Infusing Inclusion across an Evolving Ecosystem

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Objectives

• Discover ways to tailor your communication style to align with competing priorities.

• Identify avenues for considering accessibility in data gathering, analysis, and dissemination processes to prompt institutional change.

• Contextualize the lessons learned from Kent State’s experiences to develop relationships with key stakeholders in accessibility work at your own campuses.
Bottom-Up Political Actions (Bolman and Deal, 2003)

• Interdependent Networks
  • An ecosystem is made of interdependent relationships based on the need to leverage resources controlled by others.
  • Other actors may have divergent interests and agendas.
  • All of these conditions create rules of engagement that we must understand in order to play in the arena, advance our interests, and achieve our goals.

• Significant Disruption as an Impetus for Change
• Change Unfreezing old patterns and intensifying dissatisfaction
Evolving Approach to a University-wide Accessibility Committee

• Americans with Disabilities Act Committee
  • Created in late ‘90s by President Cartwright
  • Operated from a compliance mindset, focused on ADA

• ADA Committee, Recommissioned
  • Fell dormant until 2011 when it was recommissioned by three Vice-Presidents
    • Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
    • Enrollment Management & Student Affairs
    • Finance and Administration
  • Charged to “provide the moral conscious to the university”

• Accessibility Committee
  • Name changed in 2012/13 to reflect the evolving scope of work of the committee
  • Designed to cross multiple functional areas and involves faculty, staff, and students
  • Structure: Co-chairs and subcommittees
Building Intentional Networks & Fostering Sustainable Relationships

- Leadership Transitions
- University Climate Survey
- Institutional and National Trends
Leadership Transitions

• President
• Vice-Presidents
  • Turn-over
  • Addition
  • Approach to relationship
• Natural co-chairs transitions
• New SAS director
• Various other transitions across institutional partners
  • HR, Architects, etc.
University Climate Survey

- Results directly related to the experiences of persons with disabilities
- Connection with Accessibility Committee
- Leveraging data
Emerging Institutional and National Trends

- Kent State of Wellness
- JED
- Electronic and Information Technology Emphasis
- Assistance animals
- Global Education
- Universal restrooms
Current State of University Accessibility Committee

- Change in Co-chair
- Subcommittee structure into workgroups
- Annual Event: Kent State of Accessibility
- Physical plant audit
- Relationship with Information Services
- Clearer support from VPs
  - Annual report meeting with VPs
Lessons Learned

• Within committee
  • Adapt structures as needed
  • Stay mindful of representation and voices

• Between committee and others
  • Look for opportunities to educate people at all levels
  • Stay diligent in identifying potential disruptions
  • Identify future collaborations and work toward building relationships long-term
  • Pay attention to the interdependent relationships, rules of engagement, and opportunities found in disruption

• Between individuals
  • Get to know other players and their backgrounds
  • Tell stories to build empathy
Application to Your Institution

• What opportunities for disruption can you identify in the near future?
• Are there organizations or individuals with whom you can build relationships to maximize disruption?
• How can you proactively foster those relationships to prepare for potential disruption?
Thank You.

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