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A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE PROCESS AT SELECTED COMMUNITY COLLEGES

By

Linda A. Howdyshell

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ABSTRACT

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE PROCESS AT SELECTED COMMUNITY COLLEGES

By

Linda A. Howdyshell

This dissertation describes the fundamental change process in four community colleges that declared a need to transform and are in the mid-stages of the change process. The qualitative study focused on planned, fundamental change. The literature review traced the change-process literature, categorized it into models and strategies, summarized similarities, and then selected Levy, Kanter, and O'Banion to provide the conceptual framework.

Interviews of 18 key informants, document analysis, and observations from the four maximum-varied community colleges yielded a picture of the change process. The change processes began with the presidents declaring a need for change. Then, the change processes supported by change implementors floundered or flourished in the change-resistant academic environment. The change implementors included the instructional vice-president and designated change agent. The fundamental change process was successful when the instructional vice-president linked the presidential vision to the faculty.

Factors contributing to the success of the fundamental change process were collegewide recognition of the need to change, and cultural change which resulted in improved collegial relationship. Factors not contributing to the success or failure of the fundamental change initiatives were institutional size, length of presidential tenure, and the presence of a faculty union.

Recommendations include avoid moving from the first stage until the executive staff and dominant coalition of the faculty agree there is a reason to change; ensure support for the process through reallocating resources, effecting decision making, and recognizing contributions of change supporters.

Finally, community colleges are not entities of themselves but based in the community, so transformational change will require changes both in the whole educational system and in the expectations of the community.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Overview of the Problem

Few would argue that, at the end of the twentieth century, change is ubiquitous. Indeed, the likelihood of maintaining the status quo is low (Hairston, 1996). In fact, "organizational environments are now so turbulent that the notion an organization can do in the future what it has done in the past makes sense to very few people, if any at all" (Alfred & Carter, 1993, p. 47).

Numerous authors have discussed the demand for ongoing planned change in organizations and the necessity for corporations to stimulate continuous innovation in order to meet the demands within their environments (Kotter, 1996; Senge, 1990; Stacey, 1992; Tushman & Reilly, 1997). Organizations are simultaneously looking for new markets and new innovations while improving management processes, as they compete in the global community. Three-quarters of the respondents to a national business survey reported that their organizations were engaged in four or more changes and that the volume, momentum, and complexity of the changes they were facing were on the rise (Organizational Dynamics Research, 1997). The inevitability of change has been accepted (Burke, 1995).

Interest in the "management of change" has increased dramatically in the last decade (Roos, 1997). In one study, it was found that 84% of American companies were undergoing a major business transformation, with fully 68% having a "change management process" in place (Little, 1994). A variety of researchers have suggested that although some organizational change initiatives have produced the desired process outcomes, few have met expectations. Peters (1990) found that 80% of total quality management (TQM) initiatives had failed. The same dismal outcomes have been reported for process reengineering (Schwartz, 1994).

The massive changes that are occurring throughout business and industry are intruding into the academic realm, as well (Rowley, 1997). Management consultant Peter Drucker (1997) speculated in Forbes that "thirty years from now the major campuses will be relics" (www.Forbes.archives). Only three years earlier, he had articulated the belief that "knowledge equals wealth and strength" and that having a college education was no longer a luxury but a necessity (Drucker, 1994).

Nicholas Negroponte (1997), professor of media technology, predicted that "within 10 to 15 years, half of United States citizens will get their degrees over the Internet rather than by attending a 'brick and mortar' institution. To survive, colleges and universities will need to create knowledge. You will all have to be research universities" (p. 36). He forecasted, "If you're not making knowledge, you won't be teaching anything" (p. 37).

Reengeneering pioneer James Champy (1997) emphasized that there is no choice today but for colleges and universities to

> . . . revolutionize their administrative, academic and research areas in order to accomplish the radical change that is needed. Colleges and universities have barely been touched by the kinds of extraordinary change that will be required to operate successfully in the future.

Baldridge (1984) lamented the lack of successful innovation on campuses: "Out of every ten innovative ideas introduced on our college campuses, only one is likely to be a success. . . . The history of academic innovation is a history of failure" (p. 5). Perelman (1992) censured all educators, saying, "The principal barrier to economic progress today is a mind-set that seeks to perfect education when it needs only to be abandoned" (p. 24). As Champy (1997) wrote, "At the end of the 20th century, everything in our society is undergoing change. The health care industry has been undergoing a revolution, and in the next decade so will higher education."

Therefore, the question most appropriate for this decade is not *whether* organizations should change, but *how* to change (Kanter, Stein, & Jick, 1992). Everyone in education today must deal with how to change (Stevens, 1994).

The Nature of Fundamental Change

Organizational change occurs at two levels. Change that is cosmetic and temporary was described as a "small-c change" by Kuhn (1962). DeBono (1971) described change that maintains continuity as "vertical change." Other scholars (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Greiner, 1972; Kindler, 1979; Vicker, 1965) also have distinguished between these two types of change, with the first type being a change process that permits the current organization to do "more of the same, but better" (Kindler, 1979, p. 478).

The second type of change, "capital-C change," requires a fundamental modification of organizational behavior (Kanter, 1996, p. 11). This type of change is "transformational," stated Kindler (1979), for it requires "reconceptualization and discontinuity from the initial system" (p. 478). Fundamental change or transformational change was termed "second-order change" by Levy, "lateral change" by DeBono, "revolutionary change" by Greiner, and "double-loop learning" by Argyris and Schon (Levy, 1995).

Despite a marked difference in terms, there is consensus on the meaning of both concepts: (a) First-order change is incremental change, and (b) second-order change is fundamental change. First-order change consists of naturally occurring, minor improvements that do not change the essence of the organization. Second-order change or fundamental change is defined as "change in all four organizational dimensions: in core processes, in mission and purpose, in culture, and in paradigm" (Levy, 1995, p. 112). In this study, the term "fundamental change" means bringing enduring changes into the core of the organization.

Change Within Community Colleges

Community colleges have been heralded as part of the educational system designed both to build the technical work force needed by corporate America (Cohen & Brawer, 1982; O'Banion, 1989) and to develop the knowledge-age workers essential to fuel a global economy (Drucker, 1994). However, after 18 months of study, the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges' Commission on the Future of Community Colleges (1988) presented a grim future. They found that community colleges were affected by (a) the national criticism of education, (b) "a rapidly shifting environment," (c) slowed growth, (d) communities that were reluctant to continue supporting the community colleges' mission, (e) internal competition, and (f) an "erosion of the inspired sense of purpose that drove their growth in the 1960s" (p. vii).

> Modern community college leaders operate in a time of never-before-seen uncertainty and change. On a macro level, community college administrators are facing massive fluctuations in national, state and local economies; wide legislative swings; significant demographic shifts; and expensive and seemingly unending technological improvements. On the local level, state system priorities, board changes, faculty unions or associations, and a host of other quandaries vie for attention and action. (Hodges & Milliron, 1997, p. 1)

Other similar articles have focused on massive change issues facing community colleges. Carter and Alfred (1996) admonished community colleges "to adopt an attitude which accepts that future performance will be directly linked to accurately predicting forthcoming change, increasing the capacity of colleges to effectively respond to change, and to identify novel approaches to organizational transformation" (p. 2). To achieve their mission, community colleges must achieve successful change through planned change processes.

Finding Fundamental Change Models

Leading community colleges have begun transforming their processes, their missions, and their structures through various planned change strategies in an attempt to provide higher quality services, programs, and, ultimately, a better match between the skills of their students and the needs of business and industry

(O'Banion, 1997). However, there is a discrepancy between how people think about change and how they are able to implement a change process (Orlikowski & Hofman, 1997). Models for implementing change are few. Goodstein and Burke (1995) stated, "We are only beginning to understand the nature of change and how to manage the process involved" (p. 8). Kanter (1985) declared that "despite volumes of literature on planned change, legions of consultants, and the best efforts of corporate leaders, organizational change still appears to be a chaotic process. It is frequently mismanaged, beset by unexpected developments, and often largely unfulfilled" (p. 85). Therefore, the focus of this study was on the fundamental change process in community colleges.

Purpose of the Study

The best strategy for responding to rapid societal change is fundamental change or changing the essence of the organization (Alfred & Carter, 1993). Therefore, understanding the fundamental change process in community colleges is not merely helpful but indeed is necessary for survival. Responding to Alfred and Carter's recommendation, a fundamental change is a change in the organization's core: Processes change, goals change, culture changes, and the organizational paradigm changes. This is distinct from unplanned change or changes that merely improve "the way things are" (Levy, 1995, p. 112).

In this study, the researcher focused on voluntarily initiated, planned fundamental change in community colleges. The study describes the change process at four community colleges that declared a "transformational" change process, implemented the change, and were in the midstages of that change process. Examples of fundamental changes that may have been initiated are:

- Change in mission and/or vision.
- Change in population served or curriculum focus.
- Change in administrative structure (from centralized to team based, decentralized to centralized).
- Institutional effort to measure institutional effectiveness and student academic achievement.
- Change in "the way we do things" (rites and rituals, patterns of relating).
- Change in a core process (master class schedule, budget reallocation).

Specifically, through the perceptions of the individuals involved, the writer characterizes the fundamental change process at four community colleges, the external and internal factors affecting their progress, and the strategies used to attempt transformation. From the findings, a list of propositions for assessing fundamental change processes also may be derived.

Research Questions

Given the researcher's belief that community colleges must transform in order to achieve their mission, the researcher's goal was to gain knowledge through describing the fundamental change process. The basic research question was: How does fundamental change occur at community colleges? From the basic research question, three subquestions evolved:

1. Why was the adoption decision made?
2. How much planning, priority, and support did the change process have?
3. What changed as a result of the change process?

Significance of the Study

The management of planned change is not a trivial undertaking. Kanter et al. (1992) commented on the need for more scholarly work on the change process:

> Organizational theorists have produced much more work, and work of greater depth and intellectual sophistication, on the recalcitrance of organizations and their people--how and why they resist change--than on the change process. Maybe the first is easier, because "change" is an elusive concept. (p. 279)

This study is important because, in times of increasingly rapid change, understanding theories and strategies for fundamental change can lead to the powerful organizational improvements required to respond to society's needs. Developing an understanding of the fundamental change process is vital for continued competitiveness, not only for community colleges but also for the United States.

This study also is important because, despite a plethora of management literature, college leaders stumble into homemade processes, modifying and tinkering as they muddle along. Practitioners find information on transformation, reform, organizational change, and transformational leadership by sporadic fact-finding processes. These fact-finding missions occur through networks of colleagues, word of mouth, and presentations at conventions and association meetings. However, these methods of gathering information are bound by the lack of time and access. The practical application of this study of fundamental change in community colleges may equip practitioners to "do" change more effectively by guiding them toward more thoughtful change processes.

A clearer understanding of the change process within community colleges will shed new light on particular theories and strategies. It will simplify the complexity of change so that change implementors can better understand both the opportunities and the limits, and discern which methods can be useful within a collegial environment.

Further, this study is important because it contributes to the literature on organizational change in community colleges. Previous researchers have conducted primarily content-specific studies of change or the diffusion of innovations. This researcher studied four dissimilar community colleges to provide descriptive details of planned fundamental change processes. Also notable in this study is the role of the change agent, called the quality advisor, in the change process.

Design of the Study

Using a qualitative approach, the study consisted of semi-structured interviews conducted on-site during field study visits to four selected colleges. Interviews were conducted with the president, academic vice-president, quality advisor, other administrators, and faculty members. Findings were compared by role across institutions and within each institution. Related documents were gathered to inform the researcher on how change was instituted in public ways. Data were analyzed to assess:

- The level of change.
- The role individuals appeared to play in implementing change on their campuses.
- The strategies used on each campus.
- The outcome, in the interviewees' perceptions, of the change process.

From this analysis, a better description of institutional change processes emerged.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms are defined in the context in which they are used in this study:

Change agent. A change agent is an individual who seeks to secure the adoption of new ideas (Rogers, 1983). Specifically, for this study, the change agent is the individual identified as the Continuous Quality Improvement Network of Community Colleges' (CQIN) quality advisor and charged with implementing change at the institution.

Community colleges. Community colleges, also called junior colleges or technical colleges, are accredited to award the associate degree as their highest degree (Cohen & Brawer, 1982). Parnell (1985) cited "being in a partnership with the communities they serve" (p. 88) as an essential characteristic of community colleges.

Fundamental organizational change. Second-order change or fundamental change is defined as "change in all four organizational dimensions: in core processes, in mission and purpose, in culture, and in paradigm" (Levy, 1995, p. 112). It is a planned rather than an unplanned, chance occurrence.

Innovation. "Innovation is an idea, practice or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption" (Rogers, 1983, p. 11).

Levels of organizational change. A distinction in levels can be made between (a) fundamental, large-scale change in the organization's strategy and culture--a transformation--and (b) fine-tuning, fixing problems; that is, implementing modest changes that improve the organization's performance yet do not fundamentally change the organization (Goodstein & Burke, 1995, pp. 8-9).

Model. A model is an "underlying theory that guides thought and behavior" (Davis & Newstrom, 1985, p. 561).

Organizational transformation. Organizational transformation is "the creation of a new organizational reality. It requires changing not only the practices, policies, behaviors, and structures but also the underlying mental models, meanings and consciousness of the people involved" (Nevis, Lancourt, & Vassallo, 1996, pp. 12-13).

Outcomes. The results of a program, process, or change strategy are termed outcomes.

Paradigm shift. A paradigm is a cognitive model of how things are or a standard for how things should be. "A paradigm shift is a distinctly new way of thinking about old problems" (Ferguson, 1980, p. 26).

Process. A process is a series of actions, changes, or functions bringing about a result.

Role. Role refers to the expectations of behavior learned in order to accomplish assigned tasks and relate to people while fulfilling the responsibilities of a given position (Lau & Shani, 1992, p. 633).

Staff. Staff defines all college employees, regardless of their classification. This includes administrators, faculty, and support staff (technical and professional, as well as maintenance personnel). Staff are considered to be full-time employees.

Strategy. A strategy is "a defined course of action that is adopted by college leadership in order to shape the character, scope, and direction of the college" (Myran, 1983, p. 11).

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter I included an introduction and statement of the problem, a discussion of the nature of fundamental change, the purpose of the study, the research questions, significance of the research, the study design, and definitions of key terms. A review of selected literature relevant to the change process is presented in Chapter II. Chapter III includes an explanation of the methodology that evolved during the course of the research. The data and the findings are presented in Chapter IV. Chapter V contains the conclusions drawn from the study findings, as well as recommendations based on this research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

In any organization, change is a complicated undertaking. This is particularly true for community colleges, which have inherited an educational system that is "time-bound, place-bound, efficiency-bound, and role-bound (O'Banion, 1997, p. 9). This review of literature is intended to accomplish three purposes: (a) to define types of organizational change, (b) to provide background information on community colleges and organizational change, and (c) to find appropriate organizational change models and strategies that will enhance understanding of the change process within community colleges.

Definition of Organizational Change

Although Miles (1964) observed that "change is a very nearly undefined, primitive term" (p. 79) and Jones (1969) asserted that it is a somewhat self-explanatory term, there are many existing definitions of change in the literature. In Maguire's (1970) review of such writings, he observed that various authors often have used the same terms to refer to different things, while also using different terms to refer to the same things. Such terms as "diffusion," "dissemination," "model," "change," "innovation," "strategy," and "tactics" have been used interchangeably and therefore are confusing. Maguire asserted:

> [Anyone] who wishes to benefit from the insights of various writers faces the burdensome and time-consuming task of translating these insights into a common language that is meaningful. . . . [One] is also frequently in the position of trying to use what . . . has [been] read only to find out that what was read is not what the writer meant. When joined with the immense quantity and inconsistent nature of the literature on change, these factors effectively preclude the widespread utilization of the literature by practitioners. (p. 1)

The conventional concept of organizational change typically assumes movement between some discrete and rather fixed states. However, it is more accurate to view organizational change as ubiquitous and multidirectional (Kanter et al., 1992).

Organizations must deal with change as an inevitable and universal phenomenon that is constantly occurring. Organizations can change through skillful interventions, also.

> Change need not be a haphazard occurrence with its frequent problems of dysfunctionalism. Organizational settings can be changed by the skillful employment of social science knowledge and technology, in that they become effective in utilizing their energies and resources for goal attainment. (Jones, 1969, p. 3)

Summary. Much change in organizations occurs as a response to disturbances from within or outside the organization. This study is not about "haphazard" change occurring within an organization. Instead, the focus of this study was on voluntary, planned organizational change strategies and actions designed to achieve fundamental change.

Definitions of Types of Organizational Change

Differentiating Unplanned From Planned Change

> The difference between transformation by accident and transformation by system is like the difference between lightning and a lamp. Both give illumination, but one is dangerous and unreliable, while the other is relatively safe, directed, available. (Ferguson, 1980, p. 257)

Given the focus of this study on planned change, it is helpful to review the approaches taken by organizational scholars to define planned organizational change.

Lippitt, Watson, and Westley (1958) distinguished between spontaneous or evolutionary change, fortuitous or accidental change, and planned change. The first two types are unplanned; unplanned change originates outside of the system experiencing the change. Planned change originates with a decision by the system to deliberately improve its functioning.

Huse (1975) differentiated between change as something that happened to an organization and planned change as an organized effort to make something happen. Other theoreticians (Kleiner & Corrigan, 1989; Levy & Merry, 1986; Lippitt, 1982) also have divided change into two classes, planned and unplanned. A slightly different taxonomy was offered by Hopkins (1984), who identified three types of change, namely, accidental, purposive, and innovative.

Bennis, Benne, and Chin (1969), major advocates for the concept of planned change, defined planned change as a method that employs social technology to solve the problems of society. The method encompasses the application of systematic and appropriate knowledge of human affairs for the purpose of creating intelligent action and choices. Planned change relates to the behavioral sciences as engineering does to the physical sciences; thus, planned change can be viewed as a crucial link between knowledge and actions.

Jones (1969) approached planned change from a different perspective, although he incorporated many of the tenets outlined in the works of Bennis, Benne, and Chin (1969) and Lippitt et al. (1958). He recognized the complexity of organizational life and agreed with many other scholars that organizations are multilevel, multi-goal-seeking systems, therefore creating a significant difference in meaning between planned and managed change. Jones defined planned change as

> . . . to devise or project a course of action. The important feature is that a plan can take place only before the inception of the social action. A plan must include a goal or goals which are formulated against a sound understanding of the nature of the environment and of the variables operating therein. (p. 5)

Thus, the concept of planned change, according to Jones, is most appropriate only when an administrator is in a position to devise and implement a comprehensive action program from the beginning.

Huse (1975) examined different change models and created the following categories of organizational change models: (a) research and development, (b) social interaction and diffusion, (c) intervention, (d) planned change, and (e) action research (p. 90). Huse found that the last two change types were the most prevalent. Planned change differs from action research in that action research links research to action and requires the change agent to be both the facilitator of change and the researcher of data.

Briefly, the characteristics of planned organizational change are:

- Planned change originates with a deliberate decision to improve organizational functioning.
- Planned change requires a change-implementation plan.
- Planned change engages an outside resource to help in the processes of making these improvements.
- Planned change involves collaboration and empowerment between a change agent and an organization (Bennis et al., 1976; Huse, in Burke, 1995; Margulies & Raia, 1978).

Summary. In summary, planned change is viewed as organizational renewal. It is a "conscious, deliberate, and usually collaborative effort to improve the operations of a system--whether it be self-system, social system, or cultural system--through the utilization of knowledge and skills" (Lippitt, 1982, p. 52). It usually involves a change facilitator and an organized effort to bring about change. Planned change is the perspective used in this study.

Other Types of Planned Change

Incremental change or *kaizen*, managed change, innovation, and organizational transitions are common terms in the study of planned change. Incremental change, *kaizen*, involves hundreds of small, incremental improvements applied to processes and outcomes as a means of continuous improvement. Over time, they can lead to fundamental organizational change (Imai, 1986). Managed change refers to the way managers deliberately shape or implement a planned change strategy (Tichy, 1983).

For most scholars, innovation means introducing a single new idea or product to an organization.

> Innovation refers to the process of bringing any new, problem-solving ideas into use. Ideas for reorganizing, cutting cost, putting in new budgeting systems, improving communication, or assembling products in teams are also innovations. Innovation is the generation, acceptance, and implementation of new ideas, products or services. (Kanter, 1983, p. 20)

In a change process, the new method, process, or innovation can replace the old way immediately; however, for the individuals involved there is a transition. A transition is a prolonged period of no-man's land between the old reality and the new one. The transition can be encouraged but not forced to happen. People will resist changes unless they can see that the change is a solution to a problem that is significant to them. Also, continuing change will depend on how much one has to personally "let go" of a valued way of doing things to achieve the desired improvement. The transition process is three part: the ending or the letting go of the current, the neutral zone or no-man's land, and the beginning, adopting the new behavior (Bridges, 1988).

Summary. In summary, incremental change or change, innovation, and transitions, explains aspects of planned change. These terms are not as comprehensive as is planned change.

Defining Fundamental Change

There is consensus about the concept of planned change, but the definition of second-order change has not been as thoroughly researched and defined (Levy, 1995, p. 103). Among the few who have dealt with this issue is Smith (1982), whose definition provides a broad framework. Smith described first-order change as incremental, minor improvements and adjustments that occur naturally as the organization grows. Second-order change is within the organization's core and is, thus, irreversible.

Levy (1995) defined second-order change as "change in four dimensions: in core processes, in mission and purpose, in culture, and in the organization's world view or paradigm" (p. 112). Second-order change is sometimes referred to as "fundamental change" or "transformational change" (Levy, 1995, p. 105).

Argyris and Schon's (1978) concept of organizational learning was similar to first- and second-order change because learning involves the detection and correction of errors. They differentiated between single-loop learning, in which members respond to a changing environment in a way that allows them to maintain their current culture, and double-loop learning, in which external change is detected and responded to in ways that change the organization's culture. For second-order, fundamental change to occur, the organization members must unlearn previous beliefs, be open to new inputs, and relearn new assumptions and behaviors (Schein, 1991).

The labels of both first-order and second-order change are different, but the concepts are complementary among management, learning, organizational, physical science, and system scholars. The characteristics of first-order change in organizations are:

1. Change in one dimension, one level, one or two behavioral aspects.
2. Quantitative change.
3. Improvements in the same direction, incremental change.
4. Reversible changes.
5. Change that does not alter the organizational paradigm, so the current way of thinking and acting is not altered.

Second-order organizational change:

1. Is multidimensional, multilevel, including all behavioral aspects.
2. Is qualitative.
3. Moves in a new direction, revolutionary jumps.
4. Is irreversible change.
5. Is change that results in a new paradigm and in new ways of thinking and acting (Levy, 1995, p. 106).

Fundamental change or transformation is required when an organization must do things differently to continue to exist, or survive. Indeed, there is some evidence (Alfred & Carter, 1996; Cross, 1984; Drucker, 1992; O'Banion, 1997) that community colleges are in need of transformation.

Summary. In this study, the term "fundamental change" means changing at the organization's core or transforming. This researcher focused on planned, fundamental (transformational) change.

Models and Strategies for Organizational Change

Among the writers on fundamental change, there are proponents of various models and strategies for organizational change. Models of change and strategies for change are very similar and frequently overlap; however, they are categorized by those definitions in the next section. A model is an "underlying theory that guides thought and behavior" (Davis & Newstrom, 1985, p. 561), and a strategy is a method, "a defined course of action that is adopted . . . in order to shape the character, scope and direction of the college" (Myran, 1983, p. 11).

Models of Organizational Change

Since World War II, there has been a steady evolution of change approaches, starting with the work done by Kurt Lewin (1951), the father of planned change. His three-stage model of change also suggests strategy. The first step of the change process is to "unfreeze" the present patterns of behavior through new information or new leadership interventions, as a way of reducing the forces that kept the organization at the current place. The second step, "movement," involves making the actual changes that will move the organization to another level. The final stage of the change process, "refreezing," involves stabilizing or institutionalizing the changes with new support systems, policies, or cultural norms (Beckhard & Harris, 1987; Beer, 1980; Kanter, 1983; Lewin, 1951; Nadler & Tushman, 1988; Tichy & Devanna, 1986).

Lewin (1958) developed the concept of force-field analysis to further explain the change process. A number of forces either assist or resist change. Whereas these forces are balanced the majority of the time, change will occur if one set was strengthened or the other set weakened.

Rogers's (1983) model for planned change consists of five stages: (a) agenda setting, (b) matching, (c) redefining/restructuring, (d) clarifying, and (e) routinizing. Although other models identify various stages, most include the following three: initiation, implementation, and routinization.

The initiation stage may include the generation of an idea or the acceptance of an existing innovation and its proposed introduction in the system. This stage involves the recognition that the former way of doing things is no longer acceptable and that there is a need to find available resources to support the change process.

The implementation stage is the most crucial in the change process. At this stage, the organization adopts a new vision of the future and organizes its resources to achieve that vision. The failure of many innovative endeavors has been attributed to the lack of proper attention given to this stage (Rogers, 1983).

The third stage has been variously called routinization, institutionalization, integration, or incorporation; it denotes the final stage in the change process. This is either the point at which the innovative practice loses its "special project status and becomes part of the routinized behavior of the institutional system" (Berman & McLaughlin, 1974, p. 17), or it is discontinued.

Much attention has been paid to defining the stages in the change process. Hage (1980) attributed this to a preoccupation with the stages that stem from Rogers's massive work on the literature of the diffusion of change. In his compendium on the diffusion of innovations, Rogers (1983) synthesized approximately 3,100 publications treating diffusion research. He defined diffusion as the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among members of a social system. Five factors have been identified as important in transferring new ideas to others: (a) relative advantage--What's in it for me? (b) compatibility--How much do I have to change to use it? (c) simplicity--How easy is it to use? (d) easy to test--Can I try it and then go back to the former way? and (e) observability--Where can I see it operational? (p. 5).

The stages or phases in the change process are illustrated in Figure 1 (Levy, 1995; Lewin, 1962; Rodgers, 1983). The figure delineates two types of inputs, an adoption stage, a transformation stage, and a stabilization stage, which yields the new outputs.

Planned organizational change, then, is typically modeled as a three-stage process that takes a declining organization, moves it through a difficult transition stage, and leaves it at the end in a desired state. There are theorists who dissect planned organizational change differently than the stage theorists do.

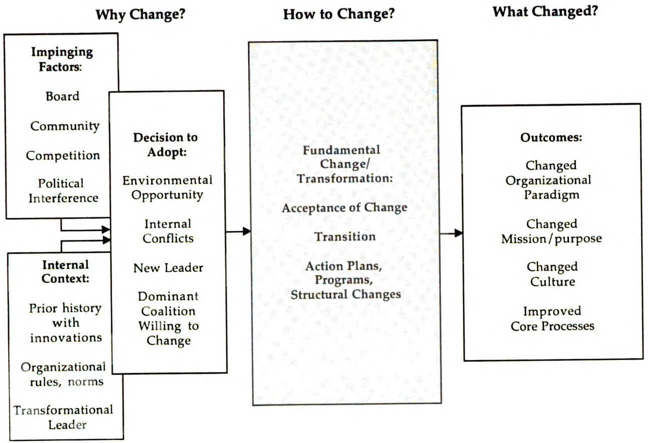
Why Change?
How to Change?
What Changed?
Impinging Factors:
Board
Community
Competition
Political Interference
Internal Context:
Prior history with innovations
Organizational rules, norms
Transformational Leader
Decision to Adopt:
Environmental Opportunity
Internal Conflicts
New Leader
Dominant Coalition Willing to Change
Fundamental Change/ Transformation:
Acceptance of Change
Transition
Action Plans, Programs, Structural Changes
Outcomes:
Changed Organizational Paradigm
Changed Mission/purpose
Changed Culture
Improved Core Processes

Figure 1: Fundamental change process model.

Source: Adapted from "Second-order planned change: Definition and conceptualization," by A. Levy, 1995, in W. W. Burke (Ed.), Managing organizational change, New York: American Management Association.

Leavitt (1964) maintained that there are three major approaches to the study of planned organizational change: structural, technological, and people. Structural approaches deal with formal guidelines and procedures (i.e., organization charts, budgeting methods, rules and regulations). Technological approaches are concerned with the arrangement of work flow (i.e., new physical layouts, work methods, job descriptions, work standards). The people approach involves alteration in attitudes, motivation, and behavior and skills (i.e., new training programs). Bennis et al. (1969) added "task" to Leavitt's three-part classification.

Tichy (1983) believed that strategic management of change requires raising basic questions about the fundamental nature of the organization. He provided a technical, political, and cultural (TPC) framework. Later, Tichy and Devanna (1986) developed a three-part model: Act I, Awakening; Act II, Mobilizing; and Act III, Reinforcing (p. 376). Tichy wrote that internal politics is seldom talked about openly, yet it often is the major use of top-level management's time and resources.

The 7-S Model or MacKensie Model evolved from Peters and Waterman's (1982) study of excellent organizations. The model illustrated the relationship among structure, strategy, systems, style, skills, staff, and shared values that is necessary for effective organizational change.

Bolman and Deal (1997) presented four frames to use for gaining insights into major organizational issues. The human resource frame focuses on skills and involvement, the structural frame on alignment, the political frame on conflict, and the symbolic frame on loss. They explained that

> restructuring, recruiting, and retraining can be powerful levers of change but they must be done in concert. . . . Change alters power relationships and undermines existing agreements and pacts. . . . Below the surface, the organization's social tapestry begins to unravel, threatening both time-honored traditions and prevailing cultural values and practices. (Bolman & Deal, 1997, p. 320)

Senge (1990) described increasing organizational capacity by becoming a "learning organization."

> A learning organization is an organization in which people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together. (p. 3)

The learning organization model, although not classified as a change model, would fundamentally change organizations. Senge required five "disciplines": personal mastery, shared vision, mental models, team learning, and system thinking. Individual, team, and system learning would take place simultaneously and result in organizational learning or change.

Brill and Worth (1997) described four "levers" or change drivers that administrators can use to initiate change and give the implementation momentum:

1. an understanding of human nature so traits such as anxiety are converted to trust,
2. a skillful wielding of power,
3. a utilization of group social process to transform employees' belief systems, and
4. effective, credible leadership. (p. 162)

Levy (1995) explained second-order, transformative, change as a cycle characterized by decline, transformation, transition, and stabilization (p. 108). Decline occurs when external and internal needs are not being met by the organization. There is denial, avoidance, resistance, and procrastination. The second phase is transformation, which includes acceptance of the need for change, disconnecting with the past, shifting perception, and "letting go." The third phase includes planning and implementing ideas and vision into programs, structures, and policies. During this period, the focus is on restabilizing the organization. The fourth and final phase is stabilization and development. This is when the change is institutionalized and first-order improvements are begun (Levy, 1995, p. 108).

In actual practice, a new order is not quickly established. Fundamental organizational change takes time, energy, and resources to achieve. To be successful, change must be addressed in a comprehensive way by clearly articulating the changes required and identifying critical success factors (Carr, Hard, & Trahant, 1996, p. 23). Second, the type of change and the direction of the change are in the hands of the organization's members. Surely, increasing understanding of organizational evolution assists practitioners to develop strategies for achieving fundamental change (Levy, 1995).

The different models are summarized in Table 1, which shows the considerable consistency in classifying strategies. An "X" in the table indicates that the model did not mention that particular factor. Leavitt's (1964) categories of structural, technical, and task are consistently represented throughout the models, although they are called by different names. Bolman and Deal (1997) add the dimension of a political and symbolic frame to the other models. Levy's model of an organizational cycle provides yet another perspective.

Table 1: Models of planned change processes.

Leavitt (1964)	Bennis (1969)	Tichy (1983)	Senge (1990)	MacKensie (1992)	Brill & Worth (1997)	Bolman & Deal (1997)
STP	Planned change	TPC	Learning organization	7-S	4 levers	Framing
Structural	Structure	X	X	Structure	Lead effectively, credible	Structural frame
X	Task	X	System thinking	Systems	Utilize social process	X
Technical	Technology	Technical	Team learning	Strategy	X	X
People	People	Cultural	Personal mastery, shared vision, mental models	Staff, shared vision, skills	Support human anxiety	Human resource frame
X	X	Political	X	Style	Wield power carefully	Political frame
X	X	X	X	X	X	Symbolic frame

Another Way of Understanding Organizational Change

One of the foremost advocates for using physical science models to understand organizations is Margaret Wheatley. Wheatley (1992) pronounced that the Newtonian mechanistic model hinders one's ability to change. She maintained that the world is "self-organizing and that everywhere in nature there is change going on. Change is growth and development. In nature change is not an event but the way things are" (p. 24). She insisted, "People don't resist change, they resist being changed" (p. 51). She believed,

> People are not inert, resistant lumps. We have had years and years of believing that without our efforts people will do nothing; without our plans and design, our organizations will fall apart. But this is not the world we live in. Organizational leaders need to realize that complex systems can emerge, not from their design, but when individuals interact with one another around some simple straightforward principles of interaction and purpose. (p. 19)

Wheatley (1992) concluded that deep and meaningful involvement of the whole organization is required for sustained change. She continued,

> I believe the key question is "can we involve the expertise and experience of everyone in the organization?" We've got to figure out how we can avoid the temptation to design things for people instead of engaging them and creating their own responses to change. (p. 21)

Summary. The models discussed in this section are useful for increasing understanding of the change process. It is necessary to recognize that change is not accomplished with a lock-step march toward a goal nor a simple recipe that can be mixed into an organization (Kanter et al., 1992, p. 494). The stage model of planned fundamental change is the most frequently used model for explaining the change process.

Strategies for Organizational Change

There are numerous theories on change but few on changing (Huse, 1975). Theories have been guiding planned organizational change for years, and the current management literature is replete with strategies.

Strategies are important as "plans for the future and patterns from the past" (Mintzberg, 1987, p. 66). Mintzberg advocated a "crafting" image rather than the long-held "planning" imagery, which he believed distorts the change process and misguides organizations. He suggested that "formulation and implementation merge into a fluid process of learning through which creative strategies evolve" (p. 67). Creating effective strategy synthesizes the future, the present, and the past.

The names of the factors within organizational change strategies vary, but they all focus on responding to external environments by improving agility and flexibility through speeding up processes, developing breakthrough products, and finding cost reductions. The most frequently mentioned strategies are total quality management (TQM) and reengineering. Other popular strategies include management by objectives (MBO), transformational leadership, systems theory, quantum theory, seven habits, downsizing, and rightsizing. New and interesting alternative ideas also have been advanced by advocates of chaos theory and "the new science."

Lippitt et al. (1958) were among the first to develop an overall strategy for implementing planned change. Although it was modified and redefined later, their basic concept of planned change as a dynamic, seven-step process remains solid: scouting, entry, diagnosis, planning, action, evaluation, and termination.

TQM is an organizational strategy that involves leadership commitment, customer focus, data-based decisions, continuous improvement, and teamwork. When implementing TQM, both analytical tools and philosophy are used. TQM is an incremental change process that may lead to fundamental change (Norris & Dolence, 1994).

In their book Reengineering the Corporation, Hammer and Champy (1993) advocated "fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvement in critical, contemporary measures of performance, such as cost, quality, service, and speed" (p. 6). The change drivers are the increasing demands of consumers, the changing nature of competition, and the accelerating rate of change. They are now, according to Hammer and Champy, drivers of second-order change. Reengineering strategies capitalize on a perceived need to avoid fixing a flawed process and impatience with incremental improvements brought by TQM.

Kanter et al. (1992) presented two broad themes for implementing change. The first theme was that "change is extraordinarily difficult and the fact that it occurs successfully at all is something of a miracle" (p. 370). They presented the difficulty of change to dispel the idea that it can be achieved by following a recipe-like plan correctly through all the steps.

Their second theme was that no one makes change happen alone; the entire organization must participate. Three groups within an organization--change strategists, change implementors, and change recipients--must be coordinated if change is to be implemented effectively. Strategists lay the foundation for change and develop a vision. They link the organization with its environment. Implementors develop the plans and implement the steps to achieve the vision. Recipients adopt or fail to adopt the change plan. Their response to the promised future, redistribution of tasks, and rewards determines whether the organization mobilizes. In successful implementations, the key players develop a process that enables them to coordinate and build on each other's work.

In addition to the three groups of people who must implement the change, Kanter et al. (1992) presented the "ten commandments" for executing change. The grouping is theirs, but the strategies summarize and draw from a wide range of sources:

> 1. Analyze the organization and its need for change.
> 2. Create a shared vision and common direction.
> 3. Separate from the past.
> 4. Create a sense of urgency.
> 5. Support a strong leader role.
> 6. Line up political sponsorship.
> 7. Craft an implementation plan.
> 8. Develop enabling structures.
> 9. Communicate, involve people, and be honest.
> 10. Reinforce and institutionalize change. (p. 383)

The key to innovation and change for Kanter (1983) is integrative action, "the willingness to move beyond received wisdom, to combine ideas from unconnected sources, [and] to embrace change as an opportunity to test limits" (p. 25), rather than segmentalism. Problems need to be seen as wholes and related to the larger systems; established practices should be challenged "rather than walling off a piece of experience and preventing it from being touched or affected by any new experiences" (Kanter et al., 1992, p. 27). Integrative organizations encourage the treatment of problems as wholes and facilitate integrative thinking, which actively embraces change.

Segmentalism is anti-change and prevents innovation. Segmental organizations compartmentalize events and actions, and keep problems isolated. Segmentalists see problems as narrowly as possible, independent of context or connections to other problems. Past and present structures dominate the future. As a problem-solving response, segmentalism is close to local rationality theories of decision making--the idea that any problem should be divided into subproblems and each given to a different subunit to solve with no interaction among units (Kanter, 1983).

As an organization matures and becomes stable, success may breed complacency to the point where it simply replicates formulas that worked well in the past. The irony is that change requires stability.

> Time is one of the first requirements for significant long-term organizational changes. . . . There is less automatic or habitual action in any change effort and more action that is a result of conscious reflection. People have to be able to keep at it for more than an organizational moment; to keep trying, learning, and accumulating and transferring experience. (Kanter, 1983, p. 122)

Kotter (1996) developed a framework of eight strategies for creating major change. He agreed that successful transformation cannot occur easily. The steps of an effective change process are:

1. Establishing a sense of urgency.
2. Creating the guiding coalition.
3. Developing a vision and strategy.
4. Communicating the change vision.
5. Empowering broad-based action.
6. Generating short-term wins.
7. Consolidating gains and producing more change.
8. Anchoring new approaches in the culture. (p. 21)

In Taking Charge of Change, Hord, Rutherford, Huling, and Hall (1987) outlined six change strategies for change agents to facilitate. These interventions are useful in the total change effort or, as they called it, the "game plan" to implement change. The components of the game plan are:

1. Develop supportive organizational arrangements.
2. Train.
3. Consult and reinforce.
4. Monitor.
5. Communicate externally.
6. Disseminate information. (p. 75)

Beckhard and Pritchard (1992) build on the earlier stage models and recommended developing a commitment plan and implementation strategies to achieve the organizational change goals. Some of the strategies they listed are:

1. Establishing a mechanism to identify problems.
2. Instituting educational activities for managing organizational change and helping people understand the reasons for change.
3. Ensuring that organizational leadership demonstrates its own commitment to change.
4. Changing the reward system to reward desired behaviors.

5. Encouraging collaboration even when people have widely different ideas and knowledge bases.
6. Improving communication strategies. (p. 79)

Some of the myriad strategies for achieving fundamental organizational change are summarized in Table 2. They are not presented here as the most comprehensive or useful, but only as current research and writings on organizational change. An "X" in the table indicates that the strategist did not mention a particular element.

Summary. Kanter (1983) merged many writers' concepts to propose the most complete inventory of strategies for implementing planned, fundamental organizational change.

The Change Agent's Role

With the development of planned change came the role of change agents. Engaging change agents is one of the distinct characteristics of planned change. Havelock (1973) focused on the change agent's role in bringing about innovation and planned change within public schools. He suggested looking at the process of change from the point of view of those being changed, as well as those trying to change others.

Havelock (1973) taught change agents five primary skills to facilitate change. The change agent could act as:

1. A catalyst who is needed to overcome inertia, to prod organizations to be less complacent, and to begin work on serious issues.

2. A process helper who contributes by problem identifying and problem solving.

Table 2: Strategies for organizational change.

Kanter et al. (1992)	Kotter (1996)	Beckhard (1996)	TQM
Analyze the organization and need for change	X	X	Data-based decisions
Create a shared vision	Develop a vision	X	Customer focused
Separate from the past	X	X	X
Create a sense of urgency	Establish a sense of urgency	Help understand reasons	Gap analysis
Support a strong leader role	X	Model leadership	Top leadership commitment
Line up political sponsorship	Establish coalition	X	Teamwork
Craft an implementation plan	X	Establish a mechanism to identify problems	Continuous improvement
Develop enabling structures	Generate short-term wins	X	X
Communicate, involve people, be honest	Communicate vision	Improve communication strategies	X
Reinforce and institutionalize change	Anchor new approaches in the culture	Reward desired behaviors	Celebrate success
X	Consolidate gains, produce more change	X	X

3. A solution giver who proposes a suitable solution and then advocates that others accept the solution.

4. A resource linker connecting needs to resources.

5. A stabilizer who, once the change is effected, shows the organization how to institutionalize it.

Havelock's (1973) six-step model was also a view from the change agent's perspective. The six steps for change agents are: "(a) building a relationship, (b) diagnosing the problem, (c) acquiring relevant resources, (d) choosing the solution, (e) gaining acceptance, (f) stabilizing the innovation and generating self-renewal" (p. 11).

Kanter et al. (1992) discussed the role of change implementors, or change agents, in relation to change strategists and change recipients. The strategist is essentially the leader of the organization, who is responsible for identifying the need and creating a vision for change. Implicit in this role is the indication that the leader must "articulate the change and capture and mobilize the hearts and minds of the organization" (p. 381), and also begin crafting the implementation strategy. "Change strategists can change organizational structures and resource allocations but it is more difficult for them to influence cultures and individuals" (Kanter et al., 1992, p. 378).

Change implementors make change happen. They are caught in the middle and frequently think they have insufficient authority to make change occur on their own. They cannot move ahead without support from above. Change implementors often are marginal to the organization in the sense that they are outside the line structure and independent. For the same reason, they are more able than others to cross traditional boundaries in the organization, to gain personal acceptance further up or down the line than others, or among a larger number of peers across the organization (Shephard, 1967, p. 472).

Change recipients are the largest group in a planned organizational change. They are the ones who must change. Their behavior determines whether a change will last. Change recipients often seem to be sources of resistance; recipients often are too far from the change strategist to understand the reason for the organizational change. In an effective change process, the recipients understand the need for the change, and both the strategist and implementor know how the change is perceived and experienced by the change recipients.

Summary. The change agent is important to the change process for various reasons. These include developing relationships and focusing on implementing the change strategies.

Other Models and Strategies for Change

There are many other models that could be used to assist with understanding planned, fundamental organizational change in community colleges. Models from organizational development, planning models, leadership models, culture/climate models, and organizational types are all ways to approach a study of organizational change. However, to this writer, the models and methods presented earlier offer a broader, more complete view of the planned change process than these other models do.

Organizational Resistance

Machiavelli observed many years ago in The Prince that nothing is more difficult to plan, more uncertain of success, or more dangerous to manage than the establishment of a new order of things. Change generates many emotions. Some people fear it, whereas others embrace it. Many like the safety of the status quo, but without change, there is no progress. "Change without continuity is chaos, while continuity without change is sloth, and very risky" (Depree, 1992, p. 74).

Resistance is a natural reaction to a change (Block, 1993; Bridges, 1988; Kanter et al., 1992; Wheatley, 1992). Kuhn (1962) developed the concept of paradigms, which are expected sets of expectations and standards used as lenses to view the world. Information that fits one's paradigm is easily seen, whereas information that does not fit the paradigm might be overlooked. Because of one's paradigm, it sometimes is difficult to "see" unusual ideas. When fundamental change occurs, there is a paradigm shift, as new sets of rules and standards become accepted. The change strategists' and change implementors' response to resistance becomes the problem. Resistors resist change because it does not fit their paradigm, for logical reasons: If the change is too difficult, if they do not understand it, or if there is a loss of identity, they may choose not to change (Kanter, 1983).

Summary. Resistance is the natural reaction to being changed. Change strategists and change implementors must understand and appreciate that fear by engaging change recipients in the change process.

Status of Educational Change

A major body of literature exists on educational change and innovation, consisting of ways in which educational institutions innovate or change. These writings are in the form, in most instances, of case studies that are individual in nature and that describe "successful" innovative activities.

Cardozier (1993) studied seven institutions to assess how well an adopted innovation worked, and when the results did not live up to the innovators' expectations, discussed reasons. In summary, he learned that a major factor in success or failure was whether the money for the innovation provided the opportunity to lower faculty-student ratios, purchase equipment and facilities, and so on. Cardozier found that the innovative practices all faced pressure to return to the traditional and abandon the new. Turnover of administrators was another reason for failure. New appointees who were not part of the original planning teams either did not agree with or did not value the innovations. The faculty, too, often found that the innovative ideas required more time and energy than was reasonable. Of all the barriers to success, student attitude was the least of the problems.

Ansoff (1984), writing about universities, categorized them as incremental organizations in which behavior is "directed toward minimizing departures from historical behavior, both within the organization and between it and the environment" (p. 179). Entrepreneurial organizations, on the other hand, strive for continuing change rather than for a preservation of the past. Ansoff believed that organizations will have to learn to accommodate both incremental and entrepreneurial behavior simultaneously. He suggested that organizations undertake parallel planning and implementation activities.

In their study in higher education, Creamer and Creamer (1988) found that the source of program innovation can be a combination of internal/external forces. The source was not as important as having participants at all levels in the organization well informed about the need for change.

Fullan (1991) studied educational change from the perspective of the change process itself and found that not enough emphasis had been placed on understanding the social and political process of change. He found that change invariably changed the culture of the organization and believed that if certain small details were observed, the change would be successful. How change is brought about is important, or as Fullan said, "the proof is in the putting" (p. 9).

In his synthesis of research, Rothman (1974) discovered that organizations with many specific, strictly enforced rules were less innovative than organizations that had few rules and allowed discretion in employee functioning. The less innovative organizations usually prided themselves on maintaining the status quo. Complexity and structural differentiation also appear to be directly associated with an organization's ability to innovate. House (1971) reasoned that a complex organization has more inputs; therefore, it can be more innovative.

Educational institutions, particularly higher education, have been called "loosely coupled systems" (Baldridge & Deal, 1975; Joyce, 1983; Prince, 1989). In loosely coupled systems, such as schools, regulatory approaches or top-down sources of change "are poor mechanisms to infuse reform throughout the system" (Murphy, 1976, p. 37), for it is difficult for anyone, on any level of such an organization, to generate and maintain an innovative change (Joyce, Hersh, & McKibbin, 1983).

In his review of the literature on the process of organized planned change in educational institutions, Giaquinta (1973) claimed that the literature is basically atheoretical in nature. It contains little work designed to develop and test theories describing the dynamics of the change process or explaining how organizations like schools vary in the degree and speed with which they change. Extension of knowledge about organizational change will require empirical studies of greater theoretical, methodological, and statistical sophistication (p. 178).

Herriott and Gross (1979) supported the preceding contention. They noted that most studies of organizational change efforts in educational institutions have lacked theoretical orientations, "a circumstance which largely explains the paucity of formulations to account for the outcomes of these change efforts" (p. 3). The primary concern of these studies, as Giaquinta asserted, has been with "precipitating change rather than studying it" (p. 179).

Studies of educational change have been heavily influenced by innovation-diffusion work in other fields, such as agriculture, where innovations were adopted and implemented by individuals rather than organizations. There are important differences in the educational setting, where complex organizations are involved, that limit the value of this work for educators (Deal, Meyer, & Scott, 1975, p. 109).

Most change management in higher education is largely based on intuition and seat-of-the-pants strategy, and there are no valid tested scientific principles of change. There are approaches to the study of educational change that can contribute substantially to the solution of educational problems (Joyce et al., 1983). There are dissenters to embracing organizational change processes who claim that the adoption of change strategies or tools is so individually time consuming and organizationally traumatic that it is difficult to justify even the most worthwhile process (Hodges & Milliron, 1997).

The Need to Understand the Change Process

Fullan and Miles (1992) believed that it is crucial for educators to understand the change process. They stated that:

> After years of failed education reform, educators are more and more in the habit of saying that "knowledge of the change process" is crucial. But few people really know what that means. The phrase is used superficially, glibly, as if saying it over and over will lead to understanding and appropriate action. (p. 745)

Supporting the belief of Fullan and Miles, Lieberman and Millonzi (1979) acknowledged the need to examine the dynamics of institutional change. Much of the available data stems from input-output research or research that stressed the "what of an outcome. Results can only be speculative as to the 'how' and 'why'" (p. 46).

> It is the explicit dynamics of change that takes place in situ which are of interest, and it is the realization that dynamics almost invariably differ from site to site that gives meaning to the term "power of the site." It is what takes place when the innovation and the site come together that is important to planners and theorists alike. (Fullan & Miles, 1979, p. 48)

After two decades of marginal change, real structural change is now required by colleges, due to an evolving environment marked by decreasing funds, increasing students, and calls for quality and accountability (Leslie & Fretwell, 1996). However, the literature suggests that neither continuity nor incremental improvement can lead to the transforming change necessary for colleges to remain competitive in today's dynamic world. The status quo is far more expensive than the cost of the change transition (Conner, 1993). Cunningham and Gresso (1993) also viewed the status quo as dangerous, stating:

> Many educators and American firms have learned that such thinking results in loss of ground and, ultimately, failure. In today's global world, holding one's ground is a recipe for slow death. If everyone within the organization is not constantly trying to improve, they will be left in the dust of a fast-paced global world. (p. 150)

Leadership of Change Processes

Smith (1996) called on leaders to face up to the fact that the majority of change efforts have failed in the past, but the research is unclear as to whether leadership is the key process driver in a change initiative. More than 7,500 studies have been conducted on leadership without developing a clear definition of the term (Bass, 1990). Birnbaum (1988) cited both studies that seemed to illustrate the necessity for strong leadership for change and other studies that showed little impact if a strong leader was suddenly replaced. This raised the question as to what degree leadership matters.

Most organizational changes in education initiated in the 1960s failed.

> I know of no inventory of intentional academic changes of the 1960s that shows their survival rate, but I would judge that about 90 percent were discontinued or so attenuated as to disappoint their authors. . . . Why? The essential conservatism of faculty members about their own affairs is certainly one reason. (Kerr, 1995)

These changes and most others were imposed either by external stakeholders or by administrators, and innovation was not supported by the reward structure (Kerr, 1995).

Summary. The effectiveness of educational change processes has not been systematically assessed or measured. However, most scholars believe they have not been successful. Greater understanding of fundamental change in educational institutions is necessary.

Community Colleges

The community college is a unique educational invention of the United States (Kelly & Wilbur, 1970). Having undergone immense growth throughout this century, they now operate in every state and educate half of the students who begin college in the United States (Cohen & Brawer, 1989). Although community colleges continue to be primarily teaching institutions, they are not simply open-door colleges or comprehensive postsecondary institutions. "Their identity as organizations is complex, incorporating their history, their ideologies, and their behaviors" (Levin, 1994).

Community colleges have been the subject of considerable discussion regarding their identity as organizations. Different scholars have offered various definitions of community colleges. The community college is characterized as an institution that is responsive to community needs (Levin & Dennison, 1989). To some, the community college is viewed as a community resource that grants "a channel of upward mobility for individuals of any age" (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p. 357; Eurich, 1990) by providing "greater, more democratic access to higher education for our people" (Norris, 1987, p. 3).

Roueche, Baker, and Browning (1983) agreed that community colleges are "democracy's colleges"; they have adopted a philosophy of equal educational opportunities for all and espouse an ideal of open admissions. "The community college is not an off-shoot of classical higher education in America. Its ancestry can be traced to 19th century educational innovation developed to fill needs that traditional institutions of higher learning could not meet" (Roueche et al., 1983, p. 9).

The community college also has been characterized as an innovative institution with visionary leaders (Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1989). In addition, the community college is expected to be "all things to all people" (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p. 359).

> They have viewed themselves, and have been conceived by their major constituencies, as comprehensive institutions performing a variety of functions--remediation, community service, economic development, job training, career preparation, and transfer among others. (McGrath & Spear, 1991, p. 9)

The Need for Change in Community Colleges

Following the phenomenal expansion of the 1960s, eroding financial bases and extraordinary technology cost increases posed severe budgetary challenges to community colleges (AAUP Committee G, 1992; Boggs, 1994). In addition, declining enrollment, first experienced in 1983, and decreasing funding at the state and local levels have all changed the revenue sources and funding mechanism of community colleges (Wattenbarger & Vbader, 1986).

From the viewpoint of community college practitioners, the wave of change taking place in community colleges is partially attributed to the 1980s educational reform movement and the nature of community colleges to change and meet the needs of their clientele. A strong public reaction followed the A Nation at Risk report; however, the fundamentals of the system have not changed, so results did not improve. Despite more than a decade of challenge, there has been little actual change and no measurable improvement in the American educational system (Anderson, 1997).

Ewell (1991) saw the current reform movement from two views: One is internal to community colleges because of their innate innovative quality of trying to serve "a new and underprepared student clientele." Second, external forces "fueled by public and political concerns about declining quality, are often directed particularly at two-year colleges" (p. 3).

Vaughan (1983) called for community colleges to do "what they do best" and design innovative and diversified programs that will meet the rapidly changing needs of their communities. Norris and Dolence (1995), in Transforming Higher Education: A Vision for Learning in the 21st Century, claimed that colleges must change from being teaching institutions to learning ones. It is critical for community colleges to innovate and respond quickly to their dynamic environments (Carter & Alfred, 1996; Norris & Dolence, 1995). The 1990s are a "period of renaissance of innovation," with the emphasis on quality in higher education resulting from being "shocked out of the doldrums of the 1970s by dozens of national reports on the decline of the quality of education" (O'Banion, 1997, p. 10).

With organizational characteristics of responsiveness and innovativeness, and a dynamic environment, it should not be surprising to consider community colleges as subject to considerable organizational change and heavily involved in social change. Community colleges are both undergoing change and influencing change (Levin, 1994).

> Modern community college leaders operate in a time of never-before-seen uncertainty and change. On a macro level, community colleges are facing massive fluctuations in national, state, and local economics; wide legislative swings; significant demographic shifts; and expensive and seemingly unending technological improvements. On the local level, state system priorities, board changes, faculty unions or associations, and a host of other quandaries vie for attention and action. (Hodges & Milliron, 1997, p. 1)

Contemporary Dissertations on Community College Change

Five dissertations have been written on community colleges and organizational change in recent years that seemed particularly relevant to this study. In her research on strategic change in two highly similar community colleges with new presidents, Snyder (1990) found that little had been written about planned change processes within community colleges. She studied voluntary and institutionwide strategic changes to discover why the results were so different at each college. One college flourished during the change process, and the president became extremely popular. The second college was "organizationally scarred" by the change effort, and the president was forced to resign. In this qualitative study, Snyder's analysis was guided by the theories of Ansoff and Kanter. She concluded that combining the models provided a more complete explanation of the strategic changes than either model explained alone.

Jones (1994) and Giese (1995) investigated the effect of innovative projects on the process of institutional change at the community college level in California. Jones, specifically, identified those elements that enhance or impede inception, implementation, and institutionalization of innovative projects funded by the California Community Colleges Fund for Instructional Improvement and sought to determine whether the expectations of the policy related to the "multiplier" effect of innovation projects were accurate. Forty-seven variables were identified through a literature search. This descriptive case study was augmented by a quantitative component. The results were not conclusive as to the influence of the institutional setting, as predicted by variables, on community colleges' innovativeness. The findings did suggest that being open to input from the community about its needs provides a favorable environment for innovative activity at the college itself. The organizational factor found to be most significant was the hierarchical level of participants involved in the projects. Leadership by strong, tenacious, and committed faculty and lower-level administrators provided the skill and stimulus to implement innovative activities. The findings did not support the assumptions of a "multiplier effect." Projects having an "institutional fit" at one college were not necessarily transferable to other community colleges.

Giese (1995) assessed the organizational cultures of California community colleges as they related to the adoption of a mandated governance model. As a result of his quantitative study, Giese recommended training for faculty and administrative leaders in participatory governance, leadership, and organizational culture to increase the acceptance of the innovation.

In his dissertation, Thomas (1997) identified conditions and processes that covaried with different levels of institutional-effectiveness reforms adopted in community colleges in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation region. Using "best practices" from empirical research in educational reform and organizational change literature, Thomas selected six key factors for study: (a) leadership interventions, (b) pro-innovation organizational culture, (c) staff involvement, (d) staff development, (e) origin of force to change, and (f) time to adopt. A survey was developed to measure adoption of the SACS criteria and the significance of the preceding six factors. The findings indicated that, in 1996, the respondents perceived a moderate depth of institutional-effectiveness adoption. Leadership intervention, pro-innovation culture, staff involvement and development, and time to adopt were found to be significantly related to the level of adoption. Origin of force to change was not found significant. Culture, time, and staff development explained more about the adoption level than did the other factors.

Respondents in higher positions at community colleges generally rated adoption levels higher than did faculty members.

Watwood (1996) studied the role community college department chairs played in the change process at two successful community colleges in a midwestern state. In a qualitative case study, the implementation of TQM was systematically studied. Watwood concluded that "visionary leadership drives proactive change in a culture that supports empowerment, teaming, quality focus, and use of data" (p. 1).

The factors necessary for success, as determined in the above-mentioned studies, were resource allocation, participants informed of need, and organizational complexity and structural differentiation. Variables contributing to failed planned change processes were turnover of administrative sponsors, requiring too much faculty time, lack of understanding of social and political processes, being rule bound, and a loosely coupled organizational structure.

Community Colleges' Response to Change

In responding to external forces and mission-led activities, community colleges have become more corporate, more managerial, and more controlled by rational systems (Taisman, 1990) in order to fulfill their goals. "They are more likely to be imitators of organizations praised in popular literature; as organizations with a bias for action and with emphasis upon productivity and achievement" (Levin, 1994). They are less likely to emulate the practice of universities (Keller, 1983).

In The Community College Journal, Baker and Reed (1994) concluded a description of current reform efforts in terms of the role of the community college:

"All of these solutions work toward trimming the branches, when attacking the root is the only viable source of action" (p. 32). O'Banion (1995), using the same analogy, wrote, "The reform movement of the past decade has been trimming the branches of a dying tree" (p. 1). These two community college writers described first-order change processes when fundamental change was desired.

Lorenzo (1993) recognized a growing need to change the "way things are being done." He emphasized that just moving faster will not suffice. The best organizational strategy is required to accommodate the turbulence caused by both rapid and radical change. The strategy is a "form of change itself--fundamental change. The term fundamental change refers to a modification of the organization's foundations or core principles and beliefs" (p. 47).

Alfred and Carter (1996) favored a rapid pace of change. First, they asserted that "community colleges have become inflexible, slow to innovate, and resistant to change" (p. 18). Then he warned that "when community colleges lose their proprietary advantages, speed--the capacity to change quickly to meet or get ahead of the market--will be what matters most" (p. 18).

So how does an institution begin the complex change process? "We need an outburst of utopian schemes and inventive thinking. If schools and colleges are to be redesigned, we must begin a massive effort of brainstorming and creative thinking, grounded in political, psychological and financial realities. Only then will we be able to build anew" (Keller, 1996, p. 14).

There is no dominant model or strategy for change, only "a growing group of experiences from which knowledge and guidelines can be derived" (O'Banion, 1997, p. 226). From O'Banion's knowledge and experience base of 38 years in community colleges and CEO of the League for Innovation, he recommended the following fundamental change strategies:

1. Find the trigger event and capitalize on it.
2. Measure the extent to which the college puts "learning first."
3. Round up and support innovations.
4. Build a critical coalition.
5. Create a vision.
6. Involve all stakeholders.
7. Ensure appropriate support.
8. Create an open system of communication.
9. Consider (hiring) consultant and establish processes.
10. Pay attention to language.
11. Reallocate resources.
12. Evaluate, evaluate, evaluate.
13. Commit to the long haul.
14. Celebrate changes and accomplishments. (pp. 227-249)

Summary. Dissertations have focused on comparing the success or failure of innovations within specific community colleges and the effect of various college characteristics on the change process. The fundamental change process is described in the present dissertation. Community colleges have been urged to become responsive and innovative to meet the needs of their communities. O'Banion, a spokesperson for community colleges, recommended a list of strategies for fundamental change.

Conceptual Framework

Most educational practitioners have little time to spend on intensive research to decipher the literature on transformation and organizational change. Leaders need to know what to choose from an apparently endless menu of models and strategies. It is essential at the community college level to develop a better understanding of the process of organizational change.

The models and strategies found in the literature review helped in developing a conceptual framework or "a current version of the researcher's map of the territory being investigated" (Miles & Huberman, 1987, p. 33), although the review did not reveal a dominant model of change. The models and strategies were examined, using the following criteria:

- The apparent usefulness of the model for community colleges.
- The completeness of the model.
- The currency of the model.

Levy's model with Kanter's and O'Banion's strategies met the researcher's selection criteria, although these criteria did not include a determination of the superiority of the theories over others. Clearly, other combinations of theories could have been used. Levy, Kanter, and O'Banion represent only one suitable combination of a model and strategies. However, when brought together, they provide a range of opinions on common elements: necessary impinging conditions for change, organizational barriers, power and control, roles, and strategies that facilitate change. This combination provided a framework to describe the fundamental change process in community colleges.

Levy (1995) emphasized the inputs and outputs of the change process, recommending that second-order, fundamental, change must alter the organization's world view, mission, culture, and core processes. He based his model on a biological life cycle of organizations. Second-order change is characterized as emerging from decline and crisis. Second-order planned change requires recognition of a need, strategic management of the change process, and creative processes that open the culture to new realities. Levy emphasized that, to accomplish second-order planned change, one has to change the metarules, the rules of the rules of the system (p. 113), and most planned change strategies do not go deep enough to facilitate second-order change.

Kanter's (1983, 1992) strategies of organizational change focus on the culture and structures within the organization that facilitate change. Her strategies complement Levy's model by providing answers to questions regarding implementation. Kanter believed that "bold strokes" and "long marches" are both necessary. In her work, she identified five organizational characteristics that enable change efforts to succeed: grassroots innovations, a crisis or galvanizing event, a change strategist making strategic decisions, individual implementors and change champions, and action vehicles. Central to her thinking was the idea of changing from "what." She believed that a destination is not enough to energize an organization but that what is being left behind must also be known.

O'Banion (1997) offered guidelines for change specifically aligned with the community college culture and based on experiences of community colleges engaged in a fundamental change process. He urged educators to move from focusing on teaching to focusing on learning and to break out of the boundaries of traditional education.

Levy's stage schema are used in Figure 2, and the stage boxes are filled with the strategies recommended by Kanter (1992) and O'Banion (1997). With just a cursory glance, one sees that the strategies fit into the categories without distortion to either the fundamental change model or the strategies for achieving fundamental change.

The overarching question of this study, then, is: How does fundamental change occur in community colleges? Can the application of the conceptual framework explain the key factors or variables? In addition, where does the model lost its impact and fail to explain the process of fundamental change in community colleges?

Summary. The conceptual framework explains the key factors, or variables, and the relationships between them (Miles & Huberman, 1987). Kanter, O'Banion, and Levy provided the conceptual framework for this study describing fundamental change in the community college.

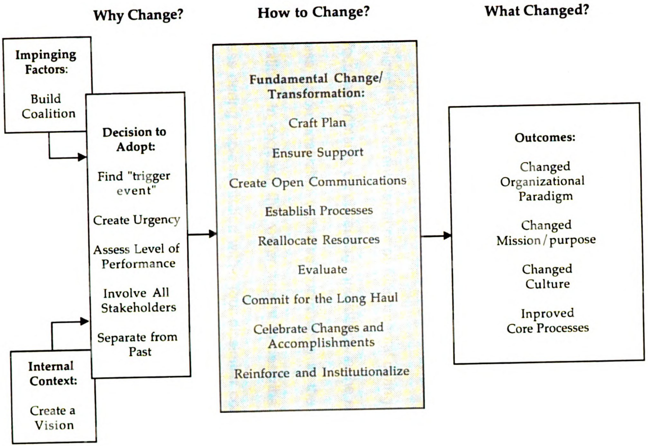
Why Change?
How to Change?
What Changed?
Impinging Factors:
Build Coalition
Internal Context:
Create a Vision
Decision to Adopt:
Find "trigger event"
Create Urgency
Assess Level of Performance
Involve All Stakeholders
Separate from Past
Fundamental Change/ Transformation:
Craft Plan
Ensure Support
Create Open Communications
Establish Processes
Reallocate Resources
Evaluate
Commit for the Long Haul
Celebrate Changes and Accomplishments
Reinforce and Institutionalize
Outcomes:
Changed Organizational Paradigm
Changed Mission/purpose
Changed Culture
Inproved Core Processes

Figure 2: Change strategies overlaid on fundamental change process.

Sources: Adapted from The challenge of organizational change: How companies experience it and leaders guide it, by R. M. Kanter, B. A. Stein, and T. D. Jick, 1992, New York: Free Press; and A learning college for the 21st century, by T. O'Banion, 1997, Phoenix: American Association of Community Colleges.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The literature on planned fundamental change was reviewed in Chapter II. It was found that organizational change has been addressed in a variety of disciplines, ranging from psychology to organizational development and business administration. Current literature on fundamental change in the community college has focused primarily on observing innovations in the early stages of the change process or on analyzing variables contributing to the success or failure of an innovation. In contrast, this writer sought to describe the fundamental change process during implementation within four dissimilar community colleges. In this chapter, the study context and site selection are presented, the research questions are set forth, and the nature of qualitative, descriptive research is described. The data-collection methods and data-analysis techniques are explained, and the assumptions and limitations of the study are discussed.

Study Context and Site Selection

There are four different ways to select field sites: (a) identify typical programs and randomly pick from them, (b) look at extreme cases, (c) maximize the variation in site selection, and (d) look at critical cases that make a point dramatically (Patton, 1980). Certainly, not enough had been written about the fundamental change processes in community colleges to establish what was a typical, extreme, or critical change process, so maximizing the variation among the colleges was the preferred choice.

The first step in identifying field sites was to learn which community colleges were engaged in transformative change processes. The Continuous Quality Improvement Network (CQIN) of 29 community colleges was formed to (a) have candid sharing of the pluses and minuses of change strategies and (b) facilitate learning about change management. Membership in CQIN is restricted to presidents of two-year, associate-degree-granting, technical and community colleges who had personally committed to transforming their institutions (Schober, 1995). The researcher decided this was an association whose member colleges would be appropriate study sites. In early 1997, while serving as a change agent at a CQIN college, the researcher surveyed the other advisors or change agents to learn which colleges were achieving planned, fundamental change. Based on these findings, four CQIN community colleges were selected based on their dissimilarities in size, location, region, and the distinctiveness of their change strategies.

The researcher had heard vague details at conferences and meetings about each of the college's progress: One institution was radically restructuring; another's change effort seemed to be delegated to visionary change agents who had been hired from outside education and brought into the institution; the third institution

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focused on training, planning, and rewards; and the fourth college's progress toward transformation seemed to have been meticulously planned and executed. These impressions were reinforced through the site visit and data analysis.

Each college was in the mid-stage of a fundamental change process initiated by the president, who declared he wanted to transform the organization. Two colleges were the same general size; the third was mid-sized, and the fourth was considerably smaller than the others. The colleges were located in four different geographic regions of the country. The four institutions had implemented change processes to achieve fundamental organizational change.

The researcher contacted the president of each college to request permission to interview the key informants during summer 1997. All readily agreed. Approval to conduct the interviews was given by Michigan State University's Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) on August 1, 1997.

Research Questions

Given the researcher's belief that community colleges must transform in order to achieve their mission, her goal was to gain knowledge through describing the fundamental change process. The basic research question was: How does fundamental change occur at community colleges? From the basic research question, three subquestions evolved:

1. Why was the adoption decision made?
2. How much planning, priority, and support did the change process have?
3. What changed as a result of the change process?

From these research questions, it was a short step to the formulation of interview questions. Because this was an exploratory study, the questions intentionally were left open so as not to impose predetermined categories on the participants' responses.

The nature of the research questions suggested that the qualitative method of study was best suited to this study. In the remainder of this chapter, the writer describes the characteristics of the qualitative methodology used in this study, the rationale for using this methodology, the data-collection and data-analysis procedures, and the assumptions and limitations of the study.

Qualitative Research Methodology

Characteristics of Qualitative Research

In educational research, the "how" and "why" questions are more appropriate for the qualitative approach than the quantitative method (Merriam, 1988). Qualitative research seeks value, meaning, and understanding. It involves detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviors; direct quotations from people about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts; and excerpts or entire passages from documents, correspondence, records, and case histories (Patton, 1980, p. 22). Indeed, qualitative research is the best methodology when increased understanding is the focus of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Descriptive Research

The purpose of descriptive research is "limited to characterizing something as it is, though some descriptive research suggests tentative causal relationships. There is no manipulation or treatments of subjects; the researcher takes things as they are" (Macmillan & Schumacher, 1994, p. 26). Descriptive data include neither judgments, such as good or bad, appropriate or inappropriate, nor interpretations; they simply describe what is (Patton, 1980). Types of descriptive data include portraits of subjects, reconstruction of dialogue, description of physical settings, accounts of particular events, depictions of actions, and observances of behavior.

A qualitative researcher strives for an understanding of how all the parts come together to form a whole (Merriam, 1988). "Personal interactions and perception create multiple realities. Thus, the strengths of the methodology become its greatest challenge" (Snyder, 1990, p. 82).

The writer's intention in this study was discovery, insight, and interpretation, which uses qualitative methods appropriately, rather than for hypothesis testing (Merriam, 1988). Qualitative, descriptive methodology had the potential for increasing understanding of the fundamental change process within the community colleges.

Data-Collection Methods

To achieve an accurate account of the fundamental change process, the researcher used observation, document analysis, and interviewing as means of data collection. The researcher spent August 1997 visiting the four colleges. During the visit to each campus, interviews with the president, the vice-president of instruction, the quality advisor, and a faculty member were scheduled. At Alpha, Charles County, and Eureka Community College, all of the key informants, as well as additional personnel, were interviewed. Because of conflicting appointments and caution about the interview content, the vice-president of instruction and a faculty member at Bravo were not interviewed.

Observation

At each of the four colleges, the researcher spent several hours walking around gaining a sense of the atmosphere, casually interacting with staff and attending meetings. The researcher believed that in a "transformed" community college, students and staff would behave differently than the norm. In a transformed college, there would be a clearer student focus and an obvious emphasis on learning. During and after each of the site visits, observations, impressions, and reflections were recorded in a journal. Time and cost prevented travel to the various parts of the country for multiple visits over time.

Documents

Documents are "a ready-made source of data easily accessible to the imaginative and resourceful investigator" (Merriam, 1988, p. 104). Before and during the site visits, the researcher collected the following documents:

1. Background documents.

2. Documents that reflect the primary phases of the change process (strategic plans, written implementation plans).

3. Documents that describe the changed environment (organizational charts, board policies, new procedures).

The documents were analyzed to learn whether a different language, reporting relationships, plans, policies, and reward structures had been developed either to (a) support the transformational change process or (b) show evidence of the change process.

Interviewing

"Interviewing is highly effective at gaining insight into phenomena that cannot directly be observed. . . . The purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone else's mind" (Patton, 1990, p. 278). By interviewing presidents, quality advisors, faculty, and vice-presidents of instruction--the key informants--the perceptions of those envisioning change, implementing change, and receiving the change could be explored.

According to Smith and Glass (1987), there are three types of interviews: unstructured, semi-structured, and structured. The unstructured, informal, conversational interview is spontaneous. The semi-structured interview includes a structured battery of issues to cover. The third type of interview is the structured interview, which involves a specific set of questions in a particular order that are posed to each subject.

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The semi-structured interview fit the research goal for this study because key individuals' perceptions of and knowledge about the change process in their institutions were sought. The participants did not receive the interview questions in advance, but they did receive a letter describing the purpose of the study and what their involvement would entail. Each interview was tape recorded and then transcribed verbatim.

All scientific procedures have their weaknesses because they are designed to do one thing and not others (Borg & Gall, 1989). Interviews are no exception. Interviewers can expect to find incongruence between the words and the actions of interviewees (Deutscher, 1970). In addition, interviewing can be labor intensive, with dangers of data overload.

Data-Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is an ongoing process involving "working with data, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 145). The researcher began noting patterns during the initial analysis of documents and then built on this analysis with each interview and subsequent review of data.

The transcribed interviews, journal entries, and documents collected on site provided the data for the analysis. Patton (1990) suggested that the qualitative analyst grapples with the problem of how the data fit together. To understand the fit, a coding system was devised based on the research questions, transcripts were coded, and then similarities and themes were sought. Once comparable attributes among the data were drawn, tentative categories were found. Categories were classified by internal homogeneity or the degree to which the data were meaningful for the specific category to which they were assigned. The data then were assembled into matrices so that they became more ordered (Miles & Huberman, 1987, p. 157).

The qualitative researcher must be careful about bringing biases to the observation and the interpretation (Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 496). To enhance the credibility of this study, the researcher used the following forms of verification. First, a second individual audited the transcripts. Second, the quotations in Chapter IV were cross-checked with the original transcripts, and the researcher's role, assumptions, and biases were documented in the study. Finally, triangulation of data from multiple sources (interviews, observations, and documents) was used to help ensure internal validity and reliability (Merriam, 1988).

Guba and Lincoln (1981) warned against assuming that a "slice of life" is an account of the whole. They also warned against oversimplification. To the researcher, it is clear that this study was simply a snapshot of the change process. By stopping in time, the organizational fabric could be stretched apart for a moment so that the change process could be examined, but the complexity remains.

Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions

The researcher assumed that the interview participants understood the phenomenon of planned change. It was not defined for them. Also, the researcher believed that key informants are the positional leaders who possess a certain wisdom that would be helpful in revealing the process of change. In addition, it was assumed that their experiences could provide useful information to other community colleges.

The researcher also understood that the participants might bias their responses to protect their institutions and themselves from negative insights or from divulging "bad news." Attempts were made to ensure confidentiality to lessen the likelihood of this occurring.

Another assumption made in this study was that the qualitative method, an inductive process, was the best approach to studying the process of change because it seeks meaning and understanding of phenomena (Smith & Glass, 1987). The researcher understands, as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, that being comfortable with ambiguity, trusting that there would be findings, and being sensitive to the context, data, and any personal biases that might influence him or her is important (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Borg & Gall, 1989; Merriam, 1988; Patton, 1980, 1990).

This researcher brought to the study a bias that planned, fundamental change can and should occur within community colleges; a belief that an analysis of the elements of planned change would glean valuable insights; and the experience of 25 years in education.

Limitations

Qualitative studies are traditionally bounded. In such studies the researcher is more interested in understanding a specific case than an overall population. This study was limited to four community colleges, in different geographic regions, where planned change had been implemented.

Generalizability and replication difficulties are other drawbacks to the qualitative method (Miles & Huberman, 1987). Generalizability refers to the extent to which the findings can be generalized to other settings. The use of multiple participants, thick description, and several colleges increases the reliability and validity of the findings (Miles & Huberman, 1987, p. 37). Nevertheless, as with all qualitative studies, the findings refer specifically to these four institutions and will not necessarily be generalizable to all community colleges. However, the findings may speak to college personnel who see their institutions as similar to one or more of the four participating colleges. The findings from this study may be used to infer similar dynamics of change in other community colleges and organizations, but they describe only the experiences of these participants.

Reliability refers to the extent to which the findings can be replicated. Replication is "problematic in the social sciences as a whole simply because human behavior is never static" (Merriam, 1988, p. 170).

Summary

Using a descriptive, qualitative methodology, the researcher gathered data through observation, documents, and interviews to describe the fundamental change process at four community colleges selected for maximum differences in their institutional characteristics and implementation of change. The patterns that emerged through the interviews, direct observations, and documents are presented in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The researcher's purpose in this study was to describe how fundamental change occurs at community colleges. From the basic research question, three subquestions evolved:

1. Why was the adoption decision made?

2. How much planning, priority, and support did the change process have?

3. What changed as a result of the change process?

In this chapter, a description of the settings and study participants precedes the presentation of the data-collection findings. The data are arranged to respond to the research questions.

Settings of the Study and Study Participants

To understand the findings of the study, a brief description of the four colleges and the study participants follows. In this study, both the particulars and the names of personnel and colleges have been changed. The colleges studied were named Alpha Community College (ACC), Bravo Community College (BCC), Charles County

Community College (C4), and Eureka Community College (ECC). These community colleges were chosen as sites because they are committed to fundamental organizational change, they had been engaged in a planned change process for some time, and they provided maximum variety from each other in both their implementation and institutional characteristics.

Alpha Community College enrolled approximately 4,000 students. The college is located on the outskirts of a small city surrounded by rolling farms and wooded land where recreational opportunities from fishing to skiing abound. ACC has strong technical programs, while in the center of town, the University extension center provides transfer education.

Driving into the single-building complex, visitors are welcomed by a long row of signs in seven different languages to "visitor spaces" adjacent to the student parking lot. Both parking lots were conveniently located close to the building. Inside, small administrative offices clustered together near the library and main entrance. A large easel, prominently placed in the main corridor, held a poster explaining the "restructuring" and recent job shifts. Faculty offices were located near their teaching stations throughout the building. The large open-architecture complex had the feel of a 1970s high school and "the advantage of having everyone under a single roof," said the change agent.

The dynamic president, Tom Andrews, had been president of Alpha fewer than five years, and during his tenure all the executive staff members had either changed roles within the staff or left the college. The newly assembled team appeared fresh and energized, and their mood was upbeat.

Thirteen buildings placed on the side of a steep hill comprise the physical plant of Bravo Community College. Convenient parking decks flank the high-rise brick buildings. The president's office is located high in a multilevel administration building overlooking a scenic vista. On the ground level, as visitors enter the elevator, they glimpse the new Community Learning Center through glass doors. A group is engaged in conversation around the conference table.

John Campbell, the resolute president of BCC, has been at the college for more than 20 years. During his presidency, the college has seen dramatic change: from being part of a K-14 system to becoming an autonomous college; from a transfer institution into a comprehensive community college; from a primarily white ethnic student population to a racially and ethnically diverse student body; and from a few hundred students to more than 14,000.

The executive administrative offices were empty in August, and the anticipated interviews with both a faculty member and the vice-president of instruction were not carried out due to miscommunication and conflicting schedules.

Charles County Community College is a large, comprehensive community college with more than 20,000 students on several campuses. At the time of the visit, a summer camp for inner-city children was in progress at one of the downtown buildings adjacent to the five-story administration building. The area was typical of metropolitan areas recovering from urban blight.

The recent arrival of incoming C4 president Dr. Jason Straub was reverberating throughout the administration building. Information regarding his meeting schedule and minute office alterations, personal computer set-up, and office entry changes circulated among the staff. All the campus interviewees anticipated changes from the "newcomer" with both anxiety and hope. Although he was extremely busy because of his recent arrival, Straub willingly participated in the interview. He was intense and passionate about improving learning and the lives of all individuals within the scope of the college.

Eureka Community College, with 11,000 students, is located in the curve of a green mountain at the end of a winding road a short distance from a major highway. The dominant building was designed around open student study spaces. Faculty offices with partial doors are easily accessible for students and frame the open areas. Even in August, there was a sense of energy, with students and staff coming and going.

ECC's long-term president, Paul Nelson, candidly reflected on the college's journey of continuous improvement. He then eagerly continued talking about future technology and its effect on education, chaos theory, and the upcoming year.

The differences and similarities among the four community colleges are illustrated in Table 3. Compared are the region of the country in which they were located, their size, whether they belonged to a state community college system, where their campus was located within their community, and what primary change strategy they were pursuing.

Table 3: Comparative data for the four community colleges.

	Alpha	Bravo	Charles County	Eureka
Geographic location	North	Midwest	South	East
Size	Small	Large	Very large	Mid-sized
System/autonomous	System	Autonomous	System	Autonomous
Site of college	Small city	City	Urban	Suburban
Change strategy	Restructuring/empowering	CQI	Learning organization	TQM

The four colleges were located in varied geographic areas. ACC was a small technical college. ECC was a mid-sized community college. Both BCC and C4 were large, multi-campus community colleges. Of the four colleges visited, two belonged to state community college systems and two were autonomous community colleges. ACC was in a small city, BCC was located in a mid-sized city, ECC was in the suburbs, and C4 was an urban campus.

Study Participants

An effort was made to interview at each of the four community colleges the president, the designated change agent, the vice-president in charge of instruction, and a faculty member. At Bravo this was not accomplished. The participants represented three perspectives in a change process: change strategist, change implementors, and change recipients (Kanter et al., 1992). The positions of the people interviewed are indicated in Table 4.

Table 4: Positions of interviewees.

Position	Alpha	Bravo	Charles County	Eureka	Total
President	1	1	1	1	4
Change agent	1	1	1	1	4
Vice-president	1	0	1	1	3
Faculty	1	0	2	1	4
Administrator	1	0	2	0	3
Total	5	2	7	4	18

Characteristics of the Participants

The demographic characteristics of the interview participants are compared in Table 5. The faculty tended to be younger than the administrators. All of the presidents and vice-presidents were white males, whereas the change agents and faculty were all females. The preponderance of males in the executive positions is a characteristic of higher education administration. Despite having a larger percentage of women executives in community colleges, this sample did not include any women executive officers.

Table 5: Demographic characteristics of participants.

Characteristic	President	Change Agent	Vice-President	Faculty	Administrator	Total
Gender						
Male	4	0	3	0	1	8
Female	0	4	0	4	2	10
Age						
Under 40	-	-	1	4	1	6
Over 40	4	4	2	-	2	12
Ethnicity						
Caucasian	3	4	3	3	3	16
Minority	1	-	-	-	1	2
Years at College						
Less than 5	2	1	-	1	0	4
More than 5	2	3	3	3	3	14

Two of the presidents and all four of the vice-presidents interviewed had more than five years of experience at their college. The other two presidents were relatively new to their positions. Three of the quality advisors or change agents had long tenure with their college; however, the fourth change agent, a relative newcomer, was planning to leave the college immediately.

The 18 semi-structured interviews, various documents, and observations at each campus provided cross-site data that yielded insights into the fundamental change process at these community colleges. The findings will be presented using the framework of the research questions: Why was the adoption decision made? How much planning, priority, and support did the change process have? What changed as a result of the change process? In conclusion, the roles of the participants will be discussed.

Why Was the Decision to Change Made?

Both external conditions and internal organizational factors combine to create a need for change. Community colleges are embedded in their communities, so the impinging factors from the external environment will be presented first, followed by the internal conditions for change. In these colleges, the decision of the board of trustees when hiring a new president, changing student and community needs, state and accreditation association mandates, and the degree of perceived threat from the external environment combined to create urgencies that resulted in the need to adopt a change process.

Board and Presidential Leadership

All of the presidents and change agents were very clear about the reason for the change process; however, the vice-presidents of instruction and faculty were not as clear. At ACC, the triggering event was when a new president was hired by the board, who wanted a different type of president, one who was willing to bring more accountability to the college and bring the college "back to prominence."

The board of trustees members represented the community interests, student needs, and business and industry requirements to the college. The external circumstances blended in issuing a mandate to move in a different direction. The Director of Institutional Research described how it occurred at ACC:

> We had what we called charette process. We had input from the community and from internal customers, etc. An internal group came up with a suggested mission that was different from the one we had done under a predecessor president. They gave that to the board, and the board modified it. The board's modification came as a value statement . . . what value did we add to the community.

The concept of a value statement came from the Alpha board of trustees' recent training experiences. In fact, three of the four colleges' boards of trustees had participated in extensive training on the Carver model of board leadership, sometimes called policy governance (Carver, 1977). Policy governance removed the governing board from the day-to-day operations of the college and allowed the governing board to see to it that the college achieved what it should and avoided what was unacceptable (Carver, 1997).

President Andrews of ACC described how his board, after recently adopting the Carver philosophy for boards, had mandated a change at the college:

> First of all, it [requirement to change] came from the board. They want things changed, and I promised I would do that. The board is reinventing themselves. They have studied and now have adopted the Carver model. They also knew we were losing enrollment but costs were going up, and they couldn't understand why that was happening.

The board wrote a document delineating executive limitations, but the related policies were still being developed by the president and administrative staff. The quality advisor at ACC emphasized the effect of the board's changes on the entire staff:

> Our board was going into policy governance. They shifted how they did business. They rewrote all of their own policies. As a result, our internal policies and procedures were in limbo. The board policies are so broad now, and we had no internal policies. People weren't sure, are they [old policies] still in force or not.

It would be inaccurate to state that the board was the triggering effect for the change at any of the other colleges. Only Alpha's board was strongly influential in the change process. "The decision to implement TQM at the college was made by the executive staff of the college. It was a top-down decision, and the continuing support of the top, especially the president, has been critical to the success of the effort," wrote the ECC change agent. The boards at Bravo and Eureka were supportive of the direction the presidents chose, and President Straub had just been hired by the board at C4 to replace a "well-thought-of president" who had moved to another presidency.

Changing Community Needs

Although these governing boards were representatives of the local community, none of the communities apparently requested different programs, services, or methods from their colleges. Unless a linkage with college personnel was formed, unmet community needs could continue. An excellent example of such a proactive linkage was at Alpha. According to President Andrews, community members bemoaned a growing immigrant population, hoping the immigrants would go back where they had come from. However, over a 10-year period, the number of immigrants had multiplied. Andrews depicted the city's situation as having large numbers of immigrants on welfare, low unemployment in the city, and essential entry-level hospital jobs unfilled. He coordinated an effort with the hospital to employ members of the immigrant group after they had been trained to fill the entry-level jobs by the college. "It was a win-win," Andrews said.

Another example of Alpha's proactivity in the community was personally negotiated by Andrews with the machine shop instructor. A large manufacturer of computer-controlled machines willingly added, when requested, their newest machine model to the campus machine shop every six months; thereafter, students completing the program were "up and running" on that manufacturer's machines immediately, and students preferred the machine throughout their careers. Andrews commented that an earlier president had isolated himself, but he was "out in the community all the time because, as the president goes, so goes the college." It was part of his change strategy.

All of the communities seemed to be fairly accepting of whatever the college did, even if it was "getting off track," the change agent from Bravo plaintively commented. "The hard part about this college is the community has left it alone. So there's not a constituency or feedback. So the college could get relatively off course without people paying much attention."

The presidents had cultivated excellent reputations for their colleges in their respective communities. All of the college presidents hoped aloud that the college could fulfill its mission and serve their communities better. Conscious of community ownership, ECC's president stated,

> There are some givens in the situation. There is a mission. We don't define our mission by ourselves. Our mission is defined by our owners. Our owners are the people and the legislature, the community. Not just the students, business community, social community, intellectual community. We're not free to decide on any mission we want.

Respondents from all the colleges mentioned that the recent past had been economically stressful. The comment from the ECC quality advisor summarized the remarks:

> Economically, we've been through some very hard times these last six or seven years. The 70s and 80s were not bad for a community college. The end of the 80s and the 90s, for us, have been very bad. There were a few years then when we were looking at, we were close to laying off staff.

The communities had all changed, according to the presidents. Students were more diverse in ethnicity and skills. They were "demanding" greater accessibility and requiring additional resources to meet their needs during a period when there were fewer additional dollars and more accountability required.

Three of the four colleges had various English as a Second Language (ESL) students who required new and different services. An administrator from C4 explained the increase in the need for ESL programs:

> From the time we started our first ESL program, the 1980 census indicated some 18,000 people were reporting that they didn't speak English very well. By 1990, it was 28,000. Now our total is 57,000 people who spoke a language other than English in our area, 17% of them being in this county, which is the major county that we serve. Well, you can imagine what we were up against. Some were coming out of the high schools and wanted academic instruction for English. Others just needed survival language. So it was a totally different kind of program. We even educated the institution as to what this field is all about and how it isn't just one program. You don't just take a couple of courses in Spanish and are ready to go.

The need to improve instruction was not just for the ESL students. Students were different in other ways, too. C4's change agent described the new student attitudes:

> It's as if I [student] want to take a pill and learn, or give me the short version and let me learn it. So we have to try to adjust to that while, at the same time, they have some expectations that . . . things will be traditional. The other thing I've thought a lot about is all the games that the kids are playing are so sophisticated, way beyond the games I've played. They're doing six levels of things while I'm doing one. So what does that tell me about their learning capability? Very bright. They just are learning something different from what I learned.

The vice-president of ECC recognized the enormous changes in the environment and the requirements the diverse student body placed on the college. He believed the changes would "require us to be more flexible and more customer sensitive." Due to the challenging environment, he thought that faculty were becoming more open to ideas because they perceived that "things aren't the same and changes have to take place."

He voiced his concern that continuous small improvements would not satisfy the students, so dramatic and transformational changes would have to occur.

> The environment out here, especially economically, and the customer expectation is changing so radically that these continuous small

> improvements tend to be slow and they're [students] demanding very quick responses. So I think where we are right now is, we're going to have to weigh those two ideas.

Just as some students were demanding more flexibility in educational services, others were comfortable in the traditional classroom. Straub, president of C4, remarked,

> When I say consumer, that means students and employers. I put them together in my category. When I say student, that means current students and prospective [incoming] students. There are a lot of consumers out there that are seeking learning that could be our students, but they are consumers. They're not our students until they sign up. They're learning and increasing in interest. The traditional side of this is driven very strongly by consumer conditioning. The consumers, particularly the younger consumers, are conditioned for this traditional stuff. If you talk to them, they really don't like it. They really don't like to learn that way. They come out of high school and they're conditioned. I [student] go to class Monday and Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. I [student] sit there and try not to be too visible. If I [student] get called upon, I have a heart attack and try to come up with an answer. Those consumers aren't really helping us. The adult consumers are. They're saying, "No, this isn't the way I want to learn."

President Nelson worried about "students being trained to sit and listen." ECC's vice-president of instruction said their students thought the college was "safe" because their mothers and relatives had gone there before them. Both colleges were considering how to make quantum leaps forward in learning, when students wanted traditional classroom lectures. This seeming incongruence with the expectations of some students acted as an inhibiting factor to change.

Legislative and Accrediting Association Mandates

In addition to governing board, community, and student changes, legislative pressure for greater educational quality and more accountability was being felt, particularly in the colleges belonging to state systems. C4's quality advisor thought that the legislative pressure reinforced what the college change agents were trying to do. A faculty member from C4 thought that when the college was being paid for performance by the state legislature, it was a real motivator.

> One of the real pluses of going through this is that performance-based funding came down the lines from the legislature about the same time. They're [legislature] looking for the fewest credits to graduation. Extra money [will be given to the college] if the student graduates and extra money if the student gets a job in the field that they graduated in. [The legislature doesn't want] a lot of students to repeat courses; if they do repeat them, the student will not receive state financial aid, nor will the college receive credit for that student.

The C4 instructional vice-president saw the legislation differently and was concerned about the effect on developmental students.

> We just passed a law here that developmental students now are going to have to pay the full cost of instruction the second time they attend class. [The second time they enroll for an entire semester to learn the material so they can take a more difficult class.] We don't have a choice, it has to be done. That's going to impact a lot of people.

In the early 1990s, the three agencies accrediting the colleges in this study, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (Middle States), and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), established requirements to measure student academic achievement systems for all their member colleges. These student academic assessment or institutional effectiveness criteria must include multiple assessments, be faculty led, and guide subsequent improvements. Despite the difficulties of implementation, a C4 administrator supported the effort. She saw it as a starting point for change. The accreditation association requirement was "one of the strictest, although very fair in terms of their assessment requirement."

All of the respondents mentioned the accrediting association they belonged to and worried about the accreditation process and site visit. The interviewees from ACC, whose site visit was within a year, were particularly concerned about receiving accreditation from a "traditional" organization when their college was organizing itself creatively around entrepreneurial units.

Competition in the External Environment

Another impinging factor was increased competition. In areas where the community college had been the only post K-12 educational provider, new competition was moving in. BCC's president discussed the competition in the following way:

> I just think it's a competitive part of the world that we live in, and we haven't decided whether we'll fight it or not. I remember when State made a public announcement that they lost thousands of students to the University of Phoenix. Of course, the University of Phoenix has become the largest university in the world in the last 18 months.

Other colleges, too, had new competition. An administrator at C4 said, "Well, the competition just moved into our backyard. It's another community college that serves the adjoining county."

The presidents of Bravo, C4, and Eureka and the change agent of Bravo were all concerned about competition. For Bravo, at least four other providers of college programming had entered their region; one competitor was a phenomenally successful national university, another was a regional college that was developing a local campus located by the community college, the third was an expensive private college, and the fourth was another community college offering a business degree completely via the Internet.

The quality advisor from BCC represented worries about being in a competitive market and retaining students.

> I'm not saying that we don't want to bring people in the doors, but we have a big problem in customer service. I think with the competitive market that there is today, I can talk about it in Bravo City, we will lose substantial population. We already know from Career College [a small, private college], students will pay more if they get something better. We're going to lose big time.

None of the faculty members mentioned competition. It either did not occur to them, or they did not see it as a real threat. It is assumed they either believed there would always be students in their classrooms, they had not heard of significant enrollment loss, or in talking with students they did not learn that students were dissatisfied. As the actual providers of the educational services, they would have to recognize the need to change their curriculum, teaching methods, and class schedule in order to respond to students' needs for accessibility and access.

The vice-president of ECC contemplated the emerging need for change:

> That [changing] is very, very difficult. . . . I sometimes think if you were in an organization that was on the brink of disaster, you might have an easier time. People may have to realize that something has to change. When you're successful, the surveys we have . . . we have an awful lot of data that indicate that faculty are liked [by] the student population. We have an excellent reputation in the community. We remain dominantly a transfer institution. So much is right. How to go from a situation that much is right to even better, that's the tough one.

Summary

The external factors contributing to changes for these community colleges were (a) a new leader selected by the board to bring change, (b) students who were more diverse and less skilled, and (c) accrediting-body mandates. Although a possibility of threat from competitors surfaced, none of the colleges' enrollments had dropped due to students leaving for other institutions; consequently, the threat of competition was raised, but it did not seem to jeopardize enrollments at this time. Also, student demands for flexibility and greater access were mentioned by the executives as a reason to change, but no evidence such as written student requests or excessive enrollments in courses taught collaboratively or through ITV was given, nor was it discussed by faculty. President Andrews had collaborated proactively with community businesses to solve both the colleges' and the communities' needs. His was a problem-solving approach versus a response to competition.

Internal Context

In this section, the internal cultural conditions permitting or preventing change are discussed. First, the organizational culture, basic norms, assumptions of the group, and attitude toward change are presented, followed by a discussion of other internal barriers, organizational maturity, and whether the organizations had surplus resources to support a change. In addition, the leadership supporting the change process is described. Last, the faculty perspective of the change process is presented.

Organizational Culture

The culture determines, to a great extent, the capacity of the organization to grow and change (Schein, 1989). The existing community college culture may have resulted from "hypergrowth" or extremely rapid growth (Kanter et al., 1992, p. 39), straining the capacity of the organization until the late 1980s, when enrollments declined or stalled (O'Banion, 1997). This type of rapid growth makes change extremely difficult, for the passionate commitment of the founders becomes diluted by professional employees who lack zeal but are necessary to manage and produce the number of classes and services requested (Kanter et al., 1992).

In the view of the interviewees, the culture of these four community colleges exhibited rigidity. The president of C4 described the slowness of change in community college as follows:

> What you find in the transformational process is that change occurs at a glacial pace in higher education institutions. As a result, we're falling further and further behind. I believe higher education is the least changed segment of our entire society. When we start getting out-performed by K-12, which we are being, that's pretty scary. A lot of that has to do with our traditions, it has to do with our noble bureaucracies and the attitudes that we have.

The president of Alpha agreed while citing similar characteristics: "It just takes too long to do things in these institutions. It takes too long to respond to a need. When you look at the process time in developing an academic program, it's incredible. That's going to kill us." The vice-president of instruction at Alpha echoed the concern:

> That word "agility" is something that we haven't used in education very much. The idea of changing and responding to things that we can't predict is foreign

> to us. We want to predict everything and then put a structure in place that allows that. Forget it!

Norms of Behavior and Attitude Toward Change

The faculty were described by both the administration and the faculty members who were interviewed as being "resistant to change." ACC's change agent said the faculty needed "black and white" solutions and wanted to see tested "models" before they considered a change. Unfortunately, fundamental change cannot occur unless people are willing to live with the ambiguity of a new situation (Levy, 1995). The vice-president of instruction from ECC attributed this "calcification" to aging faculty: "We have an aging faculty. I love our people [faculty]. I have great admiration for the people. They are tragically undervalued. I am myself sometimes amazed at how myopic they can be."

The change agent from BCC also assumed that change would occur slowly due to a large number of "very tenured faculty and staff." The vice-president of C4 explained,

> Some people can't hear at all. Some people, no matter how you say it, they don't listen to it. They've already got their minds made up, and whatever you say, they either don't hear it or somehow they can rationalize it back into where they want to go to start with. You can never get them on board with a new idea. It's either their idea or they're not going to play. If it happens that their idea is your idea, then they'll jump on board and be a great winner. They just cannot bring themselves to compromising into a new direction.

Another C4 administrator thought that resistance was generated both from educators being knowers versus learners and from their being excluded from the decision to adopt a change process.

> Educators are strong-minded people. Each of them has the answer. I think any effort to dictate down without involving them in the appearance and the context of the change, does not get very far. That's one of the things that happened with quality movement here. There were too many people that didn't feel connected to it. They didn't have a voice in saying, "Yes, we need that here." It's when you can involve people and somehow help them learn to believe that it's their idea, because it has to be their idea sooner or later or it doesn't happen. When we don't stop and do that, that's when things usually go awry.

This resistance toward change appeared to be a residue from earlier change initiatives. A faculty member from ACC described the history of the college as

> . . . turbulent with change, and we always seem to be restructuring and reorganizing. So with the faculty, I think in some cases it was, well, here we go again. That led to some frustration from faculty in that they were looking for the value of change.

Faculty members agreed that they were skeptical and suspicious when "new ideas come down the pike." A faculty member from Eureka College explained it as follows:

> Those who have been teaching for a while, I think we just balk at the latest things because we've seen so many latest things. I think our radar is up pretty high about things that will be genuinely useful in our classroom without involving cumbersome and prohibitive amounts of time on our part [faculty] or our students' parts.

Another administrator at ACC concurred: "You can't fool faculty and staff. The movement has to be from 'I cannot' to 'I may' to 'I will.' You can't go from 'I can't' to 'I will' in one single jump."

The vice-president of ACC recalled that faculty opinion and input had frequently not changed the direction the administration had chosen to take. He stated, "Maybe part of our own culture was that we often asked the faculty to participate, but if they said 'No,' we went ahead anyway." This practice--of asking for input and then not taking it when it was against the path the administration had set–continued. The results, said the vice-president of ACC, were predictable:

> The faculty has continued to be a problem. We've built and strengthened relationships in certain areas. Certain relationships have deteriorated in other areas. There are those groups of faculty that would love to return to the benevolent dean. I don't misunderstand that at all, but that's not where we're going.

The same practice of not listening or responding to faculty input thwarted the change effort at BCC, said the change agent:

> Again, what happened specifically is if committees didn't make the recommendation that the person in charge wanted, they just ignored it. So after about three years, most people wouldn't sit on a committee. The committees had just fizzled away. They turned out to be a form of you validating a person or outcome that somebody wants, who may or may not be at the meeting.

Despite most of the interviewees describing an "anti-innovation" atmosphere within their colleges, innovation was happening in both the classrooms and within the administration. All of the instructional vice-presidents countered perceived criticism of the faculty culture by remarking that critics did not see the whole picture. The vice-president of C4 said:

> Maybe it's double speaking, I apologize. Is it the glass half empty or glass half full? I can cite you many cases in this organization where the culture is very progressive, "I'm going to go serve my customer, just get out of my way." What we tend to focus on is that very traditional part of our organization that tends to do things the same. Maybe they aren't as open to change, but we have a lot that are.

A lack of appreciation for the work that faculty had to do was evidently one of the reasons faculty resisted changes. The vice-president of ECC sympathized with the difficulty of the teaching task.

> The mistakes I see are that people don't understand how difficult instruction is. Faculty [teaching] is perceived as an easy job. They are not valued highly. The end result is that no one wants to look at the complexity of what they're doing. We've got to get beyond that and get to the point where we have good people who are doing good things. The future of this institution is going to require people to function in very different ways with whole new skill sets.

The vice-president of ACC considered the possibility that the skills needed in the emerging college were different from the abilities required in an earlier, traditional college environment.

> We hired for years individuals that we said, "Go get it done, teach your way, and the students are yours." Now we say, "No, we want you to work in teams. The customer is first." It takes a different type of person. We've begun to hire those types of people, and they've begun to have their effect. The type of teachers that we've always valued and said, "Just go teach your classes and do the best job you can" now feel left out in the cold for an organization that embraced them for all those years is now kind of cold to them.

These three vice-presidents, officially designated as the leadership of the faculty, seemed tentative about the organizational changes, due in part to the amount of work faculty were already doing and the lack of support they received for innovation in the classroom and the lack of attention to input from faculty. Charles County's instructional vice-president explained:

> The worst kind [of change], really, is educational change because people get caught up with innovative ideas and we really never sit down and say, "Measure it and see how it impacts our customers. I know it's glitzy, it may be more fun than a lot of other things, but is it really making a difference?" I think we always need to ask that question. What does this do to the learning process? Many times we do make changes and we know that it does produce favorable results. A lot of times we start and process of making the change, but we never follow through to see if it works. We just let it go. We assume it's doing it. We use, too many times, anecdotal information. "Oh, yeah, three of my students say this is the greatest thing." They are happy doing it. So, therefore, we extrapolate that this is wonderful. To me,

> that's the achilles' heel of our whole system. We don't describe and quantify the type of change we're trying to create in student learning when we do something.

The vice-presidents acted as the linchpins of the change effort, for they translated the organizational change effort into faculty assignments, faculty rewards, and allocation or reallocation of resources. There seemed to be an impermeable boundary between individual faculty innovation in the classroom and organizational change initiatives that the vice-presidents did not span.

While being resistant to institutional change initiatives, the faculty also enforced a uniformity in the classrooms. The individuals who used nontraditional teaching methods and stepped out from a narrowly defined faculty role were not supported by other faculty members. The change agent at C4 explained,

> He [an instructor using quality tools] came under the fire of other faculty. He used cooperative learning, too, and he combined the two things [cooperative learning and quality tools]. They way, "You're not covering the material." He said he really wanted his students to be tested with the other students and see if they knew as much.

The change agent at Bravo described the same lack of support when a new instructor experimented with collaborative learning:

> One instructor who really tried some different things really got beat up badly by the students and was just devastated. So she decided she was going to pull back. She had done it [collaborative learning] one semester, and it worked out fine. The second semester the group just ate her alive, and she decided, "Well, I'm going back to straight lecturing." Finally, someone [a student] in the class said, "Why did you listen to us? We like to bitch. Wow, we don't want to go back there." She was devastated that the students would be so mean to her about this. Her peers and students watched her tears and watched her bawl. No one stepped in to give her a hug.

A faculty member from ACC felt repercussions for her willingness to support the organizational change process: "I was willing to step out. It put me out in front of the no man's land. There are some faculty who resent that, and so now I'm not one of them so I must be one of the others [administration]." Alpha's change agent supported the faculty member's assessment, saying, "We have some people who have stepped forward, and they've had to put up with a lot of bashing by their own people. 'You're against the norm' and 'Who do you think you are, the president's favorite?'"

Several administrators admitted there were no extrinsic rewards to encourage innovation either in the classroom or within the institution. The ACC change agent worried,

> If the faculty are getting beat on by their peers and they can't get any more of a raise than what the faculty negotiates, . . . there has to be some kind of an incentive for them. It has to be a personal satisfaction. So the support has to come in other ways.

At Bravo College, the change agent agreed that faculty were not supported either by other faculty members or by the administration.

> Some of the people who wanted to do this up in the Language Arts Department got absolutely stonewalled by their colleagues who didn't want to change or do anything. They weren't going to support anything. There were attempts to do some of the stuff. The administration retrenched, and then staff at the college retrenched when they didn't see the administration following.

The president of ECC found that innovators simply went underground to do the things they wanted to do.

> What I found out when I came was that some people knew that was the culture of the organization, so they didn't tell anybody what they were doing.

> They still did the things they wanted to do, they just didn't advertise it. So the president didn't know. The vice-presidents didn't know. The deans were hoping that nobody saw it.

Other Internal Constraints to Change

The tradition of being bound by a K-12 school schedule was strong in these institutions. The vice-president of Alpha, the change agent in C4, and the change agent at Alpha all commented on the small window of time when faculty could be involved in organizational activities due to the two-semester schedule. The Bravo president lamented, "It's so simple to say, [instruction] anytime, anyplace, anywhere. But to get that into the organization and have it become a reality and not have faculty say, 'I don't work on Fridays!' . . . ." The change agent at Alpha, too, saw the change to a learner-driven schedule as problematic:

> The resistors are the people who have been able to hide behind their own perceptions of quality without concern about value to the customer. People that were very much used to teaching four classes a day, the way they wanted to teach it, and lecture without having to worry about alternative delivery and reaching out or learning on a learner's schedule versus our schedule.

The administration's use of unfamiliar language or terms from the corporate world impeded the change process. C4's change agents explained how the language they used in their change process was unfamiliar and the faculty treated it as a business fad.

> We met a lot of resistance internally because we were using business terms. "Quality" was really horrible. I think it was a bad choice because, as I look at it now, I probably would not have been so blatant about calling it that even though that's where our initiative was.

The ACC change agent agreed that the administration's choice of language became problematic.

> We said students were just one customer, but the ultimate customer was business and industry. We used that word "customer." We got backlash on it from faculty, who said, "You don't care about students." In truth, their customer has to also be business and industry. So it became a semantic kind of thing.

What the faculty contract said was another inhibitor of organizational change. President Campbell of Bravo College stated, "I think it would have gone better than it did had we not had this other problem going with the contract, but it was like using that [the change initiative] to fuel the flame."

In the three institutions with unionized faculty, the negotiations had been more arduous during the past year than in previous years. One of the reasons given was that contract negotiations were used to alter faculty teaching conditions. A new schedule, a new evaluation system, a different pay scale for overload, a reorganization, and a faculty role change were all accomplished through contract negotiations.

The Bravo president, the president and change agent from ECC, and the president and change agent from ACC described how they had used negotiating the faculty contract to provide the structural support required for continuing the change process. The vice-president explained,

> We negotiated the reorganization. Now the faculty, if they ratify [the contract], will be organized in self-directed work teams assisted by, facilitated by, supported by instructional liaison with faculty team workers. The one thing we agree on in the organization, the work we've asked the faculty to do, is work that they think they should do.

He added, "As part of our new contract we really opened our early retirement up so we could allow those who wanted to leave at age 57 to go with some insurance."

President Campbell of Bravo was embroiled in a contract dispute with the faculty regarding changes in overload. He declared that the problem had to be resolved for the college to be financially viable in the future. Before embarking on the path to resolve this issue, he asked the board to support him. "I didn't want to turn around and see their backs instead of their faces," he said. President Campbell continued, "It's been kind of a joke now because we've ~~now~~ completed two years and three months of negotiations, and they're still saying I'm looking at their faces.

According to the vice-president of instruction at Alpha, the contract was a constraint only because it reflected former management thinking.

> You look at the contract and there's so many inhibitors in a traditional management-faculty contract that management put in 20 to 30 years ago. Everything was management-directed. Management will tell you! Now they're [management] saying, "We can't get enough energy out of our faculty." Right now we're saying, we don't want anybody on our staff you can't lead.

Mature Organizations

Organizational life cycle research provides an explanation for the internal context of community colleges. This biological model shows an organization progressing from "creativity" through various stages to "maturity." At maturity, the organization decides either to renew and adapt to changing external conditions or to stagnate and risk decline and failure (Greiner, 1972). The robust community college movement emerged in the 1960s. The institutions are now mature, needing greater coordination, having higher administrator-to-faculty ratios, benefiting special interests by preserving the status quo, and preserving the established portion of the revenue for ongoing needs. The internal conditions for change could be characterized as typical of mature organizations, satisfied with the status quo. The following quotation from a change agent at ACC picked up the flavor: "We prefer being the way we were, even though we may not have gotten a lot of things done."

According to Kanter et al. (1992), "an organization can become too good at what it does to permit major innovation" (p. 45). Community colleges may be in a position of deciding whether to renew or stagnate because they are good at what they do.

Availability of Surplus Resources

Another condition permitting fundamental change is the availability of surplus resources to support the transformation (Levy, 1995). None of the four colleges had the luxury of "extra" money, although they were not in tightly constrained financial conditions. ECC had been through the most difficult period of declining enrollment and reduced resources.

The C4 president commented,

> Whatever the college is doing, we have got to take to the next level because the work is too immense and our resource base, as big as it is, is only a fraction of what it would really take to serve a community of a million-plus people. Right at a time when community colleges are becoming the most important social institutions in the country. We've got a lot of work to do.

The quality advisor at ECC wrote,

> In the mid-eighties, the problems now besetting higher education (and ECC) were on the horizon. Those problems included sluggish employment and a reduced tax base leading to reduced state and local support, a rapidly

> changing employment base leading to changing demands for education, declining skills of new students, and an aging college staff who were in danger of becoming complacent.

The director of institutional development at C4 commented that even the possibility of funds such as grants encouraged creativity, for the application process required looking at things in a different way.

> Sometimes the presence or the possibility of the presence of money will cause an administrator or a faculty person to sit down and start thinking about what they would do differently or what they would add or how they would revise curriculum or tools in the classroom and that kind of thing. It [a grant proposal or RFP] starts change sometimes even if it doesn't get funding because the actual process of sitting down and saying, "Here's the possibility and here's the deadline which keeps us from dreaming forever," it makes us come together.

The president of C4 recognized how important flexible resources were in order to have the institutional capacity to respond to community opportunities as they surfaced.

> What happens is, colleges are fairly good at funding high-priority needs and opportunities but are comparatively bad at reacting particularly quickly because their resources are so immobile. They [funds] are so rigid, so much politics associated with it. So you have to have a flexible resource capacity, like a big investment fund. It's uncommitted. You spend it on what you know already to be high priority, and you leave some resources available to react to things in the future. I'm oversimplifying this, but there's another aspect to this, which is the politics. Higher education institutions tend to be big, big, hideous bureaucracies and are inherently unresponsive and inflexible.

A resistant culture, an anti-innovation attitude combined with limited discretionary resources countered the organizational change processes. Leadership, both transformational and transactional, is another of the "permitting conditions" for fundamental change (Levy, 1995).

Leadership

All of the presidents spoke of their leadership role. No one else, other than the vice-president of ECC, was mentioned in terms of leadership. If interviewees spoke of leadership, they referred to the president or vice-president, not their own or another staff member's leadership. There seemed to be an assumption that leadership came from the top.

The executive officers described a vacuum of leadership within their colleges. Expressing dismay that individuals did not leap forward to lead, one president said, "I'm amazed that, in the whole body [faculty], there's not much motion. They've always been treated well and got what they needed. So they're not going to get into it and they're not going to worry about it." The president of ECC noted that college staff and faculty did not want to lead ahead of him. They wanted to follow him. "They [staff and faculty] then expect you [the president] to come up with everything. If you [the president] don't bless it, they don't want to do it." Administration and faculty expected leadership from each other. It was a paradox.

Much of the resistance to change was due, in part, according to President Straub, to poor leadership. He explained,

> What very often happens is CEOs turn everybody off. We have seen a lot of bad things happen as a result of management. I've seen a lot of bad things happen in the quality movement. It depends on how it gets done. It's very delicate in institutions. People will react quickly and strongly to approaches that they don't like. They tend to get locked into the negative and stay there.

The Bravo president thought he had to "take a risk" of being locked in a "battle with the faculty." If he as the president did not initiate change, the institution would become, he believed, a "mediocre community college." He said, "I knew the comfort zone was so deep and posh within the faculty that it was, I will call it, a well-thought-out risk."

All four presidents believed that communicating a vision and aligning college members to the vision were essential parts of their leadership of the change process. They spoke of themselves as both stewards of the mission and advocates for the vision. The long-time president of Eureka College, Nelson, earnestly explained,

> I can articulate the vision. I've worked in community colleges since 1960, so I've been around a long time. I love the mission of the community college. I fell in love with it as a first-year teacher in political science in 1960. It's a mission. I'm a missionary. I think I infect people with that. Because I do that and I'm so open and willing to talk about that and push that issue, you become the leader.

He continued, "I see myself as the chief giver of vision, going around the organization and prodding everybody by saying, 'What's your vision and how does that fit the vision of the college?'"

President Straub said,

> The most important [role for the president] is what George Bush called the "vision thing." I've been living with this a lot for the past five years, the whole vision thing. I've become acutely aware and humbled by how complicated it all is. The president is just one member of the college community, who really has the most significant responsibility, I think, in the organization to think about vision and to initiate ideas, possibilities, opportunities.

The need for a match between the president's vision and that of the faculty and staff was critical to accomplishing significant changes, according to President Nelson.

> Do the things I think are important as the CEO match with what the troops think? If there's no fit, then they were wrong when they hired me and it's not going to work. Somebody is going to have to compromise pretty mightily. The troops will not follow in a direction they don't believe in, especially not in an academic institution. They shouldn't. They're professionals. If there is some consistency there in terms of what they think is important and what I think is important, then it becomes a matter of effectiveness.

All four colleges had new or recently revised college mission and vision statements. These statements had been collaboratively derived, either through a collegewide process or by a small, representative group. All of the mission and vision statements were "more student focused" and "more learner responsive," according to the interviewees. On the front page of the revised C4 faculty evaluation document, the vision statement read, "to become a premier learning community. In the college catalog, students of ACC read the vision statement, "ACC is the college of choice by anticipating and exceeding customers' expectations with excellence."

The president of BCC shared his vision for the college: "We've always been an outstanding community college, and we're going to continue to do that. . . . But I still think there's room for improvement here in terms of a real service to the businesses in this community."

The change agent at Bravo was the only respondent other than presidents who mentioned the mission and vision. She questioned whether there was a "compelling enough" vision leading BCC.

> It [the college] doesn't have strategic thinking on its board or it's top administration. So it doesn't really have a vision. It doesn't make strategic choices. We want to say we do everything for anybody out there who may be our customer. We may not do it well, we may not do it completely. We may not even do it, but we'll say it.

It seemed as though the development of the mission and vision statements was important to the executives but not notable for the rest of the college. It was not mentioned as a change factor by anyone other than the presidents.

The executives all commented that a collegial setting prohibited requiring anything done. Leadership had to be inclusive to be effective. President Nelson talked about forcing change.

> Problems you sometimes have to deal with. Some people have to be separated. Some people have to be convinced. Some people have to be surrounded, so that they eventually see the error in their ways, so to speak. Yeah, you have to have some strategies to deal with that. You can't force people to like what you want to do. If you had a small number, you might be able to force that small number to behave in a way, but you can't force them to like it. If they don't like it, you have a problem.

The vice-president of C4 believed that dictating change was occasionally possible, but if ordering was overused, when state legislative mandates were received, they would be difficult to implement.

> Can you get things done by dictating things? Yeah, for about two days. About twice. The negative of that, now, do you have to get things done by dictating? Yeah, at times you do. The law changes or whatever mandates, you don't have any choice. It has to be done.

President Nelson of ECC said,

> I've worked at three institutions, three community colleges, for long periods of time at each one. In my experience, when you talk about faculty, there is very little we force faculty to do. Very, very little. Normally, I've worked around big cities and the faculty has always been unionized, and that may have an impact. So if you're talking about a little rural community college

> where the president operates like king, that may be different. Maybe he can command things. I can't command faculty to do anything, except maybe show up for class. They have all sorts of rights and privileges and protection and grievance committees, so you can't do that.

He elaborated on what happened in a top-down situation by explaining his experiences as an administrator over three decades.

> I've been party to try impose a lot of things. I've been an administrator since 1965, so I've had my share of trying to impose things. What you find out is while you are looking, everybody really wants to please you, and while you're looking they'll do it. The minute you stop looking, they do what they want. That's the way human beings are. So the more you can get them to be involved in what should be done and thinking about it and dialoguing about it, the better chance you have of them actually doing it voluntarily and with enthusiasm.

Successful leadership of change in these colleges involved others and infused a sense of purpose or meaning into the initiative.

Faculty Perception of the Change Process

The faculty members were the "changees" in these processes. The faculty members explained their different approach to change, as well as their perceptions of change initiatives. An ECC faculty member articulated faculty's love for scholarship and learning as she described how the ECC vice-president had presented the possibility of implementing TQM at their college.

> Of course, he [vice-president of instruction] was talking to a room full of scholars, and we love to investigate things and track things down. The first thing I would say is anybody who comes up with "I have the answer" might as well quit, but to approach with an experimental attitude: "This is interesting, a key idea, how might it work here?" I think that we are not only scholars, we're great skeptics. We have been inundated by trends. To ask the question--"This has worth outside our world, but will it work for us?"--would be a good one for a person trying to implement change.

Summary

The internal culture of these institutions was slow to change; attitudes seemed skeptical and anti-innovation. In general, neither the faculty nor the administration supported or rewarded risk-takers. The language used, the traditional school calendar, and the faculty contract provisions were prohibitors to the change process. Surplus resources and inclusive leadership supported the change effort. The transmission of the vision, or meaning, to the faculty appeared to be a key determinant of the willingness of the faculty, the dominant group, to accept a change process.

How Much Planning, Priority, and Support Did the Change Process Have?

In this section, the attributes of the implementation phase are described. Considered first are how the decision was actually made to adopt a fundamental change process, how the change process was supported and the priority it received, and how planning proceeded. Finally, woven into these aspects of the change process is empowerment, followed by a discussion of changes in strategy and structure.

The adoption decision was made at these institutions either by the board of trustees hiring a new president or by the current president learning new information from the business community about how to achieve greater organizational success. For example, the change agent at ACC described the adoption as follows:

> I would go back a couple of years prior to that, probably January of 1993, which was when our new president came on board. When he came on

> board, the board had actually given him some mandates of things they wanted to see. So the change initiative really started back in February of 1993 and centered around changing the college from a fairly bureaucratic top-down organization to one that was truly participatory, not just in meaning, but really walked the talk and brought some shared decision making into our organization.

An ACC administrator stated, "It was a decision of the president to make the change. When I say it was his decision, he's the most at risk." The change agent at C4 described the adoption as the former president's decision, and the instructional vice-president concurred: "The way it started at the college was, the president going on sabbatical to IBM and coming back and talking to the board and beginning to get some things out."

The quality advisor at ECC wrote of the beginning in an internal white paper:

> The TQ adventure at ECC began with an associate dean of the college who saw the NBC White Paper, "If Japan Can, Why Can't We," and became an immediate convert. After seeing the film, he spent the next year or so studying Total Quality and keeping the president informed.

The ECC president, a continuous learner as illustrated by his introductory conversation with this interviewer on both chaos theory and computer software, read the materials given to him and learned about the philosophy of TQ. Within a year, the greater urban area was offering a roundtable on the principles of quality, which the president eagerly attended. Then, the quality advisor wrote, "Early in 1987, after a year of studying Total Quality principles and organizational change strategy, the Executive Team of ECC made the decision to implement TQM at the college. With little fanfare, the journey was begun."

A faculty member at ECC described the decision as follows: "I knew as soon as our president brought it up that we were going to be seeing it because he is tenacious. He is the pit bull of presidents. Once he gets his teeth on something, he dies holding on. I figured we would see it."

The ECC quality advisor concurred that the president's support was primary:

> Even though as we talked the president's power is basically limited, his input, absolutely [is necessary]. No one else in the institution could have done it. Well, I can't say that. If he had been essentially a passive president, and occasionally there is one like that and there had been two or three stronger vice-president types who worked together. As long as the president didn't interfere, I could see where that could have worked. In our situation where none of his executive staff, except for his assistant, were really supportive--they were neutral or show-me types--he really had to just stick to it, and he has. He has just persevered. Along the way, first his administrative vice-president was supportive. Then his vice-president for instruction has been supportive, but really only in their context, not in the same institutional way that Mark [the president] has.

The ECC vice-president of instruction commended the president's leadership: "The president exercised real leadership; he was the champion of this. He met with just about every group within the college and talked about what we were trying to do."

At only one college was a leader spoken of who was not the president. At ECC, the vice-president had joined the president to become a leader of the TQ effort. The results at the institution seemed to reflect the president's position as the change strategist and the vice-president as the change implementor. An ECC faculty member talked about the vice-president in the following way:

> Well, I think it clearly started with our president. I think it started here as it does in many places in the areas that the president has more direct control over . . . so I remember going to a classroom assessment techniques workshop with Cross and Angelo, in 1990, seven years ago. Our vice-president for instruction is really a leader in that field. He has always been

> a fan of Patricia Cross and her writing. I think that he felt that this was one way in which the faculty could really make sense of Total Quality.

It was the support and encouragement from the vice-president that motivated the faculty to experiment with the new concepts. Jack, the vice-president of instruction, was extremely effective at developing relationships with the faculty, as this faculty member related. He would discuss new instructional techniques with them individually and ask them to experiment.

> Both of those [TQM and collaborative learning] have been introduced to the faculty by the vice-president of instruction. If I hadn't gotten this continuous prodding from Jack about "tell us what you've been doing with it." He's so diplomatic, he's never really asked the question, "Are you doing something with this?" He just shrewdly made the assumption that, of course, I was doing something with it. That has kept me at it since the beginning.

The relationships built by this vice-president through encouragement and feedback on results increased faculty trust. It fostered an investigative atmosphere, which was the impetus for continued learning.

> I have enormous respect for Jack, so when he says please go to Berkeley [for a conference], I go. If he says, "Will you run this workshop?", I say, "Okay," and I do it. When I knew that he was the one that was heading up the team about faculty meetings, I go, because this is probably going to work. We're going to see some positive changes. Not because he's vice-president, but because he is tenacious as well. Not only does he have power in his office, but he is a bulldog and he will just stick with something until something gets accomplished. So for me personally, it increases their influence because it increases my respect for him.

The fear of risk and failure was gone when the vice-president permitted and even encouraged experimenting.

> Jack is a master at doing that [encouraging innovation]. He sat us all down and said, "I have no idea on how this is going to work; we're going to come back here every six or eight weeks and check in with each other, all results are important. Please report all results. You could come in and go, "I hate

> this," just as easily as you could go, "Terrific, I will always do it from now on." That part has to do with integrity. If you really are experimenting, then all results are important. If you're not just propagandizing, in that sense you want to just focus on positive results and exclude other things. If you truly are going about it in an experimental way, then all results are important and honorable. He did an excellent job of that.

Finally, Jack was praised by a faculty member for bringing models to his faculty to try, not saying, "This is it" but "Try this and decide." The change agent affirmed that "well over half of the faculty were on board" with TQ. This vice-president appeared to provide transformational leadership to the faculty. He created a shared vision, an atmosphere of experimentation and learning, which resulted in increased personal satisfaction of the faculty members involved.

Away from the executives and change agents who were advocates of the change process, there was cynicism in the colleges that the recent change initiative was just a fad, that there was no need to change. C4's vice-president represented that attitude, for he had been at the institution through three presidents' administrations and had seen earlier changes totally reversed by an incoming president and then reversed again by another. He talked about how the institutional change process worked.

> You tend to have instigators of change. Our president came to the college about 11 years ago, I'm not sure of the exact date. He was here a year or so, and we began to change based on his decisions. He was the catalyst for change.
>
> The impetus to change came from a top group of people. The actual changes that occurred, when you get down to the sticks and stones of the things that occurred, that group of people had very little to do with it. They're like the visionaries. They wanted change, but they have a hard time understanding that when you change that means a lot of fundamental changes in the whole organization of the institution. They kind of lose their interest in that kind of thing.

> Quite frankly, when we went through the change process before the current president first came here, we were a strong [centralized] campus. Change occurred almost the same way. The visionaries, they kind of wanted to see big things done; once that is kind of out there, they kind of lost interest in it and moved somewhere else. They drop back, and wart hogs, if you wish, get in and start to figure out how to make it work. Basically, when he [current president] came through we did the same thing. We basically had the same types of people [who] worked on it and redid the whole institution to make it work the other way [decentralized]. My position in it, which is so ironic–I probably am the only person left in the college who has been instrumental in both reorganizations.

Another C4 administrator explained that many employees thought there was little reason to adopt the philosophy and behaviors of the change strategy when the president advocating for the change announced he was leaving.

> The quality piece, that's been a struggle for the college, and I think a lot of the struggle had to do with the fact that not long after the president said, "This is the way I think we should move, this is what we should do," it became known that he wouldn't be staying. So a lot of people, my perspective, dug in their feet and said, "Well, we don't know what the next president's going to be interested in." They justified one way or another staying away from the training. Some faculty reacted against the idea of the thought of the student being a customer. Some accepted it and have always been there in that frame of mind. So there wasn't an overriding reason for people to buy in. It had to become a personal thing.

At all four colleges, the presidents and the instructional vice-presidents were given credit for the progress of the change process. The negative behaviors of other administrators were seen as part of the president's responsibility to "fix." Both the ACC and BCC presidents had actively reshaped their executive staffs to exclude members who did not support the change initiative.

A C4 faculty member mentioned that "for a while a group of facilitators would meet at lunch and be a support group for each other. Then, as the various teams completed their work, we no longer met together." She concluded that these meetings were an incentive to her and others to continue the change process. Upon reflection, she said they needed to go back to having the meetings for sharing and learning together.

At C4, the quality advisor explained that support is both collaboration and executive support.

> It's sort of like an underground. We would touch people in different places, and they'd say, "I know what you're talking about, this is great, how do we do it?" It's networking, collaborating, trying to support those people. I got a lot of support from the president--absolute, 100% support, I have to say that. When I would just want to jump out of the job and say, "I can't do this anymore," he would really help me. I got a lot of support from our exec. He, in the end, became one of the biggest supporters of all.

The function of top management is especially critical during the initial phases of an organizational change and remains important throughout (Dalziel & Schoonover, 1988). In the more successful community college change efforts in this study, top management was highly visible and actively participated through the entire process. In the less successful implementations, top management was less visible, less united, and delegated the implementation to others. The fact that each of these change initiatives began at the "top" could be an indication of the degree of difficulty the change would encounter (Dalziel & Schoonover, 1988).

In two of the four colleges studied, the change initiative was the priority of upper administration. In an attempt to lead the fundamental change process, the leadership considered different ways to proceed with everything they were doing. The change initiative was a priority, for it reshaped everything. For example, the institutional research director from ACC explained,

> We gave each program a report card, which showed how they stacked up on all the benchmarks for program effectiveness. Then we showed them how they compared to other programs. The satisfaction rates [were] pretty traditional. Graduate salary comparison, we looked, our averages compared to state averages. Some areas were higher, and some were lower. This is the community economic return that I talked about the board wanting. The ratio is the dollars returned for dollars invested by program for three years. We'll update this at the beginning of the year.

In two of the colleges, the change initiative had slipped in priority due to crises involved with a presidential search at one college and a lingering dispute that prevented settling the faculty contract. It appears that the degree of emphasis for the long term was important to achieving the transformation.

Planning for Implementing Change

All of the change agents believed planning was vital; however, actual planning of the implementation was done at only one college, ECC. The continuum of planning varied from BCC, whose quality advisor described the planning process as "very Loosey Goosey, very kind of chaotic, very kind of messy," to ECC's "We planned the implementation phase." C4's implementation "was the beginning of a five-year planning phase we called Ascent 2000, in which we took goals and built a series of objectives around them from a grassroots level," said the change agent. This strategic planning was a different type of plan than the change implementation plan prepared at Eureka.

The president of C4 recognized the value of planning as a change process as long as the plan was not just a paper document.

> There's a lot of organizing that comes out of the planning. There's a tremendous amount of advocacy that turns out to be probably the trickiest

> part. It is doing the advocacy in a way that inspires people as opposed to the other outcomes which we often see. There are really complex issues related to transformation.

The instructional vice-president at C4 underscored the need for planning by critically commenting, "Probably the biggest issue was, I think, we didn't have our act together before we started. We started and stopped and started and stopped a couple times before we got on any kind of an organized plan." A faculty member from ACC also supported planning prior to implementation.

> An improvement [in implementing the change process] would be planning up front. To try to look at the project and then do a needs assessment of what types of planning, what types of skills and professional development opportunities are the people in the organization going to need in order to be successful.

Of the four colleges, only ECC had meticulously planned their implementation process beginning with administrative processes. The plan was developed by a small group and taken to a quality council for approval. Both the president and his staff "were always up front with me," the change agent said. She made it clear that "the president was always behind it [organizational change]--not behind me, but behind the concept of TQM."

The question arises as to why implementation was begun before planning was completed if all the interviewees knew planning was vitally important. President Anderson explained the presidential dilemma:

> Just how long can I wait? We explained to everyone what would happen. But they chose not to listen; then when we did the reorganization, they complained that we hadn't communicated. Frankly, we didn't know some of the things we would have to do until we did them.

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Support for the Change Initiative

It is appropriate to look at the support for fundamental change. If strategy, structure, and rewards are not changed, fundamental change cannot occur. Empowerment, along with strategy and structural changes, supported the change initiatives in these colleges. In this section, the amount of redistributed power or empowerment is presented. The subsequent section elaborates on both the strategy and structural changes supporting the fundamental change.

The concept of empowerment--the degree to which the opportunity to use power effectively is granted to or withheld from individuals--is a cornerstone of an innovative organization (Kanter, 1992). All of the change initiatives sought to redistribute power by allowing decision making at lower levels in the organization. The president of ECC described empowerment as follows:

> The idea of empowering the people, once they buy into the vision, you can free the people and you don't have to worry about what they're doing. Now you've got these people who are all working and trying to achieve what we've talked about. So the ones who are moving fast, you just get out of the way and say, "Go."

The C4 learning organization was founded on the principle of empowering people, making them responsible for their own learning, and rewarding them for the results.

> [We] understand that people that are doing a job have more knowledge about how to do that job and how to improve that process than the folks who sit and pass down how it's to be done and what's to be done. So we kind of empower people, if we may use that word, even though we try not to use it [the word].

At ACC, the inexperienced vice-president assured that redistributing power, or empowerment, was important. He explained that the learning curve toward empowerment was steep for both parties. Knowing which decisions to delegate and then having employees with all of the information to make good decisions was an arduous process.

> The concept of empowerment. We have not backed away from that at all. We're firmly convinced that there are better people to make decisions than the inner circle, so to speak. I know far too little to be a traditional vice-president of academic affairs. I rely totally on those around me to be making good decisions and to work in the right ways. We've taken empowerment and we said, "Yeah, it seems to be the way to go and we're not backing off it." We made the mistakes of making decisions that should have been made elsewhere. We learned from them. We didn't go back and say, "Now we're going to make all the decisions." We said, "No, don't do that again," and we got on with it. Staying the course on that kind of strategy has been helpful because it has begun to teach our people.

President Nelson of ECC concurred that empowerment was difficult. Risks had to be permitted, mistakes had to be tolerated, and information shared for empowerment to yield any benefits.

> If we're talking about the opening up of the organization, probably there is no way to do that. You have to work on that organically. How do you begin to free up the people? How do you make them feel like they can do these things? Give them some rope. Let them hang themselves, so to speak. If they're willing to do that, take a risk. We don't pull the rope. Let them go and see if they can have some fun and come back and tell the rest of us how much fun they had and what they accomplished.

Dr. Campbell, president of Bravo, said,

> My kicks now are in seeing people who really turn on to something new and seeing someone unafraid to make a mistake and not worried if they do make a mistake. Then I have achieved ten times what I wanted to. You can emancipate people at every level.

Whereas all of the presidents recognized the value of empowerment, some of them found it difficult to "be different" because of their own needs and because staff expected them to "be" a certain way. One president confided that he and other presidents

> . . . like their own ideas, and part of the reward for being president is seeing personal ideas implemented. You're egotistical, too. You wouldn't take the crap you have to take, if you didn't have some ego involved. That makes it hard also. Most presidents I know are gregarious, somewhat egotistical. We like our own ideas. We like to talk about our own ideas. Getting the people to go off on their own and to add, or to be added to, is hard.

Empowerment is not just a presidential notion. The opposite side of the coin from empowerment is the assumption of followers about leaders. The ECC vice-president explained in the following story how difficult it was for followers to permit a leader to change.

> It is not once again a very easy thing. I went to a conference and heard this wonderful presentation on getting power to your people and allowing them the freedom to make decisions. The speaker realized that he had been an autocrat himself in not allowing the staff the freedom to make decisions. So he is going to rectify it. He goes back to his organization and he calls all his executive staff people and he says, "Okay, from now on you people are going to make the decisions. I realize that it is really important for you to do." He left. In his mind he thought that had been the transition. No one could believe him because that's not the pattern of behavior he had [been exhibiting] in the past. We're still in the process of trying to help people understand that we are trying to change our patterns. Some people realize that it has happened. Some people have a difficult time believing that we can do it. It's a perception that is probably much more in individuals and small units of the college. . . . It is a very difficult perception problem, I believe.

The C4 vice-president viewed many people as wanting control without accepting the corresponding responsibility.

> I think the thing that's always amazed me about the power issue is that people have, I'm using general terms, people will not accept necessarily that

> with power goes responsibility. When you see that, what you get a lot of times are people who are saying, "Yeah, I want to be able to make those decisions, but I don't want the responsibility." They cannot accept that downside of that responsibility. I think that's always the most difficult thing--that you have got to force people when you give them the authority or power, that with it goes responsibility. It still amazes me in all these years that people in organizations don't understand.

Another of the implementors of the change process at C4 thought that some people missed the point of empowerment. They were, according to her, building empires.

> What we found in there is that people actually wanted this different responsibility that they didn't need. Because we're into this thing of building an empire. We enter this so-called power structure. We have not learned yet that our power comes from the people we empower. That's been a tough lesson for us to learn, and we haven't learned it yet. We still think that the more things that we have our fingers in, or so-called control, the more powerful we are. We haven't learned that you have to turn it loose and let other people have it. And let them build you and lift you.

Faculty members at each of the institutions thought that power had begun to be redistributed. They talked about being given more power; however, no one mentioned "taking power" or accepting responsibility themselves. At ACC, the faculty member explained,

> They [administrators] are doing more with empowering. Some specific examples would be, they are taking faculty from the ranks. That would be one example--to take them out of the ranks and give them a leadership role in the college for a particular area. They've also done this with a student assessment role. A faculty member has 50% release time to do that.

A faculty member at ECC said she admired individuals who could share their authority.

> My personal feeling is that leaders who share power are more powerful leaders. People who tend to grab up power and sequester it end up losing it. I think that when you increase access, I would have greater respect for

> that person and more profound respect. For example, I have enormous respect for Jack.

At ECC, the empowerment had moved beyond faculty and administrators to support personnel, who were encouraged and trained to become the "experts" with technology. The quality advisor explained,

> The mentors system that we used was almost completely populated by support staff. They are the people who used these [computer] applications all the time. They are extremely good at it. That made an enormous difference. There was a very subtle redistribution of power that just happened. With their expertise came new respect, and suddenly they were heard more and they were empowered. It was very interesting to watch that happen.

At ACC, a secretary ran the Operations Team meeting from an agenda on her laptop computer when the president was not present. From the perspective of this observer, she was an active facilitator whose classification did not prevent her leadership.

According to the change agent, Bravo College had not redistributed power.

> The power hasn't been diffused. I don't believe all power should be diffused, but if you're going to ask somebody to do something, there's a certain integrity if they stay within the certain boundaries. So someone will have said, "This is the purpose of the committee." When the committee gets all done, they'd say, "That wasn't the purpose."

Strategy and Structure

Strategy means choosing specific approaches and pinpointing the institution's direction. Structure refers to the way resources are organized to achieve goals, and the reward system includes all the methods to recruit and motivate staff to high levels of achievement (Kilmann, 1989, p. 129).

The colleges' strategies--mission, visions, and strategic plan--were not discussed in depth, perhaps due to these colleges' being in the mid-stages of the change implementation process, and the documents had been revised or rewritten earlier in the change process. For some, the documents were either public relations tools or planning tools that were not operationalized. ACC was the only college currently struggling with operationalizing their mission and vision, measuring their progress, and providing guidelines to returning faculty and staff.

Respondents from all four colleges spent more time talking about the structure than about strategies. Through the examination of various documents, there were not clear explanations of what behaviors were expected in the "new organization" or what would be rewarded. The quality advisor from BCC commented,

> Their [the staff's] biggest question was, "What behaviors do you want of us?" "What is our customer service policy? What is it you want us to do? Don't send us to telephone training and diversity training. Tell us what the behaviors are here, and then we'll know what to do." So there wasn't a very good mesh between the training and the change initiative.

As the planned change efforts progressed, the implementors recognized the necessity of integrating the new efforts into existing structures and systems. Making the connection between strategic initiatives and the annual budgeting process, connecting annual performance reviews to the change initiative, and holding contract negotiations to support the change were mentioned as critical planning elements. At C4, an implementor said,

> We're also tying it in with our pay, our performance pay, our model. It has a piece of professional development in it that you can earn money for that. So

> we're still figuring out how to bring all these pieces together. They came at us from different directions. We're expected to tie that up. We're going to wrap up Ascent 2000 as we go into a new phase.

Alpha's vice-president of instruction recognized C4 as having done "a whole lot more training on change and change theories and transition and worked with their staff intensively in a training environment for a year prior to the implementation [than we did]."

The president, vice-president, and change agent at ACC all agreed that professional development and training were key to implementing a fundamental change process for faculty, and staff needed to learn new behaviors and skills. "The more I think about it, professional development and training are keys. We need to get a cadre of people trained who can facilitate things."

The president of ECC also knew that training was critical. In his technology-driven plan, training was to be delivered when the equipment arrived, not weeks later.

> So you need to have some kind of a systematic way of training people in anticipation of when the stuff is there. The worst that can happen is the stuff sits there for six months while everybody gets trained to use it, that they get some training so when they turn the machine on, or you connect them to the network, they can begin to use it in some way. So that training plays a big part in that.

Remorsefully, an administrator at ACC said lack of training had slowed their progress. At a basic level, it was difficult to believe the amount of training a fundamental change would require to implement successfully.

> I don't think we understood, I don't think we understand today what our dedication to training needs to be to truly be successful at this. It's financial resources and people resources and time of everybody and continuity. It's

> really a big piece. Industry told us that was going to be a big part of it. We chose not to believe it. We're still, even though we're the educators, we're still not convinced of the level of training which I think we're going to need. We're just learning that part, I guess.

Reorganizations also were necessary to achieve the changes. ECC's president said he wanted to ensure that the structure was not prohibiting risk-taking and new behaviors.

> I don't think you can create innovation in the organization. What you can do is free it. I don't think you can create it. In any organization you're going to have a fair number of innovative people. Not that some organizations don't have a culture that inhibits that. I think this institution for a good many years was very maintenance oriented. That inhibited innovation. It sort of dumbs down the organization. You just maintain what's going on out there. We want it to be quality, and we want you to maintain the quality.

C4's president recognized the importance of what he called "strategic architecture" to achieve a transformation.

> Another thing that is really, really important, and it doesn't get attended to enough in a transformational endeavor, is strategic architecture or business models. Business models under which the institution operates because if the strategic architecture is not aligned with the strategic intent and the vision, the directional aspects, you end up with probably a worse situation than if you would have just left things alone. Create a level of expectation you can't fill and then frustrate and demoralize people, and you damage the credibility of the administration.

Bravo's president bluntly described talking directly with executive officers who were not supportive of the change process.

> The direct answer to the question is, I have closed the door with five or six vice-presidents or others and said, "If you don't support this, you won't be here. I'm trying to help you, but I can't have a whole area that isn't catching on. That is the way we're going to operate, especially if you're walking away from the table and you say, 'Yeah, that's what you think.'" I've cut my vice-president, with instructional theories--came from university--he's brilliant, but he's not sure about the CQI stuff. We'd been trying to work around him, but I had to chop his ankles off.

The change agent at BCC criticized the lack of alignment among the executive staff. As the implementor, it became extremely difficult to accomplish the goals due to a reward system that supported old behaviors.

> What really turned people off was not having the organization walk the line. . . . Actually, our middle management wasn't. We had a number of people who used it and were fine until they saw that they could use it, but when someone came to make a decision, they didn't bother doing it the way they were supposed to. They just arbitrarily made a decision, and it didn't make any difference what their indicators [data] were. As soon as it became clear that you would get rewarded [for old behaviors] and you'd probably get punished [for new behaviors], the other people weren't interested in it.
>
> What difference did it make if John, the president, gave rousing speeches in the beginning of the year about how wonderful this was, when you worked on a committee for six months and your recommendation got blown out of the water. Or your committee got dissolved for a computer recommendation because someone had already implemented a decision while your committee was still working on it. The attitude of people was, it really doesn't make any difference what John [the president] says. . . . We really needed our vice-presidents. We needed that piece under John to support it. You need managers, too, but you also need that next level up of whatever the senior leadership is. If they don't support it, there's too much of a reward system. There were actually people who were somewhat punished for doing this because nobody wanted the information and nobody wanted them to have that level of knowledge.

The ACC president forthrightly said he had to change the entire executive staff in order to implement the change. He had moved people around, and others had left. He worried that he might have let someone go who could have, with a little more time, been a major contributor to the college. The vice-president from ACC concluded that having someone who was not supportive in the executive team was problematic for the whole change process.

> We had the wrong kind of vice-president. He wasn't a bad person, he was very skillful. The clash between him and Tom, the whole organization just sat back and looked at him--What the hell do you think you're doing? The highly developed work team, the very production-oriented group, the empowering

> group, the letting-go group, that kind of thing, we didn't do any of that stuff. As a result, I think, he put us behind.

Issues of alignment surfaced in all of the conversations with executive officers. Not having all of the executive team working for the same goals was a barrier to success. One member of the ACC executive team said,

> Yes, where we've not been aligned it comes out quite evident in what people could call inconsistencies. That's been one of our biggest concerns right now that we make sure that we are in alignment. We assumed we were in alignment in the beginning. We found out we weren't and [we are] now trying to go back to make sure that we are. That's very difficult to make sure you're in alignment.

At ECC, when the executive vice-president left, his position was not filled. This structural change led to reducing layers, shortening process time, and improving communication.

Other support structures are institutional research systems and the reward systems. Bravo's president recognized that as more data were being used, the college's capacity was limited.

> If we have a weakness, one that I would point out very quickly is not enough money and people in research. We have a far bigger need now, and that would not meet that need for people. So I'm worried about the dean's capacity to keep up with what we really need to be providing to people. I think that's going to take some major changes with the budget this year in order to allow it [funding institutional research] to happen.

ACC, C4, and ECC thought of needing more resources to motivate and support new behaviors. The vice-president of instruction at ECC knew resources were critical.

> I don't believe you can go very far unless you can get some funds that allow people to do the experimentation. I don't think you get very far if there's no money around. . . . When we become impatient, we get in trouble. Quick

> fixes consume our resources. We need time and energy to focus. More often than not, if you sit down and rationalize, we know that that's not going to really solve the problem. It's a very long, arduous process. I don't know if anybody can make the true transformation in a short period of time.

At C4, having money available for innovations or opportunities was considered part of the normal operating budget. An administrator described it as follows:

> If you run into problems, there is usually some way you can work it out or you can find more money. That's the one thing about this institution--in my 24 years here, I've never run into a snag or hit a place where I needed money and couldn't get it.

A Pew Grant had supported innovative instructional methods at ECC for the past few years, according to the dean of institutional effectiveness.

> For three years we were able to fund faculty projects during the course of the year and the summers. We held development programs. For the last two years, in the faculty meeting the start of the meeting has been devoted to, 20 minutes has been devoted to instructional techniques. People have shared what they've been doing in their classes. So we've been doing that.

At ACC, the incentives were tied to equipment dollars and professional development. As faculty achieved the performance goals set by their department and the college, they were given the budget for needed equipment. The change agent at ECC recited how it worked.

> We talked a lot about recognition and how we're going to recognize people and incentives, and our capital equipment process was set up around incentives that said it wasn't just for being reengineered, but it was for moving ahead and increasing your student body and following the strategic rules of the college. They had to tie their equipment purchases, the equipment in this college is to die for. Those who were showing that they were moving ahead had a much better chance for getting equipment than those who didn't. Other kinds of incentives would be professional development kinds of things. Professional development for those who are moving ahead. So you've increased your FTE by 40 this year, a percentage of that goes back to you so

> that you can use it to hire new staff or this and that. Those are the kinds of incentives that we've been looking at.

Rewarding faculty and staff who begin to implement and support the new initiatives was important and difficult. A faculty member at ECC explained how sharing with peers and learning from others had been reward enough for her.

> I'll tell you what I think was even more useful than that has been the encouragement to explain it and talk about it on campus. It's that old thing about you really learn something when you have to teach it to others. I came home from that seminar thinking, "Oh, I'd really like to try this," but we hadn't been home three weeks and the VP said, "Talk about this in a faculty meeting; people need to know, this is really exciting." So, early on, we were called on. Another faculty member and I went. The two of us were called on to explain it. I think we have a very wise vice-president. He basically, in the gentlest way, never lets you off the hook.

The president from ECC confided that the reward was

> . . . just the glory that they get and when they teach others. In terms of monetary rewards, nothing. Recognition, yes. We demonstrate their things to outside groups. We bring it to the board meeting and have them show their latest techniques. Send them out to the high schools and they teach what they're doing out to the people in the high schools.

At C4, a policy had been approved by the board to reward each employee up to a certain level for their professional development activity. Administrators and the change agent at C4 bragged about the results from their 1% policy on learning.

> A policy that helped us along is what we call our 1% policy. It encourages learning for an employee at the college by taking a number of either continuing education or college credit classes, after they have earned so many hours they can get a 1% increase in their base pay. For many people that's not a lot of money, maybe a couple hundred to $1,000 a year. We didn't think it would be that popular; well, it is extremely popular. So it's a way that you can put board policy into action to cause something to happen, and yet it doesn't cost us that much money. It's totally voluntary. It's been amazing how people value those hours, so we put those hours around our training. People would come and, you don't get it unless you stay the whole time. You have to sign in and out to get it. People love it. They'll stay there.

> They understand that if you go half the day and skip out, you don't get that credit. You get what you learned.

This reward system was implemented without extra staff or red tape. The C4 change agent explained:

> Each employee keeps their own record. We don't keep it. If it's credit they get their transcript and bring it in. HR doesn't, nobody has to keep the records. It hasn't cost us anything. No bureaucracy, nothing. It has been really successful.

Funds were also provided for faculty to continue their cooperative learning endeavors at C4. The venture had developed into an institute where community colleges from around the country were sending their faculty teams to learn a different instructional method. The C4 change agent articulated,

> The faculty in their development of cooperative learning did more to make the change. All we as an institution did was support that. When the grant ran out last year, we gave them $80,000 to continue the cooperative learning institute. We had that agreement. We followed up on it, and we did it again this year. So my feeling is, that's not a direct connect to quality. That was going on before; I'd say those things started about the same time. It was serendipity almost. Some faculty knew they had to do something. The president knew he had to do something. So these things started up. We didn't cause that to happen, except for the environment that was created of support. As I look at change now, I think that's one of the things you have to establish is an environment for support for change where you know if you take a chance.

An administrator at C4 insisted that a reward system needed to be over and above the basic job. She concluded that the college needed to be very clear about what behaviors they wanted to encourage. She also recommended that a "menu of options" might be more satisfying for some individuals.

> That's the thing I've taken--that there's got to be a basic evaluation of your job, which is the basis of it. If you're not doing your job, then we've got to deal with you. If you're just doing your job, then fine, this is what you'll get.

> But if you're going above and beyond your job and it's all tied in with your professional service to the college beyond what you normally would do, then we're going to reward you for that. The thing we'll have to do there is really establish what we want done and pay for it. And in paying for it, we want a menu [choice of rewards] because people have said, "It's not just the money; I may rather have a day off."

Bravo's president mused,

> We were doing a lot of things, but I'm not sure we were enabling change. We're trying to be far more responsive to what they [faculty] want to do. We're trying to provide, our foundation provides, what we call instructional improvement development grants now, without an awful lot of fuss. They can apply for money to do some change in the curriculum and get that money flowing to them pretty quickly.

Communication

Communication problems plagued each of the initiatives. The ACC president snapped, "Yeah, they thought we should communicate more. If anyone knows how to do that, let me know." The change agent at ACC described the results of a regular newsletter: "Every week we would talk about the change that we're going through and that sort of thing, put the mission on top [of a newsletter]. The backlash effect that that had was unbelievable. It gave people something to shoot at." Another communication attempt was the vice-president trying to contact all the dissenters and engaging them in a face-to-face dialogue. He reported, "It was really a dead-end street."

The ECC quality advisor also started sending out a newsletter, but it had been too time consuming to maintain, so they used face-to-face meetings for communication.

> Frankly, then it [TQM newsletter] became too much of a burden. We have an employee newsletter that goes out once a week anyway during the school year and several times over the summer. We simply began adding to the employees' newsletter. That has been our primary means of communication. We've often flogged ourselves and said, we're terrible because we never have any of these wonderful employee things. They have total quality day and stuff like that. It's not our style.
>
> The president has always had and did have about every two years, he has some means by which he has met with all of the staff in relatively small groups to talk about the direction of the college. It has always been quality related. When we were doing strategic planning, we had focus groups with all of the faculty. When we were doing process management, he came to every department and they presented some of their processes. About every two years he has literally gotten to every corner of the college in some method. In addition, of course, he attends faculty meetings.

C4 published meeting minutes to the campus, had an anonymous e-mail box, distributed hard-copy newsletters, and held open forums. One dean from C4 commented philosophically on the recent cultural survey showing low communication and trust.

> I have not ever seen a cultural survey done where people did not come up in the first three items with communication. We don't communicate. Well, how do you communicate? You've got your electronic communication. We've got more paper, we have a proliferation of paper. We talk to people, we do all kinds of stuff. How do we say it? We've been trying to figure how do we say the same thing, seven times, several different ways. So those kinds of struggles, you're going to have.

The acceptance of the need to change, letting go of the past, and commitment to change are necessary parts of the change process (Bridges, 1994). To this researcher, there seemed to be little evidence of a "letting go of the old" and a turn toward the new. Most of the changes were additive. The change agent from Bravo described the transition avoidance most of the institutions exhibited.

> What's interesting to me is that, while people have taken on some of the new behavior, they've also retained a lot of old behavior. It's not a matter of have

> we accepted new things. In a lot of cases they've accepted new stuff but they haven't given up enough of the old behavior. So they kind of co-exist or push against each other. . . . Yeah, you do have to let go, and you have to let things die, and you have to have some endings. There is a real reluctance to work on the endings piece, much more of jumping into, well we'll just do this differently. They're not dealing with the endings and the chaos in between. They either have people doing the new things which don't mean anything or ending up doing nothing.

Summary

In these four community colleges, the decision to engage in a fundamental change process was a top-down one. Support for the change initiative came primarily from the president and the designated change agent. The president had difficulty changing the organization unless his executives were supportive. The vice-president of instruction was extremely influential in diffusing and encouraging faculty to approach new concepts. Although planning was critical, colleges did not take the time to create implementation plans. Empowerment was the goal of each of the change processes. Strategies for supporting the change included restructuring, increased communication, support groups, increased salary, and recognition.

What Changed as a Result of the Change Process?

Finally, the critical question of what had changed as a result of the planned change process at the colleges was addressed. In this section, the results of the change process are presented. Processes and organizational culture are discussed first, followed by changes in the mission and organizational paradigm.

The outcomes of a fundamental change process must affect core processes, culture, mission and purpose, and the organizational paradigm. There are overlaps among the four dimensions; however, each level is embedded in and shaped by higher levels (Levy, 1995). Changes in the organizational paradigm must entail changes in the mission, culture, and core processes; however, changes in the core processes would not necessarily cause changes in the culture, mission, and paradigm. The changes in core processes are typically first-order changes. If a fundamental change is to occur, then the meta-rules have to change.

Improved Processes

The college interviewees frequently mentioned having better student processes as a consequence of focusing on students first. The vice-president of ACC explained,

> In many ways this puts the customer first, but it also puts the faculty first. If we truly are going to be a learning organization responding to the needs of our customers, we don't get that done from an administrative chair, we get that done from the faculty, service-provider chair. So their stock goes up. We can't do it without them.

Faculty members, too, said the change processes had improved the college for students by simplifying registration processes, providing additional services, and focusing on student learning. A faculty member at ECC said the TQ initiative had influenced students.

> I think it's had a number of influences on students. . . . For example, we found out that our open registration process was too chaotic. There's been a group that's been working on that. One simple improvement is that rather than making our students run upstairs for their degree, their transcripts, to come back down to prove that they can register for Comp I, or they come in through advising and they don't have any of their papers with them. We've located a few computers and printers down in the cafeteria during open registration. So they can go over there and get theirs and run back. It's a simple thing, but it certainly takes a little bit of the hassle out of open registration. Students

> who are unfamiliar with the building don't have to go find yet another place and take that much more time.

Another faculty member described an improvement for students at ACC: "We surveyed what the students wanted, and then we did changes. We have changed our scheduling process."

President Straub summarized everyone's thoughts about what was the most important outcome.

> Student success. Nothing is more important than student achievement. That's bottom line. That's what I want to know about. Related to that, but secondary, is student opportunities. What kind of opportunities are we creating for students to access, the programs, the services, the courses they need, what kind of opportunities are we creating for them when they leave here and go on to the university of their choice or career choice? Student opportunities. Because student success and opportunities don't have to go together. You might have a 4.0 grade point average, which makes you look real successful, but if you are then unemployed, we're not creating the fit.

Students' learning also was affected by the changes.

> Most exciting is the involvement of the faculty in classroom-based improvement efforts. Early in the nineties, almost one-third of the faculty became involved in structured efforts to improve the teaching-learning process in their classrooms. In the following years the involvement gradually extended to additional full-time faculty and to the part-time adjunct faculty. (Unpublished document from ECC)

Cultural Changes

Another outcome was a change in organizational norms toward collaborating, working together, and building relationships. Several interviewees mentioned that they thought as a "whole college" and were more "aligned." Examples of these responses follow. The change agent at C4 said,

> I think because of the collaborative nature of it, that some people were thrown together that had not been thrown together and formed at least some acquaintances that they didn't have before. In some cases, relationships developed.

And at ECC, the change agent explained,

> I think people became more aware of working as a team. I think they moved out of their sometimes narrow stalls into a bigger arena. We discovered through that council that talking to each other was good, that things get done when people know what your motivation is.

Faculty and middle administrators mentioned feeling as a department that they had greater freedom over daily decisions. A faculty member at ACC gave an example:

> I can speak for our students in the dental hygiene program. When I was a faculty member there, this change allowed students, if they had an issue or question, to have the opportunity for faculty to respond more directly and make a change in a more timely manner. It wasn't, well, we have to go talk to this person or that person. We could say, well, what are the issues and then reach consensus and make a difference. Sometimes they liked it, sometimes they didn't like it. It was dealt with right away when there was a concern. So I think that they liked that part of it.

These changes were beginning to affect the culture at ACC, as the following comment by the change agent illustrated: "We were just starting to move up, as far as our perception, by staff of trust, communication, and their participation. They don't have a choice. So, they're saying this will never work. So it's really down to people."

At BCC, the change agent believed the quality tools provided teams the skills to make better decisions.

> [Buying a new telephone system was a] process where the college would have bought the wrong equipment, they would have wasted a lot of money. They would have had it [the decision to buy a switch] led by which vendor

> could tell them and sell them. I was very proud to see them go out with the RFP and actually reject the whole first group and make those vendors work on their things to actually answer their questions. They were very clear about what they needed and what they wanted.

At C4, an interviewee commented, "Some of our power has been enhanced to some extent through the quality effort. People received opportunities to learn because they had shown an interest in learning."

Other harder results also surfaced as President Andrews listed a decrease in cost per credit hour and other cost savings. President Nelson credited the planned change process with improved faculty union relations, which resulted in reducing costs.

> The last contract, a five-year contract with the union, does not provide a 15% increase for faculty. It's not even 3% a year. So it's less than inflation. You can see the sides, they recognize the college has financial issues to deal with. They voluntarily talked with us about changing the insurance package. So we changed that so it was cheaper to the college. They can continue to enjoy good benefits, but not have it bankrupt the college. So you think about those things, it is a good relationship. The first three years of the contract, the insurance savings are greater than the salary increase. So the board actually comes out ahead. It isn't until the fifth year of the contract that the accumulated salary increase exceeds the cost of the insurance savings. Everybody worked together to come up with this mutual gain.

Sustainability of the Change

At each of the colleges, when asked whether the process had achieved "transformation," the response was positive although cautious. The approval of the contract at ACC, which fundamentally changed the role of faculty from instructor to entrepreneur and coach, would be a signal of fundamental change to the president and his executive staff. President Andrews said, "Yes, if the faculty approves that contract, I know we are over the hump. And I believe they will. I knew where we were going and that we could be successful. Last year was a tough year, but it is getting easier."

At ECC, a faculty member explained how they were institutionalizing the changes.

> At the other end of that is, once you institute a change you check on it. I think it has really gotten to be an institutional behavior. You don't just get something in motion and go, "Okay, there, we're fine." You actually follow up. As you plan the change, you plan a way of measuring what the effects of the change may be. Then you also go back and check them. So I think all three of those things are ways in which the school has changed.

At C4, a faculty member tentatively affirmed the success of the change initiative. "It worked well. I will not say that we're all customer focused yet. When we're making our decisions sometimes we refer back to what's most convenient for me or most customary. I think we've come a long way as a group."

President Campbell of BCC assured that progress was being made.

> Again, the review as late as two days ago is that it has worked extremely well and that it has the potential, but people need more time to settle in on it and get used to it. In other words, even the department chairs really can't evaluate how much time it's going to take long term.

The sustainability of the changes was a concern for all the implementors. The ECC president explained that everyone moves at a different pace, and that leaves a "messy organization." An ECC faculty member also talked about the ideal of being aligned but not rigid.

> The change is somewhere between alignment and integration. I think it varies depending on the person you ask. I feel like it's really an integral part of the school, but then I'm a person who uses it. So my opinion is probably influenced by that. I would agree to aligning only if we understand that there

> are some people who are never going to use this. They're never going to do anything but criticize it. It just seems okay to me. There is a difference between alignment and rigidity. It seems to me that any process probably prospers if it allows its detractors. It kind of even encourages them. There is a certain confidence about a process that acknowledges its opponents and lets them speak freely. Certainly we have that here. Nobody gets hushed up. There are predictable voices. So I would think that we're somewhere between alignment and integration, but that's just personal opinion.

And the quality advisor from ECC worried that new employees and a presidential change could allow the process to be reversed.

> That's part of my concern with the 25% turnover that we've had in the administration and I told you about and the fact that I can see some deterioration in our efforts just because they haven't been brought up to speed. As long as Paul [the president] is here, I think the culture will gradually mold them into shape. I'm not sure that we have the luxury of being able to do that. I think we need to be more intentional. If Paul's reorganization and planning is successful, I think that will help.

The vice-president of ECC testified that the TQ philosophy and methods would be lasting.

> I personally don't [think we'll drift back] because I can no longer see doing business in any other way. Nothing else makes sense to me. So what I'm groping with and what I think the organization is groping with is the realization that on the one hand we know that the word "continuous" is so important in this movement. You really do have to stay at it and stay at it.

The vice-president confided that being committed for the "long haul" had meant more time than they had anticipated.

> It is my estimation we are administratively, we all are, somewhat naive to take a faculty member who for 20 years has been successful and have them transformed in a short period of time and acquire a whole new skill set. The mistakes I see are that people don't understand how difficult instruction is. . . . We've got to get beyond that and get to the point where we have good people who are doing good things. The future of this institution is going to require people to function in very different ways with whole new skill sets.

At C4, the change seemed to be primarily about the process of professional development until an administrator explained the deeper change of valuing learning and, specifically, learning over teaching.

> We're at the point. We really are. And with a few directed initiatives, I think that we can put a lot of what has happened right into the culture of this organization. I think that the values are there, that people really value learning. In fact, we've made a conscious effort, normally you hear teaching and learning; we've made a conscious effort to say learning and teaching. We've switched it. It has a different connotation. It also talks about everybody being learners and everybody being teachers. We can learn from anybody. We can teach anybody. So it just gives that switch in the way that we think about it. I think that's there and we're ready to take advantage of it. I think the development plans, the performance-pay thing, all of it ties together and aligns us and gets us ready to just push right over that hump.

The arrival of the new president portended the support or the demise of the change.

And finally at Bravo College, where the contract was in dispute and the change agent was leaving the college, she thought there had been a great deal of learning that had left lasting changes.

> For so many people who are so critical of what we don't have, they know an awful lot about it. They are clearly aware of what is not there. They are aware of things we did that we should have continued. They are aware of a different set of questions and things that are going on. Some of it they genuinely don't agree with, but some of what they complain about they'd actually like to see. They have a great deal of knowledge and information, so it has affected the culture. This whole issue about quality in my work and making decisions around my stuff, people are pretty angry that they weren't able to make that leap. They really resent the retrenching back into hierarchical authority.

Summary

To recap my findings regarding the fundamental change process in community colleges:

- The colleges that embraced the fundamental change clearly understood and articulated the need for change.
- They developed an internal coalition supporting the vision and change.
- They crafted a plan for executing the change process that included communication, support and reward for the new behaviors, and the development of a new culture.
- The executives empowered others within the organization to create change in their areas.
- Finally, they seemed excited about the future.

The study findings are discussed in Chapter V. The conclusions drawn from the findings are advanced, and implications are set forth.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

When we look across the country at the environment within which community colleges function, the common denominator is rapid change evidenced by increased demand for accountability, declining financial support, increased cost of technology, and a greater diversity of students. From the inception of their unique mission, community colleges have been committed to innovation by leading the way to universal access to higher education through their open door policies and student support structures. In addition, community colleges have been committed to serving the needs of their local communities, which has placed them in the forefront of change. Currently, community college writers, such as Alfred, O'Banion, Cross, and Ewell, warn that community colleges are not changing fast enough to meet the needs of an emerging information age. Here at the end of the twentieth century, the question for community colleges is not **whether** but **how** to change.

Everywhere we read of the need for change, but only occasionally are we positioned to see the implementation of a change process. The purpose of this study was to describe the fundamental change process in four community colleges committed to a fundamental change process. It was conducted to learn how fundamental change occurs at community colleges. Of particular interest was the reason for adopting a change initiative, how the process was implemented, and what changed as a result of the change process.

The first phase of the study was a review of related organizational change literature. This literature is expansive and growing; thus, the focus for this study was narrowed to planned fundamental change, models of planned fundamental change, and strategies for implementing fundamental change. This review provided a conceptual framework for the data collection.

Using qualitative research methods, the second phase consisted of 18 semi-structured interviews conducted on-site during a field study at four community colleges, located in the eastern, southern, midwestern, and northern United States--Alpha, Bravo, Charles County, and Eureka community colleges. Not only was each college different in size and location, but each had a distinctive change strategy. Alpha Community College was restructuring to align support behind faculty units, Bravo and Eureka implemented TQ initiatives, and Charles County focused on developing a learning community.

During the third phase, interviews of presidents, vice-presidents of instruction, change agents, and faculty were compared with observations made and related documents collected. The data were assessed to form a description of the fundamental change process in these community colleges.

This chapter will summarize the findings to the research questions, examine the participants' roles, and then reflect on the findings in relation to the literature presented. Finally, the recommendations for further study, as well as concluding remarks, will be offered.

Research Questions

The basic research question for this study was: How does fundamental change occur at community colleges? From the basic research question, three subquestions evolved:

1. Why was the adoption decision made?
2. How much planning, priority, and support did the change process have?
3. What changed as a result of the change process?

Findings

How does fundamental change occur at community colleges? This question sought to describe the reasons for engaging in a change process, the strategies for implementing and the outcomes of a fundamental change process in community colleges. At the four colleges studied, there were notable variances in the depth and scope of the change efforts.

First, accrediting associations were agents of change for these four colleges. All three associations required greater accountability by demanding evidence of student achievement data being used to improve curriculum. Each college was in the process of developing measures and collecting such data for improving their student outcomes, so this did not explain the differences in implementation and progress, but the mandate did contribute to an awareness that the external environment was becoming increasingly critical and demanding.

Eureka Community College had suffered the greatest decrease in enrollment and funding cuts and had the highest level of transformation. At Alpha Community College, the board had "seen cost going up and enrollment going down." Both of these colleges had experienced organizational pain, which predisposed them to accepting a change strategy; therefore, organizational stress due to decline in performance motivates change. The second reason for engaging in a change process was need to improve performance and accountability.

A third driving force for change was current literature and futuristic predictions rather than evidence of dissatisfaction within the communities served. Recognizable environmental opportunities had surfaced rarely, so defining a problem in a way that engendered internal support became the basis for organizational change processes. This is the place in the process where the potential for miscommunication is especially precarious. The potentiality for defining the problem so faculty and staff support the proposed change was increased when all constituencies were involved.

Proceeding, the fourth finding was that the internal environment was rigid and a hurdle to the change process. Faculty, administrators, and staff ostensibly were familiar with the status quo. Faculty heard from students that they enjoyed their classes, so believed they must be doing what was expected. Isolated physically within individual classrooms, faculty rarely had the opportunity to develop a whole systems perspective of their students' educational experience, nor did many administrators or staff members understand how their function connected to student learning. As the change processes were introduced, all four colleges aroused considerable resistance internally. Explaining what behaviors each individual would need to change would increase understanding and support of the change process.

Fifth, empowerment was necessary to develop a culture where leadership at all levels is encouraged and respected. Mid-level managers are important to the colleges, and they need to be enrolled in the change coalition. Most operations are managed at this level, and to achieve a fundamental change, these managers must understand and support the change process.

The sixth finding was that the president has to authorize the empowerment of staff. It was interesting to note that at each of the colleges the presidents recognized the necessity to have their executive staff aligned to their vision. The executive staff must then be empowered to lead and to empower leaders at lower levels. At one college, the president had attempted to jump-start the initiative by directly communicating with faculty and staff. Although he was successful in recruiting followers, these early adopters were reprimanded for behaving differently than their direct supervisor expected.

The seventh finding was that the presidents began the implementation without buy-in from the change recipients, faculty and staff. The presidents in the study appeared to excel when selling their vision inside the organization; however, they stopped persuading before the executive staff, middle management, or the dominant coalition of faculty were really committed. It appeared that if the presidents did not receive overt objections, they assumed the change initiative was progressing well and being accepted by the college staff.

The eighth finding was that presidents both assumed support from their executive staffs and predicted faculty nonsupport. The presidents frequently implied that there was a consistent faculty opinion by referring to "the faculty." Talk of "them and us" seemed counterproductive, for there were as many different opinions in the administration as in the faculty. Supporters and naysayers were in either group.

The change process demanded planning, priority, and support from all the participants. In two of the four colleges, implementation plans were developed and implemented. Specific plans to change the culture and paradigm were not prepared, or it was too early in the implementation process for the implementors to recognize that need. The ninth finding was that change implementors believed cultural changes would result indirectly through core process changes; however, process changes did not necessarily trigger changes in culture, vision, or paradigm.

The tenth finding was that the more successful implementations required the president to make the fundamental change process a priority for many years. To be a priority, the change initiative necessitated additional financial resources and the leadership of the president and the vice-president of instruction.

Finally, what changed as a result of the change process? The eleventh finding was that the outcomes, at this mid-stage of the implementation, were primarily improved core processes. Specific results ranged from "greater student focus" to a "better bid process." In one of the four colleges included in this study, there was obvious and agreed-upon success toward achieving fundamental change. Two of the colleges were waiting for pivotal events--the arrival of an incoming president and the approval of the faculty contract--to reenergize or maintain their change initiatives. In contrast, there were contradictions in the final college between the interviewees' perceptions of progress.

The twelfth finding was that cultural changes had occurred in three colleges. Evidence was improved faculty-administration relations, which eased contract negotiations. Sustaining the fundamental change was the final phase. Eureka Community College had been implementing TQ for 10 years and was at the point of institutionalizing their changes. Other colleges were not to that stage.

Summary of Findings

1. Accrediting associations were agents of change.
2. A need to improve performance and accountability facilitated the adoption of a change process.
3. A driving force for change was current literature and predictions rather than evidence of dissatisfaction within the communities served.
4. The internal environment was rigid and a barrier to the change process.
5. Empowerment was necessary to develop a culture in which there is leadership at all levels.
6. The president had to authorize the empowerment of staff.
7. The presidents began the implementation without buy-in from the change recipients, faculty and staff.

8. Presidents both assumed support from their executive staffs and predicted faculty nonsupport. Both assumptions could be right or wrong.

9. Change implementors believed cultural changes would result indirectly through core process changes; however, process changes did not necessarily trigger changes in culture, vision, or paradigm.

10. The more successful implementations required the president to make the fundamental change process a priority for many years.

11. The outcomes, at this mid-stage of the implementation, were primarily improved core processes.

12. Cultural changes had occurred in three of the four colleges.

Roles in the Change Process

Within each college there was a distinctive culture; however, staff group cultures were remarkably similar across the colleges. The following are across-site findings.

The President--Change Strategist

The researcher found consonance among the presidents regarding the need to fundamentally change their colleges. All four presidents thought that community colleges must become more student focused, more flexible, more accessible, and more innovative.

The visions created by these four presidents were so strikingly similar that they were almost interchangeable. Although each shared the fundamental community college purpose to serve his community through providing educational services, the unique cultures of each service area had been filtered out. The president must communicate a vision for the institution that is formulated collaboratively, that demonstrates an understanding of the local community culture, and that motivates and inspires the college staff.

All of the presidents recognized a need, declared it, and adopted a change strategy, which then resulted in considerable internal resistance. Often the plans were discussed without the affected staff having enough information to make an informed decision. The presidents may not have presented a solid enough educational case for the proposed changes, or they needed to listen to the reasons for the resistance and then participate in a "give and take." Despite feeling an urgency to change, it is critical that the president stick with this step until the staff, especially the faculty, see the same picture of the world they see.

The Faculty--Change Recipients

At all four colleges, the faculty strongly believed they were doing a fine job. They did not wish to have their methods change or the classroom itself change, although they were receptive to improving student learning and to more collaborative methods. Faculty weighed the value of a strategy against both improving student learning and the effect on their department. Also, the faculty interviewed were supportive of the change process. Evidence is that each of them had sought or accepted extra assignments when the administration had offered those opportunities, so these faculty members may be early adopters of changes.

The Instructional Vice-President and Change Agent--Change Implementors

The instructional vice-presidents' attitudes toward the change process appeared to establish the attitude of the faculty at each of the colleges. Instructional vice-presidents seemed key to implementing the change process because of their direct contact with faculty; however, they seemed uncomfortable "bringing the faculty along." The three vice-presidents supported the president's vision but struggled with coaching faculty who exhibited behaviors unaligned with the change initiative. The two colleges where the vice-president of instruction actively participated in the change initiative were more successful than the colleges where this did not happen.

In contrast to the similarity of the messages from the members of the above-mentioned groups, change agents were very different from each other. The change agent at Eureka projected her energies into designing activities and strategies to continue to move the change initiative ahead. The change agent at Alpha was an outspoken advocate for the president and focused on updating policy and procedure. The Charles County change agent was concluding the change activities, strategic plans, and learning opportunities initiated earlier and waiting for direction from the new president. Finally, the Bravo change agent had grown "critical of the president and the faculty," according to the president, and was leaving the institution. Aligning support around the change process meant to the change implementors that the president "walked the talk," that structural changes were made, and that resources were reallocated to the new activities. The quality of the relationship between the president and the change implementors paralleled the progress of the change process. In the least successful college, the relationship was strained between the president and the change agent.

Factors Not Contributing to Variance of the Change Process

In the attempt to discern the possible causes for variance across the colleges and to describe the factors contributing to fundamental change, it appears that the length of presidential tenure was not the key variable because the most successful and least successful colleges, in terms of the progress of their fundamental change process, had presidents with long seniority. At one of the two most successful colleges, the president was new, and at the other, a long-term president was in office.

Nor was the presence or absence of a faculty union a determinant of a fundamental change process. Three of the four colleges had unions, and in the most successful and the least successful college change efforts, there was significant entanglement with the faculty union.

The size of the colleges did not seem to be a factor affecting the success of the implementation either. The two largest colleges in this study, Bravo and Charles County, had significantly different levels of success; however, the more successful colleges were the smaller two institutions. The most successful was the mid-sized Eureka Community College.

Also, according to the external environments, the colleges all "enjoy excellent reputations with their communities," according to each of the college presidents and the institutional research data. Even in Bravo City, where a public battle between the administration and the faculty union was raging, the community still "loved the college despite being furious at the union." Competition from other educational providers, although mentioned, had not reduced enrollments.

To recap, neither the length of presidential tenure, the presence of a faculty union, the size of the institution, nor the external community appeared to be a factor contributing to the success or failure of the fundamental change initiative.

Discussion of Conceptual Framework

The explanatory value of Levy's model is the emphasis on fundamental change rather than on first-order changes. The four colleges focused primarily on improved processes instead of "seriously attacking the traditional boundaries of being time-bound, place-bound, role-bound, and efficiency-bound" (O'Banion, 1977), so that may result in only first-order changes.

The four change processes studied were much more organic than Levy's linear model of change. Change was messy, with initiatives occurring in all the phases. Also, Levy noted that transformation occurred through "radical jumps" or "leaps" forward. This did not seem to be the case in the community colleges studied, where change seemed primarily evolutionary.

Kanter's and O'Banion's list of strategies combined to offer a laundry list of must-do's for change. Although the two lists of strategies were prepared for different types of organizations, they are remarkably similar; however, both have interesting omissions and additions.

The first strategy listed by Kanter and O'Banion is to find the trigger event and capitalize on it. For the colleges studied, their "trigger events" were both ordinary and dramatic. Charles County's president participated in IBM's corporate training, and the college received grant money for professional development; Eureka's and faculty union leader participated in a citywide roundtable on quality; ACC's president replaced a dismissed president. These events became significant drivers of change only when the president, after these events, articulated a vision of where the college was going and rallied support for that change. Defining the need in a way that motivated and inspired others was a major part of bringing about meaningful change.

Developing a vision included sorting out the possible, probable, and preferred futures for the college. The vision then required translation into the culture so that the vision did not solve a problem no one recognized. In the colleges where the presidents involved others in establishing the vision, this was not as much of a concern, for the vision grew out of the shared sense of purpose and need.

The presidents in the study created the visions but then neglected to develop the political coalition around the selected and preferred future. This appeared to be a critical error, for planned change was obstructed if there was not a broad base of support. Faculty and middle managers dug in their heels and refused to implement change strategies when they did not see a reason to change or a problem that required a solution.

As Kanter stated, the deeper into the organization, the less there was language and conversation about "vision" and organizational change. Surfacing assumptions and having dialogues about what is learning, how teaching encourages learning, and how a community college education should prepare students would enhance understanding within the institutions. The senior management seemed aware that others were not supportive of the change process but acted as though saying "It is so" would achieve the transformation. Faculty and staff continued to do as they had done unless there was a significant intervention with them.

The presidents had the power to mobilize resources, effect decision-making processes, and ensure that the success of their ideas and projects would be widely known. However, this power was used sparingly and cautiously by presidents. When the reallocation of resources and decision making was impacted, the presidents did not communicate effectively the results of the changes.

The presidents agreed that modeling the new behaviors and philosophy was essential to the success of the transformation, but they found it difficult to change their own actions. The faculty seemed less concerned about what the administration did after they, the faculty, took ownership of the change process.

In two of the colleges, reorganizations benefited certain individuals with promotions and harmed others, primarily administrators, who were forced to change jobs, leave the college, or retire earlier than planned. ACC required in the new faculty contract that the traditional role of faculty be significantly enlarged to include being an entrepreneur and a manager. ECC, too, asked faculty to change from "expert" to a "facilitator of knowledge."

Institutional support was the greatest area of concern for faculty. Systemic changes and continuing assistance were required so that early adopters could practice new behaviors. At ECC, the vice-president seemed particularly skilled at encouraging faculty growth through providing professional development activities and reinforcing their discoveries about learning by (a) showcasing them to businesses and (b) having faculty present to other faculty during inservice and regular faculty meetings.

Only two of the colleges had systematic collegewide training programs. Across all four institutions, there was no master plan for increasing the internal capacity to (a) adapt to change, (c) lead in a new culture, or (c) learn new methods and techniques.

Kanter and O'Banion stressed reinforcing and "celebrating" gains. It is important to recognize the symbolic nature of these actions. From the study, even small actions like handwritten notes or a Christmas party at the president's home had a positive effect on culture, for it developed relationships. It also was a way for the college presidents in this study to thank and recognize outstanding performance. O'Banion added not to hold celebrations too soon. This suggestion is marginally helpful with the absence of institutional-effectiveness measures or even benchmarks for most of the colleges. Unless a college has clearly defined, measurable goals, it is difficult to reinforce what is not measured. Only in part can progress be measured by institutional indicators such as enrollment, budget, positive reputation, satisfaction levels of students, alumni and business leaders, and reaccreditation. Data at the departmental and unit levels are critical to measuring and recognizing progress. Until those data are evident, individuals do not understand what they can do to participate in the change process.

Kanter's Contribution

The two strategies Kanter (1992) included that were not on O'Banion's strategy list were "create an implementation plan" and "separate from the past." An implementation plan, a systematic action plan, was an afterthought at three of the colleges. This plan, different from a strategic or annual plan, created a pathway toward a new culture by assigning individual responsibilities for outcomes and creating strategies for implementing changes.

The suggestion that seemed to be lost altogether was "separate from the past." "We just keep doing everything. We never drop anything," was the common complaint from faculty and administrators. Change implementors and change recipients at the colleges discussed conflicting feelings of wanting to achieve new goals but being constrained by the "tyranny of the ordinary."

Transitions that change processes create require an ending, a neutral zone, and the beginning. The challenge of neutral-zone management is how to provide an interim system of temporary policies, procedures, and responsibilities. At ACC, they had quickly reorganized after a year of announcing a change was in the works. Expectations of the staff, although totally unrealistic, were that all the policies, procedures, and responsibilities would be written up for the new organization immediately. Understanding, communicating, and training during the "transition" period encouraged the acceptance of change.

Respondents from both Charles County and Eureka talked about a period of rest and reflection that seemed unproductive, but in the researcher's analysis, it was a necessary part of the transition period. "It really helped us to see what was working for us and what wasn't. It was a period of learning and not just frantic activity," commented a Charles County administrator.

Kanter also suggested being honest. This seemed to the researcher to be a foregone conclusion, but it is not necessarily so in collegial environments. "Candid" or "open" may have been a better word choice. The researcher assumed that Kanter believed honesty would create trust. Neither Levy, O'Banion, nor Kanter dealt with trust directly. Levy mentioned the lack of it in a period of decline. Certainly, a lack of trust in the college leadership in all four institutions prolonged and stalled the planned change processes as fearful employees stayed with the status quo.

O'Banion's Contribution

O'Banion's additions are: round up and support innovation, consider hiring consultants, pay attention to language, reallocate resources, evaluate, and commit to the long haul.

The colleges each mentioned their early innovators. At ACC, the change took advantage of preexisting conditions. The nursing faculty had been an entrepreneurial department for several years. They were recognized for their efforts, given a stronger voice in the college's change strategy, and used as a model for other departments. At other colleges, administrators attempted to lead change without input from faculty. This was particularly obvious at BCC, where the change agents were from outside education.

O'Banion recommended considering hiring consultants. He wisely predicted that unless someone's job specifies managing, maintaining, and nurturing the change process, the change process will not have the priority it needs. Also, unless resources are reallocated to the change process, the change will succumb to the routine. However, at BCC the hiring of an external change agent was difficult. President Campbell explained,

> [Change agent name] played a tremendous role in training, but as they continued working around the country in the business industry, they also had become critical of both the faculty and administration and everything else. In one sense, they almost pulled away from directly assisting either side.

O'Banion finally said, "Commit for the long haul." As the change strategists at ECC said, "We were naive about the amount of time this would take. We've been at it almost ten years, and it will take another ten." Boredom, particularly with the strategists, sets in before fundamental change is achieved. Finding a way to keep the presidents, strategists, engaged is important to the eventual success of the change process.

Kanter's and O'Banion's strategies worked well together; each strengthened the other. The four colleges visited demonstrated Kanter's and O'Banion's recommendations: translate ideas and vision into procedures, policies, and programs; create a vision; build a coalition; and assess the level of performance. The latter strategies were not completed before moving to the next step.

Recommendations for Further Research

The overarching question that has been the impetus for this study is: How does fundamental change occur at community colleges? It appears that organizational change is an illusion at worst and, at best, genuine fundamental change. The individuals interviewed for this study were primarily change strategists and change implementors. An interesting project would be to conduct the same study with the same methodologies, but using all change recipients, faculty. How would they describe the need to change? What progress would they report? What would be their barriers to change?

In further reflecting about the fundamental change process, other areas of research have become apparent. All of the change agents and faculty members in the study were female and the executives male. It would be fascinating to learn whether female executives lead change in the same way as their male counterparts.

Another worthwhile research possibility would be to explore the development and functioning of employees in organizational cultures of different industries such as government, small businesses, and high-technology organizations. A comparison would provide useful insights for creating a systematic staff development process that was proactive and increased the college's internal capacity to achieve its preferred future.

The study raised other interesting questions that should be explored further. For instance, How do executives and change agents foster a systems perspective? How do we find ways to break down the barriers between faculty and administration? What interventions can be used to modify a college culture? How can a fundamental change process address the culture, the change process, and the interaction between the two?

Two other project areas follow from insights gleaned from this research. The leadership role in the change process that emerged for the vice-president of instruction appears to be a pivotal institutional role. Important questions to investigate include: How do vice-presidents construct their roles to support both traditional educational structures and the presidential change initiatives? How is their role defined by the president and the faculty? How do they learn their role?

Earlier it was noted that there is dissonance in employees' assumptions about leadership. A study exploring the apparent paradox between wanting strong leaders and not wanting to be told what to do could be conducted. Currently, leaders teeter as they walk that difficult line.

Concluding Remarks

As I completed this study, the following ideas occurred to me:

- Relationships between the vice-president of instruction and faculty are extremely important in order to achieve the fundamental change desired, to provide the support for new and difficult behaviors, and to aggregate information through communication. Relationships must be developed and regularly nourished to be maintained.

- Blaming someone else is the typical rationale for not moving ahead, a typical response in our society, and a barrier to personal and organizational change.
- Change is thought of as an event and not a process.
- It is difficult to change an organization. It is especially difficult to change it when everything appears to be going well.

The features of transformational change will be misconstrued if, in our thinking and in our models, we emphasize "five or seven easy steps" and we deemphasize the social and cultural aspects of change. As change comes to mind, so do pictures of student, faculty, and administrator interactions and alliances.

Effective efforts at community college transformation require attending to the boundaries of education as a whole. Educational innovations and change processes have proved difficult to sustain, in part because of what society as a whole chooses to teach. Changes such as collaborative teaching conflict with contextual messages about autonomy that cling to educational endeavors. The character of education is meshed with the characteristics of the wider social and cultural life in which they occur. Fundamental changes--changes in roles, space, time, and efficiency--would require us to change socially and culturally, locally and nationally. Until we are ready to make fundamental changes involving the structure of education, we must remain content to confine the majority of change processes to worthwhile first-order changes: curricular changes, process improvements, and improved classroom environments.

Efforts directed at educational transformation must be a matter of community as well as internal concern. Community colleges are not exclusively their own entity but rather part of the community as well as a part of the educational system in our society. As such, community colleges reflect our national and cultural life rather than what we want to become and need to become in the information age.

APPENDIX

LINDA HOWDYSHELL

2696 Earl Lake Drive
Howell, MI 48843

April 15, 1997

Dear :

It was a pleasure to speak to you yesterday and learn it would be possible to conduct part of my dissertation research at xxxxxxxx Community College. Briefly, I'm seeking to learn how fundamental change occurs in community colleges. What are the conditions and strategies necessary for change to occur? In the higher education and business literature I've covered in preparation for this study, the implementation of fundamental change in community colleges has not been investigated. To that end, I expect to contribute to the body of theory with this study.

I am familiar with xxxxxx Community College because of your affiliation with CQIN and your leadership in facilitating organizational learning. I believe you will offer significant insight in sharing your experiences with planned change. It is my hope that leaders such as yourself will participate because you have much to contribute toward understanding the process of change and transformation within community colleges.

Participation involves one hour of uninterrupted time for a tape-recorded interview. I currently am scheduled to visit XCC on August xx and xx, 1997. I would also like to interview other change agents. I will also spend some time observing at the college.

The results of the study will be made available to you, and all information shared with me will be confidential. All names--both the college and participants--will be changed. I have attached a copy of the formal participation consent form that is required by Michigan State University. It will give you a more thorough description of what the research entails. If you elect to participate, I will need you to sign this document when I visit.

It is my goal to complete the study by October 1997. Should you need to reach me, please call (517) 548-2090. I look forward to speaking with you. Thank you for being willing to share your learnings.

Best regards,

Linda Howdyshell

Attachment: 1

CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in the research entitled **A Descriptive Study of the Fundamental Change Process in Selected Community Colleges**, which is being conducted as dissertation research for Linda Howdyshell's doctoral studies at Michigan State University. The purpose of and procedures entailed in the research have been fully explained to me:

1. The reason for the research is to understand the process of fundamental change in community colleges. Specifically, the study will identify strategies, developmental factors, and organizational learning techniques change agents employ to implement planned change.

2. I understand that this participation is entirely voluntary; I may choose to answer some questions and not others, or I may withdraw at any time.

3. I will allow the researcher to interview me regarding my experiences, knowledge, and learning as related to a planned change at this college. This will entail 1 to 2 hours of my time.

4. When asked, I may or may not share relevant documents, such as strategic plans, speeches, and the like.

5. I understand the interviews will be tape recorded and transcribed verbatim following the interview. I may be asked to review the findings for accuracy as well as be interviewed again on the phone to follow up on the initial interview. I understand that the tape cassettes will be kept in the researcher's home in a locked cabinet, thus ensuring that no other person could take and/or listen to them.

6. I realize the result of this participation will be confidential and will not be released in any individually identifiable form. My name will be changed, my college will not be identified by name, and the use of key identifying factors in the written materials will be avoided. I realize that, although every effort will be made to keep my identity confidential, it is possible someone could figure out my identity.

7. I realize that the researcher will be observing on campus.

In addition, I understand that:

- The data collected through the interviews, observations, and documents will be used in the dissertation, as well as in possible articles and presentations.
- I realize that the observations and the interviews are in no way intended to be evaluative or judgmental in nature.

Signature Date

PLEASE SIGN BOTH COPIES OF THIS FORM. KEEP ONE AND RETURN THE OTHER TO THE INVESTIGATOR.

If you have questions or concerns at any time during the study, please contact the researcher, Linda Howdyshell, at (517) 548-2090.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Hello, I'm Linda Howdyshell. I am pleased you agreed to participate in my research study of the fundamental change process at selected community colleges. This project is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Ph.D. from Michigan State University. I'm interested in learning your perception of the change process, the main strategies used, the effects on the campus and the students, and whether resistance is emerging. With this in mind, I have a series of questions I would like to ask you. I'd encourage you, however, to express any thought you might have on this topic, going beyond the question. In other words, I do not want to limit what you might have to tell me on this topic. The interview will take one hour. Would you please sign this consent form to give approval for this interview and the taping of it also? I may also need to ask you additional questions by telephone, if that is acceptable. Do you have any questions before we begin?

1. Would you describe (characterize) the change at (your college)?
2. What is your vision in this area for the next five years?
3. Can you tell me two or three strategies you used successfully in implementing this change? And why were these successful?
4. Please tell me two or three strategies that you feel haven't worked and why they didn't.
5. What role did training and professional development play in this change process?
6. How have students been impacted by this change?
7. What has been the influence of the change on relations between faculty and administration?
8. How has the institutional culture been effected?
9. Can you describe any strikingly singular events when you realized the change process was taking a dramatic turn?
10. What are the main issues raised by resisters? From where has most of the resistance come?
11. Where has most of the support come from?
12. Are there incentives for change?

13. What is your leadership role in this process?

14. Has this change process redistributed power?

15. Over all, at what stage in the change process is (your institution)? For example: early adoption, start-up, alignment, integration.

16. If you were involved in doing this again, what one or two things would you recommend?

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