The winds of change
Restructuring an international office to enhance campus-wide international engagement.

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Presenters

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Agenda

1. Introduction (10 minutes)
   a. The story of change

2. What did we do and how did we manage the change? (30 minutes)
   a. Strategy and plan of action
   b. Office structure and desk distribution
   c. Human resource issues
   d. Relationships and collaboration

3. Roundtable discussion and sharing (30 minutes)

4. Evaluation (5 minutes)
Story from Memorial University

Memorial is multi-campus, decentralized, internationally active (but ad hoc), 10% int’l student body, very low tuition, demographics & increasing research intensity are rationale for Internationalization

1. 1997 – launch of the International Centre
2. 1999 -2010 – the ‘acting’ begins
3. 2010-2015 – restructure and new mandate of International Centre “Lead, partner and support”.
4. 2010 – 2013 - Many changes, constant ambiguity about direction of Internationalization at senior executive level....
5. Dec. 2013 – white paper on internationalization at Memorial
7. 2015 - Formal merge of international student and international strategy/partnership office with a strategic plan to implement.
1. Université de Sherbrooke, Located in Eastern Townships, Québec.

2. 2 campuses in Sherbrooke; 1 in South Montréal; 9 faculties; VP International relations;

3. Agence des relations internationales: partnership and international relations; VP Student: International students; Registrar & communication: int’l recruitment;

4. Some collaboration; lot of competition;

5. Dilemma: central vs faculties; boundaries of each service; silos; Nostalgia of the old time; etc.

6. University Strategic Plan 2010-2015:
   1. Open borders: Internationalization will make important contribution to the mission of the university (Comprehensive?)
   2. Very specific and comprehensive objectives
What did we do and how did we manage the change?

a. Strategy and plan of action
b. Office structure and desk distribution
c. Human resource issues
d. Relationships and collaboration
What did we do and how did we manage the change?

a. Strategy and plan of action

Memorial’s story – perseverance and patience in the face of five years of upheaval and change in senior executive.

- Communications – explaining, meeting, writing, phoning, dropping in...
- Resources – aligning international activities with external goals.
- Relationships, relationships, relationships – saying “sure, no problem”: supporting all colleagues, internal and external to Memorial, in every big and small way.
What did we do and how did we manage the change?

b. Office structure and desk distribution
Memorial’s story – revolution and evolution

• 2010 - drastic change managed by senior executive to retire or reshuffle to other units all International Centre staff
• 2015 – merger of two units based on creating efficient administrative support where it has not previously existed - strategic communications and 3rd party support
What did we do and how did we manage the change?

c. Human resource issues
Memorial’s story - when to reach out and when to say ‘enough’.
• 2010 - relationships with ex- IC staff and institutional memory
• 2013 – my own journey - how long to live with ambiguity?
What did we do and how did we manage the change?

d. Relationships and collaboration

Memorial’s story – Implementing strategic plans, but not “owning” international - maintaining relationships is key to managing change.

• Internal stakeholders – how to influence, how to help them reach goals?
• External stakeholders – how to add value and influence outcomes.
What did we do and how did we manage the change?

1. Summary and conclusion

Memorial’s story: In decentralized context, ambiguity is a constant state and leadership requires continual readjustment and strong allies.

- Danger of coming up from within the institution to create change is falling off the radar/being taken for granted.
- Advantage is already having reputation, trusted relationships.
Open Strategic plan: Objectives

• Open borders: Internationalization will make important contribution to the mission of the university (Comprehensive?)
  – To enhance the preparedness of the University to meet globalization and cultural diversity challenges
  – To increase the outcomes of the cultural diversity at the university
  – To develop a concerted and efficient international recruitment strategy
  – To Increase student mobility
  – To Benefit from the faculty and staff international networks to enrich the international characteristic of the university
  – To develop a concerted and efficient international staff recruitment strategy
  – To focus and coordinate the University international engagement
Executive director, Internationalization

• Hired in 2012 to implement the strategy and develop international activities
• Merge of three teams into one
• Internationalization framework
• **Team values** (inspired the values of the university):
  – Innovation – Respect – Openness – Collaboration
• Team building: skills, expertise, trust, proudness, sense of service and stewardship, place in the organization
Fractal structure vs pyramidal structure

Zones of responsibility vs decentralization

Trust and collaboration relationship

A team Strong enough to support you

More system in the machine: processes, Purpose, fundamental questions

Presence, stewardship, reliability, shared responsibility

Inspire: staff come to us!
Share: openness!
Celebrate: annual conference; Events; Int’l speakers; New student activities
Collaborate: improvement
Structure

- Specialists: Partnership; Students; Recruitment; Process and new projects, Communication, etc.
- Co-responsibility (2 by file, and team work): Knowledge sharing; Skills development; Sustainability; Team building;
- New projects: process development/improvement; agreement life cycle; strategy development; internationalization of the curriculum; internships management;
- Office activities (innovate and have fun): all
- Example: Conference Internationalization 2.1, presentations by all team members (what we are cooking)
- Vice-president International; Advisory committee; Executive director; Work groups; Community of practice
Human resources

• The resistant: one retired; one changed slowly but don’t recognize it ;-)

• The developer:

• The talented but worried

Team’s workplan
Old project
Team’s workplan
New project

Your idea
Conclusion

• Leadership positioned Internationalization: strong commitment
• Strong team in place
• Focus: purpose and fundamental questions
• Collaboration
• Risks
  – Time and diversion by others’ priorities
  – Lack of processes and purpose
  – Tools needed: information system;
  – Resources: budget, human, time (patience);
Roundtable discussion

• How do you build a strong international office team in a decentralized environment?
  – benefits and challenges of coming up from the ranks or being brought in from the inside?
  – what skills does the leader need?
• Share your model or approach in your office and where it fits
  – what works well,
  – what doesn't work as well?
• Any other questions?
Contacts

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