MIT DEPARTMENT SEARCH PRACTICES LISTENING TOUR  
(A Summary)

Keith and Robin met with HR personnel from 5 departments across campus from mid-December through early January to learn about search practices for exempt (administrative) staff. These departments were selected because they are administrative departments and have a large number of administrative staff, similar to the Libraries. It is worth noting that national searches are not common for these departments.

- Vice President for Student Life
- Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education
- Vice President for Finance
- MIT Medical
- Resource Development

We also met with MIT Staffing Services to confirm our understanding of required components of and acceptable strategies for searches.

Topics covered included:
- Search plans
- Use of search committees
- Staff involvement
- Posting period
- Duration of search
- Use of search waivers
- Hiring decision makers
- Background checks
- Use of search firms

There were a number of themes that emerged from these discussions:

1. Search plans are created for each individual search
2. Some form of search committee is appointed for carrying out the search which includes the hiring manager and 1-2 other individuals
3. Staff involvement in the search/interviews is very often limited to the search committee, the local HR director and the immediate work group. Some include small groups of stakeholders if appropriate.
4. The hiring managers make the hiring decision, in consultation with the department’s HR staff.
5. Waivers of search are rare. Internal-only searches were occasionally used. (Staffing Services encourages the use of waivers and internal searches when appropriate.)