

Case Study 1

My Advice

I would advise Cristina to ask her team members why their tasks seem to have come to a halt. She needs to find out what stage the needs assessment is at and why it has not yet been completed. She should ask Jon and Lionel what are problems they have encountered and what she can do to help alleviate them. This may include talking to personnel who are being uncooperative because they are unhappy with the project or even setting up meetings so the rest library staff understands what is going on and why it is beneficial.

Cristina also needs to find out if the rest of the team is really unable to continue with their assignments until the needs assessment is done, or if there are other things that they could work on and then revise, if needed, once Jon and Lionel's report comes in. For example, Chris could start looking in to spaces where the decentralization services will go and research how much equipment that is currently used by the library costs. If the rest of the team truly does need Jon and Lionel's report before they can continue, then she'll need to set a reasonable deadline for the needs assessment completed by, sometime between July 15 and August 1. Additionally, Cristina needs to find out from Chris, Gloria, and Valaria how long they expect their parts of the project to take.

Based on the information from her meeting, Cristina should come up with a timeframe of tasks and deadlines, so everyone knows how long they have to work on their pieces, when their parts are due, and who is depending on them for the next piece of the project. I would recommend that the final deadline for all of the pieces of the project be around September 15. This would give her a month to review everything, give it back to the sub-teams for revision or clarification if needed, and put the full report together before October 15.

Furthermore, Cristina needs to assure her team that she is there for them. She should remind them that if they are having trouble completing any part of their assignments, to please let her know and she will do everything in her power to work with them to solve it, even if it means going to her own manager.

Analysis

The advice I gave to Cristina was two-fold: deadlines and support. However, the two parts are somewhat mixed within the advice.

This first part concerns the deadlines of the assignments. Since Cristina herself has a deadline, even though it is four months away, she should not be left waiting until the last minute to try to complete her report. By giving the task force deadlines she can check in with them to find out how things are going which will help keep the project progressing on time. Doing so will give her confidence that the full project is done by the final

deadline. Moreover by letting the group know what the deadlines are, everyone will be able to see how the subteam projects are interrelated and if someone else is waiting for them to complete something.

By asking the team members what they need to complete their assignments and what is a good time frame for them, Cristina will be allowing them to have input, and therefore be more involved in decision makings. Furthermore, this should keep them more accountable to the deadlines because they helped to set them.

The second part of the advice is for Cristina to assure the team that she stands behind them. While we do not know what the current hold-ups are, a good manager needs to let her staff know that she supports their endeavors and they are not doing their work in a void. Giving this sort of support helps the confidence of the team, especially if there is a possibility that their efforts will be met with some resistance.

These two parts are intermingled for, while a manager should always make sure that tasks will be completed in a timely fashion, she should always be aware that there may be obstacles and must give her team the confidence that she is willing to work them to overcome the problems.

Scientific Management

The first thing that Cristina should do is break down each task into its individual components. Based on previous experience and research, she should find the "one best way" to do each task. Then she should assign each component of the task to the member of the subgroup that is best suited for that task. She should train each individual as needed so that they can perform their tasks to the utmost. For example, if Jon, being head of Technical Services, does not already know how to perform interviews and/or how to collect and analyze surveys, he should be trained on the best way to do so.

Cristina should then create a detailed Gantt chart, outlining each of the tasks, its subtasks, and who is doing each task. The Gantt chart should also have the start time, end time, and flow of the subtasks, tasks, and the whole project. Every time an element on the chart is completed, the chart should be updated to make sure that everyone is aware of how the project is progressing.

Any problems should be immediately addressed to Cristina so that she can analyze why the problem occurred and what the best way to fix it is. This will help make the process more efficient both now and in the future.

Any opposition to the project should be dealt with by explaining that this is the best direction for the library to go in. This should be backed up with research about how inefficient the current library processes are and how well decentralization is working in other academic libraries of comparable size and function.

Maslow

Cristina needs to figure out where each member of her team is on the hierarchy of needs. In order to complete the needs assessment, Jon and Lionel need to be at the Esteem section of the pyramid. This will allow them to have the confidence to perform their task. Chris should also be brought to this level in order to come up with the space and cost needs. Gloria and Valaria need to be at the highest level of the pyramid, Self-actualization, so that they will have the creativity to come up with the goals and rationale. By bringing all members of the team up to the higher levels of the pyramid then they will be more willing to work to further the goals of the project. In addition, bringing them through and above the Love/Belonging state, will help to make them feel like more of a cohesive group, since they will know that they all belong and are valuable members of the task force.

The other thing that Cristina needs to do is to help assure the other library workers that their jobs are not going anywhere and that this change will actually help them move beyond the Safety level to Love/Belonging.

Once this is accomplished, Cristina should also be at the Self-actualization level because she will have the cohesiveness of her group, the confidence in the plan, and the respect of her team. By being at this level, Cristina will best be able to lead her team to productivity, making sure that everything is done by the deadline, four months away.