
Action Project

Title: Leading and Improving Communication Processes Throughout the Organization
Version: 3

Institution: Midstate College **Status:** Completed
Submitted: 2009-11-24 **Category:** 5-Leading and Communicating

Timeline

Planned project kickoff date: 2004-09-20

Target completion date:

Actual completion date:

Project Detail

Project Goal

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

The goal of this project is to improve communication processes throughout the organization. Midstate administration will build an environment where the strategic planning process benefits from input, ideas, and experience of individuals throughout the institution. As a result, employees and stakeholders will realize that their input and efforts are an important part of the future of Midstate College, and that their contributions are being recognized accordingly. Important organizational information and strategic decisions will be well-communicated on every level of the organization.

Reasons For Project

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 results of the AQIP *Examiner* organizational assessment tool and the feedback from the previous North Central Association Comprehensive Evaluation Visit highlighted two areas of concern: valuing people and improving the communication process. This Action Project addresses those areas of concern by involving employees and stakeholders more closely in the decision making processes through enhancing communication and demonstrating the value of stakeholder contributions.

Organizational Areas Affected

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

All employees of the organization will ultimately be affected by this project. Specifically the following areas will be directly affected: full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, professional staff, support staff, administration, students, the Board of Directors, and other stakeholders.

Key Organizational Process(es)

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

The communication processes throughout the organization are the most critical processes affected by this Action Project. As seeking input from faculty and staff becomes a regular practice of the administration, employees will be more engaged in the communication and strategic planning processes. As a result, they will develop knowledge and buy-in into the long-term goals of the College. Decision making processes will be affected in the way that inputs are gathered and outputs are disseminated effectively. Administration will continue measuring the effectiveness of its communication management processes to ensure that communication is comprehensive throughout the organization.

Project Time Frame Rationale

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

The Action Project committee will meet on a regular basis to evaluate and improve the communication processes throughout the organization. The Annual Communication Survey will continue to be administered and evaluated. The Administrative Committee will make the communication process a standing agenda item thereby assuring ongoing attention to this process.

Project Success Monitoring

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

The process measures are as follows: annual faculty, staff, and administration evaluations, annual surveys for all employees, and faculty surveys to solicit communication ideas. The improvement of communication processes whereby student feedback is shared with faculty is necessary. The Action Project will develop mechanisms for continuous input from all stakeholders; develop mechanisms for tracking and attributing the original source of ideas that are incorporated into the strategic plan and decision making processes; develop mechanisms for tracking the receipt, discussion and implementation or rejection status of all feedback and input received; and develop metrics for evaluating how responsive management is to input received.

Project Outcome Measures

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

Outcome measures include the following: completion of new employee website to improve communication and access to information and measurement of the website's usage level; extent to which new ideas and feedback are incorporated into the planning process by faculty and staff who are not serving on the Administrative Committee; and assessing the level of employee satisfaction with the communication process through the employee surveys which will be performed on a regular basis.

Annual Update

Project Accomplishments and Status

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

The Leading and Improving Communications throughout the Organization Committee followed the nine step annual process it has established for improving communications throughout the organization during each year. The annual communications survey this year indicated that 58 out of 62 respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the communication process within Midstate College. This result was comparable with last year's

survey result and well above our 2005 result when 45 out of 55 respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the communication process at Midstate College. Ninety-three per cent of the respondents were much more knowledgeable or more knowledgeable of Midstate College, its strategies, and its ongoing accomplishments since completing last year's survey.

Institution Involvement

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

The cross-functional AQIP Leading and Communicating Committee, the annual AQIP all-school in service, faculty meetings regularly attended by the President and Chief Operating Officer, and Student Focus Group meetings provide many avenues for input into planning and communication across all levels of the organization. In addition, the administration now shares all meeting minutes with the rest of the organization through regular distribution of faculty and administrative meeting notes.

Next Steps

Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project

We will continue to monitor the nine step annual communications process which we have established. This Action Project will be retired and listed as a process in the Systems Portfolio.

Resulting Effective Practices

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

We believe that the administrations sharing of information and plans, the annual in-service, and the employee newsletter has enhanced employee satisfaction and aided in our efforts to include all employees in the organizations planning activities.

Project Challenges

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

Our primary challenge will be to make sure that our annual nine step communications process is followed each year in a timely and professional manner. The chairman of the committee will be responsible for assuring that the process continues to be achieved.
