

Your Ideas for Cost Saving & Pursuing Opportunities

Of the more than 250 ideas we received from people on how we can save money and pursue new opportunities for growth, nine themes emerged. On Jan. 26, Allison circulated an email outlining budget decisions made by our Finance Team for 2009. Many of the themes outlined below are addressed in these guidelines and, where possible, we have provided an "Update," based on these budget decisions. To read the full list of ideas, go to EF Public and look in the "Communications/Internal Communications" folder.

Meals



The majority of you felt that there should be consistent guidance, across the company, on when food should be ordered for meetings. Some people even questioned whether we should continue providing organic fruit in our locations.

Update: Worksite meals will be offered when there are large meetings (for example, deep dives, presentation to sales, etc.) We remain committed to bringing healthy eating and nutrition to our communities. Since we are postponing completing the Irvington kitchen, we will also be partnering with a caterer who will provide pay-as-you-go reasonably priced meals in Irvington.

Use of Technology

Many people offered ideas on how we might use technology to make us work more efficiently, including the use of web conferences and webcams.



Update: We are pursuing the development of a company Intranet, an internal web site where

we may publish news and information for our community, along with other interactive features such as video and blogs. With respect to the use of cell phones and BlackBerries, we are not encouraging use of new BlackBerries for now.

Travel



Reducing the number of offsite meetings we organize, as well as having consistent guidance on travel/lodging,

were persistent ideas raised.

Update: All budget leaders were asked to reduce the travel line item in their 2009 budget plans by 15 percent. The company will pay for local travel when traveling to an area that is different from the person's home base minus the regular travel distance/expense. People are asked to travel only when needed for the development of the business. Long distance travel beyond the budgeted amounts must be approved by the Finance Team. Business class travel is expectable for trips abroad, but not for domestic travel. We are not planning any large, overnight off-site meetings for 2009.

Leadership

People wondered what leaders are doing to cut expenses.



Update: All budget leaders have been asked to provide to our newly formed Forecasting Team (Duggie, Hayley, Jim, Ken, Lisa Glickman, Prakash and Regina) a monthly breakdown of expenses each department anticipates for the year. They are also being asked for a more disciplined compliance around the turnover of all expense information during the year. With respect to Leadership Forum meetings and meals, a light lunch will be provided for everyone in the Irvington café when these meetings are held in this location.

Facilities/Office Supplies

Several people pointed out how our Irvington location lends itself to holding some of our company-wide gatherings, such as the holiday party, company meeting, and other big celebrations. People also raised issues related to shipping, ordering of supplies, and renovation plans.



Update: The Finance Team has asked leaders to try to eliminate overnight packages. They have also encouraged ordering supplies from common suppliers in order to get greater discounts.

Human Resources

People asked for more clarity around overtime and temporary workers. They also identified some current benefits they felt we may cut back on.

Update: Leaders have been asked to limit adding any more temps.



All requests for temps must be approved by Shari Simberkoff in Human Resources. Most positions will be filled on a temporary basis. In addition, overtime will be approved on an as-needed basis. We are not planning to cut benefits because during these times in particular, participation in wellness activities may be even more needed.

Product

A number of people raised the idea of having sample sales for the public as a good way to liquidate inventory.



Retail

We received several ideas unique to Retail. (Please see list for retail ideas.)



Thank you for taking the time to submit your ideas. Please continue! We want to hear from you and value your thoughts. You can submit your ideas at ideabox@eileenfisher.com.