

PDC

PORTLAND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

DATE: February 27, 2008
TO: Board of Commissioners
FROM: Bruce A. Warner, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Report Number 08-25
Final Report on PDC Organizational Diversity Assessment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED

None – information only.

SUMMARY

The attached (Attachment A) report highlights Hanumara Consulting's assessment of the diversity needs for the Portland Development Commission. The report outlines the work performed from May 2006 through February 2008, providing a detailed summary of the activities and outcomes for assisting PDC with establishing relationships with the minority community, leadership consulting, coaching and training, and lastly, conflict management.

BACKGROUND

At the December 6, 2006 Board of Commissioners meeting, Dr. Garfield de Bardelaben stated his findings regarding the organizational effectiveness of PDC. He concluded that the consultants needed to focus on PDC's relationship with people, including its interpersonal competence, both internally and externally. Their vision was to assist in creating a new culture by providing specific training that could be visible to members of the minority community. Since that time, the consultants have continued to assist PDC in developing positive and effective interaction with members of the various factions that constitute Portland including the City of Portland, its businesses, and its ethnic communities.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Hanamura Consulting Final Report

CC: Dr. Garfield de Bardelaben
Mr. Steve Hanamura
M. Baines, General Counsel
J. Jackley, Executive Operations Manager

Portland Development Commission
Hanamura Consulting Final report

Submitted by
Steve Hanamura, and
Garfield deBardelaben

Background

Hanamura Consulting was retained to perform an assessment of the diversity needs for the Portland Development Commission (PDC). We conducted focus group interviews, reviewed previous written surveys, developed our own surveys and spoke with individual members of the executive team.

We discovered very early in the process that the challenges facing the agency were more complex than just surveying the agency about diversity challenges. This became apparent to key PDC officials as well and we realized that the scope of work originally agreed upon would need to be modified and expanded. We began the assessment process while providing consulting, coaching and training services simultaneously.

This report will highlight the work performed from May 2006 through its completion in February 2008. We list three categories followed by the activities and outcomes that occurred in each area. Hopefully this will provide the reader with a broad brush understanding of the work that has been performed to date. We will conclude this report with an analysis and observations.

Categories, Activities and Outcomes

1. Assisted the PDC to establish relationships with the minority community

Activities:

- ◆ June – December 2006 met with members of the minority community to learn what concerns they had when dealing with PDC
- ◆ June – December 2006 met with PDC officials to help them identify their concerns in reaching out to and working with the minority community
- ◆ June – December 2006 conducted face to face interviews with the mayor, members of the commission board and former employees of the agency

Outcomes:

- Assisted the minority community and PDC to begin building a process for communicating effectively with one another
- Helped reduce anxiety within the minority community about PDC's intentions to serve them.
- Reduced number of complaints about PDC within the minority community

Activity:

- ◆ Assisted the agency to also retain the services of CH2A. Their role was to advise PDC on how to approach members of the minority community as well as small businesses and contractors

Outcome:

- CH2A opened doors for PDC to talk with key members of the minority and business communities

Activity:

- ◆ Provided guidance and counsel to the executive director in hiring the community relations and business equity director. Her role is to work both internally and externally to build effective relationships and communication processes between the agency and the business and minority groups.

Outcome:

- The community relations and business equity director was able to interface with the community and the internal staff at PDC

Activity:

- ◆ Diversity awareness training for executives

Outcome:

- Increased awareness regarding the impact of departure of the African American employees and its connection to the unrest that was evident in the minority community
- Increased the understanding of the connection between diversity and other agency initiatives
- Identify the importance of treating employees as contributing members of PDC

Activity:

- ◆ Worked with the public relations consultants to assist PDC to develop different communication styles to reach different groups

Outcomes:

- Strengthened the agency's ability to learn how to create different messaging strategies to different groups of people.
- Helped them understand the impact of their actions systemically on a community that is different from them.

2. Leadership consulting, coaching and training.

Activity:

- ◆ Provided ongoing consultation and coaching with the executive director.

Outcomes:

- Served as a sounding board as he considered critical hiring decisions to his executive team.
- Assisted the executive director to address conflicts that occurred between members of the executive team.
- Provided input when making organizational changes both for individuals as well as the agency at large.
- Provide advice and counsel to the executive director regarding matters of diversity.
- Provided assistance to the executive director when it was necessary to make some key changes on the executive team.

Activity:

- ◆ Performed ongoing consulting and coaching to other members of the executive team and staff.

Activity:

- ◆ Provided assistance to the community relations and business equity director to establish relationships with the internal and external communities to address diversity and business challenges.

Outcome:

- Began the process of helping to bring about harmony and a collaborative work relationship between groups

Activity:

- ◆ Provided assistance to the organizational development manager to create processes and procedures to assist the agency to break down silos

Outcome:

- Currently leading the process for cross functional communications

Activity:

- ◆ Provided consultation to the organizational development manager in creating different training interventions in communications, leadership, diversity and organizational development

Outcome:

- The formation of several training classes and ongoing conversations regarding interventions.

Activity:

- ◆ Provided counsel and served as a sounding board to the executive operations manager to develop a communication strategy internally with colleagues

Outcome:

- Groups are now working harmoniously with each other

Activity:

- ◆ Conducted ongoing training sessions with the executive team in the areas of leadership, team building, diversity and building cultural competence

Outcomes:

- Established a process to develop a positive climate agency wide
- Assisted the team to begin the process of building trust and enhance their ability to communicate with each other more effectively
- Increased awareness of executives to become more relationship focused and not just task focused.

Activity:

- ◆ Provided diversity training to all staff (11-07 to 2-08)

Outcomes:

- Begin the process of understanding the impact of cultural differences on issues of morale, communications, and productivity
- Created an opening for staff to become more sensitive to the needs of the different communities they serve
- Provided an opportunity for individuals to achieve personal and professional growth

Activity:

- ◆ Helped to create a diversity council within the agency and then provided ongoing consulting and training services to the diversity council

Outcomes:

- Helped to integrate the diversity council into the fabric of PDC
- Provided consultation to set up the mechanisms they will need as a council in order to monitor and guide the agency's diversity related activities.
- Provided a vehicle for the council to develop an educational resource library for employee use
- Provided an opportunity for council members to make recommendations to the executive team on matters that relate to diversity, building community and productivity

3. Conflict management

Activity:

- ◆ Provided facilitated conversations between individual employees and managers when disagreements were unsolvable (more so in early phase of contract)

Outcome:

- Assisted both parties to reach positive resolutions
- Quelled negative feelings which resulted in increased communication

Activity:

- ◆ Assisted PDC's housing bureau and the City of Portland's Bureau of Housing through a conflict situation

Outcomes:

- The two groups were able to establish an understanding of what they could agree upon and to acknowledge areas of disagreement.
- Provided a mechanism so that ongoing communications could continue

Activity:

- ◆ Provide consultation to the organizational development manager to address issues of intra-departmental conflict

Outcomes:

- Assisted the organizational development manager to begin the process of breaking down silos
- Served as advisor to the organizational development manager on how to address other conflict related matters between staff and management
- Forums created to conduct creative thinking among cross functional groups

Activity:

- ◆ Met with the development department to learn about their concerns and challenges

Outcomes:

- Provided a forum for them to do some creative thinking
- Provided them an opportunity to be listened to and to propose strategies on how to work more effectively with other departments

Activity:

- ◆ Assisted the agency and members of the minority community to address serious issues in a constructive manner (frequent at outset of contract, now intermittent)

Outcomes:

- Reduced anxiety within the minority community about PDC's ability and willingness to meet their needs.
- PDC increased their awareness of sensitive concerns of the minority community.

Activity:

- ◆ Assisted PDC to begin the process of developing a positive climate agency wide

Outcomes:

- Reduced employee anxiety so they wouldn't continually go to the press
- Provided a forum so their concerns could be heard
- Offered timely recommendations to the executive director and other members of the team as conflicts surfaced

Analysis

First of all, we would like to thank the Portland Development Commission and its constituents for the co-operation we received. Personnel and materials were made accessible to us when we needed to explore the issues that we addressed.

The hiring of the director of operations, organizational development manager, director of community relations and the director of economic development have made a significant impact on how and why some of these issues we listed are now being addressed. We must also say that Hanamura Consulting had very little involvement with the director of economic development; however we were a part of the thinking process that the executive director was going through during our consultations with him.

Due to the nature of change, being in the public eye, it still appears to us that there are so many meetings that we wonder how people are able to "get the work done" when they are not in meetings.

There are still issues to be addressed that surfaced during our assessment. Examples include development of a process for employee advancement, career mentoring, recruiting and retention of minority employees, just to name a few. However with the aforementioned acquisitions and the formation of the diversity council we believe it is possible to move forward on addressing these matters.

In closing we want to say how impressed we were with the caliber of people who work with PDC. We wish the agency well in their future endeavors.

Respectfully Submitted