BETHLEHEM UNIVERSITY

Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement

Self-Assessment Report

Office Of Personnel Management

September 2003
Dedication

To the Administration of Bethlehem University for Establishing the Office of Personnel Management

To Ms. Elizabeth Moley for her donation to set up the Kaizen Fund for Staff Professional Development and Training

To the Council of Personnel Affairs for their Support

To the Supervisors for their Cooperation and

To the Staff of Bethlehem University for their Understanding.
Co-ordinating Committee

Members of the Council of Personnel Affairs:
Ms. Elsa Hazboun, Chair of Council, Director of Personnel Management
Ms. Nasra Dahdal, Administrative Assistant
Dr. Mahmoud Abu Kittah, Department of Arabic
Dr. Fouad Bannoura, Chairperson, Department of Chemistry,
President of Union of Teachers and Employees
Mr. Fadi Kattan, Dean, Faculty of Business Administration

Other Faculty Members:
Dr. Vivian Khamis, Department of Social Sciences
Dr. Usama Shahwan, Faculty of Business Administration

Brief Methodology

The Co-ordinating Committee was comprised of the Council of Personnel Affairs and two other faculty members as mentioned above.

During their first meeting in October 2002, the Co-ordinating Committee discussed the contents of the report and agreed that the Director of Personnel Management would write up the draft of the report. The framework of reference used for the Self-Assessment Report followed the format prepared by the Quality Assurance Office, University College Dublin, January 2000 for the Support Service Departments at University College Dublin.

In their next meeting, the Committee reviewed and discussed the two questionnaires on customer perspective, prepared by the Director of Personnel Management.

Dr. Vivian Khamis conducted the data analysis for the two questionnaires on the Staff and Supervisors' Perspective.

The final report was then reviewed and discussed by the Co-ordinating Committee. A copy of the report was submitted to the President-Vice Chancellor at the end of September 2003.
Contents

SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

Introduction

Chapter 1  Details Of The Office Of Personnel Management ........................................... 1

Chapter 2  Planning And Organization................................................................................. 4

Chapter 3  Functions, Activities And Processes................................................................... 5

Chapter 4  Customer Perspective.......................................................................................... 16

Chapter 5  Limitations And Recommendations.................................................................... 24

Epilogue  Vision For The Future................................................................................................. 26

Appendices.................................................................................................................................. 28
INTRODUCTION

This self-assessment report aims at assessing the performance, functions and accomplishments of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) since it was established in September 1999 and throughout the following three years.

The report comprises a pilot study towards the establishment of a quality assurance program for the Administrative, Support and Service units at Bethlehem University, which is parallel to that of the academic departments being conducted at the same time. The self-assessment study is an integral part of the Five Year Development Strategic Plan initiated in 1997.

It is hoped that the report will set the way and establish the guidelines for other units to conduct their own self-assessment for the sake of improving performance and productivity, hence improving service to the members of the university community.

The second stage of the self-assessment is for a review group to visit the OPM and evaluate the report. The review group will then write the final report incorporating recommendations for quality improvement.
Chapter 1

DETAILS OF THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

The Office of Personnel Management was established in September 1999 as part of a human resources development program, which, in turn, resulted from the Five Year Strategic Development Plan initiated in 1997.

A Director of Personnel Management was appointed to organize the OPM with the assistance of a half-time Administrative Assistant.

The Director of Personnel Management reports directly to the President-Vice Chancellor as shown below in the Organizational Chart of Bethlehem University.
In the previous version of the Organizational Chart, the OPM was placed under the supervision of the Vice President for Finances and Planning. However, a year later, the Council of Personnel Affairs recommended that the OPM report directly to the President-Vice Chancellor, particularly because recruiting and employment are functions that should be handled in coordination with and approval of the principal authority.

The table below lists the staff of the OPM.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
<th>Years at BU</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elsa Hazboun</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>MA Library Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasra Dahdal</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Secretarial Diploma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The greatest challenge for the OPM was to lay the foundations of personnel management at Bethlehem University. Policies and procedures had to be institutionalized and documented so that consistency and fairness could be maintained as far as possible.

To meet the enormous challenge confronted by the OPM, participative management was seen as an effective approach. Consequently, the Council of Personnel Affairs was established to assist in the founding stage of the OPM. The purpose and functions of the Council were delineated and the members selected as listed below. The main purpose of the Council is to serve as an advisory body to the OPM.

Functions of the Council include:
1. Discuss, formulate, review and/or update policies and procedures concerning recruiting, development, integration, compensation, maintenance, and separation of personnel and submit them to the Executive Council for final approval and implementation.
2. Discuss cases of grievances and make the appropriate recommendations to the concerned authority.
3. Discuss cases of violation of University regulations by employees and communicate the findings to the President-Vice Chancellor and recommend that the appropriate measure be taken.
4. Other related functions as deemed necessary.

Members of the Council include:
1. Director of Personnel Management, Chair
2. Administrative Assistant, Recording Secretary
3. President of Union of Teachers and Employees.
4. Two members from the academic staff, one at least from the Faculty of Business Administration.

The Council meets regularly, or as the need arises upon an invitation with an agenda from the Chair of the Council.

It is worth mentioning here that the Council of Personnel Affairs established during the same year in which the OPM was established, contributed significantly in terms of formulating the various policies and procedures.
**Physical Facilities**

Two offices constitute the geographical area of the OPM. The larger office is used by the Director and is located on the top floor of the Main Building on the other side of the hallway from the office of the Administrative Assistant. Being relatively distant from each other creates some inconvenience and loss of time and effort for both the Director and Assistant.

Additional space is also needed, particularly for interviewing purposes and for keeping the personnel files. However, it is hoped that with the renovation of the Main Building, some added space will be provided to make the arrangement of the OPM more functional. A photocopier also should be provided for the purpose of duplicating personnel documents, which is a frequent task.
Chapter 2

PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

Mission Statement
The OPM aims at bringing all personnel together into an effective organization in which personnel functions are carried out with consistency, fairness, accountability and transparency.

Policy
The OPM assumes a supervisory role with regard to the staff members of the Office, (line management) and it assumes an advisory role with regard to the Administrative/Support and Service Staff of the University.

Goals
1. Manage personnel functions including: recruiting, evaluation, development, integration, compensation, maintenance and separation.
2. Regularize, review and update university policies and procedures concerning the Administrative/Support and Services Staff.
3. Establish and maintain a well-organized unit that provides quick and accurate data about university personnel.
4. Establish and develop high standards of professionalism, effectiveness and efficiency in work performance.

By fulfilling its mission and goals, the OPM strives to contribute to the fulfillment of the university mission and goals.

Staff Meetings
The fact that the OPM comprises only a Director and a half-time Administrative Assistant eliminates the need for regular staff meetings of a more structured manner. Both the Director and the Administrative Assistant work closely together on a daily basis distributing tasks and duties to ensure that communication and a smooth working relationship are well maintained.

On the external level, the OPM communicates with staff members and supervisors via university bulletins, organized meetings, Intranet (electronic), memos as well as individual meetings or interviews.
Chapter 3

FUNCTIONS, ACTIVITIES AND PROCESSES

The work of the OPM is centered around the main personnel functions of recruiting, evaluation, integration, development, compensation, maintenance and separation. Since its establishment in September 1999, the OPM has been working towards detailing the basis for each function.

This chapter will detail activities and processes accomplished within each of the seven functions listed above.

RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

Being the most crucial step to ensure quality work performance of an employee, recruitment and employment were handled at the earliest stage.

Under this function the following items were established:

- **Job Application Form:** The form, which was used earlier, was redesigned to include more comprehensive information about the applicant and to ensure the submission of the necessary personal documents.

- **Employment Requisition Form:** This form, which is completed by an immediate supervisor and submitted to the OPM, constitutes the first step in the recruiting process to fill a vacancy in a department.

- **Employment Procedure:** An employment procedure was established to make the hiring process more objective and professional. The Director of Personnel Management implements the employment procedure, which includes the following elements:
  - Employment Requisition Form, Recruiting Sources, Advertising, Application Forms, Screening and Testing, Interviewing, Employment Offer and the Probationary period. The opinion of the immediate supervisor usually carries greater weight in the final recommendation for employment.

- **Search Committee/Search Process:** At the request of the President-Vice Chancellor, Br. Vincent Malham, a search committee was also incorporated in the employment process. The purpose of this Committee/Process is to recruit candidates for positions that are on a higher level in the hierarchy of the institution. The Director of Personnel Management leads the Search Committee appointed by the President-Vice Chancellor and leads the Search Process. For every position to be filled, the Search Committee structures the process whereby candidates are screened, interviewed and ranked in order of preference. The Search Committee then submits a report to the President-Vice Chancellor to help in making the final selection and appointment of the successful candidate.

- **Job Description Form:** A form was designed and copies were distributed to each supervisor, who then, was requested to complete a form for each staff member in that department. By February 1999, each staff member had a job description form signed by the staff member and the supervisor and kept in their files. The Form has
become an integral part of an employee’s contract. An employee's job description is reviewed as the need arises.

- **The Change of Status Form** completed by the Director of Personnel Management and signed by the President-Vice Chancellor, documents an internal movement of an employee from one position to another, or from one department to another indicating the necessary information for contract purposes.

The following table shows the number of staff employed throughout the first three years of the establishment of the OPM via the Employment Process/Search Process. Staff members were hired for one of three reasons: 1. To replace a member that resigned; 2. To replace a member that moved to another position; 3. To fill a newly created position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>1 (ICP Director)</td>
<td>1 (Asst. to EVP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 (Dean &amp; Assistant Dean of Students)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>1 (Secretary)</td>
<td>2 (Secretaries)</td>
<td>3 (Secretaries)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1 (Gardener)</td>
<td>3 (Cafeteria &amp; Coffee Shop staff)</td>
<td>1 Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of the 15 staff members hired, 11 were new employees. Within the period of three years, the turnover of the staff employed above included only one secretary who resigned in order to pursue her studies.

- **End of Probationary Period Evaluation Form.** This form was designed for newly hired employees to help the immediate supervisor recommend, after a three-month probationary period whether an employee is fit for the job and given a regular contract or not.

**EVALUATION**

Having prepared a job description for every Administrative/Support and Service Staff member, the next step was to review the performance appraisal process. The performance appraisal form was re-designed to provide a two-way interaction between the employee and the immediate supervisor. Based on the employee’s job description and through guidance and instruction by the supervisor, the main purpose of the appraisal process was to motivate employees to continue to improve their work performance.

Performance appraisal reflects, in a way, the degree of the effectiveness of the employment procedure. Proper evaluation also provides both the institution and the employee with various benefits, one of which is continuous improvement of employee performance.
Performance appraisal has become an integral part of work at Bethlehem University. Performance appraisals are conducted on an annual basis during the month of April when the process is facilitated by the OPM. The Performance Appraisal Form checks seven areas in employee performance, namely: Punctuality, Job Knowledge, Quality of Work, Human Relationships, Dependability, Initiative, and Leadership. The scale, below, is used to rate the above-mentioned areas:

1 = Poor; 2 = Below Satisfactory; 3 = Satisfactory; 4 = Good; 5 = Very Good; 6 = Excellent.

The following graph shows Performance Appraisal Ratings over a period of three years.

The results shown in the graph above indicate that there is an inflation in the Supervisors' ratings of the employees' overall performance appraisal. Most of the employees are rated as very good or excellent especially in the Academic Year 2001-2002. This may be attributed to actual improvement in work performance or it may be due to Supervisors' efforts to give a higher rating than justified in order to meet one of the criteria for promotion, namely to have received an excellent rating for the last three years prior to candidacy.

During Academic Year 2001-2002, the seven parameters in the Performance Appraisal Form ranked at slightly different levels beyond the rank of 5 (Very Good) among 111 employees with Human Relations being the highest and Leadership the lowest.
Integrating employees into the culture and the mission of Bethlehem University helps them to increase their knowledge of the institution and of its policies and procedures. Consequently, this will maximize efficiency, interest and creativity in work performance. It also enhances staff morale. Following are some measures that have been established for the purpose of integrating new as well as old employees in the university environment.

- **Orientation**
  The OPM ensures that an orientation is conducted for each new employee. The orientation program includes the following steps:
  The Director of Personnel Management welcomes the employee; gives further pertinent information about the University and the position; takes the employee on a tour of the main offices on campus and introduces her/him to the staff. If necessary, the immediate supervisor conducts the tour. The Director sees to it that an appropriate office setup is provided.

  A two-way interaction is encouraged between the new employee and the immediate supervisor or the OPM so that both parties clearly understand all issues regarding job related matters.

  In regard to older employees, meetings were organized with the different categories of employment to explain about the functions and the role of the OPM and its relationship with the employees as well as with their supervisors.

- **Handbook for Administrative/Support and Service Staff**
  One important step in integrating both old and new employees was to publish a handbook documenting university policies and procedures. Prior to the establishment of the OPM, rules and regulations were practiced in a verbal manner, which created some inconsistencies.

  Work on the *Handbook* started in 1999 with the input of the Council of Personnel Affairs and all the immediate supervisors. Much discussion and consultation on certain issues had to be held with the University Advocate. The final draft of the *Handbook* was reviewed and approved by the Executive Council. The first edition of the *Handbook* was finally published in January 2002 in its bilingual version (Arabic & English). It was then distributed to the staff and their supervisors.

  Meetings were also organized for both the staff and the supervisors to further explain about the *Handbook* and to respond to their questions. Making it an integral part of an employee's contract, it was hoped that the *Handbook* would become instrumental in integrating the employee into the university work environment. Furthermore, it would clarify to the employees their duties and responsibilities as well as their benefits.

- **Annual Celebrations and Social Activities:** The activities listed below were considered as ways of integrating the employees in the institution and as a means of enhancing morale.
  - Birthday greetings. Br. Vincent Malham, President-Vice Chancellor, initiated the idea of greeting staff on their birthdays. The Office took charge of preparing the birthday card, forwarding it to the President for his signature and then sending it to the staff member on his/her birthday. This
practice, which was appreciated by the staff, continues to be applied faithfully throughout the whole year round.

- Mothers, Women, Secretaries and Labor Day. The OPM organizes a simple gathering to celebrate these occasions annually.
- Staff Recognition for Years of Service. This is a tradition, which Br. Vincent Malham also started in 1996. The celebration usually takes place on May 15, which coincides with the Feast Day of Saint John Baptist de La Salle. The celebration aims at recognizing staff for their years of service at the University. The role of the OPM in this endeavor is to prepare the booklet including a message from the President-Vice Chancellor and the names of staff to be recognized. The OPM also prepares the awards to be given to the celebrants.

"Dialogue": Very recently, the OPM initiated a new activity called "Dialogue" for the purpose of:
* providing the staff with an opportunity to attend a presentation by a guest speaker on a work-related subject.
* providing positive feedback opportunities to staff members who take a training course or attend a conference, thus benefiting a wider circle of colleagues.
* allowing individual staff to share with their colleagues a work-related matter or a topic of professional interest of their own choice.
* providing the staff with a forum whereby they can discuss work-related concerns or issues.

DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Based on the principle of dual benefit of utilization and motivation, the OPM concerned itself in addressing the development function during its first year. The following was initiated:

- **Staff Professional Development and Training Program/Kaizen Fund:** Fortunately, the development plan coincided with a generous donation that helped establish a fund, which allowed the OPM to prepare and administer a staff professional development and training program.

"Kaizen", a Japanese word meaning “continuous improvement” was used to name the fund. The policy and procedure of the “Staff Professional Development and Training Program” were detailed in the staff handbook. The program, welcomed by the staff, included two main types of professional training:
1. Activities planned by the OPM itself to address certain training needs to enhance performance, and 2. Opportunities that are available for individual staff members whether on or off campus.

To maximize benefits and motivation, a questionnaire was distributed in May 2001 to staff members and their supervisors to allow them to communicate their specific training needs. The activities organized thereafter were based on the results of the questionnaire. Bearing in mind that such professional activities should not jeopardize the work time, an average of one activity per month was seen as reasonable under normal circumstances. The political situation, however, did not even allow the OPM to accomplish the average pace of activities as shown in the table below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Facilitator</th>
<th>Target Group</th>
<th>No. of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>A Talk on Work Ethics</td>
<td>Dr. U. Shahwan</td>
<td>Faculty &amp; Staff</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workshop on Taking Minutes</td>
<td>Dr. J. Kattan</td>
<td>Secretaries</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Workshops on Stress Management</td>
<td>Ms. B. Lavin</td>
<td>Faculty &amp; Staff</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Course on Elementary Oral English</td>
<td>Mr. I. Abu Dayyeh</td>
<td>Plant Personnel</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>Presentation on Organizational Leadership</td>
<td>Prof. B. Harrison</td>
<td>Faculty &amp; Staff</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Course on Effective Supervision</td>
<td>Dr. U. Shahwan</td>
<td>Office Managers &amp; Supervisors</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Sessions on How to Prepare a Manual of Office Procedures</td>
<td>Ms. E. Hazboun</td>
<td>Office Managers &amp; Supervisors</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workshop on Grant Proposal Writing</td>
<td>Br. K. Cardwell</td>
<td>Faculty &amp; Staff</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quality Office Service</td>
<td>Dr. U. Shahwan</td>
<td>Administrative Assistants &amp; Secretaries</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermediate Oral English</td>
<td>Mr. I. Abu Dayyeh</td>
<td>Plant Personnel</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>3 Workshops on How to Prepare a Manual of Office Procedures</td>
<td>Mr. Mazen Badra</td>
<td>Office Managers &amp; Supervisors</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2 Workshops on Power Point Presentation</td>
<td>Mr. Tarik Daoud</td>
<td>Faculty &amp; Staff</td>
<td>29</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The table below shows the training that the staff received upon their request.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>No. of Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>Computer Related</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>Computer Related Conducting an Effective Meeting</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Library Classification</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>Computer Related English Oral Communication</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hebrew</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project in Biology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** 26
It is worth mentioning here that 21 activities in the above table were taken at the Institute for Community Partnership. Expenditures covered by the Kaizen Fund to pay for all courses and activities amounted to $4486.57 during the first three years.

- **Professional Tips**: is a one-page bulletin published September through May, and is distributed monthly to staff members and their supervisors. Each bulletin presents an abridged article (in both English and Arabic) from various sources on a variety of topics, which are work related or of interest to the staff. The bulletin aims at contributing to staff development as well as at enhancing their morale. In a quick survey about the value of the bulletin to the staff and supervisors, the majority of them responded that they would like to continue to receive it. Since 1999, *Professional Tips* appeared 30 times and it continues to appear on a monthly basis.

**COMPENSATION**

Observing compensation policies, which include wages, salaries and vacations, has been minimal during the first three years because such policies were already established by the Administration and the Employees’ Union. However, the OPM was instrumental in modifying or standardizing some of the compensation/incentive programs provided for the staff, including the following:

- **Christmas Bonus**: A policy for granting this bonus was recommended by the OPM and approved by the Executive Council. The purpose of the policy is to define criteria for such a bonus.

- **Financial Incentive Allowance**: The policy and procedure for this benefit were reviewed for further refinement. The allowance constitutes moving an employee two steps on the salary scale if he/she meets the criteria for excellent performance. The allowance is granted annually to no more than five employees. Upon the recommendation of the Financial Incentive Committee and the approval of the President-Vice Chancellor, 20 staff members were granted the allowance during the first three years. For the staff, the allowance is a way of rewarding excellent performance and enhancing morale as well as a motivation for continuous improvement.

- **Benefits for Part-Time Employees**: This matter required much discussion and consultation with the Administration and the university attorney. Based on the Palestinian Labor Law, it was decided that part-time employees be granted the benefits provided for them by the Labor Law. These benefits, include: Cost of Living Allowance, Workmen's Compensation Benefit, Family Allowance, Severance Pay, Annual Vacation, Maternity Leave, Sick Leave, Absence due to Death in Family and Emergency Leave.

- **Study Leave & Leave of Absence**: These two benefits have been reviewed in order to differentiate them more clearly from those granted to the teaching staff. Policies and procedures were delineated and included in the staff handbook.
MAINTENANCE

In its attempt to address the function of maintaining the well-being of the staff, both physical and mental, the OPM followed an informal rather than a structured approach, at least as regards the physical conditions of the work arrangement. The main reason is that plans to renovate the main building discouraged individual changes in certain work settings at this time. However, by expressing care when visiting staff in their offices and suggesting quick solutions, encouraged some of them to come to the OPM to make their concerns known. Better office arrangement and better equipment are issues expressed by the staff, who are located in the Main Building.

On the level of individual staff concerns, the OPM listened and responded by offering a solution no matter how quick or temporary it might have been. There were some staff members who expressed the desire to move to another department based on certain valid reasons. This was seen as a healthy managerial practice and the staff were encouraged to put their request in writing for further follow up. Within this domain, seven staff members were moved to other departments during the first three years. Internal movement of some staff members was done in a way that was beneficial for both the employee and the receiving department.

The Grievance Procedure as outlined in the staff handbook was devised for the first time by the OPM. The purpose is to provide the employees with a fair opportunity to examine their grievances. During the first three years, only two grievance cases were submitted to the Council of Personnel Affairs and the appropriate recommendations were made to the President-Vice Chancellor.

SEPARATION

In the same way that the OPM seeks to ensure employee rights, it also concerns itself with securing the best interest of the University as well as the integrity of the immediate supervisors. Under Separation, the following procedures were put in practice:

- **Disciplinary Procedure:** To ensure good performance and compliance with work instructions, a progressive disciplinary procedure was established for employees who fail to meet the requirements of their job description. The procedure was outlined in the staff handbook.
- **Final Warning:** A mechanism was also set up by which employees who continue to fail to perform well, will receive a Final Warning instead of a contract. At the end of an evaluation period, the immediate supervisor appraises the performance of the employee and makes his/her recommendation to the President-Vice Chancellor, who in turn grants a contract or dismisses the employee. This policy was applied to four staff members at the beginning of the Fall Semester 2002. The performance of three employees improved significantly and the fourth was moved to another department.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

- **Classification of Employees:** One of the first tasks carried out by the OPM was to review the classification of employees used by Bethlehem University. The Ministry of Higher Education had its own categorization, which the University had to follow when submitting annual statistics to the Ministry. Differences in the two
systems created additional work on the part of the university employee who was in charge of submitting the statistics. Consequently, the OPM recommended to the Administration that the University apply the system used by the Ministry. The recommendation was approved and the contracts of employees were then modified accordingly.

- **Personnel Directory**: Published annually by the OPM, the Directory serves as a tool of communication among members of the entire university community. It lists all employees (Faculty and Staff) with their photos, telephone extensions, location on campus and their e-mail addresses. The publishing of the Directory was a response to an initiative listed in the Implementation Report of the Five Year Strategic Development Plan. The Executive Receptionist, (President's Office) is in charge of typing the Directory. Her contribution is acknowledged.

- **Contracts**: The OPM also contributed to the reviewing of the format and content of employee contracts. This required consultation with the university advocate to ensure consistency and legal wording of the contracts. The above mentioned categorization of employees was incorporated in the revised format of the contract.

- **Forms**: The OPM now uses 20 forms for different purposes. For the most part, the forms were newly created and designed, while a few others were modified. A couple of those are used by the teaching staff members as well, namely Employee Clearance Form and the Faculty Application Form. Below is a list of the forms used by the OPM.

  A1. **Employment**
  - A1.1. Job Application Form
  - A1.2. Faculty Application Form
  - A1.3. Reference Form (Faculty)
  - A1.4. Employment Requisition Form
  - A1.5. Job Description Form
  - A1.6. Change of Status Form

  A2. **Evaluation and Incentives**
  - A2.1. Performance Appraisal Form
  - A2.2. End of Probation Evaluation Form
  - A2.3. Financial Incentive Allowance - Application Form
  - A2.4. Financial Incentive Allowance - Supervisor's Response

  A3. **Training and Development**
  - A3.1. Employee Course Registration Approval Form
  - A3.2. Request for Permission for Absence/Request for Funds

  A4. **Vacation, Leaves and Absences**
  - A4.1. Annual Vacation Form
  - A4.2. Maternity Leave Form
  - A4.3. Monthly Record of Days Sick, Late & Absent
  - A4.4. Annual Record of Days Sick, Late & Absent
  - A4.5. Unpaid Leave Form
  - A4.6. Study Leave Request Form
  - A4.7. Employee Clearance Form
- **Duplication of Personnel Files:** For security purposes, it was decided that all non-teaching employee files be duplicated and kept in the OPM. Missing personal documents were also requested to complete the files.

- **Manual of Office Procedures:** The OPM completed its manual of office procedures during the second year, 2000-2001. The OPM also thought that by developing a procedures manual for each administrative unit at the University, it would pave the way for future self-assessment by those units. By involving the staff in the preparation of their own manuals rather than by an external person, the OPM hoped that the learning experience would provide the staff with an opportunity to enhance their productivity as well as their efficiency and effectiveness in work performance. Consequently, the OPM sought assistance from some members from the Faculty of Business Administration, who conducted several workshops for the concerned staff. A few staff members made a very good attempt while one prepared an excellent manual. The immediate supervisors were charged with following up the matter with their staff. However, the OPM will continue to provide assistance to the staff until they are able to complete their own manuals.

- **Switchboard Office:** Prior to 1999, the Switchboard Office was under the direct supervision of the Assistant to the President-Vice Chancellor. Secretaries from the various departments rotated in substituting the Switchboard Operator in emergencies or absences. When the OPM was established in 1999, the Administrative Assistant of the OPM took charge of supervising the Switchboard staff. The same substitute procedure was followed but with advance coordination with the supervisors. A schedule was prepared for the whole semester with two secretaries assigned as substitutes every month. Nonetheless, supervisors continued to complain about the interruption in their work when their secretary would be called to go to the Switchboard even though for one hour only. The matter was then discussed with the President-Vice Chancellor who approved a suggested plan. The new schedule involved the assistance of two student workers who were trained for the job. When necessary, a secretary was hired on an hourly basis to fill in the gap, and thus the department secretaries were relieved of the duty except in very rare cases. This method worked out smoothly. It saved the time and effort spent in coordinating with the secretaries and their supervisors for arranging the schedule for the whole semester. An effort was also made to enhance the professional atmosphere in the Switchboard room and the security of the mailboxes.

**OTHER TASKS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- **Academic Staff Handbook:** Upon the request of the President-Vice Chancellor, the Director of Personnel Management chaired an editorial committee to publish the 2000-2001 edition of the ASH. Periodic publishing of the ASH was then designated as a task to be carried out by the Personnel Director.

- **Appointment to the Executive Council:** Appointment of the Personnel Director to the Executive Council was appreciated in terms of representing the non-teaching staff at the highest administrative level.
PROJECTS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED

- **Personnel Database:** From its inception in September 1999, the OPM saw the great need for an electronic personnel database. So in cooperation with the Computer Center, a search was started for purchasing a ready-made personnel software. Two companies gave a demonstration of their programs but no decision was taken on either one. Pursuing the project was hindered by the political situation. Then the Director of the Computer Center, the late Tarik Daoud, offered to prepare a program himself. The idea was appreciated and encouraged. However, nothing was accomplished due to shortage in staff in the Computer Center and unfortunately due to the unexpected death of Tarik Daoud in August 2002.

  The OPM will pursue the project with the Computer Center and the Finance Office.

- **Job Titles:**

  A revision of job titles needs to be conducted. Issues related would involve the definition of a job title with the duties and responsibilities. The project would result in the standardization of job titles at the University and in the compilation of a handbook of job titles to serve as a reference for preparing job descriptions. Another aspect involved would be the opportunity provided for secretaries to apply for advancing in their career from secretary to administrative assistant. The criteria and procedure for application and the allowance attached to the higher title would also be established.

- **Personnel Newsletter:**

  This is an item that was included in the 1999 Action Plan for the purpose of keeping personnel informed of the activities and news of the OPM. However, this could not be actualized as work was focused on issues of a founding nature that needed to be institutionalized, which took longer than anticipated due to the unstable situation. However, it is hoped that this newsletter could be produced in the near future.
Chapter Four

CUSTOMER PERSPECTIVE

Staff Perspective

This chapter aims at investigating the impressions and opinions of customers regarding the performance of the OPM in conducting its various functions. Customers included the two categories of Staff and Supervisors. A survey was conducted for that purpose and a questionnaire was designed and distributed to the above-mentioned categories of customers.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

One hundred and seventeen questionnaires were distributed to the employees of Bethlehem University in the two categories of Administrative/Support and Service Staff. Approximately 75 employees (64%) returned the questionnaires. However, data analysis was conducted for 73 employees since two questionnaires were incomplete.

Of the respondents, 41.1% were males and 45.2% were females.

The years of service at Bethlehem University ranged from 1 year to 28 years, \( M = 12.09, SD = 8.23 \).

The educational level of the participants was as follows: 8 finished elementary education, 3 finished preparatory, 15 secondary, 40 university and 7 had incomplete answers.

Approximately 19 of the respondents were promoted in their position during their years of service at the University, whereas 45 were not promoted.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section included demographic data namely, department/section, gender, years of Service, educational level, and promotion status.

The second section included 24 items that covered the main functions of the OPM. These are: employment and recruitment, development and training, evaluation, integration, maintenance, and separation. In addition, the questionnaire investigated the main values that concern the OPM namely, consistency, fairness, accountability and transparency.

The 24 items were rated on a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from "1" strongly disagree to "5" strongly agree. Therefore, employees' perceptions of the Office may vary from 24 the least favorable to 120 the most favorable.

OVERALL EVALUATION

In general, the majority of the respondents were satisfied with the functions performed by the OPM. Nevertheless, the respondents were less satisfied in the area of training and development activities. Further investigation indicated that some employees were
undecided in their responses, which may imply employees' lack of information due to their indifferent attitudes or to the insufficient channels of communication between employees and the OPM.

The results also indicated that there were no significant differences according to gender or the educational level of the employees in their assessment of the performance of the OPM. However, there was a significant difference in terms of the years of service at the University. In particular, the higher the number of years of service, the lower the level of appreciation towards the OPM.

**MAIN FINDINGS**

Table 1 summarizes the results of the 24 items that investigated the main personnel functions mentioned above.

**Employment**

In reference to the employment procedure, approximately half of the employees (43.8%) were undecided whether it was acceptable or not despite the fact that the OPM devised a procedure that was more structured and objective. This may be partially attributed to the employees' unawareness of the employment process although it was fully explained in the Staff Handbook.

More than half of the respondents (57.5%) agreed that the Job Description Form helped them to learn more about their duties and responsibilities. It is believed that the job description is essential for the performance appraisals as well as for the incentive allowance.

In regard to performance appraisal, the majority of employees agreed that it helped them to learn about their strengths and weaknesses as well as to express themselves freely in response to their supervisor's appraisal. Employees' strong agreement with the appraisal process reflects the necessity for more frequent workshops for the supervisors on how to appraise performance in an effective way.

**Training and Development**

One of the results to note is the desire of the staff for development and improvement of skills, which was indicated by 35.6% of the employees who disagreed that the OPM had organized training activities to a sufficient extent. In fact, the OPM organized one activity per month for a group of staff members. Other activities were taken at the employees' own initiative and the expenses covered by the Kaizen Fund.

It is important to mention that a series of workshops was planned for staff development with a focus on information technology. However, the implementation of these workshops was hindered due to the political uncertainties, prolonged closures and the sudden loss of Mr. Tarik Daoud, Director of the Computer Center, who was supposed to conduct them. Other activities, such as having guest speakers and training staff off-campus were interrupted for the same reasons.

On the other hand, the monthly bulletin, *Professional Tips* was useful for approximately forty percent of the employees since they indicated that they keep it for reference and that it contributed to their professional development.
Integration

While 58.9% of the employees indicated that the *Staff Handbook* helped them to learn about university policies and procedures, 41.1% indicated the *Handbook* helped them to learn about their benefits.

A higher percentage of the employees 71.2% noted that they feel free to talk to OPM staff when they have a problem at work.

Also 60.2% of the employees indicated (combined agreed and strongly agreed) that the annual activities organized by the OPM added liveliness to the work atmosphere. Again the unstable situation obstructed the normal work life.

Maintenance

In reference to the rights of employees, 49.3% of the respondents (combined agreed and strongly agreed) indicated that the OPM sought to ensure employee rights whereas 34.2% were undecided in their responses. Needless to say that it is difficult to satisfy everyone, particularly placed in an intermediary position between the Administration and the employees.

In addition, 37.0% were undecided on whether the OPM cared to provide suitable working conditions for the employees. However, it is hoped that the renovation plan would improve office settings and equipment.

Separation

In reference to the grievance cases 39.7% of the employees agreed that the OPM provided the opportunity to look into such cases, while 32.9% of the employees were undecided.

In fact, during the first three years, only two grievance cases were submitted to the OPM, which then were discussed by the Council of Personnel Affairs and the appropriate recommendation made to the higher authority.

The policy of warning employees whose performance was unsatisfactory was approved by 34.2% of the employees whereas it was strongly approved by 30.1% of the employees. This indicates a justification on the part of the better performing employees for the action taken against those who care less about their performance. An added benefit of this measure is the recognition given to those who perform better and more importantly to encourage everyone to continue to have a positive attitude towards their job and to improve their performance.

Forms

In regard to the forms that the OPM uses, 53.4% of the employees agreed that the forms were easy to fill out. It is worth mentioning that 20 forms pertaining to personnel matters are in use at present.

Values

According to its mission statement, the OPM aims at bringing all personnel together into an effective organization in which personnel functions are carried out with fairness,
accountability, transparency and consistency. The results showed that 43.8% of the respondents perceived fairness and accountability in personnel functions, 41.1% consistency, and 34.2% transparency.

**Supervisors' Perspective**

This section was aimed at investigating the views of the supervisors as opposed to that of the staff.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARTICIPANTS**

Thirty-seven questionnaires were distributed to the immediate supervisors. Twenty of them returned the questionnaires. The years of service at Bethlehem University ranged from five to twenty-eight. The years of service as supervisor ranged from one to ten.

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section included years of service at Bethlehem University and years of service as supervisor.

The second section included 26 items that covered the same functions of the OPM and the values, which were included in the staff questionnaire. The 26 items were rated on a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from "1" strongly disagree to "5" strongly agree. Therefore, supervisors' perceptions of the OPM may vary from 26 the least favorable to 130 the most favorable.

**OVERALL EVALUATION**

In general, the overall evaluation of the supervisors of the performance of the OPM was favorable, with their responses ranging from 75 to 130, ($M = 107, SD = 14.3$).

It is interesting to note that there was no significant relationship between supervisors' length of service at Bethlehem University nor their years of service as supervisors and their overall assessment of the OPM. Needless to say that the supervisors' evaluation of the OPM was more positive than that of the employees.

**OPM Staff Perspective:** (Subjective Opinion of the Administrative Assistant)

Although the OPM was able to introduce many changes, I still believe that the following limitations, in some cases, hindered our performance:

- Some of the new appointments did not go through the proper channels or procedures set by the OPM.
- It seems that the annual employee appraisal is not as objective as it should be, which negatively affected the incentive allowances. I believe that the OPM could have conducted a workshop for supervisors to discuss this issue and enhance the objectivity in evaluation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1. Employment procedures are acceptable.</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Job Description Form helped me learn about my duties and responsibilities.</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Performance appraisal helped me to learn about my strengths.</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Performance appraisal helped me to learn about my weaknesses.</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>20.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Performance Appraisal Form helped express my opinion regarding my supervisor's evaluation.</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The Office organizes training &amp; development activities to a sufficient extent.</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Professional activities organized by the Office met some of my training needs.</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Kaizen Fund provided an opportunity for training courses.</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>12.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. I benefited from the courses I attended in coordination with the Office.</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>15.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Professional Tips contributed to my professional development.</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>15.1</td>
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<td>11. I keep Professional Tips for reference.</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. The Staff Handbook helped learn about university policies &amp; procedures.</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>28.8</td>
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<td>13. The Staff Handbook helped learn about employee privileges.</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>23.3</td>
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<td>14. I feel free talking to Office staff when I have a problem at work.</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>26.0</td>
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<td>15. Annual social activities organized by the Office add liveliness to the work atmosphere.</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>20.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Office personnel seek to ensure employee rights.</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>13.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Office personnel care to provide me with suitable working conditions.</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. The Office provides the opportunity for looking into grievance cases.</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>5.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Policy of warning employees who do not abide by work instructions is acceptable.</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>30.1</td>
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<td>20. Forms used by the Office are easy to fill out.</td>
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<td>1.4</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>17.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. In carrying out its functions, the Office seeks to maintain: Fairness</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>12.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. Transparency</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>34.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. Consistency</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>12.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. Accountability</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>11.0</td>
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**Legend**

- SD Strongly Disagree
- D Disagree
- U Undecided
- A Agree
- SA Strongly Agree
- M Missing
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<th>Item</th>
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<td>1. The Employment procedure applied by the Personnel Office is acceptable.</td>
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<td>65</td>
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<td>2. Job Description helped the employees learn about their duties and responsibilities.</td>
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<td>3. Job description helped me as supervisor to learn about employee responsibilities &amp; duties.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Performance appraisal helped the employees to learn about their strengths.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Performance appraisal helped the employees to learn about their weaknesses.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Performance Appraisal Form allowed employees to express their opinion regarding their supervisor's appraisal.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. The Office organizes training &amp; development activities to a sufficient extent.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Professional activities organized by the Office met some of the employees’ training needs.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Kaizen Fund provided training opportunities for employees.</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Employees benefited from the courses they took in coordination with the Office.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
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<td>11. Professional Tips contributed to exposing employees to topics related to their work.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. I keep Professional Tips for reference.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. The Staff Handbook helped as supervisor to learn about university policies &amp; procedures.</td>
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<td>14. The Staff Handbook helped to learn about employee benefits.</td>
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<td>15. I feel free talking to Office staff when I have a problem with an employee.</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>16. Annual social celebrations organized by the Office add liveliness to the work atmosphere.</td>
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<td>17. Personnel Office seeks to ensure employee rights.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Personnel Office cares to provide employees with suitable working conditions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. The Office provides the opportunity to look into employee grievance cases.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Policy of warning employees who do not abide by work instructions is acceptable.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>21. Forms used by the Office are easy to fill out.</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. In carrying out its functions, the Office seeks to maintain: Fairness</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Transparency</td>
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<td>Consistency</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>Accountability</td>
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<td>26. Personnel Office seeks to enhance performance.</td>
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</table>

**Legend**

SD  Strongly Disagree  
D   Disagree  
U   Undecided  
A   Agree  
SA  Strongly Agree  
M   Missing
Chapter Five

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on some of the main findings of the customer perspective survey, as well as observations throughout the three years, the following were seen as limitations that need further attention and follow up. A recommendation is provided for each limitation to improve the situation.

1. Supervision

This refers to the process of supervising staff in the various departments. Supervisors belong to either the teaching category such as a Chair, and a Dean, and the non-teaching category such as a Director or Supervisor of a unit.

The experience and expertise of the immediate supervisors varied. Assuming a supervisory role was for some supervisors the first experience, which was carried out on common sense rather than on formal preparation. The level of adherence to rules and regulations also varied, ranging from strictness to leniency, which created some inconsistency or even jealousy among members of the various departments. In certain cases, the OPM intervened and discussed the matter with the supervisor in order to put things back on track.

The trend that the OPM followed was to meet with the supervisors at the beginning of the academic year to introduce new supervisors to each other and to orient them to their role and to their relationship with the staff as well as with the OPM. A second meeting was held at the beginning of the second semester to discuss work-related issues and to listen to the supervisors. In general, the supervisors have been very cooperative with the OPM and particularly in ensuring that rules and regulations were faithfully and consistently observed.

However, it is believed that supervision could become a more effective and efficient process if an orientation program is set up at the beginning of each academic year. All supervisors would be invited to attend a 3-hour orientation during which a guest speaker would talk about supervising and other important topics. In-house matters could also be included in the program. Organizing the orientation annually would ensure that all supervisors are consistent concerning matters that apply to all employees. This program would be particularly helpful to novice supervisors.

2. Performance Appraisal

Appraising performance of staff is one important aspect of supervision, if not the most important. Since appraisal affects an employee’s whole career it should be conducted without bias.

The graph on Performance Appraisal showed an inflation in the supervisors' appraisal of employees whereby most of the employees were rated as very good or excellent. Whether that reflected reality or not is a controversial question. The performance appraisal process in its current format has been in practice since the OPM was set up in 1999.

Performance appraisals are usually done during the month of April when the forms are distributed to the supervisors including the covering letter with instructions and tips on appraising performance.
Over the three years, it was noted that supervisors differed from each other in their approach to appraisal, namely in the rating of the items. Also some supervisors did not include additional comments in the specified section of the Form, nor did they conduct the appraisal interview. It was observed that some supervisors did not keep a copy of the Performance Appraisal Form to help them follow up the performance of their staff from one year to another. These observations indicate a need for more structured guidance on performance appraisal to all supervisors. This could be another major topic to be highlighted in the orientation program mentioned under “Supervision”.

It is worth mentioning at this point that one of the criteria for granting the Financial Incentive Allowance is for the employee to have received the highest rating on all the parameters as indicated in the Performance Appraisal Form for the last three years. This caused some of the supervisors to give higher ratings to allow their staff the opportunity to receive the allowance. Consequently, it is recommended that the criterion of the highest rating be changed to consistently very high performance in order to maintain a more realistic approach on the part of supervisors when appraising the performance of their staff.

3. Communication

Communication between the OPM, the employees and the supervisors was done via a variety of means namely, periodic meetings, internal bulletins, Intranet and individual meetings or visits. That did not seem to be sufficient in terms of keeping some of the employees fully informed of the OPM’s activities and functions. As mentioned in the Customer Perspective survey, one possible reason why some employees were undecided in their responses was due to the insufficient channels of communication between them and the OPM. Some employees clearly stated they did not respond to a specific statement simply because they did not know about the subject of the statement. One particular employee suggested that a news update could help to keep them informed of the OPM's activities.

The Action Plan of 1999 of the OPM included the publishing of an annual personnel newsletter, which would constitute a public report to the Administration as well as to the staff. As mentioned under the subheading "Projects to be accomplished" the newsletter was not actualized because of other priorities. In order to accomplish this, the newsletter needs to be considered an end-of-the-year priority. The newsletter could also serve as a venue for employees in which they would share their own work experiences and contributions.

In conclusion, the period of three years, as a founding phase for the OPM was adequate considering the difficult political circumstances. More time and effort could be devoted in the future to innovative ideas and to enhancing performance.
Epilogue

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

This epilogue constitutes of an outlook envisioned by the Director of Personnel Management based on the four years of experience managing the OPM.

In the Implementation Plan (Phase 2, October 1999) of the Five Year Strategic Development Plan, 82 initiatives were listed, which were derived from the Vision Plan. Initiative No. 43 called for the "establishment of an Office of Human Resource Development responsible for devising a Structured Human Resource Development Scheme as a matter of urgency." Human Resource Development was the responsibility of two offices, Teaching Development (OTD) and Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for which two directors were appointed.

Since its establishment in September 1999, the OPM exerted an effort to implement the pertinent initiatives listed in the Implementation Plan, namely, Initiatives No. 44, 45, 46, 47, 48 and 51. Combined only by the general heading of Human Resource Development, the OTD and OPM worked as two separate entities, with each having its own clientele. The main function of OTD was in the area of teaching development. The OPM, on the other hand, was concerned with the non-teaching staff only, managing the seven classical personnel functions, namely, recruiting, development, evaluation, integration, compensation maintenance, and separation. However, there were a few functions related to the teaching staff, which the OPM handled including the following:

- Development and training activities: The OPM invites teachers to join the non-teaching staff when organizing activities of interest to both groups.
- Employee Clearance Form: When resigning, teachers are requested to fill out the Employee Clearance Form available from the OPM and submit it to the Finance Office before financial matters can be settled.
- Staff Recognition for years of service: The OPM prepares the list of all staff to be recognized including the teaching staff.
- Birthday Cards: The OPM also prepares the birthday cards signed by the President-Vice Chancellor to greet both the teaching and non-teaching staff on their birthdays.

The other personnel functions related to the teaching staff continued to be handled by the Academic Vice President. At one point, however, when the Faculty of Business Administration needed to advertise a teaching position, the Academic Vice President informed the Director of OPM that the Application Forms would be transferred from his Administrative Assistant to the OPM. Because the advertisement was to be published the following day, a quick adjustment was made on the Application Form used for non-teaching positions and copies were prepared. Since then, new teaching applicants have been coming to the OPM to receive and submit the forms. The following observations were noted:

- A Dean or Chair would publish the advertisement in the local paper without alerting the OPM, which would be unprepared when applicants called to inquire about the position.
- In some cases, the Application Form would be returned but not the three Reference Forms or vice versa. In one case, the applicant was interviewed and hired while the Reference Forms were in the OPM awaiting the Application Form to be submitted, which was submitted, instead to the immediate supervisor.
A Dean or Chair would sometimes ask his secretary to pick up an Application Form to give to an applicant. The OPM would then lose track of that form.

Some applicants complained that, quite often, they would come more than once to find the OPM closed. Reasons behind the situation were attributed to: 1. The Administrative Assistant worked half time for the OPM. 2. The two offices were not in the same location, which resulted in the absence of both the Director and the Assistant at certain times.

Once an applicant was employed, a copy of his file was kept in the Main Office while the original was kept in the Academic Office. The OPM does not keep a copy of the teachers' files. However, it does keep a file of the application forms for the departments' perusal when needed.

In summary, the transfer of the Application Forms relieved the Academic Office from one step only, while it continued to process all the other steps throughout the employment procedure. Whether that situation helped in making the process more effective and efficient is a question that needs further investigation.

In light of the above observations and of the four years of experience as Director of Personnel Management, I foresee two options for the future:

1. Proceed as has been the practice regarding the teaching staff, namely the Academic Office handles all related functions starting with recruiting and ending with separation. The functions may be divided and coordinated among the Academic Vice President, the Assistant Academic Vice President and the Director of Teaching Development along with their Administrative Assistants. This might entail the appointment of a full time administrative assistant for the Assistant Academic Vice President to handle the additional office work. The Academic Office would become a parallel entity to the OPM. Human resource development at Bethlehem University would then consist of two sub-units: the Academic Office would manage all personnel functions pertaining to the teaching staff and the OPM would continue to manage all personnel functions pertaining to the non-teaching staff. Coordination and cooperation between the two sub-units would be necessary for certain activities. *The Academic Staff Handbook* would also become the responsibility of the Academic Office rather than that of the OPM, which published the latest issue of 2000-2001.

2. Expand the OPM to handle all personnel functions including the teaching staff. The role of the OPM would be to support the Academic Office by facilitating and performing certain personnel functions, that would be acceptable to both offices. Furthermore, the OPM would organize, document and compile all data pertinent to the teaching staff. This arrangement would necessitate the expansion of the OPM in terms of staff, space and physical facilities. In coordination with the Academic Office, the OPM would continue to update the *Academic Staff Handbook* as needed.

From the point of view of traditional management, it is the normal procedure that all personnel matters (both for teaching and non-teaching staff) be handled by the Human Resources Office. However, I believe that each institution is unique in certain ways. So if by separating roles at Bethlehem University, the purpose is better met and the needs better served, then there should be no reluctance in breaking the norm.

In the final analysis, it is my opinion that the Administration discuss the two suggested options and others, if necessary, in order to continue to build the solid foundations of Bethlehem University developed through the hard work of the past 30 years.
Appendices

Forms

Staff Perspective Questionnaire

Supervisors' Perspective Questionnaire