

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Action Project #5:** “Increasing the Effectiveness of HR Service Delivery in a Shared Service Environment”

**Project Sponsors:** Michael Berndt and Michelle Thom, Normandale Community College

**Team Members:** David Bjelland, Loren Haagenson, Jean Maierhofer, Heidi Myers, Jay Nelson, Liz Newberry

### Team Charge

To develop and pilot a decision-making model to have the following functional requirements:

- Assess core HR functions
- Identify core functions to be maintained in-house
- Identify core functions to be obtained in a shared services environment—either from another MnSCU provider, or with Normandale as the provider to multiple campuses
- Provide easily measurable HR metrics

### Process

HR functions for the decision-making tool were identified based on:

- A matrix of HR functions performed at MnSCU campuses, developed by a work group comprised of MnSCU Human Resources and system employees, as well as feedback from campus Chief Human Resource Officers.
- The HR Management functional areas for which the Human Resource Certification Institute and the Society for Human Resource Management issues professional certifications.

The project team, in collaboration with the Normandale sponsors, identified the following five factors that would influence decisions on whether to provide or obtain through shared services an HR service: **In-House Expertise, In-House Capacity, Importance to Have In-House, Strategic, and Risk**. Using these identified functions and factors, a decision making tool was created using Excel Spreadsheet.

### Product

The decision making tool includes the following factors that can be scored on a scale of 1-5.

1. **In-house Expertise:** 1 = little in house expertise; 5= extensive in-house expertise.
2. **In-house Capacity:** 1 = little in-house staffing to provide the service; 5 = significant in-house staffing to provide the service.
3. **Importance to Have In-House:** 1 = little importance to providing the service in-house; 5 = significant importance to providing the service in-house
4. **Strategic:** 1 = the function does little to further the strategic business relationship of HR with college departments; 5 = the function offers the opportunity for HR to develop strategic business relationships.
5. **Risk:** 1 = obtaining the service through a shared service arrangement where the institution is not the provider is a low risk; 5 = high risk if not keeping service in-house.

The tool can be populated individually or collaboratively for example by HR Department staff. For the each respondent, the tool creates a one page summary and an easy to review color chart of the responses for all the HR functions within each functional area. Responses from multiple respondents may be presented in a combined average summary and color charts. The purpose of the tool is to create dialogue about potential areas for shared services, and allocation of resources for further in-house capacity. The tool is not meant to dictate decisions based strictly on survey results. As respondents complete the tool, they should think about Human Resource service needs in relationship to the following: the institution’s strategic plan, core functions, and Human Resource services not currently available. It is strongly recommended that leadership outside the Human Resources Department respond to the tool to identify leadership’s desire for strategic partnerships with HR.

### Lessons Learned

#### *What was challenging?*

- Geographical distance among the team members made it difficult to gain momentum on the project. WebEx does not provide the benefit of being able to observe nonverbal communication.
- It was hard to focus on the learning process and not the product.
- The process of only asking questions, unless asked a question, was tricky.

#### *What worked?*

- The strength team members brought to the project, for example subject matter expertise in HR and Excel.

#### *What have you learned?*

- Focusing on learning through asking questions and reflecting yields better solutions than moving right to solution formulation.
- Staying clear on whether the action learning team has a single-problem or multiple-problem focus.