



Minnesota State University, Mankato

Leadership Institute

Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 2

October 2007

Special points of interest:

1. In response to the evaluations from the first session, a microphone will be used when possible at the sessions.
2. There will be a competition for the best Maverick Pride outfit. Wear your purple & gold! Prizes will be awarded.

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Exploring MSU

Working Together Smarter: Building Organizational Capacity
By Dr. Jean Haar

Ready, Set, Go!
Crossword Puzzle

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Your To-Do List for
October 20

Thank you:
Leadership Survey

Exploring MSU: Understanding Your Environment

The second Leadership Institute Session is entitled, "Exploring MSU". Last session we focused on better understanding yourself. This session will be focused on better understanding the environment in which you work. Great leaders provide background, context, and explanations for why things are happening.

The day will consist of a number of presenters from the University and MnSCU who will be informing you

about how the university operates and how it functions within the MnSCU system. A detailed agenda will be provided at the session.

Presenters include: Kellian Clink (MSU History), Bill Tschida from the Office of the Chancellor (MnSCU), Scott Olson (President's Office and Academic Affairs), Pat Swatfager-Haney (Student Affairs), Rick Straka (Finance & Administration), Marilyn Delmont (Information Technology

Services), Bob Hoffman (Strategic Business, Educational & Regional Partnerships) and Dave Williams (University Advancement).

Unfortunately, President Davenport will not be in attendance because he will be en route with the Governor's Trade Mission to India. President Davenport sends his fond regrets.

Working Together Smarter: Building Organizational Capacity

Dr. Jean Haar

As MSU employees, we are committed to the university's mission. We individually tend to our tasks and responsibilities with the understanding that our work supports and promotes the mission. The objective of the second session of the MSU Leadership Institute is to increase our awareness and understanding of how the university as a system works collectively to meet the expectations of the mission. How effectively an organization works together determines how effectively they meet the purpose of their mission.

During my attendance at the Bryn Mawr Summer Institute, I had the opportunity to listen to J. Douglas Toma, associate professor, Institute of Higher Education at the University of Georgia. He shared an overview of the research project, Building Organizational Capacity*. The purpose of the project was to iden-

tify the conceptual and practical tools needed by institutions to successfully implement change initiatives.

In general, those involved in the project contend that building capacity across an organization, especially the bridging of academic and administrative units and functions, encourages the sustainability of key initiatives.

They encourage institutions to address initiatives from a system perspective in terms of eight inter-related elements:

- *Purpose* is why an institution is here (*mission*) and where it is headed (*vision and goals*).
- *Structure* is how an institution is *configured* to do its work.
- *Governance* is how an institution makes *decisions*.
- *Policies* are *rules* that articulate how an institution will proceed.

- *Processes* are how an institution gets things done (*means*).
- *Information* is the generation and assimilation of facts and figures needed to inform and support decision making within an institution (*data, communication*).
- *Infrastructure* is the human, physical, technological, and financial assets that comprise an institution (*capital*).
- *Culture* is the essential *character* of an institution—its shared norms, beliefs, and assumptions.

The researchers believe their approach provides a platform for institutions to think of themselves as systems and provides a type of 'checklist' for being more methodical in their planning and implementation. The following serves as an example.

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"A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way."

~John C. Maxwell

Housekeeping Details:

Please complete the following before the second session on October 19, 2007:

1. Find and bring with you a copy of the Chancellor's 2006-2010 Strategic Plan and prepare one question for Bill Tschida.
2. Find and bring with you a copy of President Davenport's FY 07 Work Plan and prepare one question for Scott Olson, Provost.

The second session of the Leadership Institute will be held at Old Main Village from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Lunch and refreshments will be served.

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Thank You!

A special thank you from Nate Dvorak for completing the survey of leadership behaviors. Your participation is essential to our ability to assess the effectiveness of this program.



Building Organizational Capacity, continued

- *Purpose*—Were an institution to decide to change its mission to become more focused on research, it requires attention to functions across the organization.
- *Governance*—Does the board understand the new aims of the institution?
- *Structure*—Are units, both academic and business, arrayed in a manner to serve the new mission?
- *Policies*—As matters such as tenure and promotion are affected, how must formal standards and informal policies be redefined?
- *Processes*—Are there ways in place to actually manage the research enterprise?
- *Information*—Do individuals and

units have the information they need to be effective?

- *Infrastructure*—Is there the right personnel, financial systems, physical infrastructure in place to support a research infrastructure?
- *Culture*—Is the institution using symbolic means to embed research into the norms, values, and beliefs of the institution?

The approach “attempts to bring order to the fluid environment of higher education by underscoring its nature as a complex system. It does so by clarifying mission, strengthening culture, optimizing structure, formalizing governance, and ensuring operations—policies and practices,

processes, systems and infrastructure—are not only in place but also working in concert” (Toma, 2006).

By tending to each of the eight elements, universities build the capacity deep within and throughout the organization, providing the foundation needed to fulfill the mission of the institution (working together smarter).

~Jean Haar

Toma, J. D. (2006). Building Organizational capacity: A systems approach to changing universities through strengthening the administrative core.

*The Building Organizational Capacity project was initiated by the National Association of Colleges and University Business Officers (NACUBO).

Ready, Set, Go!



Test your knowledge of MSU!

Down:

1. The first female President of our institution.
2. 32 Colleges and Universities
4. Houses state-of-the-art astronomy equipment on campus

Across:

3. One-stop shop for financial aid, Mavcard, campus info and more.
5. “Yes, do” hire diverse faculty and staff.
6. The _____ prepares students for commerce across borders.
7. The department where the crocodile resides.
8. Where the stage is set on campus.
9. The E-85 experts
10. The Prophylaxis Program.