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Strategic Context of Project Paper and Presentation Week Three

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*Introduction*

Strategic management applies management decisions in order to achieve organizations goals. At the Beckham Research Institute, the Project Management Model is being used as a method of singular development and reporting method for all the different research teams. This paper will discuss the organizational strategies and tactics that BRI uses to manage their different research programs. Topics of interest will touch on the criteria used to analyze project selection, using unfunded research programs as an example. That will also be done in the context of strategic management within BRI.

*Organizational Strategies*

City of Hope’s core expertise is in the field of cancer. The medical center will continue to concentrate on treating cancer patients with the latest scientific breakthroughs. The research institute will continue to strive to create treatments more quickly (Strategic Plan Aspirations – Intranet 2009). All strategic planning will concentration on the City of Hope mission; City of Hope, an innovative biomedical research, treatment and educational institution, is dedicated to the prevention and cure of cancer and other life threatening diseases, guided by a compassionate, patient-centered philosophy and supported by a national foundation of humanitarian philanthropy (Strategic Plan 2009).

*Project Management Tactics*

Beckman Research Institute will concentrate on the advancement of six major areas within the organization; Immunotherapeutics/Immunology, Stem Cell and Developmental Biology, Developmental Therapeutics, Cancer Biology, Population Sciences and Diabetes Research. Each of these areas will have a governance board with the purpose of prioritizing projects within each group. This board will have full legal authority to change the direction of any project that veers from the organization’s strategic plan. The purpose of the governance board is to help Beckman Research of City of Hope fulfill the specific mission of its existence; Beckman Research Institute Mission; The objective of the Beckman Research Institute of City of Hope is to support innovative and creative research and to educate future scientists in the biological sciences. The Institute is committed to provide an environment of academic freedom in which its investigators can pursue greater knowledge. Research is to be of the highest caliber and directed to an understanding of the molecules and processes of life, including those processes important to the causes, prevention and cure of human disease (City of Hope Intranet 2009).

*Organizational Management* Under the guidance of the facilities management team, COH will participate in a series of rotations that put a great deal of emphasis on process cores that have been designed to expose the COH to a wide array of issues in health-care administration. In each of the areas of the medical center, COH management team will spend time with senior management and departmental staff. The schedule is designed to be flexible in order to match the interests and strengths of various management teams that exist at City of Hope. COH has identified process cores which handle different areas of management within the organization.

Following are the 10 identified process cores:

* Financial Planning and Analysis
* Human ResourcesManagement and Organizational Development
* Clinical Process
* Revenue Cycle
* Quality, Regulatory, Risk Management and Accreditation
* Information TechnologyServices/Telecommunications
* Marketing, Communications and Fundraising
* Environment of Care and Safety
* Facilities Planning and Development
* Professional Clinical Faculty Relations/Medical Group Management

*Special Project Work*

Project work is a significant component of the COH experience. Projects are comprehensive and substantive, and provide opportunities for the organization to develop marketable and effective administrative and communication skills, as well asbuild valuable professional relationships within the organization.

Project work included:

* Organization-wide preparation for Joint Commission site visits
* Budget planning and monitoring
* Process redesign of the ambulatory care center
* Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act compliance training coordination and administration
* Cost, utilizationand quality analysis of language interpreter program
* Development of healthcare occupations internship for local high school students
* Implementation of benchmarking standards for the Blood Donor Apheresis Center
* Coordination and evaluation of prostate cancer screening program
* Performance improvement evaluation of pharmacy system functionality
* Allocation of departmental costs for Professional Medical Services Agreement utilizingtime and space occupancy studies
* Facilitation of medical center transition efforts to replacement hospital

*Project Selection Criteria*

The BRI developed a strategic plan of its own that supports the overarching COH organizational strategic plan. COH is a campus that not only provides medical treatment to seriously illpatients but also provides a research mechanism to begin the possible elimination of the diseases. Since the BRI plan is a sub-plan of the COH overall strategic plan, project selection has to be reviewed to support both plans for the continued ability to provide research by BRI and overall Objectives and Goals for COH.

For this paper a basic list of these selection criteria includes, but not limited to the following (Cleland, Ireland 2002) can be used to select projects for BRI:

* Profit Margin
* Project Risk
* Process Change
* Resources
* Financial Considerations
* Building Clock
* By-Product
* Technology
* Project Duration
* Size (Relative to Organization)
* Corporate Image
* High Competition
* Client
* Life Cycle Phases
* Core Competency
* Urgent Need
* R&D

A review of COH Strategic Plan and specifically BRI plan lists the following mission:

*“The objective of the Beckman Research Institute of City of Hope is to support innovative and creative research and to educate future scientists in the biological sciences.”* (Strategic Plan-COH Intranet 2009)

The BRI lists the main research areas, and subsequent projects and sub-group projects as the following:

* Stem Cell, Transplant and Development Biology
* Experimental Therapeutics
* Tumor Immunology/Immunotherapy

Using the selection criteria listed and comparing the BRI research areas, project initiations would have to address almost every one of the criteria. As an example, Experiential Therapeutics would have to address the following areas for review and discussion.

* Core Competency to BRI/COH for support of what? The Client (Patient)
* Urgent Need as compared to Project Duration and By-Product
* R&D to support Technology
* Financial Considerations as compared to Profit Margin and High Competition
* Project Risk as compared to Resources and Size (Relative to Organization)
* Corporate Image

Each project being presented for consideration to the Board must discuss these topics and present detailed information to provide valid arguments to not only receive authority to begin the project, but also the financial backing. While COH is a nonprofitorganization, financial consideration is a large component of the selection criteria for a project proposal, but also to be taken into consideration for the future of COH and BRI to continue the funding of projects and obtaining the strategic goals of BRI.

*Conclusion*

Through the creation of a five year strategic plan and formation of management teams both City of Hope and Beckman Research Institute at City of Hope continue to remain stable in tough economic times. The BOD and Executive Team members realize that the budget process for the fiscal year 2010 needs new direction. CEO Michael A. Friedman, MD addressed these concerns in his City Forum address on March 25, 2009 stating that the FY10 budget process has changed to include the following (COH Intranet 2009):

* Maintain and initiate programs that support our mission
* Scrutinize all components in a fair and equitable manner
* Recognize that we will not be able to do everything that we would like to do
* Continued eye toward efficiencies
* More creativity with resources, people
* Careful scrutiny of hiring (not a “hiring freeze”)
* Use of attrition if needed
* Avoidance of layoffs however we can
* As the three watchwords state in our strategic plan, we use:
* Caution- watch our spending, become more creative with what we have
* Change- adapt and overcome the stormy economic environment ahead
* Confidence- maintain focus on our mission to our patients

A new direction was made to prepare for what our current environment is indicating for the foreseeable future. While the direction has adjusted, why we are here will not change; we are here to serve patients at City of Hope and throughout the world. Clearly, the impetus is there; we will work with what we have, to achieve what we must.

Cleland, D, Ireland, L. (2002). *Project Management: Strategic Design and Implementation* (4th Ed). (Chap. 7, p 213-214) McGraw-Hill

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