New Mexico State University
Office of Facilities and Services
Project Development and Engineering

Peer Review Report

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Introduction

This report reflects the observations and recommendations formulated from a visit to New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico from November 17-18, 2010 to conduct a program review of the Project Development and Engineering group (PDE). The review was conducted at the request of Glen Haubold, Assistant Vice President, Office of Facilities and Services (OFS) and is based on experience in the management of comparable campus organizations by the reviewer and benchmarking similar organizational structures around the country:

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Project Development and Engineering (PDE) is responsible for managing the New Mexico State University capital projects that generally range in value from $25,000 to $100 million. The projects represent a wide array of improvements, including building construction, building renovations, interior design, utility plant and distribution improvements, landscaping and grounds improvements, and roadways and parking facilities.

PDE is also responsible for conducting feasibility studies, building systems, and programming studies. PDE employs twenty-three people – architects, engineers, interior designers, project managers, and support personnel. PDE is led by an Executive Director with three self-contained project work groups, each headed by Assistant Directors. The three work groups include Design, Engineering and Construction and work together to serve their campus clients and customers across the flagship campus in Las Cruces and the other five campuses located around the state.

Their projects are organized into two basic groups, Tier One and Tier Two with Tier One projects representing projects with an estimated cost over $300K and Tier Two projects representing projects less than the $300K threshold. The current workload includes projects at various stages, with an estimated value of approximately $198 million.

The scope of this effort consisted of a review of documents provided and interviews and discussions with PDE and OFS staff, key administrators, and selected key customers and stakeholders.

Participants in the interviews

Project Development and Engineering:

PDE Team:
Jack Kirby, Executive Director, Project Development and Engineering
Greg Walke, Assistant Director for Design
PDE Project Managers
Alton Looney, Assistant Director for Construction
Construction Project Managers

Office of Facilities and Services:

Glen Haubold, Assistant Vice President
Kelly Brooks, Executive Director, Facilities Administration
Matt Ochoa, Assistant Director, Facilities Administration
Maria Gover, Accountant III
Tim Dobson, Executive Director of Operations
Ron Fisher, Director Building Maintenance
Art Lucero, Custodial Manager
Bud Jones, Grounds Manager

University Administrators:

Angela Thorneberry, Associate Vice President for Business, Finance and Human Resources
Diane Madrid, Director of Financial Systems

Key Customers and Stakeholders

Tammy Anthony, Assistant Vice President for Auxiliary Services
Julie Weber, Director of Housing
Kate Fahrbach, Director of Corbett Center
Scott Beckner, Director of Special Events

Report Findings and Recommendations

The recommendations contained in this report can be categorized into broad areas including:

> Organizational Structure
> Vision and Mission
> Communication
> Customer Service
> Processes and Procedures
> Staff Competency and Morale (Recognition)

Organizational Structure

There are many variations in the organizational structure for departments that deliver capital projects on university campuses. Each of those structures has its own set of

strengths and weaknesses and each has an equal chance for success, depending on the specific situation at a given institution. There is no clear right or wrong structure for all situations. The current structure at NMSU is organized around three primary work groups, Design Project Management, Engineering and Construction Project Management. Similar models are deployed at many institutions around the country and have every opportunity to be successful and work effectively at NMSU.

This particular structure evolved from the recent consolidation of the Facilities Planning and Construction (FPC) unit within OFS to form the PDE unit. It effectively combined the small projects group within OFS with the previous capital projects group of FPC. This combined structure has the opportunity to capitalize upon the experience of each group to establish best practices and streamlined processes to benefit the capital improvements program, yet the group doesn't seem to have positioned themselves to optimize these opportunities. Each of the individual groups continue to hold on to their previous business models with little attempt to improve new processes.

The new structure tasks the Design Project Managers (DPM) to plan and develop capital projects up to the start of construction. At that point, a handoff occurs to the Construction Project Managers (CPM) to follow the project through the construction and occupancy of the project administering the contract for construction. While this model can take advantage of particular skill sets for each phase of a project by matching individual skill sets with the appropriate phase of a project, it has the propensity to also lead to finger pointing and blame when things do not go so well. A "hard" hand off allows for the DPM to leave lingering project issues and project problems in the hands of the CPM to resolve. This leads to mistrust between the two groups and breaks down the team spirit that is essential to the success of this model.

It is recommended that a vision and mission statement be developed for this division (see next section). This can bring a sense of unity and common purpose to the group and begin to erode and ultimately eliminate the discord that exists between the two groups. The DPM should always maintain the responsibility and accountability for the ultimate success of the project, since they have the highest degree of influence over the establishment of the scope, budget and schedule. At the same time, however, the CPM must be involved in the formulation of the project parameters and take ownership of the projects success through the construction period. A true partnership must exist between the two units with complete reliance and confidence in each other's dedication and capabilities for this model to be successful.

It's interesting to note that the trade shops in OFS went through reorganization approximately two years ago. They appear to have worked their way through many issues and seem to be a much more solid team that they might have been previously. This can attributed to many things including strong leadership and support. There are likely many lessons that could be learned from them and it is recommended that PDE seek ways to extract and apply those lessons learned.

Related to the problems above and of particular importance, are the ambiguity of roles and responsibilities and the overlap of duties among the DPM's, CPM's and assistant PM's. There were not any apparent job descriptions that supported the differences between the various job duties in the groups. This should be examined and rectified.

Recommendations:
- Examine new organizational structure to capitalize on elements that work well and modify elements that don't
- Soften the hard hand off between DPM and CPM to allow more ownership and accountability throughout the process
- Gather lessons learned from the OFS shops and apply them to the PDE unit
- Develop clear job descriptions outlining the roles and responsibilities of the various staff positions within PDE

<u>Vision and Mission</u>

The number one leadership challenge for an organization is a need to achieve clarity of purpose, and to set clear direction. Generally, people in organizations know that their job is to provide service but they struggle to articulate the mission as it is written; it is not always clear to them which direction the organization is headed (vision), they are not clear on how they are going to get there (strategy) and they take for granted or assume status quo as the way they are going to work to get there (core values).

Most facilities management departments have mission and vision statements; they're everywhere and are largely a result of the quality movement in the late 1980s- everyone was doing it-everyone had to have it. Organizational mission is important and is a powerful leadership tool when used properly. Often, when we drill-down into the organization we find that rarely is the mission statement meaningful beyond the few people who happen to occupy the boxes near the top of the organizational chart. That's not a serious problem for most organizations. The important thing is what's behind these statements in the form of core values and supporting cast. That is what matters most.

In the case of PDE, the reviewer could find no indication of a vision, mission statement or agreed upon values. This is particularly important in this instance because not everyone is satisfied or particularly happy about the new organizational structure. While some see this merger as an opportunity for growth and improvement, others see it quite differently and feel as if it is in some way a forced marriage. Each group tends to cling to their previous models and practices without the benefit of capitalizing on new opportunities. Making matters worse, the new consolidated structure was not communicated equally to all affected parties prior to implementation. Those who had not been given sufficient advance notice continue to feel as though the move was

punitive in nature and somewhat of a reaction to things beyond their control. External customers also described the merger as *"shrouded in mystery with little or no communication and no preparation for the vast changes that needed to occur"*.

It is recommended that the PDE Executive Director initiate an effort with, full unit participation, to develop a vision, mission statement and core values. The department could hold a series of meetings or a staff retreat that allows the unit to develop a clear articulated vision, mission statement and core values that are in alignment with institutional goals and the vision of the Office of Facilities and Services. These should then be displayed in prominent work places as a constant reminder of what the organization has articulated and a guide to departmental behavior in conducting the business of project management and project delivery. This effort can discover where employees believe their strengths and weaknesses are and provide the framework for improvements in meeting customer needs. A short list of priority initiatives and realistic expectations for completion should be agreed to by everyone. The strategic initiatives must then be translated into action for PDE by allocating the required resources.

Strategy implementation is a leadership responsibility. Strategy development is tough, but strategy implementation is even more difficult. Many organizations do a pretty good job of putting together a list of annual goals and objectives for the various divisions of their facilities departments, but they often fall short when considering and implementing more strategically based visions and missions.

The reviewer did not take the time to inquire how well other Facilities and Services Divisions are doing in aligning themselves with Strategic Initiatives so there is no gauge or measure of how well PDE is doing in comparison with other divisions. A status report on progress toward achieving the goals would prove helpful for all of the division directors and give everyone involved a better idea of both progress and setting realistic expectations.

Recommendations:
- Develop a common vision and mission statement for PDE with staff buy in
- Assist staff in developing core values that support the vision and mission statement

Communication

Communication is one of the most important ingredients in the success of any organization, yet effective communication remains one of the most elusive achievements as well. PDE and OFS each have had varying degrees of success in this regard. While there have been several forums created to foster effective communication within the department as evidenced by the AVP's "Sometime Monday Morning Memo's", various meetings with staff and other communications between

management and staff, gaps remain between messages given and received. Some examples cited during the interviews include the consolidation effort, a lack of a clear understanding of the new state rule related to internal labor charges, the new policy requiring written communication to clients and the introduction of the Tier One and Tier Two concepts. While management tried to provide effective communication about these events or procedures, the recipients either did not understand the message or chose not to hear it. In either case it is incumbent upon management to ensure that communications are effective and understood.

There is also a need for PDE and OFS management to get closer to the customer; to seek, stimulate and facilitate the flow of information and communications to and from customers and from project managers. There is a need for PDE to put the customers at the center of the services which they provide. While there were some encouraging examples of good customer communication, such as the project update meetings between OCS management and Auxiliary Services, there appears to be less than effective communication across a broader audience on campus and between some project managers and their customers. Some clients were very comfortable and confident that the project managers assigned to their projects were capable and reliable, while others were not. PDE must assess which PM's are effective with their client communications and which are not and overlay the successful strategies used by some throughout the remainder of the group.

A gap has historically existed between project management staff and trade shop personnel at large institutions. This gap is common and is the result of differing cultures and fundamentally opposing goals for the individual units. For example, a typical project focused unit will have goals for building facilities faster and cheaper to meet the demands of the customer while most trade shops are tasked with maintenance responsibilities and strive for the highest quality possible with less regard to cost or schedule. This generally causes problems between the involved units and manifests itself through poor cross communication and cooperation. OFS is no exception to this phenomenon and there is a gap between PDE and Building Operations. There was a time when operations needed "permission" to speak directly to project managers and there remains some degree of lingering resentment.

Recommendations:
- Conduct a confidential survey to discover what areas are perceived to lack clear and effective communication between management and employees
- Utilize the results of this survey to develop a comprehensive communication plan between management and staff
- Interview a wide variety of long term and recent customers to discover where gaps occur in project communications
- Once discovered, work with the staff to explore ways to fill those communication gaps

- Build better bridges between different OFS units to increase cooperation and teamwork among front line staff

Customer Service

Project Development and Engineering provides a variety of services to a very large and diverse constituency including customers internal to the Office of Facilities and Services Department. Customers include just about everyone who PDE has direct contact with and include the various OFS units, faculty, staff, students, alumni, parents, the Board of Regent, contractors, consultants, and other business partners. Their primary services encompass responsibility for the design and construction of the campus buildings, utility systems and infrastructure and campus exterior improvements. Building remodeling and alterations generally make up a large volume of annual service activity. Having only spoken to a limited number of people representing an admittedly narrow cross section of the customer constituency, there were some strong trends that emerged nonetheless.

Customers, clients, stakeholders, and others need to feel that their specific needs are heard, understood, and addressed appropriately. The feedback received from the internal and external customers was mixed. Some people felt that their needs were understood and their project objectives accomplished, while others did not feel that their needs were either understood or met.

A first step for an organization that desires to achieve sustained customer satisfaction and superior service is to identify who is the customer. Customer satisfaction is a key component of effective Design and Construction Services in answering the question; "How well do we serve them?" The answer to this question is linked directly to how well management understands the specific needs and requirements of a particular customer or group of customers. Service practices and staff competencies must reflect those requirements that are critical to meeting customer satisfaction. Finally, organizations that measure customer opinions, and link those measurements to their services are more likely to have success in delivering service and product that satisfy the customer.

To ensure that a complete and accurate picture of *how well customers are served*; PDE must have a process for determining the different requirements of these key customer groups. The reviewer found that PDE has not effectively determined requirements, expectations, and preferences of customers. This is a necessary management step in order to ensure the continued relevance of PDE services. In some instances there is a gap between PDE's understanding of customer service requirements and the customers' perception of services. The identification of this service-gap is based on feedback from customers with recent project service experiences. This service-gap exists among both internal and external customers. As noted above, PDE serves a very large and diverse customer base. There is a segment of this customer base who will contact PDE for

service one time and then not need to contact them again or will have infrequent contact. There is also a segment of this customer base that will have regular contact and repeated need for service.

These two customer segments have substantial differences in their understanding of which services are offered, what service they must pay for; and why, and how to get a project started and what role they must play to ensure project success. They have high-expectations for receiving a high quality experience but they have little knowledge of the service processes, and steps required of them in order to get their project needs met. This situation is not unlike the difference between a "frequent flyer" and an "occasional traveler". The frequent flyer regularly experiences the airline service and knows that flight schedules and service are not always dependable and that one must travel with lots of patience and a high tolerance for discomfort. The frequent flyer has realistic expectations of service. The occasional traveler on the other hand, has high expectations of the service, sometimes unrealistic, and these service expectations are generally very different from that of the frequent flyer.

Therefore, it is not enough to simply know who the customers are, but equally important to know the particular customer profile or differences in experience with capital projects so that services can be tailored and delivered accordingly.

PDE needs a *customer service strategy* for balancing customer expectations. The important characteristic of services for each customer needs to be identified. Project Managers need to make an effort to understand customer needs and expectations through formal and informal information gathering activities. PDE has no regular practice of conducting customer feedback or satisfaction measurement. PDE management can benefit from hands-on knowledge of what really happens on the job and through face-to-face encounters with customers.

A growing trend gaining in popularity by campus design and construction service organizations involves transaction-based service surveys. In this method, customers are surveyed immediately after a particular transaction and are asked about their satisfaction with the project contact personnel with whom they interacted. This type of evaluation is filled out by the client immediately after project completion and helps the department improve its services. PFE should give serious consideration to conducting this kind of project evaluation by the customer with the primary purpose to learn lessons from each project that can be applied to future projects. Emphasis should be placed on two questions: "What did we do well?" and "What do we want to improve next time?" Emphasis is placed on" Fixing the problem, not the blame."

There appear to be some project managers who are given very high marks by the customers while others did not fare as well. The services of these high performing project managers with regard to the customer's satisfaction and perception of skill sets is described by the customer as very good. These Project Managers are more likely to

achieve or come close to achieving the prescribed project requirements; on-time, on budget, on-quality. Equally important, these project managers also routinely meet project management measures that are critical to success such as; communication, technical know-how, availability, responsiveness, skills and ability to help resolve conflicts, effective consultation with customers to solve problems, and effective management of roles and responsibilities of all project participants. On the rare occasion that this doesn't occur, the relationships between project managers and the customer are solid enough that they can work through the issues successfully from the customer's perspective. Unfortunately, the number of project managers who received these high marks on their performance is too few for an organization that has numerous project managers.

PDE should find ways to leverage the success of the top performing Project Managers. The skills and abilities, and core competencies of successful Project Managers need to be multiplied through other Project Managers who are struggling to provide customer satisfaction with projects. PDE has an opportunity and an obligation to recognize the top performers and to actively instruct and teach others the requisite project management skills and abilities. This effort should be conducted in a manner that does not deflate the morale of the unit nor subvert the desire for the underperformers to improve their work.

There is a need for a comprehensive approach to customer relationship management. This is a *strategic* need for the organization and if done effectively will help set direction for maintaining and expanding customer relationships. A very large part of this comprehensive approach is a need for development of project management service standards, and a need for a disciplined execution and measurement of project manager performance.

There are no gimmicks to having a customer service management system that works. This is simply about managing the risks related to achieving project management satisfaction focused on the customers' perspective. An objective assessment of existing service; much more thorough than this review has provided, is the starting point followed by defining the strategies and initiatives to address the service needs captured from customer feedback. Implementation requires marshaling resources coupled with organizational knowledge to get the job done.

Recommendations:
- Develop a clear understanding of who the customers are and what are their needs
- Implement a customer feedback system that allows for candid and timely responses from completed projects
- Provide a platform to establish realistic expectations between customers and project managers allowing both groups to be in alignment

- Leverage the successes and strategies of the projects and project managers that have success in meeting project goals and utilize lessons learned to share those successes with other staff

Processes and Procedures

The reviewer found no evidence of any documented performance history or any effective method in place to measure PDE actual performance. PDE lacks metrics or a common language that allows performance measurements to be communicated openly and candidly. It is difficult to agree that customers are important to PDE when the organization is not measuring how well it is meeting customer requirements. It is incumbent on PDE managers to actively seek out service delivery problems and fix them.

Here are some important clues captured from interviews:
Some customers are pleased with the end product but are frustrated with the process. Frustrations include: understanding how to get the project started, estimating processes, communications on project work status and changes to the project, project budget management, schedule compliance and timely completion, project accounting, project close-out and overall customer relations.

Customers reported that project managers sometimes spend more money than authorized or reallocate expenditures to meet basic project requirements and do so without adequate consultation with customers. Particularly troubling is the report from several customers that they as customers spend a lot of time" *managing the project managers"*. Customers report a low level of trust and confidence in some project managers especially with capital projects. Of particular concern was the inconsistency in understanding exactly how project budgets and their corresponding scope are established. Some administrators believe that budgets and scope are established in tandem with a balance between the two providing the groundwork for success. At the same time, many project managers admitted that budgets were often derived from political sources based on "how much the state will give" with little regard to need or scope. These scenarios inevitably lead to frustration by all team members and project failure.

There was also a high degree of frustration associated with the implementation of the AiM work management system. While the Director of Business and Finance felt that the migration to the AiM module has its challenges, it will eventually be a tool that meets the need of the project management group. She readily admitted that the initial implementation was directed at work management needs and that the capital module has not been their focus, giving it a 5-7 out of 10 rating. Competing priorities have prevented their department from providing the focus and support required to fully implement the system. It is her goal to reallocate sufficient resources to this effort and provide the support and dedication needed for such a robust system.

The resistance of the AiM implementation by the previous FPC team and the inability of the system to provide all of the necessary project information directly to the PM's have caused a great deal of anxiety and frustration within the PDE group. While the small projects group has fewer problems related to the new system due to its origination within OFS, the capital projects group has much larger challenges facing them. They have been asked to abandon many of their previous budgeting and tracking practices in favor of the new AiM module, but do not feel that the new system adequately supports their effort. Consequently, they tend to run a duplicate cost tracking systems producing inaccuracies and inefficiencies. A continuation of this effort will result in further alienation of the two units. It is recommended that the appropriate financial resources be allocated to resolving systems problems with the capital budgeting and tracking systems and allow the PM's to actively participate in the proposed resolutions. The B&F Director pointed to the implementation of the new system for the lock shop as an example of successful implementation and hoped to model the PDE group after that early next year. She suggested using some of the savvier PM's to pilot some training sessions for the remainder of the group.

Equally lacking was an overall understanding of the capital process. The current process is not well defined and is consistently misunderstood by both internal and external stakeholders. The current process should be well documented and mapped out to allow for streamlining inefficiencies while optimizing positive elements.

There were also some indications that tasks were not appropriately delegated from management to the staff level creating a bottleneck and a degradation of trust. A balance should be found between oversight and control and delegation. Without the appropriate level of delegation, accountability is sacrificed and productivity is reduced from optimal levels.

Inconsistent performance by design consultants and, to a lesser extent, contractors was also noted as a problem area. There appears to be very little accountability in holding design consultants to the project requirements, especially in regard to budget and schedule. The DPM's feel powerless to force performance and compliance from these external design teams while the CPM's feel a responsibility to try and salvage the project goals and demand performance by construction contractors. This scenario further frustrates attempts to have the group feel as though they are one team working toward common goals. The DPM should be provided with the authority and the responsibility of establishing realistic project goals and ensuring compliance by the design teams. Ensuring the success of a project up to the "handoff" would greatly increase the projects chance for success and improve the overall teamwork and morale of the unit.

Yet another issue is the lack of adequate design and construction standards. Without adequate design and construction standards that are understood and enforceable, project design teams are free to offer building designs, products and details that are not

compatible with institutional practices and cannot benefit from past mistakes and lessons learned.

There should be a goal set to improve capital project processes and procedures to increase the chances of achieving "pure-prevention" of construction quality problems. Many of the trade shops expressed concern that they were left out of the review process until just before construction. By this time, too many decisions had been made and project parameters are set in an irreversible pattern. There is a need for achieving trouble-free buildings and systems and to develop processes that will prevent reoccurrence of the same or similar quality problems. This is best achieved through well prepared campus standards that are adopted and strictly enforced. Fighting quality problems solely through building commissioning and post construction inspection is not enough; good thorough plan reviews are a necessary ingredient as well. Quality efforts should move from a tactical perspective to a strategic opportunity.

In order to successfully improve quality, the quality issues must be defined, performance measurement needs to occur, performance results need to be analyzed, improvements made, and steps initiated to control and to prevent reoccurrence of the quality issues. With regard to quality measurement, many similar actions necessary to achieve customer satisfaction are also needed to achieve quality satisfaction.

Another area of concern related to project needs controlled by units outside PDE's area of influence. Examples cited were the difficulty in establishing account numbers, CID, delivery issues related to the warehouse, fire marshal involvement and accountability, and the first right of refusal for internal construction projects. There was also some degree of concern expressed by the trade shops with renovation projects not adequately documenting the existing conditions and requesting "last minute" assistance from shop personnel for project related outages and assistance.

Recommendations:
Develop some standardized processes including:
- Research and adopt metrics and KPI's that measure performance and project success
- Develop a project initiation process and accompanying form to inform others about project activities
- Provide project budget templates that are consistent and scalable so that the smaller projects can utilize the same template
- Focus on improving the implementation of the AiM module getting direct feedback and involvement of the project managers and the accounting division
- Financial controls emphasizing responsibility and accountability for PM's to manage project budgets
- Outline the overall capital process

- Examine management responsibilities and delineate where delegated tasks could be more beneficial and increase efficiencies
- Hold consultants and contractors accountable for their contractual obligations and allow the PM's to provide input in the selection process, including voting rights
- Develop and adopt design and construction standards
- Engage all project stakeholders in every phase of project development and review and search for strategies to improve the plan review process
- Time sheets should be kept and entered into Aim on a weekly basis to validate recharge amounts and track staff utilization rates
- Small projects and BRR funds should utilize the capital projects tracking system or some other effective process
- Review issues related to groups outside PDE's normal area of influence and search for opportunities for process improvements
- Close contract loopholes in the CM@Risk contract and formalize a project delivery selection process
- Develop a formal description of consultant expectations and project phase deliverables and link to contract requirements

Staff Competency and Morale (Recognition)

The condensed timeframe within which this review was conducted did not allow for an in depth review of staff competencies, but some themes did emerge. While there appears to be adequate levels of talent and skills, the abilities are not evenly distributed among the group. This is not unusual given this type of organization, yet must be recognized and accounted for. A skills assessment should be conducted and a training program established to enhance the skillsets of all project managers.

Another common theme that consistently surfaced during discussions with the PDE group was low morale. The forced nature of the consolidation, the accelerated implementation of the AiM module and the seeming inability to properly develop projects destined for success were cited as obstacles that consistently contributed to low morale. The PDE staff felt that too much time was spent in meaningless meetings while their workloads were extreme and expectations high. There was insufficient time to gauge the validity of their complaints or concerns, but it remains a fact that they do not feel that they receive adequate support or recognition for their work and want to find ways to better utilize their time.

There is a belief that further staff reductions will increase the workload on remaining staff and further deteriorate morale. It was stated that the office manager was scheduled to retire with no plan for her replacement and while many students were utilized in the past, there are very few who work in OCS in support of project needs.

There is a growing fear that the "contract packets" that help facilitate a smooth transition from the DPM to the CPM will no longer be assembled as thoroughly as it has been done in the past.

The migration from a partially funded operation a recharge based unit has created some unnecessary anxiety. Better communication concerning the implications and positive aspects of this change as well as some participation in the process could alleviate some of these worries. This has been exacerbated by the confusion surrounding the state mandate eliminating recharges on state funded projects.

A major contributing factor to staff morale is recognition. Any organization must give employees the confidence that their efforts are recognized and appreciated. While the staff is appreciative of having their jobs during these tough economic times, they do not have a good sense of appreciation for their work. There are some efforts at recognition such as the employee of the month, the Strickland award and the Christmas party in which employees are recognized for outstanding performance, but these seem to be focused, almost isolated events. Recognition for people's work should permeate the organization and become a regular part of doing business on a daily basis. A thank you or hand written note to an employee goes a long way toward building a good team and gaining employees loyalty to the institution.

Professional development and training was another area cited as problematic. State cutbacks have forced a critical examination for the cost of travel, conferences and training. It is understandable that tight budgets necessitate a scaling down of travel expenses, but people feel that they have no opportunities for professional growth. Some type of affordable training program should be developed and implemented even if it means something simple like brown bag type seminars in which employees share positive experiences and lessons learned with each other until funding levels support a more robust program. Seek advice for the staff concerning what opportunities would be valuable to them.

Recommendations:
- Conduct skills assessment for employees and develop a training program to respond to noted deficiencies
- Examine the utilization of time spent in meetings
- Examine staffing levels and communicate conclusions and metrics used with current staff
- Engage staff in discussions concerning new funding models and explain the state mandated funding approach for project support
- Explore ways to increase morale and recognition such as :
  - Team activities outside of work
  - Write thank you notes where appropriate
  - Get out and into people's work place to see what is going on
  - Be open and transparent with communications

- Encourage a good life / work balance
- Consider spot awards such a time off or coffee certificates for particularly special, yet small achievements
- Provide adequate opportunities for professional development and training and develop an internal training program
- Explore flexible work hours
- Organize a staff "help" day to offer assistance to a local charity such as Habitat for Humanity
- Reinstitute project meetings in locations of recently completed projects; this not only lets the staff to see new facilities and learn about other campus projects, but allows project managers to demonstrate pride to their peers through their individual accomplishments