Success Factors in MiWorkspace Implementation at the Stamps School

By Mahendra Kumar, Chief Administrative Officer, Stamps School of Art & Design

When it comes to introducing change, let alone one that affects every faculty and staff within an active school community, communication is critical.

At Stamps, we worked with the MiWorkspace project team to develop a communication plan and engagement strategy from the outset of the project, which was key to our success. The plan included goals to build awareness of the project benefits, articulate the pros and cons, and maintain an open dialog throughout the process. We built support of the project by recruiting sponsors, initiating a pilot, offering flexible and joint planning of the timeline, addressing concerns, ensuring technical support, providing periodic updates, and providing numerous opportunities for feedback.

Another important factor to success was building the right team. The executive sponsors at the School, the MiWorkspace implementation team, and the communication leads from both the Stamps School and the MiWorkspace team played an integral role in the success of this project.

Some factors in our successful implementation were due to the size and focus of the school itself. Stamps School is a small school with about 40 full-time faculty and about 30 adjunct faculty. Stamps School faculty generally are not involved with highly-sophisticated research software and platforms needing specialized transition, which helped the faculty transition more smoothly.

Important Factors in the Successful Implementation of MiWorkspace

There are many other important factors for units to consider to help ensure a successful partnership with ITS and implementation of MiWorkspace. Note: The starred items were the most critical factors for success of the MiWorkspace project implementation at the Stamps School.

- **Recruit executive sponsors at the School.**
  - Hold periodic meetings with executive sponsors and MiWorkspace team to build support, address concerns in a timely manner, and reduce anxiety.*
- **Build awareness of the goal and objectives of project.**
  - Use online communication for a messaging platform.*
○ Hold presentations in smaller groups to build a good rapport with the community.*
○ Review feedback and tweak future presentations to staff and faculty.
○ Reduce any unforeseen surprises to a minimum.
● **Plan for faculty transitions on a one-on-one basis.** This helps to address individual faculty needs and concerns and plan accordingly.*
● **Utilize the Pre-discovery process** to determine the scope of MiWorkspace service at the Stamps School.
  ○ Develop a clear plan to address in-scope items and out-of-scope items.
  ○ Follow-up with MiWorkspace team to assess the efficiency of in-scope services of MiWorkspace and address any on-going concerns.
  ○ Follow-up on out-of-scope items and how they are being addressed at the Stamps School.
  ○ Inform and delegate roles to appropriate staff in the Stamps School to handle out-of-scope items.
● **Plan workforce transition of IT staff from the Stamps School to ITS**
  ○ Keep the IT staff informed on what to expect before, during and after the transition
● **Implement a pilot at the Stamps School.**
  ○ Recruit senior staff and faculty in administrative roles to be in the pilot.
  ○ Review lessons learned from the pilot and tweak the communication and technical help.
● **Develop a clear timeline for MiWorkspace implementation.**
  ○ Identify individual groups of staff (like the Finance office staff) to transition their computers to MiWorkspace on the same day to ease transition.
  ○ Communicate the MiWorkspace implementation timeline for different groups to the leadership ahead of time.
  ○ Address any concerns of individual staff who are not able to transition due to unforeseen changes in their schedule.
  ○ Include planned hardware and software upgrades for individual computers and networked group printers in the original implementation timeline.