

TASK FORCE ON FACULTY RECOGNITION: REPORT TO THE ACADEMIC VICE-PRESIDENT

The official charge of the Task Force was "to recommend strategies for recognizing faculty achievement." The Task Force met on five occasions (December 12, 1986, January 21, February 11, March 4, and April 1, 1987). Members of the Task Force polled their respective departments and contacted colleagues at other institutions in an effort to develop appropriate recommendations to the administration for faculty recognition. The following recommendations grew out of the discussions that the Task Force members held during their various meetings.

The methods used to reward faculty performance can be a powerful determinant of faculty behavior. Such methods include both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards. Extrinsic rewards (e.g., economic) satisfy lower-order needs such as food, shelter, and security. Intrinsic rewards (e.g., self-esteem) while self-generated by individuals are affected by external factors such as the quality of the work environment and the quality of organizational leadership. Professional employees are less motivated to improve their work performance by extrinsic rewards because these are not generally related to something over which the employees have personal control. Even regularly administered salary increases tend to have a short-term effect as they are quickly assimilated into the employees' basic perceptions regarding their job status. Consequently, organizations with professional employees need to supplement their traditional extrinsic reward system with intrinsic motivators.

Intrinsic motivators are external activities (behaviors) that create or enhance employee feelings of self-worth. In the work place, such activities are provided primarily by the employees' superiors. (See Appendix #1 for examples of intrinsic motivators) Using intrinsic motivators to recognize and promote faculty performance is a complex process. The reason for its complexity is because individuals respond differently to different motivators. Therefore, the Task Force on Faculty Recognition strongly recommends that Western Kentucky University develop an ongoing training program to

sensitize its administrators responsible for faculty evaluation to the concept and delivery of an intrinsic reward system.

At the present time there are University Awards for Teaching; Research; and University/Public Service. At the College level there are Excellence Awards. Although Teaching is the principal criterion for the College Excellence Awards, other professional activities including Research and University/Public Service are also considered in the selection of award winners. The Task Force on Faculty Recognition recommends that each College present awards for Teaching; Research; and University/Public Service. The various winners at the College level would then compete for University Awards in the same categories. The Task Force recommends that Media and Library Services be considered as a "College" so that their personnel can compete for these awards.

Such a re-structured Award system would give us the "best of the best" at the University Awards level. This process would also make the Faculty Awards competition similar to the College and University Scholars competition for our undergraduates. Additional suggestions regarding the Awards process would include: Building the monetary element of the Award directly into the winner's salary; having a lunch/dinner/reception for Award winners; providing greater publicity for Award winners by announcing their names before graduation, featuring them in University and Student publications, and including their names in the graduation program; inscribing the names of Award winners at both the College and University level on plaques which would be displayed in appropriate places.

One faculty member, in an interview with a representative of the Task Force, observed that in the twenty-five years he had been at Western he had never been visited in his office by an administrator or told that he had been doing a good job. While this is obviously an extreme case, most members of the Task Force felt that there should be more contact between administrators and faculty members "on the faculty's turf." The recent round of coffee sessions that the Dean of Potter College held at

each of his departments is illustrative of this kind of positive activity.

The Task Force recommends that the administration establish Distinguished Professorships and/or Endowed Chairs. This would enable those who attain Full Professor rank to have yet a higher goal to attain. Given the fact that many of Western's Full Professors are relatively young, this would seem like a logical step to take.

Task Force members were in general agreement that the allocation of Merit Pay be "meaningful." Members of the Task Force criticized the practice of some department heads of distributing Merit Pay "across the board." Such a policy is essentially destructive of the Merit Pay concept.

There was a consensus on the Task Force that the University should be doing more to honor retirees. Special recognition such as banquets, receptions, retirement gifts etc . . . perhaps would be appropriate.

After general discussion the Task Force concluded that there was no universal or unified policy for allocating credit to faculty members for teaching Independent Study courses. Some faculty members receive specific hourly credit for such courses while others do not. The Task Force therefore recommends that a standardized University policy be instituted for allocation of such credit.

Members of the Task Force, in polling their respective constituencies, discovered that there was considerable concern regarding the exploitation of part-time faculty. While recognizing the realities of fiscal exigency and the need for personnel flexibility, the Task Force nonetheless felt that the University should endeavor to provide quality instruction (perhaps defined as full time faculty lines requiring terminal degrees) whenever and wherever possible.

The Task Force felt that a regular column in ON CAMPUS by the President would be helpful in creating better communication between the administration and faculty.

Members of the Task Force support the concept of free tuition for spouses and children of faculty members. Those faculty members who are single and with no dependents could avail themselves of a "cafeteria" style package of benefits such as low-

er health insurance premiums, lower retirement contributions etc. . .

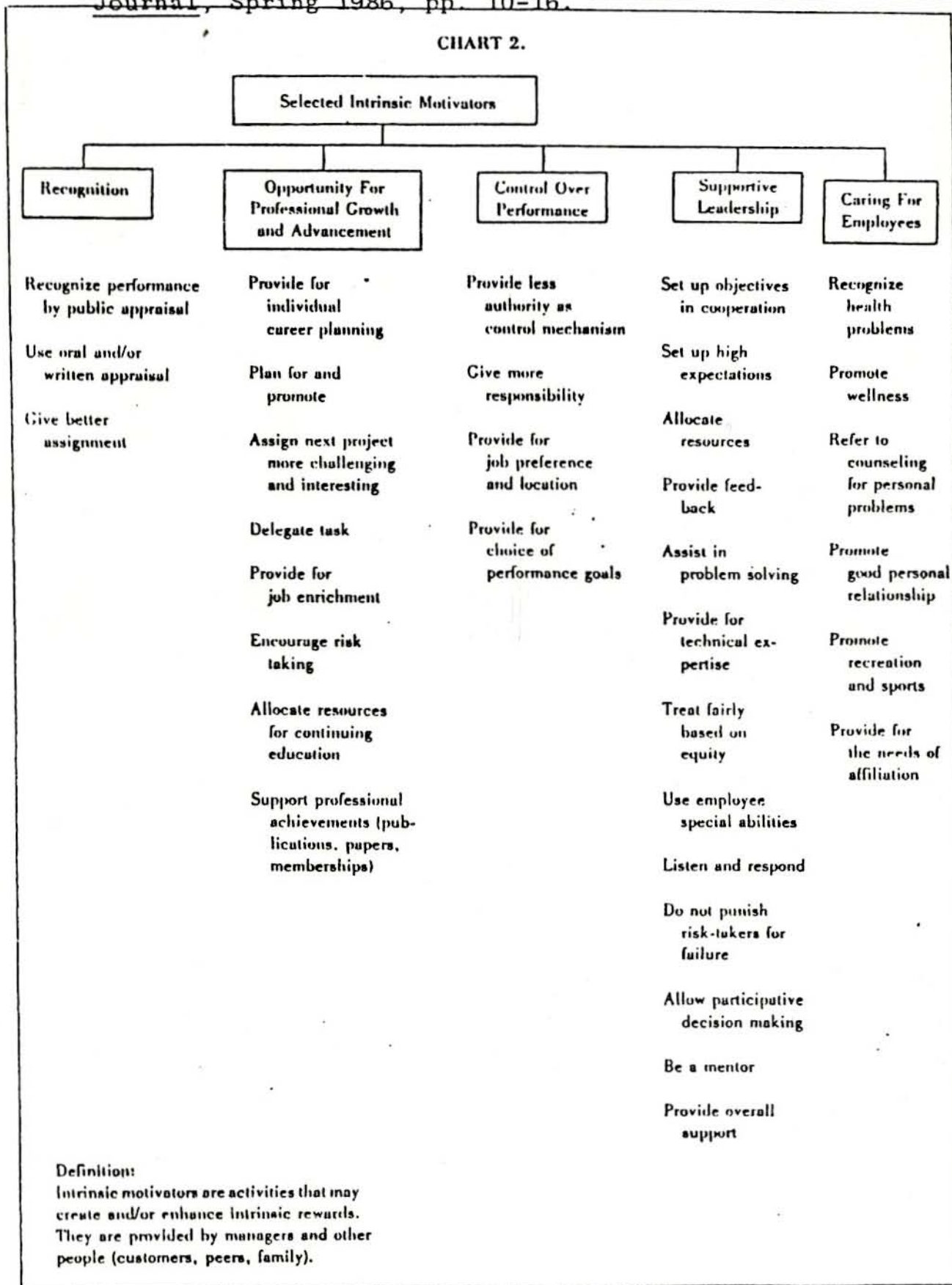
Receptions on the University and College level might be an appropriate way of promoting institutional esprit de corps. Such receptions/social functions could occur at either the beginning or the end of the academic year. By the same token it would be appropriate to hold semester ending receptions for faculty members who have distinguished themselves and the University through the publication of books or other significant professional activity. Such receptions would be appropriate at both the University and College level.

The Task Force believes that the various members of the Board of Regents should have the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the day in and day out operation of the University and its faculty. Attendance at the above mentioned receptions and open invitations to visit various Colleges and Departments might facilitate this process.

In many, if not all, disciplines there is a literal explosion of knowledge/techniques/methodologies etc. . . with the passing of just minimal periods of time. Given the fact that faculty members need to renew and refresh themselves intellectually the Task Force recommends that leaves for faculty learning/development be made available. Such leaves would be shorter than sabbaticals and could possibly take the form of internships during the summer. Such internships would carry a Summer School stipend and would enable the faculty member to concentrate on faculty development for a longer period of time than is presently supported through the Faculty Development Committee.

The Task Force understands that Murray State University has a Center for Faculty Development, an office that seeks to provide faculty with seminars, workshops, training, and resources for external development. Perhaps Western Kentucky University could develop a similar Center based on the Murray State University model.

Source: Tomasek, H. and C. Richter, "Using the Intrinsic Rewards System To Improve Performance." Organization Development Journal, Spring 1986, pp. 10-16.



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