MD Briefing Voice Mail (and transcript)

Hi there,

I wanted to have a chat to discuss the preparation for the project next week, but I am travelling so will not be available until we start with our pilot workshop next week.

The workshop is with Henry Lee, our HESG sponsor. We need to impress Henry since he is our main client and will influence future projects at DSS. So, I need you to get on top of the data sets and build insights that can demonstrate our ability to balance competing agendas in the discussion with Henry.

Henry is a very detail oriented and factually driven sponsor. He understands the data well, so it is important to double check the dashboard KPIs and motivate insights with specific examples. Henry will likely know the answers without even looking at the dashboard, but he needs an independent monthly dashboard to discuss with his government sponsors and also with DSS Operations, Finance, Voice of Customer Stakeholders, and Internal Audit. Accenture has worked with internal stakeholders, and I would summarise their concerns/ positioning as:

- The Operations Director is keen to build his empire by automating as much as possible. He is neutral towards our project teams, but also works with some of our main competitors.
- The Finance Director is charged with reducing overall DSS costs by 10 – 30% this financial year. She is concerned about the accuracy of the HESG and is often prodding Internal Audit to uncover the vast amounts of "fraud" as she calls it, in the HESG operations. She is not a keen Accenture sponsor, and very sceptical about our work. We need to take care to get her on-side.
- The Director of Customer Affairs is a new role that is created to advocate for the "customer" in all DSS decisions. She is very driven by what the customer thinks, rather than the operational or financial aspects of HESG. Her recent focus group interviews indicate that students are OK with the submission process but feel that payment is often too slow. She is neutral towards our work, but I think we need to ensure her concerns are noted and addressed.

In summary, I need you to prepare the pilot dashboard to demonstrate our data mastery and ability to talk HESG language to answer their questions. Remember that this is not the full data set. Your ability to answer priorities and to talk to Henry about data insights will be his test for the next steps. My ask is that you focus on quality and coverage, rather than volume to demonstrate our dashboard. We want to be as close as possible to the final product so that the client stakeholders can provide feedback before we scale the dashboard for tracking.

Thanks

Jane

Henry email

Hi there

Jane gave me your details to reach out before we start the project. I understand that you bring data analysis expertise and best practice, which I am looking forward to working with you to show my team.

I believe your team can help us balance how we serve our customers versus how we work internally. Operations and Finance are always in my ear with their own opinions. My Government stakeholders have some specific viewpoints that also influence this balance, since Government provides us with the HESG funding. I therefore want a fact driven answer that we can discuss in our meetings to ensure all their concerns are measured and that I am able to discuss root causes as need be.

For our kick-off workshop I expect you to prepare the following:

- A sample dashboard that we can discuss to highlight answers to key questions, insights, and future data recommendations. My senior team has prepared their own set of KPIs so it will be good to do a results comparison. My view is that a good dashboard presents actionable KPIs and insights to a broad set of stakeholders, some visually and others numerically. By insights I mean things that we do not know from our day-to-day jobs.

See you next week

Henry

DSS Project Team Notes

Welcome to the new project, we trust that you are eagerly getting ready for the kick-off. We have been gathering notes from all Accenture teams, as an induction to the client, and we would like to share them with you. Please do not hesitate to reach out to any of the other Accenture teams if you have any questions.
Points relevant to scope notes include:

- Process: The claims process starts with the student registering or logging in to lodge their claims. This is done either via the website or a phone application. The claim information critically contains the student identifier, expense date, vendor identifier, and amount. The process then asks for the student to categorise the claim and validate banking information. Lastly, students must upload images of all claim receipts. Both channels use Optical Character Recognition (OCR) driven data checks to ensure readability of information and as quality assurance before the claim starts getting processed. Claim processing then checks the student's rebate eligibility against a defined set of criteria and validates the claim to be accurate and true.

- Process: Once the claim is validated, the back-office system automatically queues the payment to go through from relevant DSS accounts. In the best-case scenario this all happens automatically, and payments are typically settled within two business days. If there is, however, a break in the claims process requiring manual intervention, the claim gets queued to the relevant back-office team member for manual work. This may include data validation, request for additional information, student ineligibility, claim rejection, potential fraudulent claim detection, and a few other factors that may stop the processing. Claims are marked as closed once the claim ticket is closed.

- Systems: The back office runs on a few systems:
  - Claims Case System (CCS) is for loading claims from the claim site or phone application and then processing the claim until closure;
  - Payment System (PS) is used for setting up and remitting the actual cash payment;
  - Fraud Management System (FMS) picks up all claims marked as potentially fraudulent; and
  - External data provided occasionally as separate files including the anonymised Employee Satisfaction Scores (ESS) and Net Promoter Score (NPS) results.

- Net Promoter Score: The NPS is the DSS-accepted measure of student satisfaction. It proxies the student's likelihood to recommend the services to other students upon claim closure. The NPS is the percent promoters less the percent detractors, expressed as a score. Refer to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Net_Promoter for an NPS guide and calculation steps.

- Stakeholders: Your primary stakeholder is Henry. He is a fact driven long-term DSS employee. He previously worked at a strategy consulting house, and he often deals with external consultants, so he knows his business and the consulting tricks. Our experience is to treat him with respect and structure your answers, rather than "shooting from the hip". He is more interested in accuracy than always knowing the answer. Having said this, he knows the program inside and out, so he has a depth of knowledge. Be straightforward and honest with him. He is motivated by the HESG success and is looking at expanding his responsibilities as part of his imminent promotion.

- You will likely also encounter the Operations Director (he is interested in automating as much as possible to reduce his staff), Finance Director (she is driven by what things cost and accuracy), and Director of Customer Affairs (newly appointed to act as the global voice for all DSS customers, including government and students).

Higher Education Supplementary Grant (HESG) summary description

HESG overview:

- National, government-funded scheme to allow students enrolled in Australia-based higher education courses to apply for grants, bursaries and rebates.
- The money can be claimed only for specific purchase types and the students can only claim 'actual' expenses, as evidenced with a receipt.
- The scheme is aimed at supporting students from lower-income backgrounds who might not otherwise be able to fund their studies and is means-tested.
- Students can claim the money by registering themselves on a DSS website, and more recently the HESG app, and applying online for expense details and uploading a copy of the receipt(s).
- Once claims are submitted, the system will automatically process claims. Claims will be processed by the back-office staff only when “breaks” or human intervention is required. These “break” may include discrepancies, inconsistencies, or a range of other anomalies that causes the automation to pause, or “break” from straight through processing.
- It is expected that all claims will be resolved, either as Settled or Declined within a few days after the end of the month.

National Government Feedback

Dear Henry

Thank you for DSS's continued running of the HESG program. It seems that the changes that your team effected on the claims system increased the HESG profile. Our discussions with universities and some focus groups have, however, indicated a concerning rise in the time between when a student submits their claim, and when they actually see the payment in their bank account. We are very concerned about delays in rebate payments. Students indicated that they were able to track the progress but flagged that there seems to be a significant delay in receiving the money into their bank accounts. We are unsure if this problem is limited to a portion of students at certain universities, banks, or purchasing from specific vendors, but we strongly feel that you need to check this quality of service and report any remedies you may take to address if this is an issue.

We are also increasingly concerned about claim payments fraud. We noticed increasing activities during student registrations, with vendor supplied receipts, and outright fraud on the actual claims.

We would like to get an urgent update and on-going reports on the tracking of these two critical issues. Our feeling is that negating any of these critical success factors may jeopardise HESG.

Regards

Ron Silverman
Treasury