



OFFICE OF THE OMBUDS

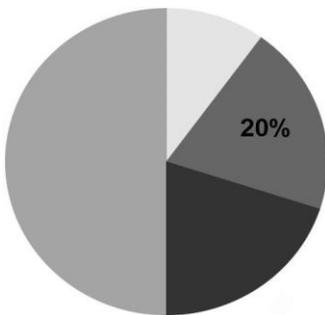
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

3RD Quarterly Report

(July – September 2014)

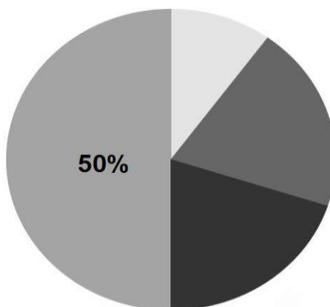
Activity This Quarter

PARTNERSHIPS:



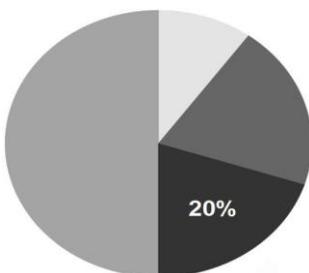
- Working with the organizational trainer to develop a Value-Based cultural training;
- Assisting the Manager's Office in defining parameters for the next Employee Engagement Survey;
- Worked with UNC & Northside in the Good Neighbor Initiative walk through Northside neighborhoods providing information to students;
- Creating a team to work with the Dispute Settlement Center as we explore mediation as a viable conflict resolution model;
- Continuing work to define and discuss our policy revisions.
- Mayors Innovation Project Summer session.
- Assisting UNC's MPA program in their Public Administration Conference segment on Community Engagement.

PEOPLE:



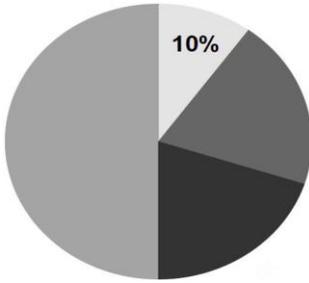
- 50% of the visitors this summer came because of interpersonal conflict with co-workers, community members, and/or supervisors.
- Much of our work with them involved using the organizational values as a template to have the visitor identify the source of the conflict.
- 13% of that 50% involved the Ombuds office in a facilitated conversation with the other party to the conflict.
- We often use role-play and identification of position vs. interest conversations to help visitors reclaim their power in dealing with the situation.

PROCESS:



- 20% of the visitors this summer sought clarity about initiatives of the organization:
 - ✓ Compensation & classifications
 - ✓ Dispute resolution/Grievance
 - ✓ Employee development

PERSPECTIVE:



- 10% of the employees that visited the office this summer sought assistance in reframing their perspective of their role in the organization and how they interact with others.
- Worked with employees to help them better understand the organizational emphasis on improving our ability to respond to several areas of focus: neighborhoods, housing, planning, sustainability, and development services.
- Invited visitors to express any questions, concerns, thoughts about their professional development with their supervisors through the **Employee Performance Management and Development System (EPMDS)**.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Many of our employees expressed a desire to meet in a neutral location. They did not want to come to the Ombuds office and they did not want us to come to their work area.
- Most of our visitors only want someone to listen to their perspective. They very often know what they should do but they need to hear themselves say it out loud in a safe, judgment free environment.
- 15% of our visitors wanted tips on how to have a difficult conversation. Many of them asked for assistance in outlining how the conversation should go. We are focusing our TOWN TALK articles towards more practical suggestions to improve communications.
- Too many of our visitors sought “quick fixes” to their concerns instead of being open to identifying the role their actions played in much of their conflict.

NEXT STEPS

- ✓ Continue work with the senior management team to help develop strategies to improve communications, and increase employee engagement.
- ✓ Collaborate with the HRDD, OEC, and Department Heads to identify & address training needs for employee development.
- ✓ Continue work with UNC’s Ombuds Office to develop regional meetings of NC Ombuds to increase our knowledge and skills in the areas of conflict management.
- ✓ Continue the development of our Value Based Cultural training that sustains a climate in which respectful discussions of differences are encouraged. This training will be instrumental in creating opportunities for mutual problem solving.

Jim Huegerich, Senior Ombuds
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