May 9, 2008

To: Sandra Knight
From: Jeff Craig
cc: Peter Taylor
RE: Action Research Project Feedback

Sandra,

You've got yourself a solid topic. I think that many employees feel undervalued and frustrated when they are denied access to PD opportunities. And, as a result, the entire organization suffers. Here are a few suggestions that might help clarify your mission and/or expand the scope of your project:

- You might want to begin by describing why you chose this topic. What are the current conditions? What have been your frustrations? (I know you talked about this in class, but you might want to briefly discuss this in your report to demonstrate the need for your services.)

- I would suggest writing a little more about how you envision your ideal work environment. In other words, if your plan was up and running with a vibrant constituency in place, what would your organization look like? In specific terms, how would your plan benefit the organization (e.g., employer and employees)? You've touched on these points in various places (e.g., better customer service, less absenteeism), but you might want to devote a section to this – maybe even list the potential outcomes in bulleted form. (You could also summarize the *current* conditions this way, too.)

- Could you say a little more about who your constituency is? You mentioned that your role would be to act as a consultant to management, but who would be your constituency? Would you consider contacting national professional organizations for HR staff? Perhaps they could serve as ongoing "informants" or as a source for obtaining other resources such as HR publications, etc.

- Would there be any opportunities for cross-training? In other words, various departments would learn the operations of others' roles in the organizations. Many organizations do this so there must be some benefits. Also, some organizations implement "training of trainers" programs where a group of staff could be trained on a particular topic by consultants (e.g. ,conflict resolution), then those who were trained could offer the training to others in the organization, which would save money (an incentive for additional trainings).

- In line with the above thought, I'm wondering if there are curricula for some topics. For example, I used to implement an HIV prevention curriculum for a state-funded program. The authors (from the University of San Francisco) trained me and then I implemented it. They offered me technical assistance

over the phone and via email whenever I needed it. They also had a Website that allowed me to network and share information with other organizations nationwide that were implementing the same program. I know that your role is not to provide the trainings per se, but it might be worthwhile to note if such resources exist.

- You might consider "opening up" the title of your project since you mention a more global outreach. Maybe some like, "An action research project to broaden the accessibility of professional development opportunities within an organization."

I hope you'll find these suggestions helpful. If you need clarification, etc., please let me know. Once again, I think you have a selected an important topic. Best of luck to you!

Jeff Craig