



MUNASA Bulletin – December 2020

Dear colleagues:

Although we would like to start this bulletin on a positive note the reality is that the past few months have been difficult and have brought many challenges. As resilient as we are as human beings and managers, it is time to step back and reflect on how we are feeling and coping. In a recent CTV news article of December 2nd, it mentioned how students and academics are struggling. This is equally true of non-academic staff, who seem to have been forgotten again. Many managers have been working longer hours and in many instances have taken on additional duties. Due to the hiring freeze, some positions have been left vacant for many months leaving managers short staffed thus forcing them to carry additional responsibilities.

Workday

The implementation of Workday has compounded the situation as it has resulted in a greater workload, especially for managers with an HR, Academic Affairs or Finance component in their job description. While there is a gradual adaptation to the new platform there is no denying that it has increased the workload by adding many additional steps in completing most processes. Managers find themselves creating positions, creating job requisitions, posting positions, making the offer, completing the hire, and this is often done for positions where the candidate has already been selected, i.e. research assistants, course lecturers hired with exemptions, visiting professors, adjunct professors, post-retirement appointments, guest lecturers, and more. Thousands of tickets have been created with the HR Service Desk seeking help with Workday issues. Dealing with duplicate profiles, onboarding, terminations, switching the primary position, all of this is extremely time consuming and burdensome. The technical issues that surfaced from the time of implementation and throughout the months have created a great deal of anxiety and a heavier workload, not just for managers but also for employees being hired. Shortly after the launch, a few hundred employees, mostly students, had to wait months to be paid during a global pandemic.

MUNASA surveyed its members during the month of November seeking to gather information on their experience with Workday. Over 52% of those surveyed were Power Users or Heavy Users of Workday. The data provides some insight but the comments affirm that the launch was badly timed, the training was inadequate, and the processes are complicated and time intensive. Some comments from the Survey have been included to capture the overall essence of the feedback we received.

- Over 37% felt that the training after the launch was seriously lacking and few job aids were available to help understand the business processes. *This Comment summed it up well: The training modules did not offer enough information to apply them to our actual work, and referring back to them upon launch was not realistic because no one has time to review*

videos and slideshows to find specific information. Many job aids were not available and the training was insufficient.

- 50% said that the timing of the launch created greater issues and stress related to the posting and hiring of course lecturers, teaching assistants, research assistants and new academic hires, etc. *Comment: It was a stressful, upsetting and shocking situation that unfolded with the launch of Workday. Many students didn't know when their next pay was coming and no one could answer that question for them. Many missed 3 consecutive pay periods.*
- Almost 20% are working 5 to 15 more hours per week and another 6.6% are working more than 15 hours per week. However, some of the respondents indicated that the extra hours were not solely related to Workday but also included additional responsibilities related to COVID. Many are working 9 to 12 hours per day and late into the evening.
- Over 78% did not receive any remuneration or time off for their overtime.
- Almost 71% experience difficulties and challenges using Workday. There were 108 comments to this question ranging from lack of training, unclear processes, technical issues in Workday, lack of support, etc. *Comment: More work has been downloaded on to managers. Even tasks that were normally completed by Central HR are now part of our work portfolio. The time it takes to complete a task/BP is extraordinary. The many levels of approval required have extended the hiring process by days and weeks. Very little information, or direction, is offered when BPs are cancelled, returned, or rescinded and getting answers/support from HR (tickets or phone calls) can also take days, weeks and months.*
- There was a consistent theme throughout the survey that most processes take longer to complete, are more time consuming and work intensive on Workday. *Comment: All the hiring processes take longer due to the multiple steps of the job requisitions, costing allocation, posting of some positions that never needed to be posted before, helping candidates to apply to the positions, candidate selection, offer letters, hiring and onboarding tasks. There are also added tasks like terminating employees which we didn't have to do before.*
- 22% indicated that Workday is affecting their mental health. *Comment: The long work days and working weekends, under constant stress and pressure have definitely taken a toll on both my mental and physical health.*
- 15% indicated that Workday is affecting their physical health.
- 27% are having difficulty managing their stress level. *Comment: Combined with the stress of the pandemic, my work has created a lot of stress over the past 9 months. I am sleeping badly, I find it difficult to concentrate, I make more mistakes than usual.*
- 22% indicated that it's affected their sleep.
- Over 14% have thought of seeking help to manage their stress.
- Almost 44% are not sure they can keep up with the challenges of Workday, if the workload remains as is.
- When asked what type of Workday training would help with the complex business processes, the response was:
 - 36.42% Small group training;
 - 31.79% Visual training scenarios;
 - 46.36% Improved Step-by-Step Job Aids;
 - 18.54% Self-directed training;
 - 7.75% All of the above.

- Over 63% rate Workday as poor or very poor as a user friendly platform. *Comment: It is a work intensive platform. It has not streamlined processes as expected.*

There is no question that many managers have worked longer hours since the launch of Workday with little or no overtime, whether in compensation or time off. It is important to remember though, if you need to work overtime have that discussion first with your immediate supervisor.

The additional workload and the time spent dealing with technical errors is not sustainable. Adequate training needs to be provided and the system needs to be reassessed for efficiency.

The results of the survey are very concerning to MUNASA, it is important to underscore that the Employee and Family Assistance program (EFAP) <https://www.mcgill.ca/hr/benefits/eap> is available to all employees to help address stress and mental health issues. Rest assured that we will tirelessly continue to address this issue during our ongoing discussions with the University.

Merit

The recent news about merit not being applied retroactive to June 1, 2020, was extremely disappointing especially in light of the additional workload and stress resulting from the launch of Workday. The fact that managers are grouped with executives and academics rings of inequity knowing that the salaries of most managers are not comparable with the salaries of executives and academics. The process is flawed and having to press for reasonable increases on an annual basis adds further concerns about the process. MUNASA will pursue a three-year plan to allow for some financial planning and stability.

Negotiations with Labour Relations are always a challenge; nevertheless, MUNASA continues to forcefully represent its members to ensure that their rights are protected.

We want to take this time to wish each of you a safe and peaceful holiday season. These past months have been historic and it has required a significant amount of patience, agility and resilience. More of that will be needed in the coming months, which makes it even more important that we take quality time to rest and to regenerate over the holidays.

Wishing you a restful break and looking forward to 2021!

The MUNASA Executive