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STRATEGIES FOR CREATING A MORE LEARNING-CENTERED

ORGANIZATION: A COMMUNITY COLLEGE PERSPECTIVE

presented by

Roberta C. Bostick Teahen

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Higher, Adult, and
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**STRATEGIES FOR CREATING A MORE LEARNING-CENTERED
ORGANIZATION: A COMMUNITY COLLEGE PERSPECTIVE**

By

Roberta C. Bostick Teahen

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

STRATEGIES FOR CREATING A MORE LEARNING-CENTERED ORGANIZATION: A COMMUNITY COLLEGE PERSPECTIVE

By

Roberta C. Bostick Teahen

The Problem

This study examines the strategies used by leaders in one leading community college to create a more learning-centered college. Findings are interpreted from an organizational development perspective, with particular emphasis on the theories of organizational learning. The research question guiding the research is:

What are the strategies being used by leaders in a community college to create a more learning-centered college, and how are the strategies similar to or different from the premises of organizational learning?

In answering the question, a number of subquestions are addressed, including descriptions of models in use, the organization's learning profile, barriers faced, and beliefs about learning-centered colleges.

Methods Used

Four data collection methods were utilized: Interviews, observations, documents' review, and an organizational learning inventory. The review of college documents, such as mission and vision, the catalog, planning documents, professional development plans, and others provided background about the college. Interviews with individuals most directly involved with leading the learning-centered initiative were the most important data source. Observations were utilized to gain a sense of the culture and the style in operation

in the college, while the Building Organizational Learning Capacity inventory enriched the description of the college's learning processes.

Major findings

Eight major strategies were found to be in use in the college for creating a more learning-centered organization. Together the eight strategies constitute a framework from which the learning-centered journey of Case College is moving forward. The eight strategies are: 1) Collaboration, 2) Broad-based Engagement, 3) Focus, 4) Resources, 5) Professional Development, 6) Results Orientation, 7) Leadership, and 8) Trust/Respect.

Much evidence was found to support the perspective that the factors which facilitate organizational learning are evident in the strategies for creating a more learning-centered college. The following conclusions are offered:

1. Becoming a more learning-centered college relies heavily on process, in addition to a focus on content.
2. Becoming more learning-centered is a major change process and will take considerable time.
3. An empowering, humane environment is an important dimension in becoming more learning-centered.
4. Individuals' commitment to learning is a critical ingredient in a change process designed to create a more learning-centered organization.
5. Clarity of the goals and measures of the achievement are important.
6. Organizational learning concepts and premises may contribute to creating a more learning-centered college.

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2000

among those I am indebted to is **DEDICATION** to Michael Teicher III, who was patient and supportive through five years of careful study and maturation to the home front.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, **Earl M. Bostick** (1913-1994) and **R. Catherine McPhillips Bostick**, who created a home environment where learning was valued, nothing was impossible,

and support was always forthcoming. On this journey, among the most important in providing their support in many ways, often coaching and reflecting, were James Folgering, of the Michigan Department of Career Development, and Karen Howie, Susan DeCamille, and Kari Kahler, all of Northwestern Michigan College. I owe a special thank you to Rochelle Hammondtree of the Mark and Helen Osterlin Library at Northwestern Michigan College for her continuous support of my needs for library resources. Without her help it would have been a far more challenging task to complete, have provided the same encouragement.

We trust in their ability to do whatever they want, "to climb every mountain,"

and to believe that nothing is impossible.

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Chapter 1: The Challenge to Become a More Learning-Centered College

the learning paradigm. The learning paradigm primarily focuses its attention on

Introduction

The demands for change in higher education are accelerating. Expanding use of technology, increasing competition, financial pressures, calls for greater accountability, and changing societal expectations are among the key factors impacting higher education as it enters the next century. Colleges are challenged to demonstrate that their learning missions are being achieved. This study seeks to understand the strategies used by community college leaders to promote more learning-centered institutions and how these strategies relate to concepts and theories associated with organizational learning. The study was conducted in one community college, and the sources of information include interviews, college documents, observations, and an organizational learning inventory.

college theme is both acknowledged Research Context community college leaders.

Prominent in contemporary higher education literature is the concept of a *learning paradigm* (Barr, 1995; Barr & Tagg, 1995; Boggs, 1995) which argues that a college's emphasis should be shifted from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning. Barr and Tagg argue that the college takes responsibility for learning. The point of saying that colleges are to *produce* learning—not provide, not support, not encourage—is to say, unmistakably, that they are responsible for the degree to which students learn. The Learning Paradigm shifts what the institution takes responsibility for: from quality instruction (lecturing, and talking) to student learning. (Barr & Tagg, 1995, p. 15)

The learning paradigm literature has set the stage for an emerging community college approach to creating a learning paradigm which has become known as a learning college or a learning-centered college.

The concept of a *learning college* (O'Banion, 1997, 1998) is a natural extension of the learning paradigm. The learning college literature primarily focuses its attention on aspects of college structure or systems, such as organization design, scheduling, services, and on students as customers. The literature offers minimal guidance on strategies which will enable community colleges to make the desired transitions to become more learning-centered organizations.

In November 1998, the Alliance for Community College Innovation (ACCI), an affiliate of the League for Innovation, conducted a survey of chief executive officers. Of the 243 who responded to the survey (40 percent of the membership), 94 percent reported that they "have undertaken an initiative to become a more learning-centered community college" (Alliance for Community College Innovation, 1998, p.1). Clearly the learning college theme is both acknowledged and acted upon by community college leaders.

Among the demands community colleges are confronting is the need for them to demonstrate what and how they are contributing to students' learning. Essentially, colleges are being asked to both identify what the intended learning outcomes are and to report on the extent to which these outcomes have been achieved. Among the questions being asked are: "Is college helping students? Is it increasing what they know and can do?" (Banta, 1993, p. 359). O'Banion notes that "the learning college places learning first and provides educational experiences for learners anyway, anyplace, anytime" (O'Banion, 1995-6, p. 22).

Little is known about how college leaders are going about creating more learning-centered colleges. Of the reports that have emerged to date, there are varying foci for

college efforts, including realigning the organization chart, review of performance or evaluation systems, implementation of Quality¹ processes, creation of one-stop student service centers, offering more flexible schedules, and emphases on professional development (Howser, 1997; Ponitz, 1997; O'Banion, 1997; Kelly, 1998; Wells, 1999). Colleges purporting to be on this journey toward learning-centeredness present little evidence to document that the outcomes intended will be realized or that the organization may be fundamentally or positively changed as a result of the process.

What is suggested is that "the measure of whether or not community colleges have been successful in becoming more learning-centered can be gauged by embedding two questions in the culture of the institution: *Does this action improve and expand learning?* and *How do we know this action improves and expands learning?*" (O'Banion, cited by Wells, 1999, p. 1). Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio, is one of the nation's leaders in espousing a more learning-centered philosophy. An executive from this college elaborates on their strategies:

At Sinclair we believe that to become a learning college, our mission, curriculum, professional development, compensation system, institutional effectiveness process, and organizational structure must be aligned with learning college principles. We feel we can demonstrate significant progress toward becoming a learning college as well as toward our commitment to create substantive change in individual learners, including ourselves. (Wells, 1999, p. 1)

Although Sinclair's definition of a learning college is consistent with other writers, Sinclair

¹ When the management philosophy of Total Quality Management or Continuous Quality Improvement is referenced in this manuscript, the term Quality, with a capital Q, will be utilized; this convention is consistent with the literature about Quality. The use of the term quality (lower-case q) will represent the general concept of quality as an inherent characteristic or a degree of excellence.

Monday - 11/11/1907
 Tuesday - 11/12/1907
 Wednesday - 11/13/1907
 Thursday - 11/14/1907
 Friday - 11/15/1907
 Saturday - 11/16/1907
 Sunday - 11/17/1907

to the same

And how pretty she is -
- lovely and lovely - white & pink
Peaches.

leaders appear to have taken a broader view of what it means to be a learning college.

Sinclair's conceptualization also aligns with some concepts of organizational learning.

Different writers envision the journey as either transformational or evolutionary. Although describing the anticipated result to be transformational, Sinclair also describes the process as evolutionary.

Some writers contend that in order for major institutional transformation to occur, the "entire formal organization will have to "dis-organize" and self-destruct" (Peters, T., in Boyett & Boyett, 1998, p. 304) or become "discontinuous with what has gone before" (Nevis, Lancourt, & Vassallo, 1996, p. 4). If becoming more learning-centered requires changes of great magnitude, as many suggest, then enormous organizational capacity for change must either exist or be created.

The primary question to guide Problem Statement

There is a need to understand more about how strategies for becoming learning centered are framed by leaders and how their conceptualizations relate to organizational learning theories. The dilemma posed is that there are significant forces driving colleges to be more learning centered. Because the thrust to become more learning-centered institutions is a comparatively recent phenomena, there is little information about how colleges may best achieve this goal. At the same time, there is a relatively well developed literature about organizational learning and related constructs. These may be useful in informing strategy for becoming more learning centered. Yet, with research published to date, linking these two concepts has not occurred.

Much of the impetus for change is being driven by external bodies, such as business

leaders, legislatures, and accrediting associations. In some states, college funding is being tied to performance. Regardless of the source or the nature of the questioning, an expectation that colleges will focus on learners' needs, learning, and/or learning outcomes has resulted. In response, many colleges are pursuing paths for becoming more learning-centered. Indeed, the pursuit for becoming more learning-centered is itself a change initiative, one of many which college leaders could choose.

At the same time, organizational learning has been demonstrated to be an important strategy for change in other organizational contexts. Considering the strategies in use by leaders in community colleges from the lens of organizational learning may provide important insights.

Research Question

The primary question to guide this research is:

What are the strategies being used by leaders in a community college to create a more learning-centered college, and how are the strategies similar to or different from the premises of various contemporary theories of organizational learning?

In exploring this question, a number of subquestions, which follow, will be examined:

- a. What do leaders mean when they talk or think about their college becoming a more learning-centered institution?
- b. What strategies do the leaders say they are using to help the college become more learning-centered?
- c. What models do the leaders say they use and/or appear to use in crafting, describing, and/or implementing their strategies for creating more learning-centered colleges?
- d. What barriers do leaders perceive stand in the way of becoming a more learning-centered college?

e. What is this organization's learning profile (as reported by leader-informants' responses to the Organizational Transitions learning inventory), and how similar are the perceptions of individual leaders concerning the organization's learning profile?

Answering these questions should both aid in understanding the strategies employed by the case college as well as inform inquiry about linking the ideas of becoming more learning-centered institutions with concepts of organizational learning. This particular conceptual framework is chosen to assess its potential value in informing strategy development. If alignment between the strategies and organizational learning is tight, it is possible that the organizational learning literature could provide an important perspective for leaders who are crafting strategy for creating more learning-centered colleges.

Conceptual Framework

An organization's capability to maximize its performance or achieve its objectives is highly dependent upon individuals' collective use of knowledge and experience and their ability to be adept learners (DiBella and Nevis, 1998; Argyris, 1992). Although designated leaders are important, they are not the only actors who contribute to the success or failure of the organization (DiBella and Nevis, 1998). A complete understanding of the organizational learning capacity of a college, therefore, would require not only understanding the leaders' strategies but also understanding the actions of others in the organization. Nevertheless, leaders' ideas and strategies are important, even critical, to the organization's performance.

Although different writers approach theories of organizational learning from different views, there is a common set of factors generally considered to be important in organizational learning. These factors and the major theorists associated with each are

discussed in Chapter 2 and summarized in the Appendices. Factors generally considered important in enhancing organizational learning are the following (offered in random order and abstracted from diverse resources):

1. Involved and/or thinking leadership that contributes to learning development
2. Collaborative approaches, which may include effective use of teams
3. Clear and shared mission, vision, goals, values, and purposes
4. Attention to organizational processes
5. Lavish communication and meaningful conversations
6. Attention to ways of thinking, including consideration of mental models and paradigms
7. Emphasis upon enhancing capability of the organization, in addition to the skills of individuals
8. A bias for action (using the terminology of Peters and Waterman, 1992) and comfort with change
9. A systems perspective (although this terminology is much less common in organizational learning than in the literature of the learning organization)
10. Encouragement of inquiry
11. Consideration of culture and climate

Additionally, occasional references are made to spirit, community, measurement, barriers, and commitment, although these themes are less common in the organizational learning and learning organization literatures. Although this study seeks to examine organizational learning, it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate the intertwined literatures of the

learning organization and organizational learning. Consequently, throughout there will be references to both, particularly when the authors cited write about both concepts.

Not all organizational learning is positive; in some instances negative behaviors are reinforced. In “productive” organizational learning, improvements in performance result, or values and criteria are redefined, and/or the organization enhances its capability for further learning (Argyris & Schon, 1996, p. 20).

Individual, Group, and Organizational Learning Relationships

Individual and organizational learning are interdependent concepts. Without individual learning, organizational learning is impossible. Translating individual learning into organizational learning is particularly challenging in an academic environment where there are often multiple constituencies. Robert Shoenberg comments, “Increasingly, all sorts of institutions are coming to resemble Clark Kerr’s definition of the modern “multiversity” as “a series of individual faculty entrepreneurs held together by a common grievance over parking.” He notes that the university (and, by inference, the community college) is “not one community but several” (Shoenberg, 1992, p. 4).

The meanings of the concepts of individual, group, and organizational learning are explored more in Chapter 2, but some summary points are made here, as the relationship among them is vital to understanding the dilemma existing in many community colleges. Among the few major theorists in the organizational learning field, the works of Argyris, DiBella and Nevis, Schein, and Senge are prominent in framing the study. The individuals who have written most about this topic are Chris Argyris of the Harvard Business School and Donald Schon from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of

Management. Argyris contends that most people are not effective learners. He writes,

What's more, those members of the organization that many assume to be the best at learning are, in fact, not very good at it. I am talking about the well-educated, high-powered, high-commitment professionals who occupy the leadership positions in the modern corporation. (Argyris, 1992, p. 84)

In talking about CEOs in his research, he observed, "They were under the illusion that they could learn, when in reality they just kept running around the same track" (Argyris, 1977, p. 121). In essence, Argyris's argument may be better summarized as an assertion that leaders are not doing the right kind of individual learning that will lead to creating learning organizations or learning systems.

The same learning dilemma may exist in higher education organizations, as they are generally described as slow to change, a description that could indicate slowness to learn.

A common description of change is that it results from learning. Learning is thought by many to be a precondition for productive change. An untested, yet seemingly reasonable, explanation of the slowness of collegiate organizations to change is that they are slow to learn, at least from an organizational perspective. Possible tests of this inference might

include an examination of how learning about new teaching strategies is incorporated into classroom practices or how technology advances influence the teaching/learning process.

Other factors could also cause a "slowness to learn." Included among possible causal factors are management, bureaucracies, values, culture, unions, and many others. Writing about universities who need to transform themselves, Moore writes, "Despite the fact that universities create, preserve, and disseminate learning, they are remarkably unlearned about their own operations" (Moore, 1998, p. 165).

In describing the dilemma in corporations, Argyris asserts that the problem is how leadership defines learning and creates environments. He believes that leaders and learners need to look inward, to reflect, and to identify ways in which they contribute to the organization's problems. The importance of inquiry and challenging assumptions become dominant themes in most organizational learning theories.

Relative newcomers to organizational learning theory are Anthony DiBella and Edwin Nevis (1998), whose approach builds on others' work but is more pragmatic, consistent with the movement of organizational theorists to link their work to practice.

They conclude, "As firms and organizations create the conditions for learning, there is an emerging need for tools that measure, diagnose, or assess learning capability" (p. 201).

A problem that exists in many organizations is how to translate individual learning productively into advancing the organization's purposes. It is this translation from the individual to the organization that remains elusive for most leaders and learners. Effective organizational learning must build upon meaningful individual learning.

Accepted understanding of the term organizational learning takes as a given that it is the individuals of the organization who do the acting (Argyris, 1992, p. 391). Individual learning is generally described as "a process by which individuals gain new knowledge and insights and thereby modify their behavior and actions" (Stata in Starkey, 1996, p. 318).

Although organizational learning is dependent upon individual learning, individual learning does not always contribute to organizational learning or performance improvements.

Organizational learning differs from individual learning in several respects. Stata (1996) enumerates the differences as follows:

First, organizational learning occurs through shared insights, knowledge, and mental models. Thus organizations can learn only as fast as the slowest link learns. . . . Second, learning builds on past knowledge and experience - that is, on memory. Organizational memory depends on institutional mechanisms (e.g. policies, strategies, and explicit models) used to retain knowledge. . . . The challenge, then, is to discover new management tools and methods to accelerate organizational learning, build consensus for change, and facilitate the change process. (Stata, in Starkey, 1996, p. 319)

If the challenge is to discover tools for accelerating organizational learning, even if frequently supporting the status quo and agents of divergence, such as appropriate responses to technology and markets. For an organization to become more learning-academic institution because of the difficulty associated with building consensus for centered, some degree of convergence of ideas among those who must make it so must change.

The Tension

If learning-centeredness is a proclaimed goal for colleges, how are leaders working (Labovitz & Rosenzky, 1998, p. 31). For many community colleges, that main thing is to bring it about? Although principles of learning and specifically organizational learning or becoming more learning-centered (Ponit, 1997) may be well known to community college leaders, the depth of this understanding is

unknown and likely varies significantly among individuals and from college to college.

Moreover, the ability to bring about organizational change, by any strategy, has thwarted political, religious, educational - is the alignment of individual interests with the interests of the organization" (Cook, 1990, p. 31). Labovitz notes that "alignment gives you the power to create an organizational culture of shared purpose" (Labovitz, 1998, p. xiii). In the absence of some sense of shared purpose, or a common vision, it is unlikely that approach that itself builds on learning.

In The Essential Tension, a collection of essays by scientists, Thomas Kuhn writes in extensive literature documents the importance of a shared vision for organizational success a chapter of the same title,

I shall therefore suggest below that something like "convergent thinking" is just as essential to scientific advance as is divergent. Since these two modes of thought are

inevitably in conflict, it will follow that the ability to support a tension that can occasionally become almost unbearable is one of the prime requisites for the very best sort of scientific research. (Kuhn, 1977, p. 226, reprinted from 1959)

A conversation with most community college leaders today will suggest that the tension between where they are and where they believe they need to be, the "performance gap" (DiBella, 1997; Barr, 1995), may be almost unbearable. There are areas of convergence, frequently supporting the status quo, and areas of divergence, such as appropriate responses to technology and markets. For an organization to become more learning-centered, some degree of convergence of ideas among those who must make it so must support this direction. Many writers observe that there must be alignment of resources and systems behind "the main thing," whatever that thing may be for a given organization (Labovitz & Rosansky, 1998, p. 5). For many community colleges, that main thing is learning or becoming more learning-centered (Ponitz, 1997).

This need for convergence is often framed as alignment, shared purposes, or shared vision. Cook observes that "the most critical issue facing any organization—corporate, political, religious, educational—is the alignment of individual interests with the interests of the organization" (Cook, 1990, p. 31). Labovitz notes that "alignment gives you the power to create an organizational culture of shared purpose" (Labovitz, 1998, p. xiii). In the absence of some sense of shared purpose, or a common vision, it is unlikely that significant gains toward becoming more learning-centered institutions will be realized. An extensive literature documents the importance of a shared vision for organizational success in achieving major goals (Senge, 1990; Tichy & Devanna, 1986; Kouzes & Posner, 1988).

At the same time, if divergence from accepted traditions and ways of thinking

remains unexplored, major gains are unlikely, according to those who advocate for major transformations (Dolence & Norris, 1995; Alfred & Carter, 1999; Nevis, Lancourt, & Vassallo, 1996). Another of the many paradoxes abounding in modern organizations is the need to establish a balance between convergence and divergence, or as Alfred and Carter describe it for community colleges,

A balance must be struck between continuity—building an unassailable niche through managing the present—and change—creating the future through constant innovation (Blanchard and Waghorn, cited in Alfred & Carter, 1999, p. 7). . . a contradictory college (is) one that is capable of managing tradition while simultaneously creating revolutionary change and learning from both experiences. (Alfred & Carter, 1999, p. 9)

The concept of the contradictory college is frequently linked to community colleges. Leaders in colleges continually struggle with balancing access and excellence, liberal arts and career emphases, external pressures and internal structures. Alfred and Carter are adding another contradiction to the long list that already exists by suggesting that colleges must also manage tradition, assure the current practices, while pursuing innovation, reaching for a new future. Using the theme of Kuhn, the requisite condition for a

"scientific" advance exists. There is a tension among many elements, and there is both convergence and divergence in most colleges. The themes of paradox and tension are introduced by many observers of higher education and organizational scenes. Cameron found "the presence of paradox to be synonymous with the presence of effectiveness in organizations faced with turbulence, change, and complexity," (Cameron, 1986, cited in Cameron & Whetten, 1996, p. 273) so there is considerable evidence to suggest that tension may be a useful condition for organizational change.

Senge describes a natural tension that exists resulting from the gap between where we want to be and where we are, "our current reality" (Senge, 1996, p. 291). Certainly the balance between becoming more learning centered and utilizing learning strategies for organizational change is yet another possible higher education paradox. If the leaders are striving to advance a more learning-centered agenda, it would appear to some observers that if learning strategies are not among those being utilized that this would be a paradoxical. Many would expect learning to be a strategy for creating a more learning-centered college.

While the need for adaptation and change in community colleges is thought by many to be critical (Alfred, 1984; Alfred & Carter, 1999; O'Banion, 1997), the knowledge base from current research on governance, leadership, and learning, coupled with the prevailing culture, lead many to question the ability of community colleges to make the required changes (McClenney, 1998) or leave us lacking critical information for making the changes.

Many writers have identified the problems in achieving educational change. Some note that a lack of information about the change and educational practice is elusive (Peterson, McCarthy, and Elmore, 1996). Others contend that the barriers are reflected by teacher isolation, lack of time, and the complexity of teaching (Lashway, 1998). Others believe it is because of lack of focus and following each new fad. Still others, particularly politicians, wonder about the complacency among public education staffs. In 1984, Alfred described this dilemma poignantly: There is a "growing inability of faculty and staff to respond to pressures for change due to calcification of the decision

process in an aging and complex organization. To the experienced community college observer, it is clear that two-year colleges are rapidly approaching a watershed" (Alfred, 1984, p. 2). The loss of the stable state described by Schon in 1971, or the approach toward a watershed in 1984, were both penned in a period that any practitioners of the time would report as tame by comparison with today's environment. The state is even less stable, and the watershed appears like a cavernous ravine to many community college leaders. As colleges seek to transition themselves, to become more learning-centered, or to provide a small proportion of the higher education research concerns community colleges. Few studies address the characteristics of organizational responses to the forces challenging fundamental missions and processes. Most of the higher education research is focused on governance, finances, assessment, accreditation and standards, and changing faculty roles (ERIC, 1996). The role of leaders (typically presidents or instructional deans) comprises a significant research base, but these studies frequently describe the characteristics of successful leaders of the past or present (Biggerstaff, 1990). Many believe that current images not only serve to preclude a new vision of leaders (Amey and Twombly, 1992) and leadership (Bensimon and Neumann, 1993) but also impede colleges' conceiving new ways of thinking or being (Vaill, 1996) which may be more productive for the future. Focusing on governance, commonly interpreted structurally (faculty senates, cabinets, Boards of Trustees, and other entities), or on leaders overlooks many of the complexities of the organization, including its systems, its change strategies, its structure, its capabilities, or its individual and organizational learning processes.

With rising internal and external concerns, an understanding of the community college's capacity for change and renewal should be of vital interest to community college leaders. Colleges must demonstrate that "the institution can continue to accomplish its purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness" (NCA, 1997, Criterion 4, p. 52) to meet not only the requirements of accrediting bodies but also the expectations of the public. As colleges seek to transform themselves, to become more learning-centered, or to pursue other agendas, new ways of thinking about learning and the organization are important.

A major goal of this research is to heighten awareness of the strategies which leaders use to contribute to becoming a more learning-centered community college. The current dilemma is that as the demand for change has accelerated, the strategies leaders employ to achieve the desired results may not have kept pace with the needs of the organization.

Definition of Terms

Following are terms which form the foundation for conducting the research. Each definition has been crafted by the researcher from extensive reading in the areas pertinent to this research study. Each is consistent with widely accepted understanding of terms, except where noted. The definitions may appear similar to other writers' definitions because the meanings for most have become universally used.

Strategy(ies)

Strategies are the actions and approaches planned by and/or implemented by individuals or groups to achieve desired outcomes.

The addition of the term “approaches” to the definition enables one to consider other views from which strategies may be implemented. Examples may include a commitment to maintaining self-esteem, listening to divergent voices, building on the best of what is, and other “approaches” which may not be reflected in a strategic plan. In some organizations, approaches such as these examples may be identified as guiding principles. Inherent in principles is the concept of theories of action, the “beliefs and values . . . stated in the form of propositions about effectiveness” (Argyris, 1992, p. 152) that people use to guide their behavior. Included in theories of action are both *espoused theories*, “the set of beliefs and values people hold about how to manage their lives,” and *theories-in-use* (Argyris, 1990 and 1992), the actual rules governing behavior, the rules one would observe when trying to make sense of another’s behavior (Argyris, 1992, p. 89).

The operant theories within individuals and in organizations influence the approaches taken to achieve objectives. An additional way to think about strategy is as it is described by Marquardt, “Strategy relates to the action plans, methodologies, tactics, and steps that are employed to reach a company’s vision and goals. In a learning organization, these are strategies that optimize the learning acquired, transferred, and utilized in all company actions and operations” (Marquardt, 1996, p. 25). The term strategy, as used in this

research, is broader than a goal, an objective, or a task, all of which are terms used in the planning literature. In this research, the term strategy is meant to be conceptualized as a

noun, a concept that guides planning and actions. "Learning" (O'Banion, 1998, p. 4).

Learning-Centered College

A learning-centered college is one where significant institutional resources, quality processes, and change and improvement strategies are focused on enhancing the learning and the learning environment for students, staff, and community. It is a college that focuses on creating higher-level learning outcomes for all learners.

Terry O'Banion defined the learning college in this way, "The learning college places learning first and provides educational experiences for learners anyway, anytime, anywhere" (O'Banion, 1995-96, p. 22 cited in O'Banion, 1997, p. 47). He then offers a series of guiding principles which speak to the importance of creating substantive change in individual learners, engaging learners as full partners in the learning process, offering as many options for learning as possible, assisting learners to form and participate in collaborative learning activities, defining the roles of learning facilitators by the needs of the learners, and suggesting that the learning college and its learning facilitators succeed only when improved and expanded learning can be documented for its learners (O'Banion, 1997, p. 47).

Both O'Banion and other subsequent writers tend to use the terms learning-centered college and learning college interchangeably. Although both learner-centered and learning-centered terminology are common, I prefer the term "learning-centered" college for the following reasons:

1. It parallels the learning college terminology. O'Banion writes that the learning and learner emphases are different and that learning-centeredness is characterized by "learning contracts, behavioral objectives, competency-based education, learning

outcomes, skills standards and performance-based funding” (O’Banion, 1998, p. 4).

2. The concept of a *learner*-centered college closely aligns with the Quality literature of “customer-focus” (Omachonu & Ross, 1994). Although the use of Quality standards and processes is continuing to expand, particularly with the recent decision of some accrediting associations to accept Quality-based approaches to self-assessment, it is still anathema to many academics. George Boggs (1999) notes that he frequently hears “voices of hostility from members of the teaching faculty.” Too many equate “customer” and “learner” and dispute the relevance of using a business model (O’Banion, 1998, p. 4), which diminishes the potential for serious dialogue.

3. The use of the term learning suggests a more comprehensive view of those who comprise the organization, rather than just focusing on the actions that are taken on behalf of traditional learners, the students. One goal of becoming more learning-centered is to create an environment for enhanced learning for all, traditional students and the staff of the organization. Because learning thrives in a continuous cycle, it should be considered a means or process and not an end. Creating a place where learning prevails (individual and organizational) is believed to be superior positioning to meet future challenges. It is this view of *becoming* learning-centered that is the subject of this research.

It is important to note that the focus of O’Banion and others who discuss the learning college is primarily on the learners commonly described as students. The general goal is not only enhanced learning outcomes but enhanced learning processes, such as scheduling and services, which arguably are intended to lead to more desirable student learning outcomes.

Organizational Learning

Organizational learning is a process by which individuals of the organization develop individual and group expertise which contributes to the enhanced capacity of the organization to achieve its purposes through collaboration and sharing of knowledge and experience.

This definition emerges from the definitions of many organizational learning theorists, including Stata, DiBella and Nevis, and Miles and Randolph, who define it in these ways: (1) "Organizational learning entails new insights and modified behavior. But it differs from individual learning in several respects. First, organizational learning occurs through shared insights, knowledge, and mental models" (Stata, 1996, p. 318). (2) "We define organizational learning as the capacity or processes within an organization to maintain or improve performance based on experience" (DiBella & Nevis, p. 28). (3) Miles and Randolph (1981), drawing on Simon's (1991) work, define organizational learning as individuals' insights reflected "in the structural elements and outcomes of the organization itself" (p. 50, cited in Cook & Yanow, 1996, p. 433).

Organizational learning may be operationalized in a college in any number of ways. One example is offered to provide a distinction between individual and organizational learning. If three different faculty members attend different technology conferences, each has probably learned. If, when they return to campus, they share their newly gained insights with each other and others in the organization, the second stage of organizational learning - sharing - has occurred. When the three and others who gained expertise from the others' experiences launch an online degree program utilizing the shared knowledge they gained from their individual and group learning, organizational learning has

happened. Organizational learning is evident because a change occurred, a new online degree program. Basic operating premises were challenged; a determination was made that not all degree programs need to be offered through traditional delivery methods. If the individuals had returned to their daily operating routines, without sharing and without implementing, neither group nor organizational learning would have occurred. The fact that they shared, gained from each other's experience, and took the shared knowledge to another level is evidence of organizational learning.

Some may raise the question of whether attributing learning capacity to organizations is anthropomorphizing. Although the concept of organizational learning philosophies may ascribe human characteristics to a non-human, it may also be a matter of how one conceives organizations. Modern writers describe organizations in many ways that ascribe human-like characteristics. The behaviors, actions, nature, and cultures of organizations are examined throughout the management and organizational literatures. Morgan describes different perspectives of organizations by metaphors: as machines, organisms, brains, cultures, political systems, psychic prisons, flux and transformation, and instruments of domination. Morgan introduces the term "imaginization" to break away from a mechanistic view of organizations.

He observes that "we organize as we imaginize; and it is always possible to imaginize in many different ways" (Morgan, 19, p. 343). One view of organizations would be to see them as inanimate; another is to see them as "living." I choose to view organizations as living because of the life that they contain (emanating from the individuals who populate them) and the synergies they create as they adapt to changes. If one

imagines them as living, one can also imagine them learning.

Community College Leaders

Community college leaders are those assigned or who have chosen to accept responsibility for implementing strategic directions of the college.

Most identified as leaders for this research would be members of the president's cabinet and would represent functions indicated by the following representative titles: Dean of Faculty, Dean or Vice President of Instruction, and Dean or Vice President of Student Services. Others may be acknowledged or elected leaders, such as the chair of the faculty senate; chair of strategic planning; chair of the curriculum committee; chair of quality improvement; or other pertinent titles. Others may simply be viewed as the campus elders, the individuals who enjoy high levels of respect and possess great power but who may have no official role. The key people will vary from one campus to another but would include individuals expected to be knowledgeable of the college's processes to become a more learning-centered institution and have responsibilities (official or unofficial) for realizing the vision.

Change

Change is becoming or believing something different from what presently exists or is believed, reflecting the view that not all change is observable.

Change is one of the themes that dominates both the education and business literatures. There are many theories of how change occurs. The literature review is primarily restricted to understanding the change which results from learning rather than outlining particular change strategies, since organizational learning is the conceptual framework of this research. This research is designed to study a particular type of change

strategy, the change to create a more learning-centered college. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (1997) defines change in these ways: "to make different in some particular," and "to give a different position, course, or direction to" (p. 190). Despite the broad treatment of the change topic in organizational literature, few definitions of the word exist for that context.

Describing organizational change, rather than just change, Elsner cites Senge who writes that change is "fast forwarding organizational evolution" (Elsner citing Senge in O'Banion, 1997, p. 179). This distinction may be important, since it suggests a process that moves more rapidly as a consequence of interventions but also could be interpreted to mean that this is a direction the organization would evolve toward more gradually. It is not likely that all evolution would necessarily move in the direction of particular change efforts.

Even in the Harvard Business Review on Change, no definition is provided. Many examples of change strategies, successes, and failures are offered. The authors observe that "Managers groping about for a more fundamental shift in their organizations' capabilities must realize that change programs treat symptoms, not underlying conditions. These companies do not need to improve themselves; they need to reinvent themselves" (Goss, Pascale, & Athos, 1991, p. 85). Argyris would argue that the reason change does not happen is because of the defensive routines that are operational in organizations. Other views of change will be addressed briefly in Chapter 2.

Although not all change needs to be dramatic, the evidence suggests that the shift toward a more learning-centered college may reflect a need for reinvention. Change can

exist at many different levels for many different issues. Although this study addresses the change toward becoming a more learning-centered college, there are likely to be some general characteristics of change which will aid in our understanding of this particular change topic. Organizational learning may serve as a way to consider underlying conditions, not just symptoms.

Premises

Premises are fundamental assumptions or beliefs about a particular topic that are accepted as "givens" in a particular context.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a premise in this way:

n. 1a) a proposition antecedently supposed or proved as a basis of argument or inference; 1b) something assumed or taken for granted: presupposition; 2) matters previously stated. (Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, tenth edition, 1997, p. 920)

In the context of this research, the premises will include both the theories or strategies which will be used to analyze the case and those which underlie leaders' theories or actions. Findings will be interpreted through premises or contemporary theories of organizational learning and related constructs. Depending upon the particular model, concepts of organizational learning span many organizational processes: leadership, operations, communications, technology, and more. Although researchers may challenge the premises of organizational learning, for example, it is not the purpose of this research to assess the literature of organizational learning. Rather, the presently accepted principles will simply be used to understand the strategies. If the premises are subsequently rejected, the interpretations of this research would also necessarily need to be reviewed.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to members of the leadership group in one community college. The concept of generalizability of this study through case-to-case transfer will be explored in Chapter 3. The particular informants preclude an ability to generalize the findings to other organizational actors, such as other faculty or professional staff in the organization. This study has restricted its consideration to a leadership group, who most writers acknowledge are key players. Consequently, the resulting descriptions can only apply to those whose views were heard. "Where you stand affects what you see," according to authors Cameron and Whetten (Cameron & Whetten, 1996, p. 277). We will see what the identified leaders see, and what they see may be quite different from what another group in the same organization at the same time may see.

It is also possible that the experience of this one college's leadership is substantially different from other colleges' experiences. The description and analyses may apply only to the perspectives gained from this group of individuals during the research period. A detailed description of the case should enable others to determine whether they could apply the findings.

Additionally, because context plays a critical role in analyzing any situation, and because contexts change regularly, another researcher may find another set of models, premises, and/or strategies in evidence among the same participants at another time. It is possible that a replication of this study in the same college, either with a similar group or a different one, could produce different results.

Perhaps the most significant limitation of the study is that it will not examine the

actualization of organizational learning or of the learning-centered college. The view will be confined to the views espoused by the informants and interpreted by the researcher. It is well documented in the literature that espoused theories do not always match theories-in-use. Further, whether the theories in use, even if espoused, are effective in creating the desired changes is a major consideration for those who would replicate the strategies. It is beyond the scope of this research to either confirm the theories-in-use or evaluate the impacts. One must wonder how much greater the capacity and performance might be if the e Finally, the complex nature of the organizational learning literature is another limiting factor. The literatures of the learning organization and of organizational learning are overlapping, yet some attempt to make distinctions between the two. More often, writers treat the terms synonymously. Complicating the research question further is the nature of the change strategy that is being investigated, the notion of creating a more learning-centered college. Although the literature of the learning-centered college is generally separate from the previous two, there are also several overlapping characteristics. Some authors introduce the concepts of a learning organization when explaining a learning-centered college. Although care has been exercised in attempting to distinguish among these closely related concepts, the fact that the literature is so overlapping precludes any ability to adequately differentiate. As these concepts are studied more, a clearer picture should emerge.

Researcher's Interest

My interest in the topic of organizational learning in a community college stems from multiple interests and experiences. Over many years of working in one community

college, I have had the opportunity to observe a number of leadership "teams" and change strategies. I have frequently been a member of task forces and leadership groups commissioned to initiate significant organizational change. Although varying levels of success have been achieved, it is clear that most of the changes are either short-lived or not as transforming as planned. Consequently, with each new strategic plan or administrative change, changes are often undone and new initiatives are only partially realized. One must wonder how much greater the capacity and performance might be if the organization had more consistently moved in strategic directions and whether learning capacity has been adequately developed to meet future challenges. Every individual engaged in college leadership should be asking this question.

Organizations exist to fulfill one or more purposes. In business, the purpose is often very clear. In higher education, the purposes are often less clear, but they are even more important. As among the most skillful knowledge acquirers and generators, professional educators have the potential to become among the most effective at achieving any goals to which they are committed. Whether they will is still an open question. For me, organizational learning presents one important hope for building the capacity we need to fulfill the missions we share.

change create tension in Chapter 2 - Views from the Literature

In fact, I would argue that the rate at which individuals and organizations learn may become the only sustainable competitive advantage, especially in knowledge-intensive industries. " (Stata, 1996, p. 318)

prospects for change: A major assumption of this research is that organizational

The Tension

Fundamental challenges face colleges as they strive to become more learning-centered. As outlined in Chapter 1, major changes must occur if community colleges are to achieve the ideal espoused by a learning-centered philosophy. Yet, few educational reform efforts have resulted in major changes to the core activities of the institution (Elmore, 1996; Alfred & Carter, 1999). Amey reports that some community college writers "agree that the primary leadership task for community college presidents during the maturity phase is to establish a basis upon which organizational renewal can occur" (Amey, 1992, p. 140). The literature is extensive in documenting the need for change and most hold leaders accountable for the required changes.

This chapter will provide additional insight to the types of changes writers envision for more learning-centered organizations and set the stage for a study that will explore how community college leaders are conceiving the change process. Although many authors observe that change is greatly influenced by the actions of leaders, others believe it results from grass-roots activities while still others argue for a new view of leadership, where "leadership is what leaders and followers do together for the collective good. Leaders operate in a shared-power environment with followers" (Brungardt, 1998, p. 7). Regardless of which view one holds, most recognize that the change process is not easy and is frequently thwarted. The need for substantive change and the difficulty of achieving

change create tension in colleges.

My perspective is that it is a combination of the behaviors of the many actors of the organization, in concert with the actions of leaders, that predisposes an organization to its prospects for change. A major assumption underlying this research is that organizational learning is a strategy that can be implemented for promoting positive change. A major theme in today's organizational literature suggests that the extent of organizational learning evidenced within a group is a major predictor of its capacity for change. This is one of the many places where the literature confuses as much as it explains, because not only is organizational learning conceived as a source of change—indeed even a precondition for—but it may also be the target of change, as individuals attempt to influence (change) the organization's learning so that other changes can proceed. This conundrum is one of many perplexing aspects of the intertwined literatures of the learning genre. Just as communicators are urged to understand their audience before crafting a message, so should organizational leaders understand the organization before developing strategies. Understanding the organization suggests a need to understand how the organization learns.

Many community college leaders are “crafting strategy” for becoming more learning-centered organizations. Rather than a rational, objective process, Mintzberg describes strategy as a craft. Mintzberg observes that strategy reflects

involvement, a feeling of intimacy and harmony with the materials at hand, developed through long experience and commitment. Formulation and implementation merge into a fluid process of learning through which creative strategies evolve. (Mintzberg, 1994, p. 110)

Some who study strategy characterize it mechanistically, but Mintzberg's characterization suits the perspective of this study because it relates strategy to a process of learning. Mintzberg's descriptors convey a feeling similar to the views of Donald Schon who writes about professionals' development of reflective practice (Schon, 1983). Strategies and practice are the essence of leaders' actions in their respective roles, and these concepts are closely associated with learning in a variety of forms. Many who have analyzed business organizations have identified characteristics of organizational learning, but no studies have been identified that seek to understand this dynamic in a community college context.

The characteristics of a college are substantially different from those of a business enterprise, and leaders enjoy very different roles, so it is unknown whether tenets of organizational learning can be applied effectively in a higher education context. The goal to become more learning-centered suggests that learning would be a fundamental strategy for transformation, yet there is little evidence to suggest that organizational learning strategies are being used. Likewise, there is no evidence to suggest that organizational learning is not a major strategy, because there is simply no published evidence concerning this question. Although there is an extensive literature on professional development programs for staff, staff development and organizational learning are very different concepts. In the absence of research about the application of organizational learning principles in a higher education context, we are unable to intelligently speculate concerning its ultimate potential for enhancing organizational capacity or creating more effective organizations. The reader should note that this construct additionally uses

organizational learning as both means and ends, as we talk about applying organizational learning principles and its potential for enhancing organizational capacity, concepts that speak to means or methods by which change may be realized. The end is suggested by reference to the promotion of organizational learning. The conundrum addressed above, that organizational learning may be both the source and the target, continues to complicate. Before we will know how to craft interventions to promote organizational learning, we must first understand how leaders are going about the change process and the organization's learning profile.

Introduction to Literature Review

This literature review will establish the framework for the research study. It will begin by analyzing current community college contexts and the imperatives for change toward becoming more learning centered. Next the concepts of a learning paradigm and a learning-centered college will be introduced. The narrative will then outline the premises of the closely related literatures of the learning organization and organizational learning and contrast them to the learning-centered college literature. This reflective, relative relationship among these literatures may be one explanation of why achieving a learning culture within an organization is so difficult. The concepts lack some distinctive focus.

A review of the types of learning that may be integral to an organizational learning perspective will also be provided. An assumption underlying my rationale is that organizational learning is an effective change strategy, a belief that is well supported in the business literature. Although the assumption is that organizational learning is an effective change strategy, it is acknowledged that little evidence exists to support this assumption in

a collegiate environment. Nevertheless, it is believed that change occurs as a result of learning. Leaders' strategies will be examined from the conceptual framework of organizational learning, a stream of the organizational development literature. Organizational learning is more closely aligned with the business change and management literature than with traditional higher education writing. The organizational learning literature is more likely to result from the work of scholars while the writings about the learning organization are more frequently offered by business practitioners. These two concepts are intertwined throughout the literature; in some scholars' works the terms are used almost interchangeably. Others distinguish between these concepts in ways significant to this research problem.

To understand the complex phenomena of a community college and create a reasonable response to the research question requires that the study draw from several literature streams, including theories of learning, organizational learning, the learning organization, leadership, teamwork, collaboration, culture, and community colleges. The goal to become a more "learning-centered college" will require fundamental new ways of thinking about the organization, its purposes, its reward structures, its culture, and more. It will require significant learning. Fundamental or transformative changes are not achieved utilizing the knowledge from a single lens or discipline; it will require multiple perspectives and novel approaches. Likewise, understanding the change and learning process in a community college must also draw from multiple disciplines. The learning-centered college, the learning college, and the learning paradigm

literature emerge from the higher education change literature. The learning college literature is almost exclusively used in the context of community colleges. In contrast, the organizational learning and learning organization literatures emerge from the organizational development literature and are closely aligned with business change literature. Although a few writers are linking the two broad fields (organizational learning/learning organization and learning college/learning-centered college/learning paradigm), there are differences between them, which will be explained later.

The final sections in the literature review will provide synopses of teams, leadership, action learning, collaboration, change, and innovation. Although a comprehensive review of the learning and change literature could extend for hundreds of pages, it is important to place organizational learning in the broader context of learning to understand how “learning” is understood in this study as well as how it contributes to organizational dynamics and individual behaviors. Appendix K includes a summary of types of learning.

The Development of Community Colleges

Some trace community colleges’ roots to the late 1800s with the 1862 and 1890 passages of the Morrill Acts which established land-grant institutions, the first national efforts to extend opportunities for higher education beyond its traditional borders (AACC, 1999). The philosophies represented by the land-grant institutions, particularly access, are largely carried out by many community colleges today.

In 1922, at the second meeting of the American Association of Junior Colleges, an organization which continues today as the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), the following definition of a junior college was adopted: “The junior college is

an institution offering two years of instruction of strictly collegiate grade” (Bogue, 1950, p. xvii, cited in Cohen & Brawer, 1996, p. 4). This definition was revised in 1925.

The junior college may, and is likely to, develop a different type of curriculum suited to the larger and ever-changing civic, social, religious, and vocational needs of the entire community in which the college is located. (Bogue, 1950, p. xvii, cited in Cohen & Brawer, 1996, p. 4)

Community colleges have developed in varying directions, generally aligning with the “ever-changing . . . needs of their communities” (Bogue, 1950, p. xvii, cited in Cohen & Brawer, 1996, p. 4). Although referred to by different names, the following generally reflect the purposes of community colleges: developmental education, transfer education, career education, community services, business and industry training, cultural programming, and student support services (Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Cohen, 1994).

The Community College Model

Evolving at a time when Taylorism, scientific management, and industrial automation and their inherent emphases upon efficiencies were prominent, a mass-production mentality emerged within many community colleges. A glance at a policies manual in many community colleges, at least until recent years, will provide evidence of the rules-intensive nature of educational organizations. Although considered more agile than many segments of higher education, community colleges’ ability to change is of growing concern to many (Alfred, 1984; Carter & Alfred, 1996; Moskus, 1999).

Community colleges, like other segments of public higher education, could be classified as “professional bureaucracies.” In describing these, Bolman and Deal write that “professional bureaucracies are flat, decentralized structures; control is provided mainly by

the professional indoctrination of their members” (Bolman & Deal, 1991, p. 88). They insulate “key players,” primarily faculty or other professional staff, from interference, which results in difficulties coordinating and assuring quality control. In describing the result of this model, the authors write,

Professional bureaucracies often respond slowly to changes in the environment. Multiple waves of reforms and reformers have tried with little success over several decades to reform and restructure public schools. . . the autonomy and adaptability of the professional make it very hard for the organization to make systematic changes. Professional bureaucracies rarely succeed when they try to standardize the performance of those in the operating core. (Mintzberg, 1979, cited in Bolman and Deal, 1991, p. 88)

As professional bureaucracies, strategies that are perceived by the professionals as attempts to standardize or further bureaucratize will be met with great resistance.

Faculty generally consider that they work in a collegial culture, but the meaning of collegial has different meanings. Bergquist writes that the collegial “culture encourages diversity of perspective and relative autonomy of work” (Bergquist, 1992, p. 17).

Another perspective on collegiality is an environment that is friendly, supportive, encouraging, and sharing.

A collegial style is likely to be more compatible with the tenets of organizational learning, yet no definition of style is likely to adequately describe the dynamic complexity of collegiate organizations. In one study of public school restructuring (Peterson, McCarthy, and Elmore, 1996), collegial style was thought to contribute to a number of positive characteristics considered to be important in enhancing a learning culture. This belief could similarly exist in a higher education context; namely, that learning is more likely to occur in a collegial environment. This study reported,

Lakeview staff members had come to believe that it was essential to provide a supportive, collegial environment because it would promote risk-taking and personal growth for both students and teachers. Teachers' self-esteem, nurtured by a supportive school setting, would then result in the provision of a safe environment where students could take risks in their own learning. (Peterson et al., 1996, p. 28)

Faculty, staff, administrators, and students in organizations may hold differing views of the college organization. This paradox may exist because the lens from which each views the organization is different. These different points of view must be reconciled by organizations, since they challenge the organization's ability to develop shared vision, common goals, and the shared beliefs important for becoming more learning-centered. The business literature on alignment would support this view, as authors contend that all systems and the culture of the organization must be focused on "the main thing" (Labovitz and Rosansky, 1998).

Jerry Moskus, president of Lane Community College, a League for Innovation member, describes the phenomena of differing views with the metaphor of eagles and moles, where eagles (administrators) may have a broader view but lack the indepth understanding of internal functions, which are also vitally important for the organization. He argues for the value of each in the organization and suggests that what we need are burrowing eagles and soaring moles (Moskus, 1999, p.2). Moskus believes that learning is the value around which leaders can engender others' commitment. Consequently, becoming a more learning-centered college has great potential to gain consensus.

Bureaucratic characteristics run counter to the prevailing view of a learning-centered institution or a place where organizational learning is rich. If the change toward a learning-centered institution is to be achieved, community colleges must move beyond

their bureaucratic origins and exhibit characteristics more closely aligned with the collegial style and with the characteristics of a learning organization. Describing the learning organization, Marquardt observes: "This rich adaptable culture creates integrated relationships and enhances learning by encouraging values such as teamwork, self-management, empowerment, and sharing. It is the opposite of a closed, rigid, bureaucratic architecture" (Marquardt, 1996, p. 24).

The calls for change in higher education, well documented throughout the higher education literature, demand a break from the traditional. At the same time, the strategies employed to achieve these ends may not result in moving the organization toward its desired ends. Many faculty believe that the current emphases on accountability, assessment, and standards will in fact reinforce the bureaucratic foundations of the enterprise.

Transformation of the colleges will take more than cultivating a different style. Many authors contend that what is needed is nothing short of a paradigm shift - a fundamental shift in philosophy as contrasted with a piecemeal approach to change. Strategies will need to be more effective than historic efforts have realized.

Organizational Structure

Two who study community colleges extensively, Richard Alfred and Patricia Carter, observe that restructuring efforts in most colleges have been superficial, keeping the prevailing structure in place while changing a few titles (Alfred & Carter, 1999). Structure is reported to influence strategy. Most who write about change address some aspect of structure as important to consider (Beer et al, 1990). Given that structure

influences strategy and that change is difficult to achieve, it would be reasonable to conclude that changing the organization structure could result in positive strategic outcomes. Yet, structures rarely change. Elmore, summarizing other writers, observes, “A continual dilemma in research on school change is that, although schools are constantly engaging in activities designed to effect change in response to external pressures, they seldom change their essential patterns of organization” (Elmore, 1991). He contends that the reward structures preclude having change reach the core processes of the organization (Elmore, 1996) and offers suggestions for how large-scale change that influences schools’ core missions could be implemented. Among his suggestions is one that talks about structure in a way different from the typical restructuring literature. He suggests that opportunities for interactions must be created, such as smaller units within larger organizations, and he offers this view,

Certain types of structures are more likely than others to intensify and focus norms of good practice--organizations in which face-to-face relationships dominate impersonal, bureaucratic ones; organizations in which people routinely interact around common problems of practice; and organizations that focus on the results of their work for students rather than on the working conditions of professionals. (Elmore, 1996, p. 320)

This view of the school that would move educational reforms toward scale is consistent with some of the identified characteristics of organizations that are adept at learning. One theme that permeates the organizational learning literature is the need for open communications, and Elmore’s view also reinforces the importance of focusing on the core mission of the school, “the results of their work for students” (Elmore, 1996, p. 320).

Learning Paradigm

The literature about a learning orientation in education is extensive, and it takes many forms, including learning paradigms, learning-centered colleges, and learning colleges. The education literature also introduces learning climate, learning culture, learning environment, and even learning revolution. The meanings of these many terms overlap both in the literature and in the common understandings among higher education practitioners. Only those few central to this research will be reviewed.

Although the learning paradigm, including the use of the term paradigm, seems to be a fairly recent phenomena, its roots can be traced back to the last turn of a century with an 1899 book by John Dewey called The School and Society. In this book, Dewey suggests that the center of gravity in education shift back to the child and his/her “natural impulses to conversation, to inquiry, to construction, and to expression” (Cremin, 1961, cited in Elmore, 1996, p. 303). Dewey’s work also introduced the concept of individualizing instruction to meet learner needs. Dewey’s views are highly consistent with the concepts of the learning paradigm.

There are only subtle differences in the concepts of a learning paradigm, a learning-centered college, or a learning college, as they are explained in the literature. In general, the first, a learning paradigm, could be considered a point of view, a philosophy, or a way of viewing the world. The second, a learning-centered college, is descriptive of the preferred overall practice of the organization, even if this practice is difficult to discern. Based on what has (or has not) been written about colleges’ progress, the expression of Michael Hammer seems pertinent: “Slogans and speeches do not a learning organization

make. Explicit policies and processes do” (Hammer, 1997). A learning college projects a picture of having achieved the preferred practice of learner- or learning-centeredness. Not one of these terms exactly captures the process of becoming, which the theories of organizational learning presume to do.

The learning-paradigm literature stems most prominently from an article by Robert Barr and John Tagg published in Change magazine in November/December 1995. These authors contrast the current instruction paradigm with the learning paradigm in this way, “We now see that our mission is not instruction but rather that of producing *learning* with every student by *whatever* means work best” (Barr & Tagg, 1995, p. 13).

Barr and Tagg also make a case for organizational learning, although they do not name it this. They suggest that “. . . the Learning Paradigm envisions the institution itself as a learner—over time, it continuously learns how to produce more learning with each graduating class, each entering student” (Barr & Tagg, 1995, p. 14). It is important to note, however, that even the organization’s learning is framed from the view of what it can contribute to each student learner. The learning paradigm focuses little attention on the needs of the staff of the organization and their collective work except to the extent that these are translated into learning gains for students.

The authors note that reform efforts have failed over the years because of a piecemeal approach to issues from within the Instruction Paradigm and with a governance structure which precludes a fundamentally different way of thinking. Barr and Tagg approach the organizational learning perspective again in their observation that institutions exhibit the behaviors described by Argyris in espousing one theory while practicing

another (espoused theories vs. theories-in-use).

The need for a vision, as expressed in change strategies and in becoming a learning organization, is also considered to be important in a higher education context. Not only do Barr and Tagg offer this view, but the importance of mission and vision is supported by others who write about learning- or learner-centered colleges:

Lacking such a vision, we've witnessed reformers advocate many of the new paradigm's elements over the years, only to see few of them widely adopted. The reason is that they have been applied piecemeal within the structures of a dominant paradigm that rejects or distorts them. (Barr and Tagg, 1995, p. 14)

The authors note that it is the lack of vision and the prevailing paradigm that have precluded widespread adoption of some of the learning paradigm's elements. They do not use the terminology of the learning organization literature, such as a systems perspective, but the notation concerning a piecemeal approach suggests this.

Barr and Tagg note the importance of placing the learner at the center of the learning process and establishing the learner as a constructor of his/her knowledge, another description that suggests both a systems view and a constructivist philosophy. Once more, the authors stop short of introducing any of the business literature to explain their theories. It is not clear whether this was because of their lack of familiarity with them, the concern that educators would not receive them well, or whether space simply precluded their inclusion. However, it is striking that the business literature which has terms for much of what Barr, Tagg, and Boggs write about is conspicuously absent from the articles while the themes are central. The overriding theme of the popular Barr and Tagg article is a focus on achieving ever higher learning outcomes for traditional learners,

the students.

Describing his view of the learning paradigm, George Boggs, former president of Palomar College, the home institution of Barr and Tagg, and currently the executive director of the American Association of Community Colleges, writes that “students are more in control of their own learning, often learning from peers in small groups. Information is more widely available” (Boggs, 1999). Boggs’ image of the learning paradigm, in this article written a few years later, is also highly focused on students and does not speak of the learning of others in the organization. He believes that the focus of the learning paradigm is primarily at the institutional (or organizational) level, rather than the individual faculty level. He contends that it was the difficulties encountered by teaching faculty to implement new ideas that led to the emergence of this paradigm. In elaborating his views, he explains that everyone in the organization is responsible for student learning and that employees’ roles must not be limited to their traditional descriptions.

He fails to pick up on the theme introduced by Barr and Tagg, that shifting to a learning paradigm requires a fundamental structural and/or philosophical shift. He does note that “faculty members will be essential in the transformation of colleges and universities to become more *learning centered* (emphasis added)” (Boggs, 1999, p. 3). Despite the fact that the publication from which this abstract is drawn is primarily targeted toward faculty, it is still disappointing that the author has not more adequately addressed the transformation to which he refers, if he believes that the learning paradigm is more about institutional-level changes than faculty changes. He only approaches this

institutional level by addressing the particular role of the faculty “to take the lead in identifying learning outcomes for students and developing ways to ensure that graduates achieve those outcomes” (Boggs, 1999). Boggs adds no additional insights to how the learning paradigm will be achieved but does support Barr and Tagg by placing the learner at the center of the paradigm.

Learning/Learner-Centered Colleges

Complimenting this view of the learning paradigm are the 1995-1998 writings of Terry O’Banion, who appears to have coined the terms “learning college” and “learning revolution.” O’Banion has published several monographs and articles plus a book entitled A Learning College for the 21st Century. O’Banion describes a learning college primarily by offering six key principles that guide learning colleges:

- The learning college creates substantive change in individual learners.
- The learning college engages learners as full partners in the learning process, with learners assuming primary responsibility for their own choices.
- The learning college creates and offers as many options for learning as possible.
- The learning college assists learners to form and participate in collaborative learning activities.
- The learning college defines the roles of learning facilitators by the needs of the learners.
- The learning college and its learning facilitators succeed only when improved and expanded learning can be documented for its learners. (O’Banion, 1997, p. 47)

O’Banion focuses less on how the organization needs to change than on its orientation toward students. He builds some of his rationale for the shift to a learning college on the 1993 work of the Wingspread Group, The American Imperative. This report calls for “redesign of our learning systems” and offers this advice about the implications of this imperative: “Putting learning at the heart of the academic enterprise

will mean overhauling the conceptual, procedural, curricular, and other architecture of postsecondary education on most campuses” (Wingspread Group, 1993, p. 14). The Wingspread Group’s report encourages not only a paradigm shift, but also refers to structural issues.

O’Banion writes that “this new wave of reform is not tweaking a system to fix a few broken parts; it is a fundamental overhaul, destruction of much that is traditional and construction of much that is new” (O’Banion, 1997, p. xiv). Although one of O’Banion’s guiding principles concerns the role of learning facilitators, he provides minimal guidance concerning how this might be achieved.

The learning-college mandate suggests a need for fundamental rethinking and new ways of behaving, consistent with generative learning theories. Although O’Banion and other writers (Perelman, 1992; McClenney, 1998; Dolence & Norris, 1995) offer this challenge, they do little to explore or examine the ways in which colleges are attempting to achieve the desired ends. Several years into the “revolution,” it seems timely to examine the strategies of leaders for effecting the desired changes.

Most of O’Banion’s principles appear related most directly to the learning of those traditionally defined as students in the college. O’Banion’s principles hint at changes in the roles of learning facilitators, but they do not specifically address the staff’s needs for learning and even more critically their need for collaborative learning, for teamwork, and for “crafting strategy.”

In summary, those who are writing about learner- and learning-centered colleges or learning colleges are highly consistent in their messages. They place the learner at the

center of the universe (the college) as the person most important in the learning process. They encourage collaboration and communication among faculty members and administrators as well as among students. They note the importance of leadership and suggest new roles for faculty members. They emphasize the importance of mission focus, a vision, and/or values. They highlight process, with some mentioning the value of continuous quality improvement as a strategy. They promote individualizing more, through breaking the barriers of time, role, place, and other structural characteristics that hamper the college's ability to serve individuals. And importantly, all note that to become thus will require major changes from the status quo. At the same time, there are many gaps. Little is known about the strategies for becoming more learning-centered organizations. Although much emphasis is placed on becoming more learning-centered in many colleges, little is known about the conceptual frameworks from which these change processes are being executed. We turn next to the process of learning in the organization, the central theme of this inquiry.

Organizational Learning

Life is too complex and effective action too contextual. Real learning - the development of new capabilities - occurs over time, in a continuous cycle of theoretical action and practical conceptualization . . . The impatient quest for improvements all too often results in superficial changes that leave deeper problems untouched. Herein lies a core leadership paradox: Action is critical, but the action we need can spring only from a reflective territory that includes not only cognition but body, emotions, and spirit as well. (Kofman and Senge, 1993, p. 7)

Taking a spiritual view of organizational learning and the learning organization, Kofman and Senge remind readers that rather than changing only in response to outside forces, the

“wellspring of real learning is aspiration, imagination, and experimentation” (Kofman and Senge, 1993, p. 9).

Other writers take a more pragmatic view of organizational learning. This section will describe the views of some prominent writers concerning organizational learning. In an article describing DiBella and associates’ views, the authors write, “We define organizational learning as the capacity or processes within an organization to maintain or improve performance based on experience. Learning is a systems-level phenomenon because it stays within the organization, even if individuals change” (Nevis, DiBella, & Gould, 1997).

Although a working definition of organizational learning is provided in Chapter 1, this definition adds a perspective useful for thinking about organizational learning in a college context. The emphases upon capacity, processes, performance, experience, phenomena, systems, and individuals create an encompassing view of the concept of organizational learning. At a time when large numbers of public educators are expected to retire in the next several years, the organization’s capacity for sustaining its vitality “even if individuals change” is a critical consideration for leaders.

The literatures about organizational learning and the learning organization are intertwined. Most who write about one also offer observations on the other. In some writers’ work, there is a shifting from an explanation of one to the other within the same paragraph, which makes distinguishing which is being referenced difficult to discern. Many of the writers fail to adequately distinguish between the two concepts. One of the clearest distinctions between organizational learning and the learning organization is offered by

Marquardt:

It is important to note the difference between the terms *learning organization* and *organizational learning*. In discussing learning organizations, we are focusing on the *what*, and describing the systems, principles, and characteristic of organizations that learn and produce as a collective entity. Organizational learning, on the other hand, refers to *how* organizational learning occurs, i.e. the skills and processes of building and utilizing knowledge. Organizational learning as such is just one dimension or element of a learning organization. (Marquardt, 1996, p. 19)

Although clarifying his view of the relationship of these two terms, it is one inconsistent with my interpretation of the literature. Rather than a subset of the learning organization, one element as Marquardt refers to it, I see organizational learning as the broader term that personifies the meaning of a learning organization. Organizational learning is the continuing process of becoming something different, including a journey toward a learning organization, as well as a process for achieving other agendas. In my view, the learning organization is just one of many possible outcomes of organizational learning.

DiBella and Nevis also write that these two concepts are often used interchangeably, “because organizational learning applies to several levels of analysis: individuals learn, teams learn, and companies learn” (DiBella & Nevis, p. 7).

The distinction that is utilized in this research is that the learning organization is about the product, and organizational learning is about process. Some writers contend that the learning organization is an ideal state which may never be achieved. Certainly it is possible that a learning-centered college may also not be achieved.

This research is more concerned with the journey, the process of organizational learning, than the destination, the learning organization or the learning-centered college. The inquiry begins by focusing on the strategies being used to move toward the

destination of a more learning-centered college. This process perspective may arise from a personal belief in continuous quality improvement processes in general and the belief that continued viability of individuals and organizations will be dependent upon being in a continuing growth mode. The “permanent white water” (Vaill, 1996) of our times has reinforced the need for more adaptive, more capable organizations. Consequently, the concept of organizational learning is gaining immense interest among business leaders and academicians. The following passage summarizes this imperative:

(There is a) . . . need to adapt to changing environments, draw lessons from past successes and failures, detect and correct the errors of the past, anticipate and respond to impending threats, conduct experiments, engage in continuing innovation, build and realize images of a desirable future. There is virtual consensus that we are all subject to a "learning imperative," and in the academic as well as the practical world, organizational learning has become an idea in good currency. (Argyris & Schon, 1996, p. xvii)

Organizational learning is an idea “in good currency,” and learning imperatives abound, from the Student Learning Imperative of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) to The American Imperative challenges of the Wingspread Group.

In contrast with the relatively recent literature about learning-centered colleges, the organizational learning literature is well established. The first references identified are from the early 1970s and evolve from the work of Chris Argyris, who is noted for his extensive work in this area . A forerunner to the organizational literature is the action learning research of Reg Revans, which will be introduced later. The focus of the organizational learning literature is substantially different from the learning-centered college literature. Rather than focusing on the development of individual learners, organizational learning focuses on the organization’s process of developing collective

capacity. Various authors characterize it as identifying and correcting errors, conceptualizing new ways of acting, and/or increasing organizational performance on measures that matter to the organization. The organizational learning literature is concerned with understanding how individuals' actions contribute to enhanced organizational performance.

Argyris notes that few organizations have changed, despite multiple change programs. The literature is united in the perspective that "the more effective organizations are at learning the more likely they will be at being innovative or knowing the limits of their innovation" (Argyris, 1992, p.1). Some contend that unless organizations become skillful at learning, their very survival is at risk. Marquardt says that the concept of survival of the fittest is being replaced by an urgency concerning the "survival of the fittest-to-learn" (Marquardt, 1996, p. 1).

Although the literature of organizational learning has a different focus than the learning-centered college literature, the themes or characteristics are very similar. The same characteristics are also found within the learning organization literature. All three streams address the characteristics of leadership and roles of leaders; teams or collaboration; mission, vision, and values; stakeholders and customers; processes; total quality management or continuous quality improvement; decision-making; organizational structure (from different views); communications and conversation; paradigms and mental models; capability or capacity; change; systems thinking; culture and climate; and measurement. Cutting broadly across the three literature bases are the themes of leadership, communications and conversation; paradigms or mental models; systems

thinking; and culture or climate. The other characteristics are offered by some authors or in only two of the three categories.

Two tables in the Appendices provide more detail concerning the particular views of contemporary theorists in the areas of organizational learning, the learning organization, and the learning-centered college. A review of these will demonstrate how confused the literatures are, since there are many overlapping dimensions; many writers address two of these three general conceptual areas. The following table is provided to summarize the topics that are commonly addressed as important in gaining an understanding of the three major learning perspectives reviewed in this research.

Table 1: Factors Commonly Considered in the Literatures of Learning Organizations, Organizational Learning, and Learning-Centered Colleges

Mission, Vision, and Values	Leadership
Stakeholders and Customers	Culture
Processes	Roles of Leaders
Total Quality Management or Continuous Quality Improvement	Decision Making/Problem Solving Teams
Teams	Collaboration
Organizational Structure	Communications and Conversation
Paradigms, Perspectives, or Mental Models	Capacity or Capability
Change	Systems Thinking or Systems View
Measurement	Barriers
Alignment	Community
Commitment	Spirit/Reflection
Inquiry	

Table 1 should demonstrate how broadly these literatures range and how overlapping they

are with other organizational literature streams. Gaining a clear focus of one without another is a research challenge. Separating these from the literatures, such as teamwork, change, leadership, and systems, is impossible.

The learning cycle underlies the DiBella and Nevis model. Building on the work of George Huber (1991), the authors “conceive of organizational learning as a series of three processes: Knowledge Creation or Acquisition, Knowledge Dissemination, and Knowledge Use (DiBella & Nevis, 1998, p. 28). By using the learning cycle as the foundation, the authors set up the model of learning as a continuous process, similar to continuous quality improvement processes. DiBella and Nevis propose methods for determining an organization’s learning style. The descriptors comprising a learning style are called learning orientations; they are non-evaluative, continuum-based descriptors.

Learning orientations. . . are the values and practices that reflect where learning takes place and the nature of what is learned. These orientations form a pattern that defines a given organization’s “learning style.” (Nevis, DiBella, and Gould, 1997, p. 5)

The seven defined learning orientations are:

Table 2: Learning Orientations in DiBella/Nevis Organizational Learning Model

Orientation	Approach (Continuum)
LO-1 Knowledge Source	Internal to External
LO-2 Content-Process Focus	Content to Process
LO-3 Knowledge Reserve	Personal to Public
LO-4 Dissemination Mode	Formal to Informal
LO-5 Learning Scope	Incremental to Transformative
LO-6 Value-Chain Focus	Design-Make to Market-Deliver
LO-7 Learning Focus	Individual to Group

Source: DiBella and Nevis, 1998, p. 41

In this sense, learning orientations are descriptive factors that help us to understand without making value judgments (Nevis, DiBella, & Gould, 1997). The learning orientation factors are expressed along a continuum, which provides a relative understanding of how the organization compares across dimensions, between units, or in comparison to defined ideals. With this information, leaders can initiate other actions to shift the organizational learning style toward one more compatible with a changing context. Although a style is neither good nor bad, it could be more or less appropriate or effective in particular environments. Understanding the organizational context and the demands placed upon the organization will continue to be an important challenge for leaders.

With an understanding of learning style, leaders can assess whether the style appropriately suits the environmental conditions. If it is determined that one or more orientations need to shift along the continuum, this knowledge could assist leaders to plan strategies for shifting the style - a far easier challenge than shifting a culture. Many writers espouse the view that cultures must change; changing learning styles may be less challenging. Ultimately, shifting the learning orientations may result in changes in the culture.

DiBella and Nevis's research base includes primarily Fortune-type companies, such as Motorola, Fiat Auto, Exxon Chemical, Pacific Bell, etc. The fact that there is a research base, and not just individuals' opinions which much of the current learning organization literature reflects, is a distinct advantage. The DiBella and Nevis model has been applied in a health care context, but to date it has not been utilized in higher

education.

Many academicians resist the application of business models to collegiate settings. In some cases, the concerns are well founded, such as the times when decisions are only financial bottom-line deliberations when the mission and the decisions facing a college may be more complex. A bottom-line orientation in business may make perfect sense, because businesses are in business to make a profit. The scenario in higher education is less explicit. This research should represent an early attempt to explore use of organizational learning theories for analyzing higher education change strategies.

The DiBella and Nevis, Marquardt, and Senge views of organizational learning have several overlapping dimensions. Most authors view organizational learning as a process that should lead to improved performance and that should enhance the capacity of the organization. Closely aligned with the work of Senge and DiBella/Nevis is research conducted within companies by company insiders. One is Ray Stata of Analog Devices. Another, Arie DeGeus of Shell Oil, a widely published organizational learning proponent, participated in the New Management Style Project at Massachusetts Institute of Technology where discussions of planning and learning occurred. Stata writes: "In an even broader context, as I come to understand this concept more fully, I see organizational learning as the principal process by which management innovation occurs" (Stata, 1996, p. 318).

Stata attributes the potential for innovation to organizational learning and expresses concern about the slowing rate of innovation. He recognizes the need for all to be learners and observes that "organizations can learn only as fast as the slowest link learns. Change

is blocked unless all of the major decision makers learn together, come to share beliefs and goals, and are committed to take the actions necessary for change” (Stata, 1996, p. 318).

If the benefits of organizational learning hold true for higher education, then innovation, such as that designed to become more learning-centered colleges, will be more feasible if organizational learning is enhanced.

Conceiving of organizations that learn is a difficult concept. As structural rather than human entities, organizations lack the capacity to learn in the traditional sense. When individuals’ learning is used collectively for the organization, a higher level of learning should be evidenced. In distinguishing among the different levels of learning, Marquardt offers the following definitions:

Individual learning refers to the change of skills, insights, knowledge, attitudes, and values acquired by a person through self-study, technology-based instruction, insight, and observation.

Group or team learning alludes to the increase in knowledge, skills, and competency which is accomplished by and within groups.

Organization learning represents the enhanced intellectual and productive capability gained through corporatewide commitment and opportunity for continuous improvement. It differs from individual and group/team learning in two basic respects. First, organizational learning occurs through the shared insights, knowledge and mental models of members of the organization. Second, organizational learning builds on past knowledge and experience--that is, on organizational memory which depends on institutional mechanisms (e.g., policies, strategies, and explicit models) used to retain knowledge. (Marquardt, 1996, p. 22)

Understanding these differences is important in analyzing an organization’s learning patterns. If shared insights do not exist, organizational learning does not exist. The major distinction that can be made between group and organizational learning is the breadth or scope of engagement. In general, organizational learning addresses the entire

organization, whereas group learning may be evident among a small number of individuals within a unit. At the same time, some would describe organizational learning as characteristic of a unit of an organization, such as the marketing department, rather than expecting that it must extend to the corporate entity. My view is that a great number of examples of individual learning will be evident in most, if not all, colleges; several examples of group or team learning may be evident in many colleges; but few cases of extensive organization or organizational learning will be apparent in community college settings. Getting to scale with innovations of any type has been immensely difficult to achieve in collegiate contexts, and one possible explanation for this lag may be the lack of proficiency with organizational learning.

Distinguishing among individual, group, and organizational learning is difficult. At the same time, because the organizational learning depends upon individual learning, we must also attend to this level in our analyses. Argyris writes,

Organizations do not perform the actions that produce the learning. It is individuals acting as agents of organizations who produce the behavior that leads to learning. Organizations can create conditions that may significantly influence what individuals frame as the problem, design as a solution, and produce as action to solve a problem. Individuals, on the other hand, may also bring biases and constraints to the learning situation that are relatively independent of the organization's requirements. (Argyris, 1992, p. 8)

The interdependence among individual, group, and organizational learning is tight.

Some authors (Dent, Goldberg, & Galloway, 1999) contend that the place to begin the change process is not with the individuals but rather with the structure, the roles and responsibilities of the actors and the environment within which they function. It is important to note that structure in this instance does not equate to the hierarchy of

organizational structure but rather suggests concerns of culture and role expectations. Much of the change in higher education has focused on realigning the boxes on the organization chart rather than viewing structure as a concept that focuses on relationships and context. The argument that change is a systems phenomena is important as we consider organizational learning as a concept. Organizational learning is not about just individuals or about leaders; it is about the interactions among several factors of the organization. These factors are identified by many but are explicitly listed in the DiBella/Nevis model. Most writers recognize the importance of the individual in the equation, but not as the problem but rather as an organic component of the system.

Senge's view, however, is not focused on fixing the individual but rather on examining the interactions between the individual and the organization. His mention of "reciprocal commitments" and a "special spirit" convey a different feeling than one that suggests fixing the individual, or dealing with "resistance to change," as some change writers suggest.

Here, I am most interested in the connections between personal learning and organizational learning, in the reciprocal commitments between individual and organization, and in the special spirit of an enterprise made up of learners. (Senge, 1990, p.8)

In his writings, Senge expands on the notion of individual learning and contends that for organizations to grow, they must develop the ability to create, a process that he refers to as generative learning. This and other related terms are introduced later in this chapter.

A few authors are challenging the appropriateness of seeking to enhance organizational learning for purposes of organizational productivity and wonder whether

this is yet another form of manipulation of workers that fails to consider the workers' needs (Dirkx, 1999). Writers are also raising concerns about the need to cultivate spirit in the workplace (Scherer, 1993) and the need for reflective practitioners (Schon, 1983; Dirkx, 1999). Although there are important questions to be asked in this realm, my perspective is that organizational learning, although not value-neutral, is a critical component in organizational development.

One point of view is that what is good for the organization in the long term will be good for the workers. Organizational learning can be considered instrumental, but the viability and vitality of the organization present the best prospects for assuring that workers have the opportunity to engage in meaningful work and develop holistically. The organization has responsibility for the whole, while generally the individual has the primary responsibility for the development of self.

A View of Organizational Learning and the Learning-Centered College

My view of a learning-centered college is more closely aligned with an organizational learning perspective than with the current learning-college literature. As knowledge of organizational learning expands, to which this research is partially designed to contribute, we should expect an increasingly enlightened perspective of the learning college to emerge.

In my vision of a learning-centered college, there would be evidence of the following:

- Energy and enthusiasm toward learning and innovation among many of the constituents, well beyond just the top leadership level;

- **Shared understandings and commitments about organizational priorities and directions (vision and mission);**
- **Lavish communications, including active use of e-mail and/or listservs, internal and external; informative in-house newsletters; vital websites with in-house documents and ongoing dialogue; regular group meetings;**
- **Active, cross-functional teams, with good performance track records;**
- **Many professional development activities and opportunities, both on- and off-campus, with follow-up conversations with participants;**
- **Social/professional relationships among diverse groups, individuals from different functional areas who have lunch together, travel to conferences together, talk to each other routinely on and/or off campus;**
- **People having fun and generally projecting a positive outlook and a can-do attitude;**
- **People working hard, because they share a passion, care, and are personally committed to the institutional purposes;**
- **Culture of supportiveness and encouragement; there is both financial and emotional support for new ventures;**
- **Trust: a belief, in general, of the good intentions of others at all levels in all areas;**
- **Respect: a willingness to acknowledge and consider seriously the expertise of others;**
- **Openness: a willingness to admit failures, seek input, reconsider assumptions, change directions or views, etc.;**
- **A passion for learning: evidence that the individuals of the organization are in a continuous learning mode and that this learning goes beyond narrow disciplinary interests;**
- **Lots of engagement of the official leadership with the unofficial followership; we will see leaders mixing with the “troops” regularly on central agenda items, particularly the learning mission of the organization;**
- **Useful and used information resources: Data is readily accessible, regularly used to make decisions, and widely understood;**
- **Evidence of leadership in the organization, as demonstrated by being among the first**

to move in some new directions in contrast with being the last to jump in (a culture of innovators or early adopters vs. laggards (Rogers, 1995));

- Broad-based understanding of important educational issues; in the community college these would include developmental instruction, access, performance indicators, assessment, technology use in instruction, alternative learning strategies, and other similar topics;
- Confidence that the vision and major directions (goals) would continue even with change in some or all of the top leadership

These views are not what the learning-centered college literature currently espouses, although some items are central and others are at least peripherally noted. These views do align well with the organizational learning literature. It is this perspective that leads me to suggest that the learning-centered college will exhibit many of the characteristics of organizational learning.

In summary, the organizational learning literature is about process. The divergence in the literature emerges primarily from the determination of critical aspects of what contributes to organizational learning. Most believe that organizational learning results in enhancing capacity. Some believe it must begin by developing individuals (Covey, 1989); others believe it must focus on systems (Senge, 1990; DiBella and Nevis, 1998). Some writers (Marquardt, 1996) take very global approaches, broad enough to encompass everything in the organization (technology, people, knowledge, etc.) while others (DiBella & Nevis, 1998) are more specific about the particular factors which influence organizational learning. Each recognizes the critical role of individuals in the process, but the role individuals play varies in different authors' interpretations.

The first place to look to develop organizational learning capability is by analyzing

where a college is. From this analysis, a gap analysis can emerge, and leaders can then focus change strategies on the factors considered most important to particular change directions.

Education Research on Organizational Learning

No studies of organizational learning in a college context have been identified, but a recent article in Educational Administration Quarterly by authors Scribner, Cockrell, Cockrell, and Valentine reports on an investigation into school improvement processes in rural middle schools. The authors conclude that four *organizational* factors influence the development of professional community: principal leadership, organizational history, organizational priorities, and organization of teacher work. They report that “the findings further suggest that double-loop learning is invaluable to sustain professional community.” Although the authors were investigating how to create professional community through organizational learning, they identify issues relevant to the creation of learning-centered colleges. They write:

Transforming typically intransigent school cultures into communities where learning is continuous, reflective, and focused on improving student outcomes will require change beyond first-order restructuring (Cuban, 1983). . . Through these organizational learning processes, schools (a) routinely examine and question values that guide organizational actions (Rait, 1995); (b) generate new insights and knowledge (Hedberg, 1981; Huber, 1991); (c) improve organizational memory through interpreting and sharing information (Argyris & Schon, 1978); and (d) build capacity for effective use and dissemination of knowledge (Argyris & Schon, 1978). (Scribner, J., Cockrell, K., Cockrell, D., and Valentine, J., 1999, p. 131)

The premises they suggest for organizational learning are consistent with other authors who suggest the importance of gaining and sharing knowledge, of challenging basic assumptions, of being open, and building capacity for using information.

Another study links the concepts of organizational learning and teacher empowerment. As a result of research in 24 site-based management schools, the authors conclude that the “strength of these schools can be understood through their capacity for organizational learning” (Marks and Lewis, 1999, p. 708). They view teacher empowerment as a critical dimension of organizational learning in a school setting but note that there is little research on organizational learning but a considerable amount about empowerment. Their work attempts to relate these two concepts.

Learning Organizations

A learning organization is a place where people are continually discovering how they create their reality. And how they can change it. (Senge, 1990, p. 13)

More common in the lexicon of business and of education than the term organizational learning is the term “Learning Organization.” This term became popular with the 1990 publication of The Fifth Discipline - The Art & Practice of The Learning Organization by Peter Senge, even though he was not the first to use this term. His book was followed by a great number of articles and books in the years since 1990. Senge’s definition was presented in Chapter 1. This definition emphasizes capacity-building, and it also emphasizes the learning process by referring to people learning how to learn together.

In contrast, Marquardt observes that “a learning organization is a streamlined, flat, boundary-less structure that maximizes contact, information flow, local responsibility, and collaboration within and outside the organization (Marquardt, 1996, p. 25). Although their general views of the learning organization are similar, in defining it, Marquardt takes both a more structural and instrumental view of the learning organization. Marquardt

adds,

A learning organization, systematically defined, is an organization which learns powerfully and collectively and is continually transforming itself to better collect, manage, and use knowledge for corporate success. It empowers people within and outside the company to learn as they work. (Marquardt, 1996, p. 19)

Marquardt's description of the learning organization is an apt description for organizational learning. It expresses the need for collecting, managing, and using knowledge; this cycle is consistent with the DiBella/Nevis model of acquiring, sharing, and using knowledge. Marquardt, although he writes of the learning organization, is describing the process rather than the product. In an undated (thought to be about 1992 since sources are as recent as 1991) "Introduction to the Classic Paperback" of Theory in Practice, Argyris and Schon observe that the learning organization has become a "banner for reform," just as a learning-centered college or a learning college has become the reform call in community colleges.

Senge introduces types of learning and the importance of some types for the survival of the organization, a view shared by many whose work is cited here as well as more generally in contemporary higher education and business literature. Senge's book emphasizes the importance of individual learning as a prerequisite to organizational learning, a view shared by other authors.

In describing the learning organization, Senge identifies five disciplines: personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking. Each of these themes is similar to many of the organizational learning theories. Personal mastery relates to individual learning. Senge writes that "personal mastery is the discipline of continually

clarifying and deepening our personal vision, of focusing our energies, of developing patience, and of seeing reality objectively. As such, it is a cornerstone of the learning organization—the learning organization’s spiritual foundation” (Senge, 1990, p. 7).

The second discipline, mental models, includes our beliefs and assumptions which stem largely from our learning styles and our experiences. Most of the organizational learning literature (DiBella and Nevis, 1998; Nevis et al, 1997; Argyris, 1999; and Keidel, 1995) emphasizes the importance of paradigms, perspectives, or mental models as critical to understanding and advancing organizational learning.

Shared vision, the third discipline, must exist before the learning in an organization will achieve the intended outcomes. The goal of change efforts in many colleges is to become more learning centered; for this to happen will require that the vision be shared well beyond the top leadership team.

Team learning is the fourth discipline. Senge writes that the discipline of team learning starts with “dialogue,” the capacity of members of a team to suspend assumptions and enter into a genuine “thinking together” (Senge, 1990, p. 10). Note that team learning is distinguished from teamwork. However, team learning could also be considered a form of either group or organizational learning.

A major theme in the organizational learning literature is the importance of communication and conversation, of sharing information, of having trust. Team learning is much like a prototype of organizational learning. Marquardt also defines team learning: “Group or team learning alludes to the increase in knowledge, skills, and competency which is accomplished by and within groups” (Marquardt, 1996, p. 22).

Systems thinking, the fifth discipline, requires consideration of the whole rather than the parts and understanding the interrelationships among parts. "Systems thinking is a conceptual framework, a body of knowledge and tools that has been developed. . . to make the full patterns clearer, and to help us see how to change them effectively" (Senge, 1990, p. 7).

An article by Calvert and associates published in Training and Development reports on focus groups' beliefs about a learning organization. Participants describe the learning organization as one "that excels at advanced, systematic, collective learning," whereas organizational learning refers to methods of collective learning. They write that "this distinction in meaning suggests three useful, if debatable, conclusions:

- All organizations learn. (In other words, they use organizational learning methods.)
- All organizations learn at different levels of proficiency and at different paces.
- To become a "learning organization," an organization must find ways to make learning more intentional and more systemic. (Calvert G., Mobley, S., and Marshall, L., 1994, p. 40)

The focus group participants agreed on many criteria for learning organizations. These descriptions of the learning organization and the linkages to organizational learning are consistent with others who write about the importance of free and open dialogue about things that matter. Calvert and colleagues' reference to talking about learning is consistent with the inquiry focus of organizational learning and of action learning, as described later.

The American Society for Training and Development has published a framework reviewing a variety of instruments which are available to assess learning organizations and

organizational learning. In describing the framework, Gephart and colleagues offer this view,

A learning organization is an organization that has an enhanced capacity to learn, adapt, and change. It's an organization in which learning processes are analyzed, monitored, developed, managed, and aligned with improvement and innovation goals. Its vision, strategy, leaders, values, structures, systems, processes, and practices all work to foster people's learning and development and to accelerate systems level learning. (Gephart, Marsick, VanBuren, and Spiro, 1996, p.36)

Gephart and colleagues reflect much of the current learning, change, and systems literature with their inclusion of multiple components in their view of the learning organization.

Striking about the assessment framework and the accompanying review of several instruments available for evaluating learning organizations is the extensive overlap between the concepts of organizational learning and the learning organization. Their definition of the learning organization could as easily be descriptive of organizational learning. Most survey developers, perhaps because of the desire to make the instrument more useful to a larger audience, have further blurred the distinctions between the two concepts.

In reviewing a matrix of 20 available tools for assessing learning organizations, Redding lists the content areas covered by each. Many consider individual, team, and organizational learning, but several have organizational learning as their primary emphasis. The identified content areas reflected in the 20 tools are: vision and strategy; leadership and management; culture; structure; systems/processes; communications and information systems; performance management and support systems; technology; and change management. Of the nine content areas, culture is reported to be the primary emphasis

area for the DiBella/Nevis/Gould tool. There is a high degree of consistency among various assessors' views of the key content areas for a learning organization, as most instruments reviewed include most of the nine. There are highly consistent views of the learning organization, and each definition further reinforces the importance of the process of becoming a learning organization.

Kofman and Senge summarize the feel of change in a learning organization, where there is both security and a letting go.

Learning organizations are both more generative and more adaptive than traditional organizations. Because of their commitment, openness, and ability to deal with complexity, people find security not in stability but in the dynamic equilibrium between holding on and letting go--holding on and letting go of beliefs, assumptions, and certainties. What they know takes a second place to what they can learn, and simplistic answers are always less important than penetrating questions. (Kofman & Senge, 1993, p. 17)

The tension theme that runs throughout organizations and individuals is characterized here as having qualities of holding on and letting go, which creating new ways of being will require. The learning organization is presented as a dynamic place. Yet, to achieve this "what," there is a need to consider the "how," which organizational learning represents.

Action Learning

Although it was Senge's work that popularized the notion of a learning organization, many writers attribute the historical development of the concept of a learning organization to Reg Revans who was engaged early (1950s) in action research to create business environments that created a forum for employees to learn from each other. His work was a forerunner to the concept of learning communities and learning organizations, but the process he describes is clearly about organizational learning. When management schools

of the time in England were unable to incorporate his views into their different paradigms, Revans moved to Belgium where he conducted his research over a 10-year period.

Revans is most noted for the development of action learning. In describing action learning, Revans observes that individuals “learn to do it better by the very act of thinking of how they do it” (Revans, 1980, p. 7) and that rather than all new learning, the employees’ learning “consisted more in reorganizing this experience than in acquiring fresh facts or principles from outsiders” (Revans, 1980, p. 28). He explains that programs of action learning are continuously changing, that “systems that do not, or cannot change, do not, or cannot learn” (Revans, 1980, p. 42). Revans believes that every organization can become a learning system. Although action learning builds on experience, Revans also distinguishes between action learning and “learning-by-doing.” Instead, he describes it as “learning to learn-by-doing with and from others who are also learning to learn-by-doing” (Revans, 1980, p. 288). Neither the terminology of the learning organization nor that of organizational learning is ever mentioned, but the characteristics of action learning are inherent in most descriptions of both of these concepts.

The action learning terminology persists, as some authors use it to explain how learning organizations develop. Marquardt describes the concept as “Action learning/action reflection learning” and suggests that it “involves reflecting on real problems using the formula of $L \text{ (learning)} = P \text{ (existing or programmed knowledge)} + Q \text{ (questioning insight)}$ ” (Marquardt, 1996, p. 23). The concept of inquiry is important in the views of many theorists, including Revans, Marquardt; Calvert, et al; and the Wingspread Group, which bases a major proportion of its report on the many questions

that colleges must address in seeking to meet The American Imperative by addressing the identified fundamental issues “common to all colleges and universities: taking values seriously, putting student learning first, and creating a nation of learners” (Wingspread Group, 1993, p. 7).

Several writers are beginning to address the question of the role of leadership, including Ellinger, whose research substantiates the need for managers to develop new skills as learning facilitators and coaches, responsibilities that are more than just a subset of their traditional management roles. This research supports Senge’s contentions that “The Leaders’ New Work” (Senge, 1996) is to facilitate learning.

Included as Appendices A and I are tables which identify various theorists with the concepts they elaborate upon in their views of organizational learning, the learning-centered college, and/or the learning organization. This chapter is designed to provide some perspective on the views, but the tables do not provide detail about these, largely because there is a considerable amount of congruence. For example, if an author addresses leadership, the perspective is generally that leadership is important and that leaders need to play active roles. If the topic is measurement, then authors generally agree that it is important to identify what it is important to measure and to do so consistently. The confusion addressed throughout this chapter is not so much that there are differences in perceptions of what the components represent but rather that the many characteristics are jumbled within the three major literature streams.

Congruence and Theories of Action

Another framework which has been developed extensively is the concept of

congruence between espoused theory and theory-in-use; that is, that one's behavior fits his espoused theory of action (Argyris and Schon, 1974). Because this research will analyze the strategies of leaders rather than the effects of these strategies, it is possible that what leaders espouse may not match the actions or desired results. The congruence, or alignment, between what one believes and one practices is a major paradox of organizational and personal life. This dilemma is not unique to education, and is personified by the story of the "Emperor's New Clothes," a situation where "we praise it loudly in public and ask ourselves privately why we can't see it" (Argyris, 1998, p. 99). Subsequent studies will need to assess congruence.

The next section shifts to examination of additional concepts that inform organizational learning. Although this research is not about leadership, it does seek to profile leaders' behaviors in a given setting. To develop this profile requires consideration of principles or expectations of leadership. Most literature concerning any of the learning perspectives addresses the important role of leaders or leadership in the creation of learning environments.

Leadership Roles

What is clear is that the increasingly fast-moving and competitive environment we will face in the twenty-first century demands more leadership from more people to make enterprises prosper. Without that leadership, organizations stagnate, lose their way, and eventually suffer the consequences. (Kotter, 1999, p. 2)

Inseparable from the strategies employed by leaders are their characteristics, behaviors, management philosophies, learning styles, or what Kotter refers to as their "substance." Most of the studies of community college leadership have focused on the

characteristics and behaviors of leaders (Biggerstaff, 1990). An increasing number of writers are expressing concerns about the “hero” model of leadership and suggest that leadership cannot be examined in isolation but rather must be reviewed contextually and contemporaneously. Amey and Twombly observe that “the consequences of images that no longer fit can hamper the effectiveness of an institution” (Amey and Twombly, 1992, p. 126). Still others are writing about the need for paying more attention to creating learning at all levels or “learningful teams,”

The team is empowered to accomplish its purposes and facilitates itself throughout the process, including the clarification of and dialogue concerning important or essential questions; identification and testing of assumptions; and the development, implementation, and evaluation of goals, strategies, and outcomes. (Corcoran, Duncan, Irwin-Robinson, Pontz, Ruterbusch, Teahen, and Wimbish, 1996)

Many authors recommend significant changes in management education to acknowledge the changing role for leadership. Senge describes the critical roles of leaders of learning organizations as designers, teachers, and stewards.

Leadership in learning organizations center on subtler and ultimately more important work. In a learning organization, leaders' roles differ dramatically from that of the charismatic decision maker. Leaders are designers, teachers, and stewards. These roles require new skills: the ability to build shared vision, to bring to the surface and challenge prevailing mental models, and to foster more systemic patterns of thinking. In short, leaders in learning organizations are responsible for *building organizations* where people are continually expanding their capabilities to shape their future--that is, leaders are responsible for learning. (Senge, 1996, 290-91)

These roles are very different from the classic roles of managers: planning, organizing, leading, and controlling (Schoderbek, Cosier, and Aplin, 1991, p. 20). In an era when management did all the thinking, the bureaucratic age, it is possible that the organization could be effective with just the top thinking. Today's organizations in uncertain

environments require thinking (one of the outcomes of learning) at all levels. Senge writes,

If anything, the need for understanding how organizations learn and accelerating that learning is greater today than ever before. The old days when Henry Ford, Alfred Sloan, or Tom Watson *learned for the organization* are gone. (Senge, 1996, p. 289)

The imperative for leaders to operate differently is inherent in the move toward a more learning-centered organization and for maximizing organizational learning. This research will take some steps toward investigating the process by which leaders facilitate learning.

Another view of leadership is offered by Bensimon and Neumann, who introduce the need for leaders to create meaning as a way of generating leadership:

Leadership requires skill in the creation of meaning that is authentic to oneself and to one's community. It also requires the uncovering of meaning that is already embedded in others' minds, helping them to see what they already know, believe, and value, and encourage *them* to make new meaning. In this way, leadership generates leadership. (Bensimon and Neumann, p. xv)

Henry Mintzberg argues that strategy is an 'emergent phenomenon' and that "the key is not getting the right strategy but fostering strategic thinking" (Mintzberg, cited in Senge, 1996, p. 294). Thinking is often believed to be an outcome of effective learning. If strategic thinking would be the outcome of organizational learning, there is good reason to believe that more effective organizations could result.

Senge argues that we need to build "communities of commitment" and reports that he is coming to "believe that "leaders" are people who are genuinely committed to deep change in themselves and in their organizations. They lead through developing new skills, capabilities, and understandings. And they come from many places in an organization"

(Senge in Gephart et al, p. 36). Further, he notes that “at least half the companies we know of that have made significant strides in developing internal learning capabilities and infrastructures have had little or no executive leadership. And we have seen no examples of significant progress made without leadership from local line managers” (Senge, in Gephart et al, p. 37). The need for learning and leading at all levels is reinforced.

These findings suggest that engagement of local leaders, which may be represented by mid- and department-level management in the collegiate setting, will be an essential ingredient to achieve organizational learning. This also supports the view of Beer and others who in a 1990 Harvard Business Review article about change report that top-down change efforts are rarely successful. The particular strategies leaders will employ will likely reflect the change philosophies they hold.

Many authors speak to the importance of alignment between goals and roles, an additionally informative concept and one that presents a problem in the collegiate context. The lack of focus and clarity about institutional missions and purposes as a confounding factor in organizational learning in colleges was described earlier.

“Involved leadership” is the term DiBella and Nevis use to describe the role of leaders in facilitating organizational learning. The authors note that strong leadership is more likely to be evident at the knowledge acquisition stage, and that it “sends a clear message about what is important to learn” (DiBella & Nevis, 1998, p. 77). Where leaders often fail is by a lack of adequate involvement in knowledge dissemination and utilization, stages 2 and 3 of the learning cycle. They see an active role for leaders at all stages of the organization’s learning: “In short, at any level of an organization it makes a huge

difference if those in leadership positions can demonstrate that they have learned what they want others to learn" (DiBella and Nevis, 1998, p. 77).

This view of leaders is consistent with the commonly held belief that modeling is a powerful learning methodology, and it also supports the organizational learning literature's emphasis on collaboration. Rather than telling others what they should know (or learn), leaders are expected to demonstrate their personal engagement in the learning.

Teams and Team Learning

In short, advocates believe that a team-centered managerial approach enhances the capacity of organizations to master new knowledge and to use it effectively to improve innovation, problem solving, and productivity. Bensimon & Neumann, 1993, p. ix)

Although much of what is being written about leadership and teams could be described as "thought papers," an increasing amount of research is being conducted about teams. In explaining that writers concerned with the human mind note that we can only comprehend so much, Bensimon and Neumann have noted the significance of this in thinking about building teams. The authors conducted 70 interviews of members of presidential leadership teams in 15 different institutions. From this comprehensive study they surfaced a view of thinking teams as teams that bring diverse capacities to the team's work. Their general argument is that teams are most effective when the individuals in them fulfill a variety of important tasks for the team, which requires that individuals bring different perspectives and skills. They argue for the value of thinking diversity within teams:

We differ not only in our viewpoints, values, and thinking modes but also in our limitations. Thus, what one person lacks another may possess, and what that person

misses yet another may have. If only we could combine the minds of several people into one . . . Even then we might not gain full understanding of the turbulent, complex reality before us, but we would certainly cover more ground than we can cover working alone. (Bensimon and Neumann, 1993, p. 1)

Their individual research, cited in this work, shows that few presidents are able to view their institutions from multiple lenses or to draw from a wide range of strategies to address change. These shortcomings are important reasons for moving organizations toward the development of effective teams. In describing team thinking, the authors write,

Team thinking *assumes* that individuals see the world differently, that they process information differently, that they make sense of life in organizations (and outside them) differently. It also requires team members to develop their own unique thinking capacities and to exercise them openly, actively, and freely. (p. 56)

The concept of thinking teams offers an additional way to analyze strategies or actions of the leadership team to be interviewed for this research. “Thinking teams” reflect some of the attributes of team learning described by Senge. Senge believes teams need to utilize dialogue, suspend assumptions, and “enter into genuine ‘thinking together’” (Senge, 1990, p. 10).

Although he acknowledges the importance of individual learning, “at some level,” Senge places the greatest importance on team learning. He describes three critical dimensions for team learning: the need to think insightfully about complex issues; the need for innovative coordinated action; and the roles of team members on other teams of the organization. Senge’s discipline of team learning lends perspective to understanding organizational learning. Bensimon and Neumann’s research informs understanding of a team’s performance capacity.

As individuals, leaders and team members bring their own learning styles to every

experience.

A summary of current learning theories, including the definitions of adaptive, generative, maintenance, experiential, and other types of learning is included as Appendix K.

Collaboration

A concept closely related to teamwork is collaboration. Much of the literature concerning collaboration elaborates on methods for working between organizations rather than within them. Prominent in the literature on collaboration is a book by Hank Rubin, Collaboration Skills for Educators and Nonprofit Leaders (Rubin, 1998). Rubin provides both a model of collaboration and guidance for effective collaboration. Although his work also speaks extensively to the collaboration required between public entities, he also provides guidance for internal activities. In a foreword to the book, Paul Houston writes that collaboration starts with “wanting, in a sincere way, to work together” (Houston in Rubin, 1998, p. xix).

Rubin observes that the public knows when collaboration exists and when it does not. He refers to the “it” as “respect, humility, trustworthiness, interpersonal and organizational skills, credibility, and focused self-discipline that enable a regular person or a public leader to build and sustain the relationships that are necessary to get a job done in public” (p. 1). Collaboration is defined as “a purposeful relationship in which all parties strategically choose to cooperate in order to accomplish a shared outcome” (p. xvii). He states that “*relationship management* is what a collaborative leader does: It is the purposeful exercise of behavior, communication, and organizational resources to affect the

perspective, beliefs, and behaviors of another person (Rubin, 1998, p. xvii). He refers to collaboration as “democracy’s mandate.”

Rubin offers a 12-step process for building collaboration:

Step 1: Figure out what you really want to achieve.

Step 2: Identify the outcomes you are targeting and the turnkey decision makers who must be influenced in order to accomplish your desired outcomes.

Step 3: Identify the full range of essential stakeholders and recruit a strategic core of them into the collaboration.

Step 4: Frame the issue so as to (a) solidify the connection of partners’ self-interests with the mission and operation of the collaboration . . . and (b) be able to tell the rest of the world just what it is the collaboration is (or will be) doing.

Step 5: Select the collaboration’s leaders, formalize role, and develop ground rules of the operation of the collaboration (including method and frequency of internal communications).

Step 6: Develop an *action plan* for the collaboration that creatively and efficiently maximizes the contributions of each collaborative partner to the collaboration.

Step 7: The *action plan* should begin by targeting successes around either the most urgent or the least controversial elements or goals and should incrementally build upon successes toward greater and more complex achievements.

Step 8: Efficiently and effectively implement the action plan.

Step 9: Build the essential bond between collaborative partners, create an internal environment of trust, loyalty, and high professionalism early on so that, later on, partners will be willing to make the compromises demanded in the context of collaborative decision-making.

Step 10: Celebrate the collaboration’s successes with *internal recognitions* so as to strengthen the bond and raise the floor beneath the capacity and vision of the collaboration; and with *external publicity* so as to build momentum around the mission and success of the collaboration.

Step 11: Find creative and effective ways to routinely measure, adjust, and reinforce the bonds between collaborative partners in the collaboration.

Step 12: Revisit the mission of the collaboration, especially at significant benchmarks or when changes in external conditions affect the collaboration. Be flexible enough to explore the pros and cons of all the options you may have, including; (a) Modifying the mission and/or operating ground rules, (b) Retaining them intact, (c) Expanding or redirecting the mission or (d) Taking a vacation or disbanding. (Rubin, 1998, pp.36-38)

Drawing on the work of Max DePree in Leadership Jazz, Rubin likens the collaborative leader to the jazz musicians, “who master the basis of their own instruments, practice with their group, and learn the strengths and weaknesses of their musical partners, all so that they might improvise together” (Rubin, 1998, p. 40).

He offers other perspectives on leaders of the collaborative organization. He writes:

Because of the synergy of their diverse dimensions, effective collaborative leaders stand out as visionaries, challenging thinkers, and people with whom others like to associate. Arrogance, insensitivity, self-aggrandizement, and the like are barriers to collaboration; people don’t want to roll up their sleeves to join in and work along side any of these characteristics. (Rubin, 1998, p. 39)

At the very foundation of effective collaborative leadership (and of nearly any type of leadership, for that matter) is the interpersonal skill and empathy needed to make and sustain strong linkages between *people*. The tools begin with a built-in radar that detects the personal self-interests people bring into a relationship, that deduces each person’s level of commitment to the relationship, and that observes and interprets the relevant psychosocial rhythms and styles of the individual. Effective leaders, in any context, understand the character, needs, work styles, capacities, and self interests of the people they work with. (Rubin, 1998, p. 41)

He advises leaders to build collaboratives of diverse constituencies but of those who can be trusted, which often results from relationships that have already been built.

A more critical perspective of collaboration is offered by Barott and Raybould.

They argue that the move toward collaboration in schools is inherently in conflict with the basic tenets of the organization. They contend that the school is built upon an ideology of professional discretion, and that this strengthens the school’s boundaries against outside

influence. They see the move toward collaboration in a school culture being at the cost of professional discretion. They warn about the danger of changing schools and suggest that we “not waste our time and energy on hopeless solutions to unresolvable difficulties” (Barott and Raybould in Pounder, 1998, p. 40).

Regardless of whether one accepts Rubin’s positive view or Barott and Raybould’s critical perspective, collaboration is a term that is pervasive in education and group discourse. In considering collaboration, readers should take into account the role of leaders, the goals of collaboration, and other factors.

Non-Learning Responses

Some authors describe non-learning responses, or behaviors. These include:

Presumption: It involves trusting that the world will not change and that successful actions can therefore be repeated effectively.

Non-Consideration: People may not respond to a potential learning experience for a variety of reasons. They may be too busy to think about it, they may be fearful of the outcome, or they may be in no position to understand the situation.

Rejection: Some people have an experience but reject the possibility that they could learn from it. . . Anyone who looks at the world and says they will not allow any of their opinions or attitudes to be changed regardless, because they are sure they are right, is in this situation. (Jarvis et al., 1998, p. 51)

Some non-learning behaviors may be in evidence at one time or another in most groups.

Non-learning behaviors will impact organizational learning. Recognition of these nonlearning responses should provide additional insights to strategy for astute leaders.

Change

Because creating a more learning-centered organization is fundamentally a change process, this literature review would be incomplete without some acknowledgment of the

change literature. The change literature is extensive, and no effort is made here to represent a comprehensive view of the literature. The analysis of this research study's particular change strategy, the creation of a more learning-centered organization, will be conducted from the perspective of organizational learning. The following is intended to provide a broad-brush perspective of the general change literature, so that the reader may place organizational learning into this broader picture.

Most prominent in the change literature are perspectives emerging from Kurt Lewin, whose work has resulted in widespread acceptance of a view of change that contends that changes move through three stages: "unfreezing, introducing the new values and behavior, and then refreezing" (Argyris, 1992, p. 10). Argyris observes, "Essentially, most of these models assume that unfreezing is produced by showing that actions lead to unintended inconsistencies (i.e., the impact is not what is intended). They also assume that human beings abhor such inconsistency, and hence, seek to learn new actions and values so that they do not repeat such errors. Finally, practice or experimentation with the new actions is assumed to lead to attitude and value change, as well as behavioral change" (Argyris, 1992, p. 10). His explanation suggests that once individuals are uncomfortable with the results they are getting, they will experiment with new behaviors. When the new behaviors appear to be yielding better results, the new behaviors are "frozen" or incorporated into the repertoire of the individual(s).

Among the gaps that Argyris observes regarding the model is the apparent belief that "individuals had the skills to learn the new behavior, or at least the skills to learn the new skills" (Argyris, 1992, p. 10). In his view, individuals may lack the skills to achieve the

desired change. It is this gap in the change model that Argyris's work partially addresses, by suggesting how individuals may enhance organizational learning through improvement of their own learning processes. At this juncture, the change and organizational learning literatures are closely related.

Rather than a view of change being limited by individuals' ability to change, such as Argyris suggests, Dent and colleagues offer an alternative perspective. They report that they find few or no instances of employees resisting change. More often, the obstacle is in the organization's structure or in a "performance-appraisal system (that) makes people choose between the new vision and their own self-interest" (Dent & Goldberg, 1999, p. 64). Reporting on a study of change by authors Porras and Robertson (1983), Dent and Goldberg observe that fewer than 40 percent of the change efforts produced positive change in the dependent variable of interest, but lay responsibility for failed change efforts not at the feet of individuals but rather flawed beliefs about change. They contend that the oral tradition about change is wrong, and that people persist in the view that people resist change. Dent and colleagues acknowledge that people may "resist loss of status, loss of pay, or loss of comfort, but these are not the same as resisting change (Dent et al 1999, p. 26).

A writer highly recognized for her work in organizations on the subjects of change and innovation is Rosabeth Moss Kanter. Her seminal work, The Change Masters, published in 1983, is still a business classic. This is her definition of change: "Change involves the crystallization of new action possibilities (new policies, new behaviors, new patterns, new methodologies, new products, or new market ideas) based on

reconceptualized patterns in the organization” (Kanter, 1983, p. 279). She places much of the responsibility for change at the feet of corporate leaders, observing that they sometimes “fumble their part in the change process—by failing to design and construct the new ‘platform’ to support the innovation (Kanter, 1983, p. 278). She notes that “if the overall climate for innovation does not exist throughout the whole organization—a readiness to readjust in response to the changes that use of the innovation will require—it is highly unlikely that even the best ideas will reach the economic mainstream” (Kanter, 1983, p. 279). Kanter links the ideas of change and innovation throughout her work. She offers views of how change may occur, with this explanation,

It is important to remember that organizations change by a variety of methods, not all of them viewed as desirable by the people involved. The innovations implemented by entrepreneurial managers by participative methods or those designed and carried out by employee teams may reflect more *constructive* and *productive* methods of change, but they do not exhaust the possibilities, nor are they even typical in organizations with a high degree of segmentation and segmentalism. . . . (the) ways that segmented organizations introduce change (are): top-down announcements, rigidly controlled formal mechanisms, and the use of outsiders for whom some of the rules are suspended. Changes may also be brought by internal political actions: for example, a “*coup d’etat*,” . . . or a mass movement, in which grass-roots groups of activists mobilize to protest organizational policies or actions. (Kanter, 1983, p. 280)

In this passage, she makes two important points significant to this research study. First, she contends that participative methods of change or those designed and carried out by employee teams will be more constructive and productive. Second, she notes that there are other methods, but her descriptions of these are clearly less attractive, as she described them in less desirable ways, as protests or rebellions. She demonstrates a clear preference for a more participative change strategy, which most of the subsequent change literature

would strongly support.

A final view to be presented from the Kanter change writings is this one, which links innovation and change to the meanings people make,

Innovation and change, I am suggesting, are bound up with the meanings attached to events and the action possibilities that flow from those meanings. But that very recognition—of the symbolic, conceptual, cultural side of change—makes it more difficult to see change as a mechanical process and extract the “formula” for producing it. (Kanter, 1983, p. 281)

In explaining this, she refers to the work of Karl Weick and contends that leaders in organizations do not respond to the pressures of the environment but instead they respond to their perceptions of that environment. They selectively define certain things as important and act upon those. Her beliefs that change is not a mechanical process and that we cannot extract a formula for effectively achieving change are important. Kanter would argue that change is context dependent, that it relies heavily upon what leaders perceive to be important, and its success will be dependent upon their effectiveness in creating a climate for change.

Most writers agree that change is difficult to achieve. Many believe that change must go through three stages, which are identified above with interpretations of Lewin’s work. Others contend that with the pace of change, there is no longer a freezing stage, but that organizations must be in constant motion. Others question whether we have useful understandings of change processes. This research will not analyze change per se, but it does examine a particular change process in a particular setting, and in effect reports on a change process that a particular set of leaders have selected as important to act upon.

Innovation

The final concept to be introduced in this chapter is innovation. Throughout the organizational learning and related literatures, fears about the inability of organizations to innovate are offered as rationale for developing this capability. The most popular author regarding innovation is Everett Rogers who has published four editions of Diffusion of Innovations. In essence, Rogers concludes that in any innovation, there will be some people who are classified as innovators. The other groups he identifies, in the order they will adopt an innovation, are: early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. Rogers suggests that there are differences among the groups and reports that “innovators have more favorable attitudes toward new ideas and so less resistance to change must be overcome by communication messages about innovations” (Rogers, 1995, p. 201). He continues,

Innovators may also have shorter innovation-decision periods because (1) they use more technically accurate sources and channels about innovations, such as direct contact with scientists, and (2) they place higher credibility in these sources than the average individual. Innovators may also possess a type of mental ability that better enables them to cope with uncertainty and to deal with abstractions. An innovator must be able to conceptualize relatively abstract information about innovations and apply this new information to his or her own situation. Later adopters can observe the results of innovations by earlier adopters and may not require this type of mental ability. (Rogers, 1995, p. 201)

Most change processes are designed to result in innovations, since innovation is defined as accepting anything that is different. Consequently, becoming a more learning-centered organization could be viewed as a process of innovation. Therefore, it is also reasonable to conclude that there will be different rates of adoption. The quotation above that identifies the likely characteristics of innovators suggests that these are the people who

may also be more active in their learning, since reference is made to their connections with resources and the credibility they extend to these resources. Here the innovation literature closely aligns with the learning literature.

The innovation literature is also extensive, and well beyond the scope of what is intended to be reflected here. The topic is introduced because it is so closely related to efforts to create change, or innovation, within the organization.

The Essential Tension

How am I to show him what it would be like to wear my spectacles when he has already learned to look at everything I can point to through his own?
(Kuhn, 1977, p. 269)

Just as scientific development depends in part on a “process of non-incremental or revolutionary change (Kuhn, 1977, p. xvii),” the occurrences that do not fit desired ways of performing will require “putting on a different kind of thinking-cap” to “transform the order” (Kuhn, 1977, p. xvii). There are many reasons to believe that the strategies in use in even the most enlightened organizations will not sufficiently contribute to transforming the order. We lack knowledge of whether the premises identified as contributory to enhanced organizational capacities in business are relevant in an academic environment. We also lack knowledge of the extent to which leaders practice learning behaviors or how their personal learning affects their strategy formulation. There are serious gaps in the literature at a time when we need to become “fittest-to-learn” and increasingly agile in a world of accelerating dynamic complexity.

Although this research focuses on the strategies of leaders to create more learning-centered colleges, other factors must be examined to ultimately make sense of the system.

The defining characteristic of a system is that it *cannot* be understood as a function of its isolated components. First, the behavior of the system doesn't depend on what each part is doing but on how each part is interacting with the rest. . . how we define the parts is fundamentally a matter of perspective and purpose, not intrinsic in the nature of the "real thing" we are looking at. (Kofman and Senge, 1993)

Although many may know what they want to achieve with becoming more learning-centered colleges, we know little about how to become so. It is possible that the espoused theories and the theories-in-use to become more learning-centered colleges are incongruent.

It is the creative leaps, the flexibility, and the unity made possible by them that leads to excellence. . . the presence of creative tension arising from paradoxical attributes helps foster organizational effectiveness. (Cameron, 1986, p. 549, cited in Cameron & Whetten, 1996, p. 273)

It is possible that organizational learning may contribute to organizational effectiveness. The research will reveal some tension. It also finds some paradox. Tension and paradox, according to some authors, may foster organizational effectiveness. Understanding a college's transformation journey toward becoming more learning-centered requires that we address important questions about organizational strategies for change. This research will attempt to address these questions, through the voices of respondents and with the lens of organizational learning.

Chapter 3 - Design of the Research Study

Conceptual Framework

This study will be framed from the perspective of *organizational learning* theories.

The research is designed to reveal how the leaders in a community college think about the strategies they are using to assist that college to become more learning-centered. The community college leaders' strategies will be compared with concepts of organizational learning, and similarities and/or differences will be identified. This study, with its focus on understanding the meanings informants have for their work, is appropriately qualitative.

Research Questions

The primary question to guide this research is:

What are the strategies being used by leaders in a community college to create a more learning-centered college, and how are the strategies similar to or different from the premises of organizational learning?

In exploring this question, a number of subquestions, which follow, will be examined:

- a. What do leaders mean when they talk or think about their college becoming a more learning-centered institution?
- b. What strategies do the leaders say they are using to help the college become more learning-centered?
- c. What models do the leaders say they use and/or appear to use in crafting, describing, and/or implementing their strategies for creating more learning-centered colleges?
- d. What barriers do leaders perceive stand in the way of becoming a more learning-centered college?

e. What is this organization's learning profile (as reported by leader-informants' responses to the Organizational Transitions learning inventory), and how similar are the perceptions of individual leaders concerning the organization's learning profile?

Design

The case study method will be employed, where a bounded phenomena, such as an event or process, is to be studied. In this case, the phenomena is the process or strategies of formulating and implementing change strategies for becoming a more learning-centered college. In distinguishing what constitutes a case, Robert Stake summarizes,

The case is a specific. Even more, the case is a functioning specific. The case, in the words of Louis Smith (1978), is a "bounded system." In the social sciences and human services, it has working parts, it probably is purposive, even having a self. It is an integrated system. The parts do not have to be working well, the purposes may be irrational, but it is a system. Its behavior is patterned. Consistency and sequentialness are prominent . . . But the boundedness and the behavior patterns of the system are key factors in understanding the case. (Stake, 1988, in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 236)

This personification of the case or a system as a "self" gives life to what others may see as otherwise inanimate objects, much as the conceptualization of an organization's having a capacity for learning is used in this problem.

Different types of case study purposes are reviewed by Stake. The types include intrinsic and instrumental. An *intrinsic* case study has as its purpose the understanding of a situation because it is of keen interest to the observer. Although the researcher has a keen interest in the topic of the case, lending some intrinsic purpose, it is the second purpose which drives this research. As a researcher who has worked in a variety of roles within a community college over a 30-year period, and as a graduate of a community

college, I have a deep personal interest in this sector of higher education. My overriding purpose is in conducting an *instrumental case study*. Stake writes,

In what we may call instrumental case study, a particular case is examined to provide insight into an issue or refinement of theory. The case is of secondary interest; it plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else . . . The choice of case is made because it is expected to advance our understanding of that interest. (Stake, 1994)

My goal is that we will gain greater understanding of one of the most pervasive change strategies underway in America's community colleges. Understanding this case and future cases may help "provide insight" or refine a theory about how this change process may be achieved. This goal is not inconsistent with Firestone's perspective of case-to-case transfer, where the situation of one context can be applied to another by readers. He writes that "to generalize to a theory is to provide evidence that supports (but does not definitively prove) that theory" (Firestone, 1993, p. 17). There are theories of organizational learning. In part, this research is attempting to see if the strategies identified in the setting are related to these theories.

Becoming a more learning-centered college is of vital interest to many college leaders. Achieving this goal is a major dilemma to many community college leaders. One goal of this research is that the findings will be useful to others who will translate the findings into positive action to create colleges more adept at becoming more learning-centered. This study is designed to both advance the researcher's understanding of strategies for becoming more learning-centered colleges and to understand these strategies in the context of organizational learning. Readers of the findings may discover ways they can apply what was learned here to other situations.

Seven presentation styles for cases are described. These include: *realistic, impressionistic, confessional, critical, formal, literary, and jointly told*. The realistic, impressionistic, and jointly told styles most accurately describe the approach used to present the findings. The style is realistic, in that it tells about the case as it was found. It is impressionistic in that some themes assumed a greater role than others. Finally, it is jointly told, because in identifying the strategies and their relationships to the organizational learning literature, the voices of respondents were used. Most reports at the community college level are without the voices of many key stakeholders, but are instead often told in the voice of the president of the college. Because this study reports the voices of some other college stakeholders, some new perspectives will emerge. Stake offers this observation,

Even though committed to empathy and multiple realities, it is the researcher who decides what is the case's own story, or at least what of the case's own story he or she will report. . . . Less will be reported than was learned. Even though the competent researcher will be guided by what the case may indicate is most important, . . . what is necessary for an understanding of the case will be decided by the researcher. It may be the case's own story, but it is the researcher's dressing of the case's own story. (Stake in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 240)

The voices of the researcher and the informants blend in the telling of this story, but what is ultimately included was a judgment made by the researcher. There was much more to report about this case than the report of findings will allow. The researcher has made every effort to select what is most important. Other stories still could be told from the findings.

Reports of learning organizations in business have contexts so different that their stories are not directly applicable to a community college. Yet it is in the private business

sector where most of the research about organizational learning and learning organizations has been conducted. Although a learning-centered college has many comparable attributes to the business models, such as an emphasis on customers' needs and a desire for continuous improvement, analyses of these processes in a higher education context is very limited. Even more limited is the application of organizational learning premises to the processes of an academic organization.

As in most "professional bureaucracies," community college leaders' potential to significantly influence organizational directions is seriously limited. Further, many in leadership roles come from the academic disciplines and have spent most of their life in academic settings. They have few of the tools of analysis and organizational design that may more commonly be found among business professionals. Moreover, the organizational learning model described as effective in business may have limited utility in the higher education context because of our different structures, reward systems, and purposes. There are enough major differences, such as the organization of work, development of shared vision or purposes, and relationships among groups (such as faculty and administration) to suggest that we may find very different patterns in a community college than researchers have discovered in business. The individuals in each context create the meaning.

Stocks of knowledge are always essentially incomplete, open-ended. Meaning requires the interpretive application of a category to the concrete particulars of a situation . . . Accordingly, social phenomenology rests on the tenet that social interaction constructs as much as conveys meaning. (Holstein & Gubrium, 1994, in Denzin & Lincoln, p. 263)

The voices of informants will be essential in constructing the meaning within the

case. It is their words - or meanings - that create the everyday reality of the institution as they experience it. Drath and Palus write,

Making sense is the process of arranging our understanding of experience so that we can know what has happened and what is happening, and so that we can predict what will happen; it is constructing knowledge of ourself and the world. (Drath & Palus, 1994, p. 2)

The meanings I make will also reflect my interpretations. Every effort has been made to triangulate the data to assure its correspondence with the jointly held reality so that another researcher conducting the same research in this setting would be likely to discover similar findings. Even if a pair of researchers engaged in a simultaneous, parallel process, however, we could expect that the results may be somewhat different because of the different experiences each brings to every endeavor.

Selection of the Case

Because a large proportion of the nation's community colleges report initiatives to become more learning-centered (ACCI, 1998, p. 1), many colleges were potential case colleges. However, a limited number have made this commitment visible in the national arena. Three criteria were used in selecting the case college. The first of the three was the frequency with which individuals from the college were listed as presenters at major national community college meetings, such as the League for Innovation's Innovations conference and the annual meeting of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). A second criterion was the availability of publications written by employees of the college. A third was the researcher's assessment of whether the prospective case might yield information pertinent to the conceptual base of the research: organizational

learning.

The task of selecting a case college was two-pronged. First, several individuals knowledgeable of community colleges, such as Patricia Carter of the Community College Consortium; Dr. Norena Badway from the Community College Research Center at the University of California - Berkeley; Dr. Marilyn Amey of Michigan State University; and Dr. Terry O'Banion of the League for Innovation, were asked for suggestions. In total, seven community college experts were asked this question and some supplied two or three names. Two colleges surfaced two times on the list, all others were named only once. In total, 12 college names were suggested.

Simultaneously, I continued reading and monitoring conference presentations and adding my own ideas to the list. Finally the list was narrowed to two prospects. Of the two, one had been recommended by those consulted; the other had not. The final two had each presented extensively on their learning-centered efforts. Each had senior-level leaders who had published concerning the learning-centered agenda. Each also, it was learned after the case was selected, had been invited to be one of twelve Vanguard Colleges by the League for Innovation.

Although the college selected was not on the list of recommendations provided by the community college experts, it was selected as a result of my having attended two different presentations by leaders from the college, at two different conferences, in addition to reading about the college's efforts to become more learning-centered in national publications. It appeared that the approach being taken by this college would lend valuable insights to the focus of this research. This was the only college I observed

that in its presentations had specifically addressed the subject of organizational learning and offered other models that were guiding their efforts.

Description of the Case

A description of the college is offered for two major purposes. First, as others consider whether the findings of this research may apply in other settings, they will understand the similarities and differences between this and other colleges. Second, there are many characteristics that, although not unique to this college, are also not common. Throughout the study, the college will be referred to as Case College. Case College is a large, public, multi-campus, urban community college. The college was established in 1967. It operates as a single college with one college president. There are four full-service campuses and two centers, including a centrally located corporate office where some classes are held and a technology training facility. The college also offers courses at many other locations throughout its two-county service area in high schools, businesses, and community centers. The first campus was established in 1971 and the second opened in 1974. In 1987, a third campus location was established and construction occurred in 1997. The last campus opened in 1998. Construction continues on many of the campuses. Most of the campuses are located on large sites which provide space for continuing growth. The college holds 391 acres and has 82 buildings (24 are permanent). The physical plant is valued in excess of \$190 million.

Case College enrolls more than 52,000 students in credit and non-credit programs; 38,000 of these are credit students. The college enrollments have increased by 15 percent since 1991, while the state community college system enrollments have declined by 3.5

percent. The college is located in a dynamic population growth area in a state that is also growing. It is among the nation's leaders in the production of associate degrees having conferred over 51,000 associate degrees by 1998-99. The number of degrees granted has increased by 64.91 percent since 1991, while the state community college system average increase is 10.17 percent (College Fact Book, 1998-99, and presentation handout, 2000).

The population of the region exceeds 900,000, and it is projected to grow by 30 percent by 2008. Thirteen hundred new adult residents arrive weekly, and employment is projected to increase by 27 percent by 2008. Diversity is also expected to increase (presentation handout, 2000).

Vanguard College Selection

Case College was one of 94 applicants nationally to be recognized as a Vanguard College, one on the leading edge of becoming a learning college. It was among the 12 selected for participation in this three-year project that will serve as an "exceptional laboratory for testing out innovations to help community colleges across Canada and the U.S. to become more learning-centered institutions" (League for Innovation, 2000).

Vanguard Colleges will focus their efforts on five objectives: culture, under-prepared students, faculty/staff development, learning outcomes, and technology. Case College has added economic development to the list, but they have rephrased it "Learning Works."

Technology has been renamed "learning support systems." In describing the Vanguard project, League staff write:

The purpose of the Learning College Project is to assist community colleges in the United States and Canada to become more learning centered by creating a network of 10 Vanguard Colleges strongly committed to the Learning College concept,

whose efforts can serve as a basis for model programs and best practices. (League for Innovation, 2000) (*Ed. Note: Subsequently 12 colleges were selected.*)

This commitment to becoming more learning centered means

a significant dedication to changing the traditional architecture of education. The Learning College Project will provide opportunities for inter-college collaboration to help community colleges fulfill this commitment. (League for Innovation, 2000)

Interview Participants

Prior to the first visit and after receiving confirmation that the college would serve as a research site, the president was asked to provide the names of 8-12 individuals who should be interviewed. At first the list was only six names, and a subsequent call resulted in the addition of four more, for a total of 10 individuals recommended by the college. Included in the group were the President and three vice presidents: planning and educational services; resource development and governmental relations; and curriculum development, teaching, and learning. The vice president of finance was not included on the interview group and the research did not evolve in a way that this additional interviewee appeared critical to the research. Financial statements were included among the documents reviewed. Also on the list were a campus provost (much like a campus president in some organizational models), a department head, a professional development administrator, and three faculty leaders from the liberal arts and sciences disciplines. The absence of occupational educators is notable, but the predominance of the transfer goal of students and the particular emphasis of the learning-centered agenda explain this phenomena.

Interviews were conducted in two phases, the middle week of May and the final

week of June, 2000. In the first phase of interviews, all ten individuals participated but one of the interviews had to be conducted by telephone subsequent to the visit because of a family emergency. The same list of questions was used and an audio tape was produced.

During the second phase of interviews, the researcher invited two additional participants which brought the total of official interviewees to 12. The researcher also met informally with a few others who are not cited in these findings. The two formal additions completed consent forms but were not asked to complete the organizational learning inventory which will be described in another section. Added to the initial group were a provost from a major campus that had no representation on the original list of interviewees and the institutional researcher. These two individuals were added as a result of ideas that surfaced during the first phase of interviews.

The findings of this research are interpreted from the interviews conducted with 12 individuals, in addition to the review of documents and researcher observations and interpretations resulting from attendance at campus meetings and informal conversations. Primary use will be made of the data collected from the 21 interviews, nine with individuals who were interviewed twice. The president's schedule precluded his availability on the return visit, but he agreed to make himself available for a telephone interview. Because of the magnitude of the data already collected and the consistency in the findings, coupled with the facts that the president is relatively new to the college and is very busy in his first year, this second interview was not initiated.

The 12 individuals are demographically diverse. Six are male; six are female. Two of the women are minorities, one an African-American and the other Hispanic. Notably,

both ethnic minorities described a high level of engagement with their respective cultural groups in the community and play significant roles within the college in representing these interests. Most had been faculty at one time, either within the college or in other settings. Their disciplinary backgrounds were also diverse, with individuals having come from math, the humanities, English, physical education, business, management, psychology, government, and chemistry. This diversity of disciplinary perspective should be a strength in the organization as different views are expressed. The literature described in Chapter 2 notes the importance of having diverse perspectives for the creation of effective teams. Most had progressed from other positions within the college. Most had been at the college many years, ranging from 10 to 31 years for most of the interviewees. Two individuals in key leadership positions were very new to the college, the president who had been there only five months and a vice-president for curriculum, teaching and learning who had been with the college two years. This individual had announced her planned retirement by the time of the second interview. The following provides a summary perspective of the interviewees.

Table 3 Descriptions of Interviewees

Current Role	Experience (Chronological)	Education and Demographic Information	Years with Case College
Faculty Member	High school teacher Other community college teacher in same state University education adjunct	Ph.D. Male/Caucasian	11 years
Central Office Administrator	High school teacher; professor in case college Campus administrator	BA/MA Male/Caucasian	31 years

Campus-based Administrator	Adjunct Faculty Regular faculty	Masters' Degree Female Ethnic minority	21 years
Central Office Administrator	Associate director of state council in another state Grant maker.	Master's degree Female/Caucasian	15 years
Faculty Member	High school teaching Community college teaching	Bachelor's and Master's degree Female/Caucasian	6 years
Campus-based Administrator	High school teacher Student services professional	BA and MA Female/Caucasian	11 years
Central Office Administrator	Community college teacher in another state; college administrator	Master's and Doctorate in education. Female/Caucasian	2 years
Central Office Administrator	Teacher; campus administrator	Bachelors, Masters', and Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction. Male/Caucasian	7 months
Campus-based administrator	Case college faculty and administrator	Male/Caucasian	31 years
Faculty	Student Services and campus administration.	Masters Male/Caucasian	30 years
Campus-based Administrator	Private sector; Adjunct at Case College; Professor; campus administrator.	Masters degree Female/Ethnic Minority	16 years
Campus-based Administrator	Faculty; administrator	Masters Male/Caucasian	28 years

One central office administrator appeared to be especially well informed about much of the literature supporting the learning-centered agenda, especially the topics of planning and change. He was adept at sharing how the college's actions aligned with a variety of models, particularly business models. He reports to be an avid reader; and he cited a large number of authors whose work he uses and his office displayed an array of books.

Many interviewees pointed to him and another central office administrator as the

brains and the drive behind the learning-centered initiative. Although the first document about the learning-centered initiative in 1996 was presented by the president of the time, it is reported to have been written by these two college leaders.

Interview Process

Almost all of the interviews were conducted in the offices of the informants. Meetings were attended and interviews conducted at five different college sites. A series of interview questions, which are included in the Appendices, were utilized for each interview. The questions were open-ended and were directly related to the overall research question, subquestions, and emerging themes. Some follow-up questions were incorporated in the second interviews of specific individuals, to gain greater understanding of topics raised in phase one. Most interviews were one hour. Some were as long as 1-1/2 to 1-3/4 hours. Several meetings were also observed, where many informants were typically present. Consequently, the interviewed individuals were observed in other settings and the learning-centered initiative was a topic of discussion in several of these meetings.

All interviews were tape recorded. In addition, the researcher took many notes of key items. There was generally some time between interviews, up to 30-60 minutes, depending upon travel time. This time was often used to make notes of overall impressions of themes heard. Sections of the hand-written notes were asterisked for later review. After returning home, full-text transcripts of the interviews were produced.

Case Profile for Potential Case-to-Case Transfer

This “thick” (Firestone, 1993) case description is provided for the use of readers

who may choose to see whether the facts of this case fit their own or other situations of interest. In an article about generalizability and the qualitative paradigm, Firestone observes that it is not uncommon or inappropriate to utilize analytic generalization and case-to-case transfer in qualitative research. To assure that the reader can use the findings, Firestone writes,

While transfer of findings from one case study to another is done by the reader, the researcher has an obligation to provide a rich, detailed, thick description of the case. This is because the researcher's theories about the conditions that affect the applicability of study conclusions are less important than those of the reader. One cannot know the situations in which readers are likely to consider applying study findings. Therefore one must describe a broad range of background features, aspects of the processes studied, and outcomes so readers have enough information to assess the match between the situation studied and their own, especially since their situations might be quite different. As readers recognize essential similarities to cases of interest to them, they establish the basis for naturalistic generalization. (Firestone, 1993, p. 18)

Firestone further observes that utilizing precedents, such as this case could represent for readers, should be based on four criteria: material facts, appropriateness, the reason for the decision, and the generality of the decision. The documents and the documentation should provide the information needed to provide readers with the possibility for case-to-case transfer. This opportunity for transfer increases the potential for this research to make a contribution to inform practice.

Research Components and Data Collection Procedures

Four components comprise the study, although they were not implemented in discrete phases. The first component is a review of the college's documents that define or describe the mission, vision, values, plans (including strategies) and other writings which contribute to understanding the organization's efforts to become more learning-centered.

A second component is on-campus interviews of key members of the learning-centered initiative team, including chief academic, student affairs, and other learning officers, including the President; campus administrators; and faculty. Third, meetings where informants play their roles were observed. These included meetings of the Executive Council, the President's Council, the Learning-Centered Initiative Team, and the College-Level Achievement Initiative. Fourth is a survey exploring individuals' assessment of organizational learning. The survey, "Building Organizational Learning Capacity-- Learning Inventory and Strategies Workbook" (copyright 1998) is described as an assessment guide for understanding organizations as learning systems. More detail on each of the research components follows.

Documents Review

Case College actively communicates with various publics. Consequently, a large number of documents were available for the researcher's review. Documents were gathered from campus informants and public areas. Among the documents are internal studies of efforts to become more learning-centered, developmental education reports, correspondence from the president, results of studies the college has participated in with other colleges, budgets, curriculum guides, strategic plans, teaching and learning plan, course syllabi, professional development materials, catalogs, schedules, published articles, web page documents, and more. Over 500 pages of materials were reviewed.

These diverse documents, from the individually produced to the professionally published, provide strong and consistent evidence of the types of information being gathered by the college and the types of use made of this data. They also serve as

evidence of the importance placed on capturing and communicating key information.

Appendix H includes a partial list of the documents reviewed.

Interviews

Interviews were scheduled with the individuals who have some responsibility(ies) for a more learning-centered college development and those with direct learning responsibilities who are members of the president's council. The interviewees were described earlier. Interviews ranged from 45 to 90 minutes, with most averaging 55-60 minutes. There were two rounds of interviews, with the second round commencing approximately six weeks after the first.

The second stage of interviews was designed to check the understandings gained in the first stage and to gather additional information about unclear points or emerging themes. Two interviewees were added at this time, and one from the first phase was not interviewed a second time. Subsequent telephone calls and e-mail correspondence was used to further confirm or gather information.

Both sets of interviews were semi-structured, with the same questions being asked of most interviewees, except as other issues arose and follow-up questions were asked. Interviews were relatively formal but also friendly. The researcher believes good rapport was established between the interviewee and the researcher. All interviews were audio taped, with the permission of the informant. At the end of some interviews, after the tape was turned off, informants were asked if there were additional comments they wanted to make. No one offered any. During one second-phase interview, the interviewee asked that the tape be turned off as she explained some organizational dynamics that she believed

influenced the learning-centered agenda. This information is not included in the research findings.

An interview guide was established for each round of interviews. Additional questions to be asked of particular informants were added to the lists of questions. The questions were developed by the researcher and were designed to relate to the research question or one or more of the subquestions to be answered by this research.

Round 1 interview questions began with knowledge and demographic information but moved toward questions asking informants to describe activities and experiences with strategies to move the college toward becoming a more learning-centered organization. Informants were probed concerning opinions, beliefs, feelings, philosophies, and assumptions as they relate to the change strategies, the meaning of a learning-centered college, and organizational learning. Questions were designed to provoke the reflective thinking of informants rather than eliciting “company-line” or textbook responses. Refer to Appendices F and G for sample interview guides. A full-text transcript was produced following the interviews.

Observations

Observations were a minor data collection technique. Observations took place in formal and informal ways during the two visits to the campus. Casual observations occurred while walking between buildings on the campus, in the corridors, in cafeterias, and in outdoor convening areas on each campus. More formal observations occurred as a result of participation in meetings of the President’s Council, the Executive Council, the Board of Trustees, the Learning-Centered Initiative Team, and the College-Level

Achievement Initiative. In the meetings, extensive notes were taken, but audiotaping did not occur since not all participants had signed consent forms and the likelihood of getting an audible tape in these group settings was unlikely. The researcher noted exact quotations, summations, and observable characteristics, such as apparent interest levels, engagement, activities of participants, and group dynamics. Organizational learning is reflected in process through factors such as sources of information, openness, sharing, and other factors. Strategies, philosophies, and tenets of organizational learning are not easily observable. For example, according to DiBella, evidence of organizational curiosity is: “We are receptive to unanticipated events and use them to learn.” Although inquiry may get at a perspective on this statement, it is not one easily seen as one watches individuals at work.

I was on the campus three days during phase one and five days during phase two, for a total of eight full days on site and 12 days in the community. Several meetings were observed, including those of executive staff, the learning-centered implementation team, a special research group studying developmental education, and the board of trustees meeting. Because there was some space between meetings, considerable time was spent “hanging out” on the campus. Most lunches and some breakfasts took place in different campus cafeterias. From these multiple observations, which included many more individuals than the selected interviewees, the researcher gained some feel for the campus culture and style.

The campus appears to be a friendly place. When asked for directions, individuals approached were always helpful. Students were observed to be communicating regularly

on the campus and in campus facilities. Offices appeared busy, with many individuals around, but there was a sense that some individuals were far busier than others. Office personnel sometimes appeared to be engaged in more personal conversations than productive work. These conversations may contribute to the friendly atmosphere of the campus, but they also conveyed a less professional style than is observed in some other settings. This behavior was more characteristic of the campus offices than of the central administrative offices. It is also important to note that the college was in the summer session, probably a less-busy time of year.

In staff meetings, the atmosphere was informal. Considerable conversation took place, and it seemed that individuals knew each other well. Time was allowed for conversation and the agendas were quite unstructured. In contrast with meetings I have observed in other community colleges, the style could be described as informal and even laid back. However, this lack of strict agendas may also contribute to the comradery in evidence at the college. Sometimes too much structure mitigates against building personal relationships. These observations of informality and a personal approach are consistent with later findings of the organizational learning inventory.

Throughout the process, I exchanged several e-mail communications with interviewees as interview times were established, materials were requested, and other business transacted. Influencing an early view of the campus was their prompt response to requests for interviews. The President's executive assistant provided a list with contact information, including e-mail addresses. The first requests for interviews were sent by e-mail late one evening. By noon the next day, more than half had already responded.

Within 12 hours, all except one had responded and provided options for interview times. This promptness regarding requests for interviews and documents continued to be characteristic of the respondents throughout the process.

The fact that the college's new president provided the list may have influenced this responsiveness, but this was a refreshing quality. In other venues, it is necessary to communicate via e-mail to establish meeting times, gather feedback on topics, etc. It is not my experience that so many would be so timely. In other work of equal or potentially greater consequence, e.g. accreditation visits, representatives are far less timely in their responses. This punctuality greatly facilitated the schedule-development and report-writing process. Within a few days of issuing a request, a complete agenda could be established. Although the on-campus observations revealed a laid-back style, especially on the campuses, the responsiveness of all suggests a campus culture that values prompt communications.

The high level of initiatives, the growth of the college, the energy exhibited by leaders, and more dispel any potential concern about a laid-back or half-hearted effort in execution of the college's agenda. Their meetings appear to serve a need for communication in a non-threatening, collegial manner, a factor noted in their values.

Survey Instrument

At the first interview in phase 1, informants were asked to complete an organizational learning profile, an instrument called *Building Organizational Learning Capability - Learning Inventory and Strategies Workbook* developed by Organizational Transitions, the firm of author Anthony DiBella. DiBella granted permission in writing for

reproduction of this survey which is forthcoming in a second book which will be published by Jossey-Bass. His most recent survey was used, which has a 1998 copyright date. Interviewees were asked to complete the surveys while the researcher was still on campus, and a few did. Others were unable to do so, but either a business card or an addressed envelope was left with each individual to facilitate their return of the instruments. All ten initial interviewees completed and returned the form.

This survey form asks participants to rate their organization on the factors included in the DiBella and Nevis model of learning orientations and facilitating factors. The factors identified by DiBella and Nevis are relevant in most theories of organizational learning.

Respondents are asked to provide examples that reflected their responses to the force-pair choices. Some questions require some extrapolation to relate to education, such as the question relating to “value-chain focus (LO-6).” However, with the demand-driven economy and the competitive pressures organizations are experiencing in higher education today, a focus on “value-chain” may not be far from where many will be in the foreseeable future. In providing interviewees with the form, the researcher explained that the form had been developed for business use.

An initial consideration regarding use of the form was to revise some of the questions to make them more education friendly, but this path was not taken for the following reasons. First, a changed questionnaire would be untested in other settings. Second, colleges are increasingly business-like in their approaches to strategy. Third, determination of the utility of this published instrument is one potentially valuable

byproduct of the research. The top leadership is likely to be more conversant with the terminology of customers, markets, and service. If this tool were to be used with faculty at large, it may not effectively serve the intended purposes because of their different points of view. Prior to utilizing the tool in the case college, the instrument was tested with another group of administrators in an attempt to assess the utility of the tool for upper-level administrators in community colleges.

Some potential bias may be built into the questions. Using one example, there may be different meanings applied to the terms “innovate” and “emulate.” Because one of the choices may seem more attractive, respondents may choose one even if the other may be a more accurate representation. Interviewing which followed the completion of the instrument and the requested written examples helped to assess the degree to which each dimension exists. Individuals’ answers to the survey questions informed second-phase interview question development.

Contributions of the Data to Research Questions

Each of the components in the research design contributed to answering the primary and secondary research questions. The survey instrument was most informative in interpreting the organization’s learning profile and enriching the description of the organization’s processes. The interviews and observations provided insight to questions about other models that are employed in the organization, the leaders’ understanding of the meaning of a learning-centered college, and others. All of the research questions are reported and interpreted from the collective data; they cannot be answered by a single informant.

Appendix B is a table that demonstrates how each data source contributed to each of the research questions. The primary source is noted with a P in the box, while other contributing sources are denoted with Xs.

Role of the Researcher

Throughout the research, I maintained a research role with the organization rather than becoming a participant-observer. The topic appeared to be of interest to all informants, and there was no shortage of conversation between the researcher and the informants. The learning-centered college topic is at the forefront of most community college agendas, as it was in this college, so participants were eager to share.

My research roles included interviewer, observer, analyzer, reflector, writer, and sense maker. In the sensemaking role, I bring my own experiences to understanding the case. I also brought a point of view, which may have influenced the interpretation but should not diminish the findings. This point of view includes fundamental values, such as beliefs about the importance of inclusion, sharing, and recognizing as dimensions of organizational life. Every attempt has been made to separate these views from what was observed and interpreted from the observations and inquiry. Chapter 2 sets out the frameworks from within which the analysis and interpretation emerged.

Confidentiality Considerations

Each individual and the college's identity is protected to avoid confidentiality concerns. This section will first address college concerns and then individual concerns regarding confidentiality.

Securing the required access and cooperation required a certain level of disclosure.

Key stakeholders affirmed their willingness to have the research conducted and agreed to participate. The researcher attended several meetings and was introduced as doing research about learning-centered colleges. Therefore, the case is not likely to remain completely anonymous, since there will be many individuals who will know of the research, and many knew who else was being interviewed. The informants are not anonymous in the setting. A single-page summary of the planned research study, its purpose, and the primary research question and major subsidiary questions was provided to participants (reference Appendix D).

At no time will the identity of the case college or any individual be named by the researcher in a public forum, such as a conference presentation or article. Nor will the name of the college or identity of any individual be included in any official or public documents without the written permission of the chief executive officer or the affected individual, as appropriate. The location, name, and explicit demographic characteristics of the college and the identity of each individual will be only generically described in published descriptions.

Because informal communication channels in organizations are often active, it is expected that many will know of the research. It is not possible to guarantee that another person will not disclose the identity of the college. The findings of the study are not expected to be sufficiently controversial to cause college stakeholders grave concerns if the college is identified, nor are they expected to be so provocative that someone would go to great lengths to identify the college.

The findings should prove valuable for the institution, as it continues its learning

journey. Gaining additional insight to the internal organization and the leaders' strategies in the light of organizational learning should be one important benefit the college can expect from participation. A tenet of organizational learning is that we learn from our experiences. The questions and subsequent findings are expected to provoke leaders to think more about their strategies and learning processes.

Efforts have been made to protect individual identities in the documentation of the findings, except in the case of a board member whose remarks were made in a public open meeting under the sunshine laws of the state. Some names are known to the researcher's committee, but in this context the names would only be used to verify the research. The report of findings has been crafted to avoid the potential for any person to be individually identified with any items that could be considered risky. In some cases, the source is openly identified by position, not by name, because of the public nature of the item and the significance in the study. Individuals are categorized by general classification type, with code references linked to each individual. Informants were invited to participate by e-mail messages. The consent form which was presented to each interviewee explained the confidentiality considerations and was signed by each person and the researcher. Copies were provided to each interviewee. The consent form is Appendix E.

It is primarily the behavior of the whole that forms the substance of the reported findings, but it is difficult to envision this without particular examples of individual actors. Organizations, it is argued in this manuscript, are entities capable of learning; at the same time, they are comprised of individuals. Each individual actor, if one believes in systems thinking, impacts the organism (the organization). Among the foundations of

organizational learning are trust, openness, and a willingness to critically self-examine.

Analysis of the Data

The information sources were analyzed utilizing a form of the pattern theory of Neuman (1991) which is explained in Creswell's book, Research Design. In explaining pattern theory, Neuman writes,

Like causal theory, it contains an interconnected set of concepts and relationships, but it does not require causal statements. Instead, pattern theory uses metaphor or analogies so that relationship "makes sense." Pattern theories are systems of ideas that inform. (Neuman, 1991, p. 38, cited in Creswell, 1994, p. 94)

Patterns and themes did emerge. These themes are utilized throughout the report of findings to answer the major research question and the subquestions. The picture emerging from the answers to the research question, the strategies in use for becoming more learning-centered, are juxtapositioned against established theories of organizational learning to further inform the findings. There is an interconnected set of concepts and relationships, although the researcher has not applied a metaphor or analogy to the data since the findings are easily understood.

The word-processing software's copy-and-paste function was used extensively to develop a series of subdocuments. The categories of these subdocuments were determined from both the research questions and subquestions and other emerging areas of interest. In total, 21 additional documents were prepared with the exact narrative from individuals concerning the topic of interest. If the topic was a critical one, such as the meaning of a learning-centered college, the researcher mined the information until each respondent's view of the topic was found. One method for doing this was to perform

word and phrase searches through the transcripts. In other cases, it was necessary to read for meaning of the informants. Many of the subdocuments have commentary included from each of the interviewees. The subdocuments include the following: barriers, collaboration meaning and models, culture, decision-making, focus, learning journey, learning-centered meaning, measures, models, most important strategy, philosophy, personal contributions, personal learning, resources, strategies, systems perspective, the ideal, trust-respect, underprepared students, use of learning, and what to do.

Each of these subdocuments was then analyzed for common themes. Once a perspective was gained from re-reading the subdocument, the researcher wrote the overall view of the topic and incorporated representative quotations. As other themes were revealed, the researcher perused the data looking for comments concerning these topics, such as leadership.

In finalizing the major strategies, careful attention was paid to both the frequency and emphasis of responses. The number of times that a strategy surfaced in interviews was an important factor. The fact that some identified strategies as the most important was another factor considered in weighting the responses. Distinctions sometimes needed to be made concerning whether an idea fit best with one category or another.

Analysis-in-the Field Strategies

Hammersley and Atkinson recommend an analysis-in-the-field mode but also suggest that beginning researchers reserve most of their analysis until most or all of the data are available. The authors' chapter on data analysis suggests many ways in which analysis can become an ongoing part of the data collection. Because of the need to build relationships

to theories, identify patterns and themes, and continually refocus the questioning, efforts were made to use “analysis-in-the-field” strategies. Although a beginning academic researcher, the researcher has considerable experience with site visits as a NCA consultant-evaluator and team chair and an occupational programs consultant. Emerging themes were identified throughout the interviews and extracted from notes at the end of each day on site.

Technology Resources

The computer was a helpful tool in both the data collection and the analysis processes. The search, copy-and-paste, and other features of word-processing software were helpful. EndNote bibliographic software was used to record notes concerning the literature reviewed, and several new entries were made following the research as the analysis phase began. The researcher has consulted more than 800 sources and has entered each in EndNote; many references include extensive notes. These records were invaluable in tying the research findings to the literature, drawing relationships between these findings and other research, and finding appropriate citations. In particular, the search feature of EndNote has been immensely helpful in finding references on particular themes, such as strategy, leadership, trust, and others. It was also valuable in completing the literature review.

SPSS Software was also utilized to analyze some quantitative parts of the survey form. Excel spreadsheets were also used in creating matrices of some of the survey form data and generating means, frequencies, etc. All of these tools were essential to developing the report of findings and performing the analysis of the data.

The Research Schedule

Following is an approximate timeline for completion of the dissertation research. In total, the research took almost two years, with the greatest time spent upfront in preparing a literature review and clarifying the research question.

Table 4 Research Schedule

Activity	Start Date	Complete Date
Do literature reading and notetaking	2/99	11/00
Submit proposal to committee		2/00
Dissertation committee meeting		2/00
Seek UCRIHS approval	3/00	3/00
Gain access to research subjects and sites		4/00
Conduct pilot test of instrument and some interview questions		4/00
Review documents of case site	4/00	11/00
Conduct first round of interviews and observations	5/6/00	5/10/00
Produce round 1 interview transcripts and summary notes	5/15/00	6/10/00
Conduct round 2 interviews and observations	6/25/00	6/30/00
Produce transcripts and integrate information with round 1	07/10/00	08/20/00
Conduct sequel research activities	8/00	11/00
Analyze documents, transcripts, and findings and do prelim. draft	07/00	9/00
Revise and Resubmit Dissertation	10/23/00	11/6/00
Participate in Oral Defense		11/28/00
Prepare Dissertation for Final Printing	11/29/00	12/13/00
Write Article(s) and Submit for Publication	1/15/01	6/01

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Reflective Opportunity

With the pace of change, many community college leaders would tell you that the need for immediate action often precludes adequate time or space for reflection. There is rarely time for “processing” of viewpoints and meaning making in dynamic and active organizations. A desirable by-product of this research would be to assist informants to increase their “reflective observation (Kolb) and to “make sense” (Drath and Palus, 1994; Weick, 1995) as they respond to questions, complete the survey instruments, analyze their own thinking, and/or react to findings. The study may provide an opportunity for participants to become more “reflective practitioners,” as described by Donald Schon (Schon, 1997). Because the topic of this research is a central theme in the daily activities of Case College, interviewees are expected to take the time to think about the research findings.

Chapter 4 - The Learning-Centered Journey

The Situation in Higher Education

Higher education was negligibly impacted by the spate of reports in the early 1980s documenting concerns about public education, particularly K-12 education. A Nation at Risk (1983) and National Education Goals were followed by a series of journal articles and books lamenting the state of American education (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Perelman, 1992). Calls began in earnest in the 1990s for a reform of higher education (Wingspread Group, 1993; Alfred, 1993; Rowley, Lujan, & Dolence, 1997). Accountability measures were increasingly being introduced in state legislatures and accrediting bodies. It was also the mid 1990s when Terry O'Banion first began to write about a learning college.

Community colleges have been national leaders in applying information technology, developing collaborative learning models, and incorporating assessment and outcome measures--all for the purpose of improving their primary function of teaching. (O'Banion, 1995, 23-4)

O'Banion's advice to community colleges included suggestions to "develop their own language to reflect a new focus on learning rather than on instruction and teaching," "develop definitions and frameworks for a desired learning paradigm," "realign current structures to accommodate collaboration and teamwork within the college community," and "involve all institutional stakeholders in the change process" (O'Banion, 1995, p. 27). It was in this educational context that the learning-centered initiative at Case College began.

The Situation at Case College

Case College's context is important in understanding the research findings. The following sections describe structures and processes. To introduce this section, the view of the college's external accreditation team is offered. In the 1993 report of the reaffirmation committee of the regional accreditation association, the authors wrote that

(The college) has a robust and mature set of processes and procedures for planning and evaluation to achieve institutional effectiveness. The Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP)—with eight strategic goals and accompanying subgoals, objectives and implementation steps and tasks and a variety of evaluation procedures to measure outcomes related to each goal—is in place. General outcomes are included in the purpose statements, and specific outcomes are included under guarantees and competencies for graduates in the catalog. (Accreditation Review Team, 1993)

The goals in this plan predate the emphasis which emerged in 1996 to become a more learning-centered college. The following sections will describe components of the organizational structure, college demographics, and organizing principles.

The Governing Board

The college is governed by an eight-member Board of Trustees which is appointed by the governor of the state, approved by at least four members of the State Board of Education, and confirmed by the Senate. The college's board has responsibilities for setting policy, appointing the president, and remaining informed about the college's financial position. Board members serve in staggered four-year terms. They represent the two counties of the service district in proportion to the population of the counties. The Board exercised their responsibility to appoint a president within the last year. The process was described by many interviewees as very open and learning-centered. Several

commented not only on the enthusiasm they had for the selection but also expressed their appreciation for the open selection process. Reports are that the campus was strongly aligned behind the selected president, but there was some split at the Board prior to the final selection.

The President

The president, by state law, has the authority to be “the executive officer and corporate secretary of the board of trustees as well as the chief administrative officer of the community college, and all components of the institution and all aspects of its operation are responsible to the board of trustees through the president (Self-Study, 1991-93).” The former president served from 1984 until 1999, 15 years. The current president began with the college in 2000 and had been at the college only five months at the time the research was conducted.

The Organizational Structure

The 1993 accreditation review team described the college’s organizational structure as a “modified flat matrix structure built on five vice presidents with college-wide functional responsibilities, three of whom also have site-specific responsibilities as campus provosts” (Accreditation Review Team, 1993). The team noted that some have concerns about this model that was established in 1990 and recommended that the structure continue to be reviewed. Concerns included clarity of reporting relationships and abilities for diverse voices to be heard. The model provided for college-wide leadership and decentralization of responsibility. By 1999, the structure had changed minimally with some realignment of vice presidents and a reduction in the number from five to four.

Campus provosts became the primary leaders of their campuses and report directly to the President and serve on the Executive and President's Councils.

The Committee and Council Structure

College-wide leadership and academic decision-making are provided most directly by the following groups:

Executive Council: This group is chaired by the Vice President for Planning and Educational Services, one of two individuals who also co-chairs the current Learning-Centered Initiative Team. Membership includes all of the vice presidents and the five campus provosts. This group generally meets monthly.

President's Council: The president's council is an expanded executive council. Others reporting directly to the president, such as the public relations director and the college's legal counsel, are members of the President's Council. This group also meets monthly, often on the same afternoons as the morning meetings of the Executive Council. This group is beginning to meet more frequently with the current college president, and several off-site retreats for team development had occurred and more were planned.

Curriculum Committee: The Curriculum Committee is chaired by the Provost of one of the campuses. The Vice President for Teaching, Curriculum, and Learning has been a member of the group, but her responsibilities did not include a significant relationship with the curriculum committee. With the rewriting of the job description for the Vice President's position that became vacant after the research began, the individual who will serve in this role will coordinate the curriculum committee. To date, the curriculum committee does not appear to have played a significant role in the learning-

centered initiative.

The College Level Achievement Initiative: This group is comprised of four subgroups with members from each of the three major campuses. There are reading, ESL, writing, and math teams. The work is coordinated by the Project Director for two United States Department of Education (USDOE) grants, two activity directors, two activity coordinators, and two administrative assistants. A total of 68 faculty and professional staff serve on the committees. Including the leadership for the initiative, a total of 74 individuals are involved directly in the activities of this group. Their primary focus is the development of learning outcomes, goals, strategies, assessments, and learning activities in the foundation areas of reading, writing, and math. These learning developments are synchronized with the college-wide outcomes described later.

The Learning-Centered Initiative Leadership Team. This group was established in 1996 to support the college's efforts to become more learning-centered. It is co-chaired by a faculty member and a vice president. There are presently 15 members, including five faculty, nine administrators, and one board member. Representatives from each of the college campuses and one of the centers are members of this team. The membership continues to evolve as new members are expected to be added as the college takes on greater efforts toward learning-centeredness. According to one of the co-chairs, "the charge has been to recommend strategies, design and coordinate the various collaborative processes used to develop the various strategies, facilitate the decision-making processes to achieve consensus, and recommend ways to institutionalize strategies once sufficiently developed. The new charge will be to oversee the design and implementation of the

strategic goals, budget planning processes, and evaluation of outcomes” (CO1, e-mail correspondence, August 27, 2000). Most current members participated in a June 2000 week-long seminar associated with the Vanguard College designation. The team reports to the president.

Staffing Levels

More than 2,100 were employed by the college in 1998-99; 312 of the employees were regular faculty. Seventy-six percent of the faculty have master’s degrees and 17 percent have earned doctorates. The faculty is not unionized, a factor which may allow it some additional role flexibility that some other institutions do not enjoy. During the same year, there were 1,176 part-time employees; many of these are faculty. There are 36 administrators, a number that is low when compared with many other large, urban institutions.

Economic Position

Case College enjoys a comfortable economic position having managed its finances carefully throughout its history. Among the reasons given for the comfortable financial position are the growth it has experienced, its success with earning grants, and its care to minimize long-term debt. It is also the fastest-growing community college in the state. In 1998-99, the college had an operating budget of over \$93 million. The greatest source of funding is from the state, which provided \$48 million of the total in 1998-99. Tuition and fees generated an additional \$25.4 million, and federal and state grants represented \$8.1 million.

An area of challenge identified by the college leadership is the fact that this college

receives per-student funding at a level considerably below the state average. Its square feet of building space places it in the bottom three of more than 29 community college in the square feet of space available per full-time equated student (FTE).

Student Demographics

In 1998-99, the average age of students was 24.8. In the continuing education programs, the average age was 38.6. Sixty-two percent of the students were Caucasian; 17 percent Hispanic; 12 percent African-American; and 7 percent were Asian/Pacific Islanders. Case College enrolls a higher proportion of minorities than do either of the neighboring four-year colleges, but it enrolls a lower percentage than the public schools of the county. In fall of 1999 Case College reported that its ethnic enrollments total 39 percent while the primary feeder high schools in the county enroll 54 percent who are ethnically diverse. Staff project that from a level of 65 percent Caucasian in 1995 that the college will enroll 55.7 percent Caucasians in 2003, while the Hispanic enrollment is projected to increase to 21.6 percent from its 19 percent level in 1999. African American enrollments in 1995 were 12 percent, in 1999 13.6 percent, and are projected to be 15.3 percent by 2003 (presentation handout, 2000).

Thirty-four percent of the students were full-time and 66 percent were part-time according to a 1998-99 Fact Book. Day students comprised 73 percent and evening enrollments accounted for 27 percent. The greatest proportion of students, 33 percent, completed high school in the original base county of the college. Seven percent of the enrollees completed high school in a recently annexed service county, and 6 percent completed high school in a neighboring county. An additional 21 percent graduated from

high school in other parts of the state and 26 percent completed out of state. However, current student residences are noted as 68 percent base county, and only 5 percent out of state. This distinction is noted in part because of the evidence it lends to the perspective of a changing community and consequently a changing community college. Most community college enrollees in other states have completed their high school educations in schools close to the community college. The backgrounds students bring to Case College are more varied than many community colleges would experience.

The college has a mandated requirement for students who test low on their incoming placement assessments to enroll in a College Preparatory Class. From 1996-97 through 1999-00, 84-86 percent of the students were required to take at least one college preparatory class. Math presented the greatest problem for students, with between 77 and 81 percent of the students being required to take a preparatory math course in each of these four years.

College Mission

The college's mission includes the following components:

- being a creative leader and partner in its region
- making available a variety of services to support students' academic and personal development
- commitment to an open-door, comprehensive postsecondary education (Catalog, 2000)

The primary mission of public community colleges in the state is to respond to community needs for postsecondary academic and vocational education. Community colleges of the state grant certificates and the Associate in Arts, Science, and Applied

Science degrees. Unlike many colleges, this college has a lengthy mission statement, consisting of several paragraphs. Many consultants or observers would question whether a mission should instead be a more concise statement that individuals could readily recite. The mission statement should specify clearly the business the organization is in and who it serves; this one does that, but it is doubtful if most college personnel would be able to articulate much about what is contained within it. Revisiting the mission statement is one area leaders intend to address soon.

Consistent with other comprehensive community colleges, Case College offers the following:

- a two-year program for students preparing to transfer to upper-division college work
- college-preparation courses for students requiring academic assistance
- technical and continuing education programs for area industry
- student services to assist students in assessing and achieving their goals through academic, career, and personal decision making

The college's historic emphasis has been oriented toward transfer education, reflecting a continuation of its early roots as a junior college. Staff reported that 80 percent of their students plan to transfer, and about 80 percent of these transfer to a local university. This reported emphasis represents a higher proportion with a transfer goal than is the norm in community colleges. The preponderance of shared goal intent may make it easier for the college to focus on some key areas than would be possible if students' goals were more disparate.

The college has included economic development among its current areas of focus,

but the economic development emphasis is restricted to some narrow areas, another fact that distinguishes this college from many others. Many community colleges have assumed a major role in economic development and offer a broad array of training opportunities. The state community college system has “strengthen community college involvement in workforce development education” at the top of its 1999 policy goals. Several colleges have non-credit enrollments that are more than double their credit enrollments, which is not the profile of Case College.

This college has not elected to concentrate on what some would call community education or enrichment courses, non-credit offerings designed to serve a broad-based audience. Many colleges offer programs in the areas of personal enrichment, gardening, cooking, crafts, college for kids, senior academies, and similar programs. This college has also not chosen to be a major player in adult education (high school completion), although it does support a comprehensive developmental program.

Core Learning Outcomes

Like most community colleges, in part because of increasing emphasis on assessment among regional accreditation associations, this college has defined core learning competencies which guide curriculum development, delivery, and assessment. Their approach to core learning appears unique and forms an important foundation for their efforts to become more learning-centered. Instead of the typical list of 6-10 general education learning outcomes, in complete statements, such as “students will demonstrate the ability to think critically using the theories of their major discipline,” Case College has identified four single-word learning outcomes that guide their work: Think, Value,

Communicate, and Act. Each of the four words is supported by additional narrative that explains what one must do to demonstrate these outcomes and how and where learners should demonstrate it. The core competencies are defined as follows:

Think: Think clearly, critically, and creatively; Analyze, synthesize, integrate, and evaluate in many domains of human inquiry.

Communicate: Communicate with different audiences using varied means.

Value: Make reasoned value judgments and responsible commitments.

Act: Act purposefully, reflectively, and responsibly (Catalog, 1999-2000).

Additional narrative for the communicate goal is offered here as an example of the detail that supports each core learning outcome.

To communicate, what must you do?

- a.) Identify your own strengths and need for improvement as communicator
- b.) Employ methods of communication appropriate to your audience and purpose
- c.) Evaluate the effectiveness of your own and others' communication.

How and where must you communicate?

- by speaking, listening, reading and writing
- verbally, non-verbally, and visually
- with honesty and civility
- in different disciplines and settings. (Catalog, 1999-2000)

This unique, concise approach has resulted in broad-based recognition of the desired learning outcomes. All individuals interviewed used the four (Think, Value, Communicate, and Act) in their explanations of the college's efforts to become more learning-centered. This concise statement of outcomes represents a significant contrast to the lengthy mission statement. In research conducted by Case College at a workshop in the summer of 2000, 98 percent of the 84 in attendance were able to recite the four core competencies (Pre-Post assessments of professional development workshop, 2000).

There is a distinct advantage in having clarity about the learning outcomes, as will be discussed later in the report of findings.

Values

The college also articulates its values in public documents, such as its self-study and the college catalog. The values are:

- We value each student as a unique individual by supporting student success, high academic and personal standards, civic responsibility, and a lifelong quest for excellence.
- We value the importance of critical thinking, reading, writing, and computational skills in all programs as a necessary component of lifelong learning.
- We value a communicative and friendly collegiate environment, with faculty and staff who support a caring and professional relationships with our students and community.
- We value the educational and interpersonal contributions to the College that people from all ethnic and cultural backgrounds bring us.
- We value our ability to quickly and effectively respond to community needs through effective public/private partnerships (Catalog, 1999-2000).

Case College has a well-documented mission and values. The college is similar to many large comprehensive community colleges, but it appears to have a higher proportion of students with transfer as their goal, minimal emphasis on community education and economic development, a lean administrative structure, a larger proportion of its students enrolled in credit programs, and a lower proportion of minority enrollment than many other urban institutions. The ethnic profile is changing, however.

A Learning-Centered Journey

The purpose of this research was to examine the strategies being implemented by

leaders in one community college for becoming a more learning-centered institution and to interpret these from the lens of organizational learning. Before reporting on the strategies identified and the researcher's findings regarding the overarching research question, it is important to profile the learning-centered journey of Case College.

Although Case College leaders say their efforts predate O'Banion's writings, in fact they seem to be synchronized. The learning college momentum accelerated with the publication of O'Banion's 1997 book, A Learning College for the 21st Century, but several articles preceded this seminal work.

During 1995 the college participated in a series of roundtables as one of 26 colleges involved in a major research project concerning leadership and institutional transformation. This college was one of only two community colleges within the group of higher education institutions. For its projects in 1996 and 1999, Case College focused on "Becoming a Learning-Centered College: Improving Learning by Transforming Core College Processes."

Suggested readings for the research project, which has published three monographs, included many on re-engineering, culture, and leadership. Several recommended articles were from the Harvard Business Review. Among the recommended resources were writings by Birnbaum, Schein, Mintzberg, Kotter, Drucker, and Guskin. Some of these authors are included in Chapter 2's review of the literature. Many of these resources are more aligned with the business literature than with traditional higher education writings. Some directly and indirectly address organizational learning, such as the reference to Schein's "How Can Organizations Learn Faster? The Challenge of Entering the Green

Room” (1993). It appears that some of these writings influenced Case College leaders, although these authors are not the ones most cited by the leaders when models in use was the subject of exploration.

The conclusion of the final monograph in the series of three resulting from a national research study concerning change in higher education is this:

Knowing where the institution began and where it is at a later point in time are crucial to advancing a change agenda and to acquiring the learning necessary to change and change again. Learning cannot occur without the feedback provided by evidence. But because evidence is difficult to collect and decipher and because the relationships between actions and outcomes are ambiguous, the act of intentionally collecting evidence does not ensure accurate learning. (American Council on Education, 1999)

The researchers not only make the case for analyzing where an institution was and is moving but also note the importance of evidence in generating learning. In an epilogue, the authors of the monograph observe that only one-third of the institutions were still working on the same change initiative four years later. They comment:

Their experiences also reveal how fluid, and often how idiosyncratic, the change process is. Each campus had its own rhythm, often characterized by steady and slow progress punctuated by bursts of activity. Campuses frequently had to turn their attention to crises, or to pressing issues that they could never have anticipated just a few months earlier. No journey of change followed a predictable course, which highlights how profoundly human is the undertaking of institutional change. (American Council on Education, 1999)

Case College is among the third of institutions that are still focusing on their initial projects, and its commitment to these has become greater. It has also experienced leadership turnover in two of the few top executive-level positions, the president and the vice president for curriculum, teaching, and learning. This “constancy of purpose” is a topic that will be explored later.

In April 1996, the former president of Case College issued a paper called “Shaping Our Future.” In this document, reportedly strongly influenced or even written by two executive leaders of the college, the president proclaimed that “my vision centers on focusing (Case College) as a learning-centered institution and on our working together as a community of learners.” He wrote, “I will be asking you to share in shaping that vision by defining what it will mean to be a learning-centered college.” He reiterated the challenges the college faces, such as technology and finances. He cited the strengths, including outstanding state and national reputations, success in student services, learning resources, instruction, and high transfer rates. He acknowledged that “our faculty are continually learning to solve new problems and to address old problems in new ways” and stated, “I respect faculty as the core strength of (Case College), and I respect the support all of the rest of the staff give to our educational program. He noted the increasing diversity, having moved from 9 percent minority when he began in 1984 to 35 percent in 1996. He observed that “a commitment to scholarship is alive and well at (Case College)” (President, 1996).

He cited as strengths the college’s mission and values statements and their emphases on education leadership, valuing each student as a unique individual, high academic and personal standards, and a lifelong quest for excellence. He shared his beliefs about the future of this college:

I believe (Case College) must continue to strive to be both a community of learners that comprise a student-centered and a learning-centered institution, examining and improving upon our core processes of curriculum and instruction, developmental advising, and life and workplace preparation. (President, 1996)

He answered the question of how this might happen by describing the need for faculty and staff to be perceived as role models, by encouraging professional development and collaborative learning, investigating new delivery systems, emphasizing personal caring, and focusing upon retention. He calls for the college to undertake certain projects, including support for faculty in making changes in general education, maximizing student learning, empowering department chairs to be leaders and managers, and funding innovation. The proposed list of projects includes 16 items, including several concerning funding, governance, and technology. He concludes by saying that all projects must meet two criteria:

Criterion 1: All college projects must support our commitment to be a learning-centered institution.

Criterion 2: All projects must contribute to strengthening one or more of the three core processes identified by the participants in the . . . Roundtables conducted in the Fall of 1995, those being curriculum and instruction, developmental advising, and life and workplace preparation. (President, 1996, p. 9)

In describing Criterion 1, he noted that students must not only learn rigorous content but also to learn how to learn. He asked that faculty and staff likewise be engaged in learning, “modeling for students the characteristics of competent learners.” After elaborating on some of the processes to attend to, including educational planning for students, he suggested that “as a result, we would be recognized as the finest institution of our type in the country.” In closing he wrote,

The cumulative efforts of the . . . faculty, support and career staff, and administration must be directed toward our goals, or we will not achieve them, and we will find ourselves wearing the yoke of mediocrity. The talent and intellect in place at this college is more than capable of meeting the challenges of the years ahead. The Board of Trustees is equally committed to excellence, and statewide

surveys show strong support from our community. Indeed, support is stronger than ever before because those in our community are realizing that, in many cases, the community college is the key to their own future. . . (Case College's) faculty and staff are in a position to redefine what is possible in higher education, and as president, I am committed to supporting you in setting high academic goals and in achieving them. . . I am convinced that more than ever before, we can become a community of learners who collaborate to achieve unprecedented successes. (President, 1996, p. 11)

The learning-centered initiative was launched with this document. The promised roundtables were held, and individuals from throughout the college began to define what they meant by a learning-centered institution. They also began to document general education learning outcomes. Over the years hundreds of college employees have participated in discussion groups concerning a number of learning-related topics. Hundreds have also participated in professional development opportunities, many of which have been explicitly designed to support the learning-centered initiative. Many of the themes from the president's white paper still resurface as the agenda for becoming more learning-centered plays out: sharing, collaboration, excellence, transformation, and high academic goals.

A Learning-Centered Initiative Team was formed and members from campus administration, the central office, faculty, and special grant project staff were invited to participate. The team hosted roundtables and conversation groups. They conducted workshops. They collaborated on securing grants. They published materials. They changed the focus of professional development at Case College, through their control of significant resources dedicated to change efforts.

Findings Concerning the Research Questions

In the following sections, the questions framing this research will be presented along with the findings for each. Chapter 6 will explore the implications of these findings. The overarching research question is this one:

What are the strategies being used by leaders in a community college to create a more learning-centered college, and how are the strategies similar to or different from the premises of organizational learning?

Before reporting on this question, the responses to each of the subquestions will first be examined. Each contributes to answering the larger question. Findings of subquestions a. through e. follow.

Meaning of a Learning-Centered Institution

Subquestion a is: “What do leaders mean when they talk or think about their college becoming a more learning-centered institution?” The following paragraphs will describe the findings regarding this subquestion.

Case College interviewees share highly consistent views of what they mean by a learning-centered institution. This consistency is likely the result of what appear to be broad-based conversations surrounding the topic coupled with extensive documentation of what the college means by a more learning-centered institution. Acknowledging that terminology has different meanings, the college has published a document that provides definitions for many of the learning terms important to their dialogues. Definitions for learning-centered college, higher education, assessment, performance-based learning, critical thinking, and other terms are included in a handy pocket-size, spiral booklet which is in its second edition. In introducing it, the authors wrote,

This little book is meant to foster discussions around teaching and learning. Language has power over how we view and frame our actions, and the chief benefit of a reference guide is to establish a shared vocabulary so that we can communicate our meanings to each other more clearly . . . the understandings of the definitions are evolving and will be refined through practice and dialogue. This tool is intended to support and enhance college-wide discussion of learning and the scholarship of teaching. (Case College, 2000)

With this widely disseminated Learning-Centered Reference Guide, the many written perspectives available in the college about the learning-centered initiative, and the extensive opportunities offered for professional development, it is not surprising that the understandings of a learning-centered institution would be well aligned. The idea has also become a part of campus discourse and employment applications ask candidates to provide a “written statement describing his/her concept of a learning-centered institution” (Employment Application Process, revised 1/00). Many of the learning-centered writings are also available on the college’s webpage, and a special CD was produced for a national conference presentation in 2000. This CD holds many of the documents concerning strategy, curriculum models, assessment, and more. The Case College Reference Guide offers O’Banion’s definition of a learning-centered institution:

More than semantic change, becoming learning-centered is a major philosophical shift for higher education. Student learning is the goal placed above all else at the college; it is the end to which all efforts are conducted. Two key questions are posed:

1. How will (activity in question) improve and expand student learning?
2. How will we know it has?

The implications are vast for assessment of learning, design of instruction, formulation of policy, and conduct of college business. (O’Banion, 1997 cited by College, 2000)

The two O’Banion questions were noted in two staff offices taped to the computer monitor, as a constant reminder about the work that should be engaged. Case College

respondents go further, however, than the O'Banion definition. The O'Banion focus on learning and measuring foretells a theme in the college's strategies. In an internal document utilized in staff development activities, the authors share this vision of a

Learning-Centered College:

More than a semantic difference, this change of perspective and expectation shifts the focus from *what is offered, taught or covered* in a given class or program to *what students learn and can do* as a result of their involvement. It also implies a shared responsibility for learning and a fluidity in teacher/learner roles. The shift is truly transformational because it requires a re-thinking of assumptions and practices, including:

- application of current research findings in learning theory and design;
 - recognition of the global nature of our future and the present-day diversity of our local community;
 - adaptation to the ever-increasing quantity of available information and speed of communication;
 - integration of learning technologies;
 - accommodation to 21st-century societal needs for skilled and flexible workers who can think critically and creatively; adapt to change; communicate effectively (within and across cultures); work in teams; and continue to learn new concepts and new skills;
 - consideration of the overall relevance and unity of a curriculum anchored in development of core competencies. . .
- . . . members of a learning-centered institution have a sense of ownership in and commitment to a common purpose, shared values, and the quality and outcomes of particular tasks. Together they create a vital, dynamic community that generates and attracts excellence. (Case College, 1999)

As will be discovered in the passages that give the informants' interpretations, there is a high degree of consistency within their responses with these tenets. Having documented and disseminated the learning-centered college meaning surely contributes to this congruence.

Throughout the report of findings, a coding scheme will be utilized for identifying sources of quotations. The following table lists the type of position and the code assigned.

A campus-based administrator refers to a person whose office is on one of the campuses.

However, in some instances these individuals also have college-wide responsibilities.

Table 5 Coding Scheme for Quotation References

Interviewee	Position	Identifier
1	Faculty	F1
2	Faculty	F2
3	Central Office Executive	CO1
4	Central Office Executive	CO2
5	Campus-based Administrator	CBA1
6	Campus-based Administrator	CBA2
7	Campus-based Administrator	CBA3
8	Faculty	F3
9	Campus Based Administrator	CBA4
10	Central Office Executive	CO3
11	Central Office Executive	CO4
12	Campus-Based Administrator	CBA5
Summary	3 faculty 4 central office administrators 5 campus-based administrators	

Note: Numbers following codes in quotations indicate whether the quotation is from the first (1) phase of interviews or the second (2) interview phase. Two individuals were interviewed in only the second phase; the number 2 is assigned to their interview.

More detail concerning each of the participants in the study is provided in Chapter 3.

Experience at Case College of interviewees ranges from 5 months to more than 31 years.

Most have more than 10 years of experience in the college. Each of the faculty

interviewees represents a general education discipline, a reasonable situation since the

focus of college efforts for becoming more learning-centered resides in the general

education domain.

The commitment to a common purpose and outcomes surfaces repeatedly in the interviews as characteristics of a learning-centered college. In the first-phase interviews, the following additional explanations of what a learning-centered college means were offered by interviewees:

The bottom line is what students learn—nothing matters that doesn't contribute to that. And how much something matters is how much it contributes to that. (F1-1)

Here the interviewee addresses students' learning and the importance of contributing to that learning.

It is an institution wherein the whole, the staff, whether it be administrative, faculty, take part in the learning process. (CBA3-1)

This interviewee notes that the staff of the organization must also be engaged in learning.

Everything we do here and every dollar we spend can be questioned in terms of what it does to support learning. And more importantly, that we have some measure that indicates that learning is improving, and that learning is occurring—or set of measures. It means that we are more than processors of students for a living. It means that we're actually adding to people's lives in meaningful ways, helping build the community, really build the community. (CO2-1)

This view suggests that resources be dedicated according to how it supports learning. The next one addresses focus and outcomes, introducing the concept of measurement or outcomes documentation.

It means that we are focused on student learning, we are focused on the outcomes, we're outcome based. . . we want evidence of learning. And it does take the focus, from a faculty member's perspective. . . off of what I do to what they learn. (F3-1)

And the next person suggests that it refers to staff as much as to students and is part of the evolving culture.

For me, it involves the whole institution, so it's not just something for our students. It means that all of us are engaged in learning, ourselves, and in improving and expanding learning for others; . . . So it's a very active, dynamic, evolving culture that's sensitive to change but doesn't just do change for change's sake. . . So it's a place where we are all learners, I believe. Some folks, I think, at the college still see it as something that we do for our students; it's a setting that we create for the students, but they haven't made the connection yet that it's also for us. (CBA4-1)

And this informant speaks of deliberateness and systematic approaches, in addition to emphasizing outcomes.

It means that the organizing principle of the institution is a systematic, deliberate measure of what students learn and how well they learn it, rather than what kinds of inputs and processes that we employ in the teaching and curriculum development. (CBA4-1)

The final example provided addresses a philosophy of learning which seemed to be widely shared, that anyone can learn, given the right conditions.

I think the real hope that the learning-centered initiative brings is that we might exceed the limits of a teacher-centered model and the results that we're able to achieve. A teacher-centered model disempowers students and treats them as products rather than collaborative worker. It excuses them from responsibility but at the same time blames them for the results. And it demonstrably achieves less result than we can afford to achieve. . . And what it means to me is subjecting virtually every process, every significant decision, and a lot of insignificant ones . . . to the test of what does this contribute to learning. Learning centered has to be based on . . . a set of assumptions. The first is that nearly anyone can learn nearly anything under the right conditions. (CO4-1)

Utilizing these voices, Case College leaders, when they speak of a more learning-centered college, believe that the focus should be on the learning of students in particular, but also incorporate staff learning. They believe that resource allocations must be directed toward learning goals, and that determinations concerning allocations should be made according to how the investments will contribute to students' learning. They also note that evidence of learning much be presented, with strong acknowledgment of the

importance of measurement of learning outcomes and creating an environment that respects individual differences.

Although most stayed close to O'Banion's vision of the student learner, several interviewees also incorporated staff learning as an integral component of their understanding of a learning-centered college. Rather than the somewhat customer-oriented approach of O'Banion, about schedules or delivery; or of Barr & Tagg concerning the teaching role; Case College leaders are looking significantly at student learning outcomes as their lens for a learning-centered college.

Strategies Reported to Be In Use

The next subquestion, b, is "What strategies do the leaders say they are using to help the college become more learning-centered?" Interview questions regarding strategies were directed at three levels: the institution's strategies, interviewees' individual efforts, and what individuals believed needed to be done. A projection of what needs to be done provides important evidence for what we may expect in the next stage of strategy development. The findings will be presented in this order.

The Institution's Strategies

Although the college has comparatively sophisticated planning and institutional research efforts, the specific strategies for becoming more learning-centered appear unclear. To date, many of the efforts have been integral to other agendas, especially grant-funded projects. Each interviewee could speak about things that were happening, but no one offered a clear perspective on a strategic plan for becoming a more learning-centered college. This is not to suggest that a shared purpose and focus do not exist, a

point which will be addressed in more detail, but rather that the plans for achieving a more learning-centered institution are not presently well developed. Many admitted this, and it is clear that there is a major thrust toward developing a strategic plan, in part because of the college's recent selection as a Vanguard College.

This apparent lack of a plan may be attributable to the fact that the president, who is expected to be a key, high-level leader in the effort, had been at the college only five months at the time the research was conducted. He is not only expected to influence the strategies dramatically but has already made known, through multiple vehicles, his intent to play a key leadership role in advancing this agenda. One interviewee observed, (The president) "has been pretty clear about saying he doesn't really have a plan yet" (F1-1). Many note that the former president was less engaged in the learning-centered agenda, and this president has been there too short a time to have plans in place.

The lack of a clear plan, however, may itself be a form of strategy, when one considers the culture of this organization. Several observed that this is not a place where someone can develop a plan and then attempt to get others to buy in. Stakeholders expect to be involved in developing plans. There was no sense that a top-down initiative would succeed here, any more than it does in other organizations. One interviewee framed it this way,

One of the things about the learning-centered initiative is that you don't plan ten steps out, you plan two or three steps out, because if you have a long-range plan, then what it looks like to people is that you do have a long-range plan and you're trying to manipulate them. The other part of it is, based upon my reading, that you need to be flexible enough to make adjustments as you go along. (CO1-1)

The 1996 address from the last president laid out a number of projects and he suggested

that he would involve the campus in setting the plans. Large numbers did participate, and initiatives ensued. Many describe these as somewhat peripheral, noting that the innovations were on the fringes and had not substantially changed the way the college goes about its business. In some ways, the plans were driven by some external influences, as campus resource developers secured funds to support specific projects. The well-established strategic planning process had resulted in the identification of some goals, which included Strategic Goal 2: Quality Faculty & Staff and Strategic Goal 3: Developmental Processes (presentation handout, 1999). Yet, there is an absence of a comprehensive plan.

Strategies In Use

The strategies reported to be in use will be presented in two sections. The first six are those that were specifically identified by at least a few interviewees as being in operation or planned at Case College. The final two are those the researcher has abstracted from the interviews, documents, and observations but which were not specifically identified by interviewees as strategies. However, the themes permeated the interviews. In Chapter 1, the use of the word strategy for this research was defined. The definition is repeated here:

Strategies are the actions and approaches planned by and/or implemented by individuals or groups to achieve desired outcomes.

The use of “approaches” in this definition enables consideration of philosophical, conceptual, or cultural views influencing how strategies may be implemented. Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary provides many definitions of strategy, many of which

emanate from military use. Here are examples:

1: The science and art of employing the political, economic, psychological, and military forces of a nation or group of nations to afford the maximum support . . . 2b. The art of devising or employing plans or stratagems toward a goal; 3: an adaptation or complex of adaptations (as of behavior, metabolism, or structure) that serves or appears to serve an important function in achieving evolutionary success. (Merriam-Webster, 1997, p. 1162)

Possible definitions of strategem are these:

1a: an artifice or trick in war for deceiving and outwitting the enemy; b: a cleverly contrived trick or scheme for gaining an end and 2: skill in ruses or trickery. (Merriam-Websters, 1997, p. 1162)

Although each of the definitions of strategem indicates a conniving approach, the use of the word strategem for achieving a goal also suggests that using strategy as a word to describe what may also appear to be a quality as much as a specific action is an acceptable use. The qualities were not deemed to be tricks, however. A better representation would be establishing a psychological set.

Citing a Harvard Business School Study, Omachonu and Ross (1994) describe “corporate strategy as the pattern of decisions in a company that (1) determines, shapes, and reveals its objectives, purposes, or goals; and (2) produces the principal policies and plans for achieving these goals” (p. 61). In this view, the strategies which follow would not necessarily appear as actions but may more appropriately be viewed as nouns, as defined in Chapter 1. For each of the strategies, an inferred definition will be provided to indicate how the term is understood in the context of this research.

Strategy 1: Collaboration

Of the several major strategies addressed by interviewees, none was more cited than

collaboration. Collaboration is the first major strategy identified to be in use at Case College. Collaboration is considered to be a decision-making process where key stakeholders are involved and have influence in the process. Inherent in this definition is an expectation that there will be some shared learning, as individuals work together to reach decisions. One example of collaboration at Case College is a learning-centered leadership team, which was described in Chapter 3. This group is charged with responsibility for advancing the learning-centered agenda. Other examples include the multiple focus groups which have been held, the curriculum writing teams which have been chartered, the professional development planning that is in evidence, and the project teams that have been chartered.

Because the learning-centered agenda is becoming more important to the college's actions, more members are being added to the LCI team. Additional provosts have been added, and more faculty members will be added. The new charge will be to oversee the design and implementation of the strategic goals, budget planning processes, and evaluation of outcomes. The president is expected to chair the group, a change from the historic co-chair model of a faculty member and a senior central office administrator. An evaluator of the above-referenced national research project, during a 1999 site visit, also wrote about collaboration:

(Case College) has been careful to create a consistent rhetoric "Learning-centered initiative," "collaboration," "core competencies" . . . are the common coin of campus discourse. . . . Embodied in no document, the college's having taught itself a genuinely collaborative approach to making key . . . decisions has been its greatest accomplishment. (Outside Consultant, 1999)

Every interviewee spoke of collaboration as a strategy for the organization, not only

for this agenda but as a way of making decisions or behaving in daily work. Almost every significant learning-related document uses the term “collaboration.” As interviewees described collaboration, they took one of two paths. Either they described it much like shared governance, that faculty would be involved in decisions that affected their roles, or like a classroom learning strategy of collaboration, even group work. Closely tied to this interpretation was the concept of active learning. Each of these views will be explored separately. Collaboration, because of its pervasiveness in the institutional culture, is considered by most to be the way the learning-centered agenda will be advanced. Just as the national project consultant who evaluated the college in 1999 observed, this researcher was unable to find any document that espoused the collaboration philosophy, yet its presence was pervasive. With so much of the college’s philosophy well documented by many writers and scholars of the college, this gap is surprising. It is possible that this is yet another example of not being too definitive about plans. One interviewee describes the importance of collaboration:

So collaboration to define what we want to do and how we’re going to do it is the bottom line most important strategy. (CO2-1)

In giving examples of collaboration, many interviewees essentially described what others may call shared governance. The term shared governance was not used by any of the interviewees. In 1966 the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the American Council on Education (ACE), and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB) issued a *Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities* which said,

The faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process. (AAUP, ACE, and AGB, 1966)

Amey (1992) notes that it was 1972 when Richard Richardson, Clyde Blocker, and Louis Bender offered an alternative to what had heretofore been an autocratic style of leadership, a “model of shared governance, with ideals of participation” (Amey, 1992, p.143). The concepts of shared governance are not new, but its implementation in some colleges has been slow. In 1995, Robert Barr noted that shared governance is more characteristic of the learning paradigm than the instructional paradigm, where roles reflect line governance. Case College’s move toward “collaboration” in the 1990s reflects a shift in their paradigm. Most interviewees described a college that was more autocratic in prior years.

Case College arrived at their collaborative model as the result of some trigger events. Interviewees described instances in which the administration had proclaimed a decision, either to outsource an educational service, mandate a course for students, eliminate the purchase of particular computer systems, or change the schedules of custodial personnel. The faculty leadership, with support from others in the college, challenged these decisions. In each case, the original decision was overturned. Ultimately, leaders of the time in administrative ranks and the faculty decided that conflict was not a way to advance the college’s agenda and decided to begin to work together toward their shared goals. A particularly confrontational event concerned how the college would handle its developmental education offerings. The results of a meeting were

described in this way,

That was a really incredible meeting; department chairs and faculty and untenured faculty and administrators really wore their hearts on their sleeves and were brave enough in a room full of people to voice what they really believed in. And we ended up saying we can do this better, there's no reason to sell these students out, they are the huge majority of our students. (CBA4-1)

This interviewee continues:

I do think that on all levels we encourage collaborative decision making and that's different, that's new. In my lifetime at the college, that's a real evolution. And I've witnessed at some pivotal meetings that we've had, where you can come away saying, wow, you know, five years ago that wouldn't have been the result, that wouldn't have happened. (CBA4-1)

The literature review introduces some relevant theories regarding collaboration.

During the second phase of interviews, the researcher asked each person what they meant when they spoke of collaboration. A variety of views were offered, but most were compatible with others and all lead to the definition presented at the beginning at this section. Here are some examples,

It means that you have people from varying degrees of authority--or let's say, not in authority in terms of organization, but in terms of knowledge. You have people with varying levels of knowledge working on a common project and you pay equal attention, or nearly equal attention to people's input, whether they're recognized as an authority in that area or not. I would say, to me, that's the essence of collaboration. In other words, you draw on the strength and knowledge that you have to approach the problem or the project that you're working on, and folks' opinions are pretty much recognized as worth something and the result may be quite different than the solution or the outcome of any individual that was brought into the system. You may end up with a quite different product than anyone had in mind when they came together to work in collaboration. (CBA1-1)

This first example notes that individuals' expertise is used as well as that opinions are respected. This informant's view is that the final product is different from what would otherwise have been the result. The next person also notes that not only is the result

different, but it is better. The institutionalization of this decision-making process is also noted.

At first, we started off thinking that it was a necessary evil we were going to have to do; have to work with the enemy because it's better to do that than to fight with the enemy. And then when we realized how good it was for both sides, now we look for ways to basically use each other to get what the institution needs. To where now, I'm serious, for some of us, it's second nature. (F2-2)

This person eschews the hierarchy that prevails in some organizations.

Collaboration in an organization means rather than decisions being formulated by someone in power and then being declared and carried out in executive fashion by layers of hierarchical dominions, you formulate together as peers policy and curriculum, and work together in a process that gives all those involved a genuine voice. It requires all those involved to genuinely listen and to make some common decisions that everyone in the process has a stake in. (F1-2)

And this person not only speaks of having voice but also of learning, being open-minded, while the next introduces the concept of teamwork..

Collaboration with broad numbers of people has been the best way for us to come to agreement and consensus on the major, overarching themes and directions. . . It means that all parties impacted by decisions have a voice in developing solutions. Have a voice first in defining the problem and secondly in defining solutions and making choices in decisions. It means early and constant communication among all those parties. It means being learning centered. It means that in the collaborative process, you're going to learn things because you're presuming you don't know everything you need to know as one party in the collaboration when you come to the table. So it presumes that you don't enter it believing I've got the solution, I'm going to con these other people into buying my solution. Which I have seen people pass that off to be collaboration, right? It means that you really come in open minded. It means that you value what other people bring to the table. (CO2-2)

When I think about collaboration, I think in terms of teamwork and coming together as a whole group and working out whatever plans or goals or objectives or solutions to things. I think, to me it's kind of a way of communicating, finding out if you're on the same path and you're able to do that teamwork and work it out together. In the classroom, it's like group work. The students are coming together, you're getting to know each other, you're getting to respect the differences. But at the

same time, you're coming to some consensus of whatever you're doing. (CBA3-2)

When some speak of collaboration, the examples they provide are more aligned with collaborative learning in the classroom. This perspective did not emanate from only faculty members. In describing a learning model of collaboration, these two views were offered,

So being learning-centered is learning collaboratively and hopefully speeding up the learning process. (CO1-1)

And I think that's the result of our applying to organizational learning, in this case, what we know about effective learning in the classroom. That is, it's important to do it collaboratively, it's important to structure any kind of meeting so that there's active involvement. . . it means to me that the people with the stake in the process are the ones working together to move it ahead. So in the classroom setting, collaboration means students primarily working in peer groups around some significant learning task, and they must employ the knowledge and think in the ways that the discipline or the learning task requires, that they have to work together in order to achieve some learning outcome or complete some task. And in working together, they engage with each other, they actively interact with the knowledge context, and do some what it is that we do in the discipline. (F1-1)

It is these as well as the previous voices concerning collaboration that broaden this decision-making process to one that also includes a learning focus. Regardless of the description, collaboration is foremost in the minds of interviewees as the way things have happened and will continue to at Case College. Experiences over several years have convinced both the faculty and the administration that decision-making must be joint. This has led to some new ways of reaching consensus before making decisions and has caused some discomfort for some, as players seek to do their work in new ways. It is important to note that consensus is an implied part of many Case College informants' views of collaboration. However, consensus and collaboration are different concepts in the minds

of most observers. With no significant exception, administrators and faculty members interviewed feel that current processes contribute to better decision-making.

One interviewee talked about a particularly important decision process that resulted finally in broad-based acceptance of an important curriculum matter:

But, not one person sent us anything in the mail, called us, e-mailed us . . . the reason was. . . it was done. We had collaborated and collaborated and collaborated and everybody had bought in to it. So now, . . . people say, we have created it. . . The fellow in the boat never bores a hole in it. It was ours. It wasn't a committee; it wasn't administrators; we did this collaboratively. (F2-1)

This served as evidence to him and others that the collaborative process works. The collaborative model should also allow the process to assure that the focus chosen or the path taken is the right one. It is explained by a faculty member in this way:

What is the use of running if you are on the wrong road? . . . emphasize 'everything isn't a crisis, and everything doesn't have to be decided tomorrow' we need to work through and come up with something we can all come up with, so let's (not) run if we are on the wrong road, let's make sure we are on the right road before we start picking up the pace. (F2-1)

There are many examples of how collaboration works at Case College. But before it begins, care is taken to assure that the right topics are being collaborated about.

Strategy 2: Broad-based Engagement

Collaboration does not necessarily lead to broad-based engagement. Collaboration could be exclusive rather than inclusive. This is not the case at Case College. Broad-based engagement is defined as involving a wide range of individuals, from various organizational levels and with different backgrounds, in important college activities. It reflects a culture of inclusiveness rather than exclusiveness. Generally this broad-based engagement refers to opportunities for input, involvement, and knowing at Case College.

It also relates to the collaboration strategy in that many of these individuals are also involved in college decision-making. Faculty, board members, maintenance staff, board members, and adjunct faculty, among others, are involved with the college's learning-centered initiatives in many ways.

The recent change in the composition of the task force reflects this second major strategy. The college has been strategic in its efforts to engage a broad cross-section of the campus in the learning-centered conversations. Many opportunities are provided for all college stakeholders to provide input to the process, engage in dialogue, and participate in activities, such as roundtables and professional development activities. The college takes particular pride in this fact, with several noting that for a series of recent roundtables, a broad cross-section of campus employees participated. All college staff were invited. Because faculty are critical in the conversations about learning, the participation in the fall 1999 roundtables was limited to assure that at least half attending each session were faculty members. Although more than 200 participated in one of eight different forums, participation still had to be limited to honor this commitment. This is not the first time college-wide forums have been held, nor is it planned as the last.

Broad-based engagement is reflected in many ways. All with campus e-mail accounts receive regular announcements of events that are forthcoming. Although not all adjuncts are presently on the system, efforts are being made to add them. Major communications, such as announcements of professional development opportunities, are also placed in staff mailboxes, so that every employee of the college has the opportunity to learn about most events. The President has disseminated messages through e-mail to

everyone emphasizing the learning-centered agenda. Many major communications are also available on the college's website and accessible to any in the world with access to the Internet. Some are only on the intranet, which has more limited internal access.

Professional development materials are also maintained on an intranet. Information sharing is rich.

Forums and roundtables are held where individuals are facilitated in discussions of topics pertinent to the agenda, such as exploring ways to implement the core curriculum. Professional development activities align with the learning-centered focus and intensive opportunities exist for in-depth engagement in acquiring skills essential in the learning-centered agenda, such as critical thinking infusion and assessment of learning outcomes. Hundreds of faculty and staff have participated in activities designed to advance the learning-centered agenda.

Examples are a Faculty Academy that is offered for all new faculty; project teams focused on developing curriculum in critical areas (core subjects); federal Title III and V grants that are focused on instructional improvement, and incorporate much professional development; and a summer institute that works on building competence among faculty in the use of the core competencies and conducting assessment. Despite all of this, because of the large number of individuals who work on multiple campuses, the engagement has still not reached as far into the organization as the leaders would prefer.

Board members are also involved. One of the board members, an African-American female attorney, attended the week-long Vanguard seminar and reported to the full board at their regular meeting in June 1999. In introducing the subject at the June 2000 board

meeting, the president said that the experience had been “team learning work.” In her report, the board member said that the learning-centered college initiative is a “key component of where the future will be.” She explained that the initiative “places learning first in every program, policy, and process.” It is different from other activities, she noted, because there are two critical questions to ask: “Does this action improve and expand learning?, and 2) How do we know this action improves and expands learning?”

The board member explained the five objectives that the Case College team of 16 had adopted for the year: Organizational culture, staff recruitment and development, learning outcomes, underprepared students, and learning works (workforce development). She also took this public opportunity (with approximately 45 in the audience, including media) to compliment the new president by saying that he had an “amazing ability to synthesize a variety of ideas and create a framework” and that he “showed tremendous leadership.” She reported that this college was one of only two among the 12 colleges present that included a board member in the team. She challenged her board peers to “become learning leaders.” She asked that they “look outside the box,” then stated that it is “critical that the board be there to support.” She concluded with “We have identified the next steps and defined the next level. We think this is a start. . . Clearly we are way ahead, but we also have a ways to go. It’s exciting.”

The board member’s report was greeted by fellow board members with receptivity and some questions. This board meeting was an eventful one in other ways. It was at this meeting that the president explained how budgets would be developed in the future and presented the first budget that identified specific learning objectives with budget priorities.

A cover memo explaining this priority-setting process was distributed to all on campus e-mail the same day and is available on the college's website. It was also the meeting at which salary increases were decided. The president's mid-year evaluation was also a subject of the board's attention, and the announcement was made that at the President's explicit request, there would be no increase in his pay. Another female, Caucasian board member was leaving the board after this meeting. She was presented with gifts, testimonials, and applause.

In her statement, she told the audience that "you just touch so many lives. I just love this college. I just love (the president). You sort of grow to love people. . . It was all done with some wonderfully fun people. This college is just set to do wonderful things." Based on the enthusiastic presentation about the learning-centered initiative by a board member and the commitment in evidence at the college to the learning-centered initiative, board members are likely to become more involved.

That broad-based engagement is a distinct strategy is clear. How difficult it is is also clear, as noted by informants. Case College respondents have not voiced concerns about conflict with the agenda but rather with the difficulty of engaging the large numbers who comprise the college. The college still has not adequately engaged students nor all groups on the campus. Speaking to the concern that the learning-centered agenda is still concentrated in a few who are directly involved, three said,

The circle of faculty who are directly involved are passionate in their commitment in this (and) are advanced in their reflection and own change process. It's a good-sized core of people, but it's still only a core of people. (CO4-1)

I think we're going in the right direction, I do think that some of the upper-level

administrators that you talk to probably think we're further along than we really are. I don't necessarily think it's a bad thing, because you have to have vision, you have to have high expectations, and you also have to be realistic. So I think we're going in the right direction; we have a lot of work to do. (F3-1)

I think there's still a sense that it's kind of an elitist--I'm not sure that's the exact word I want, it sounds a little bit too negative, but you always see the same people working on the committees and kind of representing the issues and, in part, it's because we call for volunteers, and very often the same people come forward. It's like in any organization, you have your volunteers and you have your others who will sit back. I think it's more critical here that we reach more people. I think technology is allowing us to do that a lot more. If you use technology in the right way, you can help people feel that they have a voice all along, they can shoot back a response to something that's floated, and they don't have to go to a meeting, necessarily. Some people who agree or disagree on a particular thing can have that exchange publicly and other people can chime in. So I'm hoping that we'll learn to use our electronic communication in ways that will engage more people more regularly; not just major round table events, and then nothing for 16 months or whatever. So I think communication is a big one. How do we reach more people? (CBA4-1)

Because some have not been involved, there is a concern expressed by some that the college needs to step back to assure engagement of more partners - more faculty, staff, students, and community members. This view was expressed in this way by an administrator who has been less active in the agenda,

So we really need to step back and make sure that everybody is fully on board, philosophically in tune with the learning centered idea, buys it, owns it, and then has responsibility for executing the goals and objectives of learning centeredness on the campus. (CBA1-2)

Those interviewed recognize that the learning-centered agenda is not as advanced as they would prefer after five years of effort. The passion about becoming more learning-centered is concentrated among relatively few, when one considers the size of the institution. Some are talking about using what is known from the literature about learning to bring others along, rather than using tools of management or other disciplines. Some

are making connections between this agenda and the term organizational learning, but this number is very small. Because of the nature of academic institutions, there is some potential risk of future conflict as individuals resist the organizational agenda. That tension was not revealed in these meetings.

In attempting to assess this question, I asked each individual to tell me what percentage s/he believed were committed to the learning-centered initiative. Almost every person first clarified the question. They wanted to know whether their response should specifically respond to the “initiative,” or to the principles and values underlying it. When both answers were given, as many did, it was clear that informants believed that the initiative may be supported by less than 25 percent while the principles they believed to be supported by 80-95 percent of the regular faculty. This potential evidence of shared values is impressive.

In a meeting with the president, when talking about the momentum for change, a comment was made about John Naisbitt’s (Naisbitt, 1984) belief that it takes at least 25 percent to be on board with an idea before a transformation will occur. Naisbitt does not claim that a transformation will occur, only that it is possible that one could occur with this percentage of engagement. The president disputed Naisbitt’s claim for an academic organization.

I think it takes a lot more. In a business culture that is hierarchical and power-driven you may only need a handful of change agents. In a community organization like this where power really is widely distributed, you need a lot more. You need 70 percent of the people, maybe. You need a high number of people; they don’t all need to be pioneers, but they need to be conversant with where it is you want to go, and at least supportive if not active ground breakers. So, moving this from what has been a center of innovation largely funded by grants and largely led by change agents

outside of the normal governance and meeting patterns of the college, back to the center of the college, more campus focus deeper in the decision-making processes of the college with front-line leadership behind it, chairs in particular. (President, 2000)

A particular area of concern in getting the required broad-based engagement is the adjunct faculty, where turnover is high. Many made mention of this concern; one participant noted,

Fifty-five percent of our course sections are taught by full-time faculty, and forty-five by adjunct faculty. So what that means is that you have some continuity with your adjunct faculty, but you don't have the level of continuity that you need in order to see substantive change occur. And we're addressing that (CBA2-2).

Adjunct faculty have been invited to most events, and they are encouraged to participate in the off-term professional development workshops, where participants are paid a stipend. A large number have participated in each of the years, along with many regional high school teachers.²

Results from engagement have been encouraging for leaders in that individuals are prepared to seek ways to contribute to the learning-centered agenda. One of the roundtable's facilitators said,

And I have to say, my experiences on those round tables, I was so impressed with the people that came and how they were able to express how they fit into a learning-centered institution. They really brought more to the table; they didn't need me to tell them how their role fit in it, they were able to really see it in themselves. (F3-1)

A few acknowledged the need for more student engagement. At this time, no major efforts have been directed toward engaging students in the campus conversations. With

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The college invites high school teachers to participate in professional development activities, with goals of having better prepared students arrive at the college, building community partnerships, and expanding the community of learners.

the broad-based support among leaders for an expanded base of participants in the learning-centered initiative, there are indications that future strategies will expand the concept of broad-based engagement. The president's address to the graduating class of 2000 suggests this.

Strategy 3: Focus

This emphasis on broad-based engagement leads to a third overriding strategy: Focus. Focus is defined in this research as limiting attention in goal setting to the few, most important, items that will contribute most to advancement of the learning-centered agenda. Case College attempts to focus attention and energies on the important few as opposed to the trivial many, although some still expressed limited concern about the number of initiatives and the busy-ness of the college. Only a few strategic initiatives are identified, and organizational efforts have been directed toward achieving these.

Important to this selection of target areas is that they be important goals. They say,

We have learned to focus on some key things because we can't do everything at once. You know, sometimes it feels like we are, but we learn to focus in on some key things and not feel like we have to do everything at once. (CO2-1)

So even though the themes will change, next summer we'll do something else, the core competencies will always be there, and everything they (referring to faculty participants) do will always be expected to connect to one of them. (F3-1)

You have to say, look guys, you should all be able to see now that if we do a little bit of everything, we've not done anything well. And I think what we're going to have to do is choose a different game plan. Because the opportunity costs, the distraction factor of all that other stuff is much heavier than people realize. And that makes us nimble enough to pick something, maybe even two or three things; no more than that, and say we're going to do something audacious and important in this area and if we do, then our capacity to do more audacious, important things will grow. (CO4-1)

Although no one specifically cited writers who talk about focus, with one possible exception noted in the models section of this chapter, the respondents were clearly addressing what some business writers speak about as alignment. Authors Labovitz and Rosansky write,

In the end, all of these elements must be centered on the ultimate objective of the business. We call this objective *the main thing*. The main thing for the organization as a whole must be a common and unifying concept to which every unit can contribute. Each department and team must be able to see a direct relationship between what it does and this overarching goal. The main thing must be clear, easy to understand, consistent with the strategy of the organization, and actionable by every group and individuals? (Labovitz & Rosansky, 1998, p. 40-44)

In the opening address to the college assembly in August 2000, the president said “I have a friend who likes to say, “the main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.’ For (Case College), the main thing is LEARNING.”

The respondents have the main thing clear. What they have less clearly defined is the alignment that the authors suggest must also be present. The authors say, “Like magnetism, alignment is a force. It coalesces and focuses an organization and moves it forward” (Labovitz & Rosansky, 1998, p. 6). Case College’s Learning-Centered Initiative is focused on their main thing, learning.

Strategy 4: Resources

Resources are another of the strategies in use to achieve a more learning-centered organization. A resources strategy is defined as assuring that adequate financial and other valued items can be brought forth to support strategic directions. For Case College, resources are primarily reflected in financial resources, which enable the college to pay stipends, allocate release time, purchase professional development materials, sponsor

conference participation and on-campus workshops, and fund other activities which take money. Several grants have been secured and special incentives have been offered to encourage participation and to advance the agenda.

This college has an impressive record of attracting grant money, and much of it is from competitive sources. The president reported that the grants office has an 85 percent success rate. Reporting on the grants secured is a regular part of board agendas, and the Board's warmth toward the lead grant official is noticeable. A board member asked that the grants report be removed from the consent agenda at the June 2000 meeting, because she was always so excited to hear about the good things happening.

The grants report for June 2000 noted that by the end of May, 47 proposals had been submitted, and 22 had been acted upon for a total of almost \$2.5 million. For those that were acted upon, the funding rate was 85 percent. Six grants were presented for the board's review in June. The six new requests totaled about \$1 million. The college has had multiple grants from many major sources: NSF, FIPSE, Title III, Title V, USDOE, and others. Millions are added to the budget annually from grant sources (refer to Chapter 3 for college budget information).

No one complained of a lack of resources. In fact, the view of those interviewed was that if an idea had proven itself, once a grant was gone, the institution would pick up the program. In addition, one remarked that good ideas attract resources. Although not a rich college, resources were not viewed by the interviewees to be a limiting factor and are considered to be an essential part of the strategy for becoming more learning-centered. Every person spoke of some of the special funding that had been made available to

support the learning-centered agenda.

One important way that focus can be maintained is through allocation of resources in support of the goals. The new president has been explicit about his intent to align resources with strategic priorities. In a communication sent to everyone on the e-mail system, the president said,

Finally, this is our most powerful question: “How does this decision/process/habit/custom align with our commitment to being learning centered? It has to be taken as seriously by administration as by faculty. It is as powerful for buildings and grounds as it is for learning resources. So we will be using this question to measure all of our efforts, beginning with the budget. . . You will see a number of initiatives in this budget, and even more in subsequent years when there is more time to collaborate at length, that are directed at the Learning Centered commitment of (the college). (President, 2000)

The president’s message was mentioned by several in the interviews. Everyone recognizes that decision-making processes are changing and that the agenda will be driven with institutional resources. Most are encouraged; some seem apprehensive, especially if they have had major budget control. The president’s move to orient the budget toward strategic initiatives is one obvious attempt at alignment. One faculty member explains,

There is a key line in there; he said, . . . folks we are going to target the budget and funding in future years to the strategies of being learning centered. In essence, he said, ‘you folks out there who have been sitting on the side lines and not participating, we are going forward with this project and we want you involved. . . . So you better get on board folks and better give us your input;. . . When you say you are going to drive the finances of this institution by this initiative . . . that is a commitment. (F2-2)

In his e-mail message and at the June board meeting, the president reinforced this commitment by calling attention to several new items in the budget, including:

- 23 new faculty positions

- new support staff positions focusing on student learning
- substantial funding of the learning-centered initiative
- faculty/staff diversity initiative
- support to student advising projects
- expansion of tutoring services

Subsequently a national community college publication reported on this increase in faculty, since the trend in many community colleges has been to decrease the number of full-time faculty; the proportion of part-time versus full-time faculty has become a national higher education issue. In advancing his agenda the president wrote,

Several of these items are funds without fully realized plans; rather we have earmarked funding for plans yet to be developed with input from faculty and staff in areas such as the Learning Centered Initiative, the Diversity Initiative, and others. This will enable significant collaboration in spite of the close time constraints we've had to manage this year. . . I want to signal to you now how serious I am about opening up the college's resource allocation, about directing our resources toward our goals, and about leading on the basis of principles. This process has been very new and challenging even to the senior management team. I look forward in the coming year to extending the opportunity and challenge much deeper into the college. (President, 2000)

In this communication, he acknowledges that plans are not well developed but also reinforces his commitment to involving people in a collaborative process. Other colleges may not enjoy the luxury that this college has with the comparatively extensive resources available to support strategic initiatives. This particular aspect of the situation may make replication of Case College strategies far more difficult in an organization where there are fewer investment dollars available. Becoming a more learning-centered college, as practiced at Case College, is not a free proposition.

Strategy 5: Professional Development

Professional development was cited and observed as a fifth strategy for becoming more learning-centered. Although only one person specifically named this as a strategy, the most important strategy, in response to the strategy question, each interviewee talked about the importance of development in various ways. Professional development is generally defined as planned activities for learning that are made available to college staff. Professional development may include on-campus or off-campus activities. In general the term relates to planned group activities, but it could also encompass individual learning from self-study.

The college has a rich array of professional development opportunities available for faculty and staff. These range from extensive participation in state and national conferences to support for release time, extra stipends for special assignments, and intensive workshops. Many of the nation's leaders in teaching, learning, assessment, critical thinking, and other learning topics have been on the campus more than once to conduct workshops in recent years.

Among those who have presented on the campus are Thomas Angelo; Terry O'Banion, League for Innovation; Stephen Brookfield, University of St. Thomas, Minnesota; Arthur Chickering, George Mason University; Robert Diamond, Syracuse University; James Anderson, North Carolina State; Don Farmer, King's College; John Gardner, University of South Carolina; Susan Frost, Emory University; Craig Nelson, Indiana University; Claire Weinstein, University of Texas - Austin; John Roueche, University of Texas - Austin; and Jane Frederick and Debra Chomicka, Alverno College.

This list represents less than half of those identified by the college as those who have been on the campus recently as consultants. Acquainting individuals with the current thinking in higher education permeates the daily life at Case College. Reading lists are shared. Discussion groups are hosted. Important conversations are had. Several mentioned that many opportunities exist for them to attend conferences.

In describing the value of the consultants, one of the learning-centered leaders said,

We've brought in just a number of noted people that are addressing these issues as consultants to the college. We fortunately had been able to use grant funds for the most part to do that. (CO2-1)

One who listed faculty development as the most important strategy said,

The major strategy has been faculty development. And that has been a bottom up kind of a thing rather than a top down kind of a thing. Really, we identified what we thought were the competencies that faculty in the 21st century should have. And those competencies centered on knowledge of and ability to do something about the increasing diversity of our students. (CBA2-2)

Interviewees expressed a rising interest in improving their services to minorities.

This concern is likely at the forefront of their thinking because achievement rates for these groups have been lower, area high schools have now become a majority minority, and federal grant resources have been garnered to support initiatives to improve success among minority groups. At the same time, when staff spoke of diversity, they were not always speaking of historically defined minority groups. They talked of students whose family backgrounds are not supportive of education, of conflicted life situations, of learning disabilities, and of learning differences. Case College personnel broadly define diverse students.

More than one person made the link between using what is known about how

learning occurs and learning theories to advance the learning-centered agenda. The college's approach to professional development is both formal and informal. This faculty member offers his view,

I don't know, so much of it happens kind of by accident. You know. . . you create the conditions, you create an atmosphere, explain to people what you're doing and why you're doing it, and then you give them a challenge, it's almost like the classroom, it's just more complicated and it's more difficult to shape because it's not just one person or a small group of people, it's wider. But it's also, as I say, well, how are we going to get faculty to do this? I'm going to say, we're going to teach them the same way we teach students. How do you get people to do things? Well, we'll show how it's linked to what they care about, you give them incentives, you put them together with like-minded people and you kind of help them feel good about each other, and then you just watch it cook. I mean, that's what we do for a living, we just don't think of doing it with our colleagues in the same way and we need to. I've been saying that from the beginning. If I'm a good teacher, then I can make this happen with my colleagues with a different purpose. (F1-1)

Each interviewee was asked to describe his/her own learning processes. Each was able to identify many different ways in which they extend their learning. The learning described was both solo and group. Here is one person's description,

I have to be pretty broad in general in what I do because of the nature of my work. I have to be able to work across the college in all areas so a lot of review of the literature, reading. . . I try to stay very current with what's being reported in The Chronicle of Higher Education. And then we have developed reading lists here at the college, the bibliographies that we sort of refer to and jointly develop as we work on these projects, and try to stay up with that. So it's a combination of looking for literature, learning from other colleagues, and listening to what faculty's own experience here is telling us, and that's been real important. (CO2-1)

Several bibliographies were shared by interviewees. In addition to writing about their own learning and experiences with improving the learning process for students, there is considerable evidence of consulting the literature as a foundation for their work. Individuals talk excitedly about their learning experiences, both individual and shared,

With what we called faculty leaders who were volunteers that came to us from different disciplines. . . it was really like a post-graduate seminar in learning theory and teaching practices that was wonderfully deep and broad and engaging, a real intellectual opportunity, I think. (CBA4-1)

The learning encompasses reviews of literature, attending presentations, meeting participation, and peers.

So attending presentations and seeing something of their work has certainly informed our work. The literature reviews, of course, gives us the experience of other colleges and learning in that way. And then learning from our folks internally. I've learned a lot about process by working as a member of the LCI team, and I guess more than anyone else, I've learned from (peer). Because he and I have sort of been the people that have taken it upon ourselves to try to figure out how to make all this come together and work. It seemed to fit both of our jobs and we both had a real strong interest in it. So (peer) tends to be the one who will go off and read the entire book; find it, read the whole thing, and then he'll say to me, "you know, (peer), I think this really has relevance, why don't you read these few chapters and tell me what you think and then we'll talk about it." So (peer) and I tend to be a team in that respect. His skill seems to be, in part, finding that which is relevant and sifting through it, and then my skill will tend to be figuring out how to make that meaningful to other people. (CO2-1)

I do try to attend conferences, and keep up with the trends that are going on at other institutions. I do a lot of reading from journals; I like keeping in contact with people from other universities. . . The chair academy has proven to be a good thing for me, . . . There is so much you learn about leadership. . . I do those kinds of things, but as I told you earlier, I'm kind of a little perched bird here, allowing everybody else to go. . . I try to keep abreast on things . . . I like being on teams like the learning-centered initiative. I learn from all the experts, like (peer) and (peer), all the smart people. I like listening to what they do and how they go about. (CBA3-1)

Every person talked about both individual and group learning. Several named others in their group from whom they learned, in addition to extensive use of the literature and conference participation. Continuous education is a distinguishing characteristic of organizational learning. Peterson found in 1996 that "changing teachers' practice is primarily a problem of learning, not a problem of organization" (Peterson, 1996). The

literature presented in Chapter 2 would suggest that to become a more learning-centered organization, a learning emphasis will be important. Professional development programming is one possible strategy for increasing learning. Case College has begun to move toward more active models of professional development, utilizing practice, experience, and projects. This approach aligns well with emerging theories and philosophies about learning. At the same time, the learning as “means” as well as an “end” dilemma, posed in Chapter 2, is reflected here. Professional development is very widespread and quite well focused on the learning-centered agenda at Case College.

Strategy 6: Results Orientation

The sixth strategy is Results Orientation. A results orientation means that an important indicator of success will be based upon a determination of whether the desired results have been achieved. Implicit in this description is a need for measuring. This particular strategy is one that balances some of the process aspects of strategies at Case College. This strategy refers more to content than to process. Repeatedly individuals spoke about learning gains, graduation rate improvements, key indicators, and other measurable dimensions of learning. Although few identified this specifically as a strategy of the institution, almost all spoke of measuring or assessing outcomes in some way. Each interviewee believes that evidence is important to determining whether the goal to become more learning-centered has been achieved. Here are examples of what interviewees have to say about their focus on results,

I think another strategy that's important, of course, is having institutional indicators that are measurable. We do have a set of performance indicators for the college that we've selected, and we have longitudinal data that we can base our projections of

change on and that we can then of course compare our actual results to. So I think having the strategy of measuring and being very focused on measurement is critical. Otherwise, we're just talking and you never know for sure whether anything really changed. (CO2-1)

I have other visions in terms of what it could be. What we have thought about is that large percentages, instead of 30 percent, 60 percent of our students could complete their goals. (CO1-1)

I think the real hope that the learning-centered initiative brings is that we might exceed the limits of a teacher-centered model and the results that we're able to achieve. . Maybe it's a good investment to spend a half million dollars cutting class size in developmental writing in half, but only if it gets the results that we're after. . So it's like managing any other innovation, you have a plan, you work the plan, you measure the results, you tweak the plan, or you bale out. (CO4-1)

One institution . . they were focused on assessment and we were focused on outcomes which we consider the higher level. So they were measuring a lot of individual things and individual programs and courses and so on. And we were sort of looking at our idea of learning outcomes as much broader than that. (CO1-2)

Again and again, whether faculty or administrator, there was talk of producing evidence, measuring results, and improving the outcomes.

Personal Contributions

In a related strategy question, each interviewee was asked to describe his/her particular contributions to the learning-centered agenda. Many spoke of their role on the learning-centered team, their roles as faculty development planners, or as organizational leaders. Some saw their role as motivating others to pursue the goal of becoming more learning-centered, including celebrating achievements. One used the term "cheerleader." Another spoke of being a "coach." As with the strategies for becoming more learning-centered, there was not a pat answer for the role that each person would play in contributing to the learning-centered agenda. Following are representative responses:

He says that we must build our budgets and do everything that we do around a set of principles, and that the key one is being learning centered. For me in my position in the college, it's kind of a discipline to frame my own work in that way and then as I work with others, help them to do the same. So, I feel like I'm right in the fray, and that's exciting. It's also frustrating sometimes because of some of the things that we talked about in terms of resistance to change. (CBA4-1)

I have remained very active in leading that team, helping to document what we were learning, interpret it to external audiences, and figure out strategies to keep the change process rolling at the institution.(CO2-1)

My big thing is motivating faculty to help us create this institution in the fashion that we want it to be. I do promotional things for them, certificates, and lunches, and dessert parties, and say they're the best faculty. (CBA3-1)

I'm being the coach here; I'm focused on taking us to the next steps. And we're working right now with our new president to sort of figure out how we're going to use the Vanguard Learning Project. (CO1-1)

I've stepped forward to lead working groups, several different times, core competency round tables just last--or they were actually called learning-centered round tables--the last instance of that. So I see it as my responsibility to facilitate discussion and creative critical thought around these issues and to engage people widely. And I'm able to do that partly because of my effort, my visible effort, in faculty governance. (F1-1)

We work as a team increasingly, so as we become more learning centered, (we are) drawing upon each other's strengths. I'm always involved in . . .the role of helping to summarize, interpret, make clear to another audience something that we're developing.(CO2-1)

It's my job to reinforce them everywhere I can, to call attention to them, to make sure that question is being asked in every important discussion. You do that by engaging in intellectual discourse yourself. People pay a lot of attention to what (leaders) care to engage. (CO4-1)

Each interviewee acknowledged some leadership responsibility as well as a role in moving others along, whether through rewards, coaching, or cheerleading. Everyone saw their personal contribution as one among many - a shared role. Each had a part to play at the same time as there was a common view of who the major leaders of the effort were.

What Should Be Done

Each participant was invited to explain what they believe needs to happen for the learning-centered agenda to be realized. Suggestions included focusing on faculty development as key, including advising; increasing the number of advisors to reduce the ratio of advisees to advisors; conducting more roundtables on specific topics; providing background information in advance; mainstreaming the ideas; and significantly engaging department chairs. Here are examples of what respondents had to say in response to this query:

Over the next year, eight months, six months, ten months, we're going to have probably three or four college-wide forums and invite everybody who wants to come to talk about it . . . What we're talking about is taking the college-wide forum and providing them with some background information and some data about whatever that topic is, and then having a day of activities. We have found that it's better if it's structured to some extent. But we're hoping to get a lot of ideas out and try to focus in on some specific priorities or strategies that we want to focus on within those broad parameters that I mentioned, of things like faculty and staff vitality, student success and preparation, and workforce development. (CO1-1)

I don't think we do a good job of orienting administrators or career staff into the learning-centered nature of the institution. So we're going to put a good bit of focus on that. We're going to look at ways to reward professional development . . . In fact, now I think another next step that we really talked about in Scottsdale is, I think, there's going to be a greater focus on moving from the conceptual level college wide to the implementation level at the campus level. So, it will not surprise me if in the not too distant future we don't start designating some campus teams that are going to bring the core competencies and a lot of other things closer to the people, closer to the folks in the classrooms and all of that. And I think that's the natural progression of moving this out of a few peoples' hands. (F2-2)

And I thought, oh my gosh, somebody finally gets it because if you don't work through the department chairs you're not going to get to the faculty; it's that simple. So I'm hoping that what that means is more and more bigger decisions and including budgeting decisions will be made at departmental levels, which is, I think, where they should be made. With, of course, the steering and the guidance and the approval of the upper-level administration. (F3-2)

Well, I would expect them to have a plan, some kind of strategic plan for how they were going to implement, if you will, the learning-centered initiative, in whatever form that takes. Whether it's assessing the core competencies or measuring whatever particular student outcomes they were looking for in that department. But I would expect them to have goals and have action plans to meet those goals. And then everything else that happens in the day-to-day workings of the department would then be in support, or would be part of that action plan. . . . (Talking about the importance of engaging department chairs) The next thing that was going to come out of my mouth is providing professional development. I don't necessarily mean that they have to get up there and do these presentations and everything, but making sure their faculty members a.) know about opportunities at the college, because in my role I talk to faculty all the time that didn't know about this or didn't know about that. And whether that's their own fault for not reading their e-mail or whatever, I don't know. But I know most faculty read everything their department chairs send them. Making sure they know about opportunities and if there don't seem to be opportunities for their faculty for whatever reason, b.) trying to seek some out. (F3-1)

These responses can be viewed as continuing the broad-based engagement and continuing the emphasis on professional development that have already been identified as hallmarks of their efforts. Despite the fact that there was no shortage of ideas of what needs to be done, there were still concerns about how much could be done or how the process would play out, as reflected by the following,

We came to an accommodation to where the administration has learned to slow down and the faculty has learned to speed up its processes to where we can meet their deadlines and they can collaborate with us. I am sensing now more from the faculty than the administration the need by some people to speed things up. We need to move faster, we need to involve the adjuncts, we need to bring people who have not been involved in the initiative so far to bring them in. I have even heard people say we have to mandate this and require folks to do that. . . . We have not made it go too fast. My biggest fear right now is that we are not going to stay on that kind of steady course, that we are going to feel this need, OK now that most folks are on board . . . now we just need to force it down everybody's throat, and charge ahead and go back to the same autocratic ways. I fear it coming from the faculty more than the administration because I am picking up faculty saying, 'you know I am doing this and my neighbor next door is doing it, but, those three people down the hall aren't doing it yet, and by God they ought to be doing that'. I think that is the danger that we have right now; it is a very, very big danger. (F2-1)

This faculty member was the only one to acknowledge a potential for conflict if the emphasis becomes more insistent and individuals begin to feel that they must do their work in particular ways. In wondering about the challenges that may lie ahead, and in response to a question about what other colleges may need to do, one participant observed :

I don't think it's any accident that the two best known colleges in the United States of America for being learning centered, e.g., Alverno and King's College, are both Roman Catholic institutions, where there is a culture of--I wouldn't call it authoritarianism, but a healthy respect for leadership. I think they're capable of being led. So the first thing I would say that you need to do is to try to get a reading on the culture of your college. What kind of place are you (CBA2-2)?

It is an encouraging sign that all interviewees had ideas for what needs to happen, since the culture of this organization provides opportunities for engagement and for leadership at all levels. Those interviewed were not waiting for someone to tell them what needed to be done. All seemed genuinely committed to assisting with the efforts. Ideas suggested included offering more faculty and staff development, a focus on the first several courses of most students' programs; hosting focus groups or forums around particular topics and inviting any who want to participate to do so; "beefing up" advising; developing a plan with goals, objectives, and measures; and continuing the collaborative approach.

Overall, the emphasis was a learning theme, even an active learning approach. Although the ideas for what to do next are somewhat different, they run in similar veins. They are also focused on the same "main thing"--the improvement of learning. Ideas concern making sure learning happens more effectively in more classrooms, utilizing the curriculum core as the centering device. Here are examples of the views expressed on the

topic of what the college needs to do next.

There's always one more method and one more thing that you can try to enrich your class. So that group suddenly needs more enriching activities, more professional development. We need to continue professional development for other faculty, not that we don't have good teachers and not that there are not good things happening in the classroom, but for the very best to happen in everybody's classroom then all faculty have to be exposed to the research, to the development of their syllabi, to make those changes happen. (CO3-1)

We could come up with a curriculum plan that probably would meet the needs of most of our students, and that is if we identified a half dozen foundation courses that most students take and got some consensus with the department chairs and provosts and faculty on each campus, that the students in these classes will master these competencies, and if those became the gateway to other courses. It can be done, we could draw out a plan on the board that would be easy enough, but you would have to have a much greater degree of buy in. (CBA2-2)

One of the things we're talking about is how we as a leadership team can be a learning community ourselves. How we can read more together, be more reflective, to actually embody the core competencies . . . So that's also something I think a professional goal that all of us are going to have to work toward is to become more learning centered in our own professional lives and as teams (CO2-1).

Although this final quote could strike readers as an assessment that the top leadership team is not a learning community, like all learning, it is a matter of degree. This same group of leaders talks about learning from each other, discussing the literature, garnering resources to support initiatives, and implementing learning plans. They may very well be a more advanced community of learners than most, but they yearn for more. The rapid pace of their work environment, not unlike the experience of many other community college leaders, may preclude realization of a learning ideal.

The idea of targeting the essential few courses is one the college is taking action on presently. At a meeting of the Executive Council, a group of individuals, most of whom are participants in this research, presented their ideas for improving the "front door."

Several courses, mostly developmental, that serve the majority of the college's students in the first months have been targeted for significant attention. The group's belief is that if they can positively impact these courses the results throughout the college will be improved and more students will achieve their goals. The idea was well supported with research and creative thinking and was greeted with enthusiasm by members of the Executive Council. Resources will be provided to implement the plan.

The administrative group expressed a desire to take on even more classes with this initiative, but later leaders of the idea expressed doubts about whether this would be a proper strategy. They prefer to take on the challenge incrementally to assure its success rather than to risk taking on the entire elephant in one bite and not achieving the intended results. The implementation group's assessment would suggest a more incremental than transformational approach, utilizing the terminology of the learning profile which will be explained later. The executive council's goal was to attempt transformation.

Although this is a very large college, it is described by most and observed by me to be administratively very lean. The elephant metaphor is an apt one for this college, since the "front door" team has proposed taking on this elephant "one bite at a time." With six different locations, hundreds of faculty, and a small team of implementers dedicated thus far to the effort, it does not appear possible to take on more at this time. The advance team wants to assure success of the effort. Even if additional human resources were dedicated, there appears to be skepticism about whether this would be the path to take. The proposers prefer an incremental approach. At the same time, many of the interviewees also recognize that they must move more of the learning-centered agenda to

the larger college. The scope of the efforts and the size of the college present challenges in implementation.

Inferred Strategies

The last two strategies are inferred from the interviews, observations, and documents' reviews rather than being explicitly identified by the informants. Just as models may be mental or structural, so may strategies be concrete or qualitative. Some strategies are less defined actions than they are ways of behaving. The two additional strategies are leadership and trust/respect.

Strategy 7: Leadership

There is eagerness to embrace the vision, yet there is also some tension between the old and new. Leadership is identified as an inferred strategy. Leadership, in this finding, refers to the individuals who do or will assume responsibility for aspects of the learning-centered initiative. Some have official responsibility; others have unofficial roles with the initiative. At the present time, this leadership is primarily exercised by three vice presidents, the president, professional staff, some administrators, and a limited number of faculty. Going forward, there is an expectation that more department heads and provosts will be engaged. Leadership has brought Case College to this place on the journey, and its continued expansion is designed to continue the journey.

The introduction of a new president is both warmly embraced and anxiously awaited. The college enjoys an excellent track record, yet there is enthusiasm that the next stage will yield even greater results, because of the strong leadership anticipated from the new president and the strategies which have already been set in motion.

Leadership, especially key executive and administrative staff and several faculty, was apparent. No respondents named leadership as a strategy for becoming more learning-centered, yet indirectly leadership was alluded to as interviewees described activities supporting the learning-centered agenda. Leadership development is noted as a strategy, as plans exist for moving the thrust of the learning-centered agenda to the campus level. Yet the college did not get to this place without some significant leadership. Although many did not give the former president much of the credit for meaningfully engaging stakeholders, they do credit him with having allowed talented people to implement their plans.

Because of the lean administrative structure and the fact that most executive staff share a common office area, many opportunities exist for joint planning. Strategic plans have been developed and implemented. At the same time, to date, much of the leadership has been centrally orchestrated rather than emerging from the grassroots. Effective leadership is evident. Events such as the many professional development options do not just happen; they are planned. Hundreds do not show up for conversations without plans having been made to engage the college community broadly. Grants had been secured to support learning-centered agendas. An application for becoming a Vanguard College had been submitted. Faculty play key roles in the learning-centered task force and other decision-making. Data provided indicate that the college is successful in improving retention, improving student performance, increasing graduation rates, and engaging faculty and staff in meaningful activities. Leaders facilitate campus conversations.

Many spoke about leadership issues in response to various questions, citing

inconsistency, lack of involvement of some, and lack of knowledge of others. However, all thought the leaders at all levels were important. Most acknowledge that to date the leadership has been strongest at the corporate level. This is a college where leadership is playing significant roles. Areas for future attention in the area of leadership were identified to be at the campus level. Both provosts and department chairs are seen to be important next leaders of the efforts to become more learning centered.

(Referring to department heads) . . . they need to be recognized as the instructional leaders, and they need to act as instructional leaders and they need to take that responsibility on. Whatever structure might need to change to do that, of course, you have to have good key people in those roles who know what it means to be an instructional leader, but you also need whatever institutional structure changes need to take place. . . . You know, whatever needs to take place, I think they're the key. I've heard statements that, well, if the faculty don't buy in, it's not going to happen. If the department chairs don't buy in, it's definitely not going to happen because it's never going to get down there. (F3-1)

Most acknowledged that the campus leaders' (provosts and department chairs) roles are overburdened with administrative tasks, but most also want them to become learning leaders on the campuses. Based on the overwhelming belief among interviewees that the campus is the next frontier for advancing the learning-centered agenda, the roles of campus leaders are sure to be redefined in the next months.

But those are all changing. If they're going to lead on the strategic initiatives deep in the college, then they're going to have to emerge as much stronger leaders rather than just managers . . . One of the issues here is that our provosts have largely been managers, not leaders. Campus provosts are hired for and trained for, and reinforced for good management; solve problems at your level, don't let them get downtown. But not for ideas. . . . (need) to help them get reoriented to say, you know what, every month when we talk it's going to be about mostly what are you doing to help us achieve the big goals; that's what really matters. . . . we have a lot of development to do with the chairs. That is, to change the culture in which they've worked, the expectations to which they've responded, the tools that they have to bring to bear on their work, both soft and hard tools, and probably some things

about the organization itself to give them the opportunity to lead rather than chasing their tails on administrivia. (CO4-1)

Concurrent with this belief that leadership must move to the campuses, there is concern about institutionalization. Much of the effort in the learning-centered agenda has resulted from multiple, specific grant-funded activities. Most recognize that this was very beneficial in moving this college forward, to a place where Case College staff interviewed believe they are furthest ahead in the nation in many ways, but to the detriment of not having the agenda be viewed as a “core process” of the college. This will be one area for attention as the next strategies are developed.

The following excerpts provide evidence of the forthcoming changes. In his message to the assembly at the opening conference in August, 2000, the president shared these views:

In hundreds of conversations, e-mails, and documents, catalogued in dozens of cryptic legal pads, I have tried to listen, learn and discern the heart of the college. This process will continue, at some level or another, indefinitely. . . I believe the best leaders give voice to and nurture an authentic vision that comes from deep in the organization. When the vision has these deep roots, it also has the power to leverage real movement in the organization, renewed commitment to arduous efforts on behalf of the vision, and the capacity to persist through the obstacles we may encounter along the way. . .

I believe the transformation of (Case College) into an authentic learning-centered college has the potential to deliver all of these results in time. We are preparing to adopt a new strategic plan. The plan will contain six major goals, all of them an elaboration of the learning paradigm. (President, 2000).

The six goals are identified as: Learning First, Start Right, Learning Leaders, Learning by Design. Learning Support Systems, and Learning Works. He concludes with this request,

. . .if this little summary of the point on the horizon to which I believe we can sail has excited you in any way, then get an oar in the water. We need everyone pulling in the same direction for a journey this significant (President, August, 2000).

This address had not been delivered by the time the initial draft of this research was written. It was discovered in October during a visit to the college's home page as the second draft was being prepared. The address summarizes a new set of goals framed around the learning-centered agenda. It affirms each of the seven strategies identified thus far in the research: collaboration, broad-based engagement, focus, resources, professional development, results orientation, and leadership. It does much to lend credence to the eighth strategy of trust and respect.

Among the informants, there is a strong belief that the new president is going to dramatically change things for the better. Many say they have already learned a great deal from him. Others appear somewhat anxious about what the changes mean for them. Several noted that they were reading the models the president espouses: principle-centered leadership and servant leadership. The excitement about their new leader and the learning-centered and collaborative process utilized to select him permeate the group of leaders interviewed for this research. They are looking for him to become the learning leader.

Our new president . . .is going to be leading college-wide teams, and we are looking at ways to engage the institution to mainstream what we have been doing and what we have been developing throughout the institution, so everybody knows what it is and the way in which we're talking about doing that is to involve the provosts. . . .And we want to sort of develop a model that we haven't developed yet where we sort of talk about the directions of where we want to go and they will probably be similar to what the Vanguard Project is focusing on, but not exactly because we want to use our terminology and components of our initiatives that are underway. So I believe that (the president) is going to focus on doing some college-wide forums. . . .So, our new president, I believe, is going to take the learning-centered initiative and make it a focal point for his leadership of the college. And the

challenge is mainstreaming it, so that people understand that this is important, and it's not the flavor-of-the-month, you know, management strategy. (CO1-1)

I also think we are in a little bit of a transition at (Case College) because we have a new president who has been in place for only 100 days. . . I think he is a fantastic person. Great individual, and I think he will be just great for us. (CBA-5)

And now we have a president who understands it and is committed to it, which I know we need to be patient. But the prospect is--his declared intention is that people, department chairs, will come to him and say, this is what we want to do, and the money will go there, based on what you want to do with it (F1-1).

That the president, top leadership, needs to play a key role in change agendas is widely supported in the literature. Almost every writer about learning-centered colleges, organizational learning, and change efforts in general highlight the importance of top leaders' engagement. In a collegiate environment, this leadership role takes on a more scholarly expectation, as described by the past president of Sinclair Community College,

To encourage positive change, the college president needs to be a scholar of the process, read widely about the issues, develop an internal and external network of experts on the topic of learning, and be a part of the college's learning team--only then will the project move forward. This is not a "jump in, jump out" exercise for the president. (Ponitz, 1997)

That Case College's president recognizes the importance of this role is another of many encouraging signs. He has already demonstrated considerable leadership with having articulated goals that are all learning-centered, asking the college stakeholders to look for the evidence, inviting their input, and hearing their voices. There is no question at this time about what the priorities are.

Strategy 8: Trust/Respect

The last identifiable strategy is trust. What is happening at Case College would not be happening unless there were trust and respect among the participants. Trust and

respect have different meanings, but they are related constructs, as interpreted in this research. Trust suggests that individuals believe that others have the best interests of the college and its students in mind as they make decisions, even if how another may approach a given challenge may be different. Respect suggests that people are treated with dignity and that their opinions matter. These qualities were found to be evident, and their presence allows the other seven to be more effective. There are differences in approaches and some skepticism about styles, but there is a prevailing climate of trust and respect among groups. It is important to note that there was not a specific trust question; these responses came about as a consequence of other queries. Here are examples of what participants have to say about trust,

If I am a faculty member I need to respect the fact that administrators are human beings who are trying to do the right thing. Administrators need to do the right thing with regard to faculty. I think our big mistake is when we get into this us and them foolishness to where we are the good guys and you are the bad guys and everything we do is good and everything you do is bad. That is not true in life and why would it be true here? (F2-1)

Implied in this person's view of trust was that because some individuals were in one group or another should not automatically paint them as "the bad guys." This same faculty member also talked about the golden rule, that he believed in treating others as he wished to be treated. Many campuses have a sharp divide between administrators and faculty, but I did not get this feeling from my conversations with Case College representatives. There was no "bad-mouthing" of individuals in other roles, and there appeared to be genuine interest in engaging people less commonly involved, such as support staff.

The learning process, and the decision-making process based upon that learning, probably was occurring more rapidly. You did not have this distrust because you

have to have a certain level of trust and respect for individuals to make sure that those things occur. (CO1-1)

The first thing to do is trust the people who work for you. Most people are confused about that. They think the problem is to get a leader who is trustworthy, but the real problem with leaders is not that people don't trust them, it's that they don't trust their people (CO4-1).

These two individuals address the importance of trust in a more rapidly changing environment but add an additional dimension. Trust is a two-way street. Not only must one be trustworthy, but one must be trusting. The trust issue is not always framed in this way. There are often questions about trust - whether faculty trust administrators. In this case, an administrator is saying, it starts with my trusting others.

As a result, I can pretty much drive 99 percent of them to do most anything, because they know there's nothing under the table here; I'm up front. The support factor is what makes it run so smoothly because I'm always there. (CBA3-2)

It is hard to say where my sandbox ends and somebody else's begins. And that's a level of comfort that we have with each other as team members and leaders. (CO2-1)

The last quotation talks about trust from another vantage point, that it enables one to work in other areas comfortably, without the skepticism that sometimes accompanies a person's involvement in an area outside of his/her primary responsibilities. Each of these individuals addresses the importance of trust in both organizational change and learning development. They each describe a willingness to trust, and evidence of their expectation that they should be trusted. The literature about the importance of trust in groups is widespread. Critchley writes:

A properly functioning team is one in which: people care for each other; people are open and truthful; there is a high level of trust; decisions are made by consensus; there is a strong team commitment; . . . people really listen to ideas and to feelings; .

. process issues (tasks and feelings) are dealt with. (Critchley, 1996, p. 335-6)

Many of these qualities of the effective team are evident at Case College: open-ness, consensus decision-making, and listening. Both the interviews and the organizational learning instrument reveal an openness. Individuals talk about trust. Edgar Schein, whose work is introduced in Chapter 2, offers these views about trust:

Learning leaders must have faith in people and must believe that ultimately human nature is basically good and in any case mutable. . . Notice that a fully connected network can only work if high trust exists among all the participants and that high trust is partly a function of leader assumptions that people can be trusted and have constructive intent. (Schein, 1992, p. 367)

The trust theme underlies much of what is happening and foretells what may be possible. Elements of a culture include trust and respect, and these are evident, even though when asked to comment on culture informants did not use these terms.

A select group were invited to participate, but there seemed to be lots of candor. With the belief that an accurate portrayal was offered, it was significant that there was almost no criticism of individuals or their efforts. Quite the opposite existed. Although there were many examples of how individuals perceived others' views or actions, there were no comments that suggested that another deserved less trust or respect. This trust and respect for others are among the factors that enable the organization to be collaborative.

Many who write about trust attach it to considerations of leadership. Case College leaders recognize the importance of trust and find it an important quality for achieving their ends.

That trust is a quality as opposed to an action, per se, is a unique interpretation of

strategy. However, interviewees talk about trust as an enabler of their abilities to achieve their goals. In the planning literature, as well as social science literature, there is discussion of enabling objectives or enablers. Trust at Case College is an enabling strategy. It is important in the college's ability to achieve its goals. That one may perceive that using trust is manipulative is a possible interpretation. My conclusion is that trust is a useful strategy that is dependent on leaders' trustworthiness. Trust can easily be violated. In an environment with openness, broad-based engagement, and collaboration, leaders and followers who are not trusting or trustworthy are sure to be seen for what they are. There is a high degree of comfort among those interviewed that trust is a prevailing quality, one which this research concludes is also a strategy.

Chapter 5 - Models in Use

The previous chapter described the shared meaning of a learning-centered college to Case College informants. It also identified the eight strategies in use for creating a more learning-centered college. This chapter will introduce the models in use among Case College informants, identify the barriers, and describe the organization's learning profile, according to one model of organizational learning.

Models in Use

Subquestion c. is "What models do the leaders say they use and/or appear to use in crafting, describing, and/or implementing their strategies for creating more learning-centered colleges?" Many different ways for thinking about models exist. One approach is to consider "mental models," "deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action" (Senge, 1990, p. 8) or "habits of thinking, mental models, and/or linguistic paradigms: the shared cognitive frames that guide the perceptions, thought, and language used by the members of a group and are taught to new members in the early socialization process (Schein, 1979, as cited in Schein, 1992, p. 9).

Another way to think about models is structurally, in ways defined by Merriam

Webster's Collegiate Dictionary:

3. structural design
4. a pattern of something to be made
5. an example for imitation or emulation . . .
11. A description or analogy used to help visualize something that cannot be directly observed . . .

Synonyms to model include example, pattern, exemplar, and ideal. Model applies to

something taken or proposed as worthy of imitation. Pattern suggests a clear and detailed archetype or prototype. Exemplar suggests either a faultless example to be emulated or a perfect typification. Ideal implies the best possible exemplification either in reality or in conception. (Merriam-Webster, 1997)

Each of these conceptions is useful in thinking about models that guide individuals' work in an organization. Especially in a knowledge business, neither models nor strategies are necessarily observable. They may be either or both mental and structural. They may be both concrete and fluid. Such is what was found in eliciting ideas about models from the participants in this research.

Before describing the models, this section's contribution to the research will be explained. Many leaders subscribe to various models which guide their behaviors. Understanding the models guiding the strategy developers may aid our understanding of both current strategies and future directions. Understanding these models also lends depth to our understanding of the strategies, which in this research appear to stand out from the other activities of the organization. Instead, as noted in a citation in the previous chapter, strategies are actually a reflection of the philosophies guiding decision-making. Another important reason for understanding the models was to see the extent to which leaders charged with strategy development were engaged in their own learning development. Understanding the models in use provides a richer perspective of the strategies identified and provides another way to triangulate the findings.

Case College leaders build on the knowledge of others and collectively offer an extensive list of authors whose work has influenced their thinking. Not only could those interviewed cite the work, but they also indicated how the work was useful to them.

Models cited include these: Greenleaf's servant leadership and principle-centered leadership; Kaufman's planning model; Bridges' transitions model; Angelo & Cross's assessment model; O'Banion's learning college model; Cross's collaborative learning Model; Kolb's experiential learning model; and student success models not specifically identified with any expert, but for which research references were offered. Every interviewee drew on the literature, and some did so extensively. Administrators were more likely to use business references while faculty were more likely to cite the education literature. In addition to drawing on external experts, Case College leaders also report extensive use of internal resources.

The new president has introduced the concept of *primus inter pares*, which comes from Roman times (Greenleaf, 1977, p.61); it means first among equals. The primus is the person who is the biggest stakeholder in a particular issue. Greenleaf explains that "there is still a 'first,' a leader, but that leader is not the chief." Sometimes there will be multiple stakeholders. A primus (or primuses) may not serve as the facilitator of the topic, but a decision also will not be made over the objections of a primus. Those who have the most at stake have the most to say. They also have responsibility for bringing intelligence to the others regarding the issue. The *primus inter pares* concept is designed to be an alternative to the boss/subordinate relationship. The implementation of this model is still in early stages. Although it likely will change the collaborative process in this organization, it is too early to assess either the process or its impact.

The president has also brought another of Greenleaf's teachings to Case College, the principle of servant leadership. The servant leadership philosophy is said to have been

1. The first part of the document is a letter from the

2. The second part of the document is a letter from the

3. The third part of the document is a letter from the

based in the 1960s on a Herman Hesse novel, Journey to the East. In explaining this philosophy, Spears, writing in Reflections on Leadership, relates,

The central figure of the story is Leo, who accompanies the party as the servant and who sustains them with his caring spirit. All goes well with the journey until one day Leo disappears. The group quickly falls into disarray, and the journey is abandoned; the group cannot manage without Leo. After many years of searching, the narrator of the story stumbles upon Leo and is taken into the religious order that sponsored the original journey. There, he discovers that Leo, whom he had known as a servant, was in fact the head and guiding spirit of the order—a great and noble leader.

Greenleaf concluded that the central meaning of this story is that great leaders must first serve others, and that this simple fact is central to his or her greatness. True leadership emerges from those whose primary motivation is a desire to help others. (Spears, 1995, p. 3)

At this stage, it is only the president who espouses this philosophy. However, many noted that they were reading Greenleaf's work, and the president has spoken explicitly about building his senior leadership team, so a year from now the conversations may be somewhat different.

Two senior leaders spoke of the planning and organizational elements model of Roger Kaufman. This Florida State University professor offers an interesting planning perspective. It is unlike those associated with some strategic planning experts in that it steps outside the framework of the organization to take into account the larger good. Kaufman writes that achieving sustained organizational success relies on two basic elements,

1. *A societal value-added "frame of mind" or paradigm:* Your perspective about your organization, people, and our world; it is the "paradigm" you use to understand reality.
2. *Pragmatic and basic tools.* (Kaufman, 2000)

Kaufman continues:

The required frame of mind, your guiding paradigm, is simple, straightforward, and sensible. It is to have a primary concern for adding value for external clients and society. From this societal value-added frame, everything one uses, does, produces, and delivers is linked to achieving positive societal results. (Kaufman, 2000, p. xi)

His model has three guides or basic sets of tools: an organizational elements model, a six-step problem-solving model, and six critical success factors. At the highest level on the organizational elements model is outcomes, the “results and their consequences for external clients and society.” The next lower level is outputs, “the results an organization can or does deliver outside itself (Kaufman, 2000, p. xiii). This emphasis on outcomes is consistent with the finding that a results orientation drives strategy at Case College. It is also not surprising since the two people in the college espousing this model are also seen by many to have been the two strongest driving forces behind the learning-centered agenda. The dominant leadership appears to be shifting with the arrival of the new president.

Kaufman’s problem-solving model is similar to others in the literature and includes these steps: identify the problem, determine solution requirements and alternatives, select solution(s), implement, and determine the effectiveness and efficiency. In addition to describing this as a problem-solving model, Kaufman also suggests that it can be used to identify opportunities.

The Critical Success Factors he espouses are these,

- 1. Use new and wider boundaries for thinking, planning, doing, and evaluating/continuously improving: move out of today’s comfort zones.**
- 2. Differentiate between ends and means—focus on “What” before “How.”**

3. Use all three levels of planning and results.
4. Prepare objectives—including ideal vision and mission objectives—that have measures of how you will know when you have arrived.
5. Define “need” as a gap in results
6. Use an ideal vision as the underlying basis for planning.

I was not familiar with this model prior to conducting the research, even though I am familiar with other planning models. There are aspects of the model that are highly consistent with other business and strategic planning models. There are aspects, however, that appear unique. The two Case College leaders with considerable authority for the learning-centered initiative share enthusiasm for this model and say that it guides their work.

Some interviewees also cited the work of Bridges as influencing their work. All observed that they were in transition; some acknowledged that change is difficult. Some found comfort in Managing Transitions with its down-to-earth approach to adapting to any types of changes. In introducing how transitions apply to change situations, Bridges writes,

Change is situational: the new site, the new boss, the new team roles, the new policy. *Transition* is the psychological process people go through to come to terms with the new situation. Change is external, transition is internal. (Bridges, 1991)

Bridges notes that the greatest problem organizations face is not recognizing that to change requires some letting go; people experience feelings of loss. He describes the neutral zone that follows as both a “dangerous and an opportune place” (Bridges, 1991, p.

- 6). A series of exercises is provided for identifying who has what to lose, the steps to

moving to the other side, and similar activities. In summarizing how people in transition view their position, he offers this,

But even the best-laid plans leave a troubling doubt in the minds of some people. They don't see *their* names on the wall chart. No one has told them how *they* fit into the new scheme of things. No one has given *them* any role to play in the journey itself. The purpose, the picture, and the plan all omit something: a part for them to play. Until that is provided, many people will feel left out and will find it difficult to make a new beginning. (Bridges, 1991, p. 59)

The fact that two members of the top leadership team cited this resource as one that guides their work is an encouraging sign. Attention is being paid to the emotional aspects associated the change toward becoming a more learning-centered institution. The process is more than a rational, planning activity, and the leaders have acknowledged this. On the other hand, the person who most espoused this philosophy has subsequently left the college.

Faculty and professional developers were more likely to cite Angelo and Cross, O'Banion, Weinstein, student success models, or the collaboration advanced by Johnson, Johnson, and Smith as they described their models. Angelo was fresh in the minds of some because of the emphasis on assessment and the fact that he was at the college for workshops between the first and second interview periods and in each of the past two years. Patricia Cross's most recent monograph, Collaborative Learning 101, had also just been received by several Case College staff, since the 2000 Innovations conference was attended by many. This publication was first distributed at this conference. Active learning, with a particular emphasis upon collaborative learning, were major themes in the learning-centered professional development efforts.

The Cross publication is specifically directed at the use of collaborative learning in classroom settings. She develops a stream metaphor in explaining collaborative learning and speaks to the convergence of these streams: belonging, career preparation, deep learning, and diversity. Some connection to collaboration in a work environment can be drawn. Cross writes,

...the Stream of Belonging flows quite naturally into the river of collaborative learning because collaborative learning provides an opportunity to share experiences that matter with others engaged in similar activities. (Cross, 2000, p. 5)

This metaphor fits Case College as there was great evidence revealed through both the interviews and the organizational learning survey that demonstrates that individuals share experiences and are engaged in shared purposes or “similar activities.” Regarding diversity, Cross writes,

The Stream of Diversity is full and exciting, and it is a major contributor to the fast-moving river of collaborative learning because it provides the challenge to think in new ways and to gain practice in reconciling different perspectives. (Cross, 2000, p. 6)

Cross’s concepts relate well to collaboration and the emphasis upon hearing from diverse voices at Case College. Evidence exists of thinking in new ways and of embracing diversity. A major new theme, partially because it has federal funds to support it, is enhancing diversity awareness and appreciation. Examples are provided earlier of reconciling different perspectives, such as the examples cited for developmental education, computer purchases, and speed of change. Cross’s collaborative learning model addresses the traditional student learner, but it also fits for organizational actors. Case College interviewees embrace both collaboration and collaborative learning models.

Another model in evidence at Case College comes from the business literature - the BHAG, a “big hairy audacious goal.” BHAG is a term coined by authors Collins and Porras in their book Built to Last. The writers describe it this way,

Visionary companies often use bold missions—or what we prefer to call BHAGs (pronounced bee-hags, short for “Big Hairy Audacious Goals”)—as a powerful mechanism to stimulate progress. . . . Like the moon mission, a true BHAG is clear and compelling and serves as a unifying focal point of effort—often creating immense team spirit. It has a clear finish line, so the organization can know when it has achieved the goal; people like to shoot for finish lines. . . A BHAG engages people—it reaches out and grabs them in the gut. It is tangible, energizing, highly focused. People “get it” right away; it takes little or no explanation. (Collins and Porras, 1994, p. 94-5)

Three interviewees referred to BHAGs. This emphasis is consistent with the attitude that it is important to focus on important things, in this case, student success. One suggested this,

And one of the BHAGs would be to double that graduation rate. Now, I think that’s entirely doable; we know how to do that, we just have not organized ourselves to make it happen. (CO2-1)

This interviewee speaks of focus but some lack of alignment. In his August address to the Assembly, the president lays out several other BHAGs in a series of “What Ifs,” some of which follow,

What if:

- (The college’s) core competencies—Think, Value, Act, and Communicate—were demonstrated by every graduate of the college?
- Successful completion of each class taught at (the college) really meant mastery of the learning outcomes?
- Completion/graduation rates of our prep students were as high as students who required no remediation?

- These extraordinary success rates were no different for students from any socio-economic background, language group, ethnicity, or nationality?
- The number and percent of graduates at (the college) doubled?

And, not incidentally, What If:

- (the college) was a model of a healthy work and learning community - a place where work was nourishing, relationships were imbued with respect and mutuality, personal and professional growth were habitually supported, leaders were servants, action was nurtured by reflection, and every day included the potential for fun, even joy, in our labor and legacy? (President, August, 2000)

The president has laid out a number of BHAGs. It is apparent that he believes in this model as well. Other informants have also identified some clear BHAGs, even if they do not label them in this way. Because they are all focused on “the main thing,” people understand them, such as graduation rates, learning gains, and equitable achievement. There is no explanation needed about what doubling the graduation rate, as one example, means.

The Kolb model for experiential learning was also mentioned by several. There appears to be a high level of understanding of the importance of recognizing individual differences. One way in which this is acknowledged is by referring to the Kolb model and suggesting that faculty should teach around the model in addressing the learning styles of their students. Case College has also closely linked its general education learning outcomes with this model, which makes for a tight connection between the two and is likely to result in greater utilization of the Kolb model in this learning environment. The recent presentation to the Executive Council by the team advocating the “front door” project weaves the Kolb model and the college’s identified core competencies together in

an intriguing learning model.

A major institutional thrust for becoming more learning-centered rests with two programs for advising and career and life planning. Although no specific reference was made to particular external models for student success, a bibliography of resources that guided this work was provided. Major investments are being made in engaging students more actively in planning their futures. A major launch of this initiative, accompanied by extensive advertising support, was planned for the fall of 2000. Embracing the literature that documents the importance of involving students, academic planning, career planning, and support for goal achievement, Case College leaders have taken steps to implement systems to enhance the college's performance in these areas. This is an emerging strategy of the college for becoming more learning-centered.

A large number of models are in evidence. Extensive reading is apparent. Sharing seems common. Several external references guide Case College leaders.

Barriers

Subquestion d is "What barriers do leaders perceive stand in the way of becoming a more learning-centered college?" Participants were asked to identify the barriers they saw to becoming more learning-centered. It is a given that there will be obstacles to change (Dolence & Norris, 1995; Alfred & Carter, 1999). Barriers identified were inertia, bureaucracy, naysayers, large number of part-time faculty, or conversely, the lack of sufficient full-time faculty, lack of space, communication among departments, from campus to campus, lack of learning leadership from the campuses, fear, the preparedness of students, challenge of mainstreaming, institutionalization, lack of knowledge about the

process of change, time, support from immediate supervisors, organizational structure, lack of adequate evidence to make a convincing case for change, lack of time for reflection, feelings of blame (that what's being done is not right), distance between campuses, insecurities about change, growth demands, training and retraining of staff, and the pace of technology. There was no shortage of ideas about the many barriers to change toward becoming a more learning-centered institution. It is notable that many were able to identify more barriers than strategies. In talking about the barriers, however, some suggested how efforts were proceeding to overcome some.

Many of the barriers noted above were named by just one person. The three most frequently cited barriers were adjunct faculty, leadership, and communication. The concern about adjunct faculty is focused on the need to keep them abreast of the learning-centered agenda. There is high turnover among adjunct faculty, and these individuals are generally not immersed in the developing culture of the organization. Leadership concerns were focused primarily at the campus level. Some felt that because the leadership was emerging from grants activities that it had not sufficiently influenced campus life, because it appeared on the side and was not seen as an important role for department chairs or provosts. Several believed more leadership needed to happen at the campus levels, and they believed that at present it had a more central source. This centralization of the agenda occurred naturally, since much of the learning-centered initiative has been funded by outside grants that had their own staffs. However, most staff were on loan from the campuses to the projects.

It is important to note here that although leadership was noted as one of the top

three barriers, this leadership “barrier” was directed exclusively toward some campus leaders: provosts and department chairs. Perhaps because most interviewees were members of a productive group since 1996, the Learning-Centered Initiative Team, their shared belief is that leadership is strong within the team and at the central college level.

Communication is a major barrier, because of the large number of people to be communicated with and the geographic dispersion of the campuses, along with individuals’ choices to engage or not engage in opportunities. Communication would be found to be a concern on most campuses, including much smaller ones.

The following quotations illustrate the barriers listed. The first one addresses the challenges of communications in this multi-campus college with a large number of adjunct faculty, who comprise a major proportion of the individuals who interact with Case College students. This interviewee addresses concerns about getting regular staff more involved as well as the dilemma posed by the large number of part-time personnel.

(Referring to a faculty member who raised questions in a task force meeting) But we need to really listen carefully to those other voices because she has some wonderful things to offer. So we’re struggling with some of that . . . What about the people who haven’t stepped up, who do have something to offer? How do we hear their voices? If they’re making decisions not to attend, for whatever reason, the opportunities that are offered, how then do we benefit from what they do have to say? . . . Because among the people who have stepped forward and who have worked on this, we’ve learned a lot together. But because so many of our faculty are adjunct and don’t really have the time very often, even if they do have the inclination, and we’re not paying them for it--to come to these other things. . . And it really represents a lot of the people who stand in front of our students and either know or don’t know what our mission is really about. So that’s a concern. (CBA4-1)

This individual likewise addresses communications as a problem, but this person notes that an additional barrier is posed when “nay-sayers” bring initiatives to a halt. There is an

awareness at this college that there will always be people who do not support given directions.

So barriers would be college-wide communication in a multi-campus setting; the disconnect between the discussion and the development of the initiative. Another barrier is the nay-sayers who can sometimes just bring things to a halt, and I think one of the things that we've done on our learning-centered initiative is engage people in the discussion, but not let the nay-sayers hold us up. And, in fact, some of the nay-sayers have joined in and are now participating in the process. (CO1-2)

Time. It takes time, and some people want more time, they think things are going too slow, and some others think it should have happened already. So just different time lines from different individuals can sometimes cause some problems, some conflicts. And when you are trying something that's new, there isn't always a path to follow. So you try things that don't always work. And you have to have to be prepared for that, so that if there are problems, and if there are failures, that you don't throw up your hands and give up. And if you're prepared for that, it's not that much of a barrier. But if you have an institution or administrators that are not prepared for that, then that can become a problem. (F3-1)

Some improvements are already underway. The barriers faced are not unique to this college nor this agenda. They are highly consistent with what is written about other colleges' change challenges. The problems are not structure, as one participant observed, but rather the fabric of the organization. Flynn summarizes it this way,

Given the nature of our colleges--their history and tradition, their commitment to shared governance and consensus building, and a substantial institutional culture that seems to resist change - the impediments to organizational transformation in our colleges are formidable. (Flynn, 1998, p. 5)

Barriers confront every organization and most change efforts, and Case College is not an exception to this rule.

Case College's Learning Profile

Subquestion e is "What is this organization's learning profile (as reported by leader-informants' responses to the Organizational Transitions learning inventory), and how

similar are the perceptions of individual leaders concerning the organization's learning profile? A number of instruments exist for assessing the extent of organizational learning in evidence or how far along an organization is on its journey toward becoming a learning organization. Many organizational climate and culture instruments are also in use.

Recently, the League for Innovation produced an instrument for assessing learning-centeredness in a college. The Case College team completed this instrument at their week-long workshop, but the results were not available at the time of this research. The data from the instruments is expected to be used in the League for Innovation's research concerning the 12 Vanguard Colleges which will be available in the future. In addition to identifying the strategies in use at this college, I had an interest in understanding whether the college leaders' strategies were related to organizational learning. Any of a number of tools could have been used to gain additional perspective about learning at Case College. The Organizational Transitions learning inventory was selected for this purpose. At the end of this report of the findings from the instrument, a review of the tool's utility and value to the research will be offered.

Each of the ten initial interviewees was asked to complete the "Building Organizational Learning Capability" learning inventory. All completed the form and Excel spreadsheets were prepared for each question; means and standard deviations were calculated for the overall summaries (ordinal data). Frequency tables were prepared for the factors in the learning orientations pairs, since these response options constituted nominal data. Crosstabs using SPSS software were performed on the facilitating factors on the variables of gender and classification (administrator or faculty). The spreadsheets

and the SPSS reports were used in analyzing the results. It is important to note that individuals are self-reporting their perceptions of the college's actions on the identified questions. This is one place where espoused theories and theories-in-use could differ. There is no attempt to compensate for this limitation.

Learning Orientations, as described in Chapter 2, reflect how learning takes place in an organization. No style is considered better or worse, although some style characteristics may be more or less productive in given organizations or at different times. As the summary information is presented below, an important caution is to remember that the profile was completed by only 10 individuals in an organization of more than 2000 employees. The findings cannot be generalized to the rest of the organization. However, the group was comprised of various classifications: executive administrators, mid-level administrators, and faculty. The high degree of consistency among the responses at minimum represents considerable alignment within this leadership group.

Copies of the spreadsheets are included as an Appendix. To aid in understanding the following narrative, a review of the design of the questions may be helpful. For each of the seven learning orientations, there are four or five pairs of items where respondents must select the choice they prefer (a forced-response item). Each of the items is a descriptor that falls into one or another category. For each orientation, the categories are different. For Learning Orientation 1, the categories of responses are either internal or external. Respondents may choose among the five pairs of items by selecting one in either the internal or external column. For example, individuals are asked to choose among the following options:

Pair 1:

(Internal) We value the knowledge we gain from our own experience.

(External) We value the knowledge created by others.

Pair 2:

(Internal) We encourage learning from our own actions and are likely to be an innovator in the way we do things.

(External) We encourage learning from the actions of others and are likely to emulate the work of others.

In addition, at the end of Learning Orientation 1, respondents are asked to provide an overall average. The overall average should be derived from their individual assessment of whether they had more responses in one column than the other. In the example provided, they would choose whether they chose more or mostly internal or external responses or whether they chose an even number (a rating of 3, on a scale of 1-5). The narrative which follows examines each of the seven Learning Orientations. The definitions provided at the beginning of each of the seven are taken directly from the instrument, and are the definitions the informants should have read before responding.

Learning Orientations

Learning Orientation 1 refers to Knowledge Source; the dimensions are internal and external. Learning Orientation 1 is defined as “Preference for developing knowledge internally as compared to preference for acquiring knowledge developed externally.” The mean of 1.9 (1 is mostly internal; 5 is mostly external) placed the composite view as being “more internal” than external. The standard deviation on this question was .74. Strongest agreement was registered with “we encourage learning from our own actions and are

likely to be an innovator in the way we do things,” and “we believe in being the first to develop a new product or technique,” with 8 of 10 respondents making these two selections.

Learning Orientation 2 refers to the Content-Process Focus, with a range from 1 to 5, with 1 representing a more content focus and 5 representing a process focus. Learning orientation 2 is defined as “Emphasis on accumulation of knowledge about **what** products/services are as compared to emphasis on accumulation of knowledge about **how** those products/services are developed, delivered, or improved. Case College respondents’ mean is 3.5, with a standard deviation of .71. Case College respondents report that the college is more process oriented than content focused. Respondents were more divided in their responses to this question than on Learning Orientation 1, with 6 (of 10) selecting a more process focus while three selected a content focus on most questions. (One informant selected a point between 1 and 2.) The one more content-oriented response that many selected was this one: “Individuals who create or deliver our products are appreciated more than those who support them,” with six (of 10) selecting this option. The other choices had a majority in the “process” column, with 6 (of 10) selecting three of the remaining four pairs from the process choices.

Learning Orientation 3 profiles the Knowledge Reserve. Options are personal or public. The definition is “Knowledge is possessed by individuals as compared to knowledge that is publicly available.” Case College respondents’ mean is 2.7 for the overall, representing a close-to-even response.” (1.0 is mostly personal; 2 is more personal; 3 is even; 4 is more public; and 5 is mostly public). Eighty percent agreed with

“we talk to leaders and long-term members of our business unit to gather knowledge about our history” (personal) and 7 (of 10) agreed with “When we need knowledge, we turn to the person most expert in that domain” (personal). Seven agreed with “We make every effort to document what we have learned, especially our methods and processes, so that they can be easily passed on to others” (public). The group was most divided on the question of whether “we put little stock in legends or myths about our history” and “we place great value on legends or myths about our history.” Comments on this question suggest that Case College relies on both data and stories and that they utilize both internal and external consultants and expertise.

Learning Orientation 4 addresses the Dissemination Mode. The definition is “Knowledge is shared in formal, prescribed methods as compared to knowledge that is shared through informal methods, such as role modeling and casual interaction.” Case College respondents’ mean on this orientation is 3.6, “more informal,” with a standard deviation of 1.174 (1 is mostly formal; 2 is more formal; 3 is even; 4 is more informal; and 5 is mostly informal). The standard deviation on this item at 1.174 is larger than all except one other. Strongest agreement was with the statement “When we solve a problem or develop or provide a new service, we make formal announcements,” which is in the choices column for formal dissemination mode. Eight (of 10) selected this response. The greatest deviation was with a choice between these two: “When we add new members, we share knowledge about our work through formal methods or written documentation,” a choice made by 4, and “When we add new members, we share knowledge about our work through informal or verbal methods,” selected by 5 informants. One person selected

an option between the two.

Learning Orientation 5 concerns Learning Scope. This orientation is defined as “Preference for knowledge related to the improvement of existing products, services or capabilities as compared to preference for knowledge related to the development of new ones.” The continuum ranges from incremental to transformative. Case College representatives’ mean is 3.8 on this dimension, more transformational (3 is even and 4 is “more transformational”). The fact that this rating is nearly equidistant between two scores suggests that respondents view the college as only slightly more transformational than incremental. The standard deviation on this item is 1.32. Nine agreed with the statement “Even when things are going well, we think about change” (a transformative description). Each of the other pairs had 6 or 7 of the respondents choosing the transformational option. Consequently, although respondents selected only slightly more transformational on the overall average, with a large majority they selected the transformative option in every one of the pairs, suggesting a more transformative learning orientation.

Learning Orientation 6 refers to Value-Chain Focus, a choice between “design and make” functions versus “sales or service” activities. It is defined as “Emphasize learning investments in engineering or production activities (“design and make”) functions versus sales or service activities (“market and deliver”) functions.” This terminology is very business-laden, but the answer choices could be related to an education context. Case College respondents’ mean is 3.1, with some discrepancy among responses, a standard deviation of 1.10. An overall rating of 3.1 places Case College in the “Even” descriptor

between focus on design/make versus market/deliver. Strongest agreement was registered with “The quest for service to the customer outweighs everything,” with 9 selecting this response. This is a “market/deliver” descriptor. Second highest agreement was “Other firms are likely to want to benchmark with us in areas of the “design and make” functions,” a design/make descriptor (6 responses). Respondents were almost equally divided on the two other choices.

The final Learning Orientation, number 7, is Learning Focus, a choice between individual and group. It means the “Development of knowledge and skills pertaining to individual performance as compared to the development of knowledge and skills pertaining to group performance.” It is this one that had the greatest discrepancy. The overall mean is 3.4, a descriptor of slightly more group oriented than individual oriented (3 = even; 4 = more group oriented). There is strong agreement among this group at Case College that teams can achieve more than individuals. In this learning orientation, the most “individual” oriented response of the pairs came on the choice between “When we hire individuals, we are most interested in their ability to perform a specific function,” with 4 people making this choice, while 5 chose the group response of “when we hire individuals, we are most interested in their ability to work well with others.”

In summary, the respondents report that Case College is a college that is generally adept along both ends of the continua on many aspects of the learning profile. Most of the overall ratings were close to the “even” (3) rating. However, Case College exhibits the following preferences: learns internally, is process-focused, more personal, informal, transformational, and group oriented. It is about evenly attentive to “design and make,”

and “Market/Deliver.” Among these, the strongest learning orientation dimensions are the internal knowledge source (LO-1, 1.1 points away from an even rating of 3); informal dissemination mode (LO-4, .6 from even), transformative learning scope (LO-5, .5 away from even), and slightly more process focus than content (LO-2, .5 away from even). These findings are summarized in the following table.

Table 6 Summary of Reported Learning Orientations

Learning Orientation	Rating	Distance from Even	Descriptor
LO-1 Knowledge Source	1.9	1.1	More Internal than External
LO-2 Content-Process Focus	3.5	.5	Slightly more Process Focus than Content
LO-3 Knowledge Reserve	2.7	.3	Slightly more Personal than Public
LO-4 Dissemination Mode	3.6	.6	More Informal than Formal
LO-5 Learning Scope	3.8	.8	Slightly more Transformational than Incremental
LO-6 Value-Chain Focus	3.1	.1	Even between Design/Make and Market/Deliver
LO-7 Learning Focus	3.4	.4	Slightly more Group Oriented than Individual

Coding: 1 = Mostly first dimension; 2 = more first dimension; 3 = even; 4 = more second dimension; 5 = mostly second dimension.

This perspective of the learning orientations of Case College respondents is helpful in enriching the description of the organization’s strategies. The learning orientations, as self-reported, are generally consistent with the strategies identified. For example, one strategy identified was professional development. As understood in this context, professional development generally referred to group activities, a finding which is

consistent with the learning focus orientation results. The college leaders view themselves as transformational, as they talk about their national leadership, and this instrument identified this orientation. Although none of the orientations is particularly strong, in that it received a strong “mostly” rating, it could be interpreted to suggest that this organization is agile. Additional study would be required to make this determination. The internal emphasis as the strongest orientation may stem directly from some unsatisfactory experiences with some external consultants. Many spoke of learning from each other, and the revelation in this learning orientation about knowledge source would reinforce that view.

Facilitating Factors

In contrast with learning orientations, facilitating factors are considered better or worse for promoting organizational learning. The higher the ranking, the more effective the respondents consider the college to be on a given organizational learning dimension. The scale for each facilitating factor ranges from 1 through 7, with the following descriptors: 1-2, little evidence to support this factor; 3-5, some evidence to support this factor; and 6-7, extensive evidence to support this factor. On the instrument, a box exists for each number, with the descriptors below, so individuals would easily be able to make relative choices among the various numbers, even though several have the same descriptors. The facilitating factors will be analyzed next.

Facilitating factors are presented different from learning orientations in the instrument. In this section, informants are provided with a definition and several examples of the factor. Then they are asked to place an X in the box that best describes their work-

group or organization. The boxes are labeled 1 through 7, with the following descriptors:

- 1-2 Little evidence to support this factor
- 3-5 Some evidence to support this factor
- 6-7 Extensive evidence to support this factor

For facilitating factor 1, Scanning Imperative, the following examples are provided:

- We devote time and resources to study our business environment.
 - We periodically ask clients and customers about their perception of our performance.
 - We devote time to the study of developing trends in our industry or profession.
 - Staff in our unit maintain contact with customers, suppliers, competitors, and the government in areas we do business.
 - Information from the external environment provides opportunities for learning.
 - Comparative studies of competitors or suppliers are used in setting standards.
- (DiBella, Nevis, & Gould, 1998)

Facilitating Factor 1, Scanning Imperative, refers to gathering “information about conditions and practices outside the unit; seeking out information about the external environment.” Case College respondents report a mean of 6 on this factor, falling on the lower end of the “extensive evidence to support this factor.” Standard deviation is .667.

Facilitating Factor 2 refers to Performance Gap, the “shared perception of gap between current performance and desired performance.” The respondents’ mean is 5.6, on the upper end of “some evidence to support this factor.”

Facilitating Factor 3 refers to a Concern for Measurement, which is defined as “considerable effort is spent defining or measuring key factors. Discourse over metrics is regarded as a learning activity.” Case College respondents’ mean is 5.9, on the very high end of “some evidence.”

Facilitating Factor 4 is Organizational Curiosity, “curiosity about conditions and practices; interest in creative ideas and new technologies; support for experimentation.”

Case College respondents' mean is 5.8, registering on the upper end of "some evidence."

Facilitating Factor 5 is Climate of Openness. This factor addresses "open communications among organization members; problems, errors, or lessons are shared, not hidden." Case College respondents' mean is 5.8 on this scale, the high end of "some evidence to support this factor."

Facilitating Factor 6 refers to Continuous Education. This is one of the two highest rated facilitating factors at Case College, with a mean of 6.0 and a standard deviation of .158. Continuous education is described as "commitment of quality resources for learning. It is somewhat surprising that this factor was not rated even higher, because the researcher's observation is that extensive resources, both from the college and from outside grant resources, have been dedicated to learning opportunities or resources.

Facilitating Factor 7 concerns Operational Variety. Operational variety refers to valuing different methods, procedures, and competencies; appreciate diversity." Case College respondents' mean is 5.3, one of the two lowest-rated items among the ten. The standard deviation is 1.23.

Multiple Advocates is the descriptor for Facilitating Factor 8. It means "new ideas and methods can be advanced by employees at all organizational levels. Multiple advocates or champions exist." The mean is 5.4, on the high end of "some evidence." This factor had the largest standard deviation of 1.506.

Facilitating Factor 9 is Involved Leadership. This factor resulted in a mean of 5.5 with a standard deviation of 1.179. This particular factor is expected to change in another year, because there is a new president and efforts are underway to involve more leaders,

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including the Board.

The final factor, Systems Perspective, is number 10. Respondents' mean is 5.3, with a standard deviation of 1.25, placing it tied with one other factor for the lowest rating and a higher standard deviation. Only facilitating factor 8 had more deviation among respondents. The definition is "recognition of interdependence among organizational units and groups; awareness of time delay between actions and their outcomes." In phase 2 interviews, there was a question concerning systems perspective. Most had little understanding of this term. This is not a particularly surprising finding, since the terminology is far more common in business settings. In addition, none of the extensive literature cited by informants included resources that addressed systems perspectives. The closest would be Kaufman, with his organizational elements model, but no one specifically commented on the systems nature of this model.

Tests of significance were done on the facilitating factors to determine whether there are any significant differences among respondents on the variables of classification type and gender. There was no significant difference found among any of the facilitating factors except number 4, Organizational Curiosity. On this factor, there was a statistically significant difference between the responses of faculty and administrators. Faculty rate Case College's organizational curiosity lower than administrators do. Examples of organizational curiosity provided in the instrument included these:

- We recognize and reward those who develop and try out new ideas, even when their actions lead to unexpected or negative results.
- We always try to understand how things work.

- We are receptive to unanticipated events and use them to learn.
- Members of our unit continually inquire into innovative and creative ideas.
- Asking questions is highly valued.
- Experimentation is encouraged.
- We often engage in brainstorming exercises.

The fact that there is this discrepancy should become an area of inquiry for Case College. Obviously administrators feel more positively about the amount of evidence that exists to support questioning and experimentation than faculty believe to be evident. Some faculty members did express the view that they were not confident how comfortable classified staff may be in speaking out on issues. At the same time the fact that this is the only factor on which there was variation is also significant. There were no significant differences on any of the other factors on the basis of gender or position, the two factors considered. There is great consistency in the views of this leadership group.

In summary, Case College has some or extensive evidence of all of the facilitating factors contributing to organizational learning. Rated highest are their Scanning Imperative (FF1) and Continuous Education (FF6); lowest are Operational Variety (FF7) and Systems Perspective (FF10). The only significant difference was observed in the factor of organizational curiosity (FF4) where administrators judged this quality to be higher than faculty did. There is great congruence among respondents on almost all of the factors.

Analysis of Instrument for Use in Community Colleges

One objective in using the instrument was to determine its utility in an analysis of a

college's learning. Some feedback about the questionnaire was received from participants, but there was no question in the interview process which addressed the survey form. The findings in this section will be drawn almost exclusively from my perspective in analyzing the instruments and the summary results. Several respondents took considerably more time than others in completing the forms. When asked for examples of the evidence in open-ended questions within the survey form, the three faculty, the president, and one vice president took time to provide examples on many of the questions. The other five did not. From this result, it would seem that administering the instrument within a group setting where there was time to complete the entire questionnaire may be a better technique. The authors suggest that it be used in this way. Some appear to have hurriedly completed the form; with the busy-ness of the agenda of all of these individuals, this is not surprising. Some noted that they had little time to dedicate to this activity. Nevertheless, because the responses are highly synchronized with the interview responses, the instrument appears reliable.

There would have been value in having the opportunity to discuss why individuals responded as they did. This activity could serve as a useful learning activity in a future setting. Some commented that some questions were hard for them to answer. One member found the form inconsistent with her understandings of organizational learning, although when questioned about this inconsistency, no specific observations were offered. It is possible that the dichotomous nature of many of the questions, that one must answer either one way or the other, was incompatible with this person's response style. It is acknowledged that this arbitrary forced response negates the potential for important

dialogue about how different settings may invoke different responses and other similar conversations. Administration of the questionnaire in a group setting may provide opportunities for exploring these ideas further.

For most questions, the means hovered around the middle - not on either extreme of the dichotomous choices offered for most learning orientations. Most facilitating factors were rated above the mid-point. The form did not seem to be discriminating for this audience, but it would be useful to have similar data from groups less close to the front lines of the learning-centered agenda.

Utilizing the Kaufman planning model as one guide, this tool could be helpful in identifying gaps between present and desired performance. It could also demonstrate where perceptions vary most among different groups. Ten individuals was simply too small a number in this college to draw many useful inferences. The tool was useful, however, in verifying the researcher's findings about sources of information, degree of innovation, and consistency of views. By itself it would provide minimal insight; coupled with the interviews and observations, it helped to triangulate some of the data. The limitation of this being a self-report instrument must also be acknowledged. In a widely read group, as Case College respondents are, there may be some responses that appeared more right - better to espouse - than others did. Further, additional investigation into how these ratings relate to those found in other settings, such as business and health care, could lend additional perspective.

The survey sheds perspective on the interviewees' perceptions of the college's learning orientations and learning strengths (the facilitating factors). This data is helpful in

gaining a perspective on this organization's learning profile and subsequently contrasting its organizational learning with its strategies for becoming more learning-centered.

Knowing how the strategies in use align with characteristics of learning orientations and facilitating factors adds some richness to the part of the research question that sought to understand how the college's strategies relate to organizational learning. The tool will be far more useful when we can contrast the responses from this college with other higher education institutions.

In an effort to see whether the responses from Case College would be unique, the researcher invited another set of leaders in another community college to complete the instrument. Although less analysis of the second group's findings was conducted, it is clear that Case College rates itself much more highly on most of the facilitating factors than a small group of leaders in comparable positions in another college did. There are significant differences between the descriptions of the two colleges, however. The learning orientations profile of the two, based on these limited numbers of responses, would appear quite different. Recommendations will be provided in Chapter 6 regarding this topic.

Perspectives on Culture

The DiBella/Nevis and Schein models of organizational learning talk extensively about culture, but culture is not a dominant theme at Case College. There is also little coherent view of the culture. In fact, most describe the culture as multiple cultures. The one common theme running through descriptions was a focus on learners.

Culture influences how organizational actors behave. That this college has made the

progress it has with the many complexities it faces is impressive. Larger organizations typically have a more difficult time engaging people, because of the sheer volume of individuals. Case College has created an environment that allows it to make progress on the learning-centered agenda. Recognizing that most models of organizational learning address culture, the second round of interviews asked each respondent to describe the college's culture. Here are some examples of what they said.

(It is) Pluralistic. I mean that we're not monolithic. There are lots of different interests and vested interests and we bend over backwards to accommodate everybody. We've not pushed people into a single mold. And it makes for a lower incident of unhappiness, generally, but it also makes for extremely convoluted policies. (CBA2-2)

We are more collaborative than we have been in the past. We are student centered, we are very energetic, we like to try a lot of innovations. And that can be dangerous because you can go in too many different directions. We have an environment where a lot of ideas are encouraged, in the past they have not been supported financially so they tended to remain as innovations on the sidelines or in pockets and not a part of the mainstream. And I'm hoping that now with us taking a new look at culture, it will change in that regard. I think we have a culture where people like to work, I think people find it a friendly environment. (CO1-2)

I think the culture at (Case College), probably there are several of them, but I think the main culture of the college until very recently, has been a culture of belief in helping students. Probably the best way to describe it is to say that we've had many, many focus groups with students over the history of the college and what we hear them say as far as not changing things is concerned, is small classes that relate their professional/personal relationship with faculty members, and the degree to which faculty members help individual students and mentor them along. It's unofficial mentoring, but it's a very, very close knit kind of helping students in the academic environment. I think that's our culture. (CBA1-2)

Well, the culture is one that I think very much values opportunity for everyone, and values virtually everyone that darkens the doorstep having the capacity to move ahead. So that's always been a part of it. I think it is a very student-centered culture and always has been. What I think has changed about that in recent years is the dawning of an understanding that you could be student centered and not learning centered. To date, historically, I think it's been very student centered. Open, values

people, values the potential of all people, that's still true. (CO2-2)

Culture. Very much under change right now and I have noticed a big change over the last few months since (the president) came on board. Even though there's always been a sense of collaboration, in the past it was, "administrators, let's talk to faculty and see what they think. (F3-2)

There is so little consistency in the interpretations of the culture, and most observe that it is in a state of transition. If we were to summarize the views of culture at Case College, it would be that there are several cultures, that students are central, and that the culture is in transition.

Culture is one of the six objectives in the factors for attention in the Vanguard project, which means attention will increasingly be paid to culture in the next phase of the college's strategy implementation. Indirectly, people are already talking about culture as they talk about becoming more learning-centered. At a later date, there could be a more consistent view of culture in the organization.

Strategies' Relationship to Organizational Learning

The second part of the primary research question, how the strategies relate to the premises of organizational learning, will be considered next. In answering this part, the model of DiBella and Nevis, described in chapter 2 and reported on in previous sections, will be utilized along with other theorists' views of organizational learning.

The evidence presented in the two findings chapters, 4 and 5, concerning strategies for becoming more learning-centered, barriers, and the organizational learning profile, are used to make this determination. Considerable evidence exists that relates the strategies of the college for creating a more learning-centered college to the premises of organizational

learning. The strategies discovered at Case College for becoming a more learning-centered college are the following:

1. Collaboration
2. Broad-based engagement
3. Focus
4. Resources
5. Professional Development
6. Results orientation
7. Leadership
8. Trust/Respect

How Strategies Relate

Two approaches will be used to explore Case College strategies' relationship to organizational learning. One will be the DiBella/Nevis/Gould model, presented earlier. It contains a learning cycle model, learning orientations, and facilitating factors. Data from the organizational learning inventory will inform this section. A figure depicting the model is in the Appendices.

A second approach will be to highlight some evidence that demonstrates how Case College aligns with some anticipated qualities. In Chapter 6, as the findings are interpreted, the findings will be used to explain how they may inform strategy development in other organizations and set the stage for future research.

Case College respondents overall reported extensive evidence to support each of the ten Facilitating Factors of the DiBella/Nevis/Gould model. Although some factors were slightly stronger than others, there was insignificant difference among the assessments of respondents for all but one of the factors. It is important to remember that the individuals surveyed are close to the learning-centered agenda; we cannot extrapolate these results to others in the organization. Analyzing the responses of this group, it is apparent that the

strongest ratings were given to factors in the first phase of the learning cycle, acquisition of knowledge.

In this category, the higher responses of scanning imperative (FF1), concern for measurement (FF3), and organizational curiosity (FF4) would be placed. Two of the highest factors would be in the dissemination phase of the organizational learning cycle: continuous education and climate of openness. None are in the segment of the model relating to utilization of knowledge. This may be significant. There is greater evidence of the college's ability to acquire knowledge than to utilize it. This fits with the view expressed by some that although they are skillful learners, educators are painfully slow to change . . . or to learn.

In contrast, of the five lowest rated factors, two of the five are factors that should be apparent in all phases of the learning cycle: systems perspective (FF10) and involved leadership (FF9). Similarly, two other lower factors are operational variety (FF7) and multiple advocates (FF8), both characteristics of the utilization of knowledge. Again, not a lot can be made of these findings because of the slight differences in the averages. However, if we were to survey a larger number of Case College individuals, some further from the center of the learning-centered agenda, it is possible we would begin to see greater spreads on these factors. Some summary data derived from the survey form follows.

Table begins on next page.

Table 7 Highest Facilitating Factors

Phase of the Learning Cycle		
Acquire	Disseminate	Utilize
Scanning Imperative (FF1) 6.0	Continuous Education (FF6) 6.0	
Concern for Measurement (FF3) 5.9	Climate of Openness (FF5) 5.8	
Organizational Curiosity (FF4) 5.8		

Table 8 shows the lowest-rated facilitating factors. Each is listed under the phase of the learning cycle that it is associated with. Readers will note that lower ratings exist in the factors most important in utilizing knowledge.

Table 8 Lowest Facilitating Factors

Phase of the Learning Cycle		
Acquire	Disseminate	Utilize
Performance Gap (FF2) 5.6		Operational Variety (FF7) 5.3
		Multiple Advocates (FF8) 5.4
Systems Perspective (FF10) 5.3	Systems Perspective (FF10) 5.3	Systems Perspective (FF10) 5.3
Involved Leadership (FF9) 5.5	Involved Leadership (FF9) 5.5	Involved Leadership (FF9) 5.5

Note that the last two entries, systems perspective and involved leadership, are two of the three facilitating factors associated with all phases of the learning cycle. These are among the lowest factors at Case College. It would seem that as factors important to all phases of learning, Case College leaders would want to explore ways in which they could enhance their performance on these factors.

The DiBella/Nevis/Gould model provides some additional guidance for interpreting the results of the organizational learning inventory. By coupling learning orientations, it is possible to categorize the college's style. Again remember that the learning orientations were not pronounced, with many hovering around the balanced or "even" descriptor. It is impossible to determine whether the profile revealed is well suited to their present strategies since that question was beyond the scope of this research. To determine whether the learning style is appropriate, we would need to understand what the college's situation and strategies may require. Nevertheless, we can at least catch a glimpse of how their profile would relate to one organizational learning model.

Utilizing a strategy suggested by DiBella, matrices are developed. When placing knowledge source and learning scope on a matrix, the college's learning style is characterized by Innovation, a combination of *internal knowledge source* and *transformative learning scope*. Learning scope is either incremental or transformative, and is represented on the left and right sides of the table, respectively. Learning source is either internal or external. Internal is on the bottom row of the table, and external is on the top.

Table 9 Learning Scope and Knowledge Source

	<i>External</i>	<i>External</i>	
<i>Incremental</i>	Adaption	Acquisition	<i>Transformative</i>
<i>Incremental</i>	Correction	Innovation	<i>Transformative</i>
	<i>Internal</i>	<i>Internal</i>	

When organizations learn from their own operations and use that knowledge transformatively, they create product or process innovations (DiBella, 2000, p. 40).

Next we will consider the learning style as determined by dissemination mode and knowledge reserve. Dissemination mode is either formal or informal. Formal is on the top of the table, while informal is reflected by the two bottom boxes. Knowledge reserve is either personal or public, and is shown on the left and right sides of the table, respectively.

Table 10 Dissemination Mode and Knowledge Reserve

	<i>Formal</i>	<i>Formal</i>	
<i>Personal</i>	Authorized Expert	Bureaucratic	<i>Public</i>
<i>Personal</i>	Role Modeling	Community of Practice	<i>Public</i>
	<i>Informal</i>	<i>Informal</i>	

DiBella explains that “when knowledge is seen in personal terms but disseminated in an informal manner, then learning occurs through role modeling or social emulation.” Many firms rely on specialized knowledge or skills that are intuitive or cannot be made explicit.

Sometimes that knowledge is retained by individual persons and can only be disseminated directly from one person to another. Through mentoring relationships or observation individuals learn from one another. The learning is not imposed but acquired or shared through informal, often subconscious means. By doing as others do, we learn from others in discrete ways. (DiBella, 2000, p. 41)

It is notable that some interviewees specifically referred to role modeling in their interactions with peers. No one spoke of a community of practice, another model that may be desirable in an education environment. A community of practice may be particularly well suited to Case College, because DiBella observes that “Communities of practice’ is a

learning style that involves collective or collaborative learning in an informal manner” (Wenger, 1996, cited in DiBella, 2000, p. 41).

Case College’s strategies for becoming more learning-centered relate well with models of organizational learning. Participants reported a balanced learning style, with minimal variation among the respondents and no outliers in the responses. The college leaders report that they are middle-of-the-road on the continua associated with this model of learning orientations. Further, they report substantial evidence exists to support each of the ten facilitating factors. Of the strategies identified above and abstracted from the interviews, the researcher would place each in the facilitating factor category indicated.

Table 11 - Relationship Between Strategy and Facilitating Factors

Strategy	Factor
1. Collaboration	FF3 Concern for Measurement FF5 Climate of Openness (Disseminate) FF8 Multiple Advocates (Utilize) FF6 Continuous Education (Disseminate)
2. Broad-based engagement	FF8 Multiple Advocates (Utilize)
3. Focus	FF1 Scanning Imperative (Acquire) FF2 Performance Gap (Acquire) FF3 Concern for Measurement (Acquire)
4. Resources	FF2 Performance Gap
5. Professional Development	FF6 Continuous Education (Disseminate) FF4 Organizational curiosity (Acquire)
6. Results orientation	FF3 Concern for Measurement (Acquire)
7. Leadership	FF9 Involved Leadership (All) FF4 Organizational Curiosity (Acquire) FF6 Continuous Education (Disseminate)
8. Trust/Respect	FF5 Climate of Openness (Disseminate)

This classification can only be considered arbitrary. Certainly some factors fit more closely within some strategies than others. The researcher read through the examples for

each facilitating factor and made a determination concerning its relationship to identified strategies. For instance, one example of a “concern for measurement” is “communicating outcomes is an essential activity.” Therefore, this factor was listed with collaboration, since sharing reports is a regular activity of the learning-centered task force. Additionally, some strategies were classified with a particular facilitating factor because of the research findings. For example, it was very evident that especially the learning-team leaders are immersed in continuous education and are encouraging others to also be engaged. Discussion groups and forums on various topics are held frequently, and these are often initiated by the top leadership team. Consequently, continuous education was listed as a factor reflected in the leadership strategy.

Case College is not utilizing the full range of possible facilitating factors in its apparent approaches to creating a more learning-centered institution. Increasing the variety of factors drawn upon to develop the strategies for becoming more learning-centered should be considered. Most of the factors being utilized are in the first phase of the learning cycle, acquiring knowledge. Few are in the “utilize” stage of the organizational learning cycle. This dilemma of learning is not unlike that encountered by individuals who often have an easier time acquiring knowledge than using it. This higher level of learning for individuals is reflected by Bloom’s Taxonomy of Learning Objectives (Bloom, 1956), with application being at a higher level than gaining knowledge.

None of the current strategies could easily be related to operational variety, a factor associated with the utilization phase, nor system perspective, which is related to all of the phases of the organizational learning cycle.

An understanding of systems was not in the discourse of Case College. When asked about systems perspective, most were unable to provide a response. However, some were able to describe the impact that systems have on the college's ability to achieve its goals.

Here are some examples:

But then realizing the implications of, oh, that means we're going to have to change how we register students. That doesn't just mean we're going to change what we do in the classroom. Or, oh, that means that we're going to have to change what kind of information we collect on students and student records. And, oh, that means that we're going to have to hire more tech support people because we're going to be using-- I think just realizing all--it's like a root system, it just kind of spreads out, it just continues on. And, also, knowing how to just deal with transformation. (F3-1)

Either informants did not think a systems perspective existed or they were not sure what it meant.

I'm not sure that we still have real systems in practice yet. (CBA4-1)

Well, I don't know what a systems perspective is, but I do have a sense of the college as a culture and an organization that lives. The needs of that organization have to be acknowledged, so any time you want that to develop, you have to see the big picture. And I also know the inertia of that organism is such that it can take attempts to change it, absorb them and live on, essentially, unchanged. So I have to face the possibility that that's what I'm going to do, because I'm going to attempt to change the organization, achieve some momentary localized effect, and the organization is going to live on without really changing systematically. That's what keeps me awake at night. (F1-2)

It says the only reason to tinker with the inputs and the process is if it makes a difference on the outputs. So, I think that's important. It also, obviously, invites you to think in an integrative way and not to isolate things and to see that there's more than one causative factor in that the process view has been an important one for us in order to see that, from a student perspective, often what we do with students, the process resembles a badly spliced movie. And there's jerky movements because there's something missing. And we don't see it because we're only in the first two minutes of the movie. And somebody else sits in the next three minutes, thinks their three minutes is going just fine. I thought my two minutes went well. What we don't see is that our two minutes and our three minute pieces don't splice together. (CO2-2)

Although there was little understanding of the systems terminology, there was understanding about how parts relate to other parts and how things work. The comments from informants corroborate the findings of the instrument that systems perspective is less well developed among Case College leaders.

The preceding information provides significant perspective on Case College's strategies for becoming more learning-centered, as well as introducing a perspective on how the leaders interview perceive their college's learning style, the barriers encountered in becoming a more learning-centered college, and more. The next chapter will summarize the conclusions reached, interpretations made, and implications for practice that emerge from these findings.

Summary

Eight strategies were identified as being used to support advancing the learning-centered college initiative at Case College. Substantial evidence exists to suggest that these strategies are closely aligned with premises of organizational learning. Many of the strategies are also supportive of the description of a more learning-centered college, as presented in Chapter 2.

Chapter 6 Creating Meaning from the Findings

The Research Problem

This study is about the strategies leaders in one community college say they are using or were discovered to be in use to promote a more learning-centered institution and how these strategies are or are not related to organizational learning. Little is known about how college leaders are going about creating more learning-centered colleges. If other colleges are to embark on the journey, as hundreds say they are, there will be a great need to learn from the experience of the pioneers, or those in the vanguard. As noted earlier, others' experience must also be used cautiously, because each organization presents a unique context. Further, the strategies discovered, largely resulting from the reports of informants, may only reflect espoused theories rather than theories-in-use. This study did not attempt to verify that the reported strategies were indeed the strategies in use, although much evidence pointed to support for the strategies identified.

The primary question guiding this research was:

What are the strategies being used by leaders in a community college to create a more learning-centered college, and how are the strategies similar to or different from the premises of organizational learning?

In answering this question, a number of subquestions concerning the meaning of a learning-centered institution, models in use, barriers, and the organization's learning profile (as reported by leader-informants' responses to the Organizational Transitions learning inventory) were examined.

Summary of Findings

Case College was selected because it was perceived to be committed to becoming a

more learning-centered college. This judgment was based on information available in the literature and at national conference presentations, where Case College representatives declared their “commitment to be a national leader” (handout, 2000). Individuals on the campus have both published and presented on the topic of becoming more learning-centered. Chapters 4 and 5 outline the result of the findings from review of documents, observations, interviews, and administration of an organizational learning inventory.

Eight primary strategies were found to guide Case College leaders efforts to create a more learning-centered college. Six of the eight were expressly identified by informants; two were abstracted from the interviews but were not specifically named by interviewees. Although the last two were not identified specifically by interviewees as strategies in response to that query, the topics were addressed in a variety of ways by informants and clearly emerged as items that were in play to assist the college to become a more learning-centered institution. Together the eight strategies constitute a perspective of a framework from which the learning-centered journey of Case College is moving forward. The eight strategies are:

1. Collaboration
2. Broad-based engagement
3. Focus
4. Resources
5. Professional Development
6. Results orientation
7. Leadership
8. Trust/Respect

Evidence was presented from the interviews, utilizing the voices of interviewees, that support these eight strategies. The eight are not mutually exclusive and are consequently

sometimes difficult to separate. For example, it is leaders (at several levels) who have either secured or allocated resources in support of professional development. In this example, three of the eight strategies (leadership, resources, professional development) are inter-related. It becomes even more complicated, however, when one considers that the resources are allocated for the college's particular focus on learning outcomes. Moreover, the professional development strategy is conceived and delivered collaboratively and engages a broad base of participants.

Taken further, it is probable that this example of resources being brought to support an initiative ultimately encompasses all eight of the identified strategies. Where one strategy ends and the other is in play is impossible to discern, but the mutually reinforcing aspects of many strategies may indeed strengthen the processes. Evidence gathered in this research also suggests that the strategies of Case College for becoming more learning-centered are closely aligned with common understandings of organizational learning.

Case College respondents were consistent in explaining their view of a learning-centered college. They focus on student core learning outcomes, individual differences, and measurement. A college-adopted statement of the meaning of a learning-centered college guides their work and reinforces it for others. Case College has adopted a vision of a Learning-Centered College, parts of which follow,

More than a semantic difference, this change of perspective and expectation shifts the focus from *what is offered, taught or covered* in a given class or program to *what students learn and can do* as a result of their involvement. It also implies a shared responsibility for learning and a fluidity in teacher/learner roles. The shift is truly transformational because it requires a re-thinking of assumptions and practices. . . . members of a learning-centered institution have a sense of ownership in and commitment to a common purpose, shared values, and the quality and outcomes of

particular tasks. Together they create a vital, dynamic community that generates and attracts excellence. (Case College, 1999)

Case College personnel and many national community college leaders would name this college as one appearing to have made more progress than many toward becoming a more learning-centered institution. The college has a number of measures that support this belief, including improved graduation rates, increased course retention, and higher course completions. However, assessing their progress toward becoming more learning-centered was not a focus of the research but was rather a criterion for case selection. The research goal was to identify the strategies that a leading college is using to achieve its goal of becoming more learning-centered. This research provides a glimpse into the world of this college and provides insights about what others who plan to make the same journey may wish to consider.

What It Means

The research was designed to identify the strategies either reported or observed to be in use and relate these to premises of organizational learning. A perspective on how these findings may be interpreted follows.

First, throughout this manuscript, acknowledgment has been made that what is reported may vary from what would be found in practice. There is at least some evidence to suggest that there is some gap in espoused and in-use theories. An example of one discrepancy stems from the many models offered by participants as guiding their work, yet these same models were not forthcoming in explanations of the strategies in use. The theories reportedly guiding the activities of Case College leaders were not foremost in the

minds of interviewees. At the same time as models are reported to guide leaders' work, these same leaders failed to connect these models to their explanation of strategies they were using. None of the strategies, however, contradicted reported models.

Second, an additional dimension of the espoused theories vs. theories-in-use paradox is the fact that there were so many different models for thinking about becoming more learning-centered from a variety of individuals. It is possible that the multiple models in use only confuse the agenda and that Case College may be better served by adopting fewer, more widely acknowledged models or theories for guiding their work. However, I would also observe that another interpretation of this phenomena is that the many models enable Case College leaders to bring perspective to their collaborative work. The multiple models may actually inform a more agile organization while a more prescriptive, single-model approach, may be too constraining.

Third, amazingly, collaboration, the strategy that was unanimously reported by research participants, is a decision-making strategy for which no model was evident nor could one be offered in response to inquiries regarding this topic. It is clear that the model of collaboration at Case College is a home-grown approach. All believed it works, but this is a group that has a great amount of experience in working together. Whether this ill-defined collaborative model will be equally intelligible to different levels of the organization is an open question. I suspect that it is less well understood at other levels and may even not surface as the number one way by which the learning-centered initiative is being promoted if other groups were interviewed.

Fourth, teamwork is an emerging organizational phenomena, particularly in private-

sector organizations. Efforts are directed in many organizations, including colleges, toward developing and chartering more effective teams. Many researchers are conducting inquiry about teams. The team literature and discourse were notably absent at Case College. This organization with multiple models for implementing agendas did not count teams among the models in use. Observations of group meetings confirmed this lack of a strong contemporary model. Many team models establish more rigid meeting roles and expectations about use of time, agendas, and more. Some proponents of team structure would question the effectiveness of Case College meetings, because only minimal structure is evident.

Critics of the potentially limiting structure of team models may wonder whether the more free-wheeling approach to group deliberations is a strength at Case College. Comradery and energy seemed high. Attendance was high. The lack of use of a more rigid team model may in fact strengthen Case College processes.

Fifth, leadership was determined to be important at Case College, yet it was also an area where informants were critical. Leadership at Case College is not conceptualized around the hero model but rather appears like the “shared-power environment” described by Rost.

Thus leadership is not the work of a single person; rather it can be explained and defined as a collaborative endeavor among group members. Therefore, the essence of leadership is not the leader, but the relationship (Rost, 1993). Leaders operate in a shared-power environment with followers. No longer does a single leader have all the answers and the power to make substantial changes. Instead, we now live in a world where many people participate in leadership, some as leaders and others as followers. Only when we all work together can we bring about successful changes for our mutual purposes. (Rost, cited in Brungardt, 1998, p. 7)

Brungardt and Rost's models of leadership are highly consistent with Rubin's collaborative leader description, where the primary work is building relationships. Rather than leadership as most writers envision it, of top administrators or designated faculty representatives, Case College is looking for leaders at all levels. Although not a unique interpretation, this decentralized leadership is a distinguishing characteristic of Case College's desired approach.

To date, leadership has clearly been concentrated in the hands of a few at Case College. Individuals below the president had great autonomy to implement the agenda. How the arrival of a strong single leader at the top, one who espouses pushing decision-making to the lowest levels of the organization, will be received over the long term remains an open question. When power has been centralized, a defining characteristic of a bureaucracy, there is often reluctance among leaders to relinquish power. Case College will need to be cautious as it transitions to a more decentralized organization. To some extent, the driving and restraining forces of centralization vs. decentralization may engender the concerns expressed by Barott and Raybould, who contend that "more force will lead to more resistance, which leads to more force, which leads to more resistance and so on. In effect, both sides are caught in a battle over survival (Barott and Raybould, 1998, p. 33). The researcher saw no signs of an emerging conflict but only notes that dramatic cultural changes may result in unintended consequences.

Sixth, of the several characteristics associated with organizational learning and the learning organization, a systems perspective was most absent from the discourse of most Case College representatives. Several interviewees were unable to respond to the

question asking them to comment on how they would relate the concept of a systems perspective to the work of becoming more learning-centered. Most admitted no knowledge of a systems perspective but felt that some of the central office administrators would know.

Many writers (Senge, Kofman, DiBella & Nevis) argue that until organizational leaders view the organization as a system, learning will be limited and organizational success diminished. The DiBella and Nevis organizational learning cycle places systems perspective and involved leadership as the two facilitating factors that are essential in all phases of organizational learning - acquisition, dissemination, and utilization. Case College has involved leadership but there is minimal awareness of a systems perspective. Developing a systems perspective may present a learning opportunity for Case College.

Seventh, much of the organizational development literature acknowledges the importance of the culture of the organization. A variety of responses were received for descriptions of the culture; in sum, there is no common view of the culture of Case College. The presence of multiple cultures within a college is not inconsistent with the higher education landscape. Although this is not unusual in the academy, a clearer identity of the prevailing culture may aid Case College leaders in identifying desired changes or gaps between what is and what is desired. An investigation into culture is planned, since it is one of the priority action areas for the Vanguard project. The highly visible philosophies of the new president are likely to influence the organization's culture, if we accept the large base of organizational development literature that suggests that leaders influence culture. A return visit to Case College could be expected to yield a more

consistent view of the college's culture and cultural shifts underway, in part because of the college's emerging focus on this topic and because of the high-profile role the president is taking on cultural issues, such as stewardship, principle-centered leadership, and servant leadership.

On the other hand, there is a potential danger in organizations to become so focused on achieving common goals that divergent voices are silenced. At this time, this group of informants reports a very open communication system. For many of the strategies to continue to be viable, such as collaboration, leadership, and trust/respect, there must continue to be an acceptance of divergence. The needs for both convergence and divergence are essential to scientific breakthroughs, and by inference to organizational innovation.

Eighth, finally but potentially most importantly, these strategies are not distinctively related to becoming a more learning-centered organization. Many of the same strategies could probably be found at this and other colleges for achieving other types of goals. So why should we expect these to work here? I can only speculate on the answer.

Although these strategies may be applied to any change initiative, they are applied in a particular way at Case College. This may be the defining characteristic of Case College. In addition to the "focus" strategy, where most attention is paid to the most important items, each of the other strategies also reflects focus. In some organizations, professional development, as one example, is eclectic. There will be an array of offerings on a variety of topics designed to meet the interests of a diverse audience. In contrast, at Case College, professional development is tightly coupled with the learning-centered agenda.

Further, resource gathering is very successful at Case College. However, resources are being concentrated on the primary learning agenda, not a range of options. Some colleges pursue grants in multiple directions, for internationalizing, for workforce development, for technology, and other initiatives. This is not to suggest that Case College is not also pursuing diverse grants to support varied foci, but it appears that the grants office is focusing its efforts on bringing support to this particular learning-centered agenda.

What these strategies may more accurately reflect are strategies for change. What makes them unique, and arguably successful, with the limited evidence which was examined to substantiate Case College's claim to making progress on the learning-centered agenda, is the way in which they are directed toward a common purpose, a shared vision - a focus.

The strategies' interactions as they support the learning-centered agenda also suggest a rationale to explain why these work here as well as whether they could work elsewhere. In combination, these strategies are exceedingly more powerful than any or a few taken alone. An example was provided earlier of how all of the strategies could be linked to a professional development activity, for example. It is probable that most or all of the strategies come into play as activities are planned. This may be the power of Case College's approach.

There is not presently a typical strategic plan, with objectives and tactics. There is instead a fluidity to the approach to create a place that has not been to serve students the college values. The shared meaning of a learning-centered college is just the tip of the

iceberg. The sharing of values, about service, about learning, about respect, and other qualities runs deep among this leadership team. These shared values undergird the strategies as they are executed. Getting to this level of understanding with any group is a challenge. Case College has been successful in this regard among this limited group. Getting to scale may be an entirely different challenge.

In Chapter 3 the concept of an instrumental case study was introduced, in addition to the belief that case-to-case transfer may be possible. Instrumentality suggests that what is found could be tied to theories, to help refine or build theory. The change literature was briefly featured in Chapter 2, but strategies for change were not elaborated. The degree to which these strategies for creating a more learning-centered are consistent with organizational learning was found to be strong. The degree to which they link with change practices could lead to another research stream.

Conclusions

The researcher draws the following conclusions about Case College's strategies for becoming more learning-centered:

1. Becoming a more learning-centered college relies heavily on process in addition to a focus on content.
2. Becoming more learning-centered is a major change process; as such, it will take considerable time. Case College has already been on the journey for more than five years and leaders feel they have only begun to see the desired changes, and it is a small minority who are actively engaged in the change effort.
3. An empowering, humane environment is an important dimension in becoming

more learning-centered, because leadership matters, broad-based groups must be involved, and trust and respect for others and their views must prevail. Collaboration depends on these, and change depends upon collaboration, at least at Case College.

4. Individuals' commitment to learning, variously described as professional development, staff development, sharing, and gaining experience, among other terms, is a critical ingredient in a change process designed to create a more learning-centered organization. Professional development, a form of learning, is reported earlier as a key strategy employed by Case College. A learning emphasis is consistent with the organizational learning literature.

5. Clarity of the goals and measures of the achievement are important. Case College leaders know what they are attempting to achieve (keeping the focus) and are clear about what outcomes are expected (results orientation). Implicit in a results orientation is a need for measuring progress or collecting and reporting data. Typically goals are long-range outcomes to be achieved, and these change rarely. What may change are the strategies for achieving the goals, or the objectives, benchmarks, or other activities and measures. It is in the strategies for achieving goals that innovation must occur.

6. Organizational learning strategies appear useful in Case College's efforts toward becoming a more learning-centered organization. Informants provided many examples of actions that align closely with organizational learning premises. They also reported, on the organizational learning inventory, that there was "some" or "extensive evidence" on all of the factors identified as contributors to organizational learning. Because many of these factors are closely related to Case College's strategies (reference Table 11), it appears that

organizational learning is instrumental in implementing strategies for becoming a more learning-centered community college. More research would be required to confirm this observation.

With the extent to which this conclusion, that organizational learning contributes to organizational effectiveness, has been confirmed in private-sector research, there is strong evidence to suggest that comparable results may be found for community colleges.

Argyris, cited in Chapters 1 and 2, notes that “the more effective organizations are at learning the more likely they will be at being innovative” (Argyris, 1992, p.1). Being innovative is an important method by which an institution will become more learning-centered. A break from current traditions must occur.

The findings suggest that Case College is making progress on its learning-centered journey and that the college has made some discoveries which could be beneficial to others. At the same time, it is important to remember the many differences among institutions. What works at Case College may not work as well in other places. Certainly this advice was forthcoming from Case College respondents as well.

Most writers contend that cultures and contexts are significant in defining what works and how things work in organizations. Case College informants support this view. When Case College interviewees talked about their interactions with colleagues in other schools, particularly one with a unionized faculty, they acknowledged how different the approaches would need to be. Case College representatives generally feel positive about where they are with this agenda, and they view themselves as among the most advanced nationally; yet they quickly note how far they have to go. They also caution about the

complacency that can result when individuals in a college believe they are ahead of the pack.

Contributions to the Literature

This study represents an effort to document the strategies being employed by a small group of leaders in one community college to create a more learning-centered institution. Although some articles and chapters have been written and many presentations made by college leaders about their own efforts, the researcher was unable to find any example of a study conducted to analyze these strategies in a community college. Because becoming a more learning-centered institution is a goal of the majority of the nation's community colleges, its findings are timely. This study can serve as comparative data for other researchers analyzing colleges' strategies for becoming more learning-centered. The design and protocol should also provide tools useful to other researchers and practitioners who will engage interviewees or college stakeholders in conversations about the learning-centered agenda.

Adaptations of the interview questions can be used for focus groups, forums, or workshops. The organizational learning inventory could be used as a tool to analyze an organization's learning orientations and capability, and another community college group's data can then be compared with the data reported in this research. At this time, no other reports of the use of this instrument in a community college setting exist, except for the pre-testing of the instrument done by this researcher in another community college.

The data may also serve Case College as it gains perspective on the conclusions reached by an outside researcher. The fact that the lack of a complete list of strategies did

not surface in any of the interviews suggests either a lack of communication about what the strategies are or the lack of well-defined strategies. It is possible, as noted earlier, that these may in fact serve Case College well, since adaptation is important in a dynamic environment.

Perhaps as important as any of the findings is that becoming more learning-centered may not be dramatically different from any other change processes. There are some simple-to-identify but difficult-to-implement strategies for initiating change. Lots of models may guide the work of change leaders, but the strategies that rise to the top parallel those for working with groups in almost any setting. There is no magic bullet and the process takes time. For external evaluators, this understanding will be important. Many observers are critical of education for its slowness to respond, a view that was introduced in earlier chapters. In matters substantive, the change process may be long.

Critics of higher education must be cognizant of the challenges faced by agents of change in a college setting; this research may aid that understanding. Concurrently, practitioners may also be well served by understanding the magnitude of the change process. Even an institution with focused dedication and extensive resources is finding the journey to be very slow.

Other practitioners should be well served by understanding the length of time that the learning-centered change effort requires; this is not an overnight transformation. An explicit strategic plan that spans many years may not be the best approach for another college but rather this more cultural approach may be more appropriate. Changing cultures takes even more time. Leaders must understand this.

Recommendations for Future Research:

Until there is more information available about the strategies in use in the colleges leading the way in the learning-centered agenda, it is impossible to know how consistent the findings of this research may be with strategies in place in other colleges. Although O'Banion's 1997 book provides chapters about several colleges, the information primarily reflects opinion pieces from upper administrators within the institution. No research has been published to date that examines the strategies. Few views beyond those of top administrators are offered. This research is similarly limited in that the informants were centrally involved in the learning-centered initiative and the interviewees were primarily upper-level administrators.

The first recommendation for future research is that a similar inquiry should be conducted in additional leading colleges. Specifically, the other eleven which have already been designated as the Vanguard Colleges would be perfect starting points for this expanded research. An anticipated outcome of the Vanguard initiative is a report on the results of the activities at each of the colleges, but the particular focus of that research is presently unspecified. We should expect to see some perspective provided about the areas of focus in that initiative which will add substantially to the literature. Additional studies conducted by outside researchers within the other 11 colleges could lend additionally valuable perspectives.

My view is that the instrument utilized for this research is a useful tool for describing the learning orientation of the organization and assessing the extent to which facilitating factors are in place. What is not known is how this information may be useful

in the development of strategy. However, until there is benchmark data available in other colleges, we cannot know how significant the Learning Orientations or the Facilitating Factors are in understanding the college's strategies for becoming more learning-centered. A second recommendation is that this instrument be utilized by a comparable leadership team in each of the Vanguard colleges, as well as other colleges seeking to understand their learning style and their relative strengths in factors that contribute to organizational learning. Consideration should be given to conducting future administrations of the instrument in a group setting, where there would be the opportunity for discussion concerning the items. The author of the instrument, Anthony DiBella, recommends this.

The instrument as used in this research was primarily used to develop a thicker description of the case college. Future researchers may wish to use the tool to assess organizational capability for advancing organizational learning. Those who conclude that organizational learning is a necessary condition for organizational development would want to explore more fully the relationship between these two constructs. This research does not answer the question of organizational capability except to the extent that all of the factors reported to be contributing to organizational learning on the survey form were rated at or above the mid-point on the scale. This suggests a moderately high level of organizational learning, yet the research does not establish how this capacity translates into strategy for the organization.

Third, it would be useful to know whether other groups less close to the learning-centered agenda would report somewhat similar results both resulting from the interview questions and the instrument. Research that would reach further into this organization

could be helpful in enhancing our understanding of Case College's strategies. Even the interviewees acknowledged that the further one goes down into the organization the less consistent would be the views. The voices of these individuals are important in developing the next stages of strategy at Case College, as well as being informative in any college.

Importantly, the research findings suggest that there may be a correlation between organizational learning and progress toward becoming learning-centered colleges. This conclusion is drawn because the college is moderately high on evidence of facilitating factors or characteristics of organizational learning (as reported on the instrument and revealed through the interviews when compared with the literature). If this finding can be established, through further research in this and other community colleges, a new line of inquiry regarding strategic planning and professional development may be indicated. If there is a direct relationship, organizational strategy may appropriately focus on building organizational learning capacity. Considerably more research would be required to establish this correlation.

Fourth, the degree to which the strategies for promoting a more learning-centered organization parallel theorists' views of how change needs to be implemented should be explored. It may well be that what was discovered was an iteration of a change model. It may also be that these findings could contribute to change theory. Future research would need to explore this connection. The data from this case, however, could become the foundation for this analysis, and the second part of the major research question could simply be addressed to relating the strategies to theories of organizational change.

A Closing Perspective

There is the possibility that this learning-centered agenda is another in a wave of half-realized education reforms. Many hope this is not the case. The fact that this reform reaches to the core of the mission of the colleges suggests that it should have a more enduring quality. The fact that it is not modeled after some industry model, such as Total Quality Management or Management-by-Objectives, may also improve its sustainability.

Chapter 1 laid out enormous challenges confronting higher education and community colleges. At the heart of these great challenges is the need for colleges to do better at assisting learners to achieve their learning goals. Striving to become a more learning-centered institution is one approach to meeting these challenges. Building organizational learning capability, as explained in depth in Chapter 2, is another possibility.

This study documents the strategies that one leading college is using to become more learning centered and describes how these strategies relate to premises of organizational learning. College leaders are searching for ways to meet the challenges they face. Learning how to become more learning-centered may be one important response. William Flynn, writing for the New Expeditions project conducted by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) observed,

These multiple challenges—pervasive technology, increased calls for accountability, unprecedented competition – force us to consider what was once an impossible thought: we may forfeit our mandate to provide cost effective, accessible, undergraduate education. Given the enormous size of our educational system, the sheer scope of change required, and the entrenched forces opposing such change, significant innovations are scattered. What is needed is not just incremental or even institutional change, but transformation. Unless we can transform our institutions to be relevant, competitive, accessible and accountable, we may lose the franchise. (Flynn, 1998, p. 1)

This research was designed to provide a perspective on ways in which we can “transform our institutions to be relevant, competitive, accessible and accountable.” Becoming a more learning-centered organization is one important, possible goal for making our organizations more relevant and more accountable. There are lessons to be learned from Case College. This and future research should add to the knowledge base about how college leaders can more successfully create more learning-centered organizations.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Comparative Descriptions of the Learning Perspectives and Authors' Primary Foci

Characteristic	Learning Organization	Learning College or Learning-School Centered	Organizational Learning
Leadership and Roles of Leaders	Schein (1985, 1992) Gephart (1996) (<i>local</i>) DeGeus (1988) Redding (1998)	Ewell (1997) Moore (1998) Carlsen & Radakovich (1999) Kelley (1998) O'Banion (1996-8) Lashway (1998) Moskus (1999) Elsner (1997) Gianini (1998)	Schein (1985 & 1992) DiBella & Nevis (1998)
Teams or Collaboration	Senge (1990) Calvert, G.; Mobley, S., and Marshall, L. (1994) Redding (1998)	Ewell (1997) Moore (1998) Gitlin (1999) Kelly (1998) Barr & Tagg (1995) Garcia (1998) Gianini (1998) Boggs (1998) Wingspread Group (1993)	DiBella & Nevis (1998) Keidel (1995) Revans (1980) (<i>learning communities</i>) Wenger (1998) Brown and Duguid (1995) Roth and Kleiner (1996)

Mission, Vision, and Values	Calvert, Mobley, & Marshall (1994) Redding (1998)	O'Banion (1995, 1997, 1998) Lashway (1998) Moore (1998) Wells (1999) Barr & Tagg (1995) Gianini (1998) Boggs (1998)	
Stakeholders and Customers/Cienteles		O'Banion (1997) Barr and Tagg (1995) Elsner (1997) Boggs (1998) Flynn (1999) Wingspread Group (1993)	Cameron & Whetten (1995?) Brown and Duguid (1995)
Processes		Lashway (1998) Kelley (1998) Carlsen & Radakovich (1999) Wells (1999) Elsner (1997) Gianini (1998) Flynn (1999) AACC (1998)	Argyris (1999) Moore (1998) Wenger (1998)
Total Quality Management or Continuous Improvement	Marquardt (1996) Karash (1996)	Wells (1999) Kelley (1998) Barr & Tagg (1995)	
Decision Making and Problem Solving	Garvin (1993) Marquardt (1996) Kofman and Senge (1993)	Kelley (1998)	

Organizational Structure	Argyris (1999) Marquardt (1996) Gephart, Marsick, VanBuren, & Spiro (1996) Redding (1998)	O'Banion (1997) Howser (1997) Lashway (1998) Ewell (1997) Moskus (1999) Wells (1999) Wingspread Group (1993) Elsner (1997) Gianini (1998) Barr & Tagg (1995)	
Communications and Conversation	Watkins and Marsick (1993) Keidel (1995) Senge (1990) Calvert, Mobley, & Marshall (1994) Gephart, Marsick, VanBuren, & Spiro (1996) Moskus (1999) Marquardt (1996)	Lashway (1998) Ewell (1997) Moskus (1999) Wells (1999) Carlsen & Radakovich (1999) Wingspread Group (1993)	DiBella & Nevis (1998) Brown & Duguid (1998) Wenger (1998)
Paradigm, Perspective, or Mental Model	Senge (1990) Kofman & Senge (1993) DeGeus (1988) Marquardt (1996)	Barr and Tagg (1995) Elsner (1997) Wingspread Group (1993) Flynn (1999)	DiBella & Nevis (1998) Nevis, DiBella, & Gould (1997) Wenger (1998) Argyris (1999) Keidel (1995) <i>not the term</i>

Capacity or Capability	Senge (1990) Watkins and Marsick (1993) Marquardt (1996) Redding (1998)	Lashway (1998)	DiBella & Nevis (1998) Marquardt (1996) Moore (1998) Cameron (1995) Wenger (1998)
Change	Senge (1990) Gephart, Marsick, VanBuren, and Spiro (1996) Marquardt (1996)	O'Banion (1997) Ewell (1997) Moore (1998) Wells (1998) Gianini (1998) Wingspread Group (1993)	DiBella & Nevis (1998) Wenger (1998)
Systems Thinking or Systems View	Senge (1990) Kofman & Senge (1993) Watkins & Marsick (1993) DeGeus (1998) Marquardt (1996) Gephart, Marsick, VanBuren, & Spiro (1996) Redding (1998)	Moore (1998) Wingspread Group (1998)	Ackoff (1981) DiBella & Nevis (1998) Keidel (1995)
Culture or Climate	Schein (1992) Senge (1990) Kofman & Senge (1993) Marquardt (1996) Gephart, Marsick, VanBuren, & Spiro (1996) Moskus (1999) Redding (1998)	O'Banion (1997) Ewell (1997) Barr and Tagg (1995) Gianini (1998)	Schein (1992) DiBella & Nevis (1998) Cook & Yanow (1996) Cameron (1995)

Measurement	Ewell (1997) Redding (1998)		Ewell (1997) Wells (1999) Boggs (1998) Barr and Tagg (1995)	DiBella & Nevis (1998) Nevis, DiBella, & Gould (1995)
Barriers			Lashway, 1998 Fallo (1997) Garcia (1998) Flynn (1999)	Argyris (1999)
Alignment	Gephart, Marsick, VanBuren, & Spiro (1996)		Moore (1998) (<i>about learning systems</i>)	
Community	Kofman & Senge (1993)			Wenger (1998)
Commitment	Kofman & Senge (1993) Calvert, Gene; Mobley, Sandra, and Marshall, Lisa (1994)		Moskus (1999) (<i>to learning</i>)	Argyris (1974)
Spirit/Reflection	Kofman and Senge (1993)			Vaill (1996)
Inquiry	Calvert, Gene; Mobley, Sandra, and Marshall, Lisa (1994) Senge (1990)		Gianini (1998) Wingspread Group (1993)	Revans (1980)

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APPENDIX B

Relationship Between Information Sources and Research Questions

<i>Question/ Information Source</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Documents	X	X	X	X	X	
Interviews	P	P	P	P	P	
Survey Instrument	X	X		X	X	P
Observations	X		X	X		

Note: **P** indicates a primary source for that question.

The primary research question:

What are the strategies being used by leaders in a community college to create a more learning-centered college, and how are the strategies similar to or different from the premises of organizational learning?

In exploring this question, a number of subquestions, which follow, will be examined:

- a. What do leaders mean when they talk or think about their college becoming a more learning-centered institution?
- b. What strategies do the leaders say they are using to help the college become more learning-centered?
- c. What models do the leaders say they use and/or appear to use in crafting, describing, and/or implementing their strategies for creating more learning-centered colleges?
- d. What barriers do leaders perceive stand in the way of becoming a more learning-centered college?
- e. What is this organization's learning profile (as reported by leader-informants' responses to the Organizational Transitions learning inventory), and how similar are the perceptions of individual leaders concerning the organization's learning profile?

APPENDIX C

Organizational Learning Inventory

The instrument used for describing the learning style of Case College is one developed by Organization Transitions, Inc. and is called “Building Organizational Learning Capability - Learning Inventory and Strategies Workbook” (1998). This tool was developed by Anthony J. DiBella , Edwin c. Nevis, and Janet M. Gould, as a result of research supported in part by the International Consortium for Executive Development Research, The Center For Organizational Learning at the MIT Sloan School of Management, and the Healthcare Forum.

In describing the use of this inventory, DiBella writes:

(The *Inventory*) was created to assess an organizational unit as a learning system.

The purpose of the inventory is to

- Identify the learning strengths and developmental needs of the unit.
- Analyze the learning style of the unit.
- Assist in the preparation of action plans to improve learning capability.
- Provide staff at all levels with a way of understanding and talking about organizational learning (Organizational Transitions, Inc., 1999, p. 1) . . .

Part I asks you to assess your team’s seven “Learning Orientations”– the practices that reflect where and how learning takes place and the nature of what is learned.

Part II asks you to assess your team’s ten “Facilitating Factors”–the processes and practices that determine how easy or hard it is for learning to occur.

Part III of the form was not used with Case College participants. A facilitator’s guide was produced in 1999. This tool is designed to assist organizational leaders to conduct inquiry into the learning processes of the organization and to develop and initiate plans to become more effective at organizational learning.

Additional information about this tool may be obtained from the following location:

Dr. Antony J. DiBella
Organization Transitions, Inc.
75 Huguenot Drive
East Greenwich, RI 02818
USA

Telephone: 401-884-4195
Fax: 401-884-4106
E-mail: ajdibella@orgtransitions.com

APPENDIX D

RESEARCH ABSTRACT

Working Title

*Community College Leaders' Change Strategies
and Organizational Learning*

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is to understand the strategies used by leaders in a community college to become a more learning-centered college. Findings will be interpreted from an organizational development perspective, with particular emphasis on the theories of organizational learning.

Research Question

What are the strategies being used by leaders in a community college to create a more learning-centered college, and how are the strategies similar to or different from the premises of organizational learning?

Subquestions concern models in use, strategy development, the organization's learning profile, and beliefs about learning-centered institutions.

Target Participants

Target participants are leaders in the college who are responsible for implementing a more learning-centered college. The president, several reporting to the president, and other campus leaders are the most likely to be engaged. Minimum number: 6. Maximum number: 20.

Components of the research

1. Review of college documents, such as mission/vision, catalogs, planning documents, professional development plans, etc.
2. Interviews with leaders (two or three interviews of one - two hours each).
3. Completion of survey: Building Organizational Learning Capacity
4. Observations: Researcher attendance at some leadership and learning meetings.

Time Frame for Research

Beginning in April 2000; anticipated ending of June 2000.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

The college and individual informants will not be named in any public documents. No individuals will be identifiable in the published materials. Reports of the findings of the study will not be available to the college until the research is complete and the dissertation has been accepted. The researcher will make a visit to the campus at that time to share the results, if desired.

APPENDIX E

Research Consent Form

Research Summary

The purpose of this research is to understand the strategies employed by educational leaders in one community college to become a more learning-centered college. The primary research question is: What are the strategies being used by leaders in a community college to create a more learning-centered college, and how are the strategies similar to or different from the premises of organizational learning?

Estimated Time Commitment

The total amount of time participants are expected to invest in two months is about four hours. Two interviews are planned that will range in length from 45 minutes to two hours each. Each participant will be asked to complete a survey instrument, "Building Organizational Learning Capability," that is expected to take about 40 minutes.

Procedures

The research design includes four components: (1) Review of college documents, (2) Interviews with key members of the top-level leadership team and other educational leaders, (3) Administration of an organizational learning inventory, and (4) Observations of leaders in college meetings or activities.

Leaders will be identified through conversations with designated college liaison(s) and examination of college documents. Individual interviews will be established through use of telephone, e-mail, or regular mail. Individual interviews are expected to be from 3-6 weeks apart. The survey instrument will be returned directly to the researcher. Meetings or activities to be observed will be determined in consultation with college liaisons.

Voluntary Participation

Although particular individuals who have knowledge important to the research will be identified, their participation is voluntary. Permission to conduct the research will first be secured from the college president, and it is expected that the president will inform others of his/her willingness to have the research conducted. However, each individual has the right to determine whether s/he will participate and to make the decision to end their participation at any time.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be protected on two levels: the college and the individual. The college will not be identified in a public forum or in print. In public documents, only the general characteristics of the college will be disclosed, and these will be general enough that any one of more than 100 United States community colleges could fit the description. Individual contributions will also be protected through utilization of codes to refer to individual responses. Further, data will be reported in the aggregate for most parts of the study. When individual responses or observations are significant in the research interpretation, neither the identity nor any identifying characteristics of the individual will be used. A sufficient number of interviewees should preclude any person's ability to identify a particular person's responses. Information from the study will not be available to the college until the research is complete. Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law.

I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Signature (followed by printed name)

Date

Appendix E - consent form continued

As the researcher, I agree to honor the agreements outlined above.

Signature (followed by printed name)

Date

Distribution: Copies to participant and researcher. See Following for Contact Information

Contact Information
(This section was Side 2 of original)

To Contact the University Under Whose Auspices this Research is Being Conducted

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APPENDIX F

Round 1 Interview Protocol and Questions

Round 1

1. Following greeting, introduce self and describe the research. (Reference Abstract to be used for this purpose. Participant will be provided a copy of the abstract.)

Key points to cover:

- Confidentiality
- Request permission to audiotape

2. Tell me a little about your background with X college. How long have you been here? In what roles have you served? What did you do before you came here? (Attempt to build rapport with friendly conversation.)

3. Your college is noted for its interest in becoming a more learning-centered institution (or a learning college; use college's terminology). What does this mean to you? How would you describe the ideal if you were to achieve all that you wanted to in this direction?

4. What are the barriers you face in achieving your goal of becoming more learning centered?

5. What are you personally doing to promote a more learning-centered college? What strategies is the college using to create a more learning- or learner-centered college?

6. What do you believe needs to happen for this college to be more effective in achieving this goal?

7. How are strategies determined in this college? Who is involved in making these determinations? How are they involved?

8. Describe how this organization works - for any initiatives. How do ideas emerge, get reviewed, and/or implemented or rejected? How do decisions get made?

9. Tell me about how you go about your own learning? Who do you learn from? What do you do to expand your own awareness of learning-centered colleges?

10. How do you use your own learning in the organization?

11. Tell me about other things I should know that I have not asked today about this college's strategies for becoming more learning centered.

Turn off recorder: Would you like to offer any other observations?

Round 2

Most second-round questions will be developed following analysis of first-round responses. In addition, the instrument will serve as a discussion about organizational learning processes. Those questions follow.

Follow-Up Questions to Questionnaire Emerging from the DiBella/Nevis Framework

Introduction

I am interested to learn more about your perceptions concerning how the organization learns, based on the survey form that you completed. To understand these, I will ask you a number of questions about organizational processes.

The first several questions will help me understand your organization's learning style or preferences. There are no right or wrong answers, they are just different ways of learning, just as our students have different learning styles. As you answer the questions, remember that my interest is in your initiatives toward becoming a learning college or a learning-centered college. (Use the terminology they are using.) Answer these questions from that context. Also answer concerning your perception of how the organization functions, not just how you may operate.

1. What are your *sources* of information about becoming a more learning or learner-centered college? (Relates to LOr1: Knowledge Source)

Possible follow-ups:

How do you use each of these?

How do you evaluate their relevance for your college?

2. What do you pay attention to in judging how well you are doing as a learning college? (Relates to LOr 2: Content-Process Focus.)

Possible follow-ups:

What are you measuring or observing?

What tools are you using to measure? (Or how are you observing?)

What do you need to pay more attention to?

3. How is information about a learning college shared in this organization? (Relates to LOr 3: Knowledge Reserve)

Possible follow-ups:

What sources of information exist concerning a learning-centered college that are readily accessible to others in the college? (e.g. web pages, regular reports, speech transcripts, etc.)

How adequate do you believe the public information sources are?

To what extent do you believe that the information is held by individuals or departments vs. shared knowledge across the college?

4. How does information flow through this organization? (Relates to LOr4 Dissemination Mode).

Possible follow-up questions:

To what extent are the following used: group meetings, position or opinion papers, private one-on-one meetings; in formal settings, such as meetings; in informal settings, such as the cafeteria, etc.

5. How would you describe this organization's emphasis on improving what it already has vs. developing new initiatives (services or programs?) (Relates to LOr 5, Learning Scope)

Possible follow-up questions:

What are some examples of areas of improvement that you have worked on
What are some examples of innovations which have been developed
What are some opportunities that you have chosen to bypass?
How would you describe the relationship between your approach to new initiatives and the organization's culture?

6. In what areas or directions are the greatest resource investments being made? ((Relates to LOr 6, Value-Chain Focus)

Possible follow-up questions:

Provide some specific examples of initiatives that have been funded in the past couple years.
How did you decided to support these initiatives instead of others?
Why did you believe that these were the appropriate commitments?

7. Describe the college's professional development strategies. (Relates to LOr7 Learning Focus)

Possible follow-up questions:

What types of individual development opportunities exist? How many participate?
What types of group development opportunities exist? How many participate?
How do the skills and knowledges gained in the individual or group learning opportunities get shared with other members of the college community?

The next set of questions relates to factors that are believed to contribute to organizational

learning. Again, answer each in relationship to this college's strategies for becoming a more learning-centered organization.

1. Describe your college's external environmental scanning processes. How does this information get shared? (FF1 - Scanning Imperative)

Follow-up questions:

How formal is this process?

Who is responsible? Who else is involved?

2. Describe your perceptions of the gap that presently exists between what you want to become and where you presently are. (FF2 - Performance Gap)

Follow-up questions:

How have you determined that this gap exists?

What will you do to reduce the gap?

How achievable is eliminating the gap? Why do you think this?

3. How are you measuring your progress toward becoming a learning college? (FF3 - Concern for Measurement)

Follow-up Questions:

How is this data used?

By whom?

How often?

What data do you think you need to be measuring?

4. Describe your view of this organization's curiosity about new practices. (FF4 - Organizational Curiosity)

Follow-up questions:

What are some examples of this curiosity

What do you think contributes to or impedes this curiosity?

How is curiosity valuable or not valuable to your organization?

5. How would you describe the openness of communication here? (FF5 - Climate of Openness)

Follow-up questions:

How easy is it for others in the organization to call errors to your attention?

Give me some examples of times when others called concerns to your attention, whether they were errors or just different opinions.

How do you handle it when you make an error?

What is the level of trust in this organization?

What makes you believe that?

6. Provide some detail about the learning opportunities and resources you make available to people in the organization. (FF6 - Continuous Education)

Follow-up questions:

For what groups do you provide the most resources?

What is your rationale for this?

7. What are the ways in which you encourage individuals to go about becoming a more learning-centered college? (FF7 - Operational Variety)

Follow-up questions:

What examples do you see in practice?

What do you want to see practiced?

How do you support these efforts?

8. Which individuals or groups in the organization are championing the learning college message? (FF8 - Multiple Advocates)

Follow-up questions:

Why do you think these are the groups in the forefront?

Why are other groups not as engaged?

What plans do you have for involving others?

9. What are you personally doing to advance the learning agenda? (FF9 - Involved Leadership)

Follow-up questions:

When did you begin your efforts in this direction?

How much of your time is involved with these activities?

What are your future plans for engagement?

How involved is the President?

10. How do you relate the concepts of a systems perspective to your efforts at developing a learning-centered college? (FF10 - Systems Perspective)

Follow-up questions:

What is your understanding of a systems perspective?

What impact do you believe “systems” have on your strategies?

APPENDIX G

Round 2 Interview Questions

questions for all:

I have heard many use the term collaboration. When you talk about collaboration, what does that mean to you?

Describe what collaboration looks like? How would I know it if I saw it?

Is there a particular model of collaboration that you believe in or practice?

How did you and do you learn to be collaborative?

Describe the culture of (Case College).

How will the momentum for becoming more learning-centered be sustained if and when the (grant projects) activities end?

What's the most important thing that (Case College) does to promote a more learning-centered institution?

For Those Who Will be in Scottsdale

What do you consider to be the most important things that came out of your experience at the Scottsdale retreat?

What will change in your strategies as a result of that experience

Questions for individuals:

CBA2:

enrollment figures

changes in percentages with learning-centered initiatives

CO3:

Strengths and drawbacks to how (Case College) is organized at the management levels

How does KOLB play into your work?

Explain how the A.S. programs reflect continuous education (reference facilitating factor 6.)

Tell me about the Faculty Academy and how it plays into becoming a more learning-centered institution.

Explain the external mandates for accountability and performance that are influencing (Case College).

In the Curriculum and Faculty Development Plan there are a number of items noted to be a part of the CDTL Puzzle (Curriculum Development, Teaching & Learning). Where did this name come from?

Some are Departmental Leadership Projects and Curriculum Action Teams - tell me about these.

Was this a presentation to an outside group overviewing the process?

How much of this flowed from the Title III initiative?

The Core Competencies Leadership Team Stipend. How many are involved? Descriptions of projects?

CO2

her understandings of organizational change and learning - ref. E-mail

“It really does not fit my experience with organizational change and learning. I will have to come down in the middle on many questions as well. I would love to argue with the authors of it!!!”

Tell me how it does not fit with your experience.

What is your experience with organizational change and learning?

You talk about a change toolbox or changing the tools in our toolbox. What do we need?

You talked about redesigning the curriculum (the issue of 3-credit courses, 16 weeks). What needs to be done? How should it be? How will you get there? How will this decision be made, if it will?

Copy of the application for Vanguard?

CO1

You use the term that the college has an *ethos*. What does this mean to you? What is the ethos?

Tell me about the study groups you have used. Who was involved? How were they selected? What did you do? What readings were most important?

The last comprehensive strategic plan is labeled 1996-00. It has a date of 12/10/99. What changed from earlier editions? How did the changes get made?

The April 96 paper called (Case College): Shaping Our Future by (president) What was the purpose of this paper? What followed this?

What has the response been to the feedback report and dissemination of the comments collected? (June 15 was date by which individuals were to let others know if they wanted to serve on a team.)

Tell me about the Phoenix experience.

F1

What would it take to get buy-in from the department chairs?

Tell me about your experience in facilitating the round tables in the spring?

F3

What did you mean with the comment on LO3: “

We have many long-term employees who are knowledge experts in their departments and who "run" areas in ways nobody else really understands.

How did faculty inservice go? Best things? Areas for improvement?

How will this advance the learning centered initiative?

Tell me about the Math Team that has members from east, west, and Oselola.

CBA4

Tell me about how the Math Team worked that was described in the handout for your Innovations conference. (Top is labeled C.L.A.I. - Session 2, 98-99. What is CLAI?)

For faculty development content, you note that Performance-based Instruction and Active and Cooperative Learning are the most important, but you do not list resources for these. What do you use as resources? As models? (Noted in readings were WIDS, Kolb, etc.)

Tell me about the faculty development process at (Case College). The processes listed in your handouts:

- “• Collaborative Learning Among Peers
- Guided readings and seminars (face-to-face & on-line dialog)
- Consultant Presentations & Topical Workshops
- Practice Teaching, peer Observation
- Design, Test, Publish Results”

Re the paper you sent as “Application Addendum” - 1/27/99. The definition of a learning-centered institution. Others have this form? Who wrote app?

CBA5

What is the role of the provost? (In becoming a more learning-centered institution)

What is the role of department chairs? (“)

Some have suggested that department chairs need to play a more central role in this development. What do you think about that?

CBA2

copies of the institutional effectiveness reports

How do you share the data resulting from your efforts?

How do you think others use this information?

What types of information seems to be of most interest to others?

Who are the major data users in the organization?

Which positions do not use the data as much as you would like?

What directions are you moving with providing increasingly useful information?

questions for June
revised 11/19/00

APPENDIX H

PARTIAL LIST OF CASE COLLEGE DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Accreditation Self-Study, 1993.

Report of the Reaccreditation Committee, 1993.

College Response to Reaccreditation Committee Report. 1993.

College Catalog 1999-2000.

Focus Groups Report

Teaching/Learning Plans

Class Schedule Summer 2000

(Case) College, Comprehensive Strategic Plan, 1996-00.

(President) April 1996. “(Case College): Shaping Our Future.” (11-page document that lays out the learning imperative and the challenges.)

(Case College Administrator) AAHE Report. March 3, 2000. Summarizes sessions she attended at conference and lays out challenges.

(Case) College, 1999, Learning-Centered Reference Guide. Has the terminology defined.

(Case College Team). Inclusion - Course Outcome Summary. For use with faculty and staff at Case College.

(Staff Member). From Dissertation. Form about awareness of teaching, learning and advising strategies. From 94-99 Title III projects.

Collaborative Processes in Faculty Development. Presentation by (Team) League for Innovation Conference, 1999.

(Case) College Faculty Development Program Bibliography. Contains references in following categories: Assessment, Critical Thinking, Developmental Advising, and Diversity/Inclusion.

Faculty Development Content. (Title III Faculty Development Program). Includes tables with 6 key areas: Performance-based Instruction (PBI), Critical Thinking, Diversity,

Developmental Advising, Assessment, and Active and Cooperative Learning.

(President). August, 1999. What Dilbert Doesn't Know - Servant Leadership and the Community College. Power-point slide presentation and a paper about servant leadership presented at another college. Includes references.

(Case College's) Learning-Centered Initiative Roundtables. Feedback Report Session 2, 1999-2000.

Curriculum and Faculty Development Plan.

Econoclast 2000. Student magazine.

Learning-Centered Initiative Roundtables Feedback.

League for Innovation, Learning College Project Description.

Press Release, Vanguard College.

Learning-Centered Initiative, Script for Roundtable Facilitators, 1999.

Moving From Talk to Action: A Practical Guide to Becoming learning Centered. (1999).

(Staff Member) The Learning-Centered College: A Vision for (Case College). For Curriculum Development, Teaching & Learning Document.

(Staff member). The Learning-Centered College, from her application in 1999.

Core Competencies Leadership Team Stipend Document.

Alumni Voice. Publication of the Alumni Association. Vol. 12. No. 2.

College Employment Application process.

Summer 2000 (May - August) Continuing Professional Education Course Schedule.

Leadership Program Professional Development Schedule.

Foundation Features - A newsletter for friends and supporters. (April 2000).

Just the Facts. (Case College) 1998-99. (Has vital statistics for demographic information about college.)

[Http://www.. . . website](http://www...)

Humanities Brochure.

Department of Communications. Teaching Writing: A Process is Itself - A Compilation of Teaching & Evaluating Strategies. Includes many sample activities and explains many collaborative activities.

Fall 1996 Teaching Seminar. Using Classroom Assessment Techniques. (Faculty Member). "Customizing the Classroom."

Show Me, Don't Tell Me!!! (Faculty Member). Teaching Seminar. October 5, 1996.

Agenda for Teaching Writing: A Process in Itself - Fall 1996.

District Board of Trustees. Policy and Procedure. (Includes evaluation and assessment information.)

Humanities Core Competencies Development Teams. Draft course competencies for Humanities Courses.

Theater and Entertainment Technology Associate in Science Degree. (Promotional piece and model schedule.)

Film Production Technology Associate in Science Degree.

Departmental Contacts Directory.

Associate in Science Degrees and Certificate Options.

Agenda of College Prep Task Force Meeting, May 9, 2000.

Project proposal Sample- Title V Direction 2000.

Memo regarding college preparatory Class Enrollment Projections. April 3, 2000.

CPT Review Workshops - Update to College Prep Task Force. February 2000.

Memorandum from the President to all staff. Subject: The First Fifty Days. 3/10/00.

Memorandum from the President to all staff. Vanguard learning College. 5/5/00.

Destination 2000: The Art of Assessment. Materials from June 2000 workshops.

Includes Website information, Project information, Schedule and program information, keynote speaker materials, final program evaluation summary, pre-post assessments and results.

Displaced Homemaker/Career Directions Program brochure.

Academics in Motion (AIM) brochure for low-income, academically needy, first-generation college students.

SLS 1122 Student Success - Get on Course Brochure (3-credit hour elective).

Career Center - LifeMap

Honors Program Description Card.

Draft course competencies by faculty for Humanities Core Competencies.

Registration: Step by Step.

HUM 2000 Second-Level Humanities Courses

Curriculum Model - a Plan for Learning.

The (Case College) Source. (A newspaper) April 12, 2000.

Having Trouble Seeing Your Job Future? Continuing Professional Education (Oracle certified database administrator) brochure.

Admissions Application form.

FYI - Helpful Hints. Goal setting - the process of achieving success.

Handouts from presentation to Executive Council by team. Includes Student Core Competencies, Good Practice in Undergraduate Education, AAHE Bulletin article, "What Research says about improving undergraduate education," Three Definitions: Higher learning, assessment, and classroom assessment. Defining features matrix (Teaching Centered vs. Learning-Centered); Perry's model of intellectual and ethical development.

Executive Council Report, June 26, 2000. (Talking points)

Draft Core Competency Learning Teams Proposal (CDTL, June 00) Proposal presented to Executive Council for next stage of development. Accepted by group and expanded.

Task Assignment Sheet for Curriculum development in NSF grant. Has page on evidence of past success.

Project Summary of NSF Project Grant for Information Technology Workforce Development System plus budget pages.

College's Assessment website (Description of assessment)

College's Developmental Advising website.

College's Active Learning website.

Faculty website on "Increasing Retention in College Preparatory Mathematics."

Developmental Advising Retention. Return Rates. (website)

College Preparatory English II (Fall 2000 website).

Faculty and Staff website.

President. Remarks on the Occasion of the Class of 2000 Commencement. April 28, 2000.

E-mail correspondence from several in response to specific information requests.

dissertation\college\documents
revised 11/19/00

APPENDIX I

Theorists and Their Foci

Learning Organization	Learning-Centered College	Organizational Learning
<p>Chris Argyris (1999) Gene Calvert, Sandra Mobley, and Lisa Marshall, (1994) Arie DeGeus (1988) Peter Ewell (1997) David Garvin (1993) Martha Gephart, Victoria Marsick, Mark VanBuren, and Michelle Spiro (1996) Robert Keidel (1995) Fred Kofman and Peter Senge (1993) Michael Marquardt (1996) Jerry Moskus (1999) John Redding (1998) Edgar Schein (1985, 1992) Peter Senge (1990) Karen Watkins and Victoria Marsick (1993)</p>	<p>Robert Barr and John Tagg (1995) George Boggs (1998, 1999) Carlsen and Radakovich (1999) Patricia Cross (1998) Paul Elsner (1997) Peter Ewell (1997) Thomas Fallo (1997) William Flynn (1999) Kimberly Garcia (1998) Paul Gianini (1998) Lee Howser (1997) Susan Kelley (1998) Larry Lashway (1998) Jerry Moskus (1999) Terry O'Banion (1995, 1997, 1998) Karen Wells (1999) Wingspread Group (1993)</p>	<p>Russell Ackoff (1981) Chris Argyris (1999) Chris Argyris and Donald Schon (1978) Arie DeGeus (1988) Anthony DiBella and Edwin Nevis (1998) John Brown & Duguid Kim Cameron, Sarah Freeman, and Aneil Mishra (1995) Kim Cameron and David Whetten (1996) Scott Cook and Dvora Yanow (1996) George Huber (1991) Robert Keidel (1995) <i>(concept only)</i> Michael Marquardt (1996) Kathryn Moore (1998) Edwin Nevis, Anthony DiBella, and Janet Gould (1997) Edwin Nevis, Joan Lancourt, and Helen Vassalo (1996) Reg Revans (1980) <i>(concept only)</i> Edgar Schein (1985, 1992, 1995, 1999) Ray Stata (1996) Peter Vaill (1996) Etienne Wenger (1998) <i>(learning communities in organizations)</i></p>

notes\appendix I
11/19/00

APPENDIX J

Letter to College

Roberta C. Teahen
8802 Peninsula Drive
Traverse City, MI 49686
telephone (231) 922-1151 (work) e-mail: rteahen@aol.com

April 10, 2000

President, (Case College)
P. O. Box
City, State, Zip

Dear President:

Community colleges must become increasingly adept at learning if they are to retain the vitality that has characterized their impressive growth. As a long-time community college faculty member and administrator, I have a deep interest in the future capacity of community colleges. As a doctoral student at Michigan State University, I have developed a keen interest in organizational learning.

(Case College) is at the forefront in its efforts to become more learning centered. My dissertation research concerns college leaders' strategies for becoming more learning-centered organizations. The purpose of this letter is to invite your participation in my research. An abstract of my research proposal and the consent form are enclosed for your review. I have also enclosed a resume so that you can see the breadth of my background. Although I am new to formal research, I am an experienced community college educator.

The research will take a minimal amount of your staff's time. The estimated time per individual is about four hours over a two-three month period with meetings, individual interviews, completion of a survey instrument, and/or telephone conversations. The target group are those with top-level responsibilities for helping the college to become more learning-centered. The president and those who report directly to the president, along with other campus leaders with responsibilities associated with becoming more learning-centered, are the individuals I would like to meet with. It would be ideal to have a group of 8-12 participate.

Organizational learning is becoming a topic of vital importance in organizations. This research should not only provide valuable information for your campus, but it should also contribute to knowledge important for other college leaders. I would very much appreciate your support of my inquiry on your campus. The identity of your college and the individuals who are interviewed will be kept confidential. Once the research document has been accepted by MSU, I will be pleased to make a visit to your campus to share the findings with the participants in a format of your choice - a seminar, a meeting, or individually.

I will call your office in about one week to talk with you about this request.

Sincerely,

Enclosures

Roberta C. Teahen

APPENDIX K

Learning Theories

Real learning gets to the heart of what it means to be human. Through learning we re-create ourselves. Through learning we become able to do something we never were able to do. Through learning we re-perceive the world and our relationship to it. Through learning we extend our capacity to create, to be part of the generative process of life (Senge, 1990, p. 14).

The literature on learning is both broad and expansive. Most of it focuses on individual behaviors and emerges from many paradigms: psychological, social, cognitive science, and others. The learning literature contributes important perspective to understanding organizational processes, especially because the behaviors of individuals and groups represent the organization. Although separate from the organizational learning literature, which emanates from organizational behavior and organizational development theorists, an overview of some of the learning literature is offered here because it should help with understanding the actors and actions in an organizational context. Peter Senge, in The Fifth Discipline, observes:

Learning has very little to do with taking in information. Learning, instead, is a process that is about enhancing capacity. Learning is about building the capability to create that which you previously couldn't create. It's ultimately related to action, which information is not (Senge, 1990, p. 191).

Some believe that behavioral change is required for learning; others insist that new ways of thinking are enough. Some cite information processing as the mechanism through which learning takes place; others propose shared insights, organizational routines, even memory (Garvin, 1993, p. 80).

Despite the particulars of the “change,” whether behavioral, attitudinal, or cognitive, there is strong agreement among organizational learning theorists that some change results from learning. Some contend that improved performance will be based on both learning and experience (Nevis, DiBella, & Gould, 1997). Most also believe that learning precedes organizational performance improvements.

In a learning organization, employees are expected to learn and to plan their future learning (Marquardt, 1996, p. 26). Learning may also become problematic. The learning process has the potential for tremendous murkiness, as leaders and followers explore new paths in pursuit of new agendas. It is perhaps this uneasiness between comfort with the known and uncertainty concerning the unknown that lies at the heart of organizations' inability to break out of traditional patterns of behavior.

Boulding has suggested that inappropriate mental models (1988) are one of the primary factors causing organizational dysfunction today, even threatening the survival of some organizations (p. 101). . . Porras and Robertson (1983) performed a metaanalysis of large numbers of change studies and discovered that fewer than 40% of the change efforts produced positive change in the dependent variable of interest. Beer, Eisenstat, and Spector (1990) found that in one third of the major resource-intensive change initiatives they studied in depth . . . the efforts actually made the situations worse (Dent, 1999, p. 26).

Constructivism and Meaning Making

Constructivism refers to the concept that each person creates his own knowledge based upon his own interpretations of each situation. If each person makes different meaning of what appears to others to be the same situation, then not only will the learning be different, but so must the strategies for implementing change be different. An unanswered question is the extent to which these learning differences are acknowledged in strategy formulation and implementation.

Meaning is always an interpretation of experience based upon our previous experiences, our meaning systems and the language we use. However, there is a danger in this: we can impose our meaning systems on our present experience in an uncritical manner, rather than seeing things as they 'really are' (Mezirow, 1991, cited in Jarvis et al., 1998, p.36).

Prior experiences of all of the learners of the organization will be part of the meaning they make of every situation. Further, because of this experience, they may not see things as they really are. Many assumptions exist, particularly in higher education, which are not supported by convincing evidence. An important tenet of organizational learning is that we must challenge assumptions. In doing so, new issues are raised, as learners may become defensive about the challenges and evoke what Argyris refers to as defensive routines:

I define these as any action or policy that prevents human beings from experiencing negative surprises, embarrassment, or threat, and simultaneously prevents the organization from reducing or eliminating the causes of the surprises, embarrassment, and threat. Organizational defensive routines are anti-learning and overprotective (Argyris, 1992, p. 102-3).

Experiential Learning

Learning from experience is essential for individual and organizational effectiveness and . . . this learning can occur only in situations where personal values and organizational norms support action based on valid information,

free and informed choice, and internal commitment (Kolb, 1984, p. 11).

Kolb, in 1975, advanced a model of experiential learning which has been applied primarily to individual learning. This model describes a continuous cycle comprised of concrete experience, observations and reflections, formulation of abstract concepts and generalization, and testing implications of concepts on situations. The model can also be applied to an organizational context.

Industry research by Kolb has demonstrated that managers with different learning styles approach problem solving and decision making differently. Both learning and decision-making are similar processes requiring adaptation (Kolb, 1996, p. 278). Although it is beyond the scope of this research, the relationship between the strategies of leaders and their personal learning styles may contribute important perspective to understanding the organization's learning profile. If Kolb's work were conducted among collegiate leaders, we should expect to see the same results as those uncovered in industry—that the learning style of the manager influences strategy development and consequently the learning style of the organization.

A frequently cited concern in organizations is that communication is poor. Considerable research exists to suggest that “when style differences are great, communication difficulty rises” (Kolb, 1996, p. 284). Acknowledging the learning differences among leaders and followers may be a vital link in a change strategy. Kolb believes that an awareness of the experiential learning model and our own individual learning style will help improve individual and organizational learning. He makes two recommendations:

First, learning should be an explicit objective that is pursued as consciously and deliberately as profit and productivity. . . . The nature of the learning process is such that opposing perspectives, action and reflection, concrete involvement and analytical detachment, are all essential for optimal learning. When one perspective comes to dominate others, learning effectiveness is reduced in the long run. From this we can conclude that the most effective learning systems are those that can tolerate differences in perspective (Kolb, 1996, p. 285-6).

Kolb's findings also support the view of Bensimon and Neumann who argue the importance of different types of thinkers within an effective team. There are known differences in perspective in academic settings. The disciplinary focus, the differing understanding of institutional purposes, and general skepticism between groups are frequent areas of communication breakdowns. An effective change strategy will accommodate differing voices, and different learners, while staying the course or staying aligned with the goals.

Types of Learning

There are many additional perspectives on learning which inform understanding about behaviors of individuals and groups in learning contexts. Following are some examples of those which may contribute to interpretation of the findings in this research study.

Single- and Double-loop learning

Chris Argyris and Donald Schon have defined learning by its actions in an organizational environment and use the terms single- and double-loop learning. These terms are reported to have originated with Ashby's book Design for the Brain (1952). Single-loop learning is a type of learning which maintains the status quo, while double-loop learning is change-oriented. The authors explain that double-loop learning questions underlying policies and goals and challenges assumptions (Argyris, 1977, p. 116).

A group of authors who conducted research in a school setting define double-loop learning "as a process that examines the underlying assumptions and leads, not only to the acquisition and integration of new knowledge, but to the effective use and dissemination of professional knowledge" (Scribner et al, 1999, p. 155).

Adaptive Learning

Adaptive learning is considered to be the same as single-loop learning, according to Argyris & Schon and Senge. Marquardt also relates it to experience: "Adaptive learning is learning from experience and reflection" (Marquardt, 1996, p. 23).

Generative Learning

Generative learning, according to Marquardt, is the "learning that is created from reflection, analysis, or creativity " (Marquardt, 1996, p. 23), and Senge writes that "'learning' in this context does not mean acquiring more information, but expanding the ability to produce the results we truly want in life" (Senge, 1990, p. 142). In explaining this meaning in the personal mastery chapter of his book, Senge explains the importance of maintaining a "creative tension" in order to optimize personal performance. He explains that juxtapositioning vision (the ideal) and current reality (the present) generates this tension and that personal mastery is learning how to sustain this tension (Senge, 1990, p. 142).

Maintenance Learning

Less common in the literature, but interesting nonetheless, is the concept of maintenance learning. Its contrast is innovative learning, explained next. Maintenance learning was defined by Botkin, Elmandjra, and Malitza in 1979. They defined it as:

the acquisition of fixed outlooks, methods, and rules for dealing with known and recurring situations. It enhances our problem-solving ability for problems that are given. It is the type of learning designed to maintain an existing system or an established way of life (Botkin et al, 1979, cited in Jarvis et al, 1998, p. 60).

As defined, maintenance learning is similar to single-loop learning.

Innovative Learning

Botkin, Elmandjra and Malitza see innovative learning as bringing “change, renewal, restructuring and problem reformulation” (Elmandjra & Malitza, 1979, cited in Jarvis et al., 1998, p. 60). This definition suggests a meaning similar to generative learning. It emphasizes something new and a break from the existing. This concept parallels double-loop learning descriptions.

Transformative Learning

Emanating from the work of Mezirow, transformative learning is defined as the “development of revised assumptions, premises, ways of interpreting experience, or perspectives on the world by means of critical self-reflection” (Cranton, 1994, p. xii).

Summary of Learning Types

Most of these categorizations of learning reflect either maintenance of the status quo or effecting change. The forms of learning most prevalent within the organization will have significant impact upon the extent to which the organization is able to change as a result of learning practices. By their very definitions, some of the learning types are best at maintaining the status quo. Few believe the status quo is adequate for today’s challenges.

Learning Orientation 1
Knowledge Source
Internal vs. External

APPENDIX L

Definition: Preference for developing knowledge internally as compared to preference for acquiring knowledge developed externally.

Interviewee	Overall					LO1 Notes
	LO1-1	LO1-2	LO1-3	LO1-4	LO1-5	
F1	2	1	2	1	1	2 See Note 1
CO4	1	1	1	1	2	1 See Note 2
CBA4	1	1	1	1	1	1
CO1	1	1	1	2	1	2 See Note 3
CO2	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	3
CBA5	2	1	1	2	2	2
F2	2	1	1	2	1	2 See Note 4
F3	1	2	1	2	1	2 See Note 5
CBA3	1	1	1		1	1
CO3	1	1	1	2	2	3 See Note 6
Overall Rating Average					1.90	
Standard Deviation on Overall Rating					0.738	

Frequency 1	6	8	8	3	6
Frequency 1.5	1	1	1	1	1
Frequency 2	3	1	1	5	3

Percentage 1	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.333	0.6
Percentage 1.5	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.111	0.1
Percentage 2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.556	0.3

Note 1: Title III & IV projects very research-based; But also high confidence in our internal products and process.

Note 2: Although we use refs(?) from outside, it is heavily "processed" before put to work for us. Has to be internalized early.

Note 3: Focus is on collaboration. External expertise is used to inform discussions. Internal staff lead the discussion.

Note 4: Initially we looked external; as we have developed self-confidence and trust we have looked more internally.

Note 5: Underscored collaboration; We use internal faculty/staff for most action or planning teams and program development. Our performance goals are based mostly on internal student performance stats.

Note 6: Conference presentations external; consults - external; faculty best practices teaching strategy - internal.

Coding Scheme:	Learning Orientations Pairs:	Overall Rating:
	1 = Internal	1 = Mostly Internal
	2 = External	2 = More Internal
		3 = Even
		4 = More External
		5 = Mostly External

Learning Orientation 2

Content-Process Focus

Content vs. Process

Definition: Emphasis on accumulation of knowledge about **what** products/services are as compared to emphasis on accumulation of knowledge about how those products/services are developed, delivered, or improved.

Interviewee	LO2-1	LO2-2	LO2-3	LO2-4	LO2-5	Overall Rating	LO2 Notes
F1	2	2	1	2	2	5	
CO4	2	2	1	2	2	4	See Note 1
CBA4	2	2	2	1	1	4	
CO1	1	1	2	2	2	4	See Note 2
CO2	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	3	
CBA5	2	1	1.5	2	1	3	
F2	1	2	1	1	2	3	See Note 3
F3	1	1	1	2	2	3	
CBA3	2	2	1	2	1	3	
CO3	1	2	1	1	2	3	See Note 4
Overall Rating Average						3.50	
Standard Deviation on Overall Rating						0.707	

Frequency 1	4	3	6	3	3
Frequency 1.5	1	1	2	1	1
Frequency 2	5	6	2	6	6
Percentage 1	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.3
Percentage 1.5	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1
Percentage 2	0.5	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.6

Note 1: Product mix hasn't changed dramatically, but delivery and service has.

Note 2: I see both as important, but consistency of process probably is more important.

Note 3: This was hard. These choices seem to both describe us.

Examples: I struggled choosing only one. What we teach and how we teach it both effect student learning so the both seem to be at work here.

Note 4: Research on learning-centered initiative. Budget reflects our process; expenses are treated as overhead.

Coding Scheme:

Learning Orientations Pairs:

1 = Content

2 = Process

Overall Rating:

1 = Mostly Content

2 = More Content

3 = Even

4 = More Process

5 = Mostly Process

Learning Orientation 3 Knowledge Reserve Personal vs. Public

Definition: Knowledge is possessed by individuals as compared to knowledge that is publicly available.

Interviewee	LO3-1	LO3-2	LO3-3	LO3-4	LO3-5	Overall Rating	LO3 Notes
F1	1	2	2	1	1	2	See Note 1
CO4	2	2	1	2	1	3	See Note 2
CBA4	2	2	2	1	1	4	
CO1	1	1	2	2	1	3	See Note 3
CO2	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	3	
CBA5	1	1	2	1	1.5	3	
F2	1	1	2	1	1	2	
F3	1	2	1	1	1	1	See Note 4
CBA3	1	2	2	2	1	4	
CO3	1	2	2	2	1	2	See Note 5
Overall Rating Average						2.70	
Standard Deviation on Overall Rating						0.949	
Frequency 1	7	3	2	5	8		
Frequency 1.5	1	1	1	1	2		
Frequency 2	2	6	7	4	0		
Percentage 1	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.8		
Percentage 1.5	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2		
Percentage 2	0.2	0.6	0.7	0.4	0		

Note 1: Consultants, external & expertise

Note 2: Sources of knowledge are both data & story.

Note 3: We hire based on skills, but development tends to be team-based.

Note 4: We have many long-term employees who are knowledge experts in their departments and who "run" areas in ways nobody else really understands.

Note 5: Statistics from (colleague's) dissertation - personal.

Coding Scheme:

Learning Orientations Pairs:

1 = Personal

2 = Public

Overall Rating:

1 = Mostly Personal

2 = More Personal

3 = Even

4 = More Public

5 = More Public

Learning Orientation 4

Dissemination Mode

Formal vs. Informal

Definition: Knowledge is shared in formal, prescribed methods as compared to knowledge that is shared through informal methods, such as role modeling and casual interaction.

Interviewee	LO4-1	LO4-2	LO4-3	LO4-4	LO4-5	Overall Rating	LO4 Notes
F1	2	2	2	2	1	5	See Note 1
CO4	2	2	2	1	2	4	See Note 2
CBA4	2	1	2	1	1	2	
CO1	2	2	1	1	1	2	See Note 3
CO2	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	3	
CBA5	1	1.5	1	1	1	3	
F2	1	2	2	1	2	3	
F3	2	2	2	1	2	5	See Note 4
CBA3	1	2	2	1	2	4	
CO3	2	2	2	1	2	5	
Overall Rating Average						3.60	
Standard Deviation on Overall Rating						1.174	

Frequency 1	3	1	2	8	4
Frequency 1.5	1	2	1	1	1
Frequency 2	6	7	7	1	5

Percentage 1	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.8	0.4
Percentage 1.5	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
Percentage 2	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.1	0.5

Note 1: Generally, the LCI.

Note 2: Lots of meetings & discussion - little that is written is shared.

Note 3: Official procedures are shared formally but much expertise is disseminated through informal networks.

Note 4: The definition states this is about how "knowledge is shared" yet the statements below state "we learn." I do not think these are the same. Our institution is very formal in how it shares information but we actually learn it in very informal ways. I answered the statements below on learning. Examples: Title III, Title V, Faculty Academy.

Coding Scheme:

Learning Orientations Pairs:

1 = Formal

2 = Informal

Overall Rating:

1 = Mostly Formal

2 = More Formal

3 = Even

4 = More Informal

5 = Mostly Informal

Learning Orientation 5

Learning Scope

Incremental vs. Transformative

Definition: Preference for knowledge related to the improvement of existing products, services, or capabilities as compared to preference for knowledge related to the development of new ones.

Interviewee	LO5-1	LO5-2	LO5-3	LO5-4	Overall Rating	L05 Notes
F1	2	2	2	2	5	See Note 1
CO4	1	2	1	2	3	
CBA4	2	2	2	2	5	
CO1	2	2	2	2	4	See Note 2
CO2	1.5	2	1.5	2	4	
CBA5	2	2	2	2	5	
F2	2	1	2	1	3	
CO3	2	2	2	2	5	See Note 3
CBA3	1	1	1	2	1	
F3	2	1	1	2	3	See Note 4
Overall Rating Average					3.80	
Standard Deviation on Overall Rating					1.317	
Frequency 1	2	3	3	1		
Frequency 1.5	1	0	1	0		
Frequency 2	7	7	6	9		
Percentage 1	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.1		
Percentage 1.5	0.1	0	0.1	0		
Percentage 2	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.9		

Note 1: New president will reinforce this preference.

Note 2: We draw on existing knowledge, but seek new ways to improve services.

Note 3: Learning-centered initiative - transformative; College Level Academic Initiative.

Note 4: Different areas at the college fall into different sides of these pairs.

High-level administrators are always looking for new ideas, but some departments (registrar's office) keep re-doing the same old thing.

Coding Scheme:

Learning Orientations Pairs:

1 = Incremental

2 = Transformative

Overall Rating:

1 = Mostly Incremental

2 = More Incremental

3 = Even

4 = More Transformative

5 = Mostly Transformative

Learning Orientation 6
Value-Chain Focus
Design/Make vs. Market/Deliver

Definition: Emphasize learning investments in engineering or production activities (--design and make--) functions versus sales or service activities (--market and deliver--) functions.

Interviewee	LO6-1	LO6-2	LO6-3	LO6-4	Overall Rating	LO6 Notes
F1	2	2	1	1	2	
CO4	2	1	2	2	4	
CBA4	2	2	1	1	3	
CO1	2	1	2	2	4	See Note 1
CO2	2	1.5	1.5	1.5	3	
CBA5	1.5	1	2	1	3	
F2	2	2	1	1	3	
F3	2	1	1	1	1	
CBA3	2	2	1	1	3	
CO3	2	2	2	2	5	See Note 2
Overall Rating Average					3.10	
Standard Deviation on Overall Rating					1.101	

Frequency 1	0	4	5	6
Frequency 1.5	1	1	1	1
Frequency 2	9	5	4	3
Percentage 1	0	0.4	0.5	0.6
Percentage 1.5	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Percentage 2	0.9	0.5	0.4	0.3

Note 1: Our processes focus more on service and adding value.

Note 2: Outsourcing of ads.

Coding Scheme:

Learning Orientations Pairs:

1 = Design/Make

2 = Market/Deliver

Overall Rating:

1 = Mostly Design/Make

2 = More Design/Make

3 = Even

4 = More Market/Deliver

5 = Mostly Market/Deliver

Learning Orientation 7

Learning Focus

Individual vs. Group

Definition: Development of knowledge and skills pertaining to individual performance as compared to the development of knowledge and skills pertaining to group performance.

Interviewee	LO7-1	LO7-2	LO7-3	LO7-4	Overall Rating	LO7 Notes
F1	2	2	1	2		See Note 1
CO4	2	1	2	2	4	
CBA4	2	1	1	1	1	
CO1	2	2	1	1	3	See Note 2
CO2	1.5	1.5	1	1.5	3	
CBA5	2	2	2	2	5	
F2	2	1	1	2	3	
F3	2	2	1	1	4	See Note 3
CBA3	2	2	2	2	5	
CO3	2	2	1	1	3	See Note 4
Overall Rating Average					3.444	
Standard Deviation on Overall Rating					1.236	

Frequency 1	0	3	7	4
Frequency 1.5	1	1	0	1
Frequency 2	9	6	3	5
Percentage 1	0	0.3	0.7	0.4
Percentage 1.5	0.1	0.1	0	0.1
Percentage 2	0.9	0.6	0.3	0.5

Note 1: My perspective - not necessarily widely shared.

Note 2: It seems to be blend of both learning focuses.

Note 3: Individuals, faculty, staff, etc. are hired for the specific function they will perform.
However, most big decisions are made by committees or action teams making recommendations.

Note 4: LCI, Title III and V.

Coding Scheme:

Learning Orientations Pairs:

1 = Individual

2 = Group

Overall Rating:

1 = Mostly Individual

2 = More Individual

3 = Even

4 = More Group

5 = Mostly Group

Facilitating Factor 1 Scanning Imperative

APPENDIX M

Definition: Gather information about conditions and practices outside the unit; seek out information about the external environment.

Interviewee	FF1	Notes
F1	6	See Note 1
CO4	5	See Note 2
CBA4	6	See Note 3
CO1	6	
CO2	7	
CBA5	5	
F2	6	See Note 4
F3	6	
CBA3	7	See Note 5
CO3	6	
Summary	6.00	
Standard Deviation	0.667	

Note 1: Institutional research, enrollment management, but actually little assessment of student learning.

Note 2: Much data is gathered--surveys, follow-up studies, environmental scans, labor market information, etc. But it isn't clear how this really changes core processes in the organization.

Note 3: Focus groups; focus on industry; institutional data.

Note 4: ACE/Kellogg; college & community relations/student services surveys; workforce development; lobbyist; conferences, site visits

Note 5: A.S., Advisory Groups, Business Surveys; partnerships with businesses

Rating: 1 - 2 Little Evidence to Support This Factor
 3 - 5 Some Evidence to Support This Factor
 6 - 7 Extensive Evidence to Support This Factor

Facilitating Factor 2 Performance Gap

Definition: Shared perception of gap between current performance and desired performance.

Interviewee	FF2	Notes
F1	6.5	See Note 1
CO4	6	See Note 2
CBA4	6	
CO1	6	See Note 3
CO2	7	
CBA5	6	
F2	5	
F3	3	See Note 4
CBA3	7	
CO3	3	See Note 5
Summary	5.6	
Standard Deviation	1.46	

Note 1: Within my circle, this is strong - There are large pockets of complacency.

Note 2: Widespread desire to improve results (graduates, e.g.) has resulted in major strategies to accomplish this. Result is 26% increase in graduates over past 6 years!

Note 3: Comprehensive Strategic Plan; cyber suite; redesign of core processes.

Note 4: Learning-centered round tables; learning-centered leadership team.

Note 5: Student Success; GPA; rates of graduation.

Rating: 1 - 2 Little Evidence to Support This Factor
 3 - 5 Some Evidence to Support This Factor
 6 - 7 Extensive Evidence to Support This Factor

Facilitating Factor 3

Concern for Measurement

Definition: Considerable effort is spent defining or measuring key factors. Discourse over metrics is regarded as a learning activity.

Interviewee	FF3	Notes
F1	3.5	See Note 1
CO4	6	See Note 2
CBA4	6	
CO1	7	See Note 3
CO2	7	
CBA5	3	
F2	5	
F3	3	See Note 4
CBA3	7	
CO3	6	See Note 5
Summary	5.9	
Standard Deviation	1.63	

Note 1: Institutionally we do this well - Faculty don't do it well.

Note 2: Excellent use of institutional effectiveness measures. Lots of emphasis on assessment in classrooms. But not enough discussion of what the measurements really mean.

Note 3: Institutional data used extensively for decision-making; focus group; periodic reports and updates.

Note 4: Institutional research department.; most grants are performance based and require feedback/evals; tangible, yes; intangible, no; ideally yes; in practice, no.

Note 5: Documentation of Title III & V; Documentation of LCI.

Rating: 1 - 2 Little Evidence to Support This Factor

3 - 5 Some Evidence to Support This Factor

6 - 7 Extensive Evidence to Support This Factor

Facilitating Factor 4

Organizational Curiosity

Definition: Curiosity about conditions and practices; interest in creative ideas and new technologies; support for experimentation.

Interviewee	FF4	Notes
F1	4.5	See Note 1
CO4	6	See Note 2
CBA4	5	
CO1	7	See Note 3
CO2	7	
CBA5	6	
F2	5	
F3	4	See Note 4
CBA3	7	
CO3	6	See Note 5
Summary	5.8	
Standard Deviation	1.1	

Note 1: We have met the resistance of the system - but innovators in this organization tend to be persistent (3-course intensive language & ESL courses).

Note 2: Wide array of innovative grants, pilot projects, etc. Lots of release time invested here.

Note 3: Several grant-funded projects; variety of innovative strategies; core competencies learning-centered initiative; life map.

Note 4: ACE/Kellogg institutional transformation project; failed Kaplan plan; Title III, V, Destination; Title III, V; Roundtables every few years, focus groups (all attached to descriptors in narrative.)

Note 5: President's council - memory dump; Title III & V management teams; Destination 2000.

Rating: 1 - 2 Little Evidence to Support This Factor
 3 - 5 Some Evidence to Support This Factor
 6 - 7 Extensive Evidence to Support This Factor

Facilitating Factor 5 Climate of Openness

Definition: Open communications among organization members; problems, errors, or lessons are shared, not hidden.

Interviewee	FF5	Notes
F1	6.5	See Note 1
CO4	5	See Note 2
CBA4	4	
CO1	6	See Note 3
CO2	6	
CBA5	6	
F2	6	See Note 4
F3	5	See Note 5
CBA3	7	
CO3	6	See Note 6
Summary	5.8	
Standard Deviation	0.707	

Note 1: We are probably as open across the hierarchy as any college I know or have worked in.

Note 2: In transition on this. Senior team can discuss ANYTHING. Not clear how criticism is honored elsewhere.

Note 3: Roundtables; meetings of president's council & faculty leaders; periodic collegewide forums.

Note 4: I think this is true for faculty. It is somewhat less true for administrators and not true for most career service personnel.

Note 5: Not as widespread as should be (newsletter, general e-mails & voice mails); roundtables, faculty senates. Some are, full-time new employees go through orientation or faculty academy Title III & Title V work together collegewide.

Note 6: Title III & V Initiatives; LCI.

Rating: 1 - 2 Little Evidence to Support This Factor
 3 - 5 Some Evidence to Support This Factor
 6 - 7 Extensive Evidence to Support This Factor

Facilitating Factor 6 Continuous Education

Definition: Commitment of quality resources for learning.

Interviewee	FF6	Notes
F1	5.5	See Note 1
CO4	6	See Note 2
CBA4	6	
CO1	6	See Note 3
CO2	6	
CBA5	6	
F2	6	
F3	6	See Note 4
CBA3	6	
CO3	6	See Note 5
Summary	6.0	
Standard Deviation	0.158	

Note 1: We have lots of resources and they flow to the right places very often.

Note 2: Close to 4% of payroll devoted to formal training/learning. Lots of release time invested.

Note 3: Leadership (case college); SPD Funds; Title III/V; Destination 98, 99, 00.

Note 4: Destination, Title III & V, new teaching-learning centers. Money for professional dev.; Leadership (case college) and all those above; SPD funds for full-time faculty; Destination for full or part-time; Leadership (case college); stipends for faculty dev.

Note 5: AS programs; workforce dev.; focus on the workplace; faculty endowed chairs.

Rating: 1 - 2 Little Evidence to Support This Factor
 3 - 5 Some Evidence to Support This Factor
 6 - 7 Extensive Evidence to Support This Factor

Facilitating Factor 7 Operational Variety

Definition: Value different methods, procedures, and competencies; appreciate diversity.

Interviewee	FF7	Notes
F1	5.5	See Note 1
CO4	5	See Note 2
CBA4	4	
CO1	6	See Note 3
CO2	6	
CBA5	6	
F2	4	See Note 4
F3	7	See Note 5
CBA3	6	
CO3	3	See Note 6
Summary	5.3	
Standard Deviation	1.230	

Note 1: We do well on this score at the grassroots; not necessarily at upper executive levels.

Note 2: Always a strong value in hiring & promotion of staff & administrators.

Not necessarily an effective value yet in hiring faculty.

Note 3: Diversity initiatives; diversity study groups.

Note 4: As creative as we are in some areas, we are still very much a "one size fits all" employer.

Note 5: Different teaching texts and resources by campus; many variances by dept. Faculty set own schedules within guidelines; better home-office communications (e-mail, Internet, voice mail). Within limits of our accreditation agency SACS. Yes, EAEOC, Leadership (case college), Diversity workshops. EAEOC (Equal Access, Equal Opportunity Committee and campus representation sits on every hiring committee.) Title V, Leadership (case college), Title III.

Note 6: Goals for diversification; policies & procedures.

Rating: 1 - 2 Little Evidence to Support This Factor

3 - 5 Some Evidence to Support This Factor

6 - 7 Extensive Evidence to Support This Factor

Facilitating Factor 8

Multiple Advocates

Definition: New ideas and methods can be advanced by employees at all organizational levels. Multiple advocates or champions exist.

Interviewee	FF8	Notes
F1	6.0	See Note 1
CO4	7	See Note 2
CBA4	5	
CO1	6	See Note 3
CO2	6	
CBA5	6	
F2	5	
F3	4	See Note 4
CBA3	7	
CO3	2	
Summary	5.4	
Standard Deviation	1.506	

Note 1: Very high in my department areas.

Note 2: Many champions for change--more than 300 active participants in learning centered initiative. More than 100 active participants in Lifemap.

Note 3: Learning-Centered Initiative; core competencies; life map; workforce development

Note 4: Destination started from faculty requests. Curriculum development teaching & learning (CDTL) team. Learning-centered initiative leadership team. Leadership (case college), Destination.

Rating: 1 - 2 Little Evidence to Support This Factor
 3 - 5 Some Evidence to Support This Factor
 6 - 7 Extensive Evidence to Support This Factor

Facilitating Factor 9 Involved Leadership

Definition: Leaders personally and actively involved in learning initiatives and in ensuring that a learning environment is maintained.

Interviewee	FF9	Notes
F1	6.0	See Note 1
CO4	6	See Note 2
CBA4	4	
CO1	6	See Note 3
CO2	7	
CBA5	6	
F2	5	
F3	3	See Note 4
CBA3	6	
CO3	6	See Note 5
Summary	5.5	
Standard Deviation	1.179	

Note 1: This will get higher; as we said, provosts are not involved.

Note 2: Each member of the senior team "walks the talk."

Note 3: Learning-Centered Initiative; core competencies; life map; workforce development

Note 4: Re-do budget based on learning-centered strategic plan, roundtables, creation of instructional technology dept. to support innovations with learning technologies.

Note 5: LCI Initiative; President's council; faculty association.

Rating: 1 - 2 Little Evidence to Support This Factor
 3 - 5 Some Evidence to Support This Factor
 6 - 7 Extensive Evidence to Support This Factor

Facilitating Factor 10

Systems Perspective

Definition: Recognition of interdependence among organizational units and groups; awareness of time delay between actions and their outcomes.

Interviewee	FF10	Notes
F1	6	See Note 1
CO4	7	See Note 2
CBA4	4	
CO1	6	See Note 3
CO2	6	
CBA5	4	
F2	4	
F3	4	See Note 4
CBA5	7	
CO3	5	
Summary	5.3	
Standard Deviation	1.252	

Note 1: (CO1) and (CO2) use this perspective to sell (case college)--generally a very good thing.

Note 2: Four year commitment to Learning-Centered Initiative and counting...Strategic goals are all long-range, stable & well measured...no "goal of the month" fads here...

Note 3: Learning-centered initiative; core processes; life map

Note 4: Professional development opportunities (Title III, V, Destination, Leadership [case college]; vision statement; learning-centered initiative leadership team; Kaplan.

Rating: 1 - 2 Little Evidence to Support This Factor

3 - 5 Some Evidence to Support This Factor

6 - 7 Extensive Evidence to Support This Factor

Summary of Facilitating Factors

Factor	Average	Standard Deviation
FF1 Scanning Imperative	6.0	0.667
FF2 Performance Gap	5.6	1.46
FF3 Concern for Measurement	5.9	1.63
FF4 Organizational Curiosity	5.8	1.1
FF5 Climate of Openness	5.8	0.707
FF6 Continuous Education	6.0	0.158
FF7 Operational Variety	5.3	1.23
FF8 Multiple Advocates	5.4	1.506
FF9 Involved Leadership	5.5	1.179
FF10 Systems Perspective	5.3	1.252
Mean	5.7	1.0889
Standard Deviation	0.276	0.453

APPENDIX N

FF1. Scanning Imperative

	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	20.0	20.0
	6 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	60.0	80.0
	5 Some evidence to support this factor	20.0	100.0
	Total	100.0	

FF2. Performance Gap

	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	3	30.0
	6 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	4	40.0
	5 Some evidence to support this factor	1	10.0
	3 Some evidence to support this factor	2	20.0
	Total	10	100.0

FF3. Concern for Measurement

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	3	30.0	30.0
	6 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	3	30.0	60.0
	5 Some evidence to support this factor	1	10.0	70.0
	4 Some evidence to support this factor	1	10.0	80.0
	3 Some evidence to support this factor	2	20.0	100.0
Total		10	100.0	

FF4. Organizational Curiosity

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7 Extensive Evidence to support this factor		30.0	30.0
	6 Extensive Evidence to support this factor		30.0	60.0
	5 Some evidence to support this factor		30.0	90.0
	4 Some evidence to support this factor		10.0	100.0
Total		0	100.0	

FF5. Climate of Openess

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7 Extensive Evidence to support this factor		20.0	20.0
	6 Extensive Evidence to support this factor		50.0	70.0
	5 Some evidence to support this factor		20.0	90.0
	4 Some evidence to support this factor		10.0	100.0
Total		0	100.0	

FF6. Continuous Education

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	6 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	10	100.0	100.0

FF7. Operational Variety

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	1	10.0	10.0
	6 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	5	50.0	60.0
	5 Some evidence to support this factor	1	10.0	70.0
	4 Some evidence to support this factor	2	20.0	90.0
	3 Some evidence to support this factor	1	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	

FF8. Multiple Advocates

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	2	20.0	20.0
	6 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	4	40.0	60.0
	5 Some evidence to support this factor	2	20.0	80.0
	4 Some evidence to support this factor	1	10.0	90.0
	2 Little evidence to support this factor	1	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	

FF9. Involved Leadership

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	1	10.0	10.0
	6 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	6	60.0	70.0
	5 Some evidence to support this factor	1	10.0	80.0
	4 Some evidence to support this factor	1	10.0	90.0
	3 Some evidence to support this factor	1	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	

FF 10. Systems Perspective

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	7 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	2	22.2	22.2
	6 Extensive Evidence to support this factor	3	33.3	55.6
	5 Some evidence to support this factor	1	11.1	66.7
	4 Some evidence to support this factor	3	33.3	100.0
	Total	9	100.0	
Missing	System	1		
Total		10		

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
FF1. Scanning Imperative	Between Groups	.000	2	.000	.000	1.000
	Within Groups	4.000	7	.571		
	Total	4.000	9			
FF2. Performance Gap	Between Groups	2.150	2	1.075	.412	.677
	Within Groups	18.250	7	2.607		
	Total	20.400	9			
FF3. Concern for Measurement	Between Groups	8.400	2	4.200	2.100	.193
	Within Groups	14.000	7	2.000		
	Total	22.400	9			
FF4. Organizational Curiosity	Between Groups	7.350	2	3.675	11.433	.006
	Within Groups	2.250	7	.321		
	Total	9.600	9			
FF5. Climate of Openess	Between Groups	1.350	2	.675	.756	.504
	Within Groups	6.250	7	.893		
	Total	7.600	9			
FF6. Continuous Education	Between Groups	.000	2	.000	.	.
	Within Groups	.000	7	.000		
	Total	.000	9			
FF7. Operational Variety	Between Groups	1.350	2	.675	.371	.703
	Within Groups	12.750	7	1.821		
	Total	14.100	9			
FF8. Multiple Advocates	Between Groups	3.150	2	1.575	.639	.556
	Within Groups	17.250	7	2.464		
	Total	20.400	9			
FF9. Involved Leadership	Between Groups	6.750	2	3.375	4.109	.066
	Within Groups	5.750	7	.821		
	Total	12.500	9			
FF 10. Systems Perspective	Between Groups	4.600	2	2.300	1.695	.251
	Within Groups	9.500	7	1.357		
	Total	14.100	9			

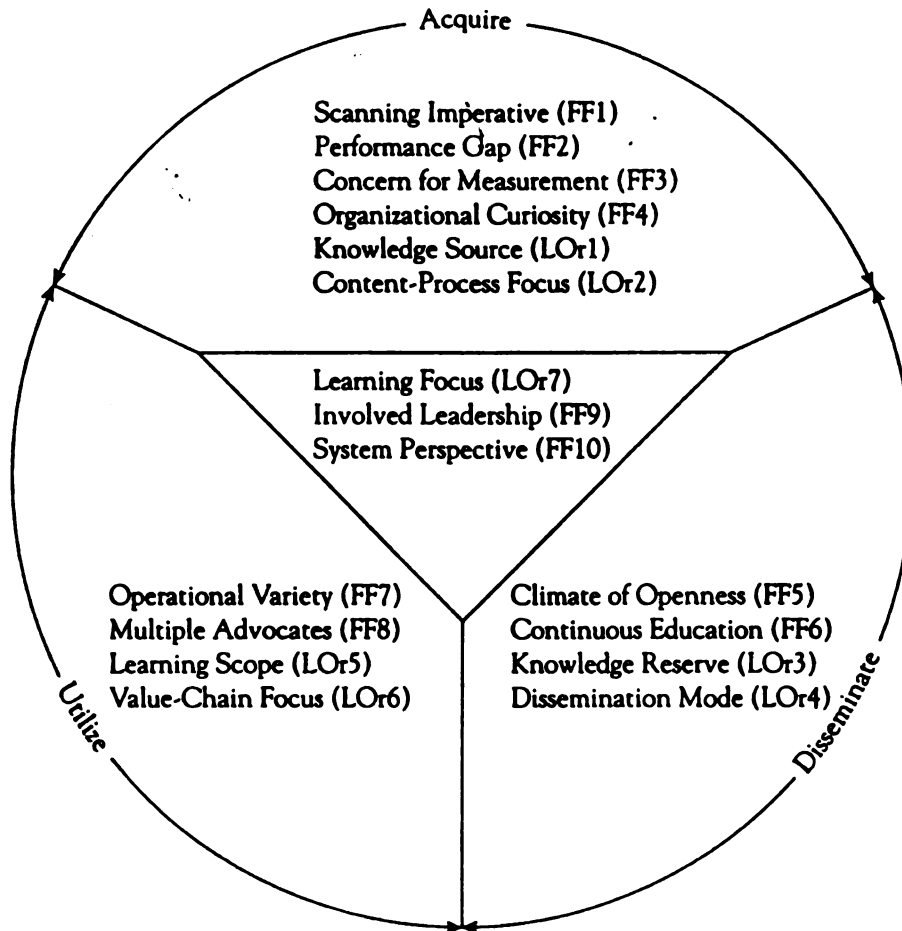
Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
FF1. Scanning Imperative	Male	5	5.80	.45	.20
	Female	5	6.20	.84	.37
FF2. Performance Gap	Male	5	5.40	1.52	.68
	Female	5	5.80	1.64	.73
FF3. Concern for Measurement	Male	5	5.60	1.14	.51
	Female	5	5.20	2.05	.92
FF4. Organizational Curiosity	Male	5	5.80	.84	.37
	Female	5	5.80	1.30	.58
FF5. Climate of Openess	Male	5	6.00	.71	.32
	Female	5	5.60	1.14	.51
FF6. Continuous Education	Male	5	6.00	.00 ^a	.00
	Female	5	6.00	.00 ^a	.00
FF7. Operational Variety	Male	5	4.80	1.30	.58
	Female	5	5.80	1.10	.49
FF8. Multiple Advocates	Male	5	5.20	1.92	.86
	Female	5	5.60	1.14	.51
FF9. Involved Leadership	Male	5	5.80	.45	.20
	Female	5	5.20	1.64	.73
FF 10. Systems Perspective	Male	5	5.60	1.14	.51
	Female	5	5.00	1.41	.63

a. t cannot be computed because the standard deviations of both groups are 0.

APPENDIX O

Figure 2.3. Elements in Our Integrated Approach Mapped Onto the Learning Cycle



LOR = Learning Orientation
FF = Facilitating Factor

Source: An earlier version appeared in Nevis, DiBella, and Gould, 1995, p. 82.

Source: DiBella, A. & Nevis, E. (1998). How Organizations Learn - An Integrated Strategy for Building Learning Capability. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Page 38.

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