INDIANA UNIVERSITY

24 – World-class IT Staff

Action Item Template Response

General Action Item Information

Lead Division/Office: HR
Action Item Number: 24
Action Item Short Name: World-class IT Staff

Dependencies with other EP Action Items: 72
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I. DESCRIBE YOUR PLANS FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS ACTION.

For Indiana University to remain a leader in the development, implementation, and use of information technology emphatic attention must be placed on attracting, retaining and growing world-class staff. IU has developed an excellent staff in spite of the inherent challenges of attracting people to Bloomington or Indianapolis (as opposed to the employee and employment fluidity one sees in Silicon Valley or the NC research triangle). Developing and maintaining a world-class staff is possible through a combination of the attractiveness of the communities, work environment, and the values and success of IU. The many positive benefits of working at IU do not diminish the necessity of providing growth opportunities, training, and salaries that are at least competitive.

Specific actions to be undertaken as part of this Action Plan include:

- Salary surveys. It is essential to understand accurately what the market is within the region, state, and nation so that the university is offering salaries that are competitive and differentiated in the markets where we want to lead.

- Work climate survey follow-up/action/repeat. Work climate is a critical factor in overall employee satisfaction, and as a result of inadequate buildings that house many UITS staff, has been a real issue. In addition to identifying major (e.g., facilities) issues, work climate surveys uncover smaller sources of dissatisfaction that can be fixed as well as areas where minimal effort (e.g., in-house training) can have significant positive impact. Surveys require honest communication, expectation management, and serious follow-up.

- On-site IT Leaders Program. One of the best things we can do to improve satisfaction among our leaders (from leaders of informal teams, to managers, to more senior management) is provide training to enable them to be more effective in current roles and be better prepared for future roles (i.e., succession planning.) The IT Leaders Program has been very successful in this regard so far on three different levels: participation with CIC schools, IU on-site program with extended IT community, and UITS leaders and emerging leaders boot camp. Increasing the network of common knowledge and shared terminology will enhance and underscore the entire EP effort.

- Job enrichment/career development. A job enrichment program can address the important human resource issues of staff retention and succession planning. EP implementation will provide opportunities to launch projects across units and campuses that will promote both skills development and inter-unit understanding.

- Funding for training, basic IT infrastructure for non-base staff. The pressure and success in seeking external funding has created a problem in funding necessary staff infrastructure support. Funding agencies may not pay for workstations, land lines, or travel for training. Likewise, such funding sources may not pay for PDAs or cell phones, even when allowed within IU policy. Internal VPIT policy is to not centrally fund the infrastructure for positions that are externally funded. These staff members require the same level of support to excel as their base-funded colleagues. A combination of incorporating such costs into internal charge-back costs and use of indirect cost recovery could eliminate the discrepancy in the way infrastructure support for staff is provided; such a solution could also be scalable beyond OVPIT and UITS into the broader IT community.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

IU Human Resources staff continuously participate in salary surveys for technology jobs and monitor and analyze the compensation trends for IT jobs within the state, region, and nation. A group of VPIT senior leadership collaborated with them during the last fiscal year to discuss the roles and responsibilities of IU technology jobs and the unique challenges of IT recruitment and retention. The outcome of these discussions and associated market analysis resulted in the development of a recommendation to adjust the salary ranges for the IT job family.

We did not repeat the work climate survey in 2010. Instead 80% of all IT staff system wide, randomly sampled, participated in survey administered by Computerworld as part of IU's application to be named in the 100 Best Places to Work in IT list. The questions asked were similar to those on the work climate survey. We were one of two Indiana businesses, one of five universities to make the top 100, testimony that our colleagues had good things to say.

IU ITLP graduated 26 participants last December. ITLP2 takes off November 3 with a cohort of 30, half UITS and half from other departments, schools, and campuses. One IU IT is the new motto and collaboration is intensifying (e.g., the Central Endpoint Virtualization project).

The IT Boot Camp will also see another cohort this fall bringing leadership concepts and relationship building practice to emerging leaders in the organization. Project work (by an IU ITLP team) has provided some structure for inter-unit job enrichment/career development opportunities. A table at Tech Expo will solicit ideas and projects for job enrichment and exchange opportunities.

II. WHAT ARE THE POLICY AND PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS OF YOUR PLANS?

IT leaders continue to collaborate and communicate frequently and effectively through councils, projects, and workshops. Creating a practice of sharing will require greater transparency among roles and compel the campus Human Resources offices to draw fewer distinctions between departmental, school, campus, and system roles.

Federal agencies have policies against funding workstation infrastructure or asking for same. This negatively impacts the competitiveness of UITS proposals. We therefore recommend a change of policy/practice, allowing utilization of a portion of indirect cost recovery to provide externally funded IT professionals with the same level of central allocation for personal workstations, telephone and networking charges, and cell phones/PDAs as their base-funded colleagues.

III. IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS.

- UITS staff members
- Extended IT community
- Council of CIOs
- University, campus human resources organizations