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Interest Based Problem Solving - Problem Statement Sheet

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INTEREST BASED PROBLEM SOLVING PROBLEM STATEMENT SHEET

SIMULATION:

“DECIDING UPON A SPECIAL EVENT”

Over the years, East University has scheduled an annual special event; that is, some non-work activity observed during non-working time. Every year something different is announced.

The Administration has historically selected the event, but was always willing to listen to employee or Union leadership suggestions.

It was agreed to select this year’s opportunity for a special event applying interest based problem solving. A joint task force is to be assembled to recommend an event to be held in the near future. The task force need not be concerned with planning the details of the event at this time.

Your group has just found out that it will be your task to come up with a recommendation.

INTEREST BASED PROBLEM SOLVING PHASES

Phase 1--- Your assignment is to, in separate caucuses, write an issue statement that identifies the issue at hand, and then to discuss the interests behind the issue. (*Write the issue statement on the flipchart-note interests on a separate piece of paper.*)

Phase 2--- Review issue statements in joint session. Merge them into one statement for the entire group. Then, brainstorm interests, write these on the flipchart, and then mark the interests that are mutual (*between Union and Administration*)

Phase 3--- Based on the interests expressed, brainstorm options for the Special Event (joint session). List them on the flipchart, and number them.

Phase 4--- Using a Three Stage Analysis F-B-A (*Feasible, Beneficial, Acceptable*), and consensus decision-making, determine which option(s) is the best solution to the issue.

Phase 5--- Once the group decides on a solution, put it in writing!

INTEREST BASED PROBLEM SOLVING ADMINISTRATION FACT SHEET

SIMULATION:

“DECIDING UPON A SPECIAL EVENT”

Administration Fact Sheet

Special Events in prior years have repeatedly been a source of conflict. For example:

- The golf tournament was criticized by many as a benefit mostly for administrators/managers and predominantly for males.
- The bingo party was viewed as gambling, and not family friendly.
- The night at the ball game cost everyone too much money, even with free tickets, and raised a real safety concern regarding the consumption of beer.
- The skiing outing was a real bust, being too far to travel, costing too much, and excluding practically everyone.
- The Christmas party raised issues of religion.
- And the picnic lunch on a workday caused managers to complain about tardiness when attendees stayed beyond their normal lunch period, and to also cringe when it was reported that some were drinking alcoholic beverages.

For this year’s event the Administration wants something non-controversial and inclusive. Cost is also a concern, but one in which the Administration is flexible provided there is a reasonable standard and the event is otherwise acceptable. They would prefer not to have an event during work time, but they are not insistent. Whatever event is selected, they would like safety, employee morale, and community goodwill to be a number one priority. It would also be ideal if everyone had a great time and praised the event for a change.

INTEREST BASED PROBLEM SOLVING UNION FACT SHEET

SIMULATION:

“DECIDING UPON A SPECIAL EVENT”

Union Fact Sheet

In prior years, the Administration has unilaterally decided the annual special event, and every year seems to come up with something that does not work. For example:

- The golf tournament was just another sports getaway for Administration Officials.
- Many enjoyed the bingo party, except that children were not welcome, and a few wondered why it was all right to gamble in this event, but not all right to have a friendly game of poker during lunch.
- The ball game cost many families more than they could afford, even with free tickets, considering parking, food, souvenirs, and drinks (including more than a few beers).
- Nobody was interested in driving 100 miles for skiing, not to mention all the other problems.
- The Christmas party raised too many issues about religion.
- And the picnic during work time nearly resulted in several employees been issued corrective action for tardiness for coming back late; and was practically spoiled by security looking for alcohol.

The Union does not want to be party to any of these problems for this year's event. Moreover, it would be ideal if the Labor-Management Committee could not only jointly decide the type of event, but also have an equal voice in planning and implementing the event. That way the event has the greatest chance of really being fun and attended by all.