UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
Observations Regarding Business & Finance Functions at USF

President Genshaft determined that the departure of Carl Carlucci as Executive Vice President and CFO provided an opportunity for USF to reassess the needs and portfolio of the business and finance functions required to meet the University’s strategic agenda.

USF’s devolution as a state agency and the creation of the Board of Trustees in 2001 required that the business and finance staff develop and implement new approaches/systems to perform their functions. While much has been accomplished, the business and financial functions remain a work in progress to enable them to support the University’s management information, service delivery and fiscal control needs of USF’s ambitious strategic agenda. Success in these times of reductions in State funding will require a strong leader with experience. The key will be effective strategies to identify the requirements for the needed support services along with successful design, development and implementation strategies which will engage the talented staff throughout USF in creating the solutions.

Our observations are a result of discussions with a multitude of USF officials including Trustees, the President and her leadership team, business/financial staff members, deans, and regional campus CEOs. It was important to learn from management, the service providers as well as some of the customers. The focus was to define an alignment of organizational responsibilities and leadership criteria to best advance USF toward accomplishing the University’s strategic objectives.

1. Change the title from “Executive Vice President” to “Senior Vice President for Business and Finance” (SVP). Doing so would make the SVP consistent with the title, Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs as well as clarify the Provost as second to the President in the leadership structure for USF.

2. The SVP should be a collaborative leader at all levels of the University who embraces the vision of the President while demonstrating an open and transparent style of trustworthiness throughout USF as well as externally. The portfolio of the SVP responsibilities can be grouped into three basic resource functions consisting of finances, people and facilities, and administration, which are described as follows.

   a. Chief Fiscal Officer, CFO, with responsibilities for the University’s financial functions including Treasurer, Controller, grant & contract accounting, budget support along with appropriate fiscal controls and reporting for accountability, compliance, monitoring performance and decision support.

   b. General business functions including purchasing, contracting, property management, inventory, and parking/transportation services.
c. Human Resources including recruitment, orientation/training, employee and labor relations, compensation planning, benefits, payroll and organizational development.

d. Facilities planning, design, construction, energy management, recycling and physical plant/grounds operations.

e. Public Safety including University Police, emergency management, environmental health & safety, crises management, and parking enforcement.

f. Enterprise Business Systems with responsibilities to initiate/manage project teams to modernize USF’s support systems by clarifying each project’s expectations, requirements, budget and timelines with performance milestones to monitor progress.

While the drafted position description references the current titles, you might want to consider reducing the span of control by having reporting to the SVP a Chief Fiscal Officer, Vice President for Human Resources, and Vice President for Facilities & Safety. Such titles clarify the responsibilities for the USF community as well as have the advantage of attracting quality individuals to consider the positions. Using these titles, suggest that the general business functions of purchasing, inventory and contracting report to the CFO while property management and parking/transportation services report to the VP for Facilities & Safety. Enterprise Business Systems should continue to report to the SVP, which will be discussed further under item #4.

3. University budget strategy, planning and development should be led by the Provost to assure that the budget reflects USF’s strategic priorities. The SVP, through the CFO, provides the budget support functions for timely implementation of the budget and monitoring of actual performance with appropriate reporting to assure accountability and control, as well as meeting State and Federal government reporting requirements. The President and the senior leadership team approves the University budget that is then sent to the Board of Trustees for approval with periodic reporting of actual performance as well as corrective actions as necessary.

4. Information Technology (IT) is a key University resource where services and efficiencies can generally be improved by consolidating the hardware, software, networks and required technical staff under a Chief Information Officer, CIO. Experience has shown that the senior USF leadership, not the CIO alone, best determines the service delivery needs/expectations as well as priorities for the allocation of IT resources. For example, the Provost and Vice President for Research defining academic/research IT requirements/priorities; the Vice President for USF Health Services defining health services IT requirements/priorities as well as the SVP defining the enterprise business services IT requirements/priorities. That is the rationale for the Enterprise Business Systems role reporting to the SVP, as well as similar positions supporting the Provost and Vice President for USF Health.
However, suggesting a University structure for providing the IT leadership will require more in depth study than provided for in this assignment. The highest priority is to focus on the recruitment of the SVP. The SVP should be recruited with the understanding that the University structure for the IT resources has yet to be decided. Having the SVP in place would be a more appropriate time for the President’s leadership team, with external assistance as necessary, to determine the structure to deliver the University’s IT resources that will best address USF’s goals.

5. The University’s multi-campus relationships can be enhanced through clarifying those functions that represent the system versus those which address campus needs. This is especially true for those units on the USF-T campus who have shared system and campus responsibilities. Use the clarifications to review and modernize the overhead allocations/charge rates to then reflect actual costs.

6. The Direct Service Organizations (DSO’s) fulfill important roles in support of the USF mission. However, there is a need for a common strategy for linking their missions to those of the University. With the hiring of a new SVP it is timely to have the new person lead a review of the mission, operations and financial management of the DSO’s to ensure alignment of DSO missions with USF’s evolving future as a major research university.

In conclusion, USF has a vibrant strategic vision. Achieving that vision requires the commitment and talents of all USF faculty and staff. Vital components for success include:

- openness and transparency throughout the University;
- mutual trust and respect among faculty and staff;
- customer service commitment which invites the users’ involvement in developing business process solutions;
- training to assist people in working effectively; and
- treating information as a resource whose value is enhanced through sharing with others who need it to be successful.

It is our hope that these observations will assist USF in building upon its record of success toward realizing the strategic goals and priorities to achieve your vision.

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May 10, 2008