

CEO BRIEF

A weekly report
from the office
of the CEO

February 27, 1995



I want to relay to you some of the

suggestions made by the CEO Advisory Group in formal reports presented to me last Thursday. After nearly a year's worth of study, the group offered common-sense solutions to some of the problems directly affecting employees.

First, some history: Last year, the group was divided into four task forces: Employee Morale, chaired by Construction's Bill Lewis; Downsizing/Layoffs, headed by Division 15 Manager John Roberts, External Relations and Image, chaired by Public Affairs' Sumi Gant; and Merger, led by Assistant Treasurer Mike Smith.

Each task force compiled issues of concern, and then, about six months ago, presented their suggestions for solving the identified problems. Then, in a final report, each group updated and prioritized their issues and explained what, if any, strides had been made to implement their suggestions.

I was tremendously impressed with the work and discussions that went into the reports.

Some of the high priority items identified by the merger committee a year ago and their current status included:

Issue: Human Resources needs uniform policy book, revised job definitions and classifications, performance evaluations and standardized benefits. Changes in benefits need to be equitable.

Status: Ancillary benefits are completed. A Human Resources Director is hired (in fact, new director Frank Montalvo started this week). Human Resources policies are combined. Job classifications are complete. Social Security issue has made advances.

Issue: The consolidation of operational systems (i.e., hardware, software, data bases, and applications).

Status: Although some groups such as facilities and accounting remain separated, several of the most significant relocations have been accomplished such as Procurement, Human Resources and Benefits. Remaining moves will mostly be accomplished with the move to the Gateway facility.

Issue: Lack of understanding and appreciation of individual job functions result in poor cooperation between departments.

Status: There is a new phone directory, but no cross-training between departments yet.

From External Relations/Image Committee:

Some of the recommendations of the External Relations/ Image Task Force included:

Issue: Replacing all RTD and LACTC insignia
Status: Most buildings and buses have been updated. However some bus stops, customer service centers, pass/token outlets and city street signage still have the RTD name and logo.

Issue: Develop a corporate slogan.

Status: No action taken. Recommended an employee contest.

CEO REPORT

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Here's one I really liked:

Issue: Use Metro prefix for all services.

Status: Metro is used in print for many of our services, and almost always in referring to rail, but making it a part of our corporate lingo would go a long way in establishing identity.

In fact, given the confusion of the public as to what the MTA is, calling the agency, "L.A. Metro" could serve to clarify confusion and establish a more positive overall identity for the agency, as well as for all of our operations and services.

I'd like for you to give me feedback on this as a marketing slogan.

From the Committee on Morale:

The issue of low morale must be resolved immediately — that was the bottom line from the Morale Committee. The committee felt that last summer's labor dispute represented the first major step toward improved employee morale. According to the committee, it established the customer orientation of the MTA in the minds of MTA employees and served to blur the distinction between 425 and 818 by providing an opportunity to understand and appreciate our respective functions and responsibilities.

Additionally, and I quote from the report, "the effectiveness of current efforts to facilitate the merger of MTA's predecessor organizations, the promulgation of MTA policies and procedures, and the completion of and implementation of the classification/compensation program represents significant steps toward improving employee morale. The retention of key Strategic Planning/Organizational Development staff and the integration of small unit goals and objectives within the MTA mission will further the realization of this goal."

I continue to believe that morale is directly linked to lack of pay raises and the pain involved with the Social Security issue.

From the Downsizing Committee:

Their concern was that management should communicate to all levels of employees what the future holds for them. They want to emphasize that all managers who give performance evaluations should communicate often with employees about their performance. And, that those persons about to be laid off be given priority for other jobs.

As I've told you, we'll know more about the extent of layoffs after the budget process is completed this spring.

Outcome

The reports will be assembled into one final report. The CEO Advisory Group will continue to meet, but as we near the first anniversary of the group, I'm hoping that I can see new faces helping us solve some old problems. Phyllis Tucker, who coordinates the group, is looking for about a 50 percent turnover of the group, so if you're interested in joining our team, tell your executive officer of your interest.

Long Range Plan Meetings

Speaking of the long-range plan's availability, we've scheduled two employee meetings on the matter. The first one is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 28, from 2 - 3 p.m. in the 425 Building in the Board Room on the second floor. And, next Thursday, March 2, on March 2 from 1 - 2 p.m. in the SCAG conference Room on the 12th floor of the 818 Building afternoon. I strongly encourage you to attend. The plan is one of the best pieces of work put together by staff since we came together in the merger. If you want to get a copy of the plan, see Jody Feerst on the 4th floor of the 818 Building. She's at ext. 4-6423.

Scheduling and Operations Planning Moves to Planning Unit

As many of you know by now, I've reassigned Scheduling and Operations Planning to the Planning unit. This has absolutely nothing to do with the past performance of the unit. They're perhaps one of the most dedicated and expert groups in the country at what they do. But I believe they should be a part of the group having direct responsibility for implementing the 20-year plan.

Status of the CEO

Last week, the Board's committee on the CEO Performance unanimously voted to extend my contract another year. I look forward to the challenges that lie ahead.

- Franklin White

I welcome your comments and questions in response to CEO Report, which is designed to provide employees with direct communication with my office. Please contact either of my Special Assistants, Michael Gonzalez at 244-7476, or Phyllis Tucker at 244-6191. Also, employees can fax comments to 244-6014.

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