

## Question: What obstacles or challenges should the SSC implementation team be aware of?

### Response

Just because a model works for one university doesn't mean that it will work here at KU. The process needs to be flexible to allow for differences in the way our University functions and the culture of the institution.

Lack of support from some units.

Space!

People are scared of losing their jobs or salary.

Those who are left in offices where most duties have gone to SSC's but a person's presence is needed to interact with daily events, faculty and visitors should not have to become greeters only and receptionists with lists for referral. It is a great let-down after over 30 years.

Federal, State, and private requirements for Research dollars and the compliance therein.

They should understand and seriously consider the needs of each department being careful to offer usable alternatives to the "old way" of doing things.

The SSC implementation team should be well aware of the direct impact that the SSC's might have on academic departments. Most, if not all departments rely heavily on their support staff, and once support staff is stripped from the departments, it will be hard for the departments to adjust. Support staff in academic units are a strong resource for students, and faculty on a day to day basis beyond just sitting behind a desk paying bills, processing travel, etc.

There is a strong impression that the Huron representatives do not listen to feedback provided (ex: when meeting with them for an hour they never wrote down a single thing that was said). At many of the junctures where feedback was requested the representatives appeared to be more interested in towing a party line than receiving feedback from the participants.

I think there are still many support/accounting staff on campus that believe their jobs won't be affected by the SSCs even though most of their current jobs duties will be moved to the SSC. There is an assumption that their particular department can't function if accounting/hiring/other duties are moved to an SSC...there will be no control over the department budget.

A University is not a Corporation. Be aware of the differences and sensitive to how best to accommodate those differences.

Challenges - providing enough communication at a level of detail that people can relate to

Pretty sure they already know most of them.

Proposal preparation: PIs generally benefit from staff who know their work very well helping prepare their proposals. I believe the create part of proposal preparation needs to remain distributed. The compliance functions that KUCR serve are sufficient, and should not be expanded.

The mindset of staff that they are "losing control" of their own area - that they are not needed. Re-writing their pd's prior to the big change to SSC's will go a long way to providing them with a sense of responsibility and ownership of their position.

Change is hard and people will be resistant.

Individuals who are used to doing everything for a department (HR, travel, payroll, etc.) may find it less rewarding to go into a SSC to only do one thing (i.e. focus only HR). The variety of their current position may make the SSC less appealing.

Just sensitivity to the change process, which it seems you are already keenly aware of. Making information available to people. Employees are wondering...how is this going to impact me? How do I decide if I should apply for a SSC job? If I don't want to go to a SSC, will I have a job? What if I don't want to relocate to another department?

Don't forget about the people. Programs are only as good as the people that set behind them.

The many unanswered questions are a source of frustration.

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### Uninformed staff

Many administrative employees are personally involved in their departments and have longstanding personal relationships with their departments. We are often the people who plan the various social functions for our departments, thereby fostering relationships and communication. We're also often the people who provide mediation in personal conflicts within the department. In short, we are the heart of the department. Remove us, remove the heart.

The nearly total lack of buy-in from the faculty in my department. They think this is going to fail before it even starts and are planning to fight it with everything they have. Their biggest concern is the financial accounting and grant-related activities - at this point the 25 faculty are sharing one accountant and part of my time (as Business Manager) and needs are still not being met in a timely basis because there's too much bureaucracy to allow us to be more efficient. In their minds, an SSC just adds to the bureaucracy by adding another layer.

Unfair hiring/assignment practices analyze procedures from a broad perspective, not just models Information that is clear and exact.

purchasing for research should remain in an SSC for research as additional federal, and agency regulations apply and many are unique to individual grants or contracts.

Tenured staff with negative attitudes and no responsibility to the students or staff at the university. I think this is the most significant challenge working in student services, people who do not like students or service positions.

Not familiar with what will be involved so no way to comment

Change. People don't like change and faculty will not do the things the University asks them to do. They are here to teach and do research, not push paper.

I don't see how this model will work for Principal Investigators. PI usually want to the minute information on their funds. Also we haven't been told at all how this is going to work.

The biggest challenge will be to carefully select supervisors with the right personnel management and process management skills and a service attitude. The second challenge, then, will be to ensure that the best people working at KU move into the SSCs into appropriate positions; and then to take quick action to either correct underperformance with any needed additional training or to remove the underperforming employee with someone who can do the job.

Herding cats.....academics are notoriously cavalier about the "niceties" of the details of research funding; i.e. the searching for, assessing who best can deliver the outcomes the funding will support, the complexities of the various funding mechanisms, etc. And that's just the "get", let alone the ongoing grant management and deliverables....simply put, it's a complex business much of which is left to those who can do the "work" (research and/or teaching), but can't do the tasks to make all that happen, but most times think they can. This makes it hard for people who do know how to do all those tasks.

Parking, personalities, departmental grudge matches, 'shadow systems'

Unit directors who are resistant to change when perhaps their staff involved in the implementation are not.

As mentioned earlier, some of the tasks on the proposed list will likely take much longer to accomplish if handled only by a central unit. For example, ad placement for hiring, and simple purchasing of office supplies, etc.

keeping institutional knowledge, especially department-specific, as closely aligned as reasonable, as staffing decisions are made - the service center should be comprised of some staff with knowledge of the departments they are serving

Making work flows and procedures harder, rather than easier. Clogging up the processes, instead of making them flow.

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Employees are increasingly concerned about their jobs. Merely promising that they'll HAVE a job is not enough anymore. You owe it to the employees at KU to determine (and announce!) the course of action and all contingency plans for employees affected by this change.

If things don't happen swiftly, some employees will disengage and service to faculty and students will suffer.

1. The KU Communities inability to make meaningful changes in a reasonable amount of time. 2. The talent bleeding out or fleeing from the KU community due to 3 years of uncertainty and transitional leadership.

Have a Plan B. Remember that the teams working and designing all of this has had all the advantages of knowing all the processes It may look good on paper, but implementation! Change is very stressful for everyone involved. Just leading to the end results. Us on the "outside" don't have that advantage. We see only end results and not the process leading to why this will eventually work better in the long term. It's people's lives--financial and personal. Uncertainty results in many different emotions and reactions.

already commented previously.

the obvious--resistance to change and fear of job loss. big challenge--SSC employees being competent and knowledgeable about units they are serving as well as sensitive to needs of units from day one of implementation.

Change scares most people. Employees need to feel secure that they won't lose a job due to reorganization or "downsizing". Demoting or reassigning staff without staff input is demoralizing and leads to skepticism about the security of the position.

Internal department level time delays.

many departments have unique or specialized projects and tasks

Different departments with different functions utilize services differently, so it's important to keep this in mind when attempting to group departments together in order to provide services... there needs to be a lot of communication throughout the process, and feedback should be encouraged and considered.

All changes

making sure that current KU employees do not feel threatened by the changes.

General reluctance by staff to do anything but "what we've always done" Balkanization of the university where people, including some senior leaders, feel more loyalty to their schools/departments/units than to the university as a whole

The inefficiency of new systems might be an obstacle since the SSC model is based on employees who are familiar with other systems and practices to run like a well-oiled machine.

I think the main thing to be conscious of is to be careful what duties you are pulling out of a department level and putting into a service center. The whole point of this is efficiency so if you make the team weaker as a whole by removing the wrong things then you haven't done any justice for the university.

Resistance to change.

Our office is run like a business. We offer programs

[REDACTED]. The list goes on. As a result a lot of the programs we offer are taken on-site to the participants. No one on campus handles programs like we do. This will need to be taken into consideration.

There are a lot more "exceptions" or "special cases" than you realize, especially in the research world. Not everything will fit neatly into standard procedures or unforgiving computerized forms.

restructuring services so they actually take longer to get things done, instead of being more efficient.

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Proceed at a regular, measured pace. Give people time to absorb the changes but make it clear they are happening. There have already been problems with moving too fast specifically the hallway full of new Herman Miller in McCollum Hall and the service center it was designed for is no longer moving here.

Defined chains of command Ensure there are no major functions omitted when attempting to avoid "duplication". Recognize that some functions are highly specialized and require many years of experience to perfect i.e.

The current in house staff were able to quickly answer questions in a casual fashion. I am concerned that having these functions centralized will increase the time required to get answers and reduce the ability to easily discuss what if scenarios especially in the HR area.

You need to make sure you do not prevent, take away, or limit the management/leadership decisions of unit heads. Many of the things proposed are great for academic and research areas and will do away with unnecessary duplication. However, many of the things proposed may cause problems and hardships for non-academic/non-research units.

Those employees that do not accept change well.

The "us vs. them" mentality. I currently work in a SCC type environment and hear repeatedly from departmental employees that "we" have nothing to worry about. be forced to move to a call center type atmosphere. The departmental employees will be making all the sacrifices and will

Many faculty members will be resistant to give up "their" staff to a far off place (e.g. more than a few steps down the hall). Don't underestimate how chance hallway conversations can grease wheels, and how this will be lost.

Time spent preparing orders, requests, etc. by faculty and staff and the level of detail required to send these off for processing by someone who does not know the use or needs of the unit is going to be a steep learning curve at both ends and a greater time spent overall.

Beware of creating extra layers of communication that place a burden on departmental staff and chairs/directors. Many staff are the communication component between chairs & faculty, faculty & students, university admin & chairs, etc. It could be an extra burden to keep the SSC also informed enough to serve its purpose. Ensuring concrete diagrams of communication flow to avoid unintentional diplomacy missteps (e.g. when faced with a payroll/HR issue, should I talk to my College higher up or SSC or Payroll office or HR office??) Ensure that each department maintains a similar ability to make decisions for itself, while benefiting from the tools of standardization that the SSC creates. It is my hope that items that are chosen NOT to move to SSCs are still explored in terms of finding solutions for more effective and efficient ways of doing things moving to SSCs. In other words, that this opportunity for improvement not be lost for those business areas that are not

don't forget you are dealing with people and how much these changes impact or change their life.

Weak communications - the more people know, and the more they know in advance, AND having the opportunity for two-way communication (not handed-down decisions) the more likely there will be a good decision and buy-in.

forced change in the culture of units

There are still many employees who are angry about the changes and have made it more than clear that they are not willing to make changes themselves.

For offices that are running smoothly, there will be strong resistance to any change. Key staff may be lost to a SSC that will reduce productivity for that office as they learned new ways of doing things.

If cost saving is the goal, it isn't clear how that's going to occur.

Applications that are specific to a given department. A process for identification of special applications is needed so that the department will continue to get best service until a replacement or new process is identified.

Negative attitude by employees who feel they are being forced to change. Cooperation from departments that do not want to let go of certain responsibilities.

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People hate change. They have also been doing things one way for so long that they can't envision it any other way. Also, people think their office will be the "exception" and that they will not be touched. I don't know if people truly understand what is about to happen.

I just hope the change doesn't interfere with services to our clients.

The SSC implementation team needs to be aware that there are significant differences in the way that grant-funded and state-funded units run. These differences are not just cultural; many are required by funders. The University needs to be far more nimble in allowing units to pursue and spend grant funds, and the SSCs need to remain aware of and respect these differences.

When you have a division like ours, that spans 5 buildings, with over 200 people, you need personal service, not an SCC, to take care of requests.

Getting individuals to bypass their current administrative team within the department to go to a new SSC will be difficult.

Many college units are extremely secretive about their funding. They have spent years not sharing information between their fellow units and I think it will be very difficult for them to change their mindsets.

culture of resistance to change at KU

I think the SSC idea is a great one, but then I came from a large employer who used that same model. I think the challenge KU is going to face is that people need to be reassured that there will still be a place for them at KU if their position is being threatened in any way by the implementation of the SSC. You'll need to be VERY clear in communicating the options that are available to these people: --apply for the job and assurance that if they don't get it, they'll be given good feedback as to what to do next --be mentored in the new role --get free training for a different job--get career counseling from a trusted person. In most cases, this is not going to be a person's supervisor but might be something that is better to be outsourced to a career counseling company - one that can identify each person's strengths, give resume writing and interview tips, etc.

Research administration will be a challenge in an SSC.

n/a

People always fear for their jobs in times of change. Communicate how each person's job is impacted. Which specific duties is someone no longer responsible for? If additional duties will be assigned, be clear about those. Clearly define the hand-offs between the SSC and the unit.

People do not like change. There will probably be a lot of push back. People need to get onboard and do what is best for the University. Get on the surf board and ride the wave of change. Keep current employees informed of all the changes. There is a lot of anxiety concerning whether or not people will still have a job. Hire within KU before hiring outside people.

They are so many doing similar but unit specific work that a one size "vanilla" fit won't always work, It may cause more work at another point in the process. Understand the entire process and service (start to finish). What is really the best use of limited resources - labor time or a vanilla software program? This could easily vary.

creation of functional gaps in departments/units

Making sure that all areas are covered at the SSC level i.e., don't leave a task at the department level that should actually be in an SSC.

Staff's understanding of roles, and how they may change

I think that people are resistant to change, especially when they don't feel that they have been included in the process. It seems as though including as many people as possible from all areas of the university (especially those that will undergo the most significant change) is important.

## Question: What obstacles or challenges should the SSC implementation team be aware of?

Information about SSCs or what they may potentially look like at KU has not been well-distributed. I'm not completely clear on what the SSC is or is intended to be.

genuine care for individual staff members, as well as the overall goal of changing for excellence

If workers are moved to a central location, people will lose the one on one contact that is vital for much of the work we do. It will take time out of their day to find a way to get to the office and find the right person, possibly waiting in line to talk to someone. The University will be paying people to wait because they are trying to save money centralizing.

Specific training and exceptionally long learning curve to perform at a high level in all research administration pre and post award areas.

I think you're already aware of this, but the apprehension and anxiety about this transition is great across campus, so managing that effectively will be a challenge. It seems like you're doing a good job with this already.

Units that are losing people are suffering.

Staff in different locations - how that will work? Clear communication on additional help if staff is gone.

Timely and accurate communication is extremely important for staff

Unknown

In participation of the brown-bag meetings I feel that some departments are very reluctant to let go of some of the budget/finance functions that aren't purely transactional. I don't feel that they have a good understanding of the level of relationship that will be necessary with the department and SSC contact.

Staff resistance/fear to change.

unwanted employee dislocation

the uniqueness of departments and special tasks they do on a routine basis that is often not part of their job description.

How difficult it is to change the culture on campus. How to get people out of the mindset...this is how I've always done it.

I am still trying to figure out how the changes will impact workers in my office.

If individuals who take care of a portion of the duties listed on the previous screen are moved out of departments, won't most departments still need a budgeting kind of financial contact for the day to day kinds of purchases (office supplies, equipment)? Diane Goddard mentioned at the town hall meeting that they have moved as much as possible back to departments to take care of, and in this case it appears that departments would still be doing even more with less.

every other place that I've heard of that has SSCs HATES them, and the good people quit, leaving the less-able staff to run the SSC. I worked in a place before that had something similar to what I understand is planned for here, and if the person or people who handle one particular function are out sick, or on leave, or at a PD event, etc., then everything ground to a halt. It once took me 4 months to get an invoice paid because the person who could handle that particular type of invoicing was on leave.

Not enough communication and a fear of change through top down approach

The response from faculty regarding removal of staff from departments has not been positive. Many of them feel this will hinder their ability to meet teaching and research responsibilities. There is no desire to lose the institutional memory that faculty rely on staff members to retain.

People that have been assigned or even went through the interview process, who are NOT qualified to supervise !

Communication is the key factor. There has to be clear communication and input from all levels.

There are no standard operating procedures around here. Training for software you use to do your job is very poor. PeopleSoft training is poorly done.

I think there are people in key positions who resist change.

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There are a lot of changes taking place affecting all areas so morale is very low. Adjusting to additional challenges when we haven't quite got the hang of the previous changes will be a challenge.

There are items, services, reports which departments provide that may not be a part or something the people on the focus groups deal with and so pieces end up missing. We are left with not having the access or ability to pull the information that is needed. The more complex needs of departments seem to be simplified in order to achieve conformity/unity and solutions don't seem to be on the agenda so the needs can still be met.

Again, I think it would be better (and safer, audit-wise) to keep all research administration in Research SSCs. I strongly urge the steering committee to reconsider.

People are scared because they are not informed. Scared people rarely follow an orderly path. Resistance is building because of unanswered questions.

Primarily personnel issues: Some individuals are so loyal to their departments, they just can't fathom moving to the SSC. However, in many cases, all the work that individual does should be at the SSC. What if the department doesn't have anything to reassign to that person? You've either got a very dissatisfied employee, or a position created at a department that isn't necessary.

The university needs to realize that its first mission is to the students. The university is not a business. Changing to save money is a good thing but not always the best thing. What works in one area may not work in another.

Resistance to change if the process is sold only as "more responsibility for employees."

Making changes where people will lose jobs.

Communication - you need to talk more - the Brown Bags just are not enough. People cannot ask enough questions and when they do - they do not get answers because either no one knows or they don't want to say. Someone has to start giving out the correct information.

People (perceptions), space, time and the learning curve seem to be the biggest hurdles. Not new ideas to the implementation team, I'm sure.

Going to the department chair or Dean might not be the best way to understand everything that their support staff does. As you transfer jobs to the SSC, you might consider speaking with the support staff in the departments to make sure that you have everything covered. Sometimes they do so much behind the scenes that it's not all recognized by those they do it for.

Further corporatization, "cubicalism", further disconnection from the engaged intellectual role all employees play in the university.

The individual employees affected by SSCs may be hearing a different report from their departmental administration and feel like they are caught in-between their department and KU.

I think ordering is already a cluster anyway. Somehow they have turned what used to be next day service on the likes of Grainger.com into a several day affair. I guess they are getting everyone accustomed to bad service.

That staff feel like we are being run over with a 10 ton Mack truck with no consideration for us.

Consider how SSC affects our colleagues at satellite campuses like Edwards, KUMC ( Salina & Wichita), etc.

Be honest with yourselves. Will it truly accomplish what you want? If it takes retraining the entire staff and creating a huge (new) bureaucracy that takes years to get working - have you REALLY improved anything?

People & departments actually do the same jobs differently. Staff that have been at their jobs a long time are less willing to embrace change!

The staff's inflexibility and inability to conceptualize ideas. Some have never been exposed to anything but a KU environment - it will be difficult for them to imagine the ideas you are putting across. This university is also composed of many fiefdoms and any kind of standardization or sharing of resources is highly frowned upon. Also be aware as I'm sure you are that this is a VERY low trust organization.

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I don't want to lose my job. Beyond that, I will reiterate that the SSC implementation team should be consulting with those of us who are doing these jobs currently to make sure that the processes that are put in place are efficient and meet the needs of the University and our School.

Confusion surrounding changing responsibilities for employees. Relationship building for departments with their SSC contacts - SSC people will not have a high degree of understanding for department work and projects.

The abbreviation SSC is not commonly known by employees.

NA

Pride. Most staff members have pride in their work and have close relationships with those they assist--this may be lost or diminished. Many will be hurt or have a negative attitude. Why did this happen to me? There will, of course, be negative attitudes. Additional messes (i.e. facilities and HR)! Fear for loss of job. PLEASE make sure previous initiatives are complete before moving on to make. Some processes are working, don't change to be changing. Most staff members are busy around here, doing more with less cannot always happen!!! Be REALISTIC!

As clunky as the current system is, it matters to people that they know who to go to with questions and to handle these issues without having to reexplain the situation, exceptions, etc. So the more the SSCs can replicate this with particular contact people for particular departments, the less push back there will be.

Seems there are at least 3 tiers of reordering: the SSC organization and related positions around existing skilled personnel along with expanded training; the rework of remaining responsibilities -- and related training -- for those areas/people that stay behind; the integration of the new positions/responsibilities around the SSC models across whole new organizational groups of the University. And a lot of this needs to be done concurrently...

Having the HR-ROC over at the Continuing Ed building at 15th & Kasold is NOT an ideal placement for new employees, especially student-employees, to complete their onboarding paper-work, especially for those who do not have personal vehicles. I hope there can be some re-thinking of that SSC location.

Change is difficult and people will sabotage sometimes without even being conscious of it.

So many good staff members leaving KU.

Our facility is an off-site facility in a different city. This will present challenges in communicating needs between PIs, staff and purchasing/travel/HR if these functions are eliminated at our office. Most of our staff does not live in Lawrence, and communicating much of this information over phone/email/video conference will present significant challenges.

No quality control on Mech. eqm. on new remodels and new buildings. More training need for direct digital controls .

The extensive number of positions that have been consolidated to save money. It's hard to have a one-stop job shop when not many positions are one-stop jobs any more. PLEASE use input from existing departments, and don't just wing it without the input of the people on the ground.

Many staff members who will be/are affected, do not know what questions to ask. If they have questions, they are hesitant to ask thinking it will impact their future options. Afraid of the unknown and being successful if they venture out to apply for the new opportunities. Many lack self confidence that they can be a contributor to the new processes - fear of failure.

Space - can we justify the reconfiguration of space when it seems we are still trying to find room for classes to meet? Funding - can we justify the cost to the students and public as a good use of tuition, fees, and tax revenue?

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