Change Proposal:

Tuition Benefit Waiver Revamp

Simplifying a Process

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Executive Summary: Tuition Waiver Benefit

The University of Colorado offers a tuition benefit to eligible university employees and their dependents.   This benefit is provided in the form of a tuition waiver or at a discount (for dependents). Being implemented approximately 3 years old (instated 3/8/2012) this program is new to the University. The Tuition Waiver Benefit workflow was built around what was fast and efficient at the time.   This process would be the building blocks of a benefit that hundreds of employees and their dependents use every year.

Problem

The Tuition Waiver workflow has not been updated in any significant way that has improved it's over all functionality since its implementation 3 years ago.

I work as a Training and Documentation Specialist at Employee Services at the University Colorado in in downtown Denver. I was asked to step in to assist the individual who has been overseeing the Tuition Waiver Benefit process from the beginning.

Over the course of the last two weeks I have been engaged in an "all hands on deck" learning approach with the only individual that currently processes the Tuition Waiver applications. The process to collect, track, research, and approve the employee's eligibility for the benefit is lengthy and not time efficient. Two months ago a brand new ticketing system called Cherwell began tracking employee's emails and applications. Since its utilization by Employee Services, it has become obvious how inefficient and cumbersome the process for approving applications has become.

Intervention

My plan is to come up with a new method of collecting and tracking the employee's application. Employee Services is responsible for researching the employee's eligibility. This is the constant in this equation, because there is no intent on changing or improving this process. I intend to first address the current workflow. While breaking down all of the steps I have to go through to approve the application, I intend on locating the areas where applications "sit" the longest.

Project Goals:
- Determine where applications remain in queue's the longest and improve these lag times
  - Is this human or system related?
- Speed up the process of the final approval or decline of the use of the Tuition Waiver Benefit
  - Can this process be more automated?

- Develop the framework for tracking how quickly applications are getting processed and sent to the campuses
    o Can technology be used to track how many days an approval takes?
- Keeping employees informed every step of the process their application goes through

Rationale:
- If I can determine where applications sit in queues I can develop new efficiencies
- By evaluating the "why's" behind the process as it currently exists I can get to the root of what is necessary
- I need a base to compare how quickly applications are getting through the workflow

Accommodating Diverse Participants:
- The diverse participants include employees over five locations
    (Four campuses and the Systems building downtown)
    o Employees
    o Employee's Dependents
    o (future consideration) VIP employee's – do these individuals require more attention or planning?
- Each campus has different:
    o Enrollment dates and specific rules regarding when applicants need to fill out the application, register for class, and drop classes
    o Ineligible classes

Cost and benefit payoff and feasibility:
- There is no allotted budget to fund this project
- Payroll Management is currently considering having two individuals assigned to this workflow instead of just one (as it stands today)

Evaluation

The difficulties of tracking this progress include not having a measurable goal to compare the past versus the present. There was no method of tracking in the past that will provide an accurate baseline to prove success. The development of this process hinges on the ability to process the applications in the quickest and most accurate way possible.
- Management: I have been given full authority to track and update this process
    o I will meet with Payroll Management on a weekly basis to provide relevant feedback on my progress
    o It is my intent to track the entire process from start to finish by creating a Step by Step guide for future use at Employee Services

Long Term: Can I capture all my goals within the allotted time?
- Updates- Website, Tuition Waiver Benefit Application, Customized templates for email responses
    - By cleaning up the current language, Employee Services can empower employee's to better understand the policies and procedures
        - This will enable them to fill out the forms more quickly and with more accuracy
        - There will be less follow up questions if there are more posted timeframes

Resources

- University of Colorado: Office of Policy and Efficiency APS 5024 – Tuition Assistance Benefit. http://www.cu.edu/ope/aps/5024 Web. 23 Jan. 2016.

- University of Colorado: Career Advancement and Learning – Tuition Waiver Benefit. http://www.cu.edu/employee-services/career-advancement-learning/tuition-waiver-benefit Web. 23 Jan. 2016.