2020 Policy and Procedures

Creating a defendable position of why we make a decision on an issue, and how we internally complete the procedure

Policy and Procedures

The who, what, why and how to do them

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Definitions

- Policy: Explains why we do it this way. Details the rules as to why we do things in a certain way. It is the governing principle, plan, or understanding that guides the action
- Procedures: How to do it. A procedure is like a recipe-a set of instructions that clearly states who does something, when it should be done, how it's done and what the result should be
- It equates to the same formatting you would see when you get GPS directions

Why we do them

- To set a protocol of standards or rules allowing uniformity in how you conduct your business
- Allows everyone to be on the "same page" creating an efficient work flow
- Reduces the risk of liability by ensuring all circumstances are treated in the same unbiased manner
- Creates a stress free environment for staff, and allows them to know exactly what to do and how to do them

Who we do them for

- Our customers, both internal and external
- Our staff
- The Auditors
- External examinations, such as court proceedings, or for the news media
- Internal inquiries, from the Dean, provosts office, University/college president, or the board of directors
- Ourselves, (gets down on memory loss!)

In the Beginning

- Which comes first? The policy or the procedure?
- You can't have a procedure without a policy
- Policy dictates why you do it, and the procedure directs you on how to get it done
- Decide who is going to be the author/officer of authority of the policy and procedures manual

Writing a Policy Step by Step Guide

- Deciding who is going to do it
- Are you going to volunteer, or will you designate an "officer of authority". It must be someone who is able to compile information in clear and simple language. They are responsible to create and review the policy and maintain updates as needed

Writing a Policy
Step by Step Guide

- What is the subject of your policy? Compose a brief synopsis of what your policy is about. A concise summary of the objectives helps to clarify your subject matter
- Gather research material. This can be a law you are quoting, a related policy, or why this policy was created

Writing a Policy
Step by Step Guide

- Develop an outline, listing the key points you want your policy to cover. Your outline will help format the sequence of information being presented in your policy
- Once you have completed these steps, review this information with a higher authority to ensure your policy is accurate and exactly defines the information being presented

Writing a Policy Special Note

- Your policies should all be written in the same format, font size, and style to maintain uniformity and reduce confusion to the reader
- Develop a template to be used. I highly recommend a system called "Info Mapping"
- Policies should be written in the third person. It allows the reader to relate one on one with the material

Writing a Policy Special Note

- When writing a policy, less is more
- Keep statements concise and to the point
- Use strong action words, examples are: must, will, cannot and no
- Avoid including information that changes frequently. Instead of using a persons name, use the position title. Instead of a building name use the departments name, in case the department moves to another location

Writing a Policy
Flow chart of document information

- Policy Title: Identify the key purpose
- Brief description: Short summary of the policy. Do NOT include specific details
- Applies to: List of who this policy is targeting
- Reason for Policy: List why this policy exists
- Policy Statement: Specific directions , including who is the primary audience. Who needs to follow the policy in what situation. What are the major conditions or restrictions. What is expected of the employee or student. Are there exclusions or special circumstances
- Forms/Links: Links to forms used in following this policy and information quoted/related to your policy on another site, such as federal or state websites
- Attach printouts of the information being obtained from websites, in case the web links are discontinued
- Definitions: Define unfamiliar or technical terms, and terms with special meanings. Acronyms must be spelled out completely.. The first time you use an acronym in your document use the entire name
- Footer: Bottom of page lists the date done, or revised and page number

Policy is written… Now What?

- It's time to write your procedure
- A procedure is like a recipe-a set of instructions that clearly states who does something, when it should be done, how it's done and what the result should be
- Keep in mind you are the expert, but your reader isn't, and staff referring to your policy maybe new to their current position
- You need to keep your procedures as simple and straightforward as possible, Provide enough information for users to understand, but not so much that confuses them

Starting the Procedures

- You need to decide who will write the procedure
- Gather information. What does it take to do the procedure? What steps/equipment are needed. List what access is needed for any systems. Does staff have the clearance to use the program/system.
- Survey potential procedure users, make a list of operational problems, if you're creating procedures from scratch

Starting the Procedures

- Establish your manual's layout
- Write a rough draft. Using a two column layout, in the left column list the person responsible for the procedure. In the right column, list the steps in order that person performs. If the procedure involves multiple people, they should all be able to clearly see where they fit in the process and what they need to do

Procedure Layout

- Header Box: Procedure title, related policy title, date issued, Office of Origin, and procedure
- Approval Authority: The procedure title should be simple and clearly express who/what authorizes the content
- Procedure description: List your objectives, functions, or tasks to accomplish, and the conditions when to use the procedure

Procedure Layout

- Areas of responsibility: List departments, offices, and individual job titles for those who have responsibility for the procedure. DO NOT use personal names of the current staff doing the procedures
- Who has the authority to approve exceptions, modifications, or updates to the procedure.

Procedure Layout

- Procedure details: Style format should be organized using a chronological series of steps to accomplish a task. Can be organized as a list of tasks done by an individual or a department. You can do an outline of each step, a "to do checklist", explanations of how to complete the necessary forms or screens. Include copies of the forms or screens. Remember some people are visual learners. A transaction flow chart can be included in this section
- Provide the reader with the necessary procedural and "how to" information. Include definitions of unique terms subject to interpretation by the reader

Procedure Layout

- References: List any campus specific, references or federal/state laws or regulations directly applicable to the procedure
- Help page: Direct users to training programs, classes, related office or campus sources of help completing forms, or carrying out the procedure
- Footer: Bottom of page lists the date done, or revised and page number

Finalizing your Procedures

- Test the procedures. Get someone unfamiliar with the procedures to follow them from the draft. It's important to use someone inexperienced so the person won't take any habitual shortcuts or gloss over unclear points another reader wouldn't understand
- Revise the draft. Clarify, add, delete and rearrange steps until the procedures can be followed by anyone reading the manual
- If needed have a higher authority review your document for approval

Finalizing your Policy and Procedures

- Now you can publish your policy and procedures
- Keep all Policy and Procedures in a centralized location
- Create a simple table of contents so readers can quickly locate the policy and procedures they need. Remember the staff member maybe under stress when trying to locate the information

Special Notes

- Forms and supplemental information should be maintained on the department's website. By keeping it on that website it is easier to change or update it
- All policy and procedures must be reviewed and updated. Best practice is at least once a year
- Update the documents showing the date it was reviewed, and if changes were made the date it was done. Keep historical records of any changes to refer to, if any questions arise later on

Special Notes

- Keep all Policy and Procedures in a centralized folder or binder, have a main table of contents listing each topic. Make sure staff knows where to find the manual containing all the policy and procedures
- Have employees sign any new drafts of your policies and procedures. New staff should be required to sign the policies and procedures document. Any changes made should be re-signed by all employees. Should any legal action arise taken by either party in the future, it holds your staff accountable
- Have the staff initial a form stating they know where the policy and procedures are found
- Create a calendar reminder when a review is due

Any questions or Comments?