



Issue 3/ 2011

Diversity and Staff Appraisals

The current newsletter will be focusing on the topic

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„Staff Appraisals“. University teams are marked by diversity. They are not only characterized by visible attributes such as age, gender or skin color but also by their different conducts and methods of operating. The relatively fast turnover of staff is especially challenging for the science departments. The basic approach of Diversity understands diversity as a chance for universities. It is the executive's task to create a climate of appreciation and optimal utilization of talents. The means of "Staff Appraisals" helps to analyze the work situation as well as to analyze strengths and weaknesses of individuals in their diversity.

"Staff Appraisals - Under all circumstances! BUT...

... it shouldn't be used as the only instrument but rather as an element within a wide range of instruments of human resource development. " Prof. Dr. Christiane Hipp, chairholder of Organisation, Human Resource Management and General Management, absolutely recommends the instrument of "staff appraisals" to everyone. "Each employee conducts in a different manner when working in a diverse team. It requires an increase of communication. With this, an atmosphere of appreciation, acceptance and understanding within each and everyone ought to be creat-

ed." The talks take two to two and a half hours. Content of staff appraisals embraces accomplishments of the past year, analysis of the current situation and lastly an outlook on the coming year. "Approximately 80% of the employees make use of this opportunity to communicate their needs, desires and visions.", Hipp estimates. Employer and employee should be able to communicate on an equal level. She suggests a form of bilateral dialog that is open and in which both partners are confidential, honest and respectful with each other. Both should be able to express their desires and ideas so that they can be put into action. For Christiane Hipp this is a chance to get to know her employees better. The results are recorded in a protocol, which is signed by both parties. The implementation should be visible. In closing she said that in heterogenic teams with diverse disciplinary procedures it is like a coming together of completely different worlds. Subsequently, each has a different approach. She therefore sees it a challenge for universities, especially when it is their target to be internationally orientated.



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Christiane Hipp is pleased to offer information to anyone interested in introducing this instrument of staff appraisal in their institution or to anyone who is interested in learning more about this topic.

“Just like in Diversity Management”

Birgit Hendrichke, head of the central department for further education at BTU Cottbus, sees staff appraisals as a sure formula for a good work climate and fun at work. The atmosphere should be open and friendly, it should be a trust based talk between two persons with bilateral appreciation - “Just like in Diversity Management”, she says - committed and characterized by active listening. Employees feel appreciated when their employer offers them unrestricted time. This, on the other hand, creates a positive work climate. Each employee in a team has his or her own qualities. In the talks she learns more about the individual concepts on and desires regarding work practices. Communication, although often neglected in everyday work, can help to prevent conflict potentials. Birgit Hendrichke knows that her coworkers are constantly evolving. The presented appreciation counteracts the will of reorientation. Moreover, there is a higher motivation to get out of the comfort zone in certain situations. From the employees’ perspectives this means: Where do I want to play a part? Where am I? Where do I want to be? Birgit Hendrichke concludes saying that she invested a lot into preparation but can see the results of an invigorated cooperation of trust. She now reviews the everyday work situation from the perspective of her employee’s and can make necessary adaptations.

Tip: Qualification offer about “Diversity”

Gabriele Weineck (Social Scientist) and Astrid Lange (Psychologist) offer the extracurricular qualification programs of the BTU Cottbus focus on university-intern as well as extern persons.

The themes of the programs are worked out in the form of a modul and can be held in small groups of 6 to 12 members.

“Diversity” is a totally new modul. “We experienced that this topic arises often and that it comes with a lot of questionmarks. Benefits as well as risks of diversity when creating teams are being discussed or career-workshops also focus on future requirements of dealing with diversity in work places.

That is why we decided to give this particular topic more room for everybody who want to educate themselves in diversity in their teamgroups or in the possibility of increasing the efficiency in diverse teams.”

The module comprises several components like “Benefits of Diversity: Why should I deal with this?”,

“Diversity in teams: The dimensions of Diversity” or “Change of perspectives: Same but different while together”.

The qualification modules will be offered by the central department for further education as of April 2011.

Contact: Astrid.Lange@tu-cottbus.de

Events and links:

11.11.2011,

„Das Mitarbeitergespräch als Instrument guter Führung“

<http://www-docs.tu-cottbus.de/weiterbildung/public/PDF/mitarbeiter.pdf>

Das Mitarbeitergespräch – Handlungsempfehlung; Staatskanzlei des Landes Brandenburg

<http://www.brandenburg.de/media/1172/mitarbeitergesprach.pdf>

Contact:

Project coordinator Diversity Management

Birgit Berlin

☎ 0355 – 69 21 46

✉ diversity@tu-cottbus.de

Equal opportunities officer of the BTU Cottbus

Ehregard Heinzig

☎ 0355 – 69 23 24

✉ gba@tu-cottbus.de

www.tu-cottbus.de/diversity

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