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Silman, Joseph S. *Evaluation of New Faculty Orientation and its impact on Temporary/Adjunct Instructors at a local Technical and Community College*

Abstract

Temporary and adjunct faculty members are widely used by higher learning institutions to supplement full-time staff. These temporary faculty members are oft-times considered disposable employees by the organization and other full-time faculty. This sometimes results in inadequate or sub-par performance by these temporary faculty members. Employee orientation is the first opportunity an institution has to connect with employees, but many times it is not used to its fullest potential. This pilot study will examine the existing orientation program at a local technical college that utilizes a good number of temporary faculty members and assesses the current orientation process. The data gathered from the study will be used as a basis for further research and improvement of the current process at this technical college.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Temporary employees are commonplace in the workplace as employers seek to lower workforce costs and fill gaps left by laid off full time staff (Akdere & Schmidt, 2008). According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics Current Employment Statistics Highlights (2012), temporary employees accounted for 61% of the gain in employment services for January 2012, or the addition of 20,000 jobs (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). From 2002 - 2012 this trend has been felt even more in the academic environment. For clarification, adjunct instructors are those instructors that teach 5 credits or less, temporary part time instructors teach 5 or more credits and are contracted for a single semester, and temporary full time instructors have been contracted to teach full time for an academic year. During the 1990's the use of temporary/adjunct instructors increased 30% at four-year institutions and by 2003 44% of faculty were temporary/adjunct instructors (Bettinger & Long, 2010). At the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College (SCTCC), over 30% of the academic staff are part-time or adjunct faculty (Keller, personal communication, 2/29/2012). With temporary/adjuncts being 80% less expensive to maintain with respect to salary, benefits, and tenure, than a full time faculty member, the increasing use of adjuncts makes fiscal sense to an educational institution (Bettinger & Long, 2010).

Temporary status, by its nature, can lead to employees that are not motivated or provide unsatisfactory performance due to a lack of "well-being" created by job insecurity (De Cuyper, De Witte, Kinnunen, & Nätt, 2010). In addition, turnover among temporary employees can be high and management, as well as other staff, may see them as disposable (Doerpinghaus, Feldman, & Turnley, 1994). This might be attributed to their lack of inclusion in the

organization, clarity of what their role is in the organization or simply poor follow up by organizational leadership (Anderson, Slattery, & Selvarajan, 2008).

Research demonstrates that effective use of employee orientation can mitigate the recurring pitfalls encountered when hiring employees and provide a vital introduction and opportunity for employee contributions into an organization (Dunn & Jasinski, 2009). More importantly, in the case of SCTCC, it can provide the mentorship needed to ensure successful utilization of temporary/adjunct faculty and reduce the costs associated with turnover by increasing employee satisfaction (Ellison & Williams, 2009).

Statement of the Problem

A commonly used tool to introduce employees to an organization is through some form of employee orientation (Dunn & Jasinski, 2009), but how effectively is it being used for temporary/adjunct staff at the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College? The current orientation is a two hour, non-compensated, non-mandatory information session. Due to the growing use of temporary/adjunct faculty there is an increasing importance that any orientation meets the needs of both the temporary/adjunct faculty and administration. Is emphasis on employee acclimation, organizational understanding, and policy training during employee orientation beneficial to temporary/adjunct faculty? How would the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College balance the need for the temporary/adjunct faculty member to be “in the classroom” with the potentially significant time and financial investment needed?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the effects and impact of the existing orientation program for temporary/adjunct employees hired by the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College, St. Cloud MN. The researcher will assess and analyze the benefits for incorporating a

greater cultural understanding, improved policy training, and organizational acclimation, and provide recommendations to the existing orientation program.

This research will aid the SCTCC by:

1. Evaluating current orientation practices,
2. Evaluating post orientation follow-up by college administration,
3. Determining temporary/adjunct perception of the organization
4. Provide recommendations for improvement.

Assumptions of Study

1. Individuals surveyed will answer questions truthfully.
2. Individuals surveyed will understand the importance of participating in the study.
3. Individuals surveyed have not worked at another technical college or academic environment.
4. Any data or recommendations gathered will be used by the Dean of Business and Information Technology (IT).
5. All survey information received will maintain the confidentiality of the participants.
6. Credit load for temporary/adjunct faculty will not be a factor in determining participation in this survey

Definition of Terms

Adjunct Faculty Member (Adjunct) – “Adjunct Faculty Member” are faculty who work fewer than five (5) credits in a term. Such faculty do not accrue seniority and are not probationary (MSCF Master Agreement, 2011, p. 18).

Acclimation - to accustom or become accustomed to a new climate or environment; adapt (Dictionary.com, 2011).

Desire2Learn – D2L. Electronic software suite of products that allows for the creation, delivery, and management of learning courses. (desire2learn.com, 2012)

Employee(s), Faculty, and Faculty Member – “Employee” or “Faculty Member” shall mean a member of the appropriate unit as described in this contract. “Employees” or “Faculty” shall mean all members of the appropriate unit as described in the Contract (MSCF Master Agreement, 2011, p. 19).

Employee Orientation (EO) – Program that provides newcomers to the organization an introduction to health and safety issues, terms and conditions of employment, and in introduction to the organization itself within the first 4 weeks of hire (Reichers & Wanous, 2000).

Organizational Culture – Generally accepted behavior that provides an employee “with a framework for understanding and making sense of their work environment and experiences” (Bellot, 2011).

Temporary Full-Time Faculty (TFT) – A Temporary Full-Time Faculty Member is a faculty member who has been hired for a full-time assignment for an academic year (MSCF Master Agreement, 2011, p. 21).

Temporary Part-Time Faculty (TPT) – A Temporary Part-Time Faculty Member is a faculty member with a part-time assignment of five (5) or more credits in a semester or a summer session (MSCF Master Agreement, 2011, p. 21).

Limitations of the Study

1. There is no certainty that any surveys sent will be returned. Survey will be administered electronically via Qualtrics™. An acceptable response rate for this survey is 30%.
2. The survey itself will be limited to the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College, and the population will include all new employees hired between the Fall of 2011 and Spring of 2012.
3. Research will be conducted over the course of one Academic Semester.
4. Adjunct and temporary faculty may be difficult to contact outside of assigned classroom schedules.
5. Departments will not be identified for the purposes of this study.
6. Credit load for temporary/adjunct faculty will not be a factor in determining participation in this survey

Methodology

A literature review analyzing current best practices for conducting new employee orientation, and the influence employee orientation has on temporary employees will be conducted. In addition, an evaluation of the current employee orientation program at the SCTCC was also completed. A survey will be developed based upon the literature review and current orientation practices at SCTCC. This survey will be administered electronically through Qualtrics™, the online survey program available through the UW system. All data collected will be stored and secured within the Qualtrics™ by the use of password. Data collected will be confidential and available only to the researcher and the research advisor. No other persons will have access to the raw survey data. Results of this study will provided in an aggregate report and

will not contain any confidential information that could be traced to participants. Any raw data gathered will be deleted at the conclusion of this research project.

Summary

The use of temporary and adjunct faculty is becoming increasingly common at the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College. However, little emphasis is placed on employee orientation, which can theoretically cause performance, policy adherence, and student management problems in addition to these employees having to cope with the transient nature of their temporary employment.

The following chapters will include a literature review in Chapter 2. The methodology and methods for the employee orientation survey will be discussed in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 will provide an analysis of the survey results and a discussion and recommendations for further study and future research will commence in Chapter 5.

Chapter II Literature Review

This chapter is a review of literature on the characteristics of employee orientation and elements that can build a successful orientation program for an organization or academic facility. This chapter will explicate the general traits of temporary employees, the attitude toward and held by temporary/adjunct faculty, and the challenges faced incorporating these employees into the organizational culture.

The use of temporary/adjunct faculty has become more important to the academic structure. These faculty members have been determined to be less expensive in respect to salary, benefits, and tenure of full time faculty members. This increased use of temporary/adjuncts has made fiscal sense to educational institutions. (Bettinger & Long, 2010). While the fiscal benefit to the college has been apparent, these faculty members have encountered the same perception, worries, and stressors as their corporate equivalents, i.e. temporary contracted employees when regarded by their administration and other full time staff.

This was illustrated by Wilson in his article (2010):

The notion of academic freedom is a nonissue for most contingent and adjunct faculty," says Earl Yarrington, a tenure-track associate professor of English at Prince George's Community College in Maryland. "They are seen as disposable. They can be thrown away at will by the community college administration and recycled out with the garbage if need arises. The unjust and unequal treatment makes academic freedom an empty term for them. (p. 12)

While Wilson was partially addressing academic freedom in this report, the examples of organizational attitude toward temporary/adjunct instructors have been apparent. Full-time staff

generally has not held higher opinion of their temporary/adjunct counterparts, thinking of them as, “a migrant underclass”, “gypsies”, or incapable of teaching at the level of quality of a full-time staff member (Gordon, 2003). Understanding the hurdles faced by temporary/adjunct (as well as the temporary workforce in general) has provided a focus for leadership on how to better orient new employees into the organizational culture.

Employee Orientation

The primary method of introducing employees to an organization was found to be through employee orientation, with upwards of 87% of organizations providing some type of orientation program within the first four weeks of an employee being hired (Reichers & Wanous, 2000). The time period directly before and shortly after being hired was critical for introducing new employees to organizational culture and easing their way into their position. Research published by Dunn and Jasinski (2009) found that the first few weeks on a job were particularly critical, affecting impressions, feelings, attitudes, and job satisfaction. This was reinforced by Williams (2010) where employee orientation was found to be an important component in introducing a new employee to their work environment. The author also implied that an orientation program acted as a first impression between the employee and the company and gave administration the opportunity to discuss the organization’s vision and mission (Williams, 2010).

A successful orientation program was found to go beyond introducing an employee to an organization. Orientation programs were found to provide fiscal sense by reducing the number of new hires that left positions shortly after hire. According to Dunn and Jasinski (2009) these reduced turnover costs ensured that an organization received motivated employees. Orientation programs also assisted in building morale and the understanding of work responsibilities and work roles (Akdere & Schmidt, 2008). The importance of a successful orientation program in an

academic environment has been found to mirror its business counterparts by keeping instructor turnover low and reducing the need to continually hire adjunct/temporary instructors unfamiliar with the college (Dolan, 2011). The author also found that it was important for faculty to be connected to their college.

However, many organizations have employed orientation programs to deliver mandatory training, and have not met the need to establish relationships, or address the stressor of starting a new job (Reichers & Wanous, 2000). The research showed employers and faculty administration needed to realize that orientation is not training because employee orientation was associated with context performance rather than task performance. Reichers and Wanous (2000) described context performance as, “(a) Volunteering for activities not formally part of the job, (b) persisting with extra effort to finish one’s own tasks, (c) helping and cooperating with others, (d) following organizational rules/procedures, even when inconvenient, and (e) supporting or defending organizational objectives” (p. 440).

Employee orientation was also assigned to other employees in the department rather than part of a formalized program (Williams, 2010). On-the-job or mentored orientation has been found to be unsuccessful because work schedules and other human factors, such as work experience, personality, and attitude have led to inconsistencies in the quality of the orientation. (Williams, 2010).

Temporary Employees and Employee Orientation

Research has identified that an understanding of the attitude towards, and the attitude of, temporary workers and temporary/adjunct faculty needs to be understood before any recommendations can be made on how employee orientation can be used to incorporate these

employees into the organizational climate. Temporary workers have been relegated to second-class status by full time employees because, according to Anderson (2008), “management has regarded temporary workers as of relatively little strategic value and highly replaceable” (p. 2269). Anderson et al. (2008) alluded that this was a possible factor as to why temporary workers had significantly lower levels of morale and commitment compared to permanent workers.

However, lack of commitment could have other reasons. Doerpinghaus, et.al, (1994) determined that that when employers, “failed to provide an accurate picture of their job assignments” (p. 56), employee satisfaction was lower, stress on that employee is increased, and the likelihood of adequate performance is lessened due to confusion on expectations. Anderson also found that if a temporary worker does not clearly understand where they fit into organizational culture, this created a large amount of job stress and led to lower levels of job satisfaction for temporary employees (Anderson, et al., 2008). Wilson determined that the issues of job stress and satisfaction could be minimized, in part, by an effective employee orientation process (Wilson, 2010).

Temporary employees in general were found to be assigned tasks that required less organizational knowledge, thus placing increased burden and resulting job stress on full-time employees (Doerpinghaus, et al., 1994). However, Reichers and Wanous (2000) determined that when employee orientation was used to establish a relationship with the full-time staff significant benefits were realized. These benefits included smoother employee assimilation with full time staff, an understanding of the temporary employee’s capabilities, and facilitated the transition across established organizational boundaries (Reichers & Wanous, 2000). Organizational boundaries were defined by Reichers and Wanous (2000) as, “(a) from outside to inside

(organizational entry), (b) from lower to higher levels (hierarchical), (c) from one type of job to another (functional), and (d) from being on the periphery of power to the core of power (inclusional) (p. 438).

A review of the research of temporary contract employees in the corporate workforce has demonstrated that temporary/adjunct motivation and job performance was directly related to the trust and value placed in them by their employers (Wallen, 2004). Jazzar, et al, (2010) found that motivated faculty was more likely to strive in their teaching and research if a strong sense of belonging to the institution and connection to the student body was evident. These aspects were instilled through a successful new hire orientation program (Dolan, 2011).

Components of Successful Orientation

Williams (2010) identified that the components for building a successful employee orientation program were situationally dependent and based on the organization type. Reichers and Wanrous (2000) recommended that orientation programs focus on the basic needs of employees in terms of management involvement, clarity about the mission and vision of the organization, and communication. Management and leadership involvement in orientation programs presented another point of contact for new employees. This involvement was found to be more important than an introduction and interaction with other employees at this stage of their employment because an employee believes that they will be getting relevant work information from immediate, first line, leadership and not have to rely on second hand information from coworker (Reichers & Wanous, 2000).

Williams (2010) found that discussion of the vision and mission of an organization provided a sense of identity for employees and created the opportunity for relationship building

with leadership. The author also identified that implementation of employee orientation checklists for tracking progress in accordance with 30-60-90 day reviews were hallmarks of a successful orientation program (Williams, 2010). Reichers and Wanous also identified that when management reassured employees that they were hired or contracted based on their skill set, such communication prompted employees to demonstrate greater motivation and confidence in their job roles and tasks. (Reichers & Wanous, 2000).

Summary

Chapter 2 reviewed the literature that served as the basis for the business case identified in Chapter 1. Chapter 3 will outline the methodology and methods that will be used for data collection for this research project. Analysis of the survey results will be included in Chapter 4. Discussion and recommendations for further study and future research will be included in Chapter 5.

Chapter III Methodology

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College's (STCC) faculty orientation program and the impact on new temporary/adjunct faculty. A review of the literature in Chapter 2 supported the researcher's question that a problem may exist with the current orientation process for temporary/adjunct staff at STCC. The current orientation is a two hour, non-compensated, non-mandatory information session.

A survey was created and administered using Qualtrics™. Any information gathered was secured with a password. Information gathered was available to the researcher and the research advisor at UW Stout. The survey included questions that focus on the association between employee orientation and the effective use of communication by administration, understanding the unique needs of temporary/adjunct instructors, and the extent of organizational compliance by new temporary/adjunct faculty. Questions were developed based on research conducted and a review of the existing orientation process. Qualitative and quantitative analysis were performed on the results and this data will be used to recommend improvements to the current orientation process.

Approval for the survey was obtained by the Institutional Review Board at UW Stout on 5 April 2012. Approval to conduct this survey has been obtained from the Human Resource Department at the SCTCC (see Appendix A). Invitation to participate in the survey was distributed to new faculty hired from Fall 2011 – Spring 2012 by the researcher through Qualtrics™. Participation in the survey was voluntary and participants received informed consent information which will be included in the design of the survey instrument (see Appendix A). Recommendations of this study and recommendation for future research and action will be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

Subject Selection/Description

The subjects selected to participate in this study were undergraduate temporary/adjunct faculty that were hired and attended, or were invited to attend orientation between Fall 2011 and Spring 2012. Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous and employees could choose to withdraw with no adverse consequences. An informed consent was included with each survey (see Appendix C). The estimated sample size was 40 employees.

Contact information for temporary/adjunct faculty was obtained from Human Resources. The employee list was obtained from the Human Resources department; however Human Resources did not have access to raw survey results or other identifying information. The survey email was sent to participants using Qualtrics™ software through UW Stout included the Invitation to participate (see Appendix A) and the Informed Consent information (see Appendix D).

Instrumentation

Qualtrics™, an online survey program available through UW Stout, was used for administration of the survey. Benefits of this tool are: availability at no cost, anonymity of the participants, and ability for participants to complete the survey at a time of convenience. The survey was specifically created for the purpose evaluating SCTCC's orientation following the literature review conducted on the use of temporary adjunct/faculty at other institutions, and the successes of other new hire orientation programs. ~~Questions for the survey collected~~ survey collected data on:

- Understanding of SCTCC Mission
- Expectations of the faculty member
- Perception of organizational culture
- Understanding of performance evaluation

- Faculty's perceived relevancy to SCTCC
- New faculty orientation effectiveness
- Communication and follow up by administration

After the survey instrument was developed, it was reviewed by the Dean of Business/IT and the Director of Human Resources for content and accuracy. After review, the survey questions were entered into Qualtrics™ and invitations sent via internal college email.

Data Collection Procedures

Adjunct/TPT faculty of the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College were invited via email to participate in a survey administered through Qualtrics™. Participants were given the consent form and the contact information of the researcher through email when the survey is distributed. Participants had given 5 business days to complete the survey in order to provide enough time to accommodate academic schedules. The survey was deployed upon IRB approval and concluded on April 20, 2012. Survey results were collated and analyzed in Qualtrics™. No identifying information was collected during the survey. All data collected will be stored and secured within the Qualtrics™ by the use of a password. Data collected will be confidential and available only to the researcher and the research advisor at UW Stout. No other persons will have access to the raw survey data. Any data collected will be deleted upon conclusion of this research project.

Data Analysis

Qualtrics™ was used to analyze the data collected in this survey. Raw survey data available only to the researcher and the research advisor at UW Stout and will be password protected. Qualitative analysis was selected because of the need to focus on the examination of the perception of temporary/adjunct faculty and the smaller, more focused group of participants. These results will provide the basis recommendations to improve Saint Cloud Technical and

Community College's new faculty orientation. Any suggestions and comments of the survey instrument itself will be included in the data analysis. The results of this study will be provided in aggregate form in a report format.

Limitations

The following limitations for this study have been identified.

1. There is no certainty that any surveys sent will be returned. Survey will be administered electronically via Qualtrics™. An acceptable response rate for this survey is 30%.
2. The survey itself will be limited to the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College, and the population will include all new employees hired between the Fall of 2011 and Spring of 2012.
3. Research will be conducted over the course of one Academic Semester.
4. Adjunct and temporary faculty may be difficult to contact outside of assigned classroom schedules.
5. Departments will not be identified for the purposes of this study.
6. Credit load for temporary/adjunct faculty will not be a factor in determining participation in this survey

Summary

Chapter 3 outlined the methodology for collecting and using data for this research based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and the business case identified in Chapter 1 for STCC. The survey will include questions on relevancy of topics covered during, administration involvement, suggested areas of improvement, and additional participant responses. The survey will be administered via email. Data collected will be evaluated using Qualtrics™ and destroyed

upon conclusion of this research project. Conclusions and recommendations will follow in Chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter IV: Results

The purpose of this study is to determine the effects and impact of an expanded employee orientation program for temporary/adjunct employees hired by the SCTCC, St. Cloud MN. Research gained from the study assessed how the existing SCTCC employee orientation program incorporates cultural understanding, policy training, and organizational acclimation and also gauges the need for including these in employee orientation. Respondents were asked to read 10 statements regarding their participation and evaluation of SCTCC's new hire orientation program. After reading each statement respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each statement on a four-point Likert scale or provide a Yes/No response. The option for neutral responses to questions was excluded to avoid ambiguity and ensure validity. The research goal was to collect survey results from at least 30% of the 40 adjunct faculty members that were contracted during the Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 semesters. The final response rate for the survey was 52% with 22 of the 40 faculty members completing the survey.

Item Analysis

Table 1 displays the first three questions in the survey and lists any additional comments faculty members wanted to provide regarding orientation. The first question was used to determine if a temporary/adjunct faculty member had taken SCTCC's orientation program. If the faculty member attended the training, they would be directed to answer 2 additional questions about the formal orientation session, if not, they would progress to the next section of the survey, which asked questions pertaining to the 2 months following their start date. There was a 100% response rate to this question. One temporary/adjunct faculty member stated they

attended orientation but did not answer any questions pertaining to the formal orientation session.

Questions 2 and 3 were specific to the scheduled orientation program formally delivered by the college. The purpose of these questions is to gauge the success of the college in outlining SCTCC's vision, mission, and organizational culture. One temporary/adjunct faculty member provided comments on the need for information on each division, how they work together and what degrees were available.

Table 1

Question	No	Yes
<i>1. Did you attend a SCTCC new faculty orientation at the beginning of the Fall 2011 or Spring 2012 Semester?</i>	23% (5)	77% (17)
Question	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Agree or Strongly Agree
<i>2. Do you feel that the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College's organizational vision and mission were explained adequately to you during orientation?</i>	19% (3)	81% (13)
<i>3. Did you finish orientation with a better understanding of the college's organizational culture</i>	19% (3)	81% (13)
<i>Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding your experience with the formal faculty orientation session.</i>		
Just being there to meet other faculty & staff was helpful also.		
Deans representing most of the divisions were there (which was good). I would have liked to know more about each division and how they work together. A visual explaining the different divisions and degrees available would have been good.		
I didn't have a clue what the meeting would be about, but it made me feel important. Thanks.		

Without the orientation I, a new instructor, would have been lost. I felt that it was very informative and helpful for me to attend both fall and spring session.

The question displayed in Table 2 addresses the follow up by the department deans on new hire progress. This was outlined in the literature review as a crucial part in employee assimilation within the organization, the goal being to make an employee feel cared for and important (Dunn & Jasinski, 2009). Forty-three percent (43%) of the new faculty hired during the Fall 2011/Spring 2012 semesters had no follow up meeting with their immediate supervisor during their first 2 months of starting at SCTCC.

Table 2

Question	No	Yes
<i>4. Did your department Dean conduct a one-on-one session with you during the orientation period to check on your progress?</i>	43% (9)	57% (12)

The following questions in Table 3 pertain to work standards and departmental priorities as outlined by the department dean or some other authority. Not unexpectedly, adjunct instructors were provided a set of work expectations/standards during the first two months of employment. However, a deficit appears when these employees were asked if their departmental priorities were communicated. Almost 25% of employees surveyed stating that this was not done.

Table 3

Question	Ineffective or Strongly Ineffective	Effective or Strongly Effective
<i>How effectively do you feel you were communicated a set of expected work standards during the employee orientation period?</i>	5% (1)	95% (20)

<i>How effectively do you feel that you were communicated your departmental priorities during the employee orientation period?</i>	24% (5)	76% (16)
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The questions in Table 4 are related to employee communication and perception. Each faculty member has a different opinion on the interest the department dean should take in their career. Interestingly, it is the responsibility of the department dean to determine how much time should be spent with each individual. From the results of this survey, most employees felt they were receiving adequate feedback from their dean. Since the purpose of the study was not to evaluate each dean individually, but the college as a whole, it is impossible to determine if the 4 employees that responded negatively were from the same department.

In general, faculty member response indicated they felt capable of performing the job after two months of working at the SCTCC, regardless of departmental dean interaction. This measure of effectiveness was determined by individual faculty member perception. Survey comments did identify a lack of leadership direction department deans. Three out of four written comments alluded to the adjunct instructor having to rely on previous experiences, unclear processes, or finding answers by happenstance. One respondent went to great lengths to explain the need for more direction and inclusion.

Table 4

Question	No	Yes
<i>Do you feel your department Dean communicated with you sufficiently during the orientation period?</i>	17% (4)	83% (17)
<i>How do you feel that your department Dean could have communicated with you more effectively during your orientation period?</i>		
Stopped by, given feedback, introduced me to other instructors.		

Question	Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied	Satisfied or Very Satisfied
<i>How satisfied were you with the interest your department dean placed in your success during the orientation period?</i>	17% (4)	83% (17)
Question	Ineffective or Strongly Ineffective	Effective or Strongly Effective
<i>At the completion of the orientation period, how effective did you feel you were capable of performing as a faculty member of the SCTCC?</i>	0% (0)	100% (21)
<i>Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding your orientation period below</i>		
I was hired the day before classes started in the Fall 2011.		
<p>As an adjunct I was extremely excited about teaching but it is difficult to feel a part of a team all working toward the success of the students. I understand there is an "outsider" stigma that comes with stepping in as an adjunct, however it would have been helpful to better understand the workings of the college and in general who's who. (I wouldn't know our president if I bumped in to her.) Everything is in the book as far as processes, timelines, etc., but I would encourage a more comprehensive checklist so I understand at what point in time I need to be addressing critical issues--and where to find forms, etc. I would have felt horrible if a student's success wasn't achieved due to my lack of understanding of the processes and procedures. I also thought fumbling my way through creating lesson plans and assessments was a quality risk. I am fully prepared to leave all my planning and lessons I learned for the next person to teach these classes and wish there had been more of that available. On the other hand, the department head (at least who I perceive to be) and another instructor were fantastic support - checking each and every day despite their obviously very busy schedules and the student demands placed upon them. I won't be able to express my thanks to them enough; they are simply the crème de la crème of educators.</p>		
It's a good thing I had teaching experience. If I didn't, I would have liked a mentor.		
For nursing, it is a bit of asking others and figuring out how the program all comes together.		

The final table lists any comments that survey respondents provided regarding the entire orientation process.

Table 5

<i>Please provide any additional comments regarding the employee orientation process at SCTCC below.</i>
It was great.

I would have liked clear direction on midterm grades. I heard different things from different people.

I only had one general session. It would be nice to have a nursing orientation. I had some conversations with [Department Dean], but now that I will be doing more than just a clinical rotation (I will be teaching a couple classes, skills and clinicals), I am taking it upon myself to know more by attending meetings.

Summary

This chapter examined the responses of the employee orientation survey distributed to faculty members hired during the Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 semesters at SCTCC. The results of the survey data will be used to recommend potential improvements to the existing orientation process. Chapter 5 will discuss conclusions and recommendations derived from the previous chapters.

Chapter V: Discussion

The purpose of this study is to determine the effects and impact of the existing employee orientation program for temporary/adjunct employees hired by SCTCC. A literature review was conducted to assess and analyze the benefits for incorporating a greater cultural understanding, improved policy training, and organizational acclimation for adjunct instructors. A survey of adjunct/temporary instructors hired during the Fall 2011/Spring 2012 semesters was distributed to gauge their views on the existing orientation process. The population used for the survey was 40 temporary/adjunct employees and was administered through the Qualtrics™ tool.

Limitations of the Study

1. There is no certainty that any surveys sent will be returned. Survey will be administered electronically via Qualtrics™. An acceptable response rate for this survey is 30%.
2. The survey itself will be limited to the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College, and the population will include all new employees hired between the Fall of 2011 and Spring of 2012.
3. Research will be conducted over the course of one Academic Semester.
4. Adjunct and temporary faculty may be difficult to contact outside of assigned classroom schedules.
5. Departments will not be identified for the purposes of this study.
6. Credit load for temporary/adjunct faculty will not be a factor in determining participation in this survey

Conclusions

Seventy-Seven (77%) of adjunct/temporary employees surveyed attended the formal orientation session offered by SCTCC. Reasons were not given for non-attendance. In addition, orientation sessions are not mandatory. The survey comments identified that one employee was hired after the orientation session was offered. The majority of employees commented that the SCTCC vision and mission was communicated, and participants were provided an introduction to corporate culture during this orientation session. Division dean representation was present for most departments. However, there was no organizational overview which explained how departments were structured academically, what dependencies individual departments had on each other, and which departments handled which function at the college. This could result in employees feeling that they are working in a vacuum with limited understanding of where they fit in the college organizational schema. In the literature review, Williams (2010) found employee orientation to be an important component in introducing a new employee to their work environment as well as interdepartmental interactions which could potentially eliminate any isolated feelings.

The survey results for the 2 month period after orientation were positive in terms of communication. Temporary/Adjunct instructors were communicated an expected set of work standards during the first 2 months of employment. Two items of concern were identified as a result of the survey: 1) whether the department dean conducted a follow up session and 2) whether the employee was outlined a set of departmental priorities. The literature indicates that the first few weeks on a job were particularly critical, affecting impressions, feelings, attitudes, and job satisfaction imparting a set of work expectations and a directional focus contributes to the positive performance of the new employee (Dolan, 2011; Dunn & Jasinski, 2009).

In addition, this study found that Forty three (43%) of temporary/adjunct new hires did not receive a follow up on their progress by their department dean in the 2 month period after being hired. This was outlined in the literature review as a crucial part in employee assimilation within the organization, the goal being to make an employee feel cared for and important (Dunn & Jasinski, 2009). Therefore, communication and follow up are critical success factors for temporary/adjunct new hires in terms of job satisfaction and retention.

Comments from the survey may indicate a causal link between employee performance and ambiguity regarding job expectations. This was evident with 1 respondent going to great lengths to explain the need for more direction and inclusion. Lack of direction and focus could contribute to inadequate performance (Dolan, 2011).

Another deficit appeared when employees were asked if they were communicated their departmental priorities, with almost 25% of employees stating that this was not done. This could have a direct impact on employee evaluations, which are required to be conducted on temporary/adjunct faculty during their first semester at STCC. Outlining departmental priorities would provide the faculty member focus for growth and development, and assurance that they are meeting the goals the department dean has put into place for meeting their department's responsibility to the college. A temporary/adjunct faculty member with no indication on what they will be evaluated on may have lower morale (Doerpinghaus, et al., 1994), be rated at a lower ranking level, and have less job satisfaction (Anderson, et al., 2008).

While it is up to each faculty member to manage their own career, sometimes these faculty members may be unaware of the options available to them. They may also be unaware of the large amount of policies that must be adhered to concerning student management. While it is easy to expect an employee to ask for help when they are having issues or are unclear of a policy; there are many reasons why that employee may not. This hesitation could come from a

lack of knowing whom to ask, or perception by other staff members (Gordon, 2003). As determined in the literature review it is often harder for a temporary employee to seek help due to their impermanent status or personal perceptions of their place in the faculty hierarchy, specifically how full-time staff and administration regarding temporary employees (Wilson, 2010). It has been identified in the literature review that outlining goals and responsibilities and expressing value in the temporary/adjunct faculty member's professional development makes that employee more productive and loyal (Wallen, 2004).

Recommendations

There are 4 recommendations for the employee evaluation process based on the research, survey information, and experience gained in this study.

1. Implementation of a new hire checklist system with a single point of administrative oversight can be used to track employee orientation progress and provide a basis for a successful orientations program (Williams, 2010). This should be a separate file from their employee file. Human Resources can administer the completion of the checklist, but the responsibility for executing the checklist would fall on department deans and associated administrative assistants. This checklist should track, at a minimum, training, certification or completion of the following items:

administrative

- Benefits (Leave, Health, Life)
- Facility
- Mail
- Desire2Learn
- Email
- Intranet

departmental

- Mentoring
- Progress and Goal Setting

- Policy and Procedures
- Student Success
- Evaluation Expectations

Individual items on the checklist are recommended to be signed off by the department dean or their designated representative. A time frame of less than 2 months will be assigned for each item completed. Tracking can be efficiently set up through templates in the existing Microsoft Outlook™ email system, through Microsoft Excel™, or can be tracked via pen and paper and routed. Upon completion of each orientation period a status update checklist should be sent to the President's office for review.

2. Leverage existing IT infrastructure to assist in accomplishing the first recommendation. Some items from the above checklist can be set up and tracked for completion using Desire2Learn (D2L) to reduce the burden on department administration. Using D2L would also provide a consistent and persistent reference for both new temporary/adjunct employees as well as new full-time employees.
3. Increase/maximize employee intranet usability and remove outdated information. The use of a document management system to ensure the most recent documentation is available would be the best solution. Providing this resource to new employees could help ensure policy adherence and minimize the use of ad-hoc email distribution lists.
4. Instructor evaluation forms should be emphasized in the orientation packet and expectations should be outlined within the first few weeks of hire. Provide an information section for the department deans to ensure they are not inadvertently using the first employee evaluation as a new hire orientation. This information session could be hosted on Desire2Learn.

Recommendations for Further Study

Due to the limitations of the current study, the researcher strongly recommends future research. The recommendations for future research are as follows:

1. It is impossible to determine if the 4 employees that responded negatively to the survey were from the same department. A more detailed follow up survey should be conducted to determine which departments new employees are assigned in an effort clarify negative responses. In addition, reasons were not given for non-attendance to the formal orientation session. Determining this information could identify a potential problem in the notification process for employee orientation.
2. Although the ratio between full-time faculty and temporary/adjunct faculty was not gathered for this study, SCTCC utilized 40 new temporary/adjunct faculty over the 2011-2012 school year. A follow up study should be conducted on this pilot group to determine employee satisfaction and turnover in order to facilitate orientation process improvement.
3. Conduct this study with tenure track faculty in an effort to enhance current tenure track faculty orientations processes and systems.

Summary

Employee orientation is an opportunity to properly introduce a new employee to their new work environment. It can be used as an opportunity for a formal introduction to corporate culture, departmental priorities, and important policies needed for that new employee to be successful. This introduction could be considered more important for temporary employees because it provides a sense of inclusion which could offset the transient status that employee may feel and motivate them to greater performance. This study examined the existing

orientation program at a local technical college that utilizes a large temporary adjunct faculty workforce and the current orientation process. The data gathered from the study will be used as a basis for further research and improvement of the current process at this technical college.

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Appendix A: Permission to Conduct a Survey

Joe Silman

From: Deborah Holstad
Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2012 11:20 AM
To: kerstenj@uwstout.edu
Cc: Joe Silman; Kristina Keller
Subject: FW: Contact Information for Program Director

Dr. Kersten,

Hello, my name is Deb Holstad. I am the human resources director at St. Cloud Technical and Community College. Joe Silman, one of our adjunct instructors and one of your students, has been working with me and Kristina Keller, Dean of Business and Information Systems, to offer a feedback survey to our adjunct faculty. Joe asked me to send a message to you letting you know that I am giving the okay to move forward with the survey.

I do need a written response from your organization that you will use the e-mail address of the faculty involved only for the purpose of sending the survey link and information.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,
 Deb Holstad

From: Joe Silman
Sent: Wednesday, March 14, 2012 9:07 PM
To: Deborah Holstad
Subject: Contact Information for Program Director

Deb,

Here is the contact information for Dr. Kersten. I don't think anything other than an email stating that I am authorized to conduct a survey is required. Thank you again Deb!

Dr. Jeanette Kersten, EdD
 Assistant Professor
Program Director- MS in Training & Development
 College of Management
 248 Jarvis Tech Wing
 University of Wisconsin, Stout
 Menomonie WI 54751-0790

Joe Silman
 Computer Technology Instructor

Appendix B: Employee Survey

SCTCC Employee Orientation Survey

Q1 This research has been reviewed by the UW-Stout IRB as required by the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46.

Q2 Did you attend a SCTCC new faculty orientation at the beginning of the Fall 2011 or Spring 2012 Semester?

- Yes
- No

Q3 The following two questions pertain to the formal evaluation session held at the beginning of each semester. You have the option to provide comments at the end of this section.

Q4 Do you feel that the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College's organizational vision and mission were explained adequately to you during orientation? [Organizational vision and mission are the tenants that the facility operates under.]

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q5 Did you finish orientation with a better understanding of the college's organizational culture? [Organizational culture is defined as providing an employee the framework for understanding and making sense of their work environment and experiences.]

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Q6 Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding your experience with the formal faculty orientation session in the box provided below. Your feedback is important!

Q7 For the following questions, the orientation period is defined as: The time frame within two months of your start date to include follow up meetings scheduled by department Deans. Please answer these questions even if you did not attend the formal orientation session.

Q8 Did your department Dean conduct a one-on-one session with you during the orientation period to check on your progress?

- Yes
- No

Q9 How effectively do you feel you were communicated a set of expected work standards during the employee orientation period ?

- Very Ineffective
- Ineffective
- Effective
- Very Effective

Q10 How effectively do you feel that you were communicated your departmental priorities during the employee orientation period?

- Very Ineffective
- Ineffective
- Effective
- Very Effective

Q11 How satisfied were you with the interest your department dean placed in your success during the orientation period?

- Very Dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied

Q12 Do you feel your department Dean communicated with you sufficiently during the orientation period?

- Yes
- No

Q13 How do you feel that your department Dean could have communicated with you more effectively during your orientation period?

Q14 At the completion of the orientation period, how effective did you feel you were capable of performing as a faculty member of the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College?

- Very Ineffective
- Ineffective
- Effective
- Very Effective

Q15 Please provide any comments or suggestions regarding your orientation period in the box provided below. Your feedback is important!

Q16 Please provide any additional comments regarding the employee orientation process at SCTCC below.

Appendix C: Implied Consent Statement

UW-Stout Implied Consent Statement for Research Involving Human Subjects Consent to Participate In UW-Stout Approved Research

Title: Evaluation of New Faculty Orientation and its impact on Temporary/Adjunct Instructors at a local Technical and Community College.

Investigator:
Joseph Silman
silmanj@my.uwstout.edu
(320)308-6595

Research Sponsor:
Dr. Jeanette Kersten
kerstenj@uwstout.edu
(715)232-5229

Description:

This purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College's faculty orientation program and its usefulness to new temporary/adjunct faculty.

This research will aid the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College by:

1. Evaluating current orientation practices.
2. Evaluating post orientation follow-up by college administration.
3. Determining temporary/adjunct perception of orientation.
4. Provide recommendations for improvement.

Risks and Benefits:

There are no physical or financial risks identified in this study. Confidentiality measures are being taken, and Human Resources will be involved in the distribution of the survey. The research itself has been approved by the Saint Cloud Technical and Community College and candid feedback is anticipated by school administration.

Recommendations will be made to the SCTCC new faculty orientation program based on feedback received, which may reduce temporary/adjunct turnover, increase temporary/adjunct engagement in SCTCC organizational culture, and improve communication between new adjunct/temporary faculty and college administration.

Time Commitment and Payment:

The online confidential survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. You will be asked to respond to questions regarding your experience with new faculty orientation. Participation in this survey is voluntary and no compensation will be awarded.

Confidentiality:

Survey information will be recorded confidentially online. Only the researchers will have access to individual survey data. Your name or identifying information will not be included on any documents or findings.

Right to Withdraw:

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may choose not to participate without any adverse consequences to you. You have the right to stop the survey at any time. Since you are participating in a confidential online survey, once you submit your response, the data cannot be linked to you and cannot be withdrawn.

IRB Approval:

This study has been reviewed and approved by The University of Wisconsin-Stout's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this study meets the ethical obligations required by federal law and University policies. If you have questions or concerns regarding this study please contact the Investigator or Advisor. If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the IRB Administrator.

Investigator:

Joseph Silman
silmanj@my.uwstout.edu
(320)308-6595.

Advisor:

Dr. Jeanette Kersten
kerstenj@uwstout.edu
(715)232-5229

IRB Administrator

Sue Foxwell, Director, Research Services
152 Vocational Rehabilitation Bldg.
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Menomonie, WI 54751
715-232-2477
foxwells@uwstout.edu

Statement of Consent:

By completing the online survey you agree to participate in the project entitled, Evaluation of New Faculty Orientation and its impact on Temporary/Adjunct Instructors at a local Technical and Community College.