



## Professional Development Trust September 2006 Meeting Notes

### **Agenda Item: Improving *Coordination and Communication of P.D.***

The group discussed key points to improving coordination and communication of professional development which included:

- Making sure there is organization-wide coordination of professional development.
- The importance of timeliness of coordination and communication of professional development to make it valuable as well reasonable to expect engagement or participation.
- That professional development opportunities should be needs driven and take into consideration organizational type needs, individual needs, clientele and program needs, as well as research/specialist identified needs. It was also reaffirmed that there are really two types of needs. One is subject matter/technical knowledge and the other knowledge and skills which includes organizational understanding, working with people, etc. Leadership for identifying needs for subject matter is the coordination responsibility of regional program directors and the other is the leadership role of immediate supervisors such as district extension administrators, county extension directors, and program leaders.

Strategies on were discussion related to coordination and communication of professional development. Suggestions from this discussion included:

- Using the learning opportunities catalog and calendar as the “coordination” tool where middle managers would post to the catalog and calendar via an open data entry web form by a certain date (by April or May). That would then be reviewed and posted for public viewing by a late summer (August or September). By requiring entry of opportunities and deadlines this would improve the timely coordination of professional development resources.
- The learning opportunities catalog and calendar would include all meetings and learning resources which would help with recognition of over scheduling and scheduling patterns which would also help enhance or improve coordination.
- Use the learning opportunities catalog and calendar as the foundation for communication of professional development. The key to it being a good communication tool is ongoing reminders of its availability. This could be done by having it accessible from the TCE-employee web site, through monthly email reminders, agency newsletters, etc.

There was also some discussion about other coordination/communication related topics that focused on making sure learning resources were readily available and centrally managed. The following areas were identified as important to that happening:

- The implementation of a Web Content Management System where people could get to self directed information resources including access to experts will help with coordination and communication.
- The TCE Bookstore where there was ready access to printed resources.
- The development of some type of Learning Management System for online course development, registration for both face to face and virtual learning, as well as management of learner information will also help coordination and communication efforts as well.

**Agenda Item: Needs Assessment Process**

The group determined that it is time to conduct another needs assessment early in 2007 and then outlined the following process for this assessment.

When	What	Who	NOTES/Comments
January 2007	Determine Competencies for Regions	Regional Management Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Try to keep to 4-5 competencies</li> <li>● Campus is a Region</li> <li>● Specialists will not have subject matter competency assessments</li> </ul>
February 2007	Prepare Assessment Tool	Extension Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Will have some profile information as well for make cross tabulations</li> </ul>
April-May 2007	Employees Do Assessments	Supervisors Announce	
May 2007	Review Results	Middle Managers Admin Leaders Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● State Data Reports</li> <li>● Regional Data Reports</li> <li>● District Data Reports</li> </ul>
June-July 2007	PD Plans Made	Middle Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● State Plans</li> <li>● Regional Plans</li> <li>● District Plans</li> <li>● Plans need to consider other needs inputs such as clientele, program, research, etc. (see previous comments on needs listed above).</li> </ul>
August 2007	Plans Posted to Learning Opps Catalog and Calendar	Middle Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● State—Extension Education and Other Campus Based Units</li> <li>● Regional—RPDs</li> <li>● District--DEAs</li> </ul>

### **Agenda Item: *Onboarding of New Employees***

The group discussed the onboarding of new employees and were provided an update from Rebecca Luckey who is the program coordinator for new employee development. Below is a summary of the types of things that are currently in progress to support new employees:

- Redevelopment of the New Agent Guide
- There is a new agent individual development plan template in TExAS
- A template for specialists needs to be developed and Rebecca will be working with Cheryl, Sharon and Chris on that.

Some suggestions for onboarding were discuss and included the following:

- There needs to be some way for mentors and co-workers to be made aware of new employee online seminars and then to watch them to help new employees with the topics from the seminars.
- Don't let specialists attend NEATO cold, they need to understand the context in which the information is being presented to the agents at NEATO.
- NEATOs need to be evaluated to see how it can made more consistent and where curriculum for certain topics is developed.
- Mentoring System and Notification Process need to be enhanced to minimize clerical work and make more timely. This would involve moving it to an electronic process and the development of support resources for mentors. Sam, Kyle and Dareel will work with Rebecca on this.

### **Agenda Item: *Technology***

Jennifer Jahedkar from EIT provided an update to the group on Technology as it relates to Professional Development which included the following:

- Centra Symposium continues to be well used and adoption is getting broader and wider for both meetings and training.
- The Virutal Extension Collaborative is working on developing template project development processes to be used as recommendations for how online courses can be developed in Extension. Development of these template development plans is being done through the actual development of several online courses for Extension. This group is also exploring learning management systems and making recommendations to the organization for how to move forward in this area.

### **Agenda Item: *What's Next***

- Next distance meeting will be December 8 via Centra Symposium.
- We will have two face to face meetings in 2007, one in the spring April 26-27 – College Station and one in the fall September 13-14.