



AQIP Action Project Update & Review:
**Improving Employee Satisfaction Through a
Comprehensive Professional Development Program**

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Prepared by:

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Action Project Title:
**Improving Employee Satisfaction Through a
Comprehensive Professional Development Program**

Lead: Keith Balaski
Dates: 2004-2007

Overview

Primary Category: Valuing People

Describe this Action Project's goal in 100 words or fewer:

The College will improve employee satisfaction by designing and implementing a comprehensive professional development program, including the framework for administering that program, for all staff groups. The College will conduct a needs assessment of both the institution overall, and individual employees in this area. One product of this assessment will be a gap analysis identifying developmental needs versus tools currently available. External and internal, fiscal and non-fiscal, resources needed to fill the gap will be identified, along with an implementation plan. An evaluation tool will be chosen that will monitor overall goal attainment.

Describe briefly your institution's reasons for taking on this Action Project now -- why the project and its goals are high among your current priorities:

The College provided various feedback opportunities for employees to identify barriers to and drivers of employee satisfaction: Spring Term 2003 Opening Day discussion groups, the Constellation Survey results, and the MCTC Conversation Day propositions. Valuing and investing in people were themes that stood out in our conversations relative to actions that could lead ultimately to better serving our students. Employees identified a strong interest in continuous, life-long learning and in having a consistent, structured approach to training and development. The College has committed to creating a cultural of inclusion and engagement which by its very nature will be attained by having informed, empowered employees.

List the organizational areas - -institutional departments, programs, divisions, or units -- most affected by or involved in this Action Project:

In focusing on staff and administrative groups, all departments would be impacted: student services — admissions, financial aid, records, counseling and advising, and other student support offices; finance and operations — accounting, business office, human resources, public safety, facilities maintenance; auxiliary operations — bookstore; administration — support, supervisors and other academic support functions.

Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve:

Many human resources driven processes will influence or be impacted by this project including: recruitment and selection of employees, new employee orientation, performance management, training and development, employee involvement, internal communications, and how we monitor College performance (opinion surveys).

Explain the rationale for the length of time planned for this Action Project (from kickoff to target completion):

Budget. Clear direction from cabinet to everyone of the priority of staff development initiatives. Publish staff development calendar and programming opportunities. Report back to the College community on an annual basis relative to goal attainment. On-going measurement of employee and student satisfaction.

Describe how you plan to monitor how successfully your efforts on this Action Project are progressing:

Qualitative and quantitative measures will need to be established including: level of staff participation, feedback on quality and quantity of individual programs, monies spent on employee development, timeliness and quality of

performance reviews, conformance to legally required training.

Describe the overall "outcome" measures or indicators that will tell you whether this Action Project has been a success or failure in achieving its goals:

Qualitative and quantitative measures will need to be established including: employee satisfaction levels per opinion surveys; level of staff participation; student satisfaction of service received.

Other information (e.g., publicity, sponsor or champion, etc.):

Survey of staff to determine development needs. Creation of staff development days for fall and spring semester. Establish processes and procedures to administer development resources. Initiate a pilot program for staff development. Ensure all staff receive timely performance reviews. Establish and operationalize a staff development committee. Full implementation of a sustainable staff development program accessible by employees in all areas of operation. Establish a calendar of targeted training opportunities to enhance overall College performance, including staff development days. Create a resource to be used for individual employee development plans. Create a resource to survey students regarding quality of service received. Conduct on-going employee and student feedback. Continuation of year 2 targets. Review and adjust the development program as needed.

Action Project Update: 2007-09-13

A. Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.

Much of the past year was spent authoring chapters of the college's AQIP Systems Portfolio, however we continued to advance our comprehensive professional development programming aimed at improving employee satisfaction. Since the inception of our Individual Staff Development Program in FY '05, participation in the program has increase by 10.83% (individual employee) and 12.92% (individual departments). The Staff Development Committee (SDC) enhanced our Departmental Development Program by piloting an interdepartmental training activity designed to bridge service departments across campus divisions (student affairs and finance and operations). While the Departmental Development Program was originally designed to provide for the unique and professional growth needs of individual departments, leadership of the two departments collaborated and combined resources toward shared objectives – service to students. The activity evaluation identified improved team cohesion and increased levels of motivation and engagement. The SDC also drafted the Institutional Development and Training Strategic Plan for FY 2007-2011. This plan is the third and final component of our comprehensive professional development program.

Last FY, the SDC completed its work on a campus-wide Performance Appraisal Tool as a component of an overall Performance Management Process (clarifying position expectations, providing timely feedback and coaching, performance appraisal, development planning).

In December of 2006, the SDC sponsored an all-staff Performance Management and Development training session based on our new Performance Appraisal Tool. Participant evaluations conveyed that the training was effective (2.36 on a scale of 1 – 5, 1 being very effective, 5 ineffective) relative to meeting the college goal of "creating a positive work environment designed to develop ad empower a diverse workforce."

In FY 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2004 and 2005, the college administered the Performance Horizons' Campus Quality Survey to gather data relating to how well the college is meeting or exceeding employees' needs and expectations. Although we gleaned an abundance of pertinent data, employees provided feedback that the instrument was too lengthy and cumbersome. This past year we research online options that included national norms for two-year colleges and customization so that we could incorporate questions from the Campus Quality Survey for trend analysis. We choose and administered the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) which focuses on perceptions of employees concerning the college climate. Climate factor responses are being used to guide next steps for this Action Project.

Twenty one (21) employees completed our eight-week Leadership Academy. This program was developed to engage employees in the art and science of becoming the next set of leaders at MCTC. Of this original cohort, three (3) employees have since made application and have advanced in promotional opportunities within the college.

Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.

MCTC continued to provide updates and sought feedback related to the AQIP Action Project progress via various venues; Labor Management meetings, President's Executive Committee meetings, and bi-monthly Excluded Administrators' Meetings. In February, the complete college AQIP Leadership Committee (comprised of cross-functional and employee types) met to review the activities, results and projected project activities as well as comment on each of the AQIP Systems Portfolio categories/chapters.

In FY '07 a Finance and Operations quarterly employee newsletter was also developed. Activities related to the action project are highlighted. This publication is also used to solicit employee development participation. We continue to solicit strategies for additional communication.

Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project.

The SDC work plan for FY '08 includes additional activities around enhancing employee training and satisfaction. We will implement a buddy (mentoring) system between new and current employees in order to empower employees, increase employee engagement and satisfaction, with at least 25% of employees participating in the first year. We will implement a comprehensive guide and resource website for employees for training and development opportunities in an effort to enhance individual professional development. A college-wide professional development day is scheduled for April 2, 2008.

Additional initiatives, based on the results of our May 2007 Personal Assessment of the College Environment, will be developed to actively involve employees in the decision-making process and to offer opportunities for advancement, improving the campus climate to achieve ratings above the national mean from all employee groups. Consultative group meetings are currently being scheduled.

Describe any "effective practice(s)" that resulted from your work on this Action Project.

All SDC activities are based on our assessment of individual employees via our feedback venues such as our Personal Assessment of the College Environment survey and the 2006 MnSCU-wide Staff and Leadership Development Report and Action Plan. Baseline data and quantifiable outcomes are components of each activity. All activities are also measured for effectiveness and improvement by means of participant evaluation.

What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project?

Technology resources continue to challenge activities of our action project. Many of these challenges have been addressed by outsourcing the development of web-based platforms. Competing priorities of the Chief Human Resources Officer has also impacted implementation of activities. An additional FTE was added to human resources staffing area in an effort to allow reprioritization.

If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help to stimulate progress on this action project, explain your need(s) here and tell us who to contact and when?

Not at this time.