South Central College Leadership Workshop

Follow Up Letter

George R. Boggs, PhD and Christine J. McPhail, EdD

Facilitators

June 27 & 28, 2017

"An empowered organization is one in which individuals have the knowledge, skill, desire, and opportunity to personally succeed in a way that leads to collective organizational success." --Stephen Covey
July 12, 2017

Dr. Annette Parker  
President  
South Central College  
1920 Lee Blvd.  
North Mankato, MN 56003

Dear Annette,

We thank you for the opportunity to facilitate the South Central College Leadership Workshop on June 27 & 18, 2017. We are delighted that you understand that South Central College’s future success depends on identifying and developing the next generation of its leaders. We encourage you to continue to provide leadership development for your team as you move forward this year.

The purpose of this letter is to offer a few suggestions about how to keep the momentum we saw emerge during the two-day workshop running throughout the year. Our comments in this letter are designed to help you unleash the potential from the seminar by engaging your team in workshop follow-up activities. We are confident that the administrators were involved and engaged with us during the sessions, but we recognize that post-workshop follow up by you and your team members is the single most important driver of the success of the workshop—and by success we mean results, i.e., using the ideas, leadership competencies, strategies we discussed, and developing action plans to make a positive impact at the unit and institutional level or on individual leadership performance.

We hope that you will find our comments useful and encourage you to share our letter with those administrators who participated in the workshop sessions.

1) Workshop Debriefing. Carol did a fantastic job with summarizing the discussions that took place during the workshop. We have learned from our experience and research that you will be able to get considerable mileage from reviewing and sharing these workshop notes with your team. The debriefing is an outstanding opportunity for you to realize the benefits from your investment. Also, consider placing the workshop topic on the agenda at an upcoming leadership team meeting. Spend some quality time focusing on several key questions:
   a. What were the key lessons learned from the workshop?
   b. What changes are you going to make as a result of the information?
   c. What impact will the changes have on the team, your unit, or South Central?
   d. How can I [president] support your efforts?

If you do decide to do the debriefing, let everyone know in advance that you are going to ask questions so they can come prepared for the discussion and come to the meeting with ideas about how to put things into action.

2) Accountability. Ask for volunteers to take responsibility for conducting follow-up activities related to the five areas discussed at the workshop (Appreciative Inquiry, Holistic Learner Services, Quality Education, Marketing, Branding & Recruitment, and Partnership and Collaboration). Determine how these ideas can be aligned with the strategic planning process. Monitor the work of the team to identify how change is taking place. The senior leadership team must support your efforts by working with you to remove obstacles as needed.
3) Communicate Broadly. Inform the college-wide community about the Leadership Workshop. Share with the college community what you and the leadership team are doing to improve as an institutional team and affirm that the entire team is committed to serving the institution to the best of their ability. Sharing goals and attainment results are powerful ways for you and the team to lead by example.

4) Establish a set of clear and defined leadership messages. All stakeholders need to know what to expect from the senior and midlevel teams. The president and other senior leaders must determine the specific information the college community must have to successfully engage with them in executing the institution’s strategic plan.

5) Align individual performance goals with the goals of the institution. Assign all leadership team members along with their supervisors to develop annual individual performance goals and expected outcomes that are in alignment with (and will advance) institutional goals. These should be approved for every team member by a specified date.

6) Create a process for evaluating overall leadership team goal attainment. Once the necessary leadership outcomes have been established, monitor the results.

7) Next Steps. Building upon the workshop, ask these questions, “Were there ideas or practices discussed in the workshop that our team can benefit from? If so, how do you think we should proceed? This type of follow-up inquiry will help everyone understand that you are serious about continuous quality improvement. Once you get ideas moving forward, develop an ongoing leadership development program for both the senior and midlevel teams.

Final comments: Empowering leaders at all levels
We encourage you to continue to offer leadership development training for the leadership teams. With the fast-changing pace in community colleges, all leaders need to be aware of new ideas and best practices. Continue to support an active professional development process to prepare people for their current assignment and future opportunities. Professional development training means that while the HR Office can provide support and guidance, and coordinate the training process, it is the leadership teams that have to make things happen at the college. If South Central continues to invest in leadership development training and empowering its leaders at all levels of the institution, we believe all of our suggestions can be implemented efficiently, effectively, and sustainably, with a significant positive impact on the college.

Sincerely,

George R. Boggs, Ph.D.

Christine J. McPhail, Ed.D.
# Management Team Meeting

**Date**: September 22, 2017 09:00 AM – 12:00 Noon  
**Location**: FB PCR/NM E132

- **Facilitator**: Dawn P.  
- **Note taker**: Carol F.  
- **Timekeeper**: TBD

**Attendees**: Management Team Members

**Please read**: See documents embedded below

**Please bring**: N/A

## Agenda Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
<th>Time allotted</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome and Introduction of SCC Leadership Work Plan</td>
<td>Dr. Parker</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting norms</td>
<td>Dawn P.</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
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We will debrief #1 of the “Follow Up Letter” as a group. Be prepared to discuss:

1. What were the key lessons learned from the workshop?
2. What changes are we going to make as a result of the information?
3. What impact will the changes have on your team/department and the college as a whole?
4. What can the President do to support these efforts?
5. How will we align the Leadership Work Plan with the area/department goals and strategies?

<p>| Break | All | 10 minutes |</p>
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<tr>
<td>President’s Update</td>
<td>Dr. Parker</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Round the Table Updates: This is an opportunity for each team member (if you would like) to provide an update on work in progress, upcoming events, solicit feedback, ask questions, share decision making, etc.</td>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>40 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closing: Gratitude and Recognition</td>
<td>All</td>
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Other information

Next Meeting: Friday, October 13th, 9 a.m. – Noon via ITV

Agenda Item Requests: Send to Dr. Parker and Dawn in advance
Management Team Meeting

Date/Time: October 13, 2017 09:00 AM – 12:00 Noon  |  Location: FB PCR/NM E132

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<tr>
<td>□ Welcome and opening remarks</td>
<td>Dr. Parker</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Meeting norms/Review meeting notes from September</td>
<td>Dawn P.</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
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<td>□ President's Update</td>
<td>Dr. Parker</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ PACE Survey Results</td>
<td>Dr. Brown and Dawn P.</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Develop Communication Strategy</td>
<td>Dawn P. and Shelly M.</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
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From Boggs and McPhail follow up letter:

3) **Communicate Broadly.** Inform the college-wide community about the Leadership Workshop. Share with the college community what you and the leadership team are doing to improve as an institutional team and affirm that the entire team is committed to serving the institution to the best of their ability. Sharing goals and attainment results are powerful ways for you and the team to lead by example.

4) **Establish a set of clear and defined leadership messages.** All stakeholders need to know what to expect from the senior and midlevel teams. The president and other senior leaders must determine the specific information the college community must have to successfully engage with them in executing the institution’s strategic plan.

□ Round the Table Updates: This is an opportunity for each team member (if you would like) to provide an update on work in progress, upcoming events, solicit feedback, ask questions, share decision making, etc.

□ Closing: Gratitude and Recognition

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Next Meeting: Monday, November 13th. 9 a.m. – Noon via ITV

Agenda Item Requests: Send to Dr. Parker and Dawn in advance
South Central COLLEGE

Achieving the Dream (ATD) Coach Visit Agenda

Monday, October 16, 2017 – North Mankato

7:30 – 8:00 a.m. Dr. Parker (President’s Office)
8:00 – 9:00 a.m. Cabinet Members (President’s Office)
9:00 – 9:30 a.m. Break (Dr. Tarnowski’s Office)
9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Deans’ Council (President’s Conference Room)
10:45 – 11:45 a.m. MMA Staff (ITV - President’s Conference Rooms, Both Campuses)
12:00 noon – 12:30 p.m. Presidential Forum (ITV – NM Heritage Hall/FB President’s Conf. Room)
12:30 – 1:45 p.m. Lunch Break (Dr. Tarnowski’s Office)
1:45 – 2:45 p.m. Data and Leadership Teams (ITV – NM Heritage Hall/FB President’s Conf. Room)
2:45 – 3:00 p.m. Break (Dr. Tarnowski’s Office)
3:00 – 4:00 p.m. MSCF Faculty (Conference Center A)
4:00 – 4:30 p.m. Break (Dr. Tarnowski’s Office)
4:30 – 5:30 p.m. Pizza with SCC Students (Heritage Hall)

Tuesday, October 17, 2017 - Faribault

8:15 – 9:15 a.m. MAPE Staff (ITV – President’s Conference Rooms, Both Campuses)
9:30 – 10:30 a.m. AFSCME Staff (ITV – President’s Conference Rooms, Both Campuses)
10:30 – 11:00 a.m. Break (Dr. Tarnowski’s Office)
11:00 – 12:00 noon MSCF Faculty (Room B104)
12:15 – 1:15 p.m. Lunch with SCC Students (Event Center)
1:15 – 2:15 p.m. Debrief with Dr. Parker (President’s Office)
students are currently placed in the deepest levels of remediation spend time and money but are almost always “doomed” to wallow in developmental education until they decide to drop-out. These students would benefit by being referred to Adult Basic Education.

Faculty also remarked about the difficulty of posting syllabi online, lack of adequate student advising, and need for a transfer specialist. Another observation seemed to suggest that due to a lack of documented policies, institutional practices were viewed as belonging to a person. In the case when that person left the institution, the practice, however useful, ceased, causing chaos. We view this remark as another indication of the lack of codified systems to carry out the business of the College.

As we went from meeting to meeting with many groups, in general, we were left with the impression that rather than simply complaining, we were hearing genuine concerns from people who care about South Central College, want it to do better and want to have a greater sense of belonging to it. In all fairness, during our meetings some did acknowledge that past practices were hard to let go and contributed to a reactionary rather than proactive approach to problem solving. For some, continuing to do things the same way, although unsatisfactory, appeared to be reassuring. For others, it was frustrating.

While these issues present significant challenges for SCC, there is a reservoir of strength and potential evident among college faculty and staff. This first became apparent at the Achieving the Dream Kick Off when we met and interacted with a group of SCC faculty and staff. These are the folks who are not satisfied with doing things the same old way and appear willing to step up and challenge past practices in favor of more progressive thinking to make the student experience better. We believe there are others who share this view. During our visit, we met even more members of your college community who, if empowered, show great promise as potential contributors to your vision for a transformed South Central College. To encourage and nurture this spirit, we encourage you to enable a sizable team of faculty and staff, including some members of your ATD Leadership Committee and Data Team to attend this year’s national ATD DREAM conference, which convenes more than 2,500 faculty and staff from ATD member institutions to discuss and share best practices to help students. This year’s conference will be held in late February in Nashville. DREAM Registration has recently opened.

As part of our visit last week, we described an ATD survey instrument, the Institutional Capacity Assessment Tool (ICAT), which is designed to gauge the extent to which faculty and staff believe the College demonstrates strength in seven capacities believed to be indicators of a college organized and aligned for student success. These are Leadership and Vision; Teaching and Learning; Policies and Practices; Equity; Data and Technology; Engagement and Communication; and Strategic Planning. To learn more about SCC, one of our major recommendations going forward is to give all faculty and staff the opportunity to make their voices heard by taking this anonymous survey online. We suggest that the survey be made available in late January-early February for about two weeks online and we suggest that you encourage faculty and staff voices to be heard through this vehicle.

During our next scheduled visit, February 16-17, we would like to facilitate a gathering, called a Capacity Café, to which all of your faculty and staff would be invited. The purpose of this event would be to enable faculty and staff to react to survey results and exchange views with their colleagues about SCC’s strengths, challenges and next steps to promote student success. These results would then serve as a major contributing factor to inform what SCC does next.
Dear Dr. Parker,

Thank you for hosting us last week. We appreciated the opportunity to meet so many faculty, staff and students at South Central College on both campuses during our two- day visit and were especially impressed with the openness and honesty displayed by faculty and staff with whom we met. As time goes on, we will learn more about SCC. For now, based on what we experienced and heard from so many individuals and groups throughout our visit, we offer some preliminary observations and recommendations for your consideration.

First, we applaud your courage, persistence and commitment to a process of institutional transformation despite several significant challenges over the past few years. Similarly, we appreciate the commitment to the College demonstrated by both newer and veteran faculty and staff. Against this backdrop, we see SCC as a college in transition, characterized by your strong leadership and hardworking faculty and staff despite initiative overload; staff turnover; hiring lags; inefficient ways of doing things; and an apparent absence of policies to guide day to day operations. These are not insurmountable obstacles. However, they do distract from being able to focus on a student success agenda and lead to perceptions from members of the college community that communication is lacking, trust is in jeopardy and there must be something, albeit unknown, to fear.

To support our observations, we call your attention to some of the comments made to us by staff during our visit. For example, we heard about frustration from some who feel burdened by additional work because of vacancies in their areas. We also heard about long unexplained hiring delays impeding work flow. The faculty and staff feel confused as to why the delays are occurring. We heard from some that the College was delaying the hiring process to “save money” and others expressed that the delays were due to “people not doing their job.”

We also heard about what appears to be a lack of coordination of functions or operating in silos leading to unnecessary work as a result of duplication of efforts. Others remarked that there was a pervasive climate of “top down” management and decision making with no room for input from those who stand to be affected by administrative decisions. Some expressed frustration due to inaction or indecisions by their supervisors resulting in log jammed situations, ultimately to the detriment of students. Some simply said, “We don’t have a way to get things done”. Faculty, too, remarked that inefficiencies such as the lack of an accessible master academic schedule, resulted in guess work when developing course schedules in their department so as not to conflict with other departments’ offerings thus making it hard for students to complete required courses in a timely fashion. Another example points to faculty complaints about the disservice done to limited English proficient students’ in their courses, who are enrolled due to either an apparent misunderstanding or disregard for the policy as stated on the College’s website (http://www.southcentral.edu/Admissions/international-students.html) and detailed in the College’s international application for admission (http://www.southcentral.edu/images/departments/Admissions/SCC_International_Application_10_2016.pdf). This issue is compounded by the absence of an ESL program despite what appears to be a significant student population that need and could benefit from it.

Faculty also indicated that students without basic skills are enrolling in their courses. They indicate that the lack of a floor for placement allows students without basic reading to enroll. These very low scoring
In the meantime, before our visit next February, we offer the following recommendations for your consideration in unranked order:

1. Develop formal charges for both the Leadership Committee and Data Team. Review composition of these groups with an eye toward adding members for more balanced representation, especially faculty. Establish a meeting schedule and publish minutes of all meetings for dissemination college-wide. Hold joint meetings of the Leadership and Data Team at times to maintain coordination between these groups.

2. Conduct an inventory of all ongoing student success related initiatives to determine how many there are and where there is a duplication of effort. (Leadership Committee)

3. After initiatives have been identified, identify data that will help to assess who is (or can be) be helped by these college programs. (Data Team)

4. Begin to collect and disseminate basic student success data such as persistence from semester to semester; success in gateway courses; developmental course completion rates; and course withdrawal percentages. Begin to disaggregate data within these categories as well as for the completion rates of the top 20 highest enrolled courses. (Leadership and Data Teams).

5. Act with urgency to fill all vacant positions.

6. Review “how things get done” by identifying the practices that present the greatest obstacles to student success and begin to develop and document standard procedures (process mapping) to ensure efficient processes that are well understood and can be carried out consistently by appropriate staff. (Administrative staff in cooperation with faculty and staff)

We recognize that the menu of actions to be taken contain numerous items. While, we encourage urgency in addressing the points above, we realize that there may be reasons unknown to us for timely completion of some of these priorities. While unanticipated events may interfere with progress, in general we urge a “no excuses policy” be put in place. This policy is especially critical in cases where administrative support is required to assist faculty and staff to address issues.

Most importantly, we urge you as President to send this message to your direct reports- that this is no longer business as usual and that as you said to us, “We are in it for transformation”. We also urge that all members of your administration take care to model the kind of open communication, timely responsiveness and receptively to faculty and staff involvement in problem solving to encourage and build an atmosphere of collegiality and trust. More concretely, in the foreseeable future we suggest that a line item be created in the college budget to be managed and used exclusively by faculty and staff, rather than administration, to promote student success. We would be glad to discuss this item further with you during our second visit.

This is an historic moment in time for SCC and presents an unparalleled opportunity for the transformation you envision. We are honored and feel privileged to serve as your coaches and assist you and members of your college community in this effort that has the potential to improve the student experience for many generations of students to come. Please feel free to call upon us between now and our next visit in February if we can clarify anything contained in this letter or be of assistance in any other way. We extended this invitation to members of your ATD Leadership and Data teams as well.

Sincerely,
Mary Fifield, Leadership Coach and Linda Hagedorn, Data Coach