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***EmpowHR* 9.0** **Upgrade Project** **Newsletter**

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of the Chief Financial Officer • National Finance Center

This is the inaugural edition of the ***EmpowHR*** 9.0 Upgrade Project Newsletter. We fully understand the importance of communication in a critical project such as this and are excited to bring this to you. Each month we will issue another edition with the latest project related news. If there are any topics you would like to see included, please feel free to submit them to empowhr@usda.gov.

9.0 Project Kickoff Meeting Held

On June 13, 2007, NFC held a kickoff meeting for the ***EmpowHR*** 9.0 Upgrade Project at the NFC's Client Services Office in Washington, D.C. Attendees included NFC participants and representatives from the NFC's current and potential ***EmpowHR*** clients. Meeting discussion items included:

- Project Scope
- What's New in 9.0?
- Project Timeline
- User Acceptance Testing Participation and Expectations
- NFC's Communications Plan
- Pricing Issues Regarding Modules and Licensing

During the meeting, NFC also explained the fit gap process for the project covering the structure of the process and expectations related to client participation. Client participants at the meeting were overwhelming eager to be involved in the fit gap process and were excited at the potential benefit from such involvement in the development process.

NFC Announces *EmpowHR* 9.0 Communication Campaign

Attendees at the 9.0 Upgrade Kickoff Meeting all agreed that communication would be vital to the success of the implementation

project. NFC anticipated this and had already begun plans to address this concern. The planned communication campaign for ***EmpowHR*** 9.0 is as follows:

- Develop electronic distribution list for fit gap participants and related client managers.
- Issue monthly newsletter to distribution list and other messages or documents as needed.
- Update ***EmpowHR*** web site with newsletter, project timeline, and other documentation as necessary.
- Schedule and conduct training including student and train-the-trainer sessions.

Additional thoughts on project communication can be sent to empowhr@usda.gov or by phone to Theresa Trentacoste at 504-426-1202.

Timeline of Fit Gap Sessions

The following is the schedule of fit gap sessions for the project. Sessions will take place in the NFC's Client Services Office in Washington, D.C. Although the sessions are going to be time-consuming and a great deal of information will be covered, we ask that fit gap participants remain committed to participation in the process so that we can implement the best product possible.

Timeline of Fit Gap Sessions

Questions regarding the fit gap sessions should be directed to Billy Dantagnan at 504-426-1262.

Dates	Session Topic
7/23 - 8/3/07	PAR/Position/Jobcode
8/6 - 8/17/07	Employee Self-Service(ESS)/Manager Self-Service(MSS)
8/27 - 8/31/07	Payroll Documents including ESS/MSS
9/10 - 9/14/07	ePerformance
9/24 - 9/28/07	Learning Management (concurrent session)
9/24 - 10/5/07	Candidate Gateway/Talent Acquisition Manager (concurrent session)
10/1 - 10/5/07	Security - Flexible Row-Level Security (concurrent session)
10/29 - 11/30/07	Design Acceptance - Client Agency Review

EmpowHR Web Site Available for Important Project Documentation

NFC has a web site at www.empowhr.gov that provides an array of information related to both **EmpowHR** and the HR support services that NFC has to offer. During this upgrade project, updates will be made to the site to post project related documentation. Examples of information that will be updated include:

- Overall EmpowHR Timeline
- 9.0 Upgrade Project Timeline
- Release Notes for 9.0
- EmpowHR Newsletter Editions

Sandbox Available to Clients for Exploration and Testing

NFC has established for clients a sandbox for their exploration, fit gap participation and testing of the 9.0 product. The sandbox was made available to clients on June 25, 2007. Anyone interested in accessing the sandbox should contact NFC at empowhr@usda.gov for the URL information. Questions about the sandbox can be directed to Giuseppe Montalto via email at Giuseppe.montalto@wdc.usda.gov.

Coming Next Month

In next month's issue of the newsletter, you can expect to hear more project news related to:

- Update on Progress of the Fit Gap Sessions
- Less customization - More Peoplesoft Out-of-the-Box
- Agency Licensing Responsibilities in preparation for new 9.0 Functionality