

SKILLSFORTOMORROW: A MANAGEMENT TEAM IN CRISIS

Steven D. Charlier and Martin M. Brennan wrote this case solely to provide material for class discussion. The authors do not intend to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a managerial situation. The authors may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to protect confidentiality.

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Martina Jones shut the door to her office in downtown Pittsburgh, collapsed into her chair, and contemplated the predicament that she found herself in with her client, SkillsForTomorrow (SFT). It was Friday night on September 28, 2012, and she faced a long weekend in preparation for a meeting with the SFT management team at the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, location on the following Monday. Jones was a lead consultant for Hancher Consulting, a small boutique management-consulting firm that specialized in the public sector. Her client, a satellite location within SFT, signed a contract with Hancher in early August 2012 to help with "morale issues" among its management team. Jones and her team of consultants had been busy ever since, learning about SFT and the problems facing the Harrisburg campus. Through a series of interviews with the Harrisburg management team, several issues had come to life — many of which went well beyond poor morale. She opened her laptop, began to review the data that she and her team had collected, and wondered how she was going to present their findings while preserving any hope of a continuing relationship with SFT and the Harrisburg executive director, Ted Alvarez.

SKILLSFORTOMORROW (SFT)

SFT was a government-sponsored organization tasked with helping at-risk young adults gain vocational training toward preparing them for a successful career in one of several areas, including automotive and machine repair, construction, health care and information technology. The program provided support to students beyond technical training, including the development of interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills, and skills in effectively conducting a job search and interview — all towards the goal of graduating individuals that were prepared to live independently and become productive citizens (and taxpayers). SFT was founded in the 1960s, and had been widely hailed as a success story.

The SFT organization was highly decentralized, operating out of a total of 180 locations across the entire United States as of the end of 2011. While the headquarters was located in Washington, D.C., each location had its own management staff that oversaw the operations within its jurisdiction. The Harrisburg location handled SFT activities for the entire south-central Pennsylvania region. Like in much of the country, unemployment was an issue in this region (around 7 per cent in the summer of 2012), and the demand for entrants into the SFT was high and stable. Harrisburg was one of six SFT locations in the state of Pennsylvania.

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All of the SFT locations went through an annual appraisal process conducted by a team from the corporate headquarters. During the appraisal process, locations were rated based on a variety of criteria, including admission rates, graduation rates, hiring rates, disciplinary issues and student satisfaction. Based on the data from these yearly appraisals, locations were ranked from top to bottom across the entire organization. These rankings could have a significant impact on the individual locations, in that consistently low-performing locations had had their charter revoked in recent years (see Exhibits 1 and 2).

SFT HARRISBURG AND THE YEARLY RANKINGS

In terms of the yearly rankings, Harrisburg consistently placed in the lower half of the SFT locations. While the location met the baseline standards in a number of key performance areas, Harrisburg had not been able to break into the upper half of the rankings for several years. Jones knew that this was a potential source of concern for everyone at the Harrisburg location, but this was especially true for the executive director, Alvarez, who said:

We've got to figure out a way to get our ranking up in the next year or two, at the latest. Four locations were axed last year, and I don't want to be the next! I know that D.C. is keeping an eye on things here, and if we don't right the ship, we'll all be looking for a job. Everyone needs to understand how vitally important the rankings are to our future.

How to "right the ship" seemed to be a topic of conversation in many of the interviews that Jones and her team conducted with SFT management. The comments of staff members covered a wide variety of topics and issues facing the organization. The quotes below typify this diversity of opinions:

I don't think our students are as well prepared for life after the program as they should be. I mean, we focus our efforts on giving them technical training to do their jobs. But what about everything else that you need to know to live on your own? The curriculum that's in place now only covers the bare essentials, and I think many of our graduates still struggle with basic life skills after they leave SFT. (Nancy Cummings, director of career services)

Our executive director is a nice guy, and I know his heart is in the right place, but I think he's in over his head. He's never been an executive director before, and from what I've seen, he's still got a lot to learn about leading an organization. (Walter Blackmon, dean of students)

How do I define the culture here in Harrisburg? Every man for himself. We have to fight for funding, fight for staff, fight for programs . . . everything is a battle. If we just had more money, I think you'd see a lot more camaraderie around here — instead, we're just constantly bickering amongst ourselves for whatever we can get. (Jake Rasmussen, director of outreach)

The instructors are pretty cool, I guess . . . I mean, I've learned a lot in the six months that I've been here. But I don't think anyone understands how hard it is for us when we get here, you know? I've got three kids, no money . . . I'm trying to make my life better for my family, but sometimes I just need a break. But the system is set up so that we never get time off! I think if these folks walked a day in our shoes, they'd have more respect for what we're going through. (Tabitha White, current SFT student)

Jones closed her eyes and pondered these quotes in particular. She knew that Hancher Consulting had been brought in to help with "morale issues" in the management team — trying to fix *everything* at the



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location was beyond the scope of the assignment. Also, Alvarez had made it clear to Jones that he felt that the potential for the location to lose its charter was having a severe impact on morale. But what about the other issues that came up in the interviews? Was all of this connected in some way? She pushed this thought aside and pulled up the organizational chart for the Harrisburg location on her screen.

THE HARRISBURG SFT ORGANIZATION

The management team at Harrisburg was relatively flat, with most of the senior managers (all with the title of "director") reporting directly to the executive director, Alvarez. Eleven directors (including Alvarez) comprised the central management structure at Harrisburg. Many of the directors had worked for SFT — and in the Harrisburg location — for more than a decade. As a whole, they were dedicated to their jobs and believed in the mission of the organization. Time and again, graduates of the program were able to make a new start in life, and success stories were commonplace. Thus, it came as no surprise to Jones that turnover among this group was very low — openings in the management team at Harrisburg generally came either through retirement or a promotion/relocation to another SFT location. (See Exhibit 3 for the organizational chart for the Harrisburg location.)

Alvarez was a relative newcomer to the Harrisburg location. He had been with SFT for 14 years in a variety of roles and locations, but had only been in the executive director position at Harrisburg for four months. When he arrived at Harrisburg in May 2012, Alvarez also brought two other directors (Nancy Cummings and Lucinda Smith) from his previous stint in the Tidewater region of Virginia. It just so happened that two other vacancies in the Harrisburg management team were available at the time of his acceptance of the executive director position (one former Harrisburg director had retired, while the other had taken a position at the SFT headquarters in Washington, D.C.). Alvarez had worked with Cummings and Smith for several years prior to their relocation, and found them both to be highly reliable and competent individuals.

Alvarez had known about the consistently lower-than-average ranking of the Harrisburg location before he took the job, but felt that the location had a lot going for it — after all, the raw scores for Harrisburg on many of the criteria had been consistently above the baselines set by the SFT headquarters for many years. He was confident that with the right leadership, the Harrisburg location could quickly improve in its rankings and avoid the potential of losing its charter. But his first few months on the job showed him that this task would not be so easy.

First, Alvarez had to deal with the fact that he was replacing a beloved executive director, Herbert Brooks. Brooks had led the Harrisburg location for nine years — when he announced his retirement in January 2012, the Harrisburg staff pooled together a fund to throw Brooks an elaborate going-away party. Pictures from the party could still be found in many of the cubicles at the SFT office. Alvarez told Jones:

Herbert was a hard act to follow. I met with him several times to discuss the transition, and I was really struck by his passion for this place and his incredibly positive outlook on life and SFT. Everyone around here loved him! I knew that the transition would be tough, simply because of the personal relationships that he had developed with the staff here over the years. That was something that I knew I wouldn't be able to change overnight. But I think I've done a good job at fostering those relationships since I got here.

After the first week on the job, Alvarez noticed that communication between the directors was not always good. He was accustomed to management meetings at the Tidewater office that were often loud,



passionate and energetic. At the Harrisburg location, his first status meeting with the directors could not have been more different.

Boy, that first status meeting was a nightmare! I laid out the agenda for the meeting and dove into the first order of business — it had to do with some mandated curriculum changes that were coming from D.C. Andy [Dr. Wong, director of student education] presented an overview of the changes, and there was nothing. Stone-cold silence. I tried to get feedback from the other directors, but no one really had anything to say! It was like no one cared . . . or that everyone was afraid to speak. Status meetings have gotten a bit better since then, but I still feel like people are holding back.

After Alvarez was on the job for about a month, the annual budgeting process began for all of the SFT locations. Budget proposals were due to SFT headquarters by the end of June for the upcoming fiscal year (which began on September 1). Alvarez was proud of the work that he and the staff did on the budget proposal — they had been hit with a 10 per cent cut across the board, and tough decisions had had to be made. Alvarez commented on this period to Jones:

The conversations that we had around the budget for this year were some of the hardest conversations I've ever had as a manager. Many of the directors already felt like they were understaffed, and the budget cuts weren't going to help. I solicited proposals from all of the directors, and had to make some tough choices in terms of who would get their request, and whose areas were going to fall short. It wasn't fun — especially for someone new to the position.

Alvarez also stated that while the Harrisburg location was able to get a budget approved, he felt like some of the staff took the decisions personally.

My overarching goal during the budgeting process was to protect the students from feeling the brunt of the budget cuts. So naturally, education and res life stayed relatively safe, while other areas felt more pain. I know this created some bad blood between some of the directors, but I felt that it was the right thing to do. We'll never be successful as an organization if our students aren't successful. They have to remain our priority.

INTERVIEWS WITH HARRISBURG SFT EMPLOYEES

Because Jones's main initial contact in Harrisburg was with Alvarez, she was keenly aware of the issues that Alvarez believed should be the focus of her consulting efforts. But Jones knew that to get to the heart of the matter, it was necessary to talk to as many members of the Harrisburg SFT management team as possible. Between Jones and the rest of her colleagues, the Hancher Consulting team conducted one-on-one interviews with all of the senior management team, along with a number of students, instructors and support staff at the location. Exhibit 4 provides selected notes and quotes from the director interviews. A brief survey was also given to the directors, and the results can be found in Exhibit 5.

While many of the same themes were evident across the overall set of interviews, the blame was placed on many different facets of the organization. And some new issues arose from these interviews, as well. As Jones reviewed the interview data again (for what seemed like the hundredth time), it was clear that there were several problems that needed to be addressed. With just a weekend to prepare for the Monday meeting, Jones barely knew where to begin.



FINAL PREPARATION MEETING WITH ALVAREZ

As if the situation were not dire enough, Jones thought back to the meeting that she had with Alvarez earlier that day. As Alvarez entered the conference room for the meeting, it was clear that he was under a lot of stress. And while the meeting was brief, Alvarez made it clear to Jones about the direction that he wanted to take things.

(Alvarez rushes into the conference room)

Alvarez: Hi Martina — sorry I'm late. We just finished a status meeting on recruitment, and the numbers for the upcoming winter session are lower than I expected. Had to give the troops a pep talk on getting the word out about the program, and trying to drive those numbers up in the next few weeks!

Jones: No problem, Ted! I know you're very busy, but I just wanted to take a few minutes to review some of the things that came out from our interviews. I don't want our presentation on Monday to come as a surprise to you!

Alvarez: Oh great! I hope that all of my staff have been accommodating to you and your team.

Jones: Yes, they've been very forthright in their feelings about SFT and the team! We've been very pleased with their candor.

Alvarez: Good . . . good. Listen, I've been thinking about this a lot, and I really believe that we all just need to take a day or two outside of the office and really have an honest conversation about how we do things here. You know, a management retreat of some sort! I think I could get something scheduled for next weekend, and would love your help in organizing the meeting. I'm sure the team will grouse about having to go away for the weekend, but I know it will pay huge dividends!

Jones: Well, Ted, I think we ought to talk about some of the things that emerged from our research before we dive into planning a retreat. For example —

Alvarez: Listen, Martina — I know that we brought you and your team in to provide an outside assessment of what's going on, but things are going from bad to worse around here, and I need to get everyone on the same sheet of music. Personally, I've found that getting folks out of the office, in a neutral environment and away from the daily grind, and focusing everyone to really open up about their concerns — you know, lay everything on the table, no holds barred — is the best way to resolve these kinds of touchy-feely issues. We can't beat around the bush, especially with our next round of audits and rankings around the corner. I've got to get results now, or we're all cooked. I think if we just incorporate your thinking with my thinking — at the retreat — we'll get these problems solved!

Jones: Frankly, Ted, I'm not sure it's that easy! I'd really like to go over some of the data that we've collected over the past month, and —

Alvarez: But isn't that what the Monday meeting is for? I think your presentation will be a great way to introduce the need for the retreat. You know, here's what you all said, these are the issues . . . let's go off-site for a day or two and hash it all out together! It's got to work!



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Jones: Well, I think you might be surprised about —

Alvarez: Oh, I doubt that there are any surprises there! I've been around the block a few times, and I know this organization and these folks well enough to know what's going on. We'll get everyone in the room for your presentation on Monday, and I'll get Lucinda to figure out the logistics for the off-site by the time we meet. Remind me again, the presentation is scheduled for 3 p.m. on Monday, right?

Jones: Yes, but —

Alvarez: Super — that's more than enough time to find a place for the retreat! I'll get Lucinda on it right away. I look forward to hearing your presentation and working with you on the retreat! I know you guys will be a big help in clearing the air with the team. Having an outside facilitator for these things is so important! I'm sure that you all will do a great job, and we'll leave the retreat as a much more cohesive team.

Jones: Ted, I'm sure that we can add a retreat to our statement of work without too much difficulty —

Alvarez: Oh right, the contract! Yes, let's plan on meeting right after the presentation to draw that up. I know you consultants need to have the i's dotted and the t's crossed before you do anything! (Laughs) We'll get that worked out on Monday. I'll see you then! Got to run to another meeting, but thanks for all of your hard work! I'm so glad that you all are here!

(Alvarez leaves the conference room)

A LONG WEEKEND AHEAD

As she sat in her office, tapping her fingernails on her desk, Jones figured that she had two significant dilemmas facing her. First, what were the major issues facing the Harrisburg location — and what was the root cause (or causes) behind those issues? And second, how should she handle the Monday presentation with Alvarez and the rest of the Harrisburg directors? She knew that Alvarez expected her to "rubber stamp" his solution of an off-site management retreat — but was this really the answer? She knew that whatever course of action she took, the Monday presentation was going to have a significant impact on both the Harrisburg location and her prospects of seeing this project to a successful completion. Jones picked up the phone, ordered some beef lo mein and contemplated her strategy.



**EXHIBIT 1: RANKING OF THE HARRISBURG SFT LOCATION
(2006-2011)**

2006			2007			2008		
Rank	Location	Overall Score	Rank	Location	Overall Score	Rank	Location	Overall Score
1	Baton Rouge, LA	122.5	1	Boise, ID	124.9	1	El Paso, TX	119.8
2	Cedar Rapids, IA	119.4	2	Helena, MT	121.2	2	Boise, ID	119.7
3	El Paso, TX	119.1	3	Baton Rouge, LA	120.0	3	Cedar Rapids, IA	118.7
...				
76	Pittsburgh, PA	95.4	82	Detroit, MI	93.9	81	San Diego, CA	93.3
...				
82	Harrisburg, PA	93.2	90	Harrisburg, PA	91.8	91	Harrisburg, PA	91.6
...				
150	Richmond, VA	79.0	163	Acton, MA	80.1	161	Omaha, NE	78.2
151	Sacramento, CA	78.8	164	Richmond, VA**	78.2	162	Dallas, TX	78.1
152	East Los Angeles, CA	78.5	165	Tacoma, WA	78.1	163	Sacramento, CA**	77.9

2009			2010			2011		
Rank	Location	Overall Score	Rank	Location	Overall Score	Rank	Location	Overall Score
1	Kalamazoo, MI	123.3	1	Kalamazoo, MI	124.1	1	Phoenix, AZ	122.0
2	Portland, ME	122.5	2	Helena, MT	123.9	2	El Paso, TX	121.9
3	El Paso, TX	120.3	3	Phoenix, AZ	123.3	3	Kalamazoo, MI	120.4
...				
85	Cincinnati, OH	94.1	88	Atlanta, GA	93.4	90	St. Louis, MO	93.1
...				
95	Harrisburg, PA	92.7	97	Harrisburg, PA	92.2	103	Harrisburg, PA	91.7
...				
168	Toledo, OH	80.5	174	Bethesda, MD**	79.1	178	Fort Collins, CO**	80.5
169	Bethesda, MD	80.1	175	Durham, NC	78.8	179	Newport, RI**	80.4
170	Omaha, NE**	77.2	176	Tallahassee, FL**	78.7	180	Albuquerque, NM	79.9

** Charter revoked during the following year.
Source: Adapted from company files.



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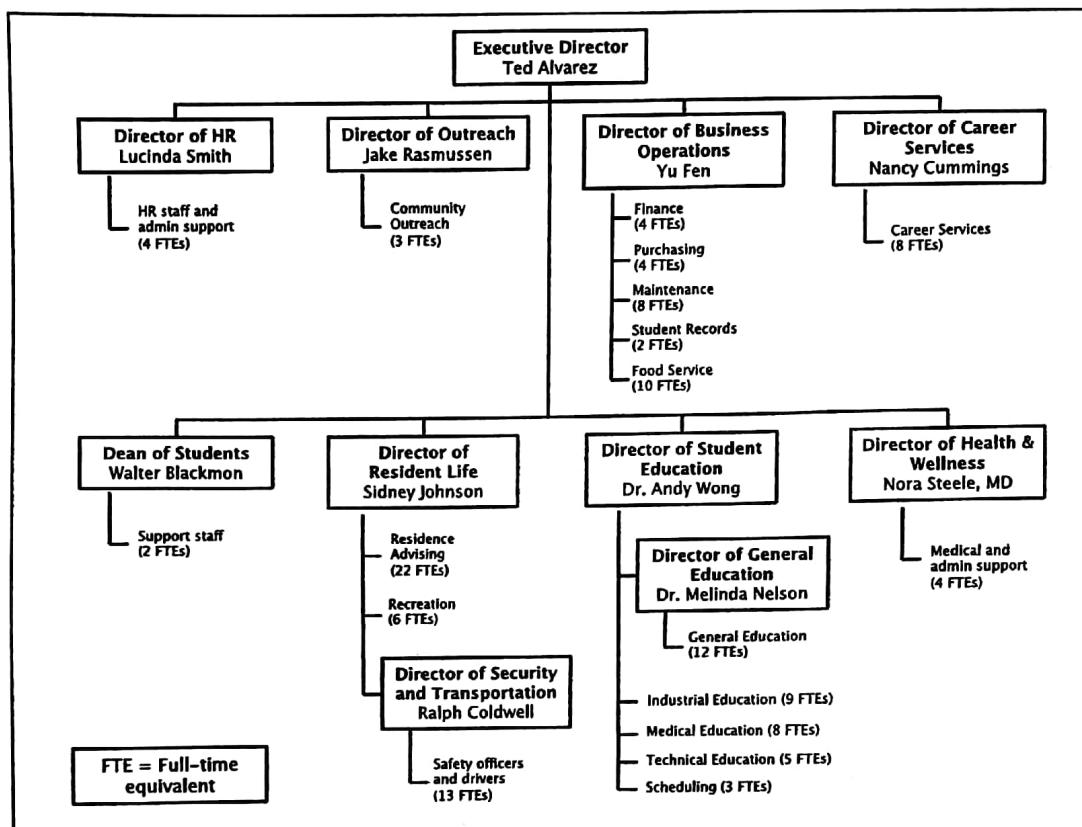
**EXHIBIT 2: HARRISBURG RAW SCORES AND BASELINE TARGETS
FOR BFT LOCATIONS ON KEY PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

Criterion	Benchmark	Harrisburg Score for 2011
Recruiting and Admissions		
30-day commitment rate	80%	77%
60-day commitment rate	75%	73%
Student Retention & Satisfaction		
Average length of stay	9 months	8.6 months
Graduate length of stay	12 months	12.4 months
Location capacity utilization rating	100% of target	98%
Compliance rating	100% of target	97%
Student satisfaction rating	100% of target	104%
Program Results		
Graduation rate	59%	61%
GED/high school diploma rate	56%	60%
Vocational training completion rate	56%	58%
Placement Results		
Placement rate	65%	62%
Average initial wage rate	\$8.50	\$8.78
Percentage wage above \$8/hour	62%	66%
Other Factors		
Student safety rating	85%	92%
Early student terminations for cause	10%	8%
Other student terminations for cause	10%	7%
Incident reports per student	0.10	0.06

Source: Adapted from company files.



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EXHIBIT 3: HARRISBURG SFT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Source: Adapted from company files.



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EXHIBIT 4: NOTES FROM HARRISBURG INTERVIEW SESSIONS

Name: Ted Alvarez, Executive Director; Age: 43
 Education: BA — Old Dominion; MBA — U. of Richmond
 Tenure with SFT: 14 years; Tenure at Harrisburg location: 4 months

What do you love about your job?

- The impact that we have on students' lives — our mission and purpose.
- The challenge of achieving success, even with the current economic/fiscal difficulties.
- Being surrounded by a talented and hardworking staff.

What do you hate about your job?

- While I do believe that the staff is talented and hardworking...
 - Lack of *morale* and teamwork among the directors.
 - In-fighting and bickering; departmental focus rather than focus on the "big picture."
 - Struggles over budget decisions.

What would you change at Harrisburg?

- We need to get back to the basics — why are we here? For the students!
- Need to focus on getting our ranking up — if we don't have a charter, we can't help our students.
- Morale and teamwork need to improve *now* — we need to come together and work out these issues and become a cohesive team.

Other comments:

- None

Name: Lucinda Smith, Director of HR; Age: 52
 Education: BA — Amherst College
 Tenure with SFT: 18 years; Tenure at Harrisburg location: 4 months

What do you love about your job?

- I love working in HR — I have a real passion for helping our staff continue to grow and be more successful.
- Ted is a great guy to work with — he knows how to get a job done, and he's very supportive as a boss.

What do you hate about your job?

- Some of the SFT policies are tough to deal with — lack of flexibility related to performance management, and feedback mechanisms just don't work.
- It's been difficult to gain the trust of some of the other directors — they blame me for HR policies that are beyond my control!
- People are stuck in how things used to be (before I got here) — not open to change.



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EXHIBIT 4 (CONTINUED)

What would you change at Harrisburg?

- Implement 360 feedback for directors — I think this will be beneficial to both the individual and the management team, but HQ won't let me implement this!
- Get people to understand how HR policy is developed. If everyone understood how things work in HR, I think they'll have more respect for my position.
- Work on trust and putting aside personal grudges.

Other comments:

- It's been tough being new to the staff — I know these things take time, but it's been hard for me to deal with the cold shoulder that I've gotten from several of the other directors. I don't know if I can keep fighting these battles...

Name: Jake Rasmussen, Director of Outreach; Age: 31

Education: BBA (Finance) — George Washington U.

Tenure with SFT: 5 years; Tenure at Harrisburg location: 5 years

What do you love about your job?

- I feel that I have a significant role in helping this organization achieve its mission of helping these students.
- I enjoy the level of responsibility that I've been given — as the youngest member of the management team, and relatively new to the position (18 months), I'm excited to be a part of the decisions made on behalf of the entire location.

What do you hate about your job?

- While I'm excited to be a director, some people don't respect me or the work that I do — especially Yu. We just don't see eye to eye.
- I've had my budgets cut twice since I came into this position — I can't do a good job without the right level of resources and support! Meanwhile, Sidney gets whatever he wants. It's frustrating.

What would you change at Harrisburg?

- Budgeting — we need to know how these decisions are made. I submit a budget, and it gets cut every time. Why? Need more visibility and voice in this process.
- People need to understand what it is that I do, and why it's so important to the success of this organization. Without my staff and me, who's going to recruit students and solicit donations from the community?

Other comments:

- Yu has had it in for me from day one — we've got to figure out a way to work better together.
- Walter is a great guy, but what does he do here? I've never understood his role in the organization.



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Page 12**EXHIBIT 4 (CONTINUED)**

Name: Yu Fen, Director of Business Operations; Age: 38
 Education: BA — Xiamen University; MBA — U. of Illinois
 Tenure with SFT: 8 years; Tenure at Harrisburg location: 8 years

What do you love about your job?

- I have a great team! The managers and staff in my department are great to work with and highly reliable.
- I love working for an organization that has such a significant and positive impact on our customers (students).

What do you hate about your job?

- I wish we got more praise for the jobs we are doing — all Ted ever talks about is the rankings. We're fine! We're not going to get our charter revoked. I don't know what the big deal is.
- I'm tired of listening to Jake complain about his budget — we're all stretched thin (well, except for Res Life and Education). We've just got to do the best with what we have.

What would you change at Harrisburg?

- We need to celebrate our successes more! And Ted needs to calm down about the rankings.
- More autonomy in decision-making. Most of us have been in our jobs for a while now, and we know what to do. Just let us do our jobs.

Other comments:

- I try and stay out of these things, but it's obvious that there are clashes between directors — you know, personality differences? It's not my business, but somehow we've got to resolve these personal issues among the directors.
- Ted has his favorites — obviously, Lucinda and Nancy (since they came with him). Melinda as well. Everyone knows this, and it's causing problems.

Name: Nancy Cummings, Director of Career Services; Age: 45

Education: BS — U. of Delaware; MBA — Temple U.
 Tenure with SFT: 12 years; Tenure at Harrisburg location: 4 months

What do you love about your job?

- When a semester comes to an end, and a student walks out with a new job and new outlook on life... that's why I come into work!
- I love working with Ted — he respects me and the work that I do, and I know that he's always got my back.

What do you hate about your job?

- The team has lost sight of "teamwork." Trust issues have led some directors to have a "cover your back" mentality, and they focus more on their department instead of what's best for the entire location.
- Meetings with the directors are a waste of time — Ted may as well just have individual meetings with all of us, because we do a lousy job of trying to help each other.



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EXHIBIT 4 (CONTINUED)

What would you change at Harrisburg?

- I don't know how to do it, but we've got to develop a better sense of trust among the directors. People need to understand everyone else's roles and how we all fit together to make this place successful.
- We've got to place more emphasis on training these students in life skills. They know how to do a job, but do they know how to live? I think we can do better.

Other comments:

- I've had a hard time communicating with Yu — I don't know if it's a cultural thing, or a language issue, or what . . . but I just can't seem to connect with him. Maybe things will get better as time goes on, but I know that I've had a hard time reading him...

Name: Walter Blackmon, Dean of Students; Age: 53

Education: Graduate from SFT (1979); BA/MA — Penn State U.-Harrisburg

Tenure with SFT: 21 years; Tenure at Harrisburg location: 21 years

What do you love about your job?

- It's simple — the students! Having been one of them 30+ years ago, I know firsthand what they are going through. Seeing the students learn and grow in the program, and the positive changes that I see from when they first walk in the door to when they graduate — it's everything to me! That's why I came back, and that's why I stay. I love being a mentor to these kids!

What do you hate about your job?

- Ted has a lot of passion, but I think it's a bit misplaced. All this talk about rankings . . . that's all we hear about. Students don't care about the rankings — all they care about (and all we should care about) is that we are doing a good job for them.
- Directors' meetings are either "bitch sessions" or silence — no one helps each other!

What would you change at Harrisburg?

- Ted has got to change his focus away from the rankings, and back to the students and his team. Same goes for the directors in regards to the last point — we've got to learn to work together and quit squabbling between departments.
- We seem to be a bit of a ship without a rudder. We need to start over and clearly define our goals as a management team, and lay out the path forward with concrete steps to be taken . . . with everyone's buy-in.

Other comments:

- Off the record, Ted seems to think of himself as a ladies' man! He clearly favors some of the women in this organization. In fact, I think he has a thing for Dr. Nelson!



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EXHIBIT 4 (CONTINUED)

Name: Sidney Johnson, Director of Residence Life; Age: 35
 Education: BA — Ohio State U; MA — U. of Iowa
 Tenure with SFT: 3 years; Tenure at Harrisburg location: 3 years

What do you love about your job?

- I love that I have a positive impact on the lives of these students.
- I love working with my staff — we have a lot of fun!

What do you hate about your job?

- I hate always having to support Jake's outreach sessions — these are always at night or on weekends, and it conflicts with what we're trying to do in Res Life.
- I hate all of the complaining over budgets.
- Dr. Wong is difficult to work with. He thinks everything revolves around the curriculum! There's more to the program than just classes.

What would you change at Harrisburg?

- Everyone has to gain a full understanding of each other's mission/goals, and how each of us has a role in making each other successful. I don't think the other directors have a clue about what we do in Res Life to support the mission.
- Everyone needs to learn how to say what is really on his/her mind, and create an environment where there is no retaliation for stating an opinion.

Other comments:

- We seem to have in-groups and out-groups among the directors. I won't name names, but it's clear to me that Ted has a trusted "inner circle" that excludes a number of the directors.

Name: Ralph Coldwell, Director of Security and Transportation; Age: 56

Education: Mount Olive HS

Tenure with SFT: 17 years; Tenure at Harrisburg location: 17 years

What do you love about your job?

- I have worked my way up from the bottom, and I am thankful for the opportunities that have been given to me along the way. I believe that SFT appreciates loyalty and hard work.
- I have a great staff and a great manager — Sidney has always been a strong supporter of our work.

What do you hate about your job?

- Not everyone appreciates what we do. I suppose it's a compliment if no one notices our work (we're supposed to be "behind the scenes"), but it would be nice to be appreciated by someone other than Sidney once in a while.
- Nora and I don't get along. I feel like she looks down on me and my department. She doesn't respect me . . . and the feeling has become mutual.

What would you change at Harrisburg?

- I would force Education to coordinate with us when they plan their schedules. We have classes that run all hours of the day and night, and when schedules are made we're forced to adapt at the last minute. We need to be part of the conversation.
- We all need to better appreciate each other's work, and stop taking each other for granted.



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EXHIBIT 4 (CONTINUED)

Other comments:

- None

Name: Dr. Andy Wong, Director of Student Education; Age: 49
 Education: BA — Colgate U.; MA — NYU; Ph.D. — U. of Virginia
 Tenure with SFT: 10 years; Tenure at Harrisburg location: 7 years

What do you love about your job?

- The students are an absolute joy to work with! I love that we've been able to have high student satisfaction scores for several years now — it's validation that we're doing the right things!
- I have a passionate and skilled team of instructors, and could not ask for anything more from them!

What do you hate about your job?

- I hate director meetings. They are a waste of time — nothing ever gets done in these meetings! We do a poor job of helping each other out.
- Sidney and I seem to disagree on just about everything. I've tried to work with him on a number of joint initiatives, but there's no give with him — only take.
- We don't communicate change well — generally speaking, it seems that a change is implemented, and then people are told. It should be the opposite!

What would you change at Harrisburg?

- We need to change how we "change"! Decisions can't be made in a vacuum. We need to do a better job of communicating.
- Related to this, I think we spend too much time emailing one another. I think if we went one week where nobody used email — and instead, talked to one another like real people — this would help matters a lot.

Other comments:

- I've worked with Walter for a number of years, and I value his experience and friendship. But it's not clear to me how his role fits in with Sidney's and mine. I have Education and Sidney has Res Life...then what does the "Dean of Students" do? Maybe a reorganization is needed...

Name: Dr. Melinda Nelson, Director of General Education; Age: 41
 Education: BA — Georgia Tech; Ph.D. — U. of Arizona
 Tenure with SFT: 6 years; Tenure at Harrisburg location: 6 years

What do you love about your job?

- I have great support from Ted and Andy — I know that I can come to them with any request and it will get a fair appraisal.
- I love working with the instructors and students — it really is a magical place to see these students transform as they work through the program! We are doing really important work here.



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EXHIBIT 4 (CONTINUED)

What do you hate about your job?

- Working with the other directors can be tiresome, simply because we don't work "with" one another. We all seem to be stuck in our own little worlds!
- I don't think that we all share the same view of where it is that we're heading. While I'm sure that everyone cares about the students, we seem to have a lot of different ideas on how to best serve the students. We're not all on the same sheet of music.

What would you change at Harrisburg?

- I realize that this is easier said than done, but we need to change our focus from just our departments to SFT as a whole. I'm not an HR specialist, but I wonder if something as radical as a new performance management process is needed. You know, something that will force everyone to look at the big picture?

Other comments:

- I've started to hear rumors about something between Ted and me, and I don't know what to do about it. We did go out for drinks after work a couple of times, but my personal life is none of their business. I'm a professional and so is Ted, and I don't think what we do outside of work has any bearing on SFT or the other directors.

Name: Nora Steele, MD, Director of Health & Wellness; Age: 61

Education: BA — Penn State U.; MD — Penn State U.

Tenure with SFT: 20 years; Tenure at Harrisburg location: 11 years

What do you love about your job?

- I love being able to help our students live healthy lives! Some of the students come in here in pretty awful shape — most don't have health insurance, and haven't been to a doctor in years. I love that we're able to help them in mind, body and spirit.

What do you hate about your job?

- I feel very constrained as to what I can accomplish as a physician. We don't have enough resources to be able to provide the level of care that these students need.
- I hate that Food Service is out of my direct control. I've been trying to get a new nutrition plan implemented for three years now, and it's always shot down. Yu just tells me that it's too expensive, period. It's very frustrating.

What would you change at Harrisburg?

- Food service is part of health and wellness, and should be in my department, not Bus Ops.
- We don't seem to deal with change very well as a group. People seem to be stuck in their ways: "It's how we've always done things" seems to be a common justification for most decisions. We need to be more open to new ideas.

Other comments:

- Ralph can be quite rude at times. I know he's trying to be funny, but I don't appreciate his humor. I haven't spoken with him about it, but it really gets under my skin. I need to have a talk with him, but it never seems like the right time.

Source: Adapted from company files.

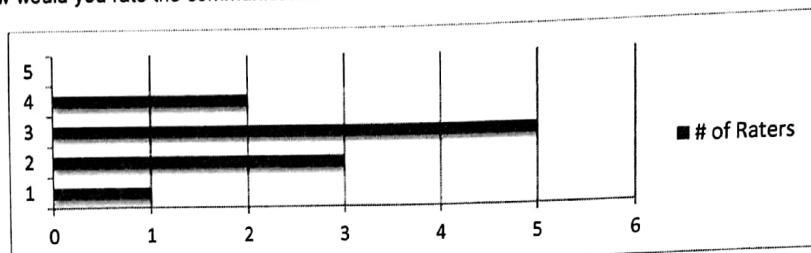


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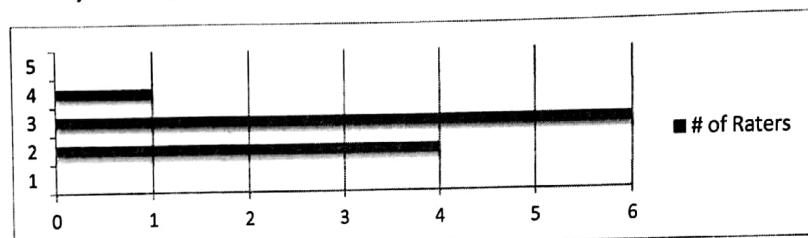
EXHIBIT 5: DIRECTORS SURVEY

All questions were responded to on a 1-5 scale (1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = adequate, 4 = good, 5 = very good)

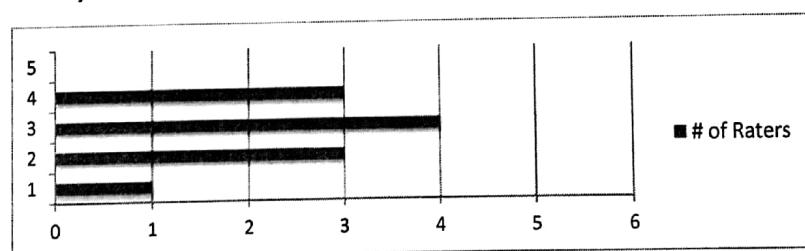
1. How would you rate the communication within the management team?



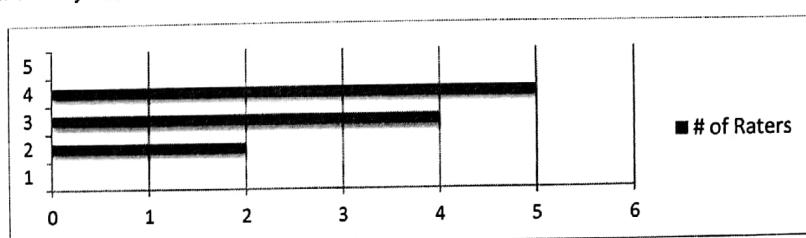
2. How would you rate the level of teamwork within the management team?



3. How would you rate the level of trust within the management team?



4. How would you rate the overall effectiveness of the management team?



Source: Adapted from company files.



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