Campaign
- b. HR benchmarks our salaries with 'sister schools' locally and nationally
- c. Individual managers approve salaries based on department's budget
- d. The Board of Trustees approve all merit increases
- e. Sometime in the distant future, The Employment & Professional Development Sub-committee would like to submit a proposal to the Office of the VP for Business & Finance that the Board of SMU adopt a staff salary model that provides for staff an annual 3% cost-of-living-adjustment and above that, an option for each manager to elect to give staff 1 – 2% merit raise. Our sub-committee might also petition the Board to create a staff endowment for merit pay salaries.
- f. HR can consult with employees to help them maximize their benefits
 - i. How to save money by choosing the best medical plans
 - 1. Health & Wellness Week, October 15th
 - ii. How to earn more from your 403B/401K
 - 1. Spring 09, 1st Financial Wellness Week!
 - iii. How to use benefits in lieu of wage increases
 - 1. Tuition benefits are not managed in-house, giving greater flexibility/options, etc
 - iv. New online open enrollment & medical plan selection tool
 - v. Example: Free mammograms and colonoscopies
- g. HR can only offer suggestions to managers and employees
 - i. Rebecca Sampson is the 'salary coach'
 - ii. Amy Mittelstet Sample fields questions regarding salary/comp structure, etc.
 - 1. Cannot give out salary info or reveal sources to employees
 - iii. Helen Regan is the benefits contact
 - iv. Benefits Council sets the standards for SMU benefits packages
 - 1. Dee Powell represents SMUSA on the University Benefits Council, providing input from a "staff-perspective".

2) Promotion & Professional Development

- a. "HR is Listening" Campaign
- b. EAP Online has TONS of articles and assessments for employees and managers
- c. Manager Focus Groups conducted by HR
- d. Manager training programs provided by HR
 - i. Next 18-24 months possible roll-out
 - ii. Possibly mandatory for all new managers
 - iii. Similar program for existing managers
- e. Career Pathing Model
 - i. 2 yr pilot program/project between HR & Info. Tech. Services establishing career development paths and opportunities for employees.
- f. Performance Management Task Force

- i. University wide task force looking into any changes in the HR performance review process.

- 1. Bill Dworaczyk, Ph.D. and Troy Behrens, Ed.D. are members of this committee

- g. HR can only offer suggestions to managers and employees
 - i. Rebecca Sampson is the HR contact for promotion coaching
 - ii. Lorea Seidel is the Professional Development/Seminar contact

3) Flextime, Flex-place/Telecommuting, and Job Sharing Programs

- a. "HR is Listening" Campaign
- b. At the discretion of individual managers
- c. Employees should individually call the HR/Quality of Life contact at 214.768.3311 to discuss participation in program.

4) "Managing Your Boss"(Assessment tools, techniques, etc. that promote better employer/employee dialogue & communication)

- a. "HR is Listening" Campaign
- b. Manager Focus Groups conducted by HR
- c. Rebecca Sampson is the 'managing your boss' coach
 - i. One-on-one coaching is better than a seminar in most cases
 - ii. Rebecca will conduct employee relations roundtables (near future)

5) SUMMARY

- a. HR would like to be viewed as "Problem Solvers"
- b. They would welcome any assistance we could provide related to outreach and dissemination of their messages about events, policies, etc.
- c. They would like to share the results of their satisfaction survey with us and review the results of their 644 respondents and perhaps coordinate possible follow-up
- d. Our sub-committee had only 1 complaint/request for assistance. It pertained to an employee disagreement with management's rules for breaks. The complaint was sent to HR, they contacted the manager and now the rule for break times is back to the way the employees preferred.
- e. Given the current economic climate most of our sub-committee's interactions with salaries, benefits and promotions will be lessened. However, flextime and telecommuting might come to the fore as a benefit. Staff development and professional development will be more important, especially in the form of career-pathing and long range planning.