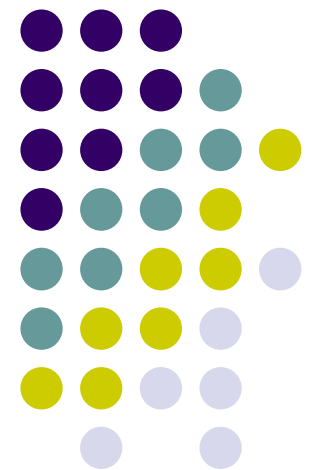


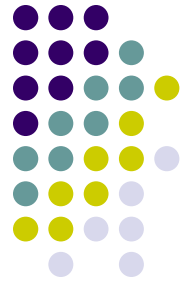
Entrepreneurship in the Mail Center

Prepared for 2007 SWACUMS
Conference at
Rice University
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"Why should we be in such desperate haste to succeed, and in such desperate enterprises? If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away."

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*



What I hear at Concordia

(Have you heard this too?)



- “If I had a new administrative assistant, I could do that”;
- “Well, if XYZ department would do their job, I could do mine”;
- “There’s no money in the budget for *that*”

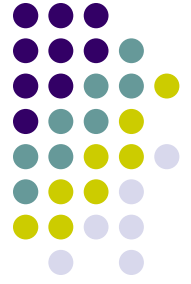
“Excuses are just that, excuses”

-Mary Selcer, Pre-calculus teacher extraordinaire

Today's mail reality



- We operate in a world we have, not a world we want. We have limited:
 - Capital expenditures
 - Space
 - Human resources
 - Time
 - Training
- The director who understands this is the one in a position to get what they want in the world they have.



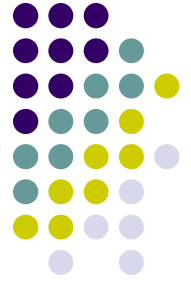
Options for our reality

- Prepare detailed requests, document needs & volumes and fight for the resources we want from our schools;

and

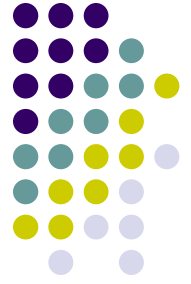
- Take steps to make those needs and wants a reality now.

Both are good and necessary means to an end.



Entrepreneurship

- Easily defined as “*one who organizes, manages, and assumes the risks of a business or enterprise*”- Webster's Dictionary
- Root of the word is French, from Old French, from *entrepren dre* to undertake.

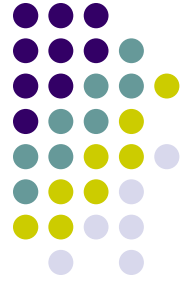


Intrapreneurship

- Intrapreneurship is a phrase coined by G. Pinchot in 1985 to describe corporate entrepreneurship.
 - Focuses on closed organizations such as a college or university.
- Allows us to identify an entrepreneur as:
“someone who acts with ambition beyond that supportable by the resources currently under his control, in relentless pursuit of opportunity”

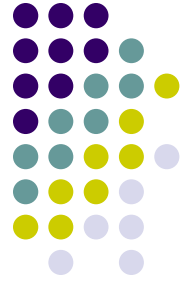
-Howard Stevenson and Jeffry Timmons

Traits of entrepreneurship



- Risk-taking
- Ambition
- Risk-valued returns
- Organizational skills
- Interpersonal relationships
- Leadership
- Innovation

How this applies to today mail centers: Problem solving



- Creating new solutions for old problems

We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."

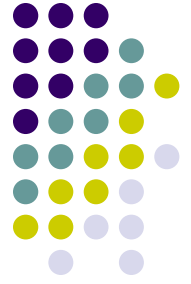
-Albert Einstein

How this applies to today mail centers: Problem solving



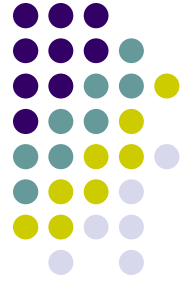
- According to James Surowiecki in *Wisdom of Crowds*, A good idea is a good idea, regardless of who generates it.
 - Put less emphasis on the experts, and yes, the vendors.
 - Put more emphasis on students, staff and faculty of the school
 - Be open to ideas that may solve problems in a way you had not considered before

How this applies to today mail centers: Problem solving



- Determining who owns a problem
 - What percentage of problems in your mail center are truly yours to solve?
- Having the owner of the problem solve the problem allows you to focus your energies on your problems.

How this applies to today mail centers: Problem solving



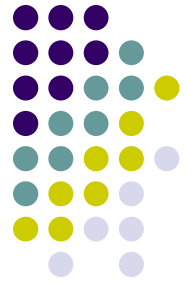
- Entrepreneurship requires the leadership to identify problems, ownership of the problems and assigning that ownership.
- Entrepreneurship requires the innovation to look for solutions in a way that has not been done before
 - Cuni-Mail is an excellent example of leadership, problem solving and innovation in action.

How this applies to today mail centers: Expansion & Improvement



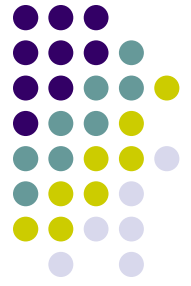
- Pitney Bowes and IKON facility management have identified college and universities as prime targets for expansion. Reason? Expansion of services.
- Unless we are expanding services, we are making ourselves less relevant.

How this applies to today mail centers: Expansion & Improvement



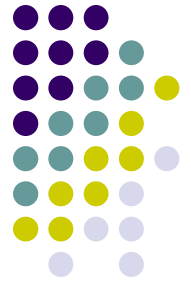
- Look at “cleaning out” your offered services.
 - Old and obsolete services that require funding that can be used elsewhere;
 - Look at services better served by being outsourced;
 - Make decision makers aware of conflicts in services offered.

How this applies to today mail centers: Expansion & Improvement



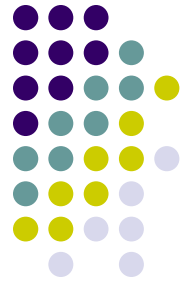
- Look at what the customer wants
 - Customer service surveys;
 - Customer round tables;
 - Talk to people who want to see you succeed.
- Prioritize what is needed and commit resources as needed
- Make the small things that do not require resources the top priority

How this applies to today mail centers: Expansion & Improvement



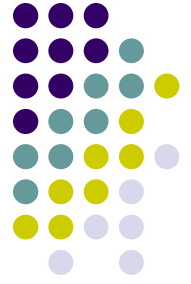
- Take risks
 - Some new service ideas “can’t be done” by conventional wisdom
 - May not have budget to do the expansion
 - Look at lower cost solutions and build it from the bottom up
 - Look at other departments who may be willing to share costs in the expansion

How this applies to today mail centers: Expansion & Improvement



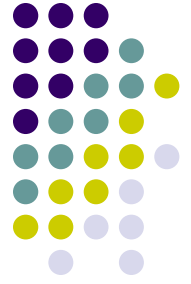
- Work with other departments!
 - Interpersonal relationships are key
 - Communicate improvements
 - Modify as necessary
- *Expansion and improvement of services does not mean one or two huge projects but many, many small improvements measured in it's aggregate.*

How this applies to today mail centers: Resources



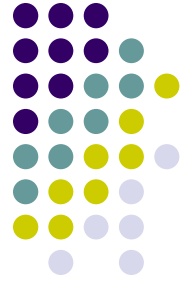
- Entrepreneurs are looking to improve the resources available:
 - Profit centers look for new services to offer, and bill for a profit;
 - Cost containment centers look for new services to reduce costs.

How this applies to today mail centers: Resources



- We have to look at our return for the risk incurred. Possible risks:
 - Loss of funding (from profit or institution)
 - Loss of positions
 - Loss of your position
- These risks have to be balance by adequate rewards.

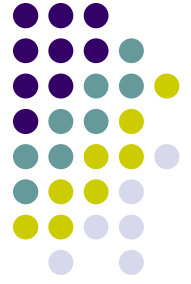
How this applies to today mail centers: Resources



- What rewards are you looking for?
 - Positions
 - Funding
 - Promotions
 - Improved training
 - Improved space
 - Improved exposure

Case Study

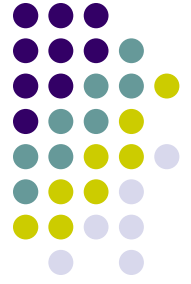
Concordia Package Tracking Software



- Constraints:
 - ITS unwilling/ unable to make in house solution;
 - 3rd party Solutions priced at \$10,000-\$12,000;
 - Vice President does not consider leases a wise financial decision and will not look at leasing under normal circumstances;
 - No one on staff strong enough in programming to create a database;

Case Study

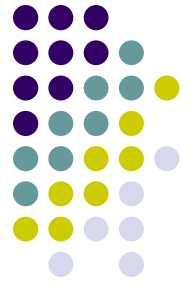
Concordia Package Tracking Software



- Resources available:
 - Director with strong drive to see project completed;
 - Vice president and Director with good working relationships on campus;
 - Modest budget (\$1,000) to work with;
 - A supportive Vice President;
 - A staff with ideas.

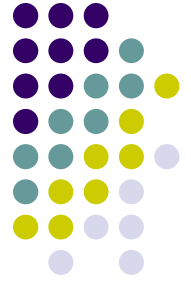
Case Study

Concordia Package Tracking Software



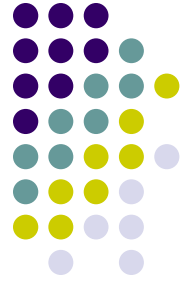
- Solution:
 - Computer Science class focusing on databases made the package tracking software a semester long project;
 - Scanner purchased (\$400.00);
 - Frequent work group sessions with class and staff worked out major functional issues as well as minor details;
 - Final program debugged by one student with contract staff funds (\$380.00).

Case Study Follow up



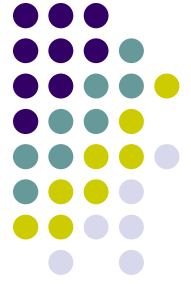
- What risks were involved?
- What possible rewards are possible?
- What role did interpersonal relationships play?

Case Study Follow up



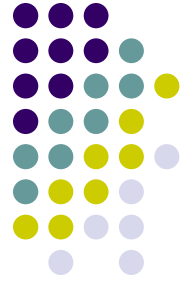
- Results:
 - 1 package in 1,800 claimed to be lost, 1 package in 9,000 actually lost since inception;
 - Improved confidence in mail center, fewer calls regarding packages, more time to operate;
 - Students benefited by having a real-life situation and solution they were a major role in;
 - Own the platform to offer new improvements as needs change with new database classes;
 - Professor is able to show relevant teaching in the classroom.

Summary



- Entrepreneurship is the mentality to take the risks to transform the world we have to the world we want.
- Entrepreneurship is small steps to make big changes overall.
- Entrepreneurship is taking calculated risks for the benefit of the institution and the department.
- Entrepreneurship keeps mail centers relevant, cost effective and progressive.

Thank you for your Time!



Questions?
Comments?