



Firm makes recommendations to increase employee morale at UConn

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The Segal Group issued their findings from a University of Connecticut operations review to UConn leaders during a virtual meeting on April 13, identifying four areas of focus: low morale, burdensome processes, fragmented organizational structure and strategic direction refresh, according to a UConn Today press release.

The Segal Group has reviewed UConn’s operations since August 2025. In the UConn Today release, UConn President Radenka Maric and Interim Provost Pamir Alpay said that Segal did not recommend eliminating positions or reducing the size of the university’s workforce.

“[Segal] recommends designing new models within the business and administrative areas that were assessed, which may include shared services or hybrid models that utilize both embedded and shared service functions,” Maric and Alpay said in the release.

Scott Nostaja, senior vice president and national organizational effectiveness practice leader at Segal, said in a NewsTimes article that UConn has taken the approach of doing more with less, leading to “high

risk of errors, workflow, confusion, prolonged turnaround times [and] employee burnout.”

The Segal Group recommended an organizational redesign with clearer roles and standardized processes, according to NewsTimes. Their main goal would be to focus first on the HR department, making sure that tasks are within a shared system.

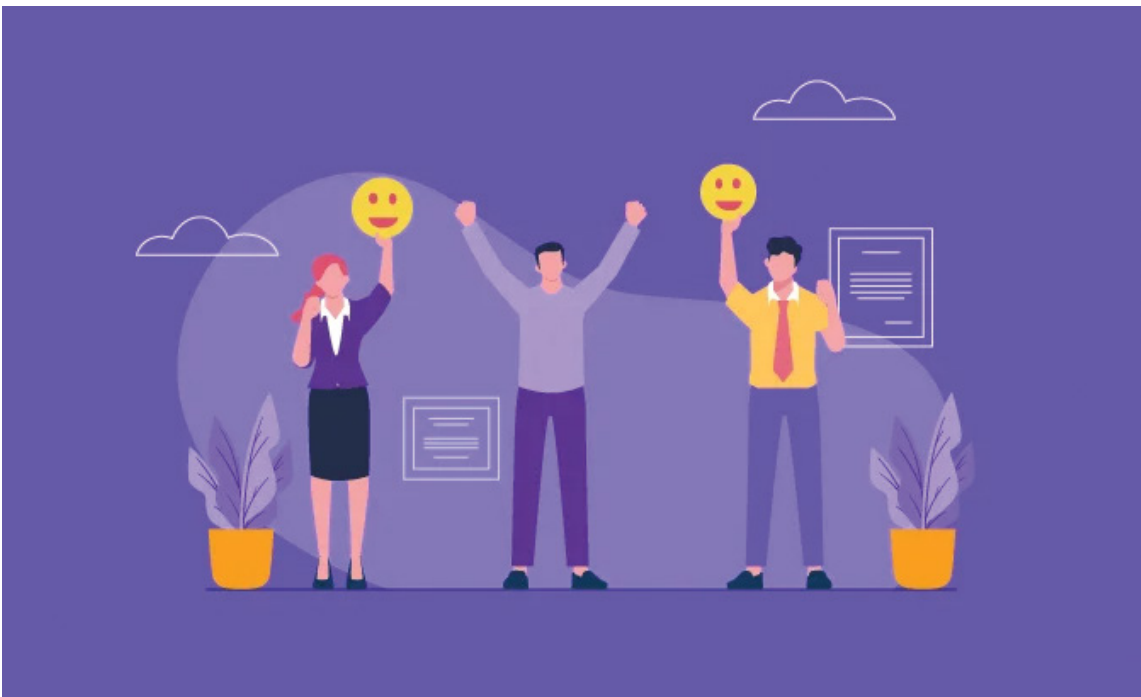
The second concern highlighted in the findings was a lack of connection between systems. This has led to the “confusions, delays and heavy workloads and errors,” according to Segal.

The third point of low morale stems from the uncertainty of the future at UConn, Nostaja said.

“UConn must make an intentional effort to improve culture and morale, and work to increase transparency and elevate communication,” said Nostaja.

The goal of the project is to gather insight that will guide the university’s future planning, according to UConn’s website. The project will also help with “decisions on the organizational design of both business and administrative support functions and marketing and communications functions.”

The assessment data finding



A stock image of employees standing in position positions and holding smiley emojis, displaying good morale. Consulting firm The Segal Group recently recommended that UConn focus on improving low morale, among other things.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PEXELS

area of the study was done with the collection of organizational charts and job descriptions, as well as “one-on-one and group interview with university leaders and staff” according to the HR website.

The interviewees were selected to “represent a cross-section of our campus community in terms of level, experience,

department and roles.”

There will be feedback sessions on May 4-6 as well as two in-person feedback sessions on May 12 in the Homer Babbidge Library, according to a statement the university sent out to employees on April 14.

More information can be found on the Organizational Needs Assessment website, in-

cluding livestream recording and information on how to attend the sessions.

The Segal Group is an HR consulting firm based in New York City. The firm “benefits, compensation, and human resources consulting firm that helps organizations and their people prosper,” according to the Segal Group website.

UConn student launches new study app that turns notes into songs



The logo for MelodyMind, a new study app that converts student notes into songs. MelodyMind was founded by first-semester UConn student Soham Shah.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MELODYMIND.CO

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A first-year University of Connecticut student has founded a new study app, MelodyMind, that converts a student’s notes into memorable songs.

“I wanted to turn my notes into something that I could listen to, and that’s kind of where it started,” said the app’s creator, Soham Shah, a second-semester accounting major.

Shah said the app, which is accessible through a web browser, prompts users to upload notes and automatically generates flashcards with corresponding music. Users may customize both the genre and the mood of the

songs.

The main goal is to help students retain information in an engaging manner, Shah said.

“Studying and memorization was a lot more monotonous than I thought it should be, especially if you’re trying to learn something for the first time,” Shah said.

Shah, who began the project with two other associates last summer, said the app is meant to compete with incumbent software such as Quizlet, but without the same pricing limitations.

“My goal is to help as many people as possible retain information at as low of a cost as I can make it,” Shah said. “Obviously generating revenue would be great, but it is not a project I created for that purpose. I just wanted it

to be something that students could use.”

Shah said he and his colleagues started promoting the app to their friends this past fall and began to further expand the program this semester. The app has around 270 users, some of who are from UConn, and some of who Shah assumes are from other universities.

“It’s mainly college students in terms of who I’m gearing the project towards right now,” Shah said.

Shah said he has been working alongside Stephen Stifano, a professor in the communications department, to implement the app into his introductory communications class. The goal is to determine if students are interested in using the program, Shah said.

In the future, Shah said he may seek university funding if he feels that he needs it, and he will continue to take advantage of the university’s entrepreneurial resources.

Shah is active on social media, and frequently posts short videos geared toward college students. In an Instagram post, Shah said his three professional interests are accounting and business, entrepreneurship and entertainment.

“Growing on social media is an active project of mine,” Shah said.

According to Shah’s LinkedIn profile, he is also working on an ongoing venture called the Neurofibromatosis Student Alliance. The project, which Shah said was inspired by his sister’s battle with neurofibromatosis,

works to advocate for the rare disorder, aiming to increase public awareness.

“My ultimate goal is to continue to make an impact in my own community and the world through the tools I build and initiatives that I launch,” Shah wrote on his LinkedIn profile. “I am a strong believer in the notion that each of us has the potential and responsibility to leave the world a better place than what we found it in our own unique way, through the story we choose to tell.”

Additionally, Shah said he is currently working on other student learning programs, similar to MelodyMind.

“In the next five years, my hope is to grow into as many users as possible and hopefully people will just be benefitted by it,” Shah said.

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