



2015

**ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS**

Annual Conference

February 15-18, 2015

Washington, DC, USA

The winds of change

**Restructuring an international office to enhance
campus-wide international engagement.**

**Sonja Knutson, Director, International Centre, Memorial University
Adel El Zaïm, Executive Director International, University of British Columbia**

Presenters



MEMORIAL
UNIVERSITY

www.mun.ca



UNIVERSITÉ DE
SHERBROOKE

www.USherbrooke.ca

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
6. Dec. 2014 - Strategic Internationalization Plan 2020
7. 2015 - Formal merge of international student and international strategy/partnership office with a strategic plan to implement.

Story from Université de Sherbrooke

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.
- http://www.mun.ca/vpacademic/SIP_2020_Final.pdf

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.

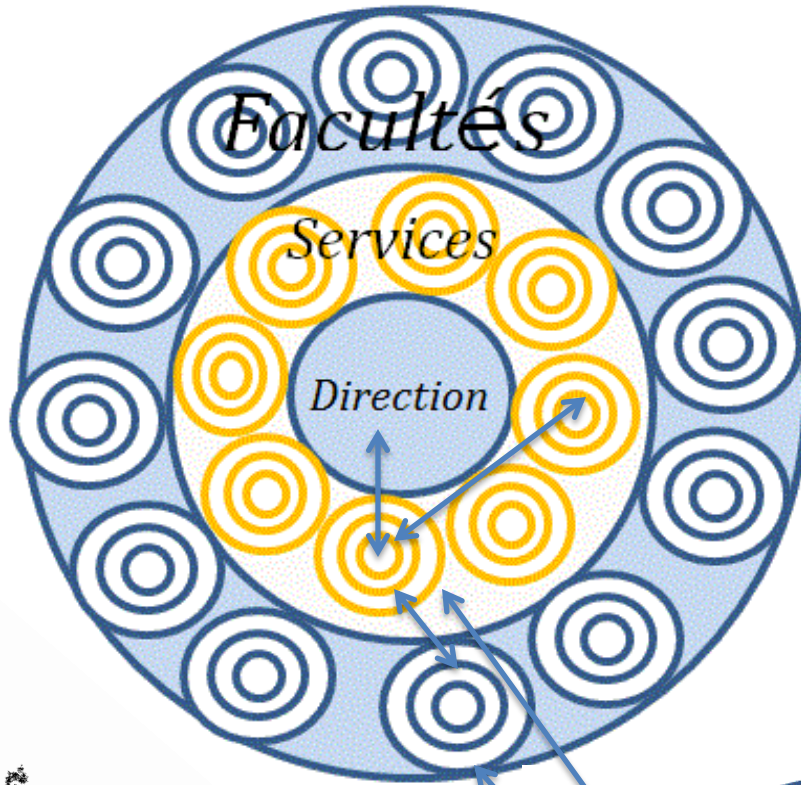
Open Strategic plan: Objectives

- 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



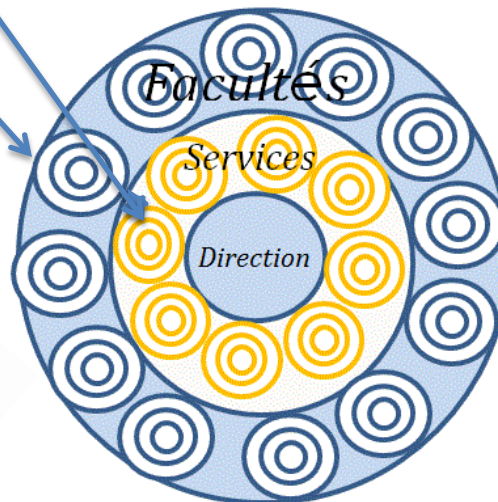
Zones of responsibility vs decentralization

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

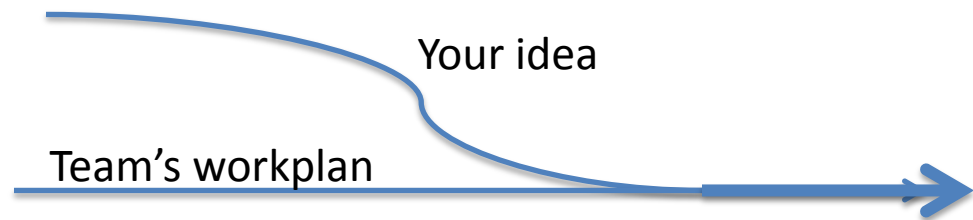
Structure

- 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

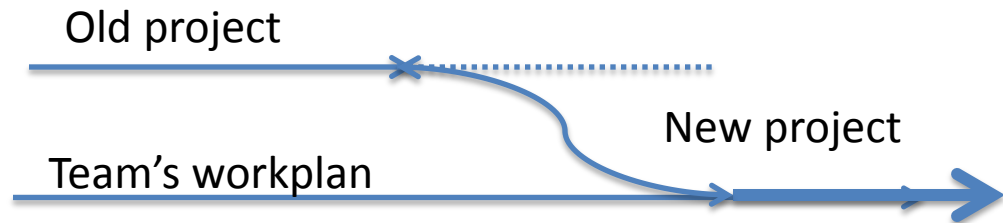
Human resources

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

- The developer:



- The talented but worried



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

Sonja Knutson

a/Director, International
Centre and Special Advisor to
the President on International
Affairs

www.mun.ca

sknutson@mun.ca

Adel El Zaïm

Executive director, International

www.ubc.ca

Adel.Elzaim@ubc.ca