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ABSTRACT

Based on studies comparing leadership in two rural community colleges undergoing change and examining the management of change at Maryland's Allegany College, this paper presents a conceptual framework and model for managing organizational change. First, a framework for understanding the community college chair's role in organizational change is presented, suggesting that chairs should exercise visionary transformational leadership in their departments, empower others, make use of teams, maintain a focus on customers and quality, and ensure that meaningful data is collected. The framework also points to two expected outcomes of these strategies: institutional innovation and constituent satisfaction. Next, implications of the framework are described, stressing the important roles of both presidents and chairs in dealing with change, the importance of staff development for quality, and the need to balance instructional and administrative duties of chairs. Finally, a model for managing organizational change is provided, including the following four components: (1) conceptualization, or recognizing the different parts of a system as a whole, which may best be accomplished through cross-college representation on committees; (2) active, two-way communication; (3) commitment by leaders to organizational goals to gain the commitment of stakeholders; and (4) the creation of management systems and support services dedicated to managing change and monitoring progress in the change process. (TGI)

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# MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

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## BIOGRAPHY

**Debra Frank** has served as a Program Coordinator in the Business and Management Division at Allegany College in Cumberland, Maryland since 1986. At that time, she developed and continues to coordinate a Hospitality Management curriculum. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Nutrition from the Pennsylvania State University and completed a post-graduate dietetic internship at Shadyside Hospital in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She is a Registered Dietitian and serves as a nutrition and food safety consultant to area health and service agencies, businesses, and WJJB Radio. She is actively involved in faculty/staff development.

In 1995, she completed a year-long professional certification program through the Institute for Academic Leadership Development sponsored by the National Community College Chair Academy. A special interest that emerged from her work with the Institute was the development of a college-wide strategic planning process.

**William Rocks** served as the Director of Clinical Education for the Respiratory Therapy Program at Allegany College in Cumberland, Maryland from 1984 - 1988. Since 1988, he has been the Program Director for Respiratory Therapy. He earned his Master's degree in Health and Education from Frostburg State University and a Bachelor's degree in General Education from California State College. He received an AAS degree in Respiratory Therapy from Columbus Technical Institute and is a Registered Respiratory Therapist. He served as a Maryland Board Member of the American Lung Association and is actively involved in numerous other professional organizations. He is an instructor for Advanced Cardiac Life Support. He serves as Vice-Chairman of the Faculty Senate.

In 1996, he completed the year-long professional certification program through the Institute for Academic Leadership Development sponsored by the National Community College Chair Academy.

**Dr. Britt Watwood** is the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at Herkimer County Community College in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains in upstate New York. At the college on the hill, he oversees 56 full-time faculty in the areas of Business, Health Services, Science, Mathematics, and Physical Education. A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, Britt received his Masters degree in Education from Old Dominion University and a Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership in Higher Education from University of Nebraska. He is also a 1996 graduate of the Institute for Academic Leadership Development. He has been a consultant in quality initiatives and strategic planning, and his recent research has been on the role played by community college chairs in leading their colleges' quality initiatives. Britt retired from the Navy as a Commander after 22 years of service. For the past two years, before moving to New York, he was the Assistant Director of the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education at UNL. His research there was on quality improvement, with particular emphasis on the application of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award to higher education. He also worked on technological applications to education, and helped design and deliver graduate courses via Lotus Notes in UNL's Distant Doctorate program. he and his wife, Linda, reside in Herkimer.

# MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

## INTRODUCTION

The rapidly changing conditions in today's environment have placed unprecedented demands on organizational leaders. Nowhere is this more apparent than in educational institutions. Tighter funding climates, declining or stagnant enrollments, increased competition, and major technological advances in product delivery are forcing leaders to examine the very essence of their organizations--their basic purpose, their identity, and their vision. In addition, leaders are recognizing that new directions must be explored while securing commitment from stakeholders.

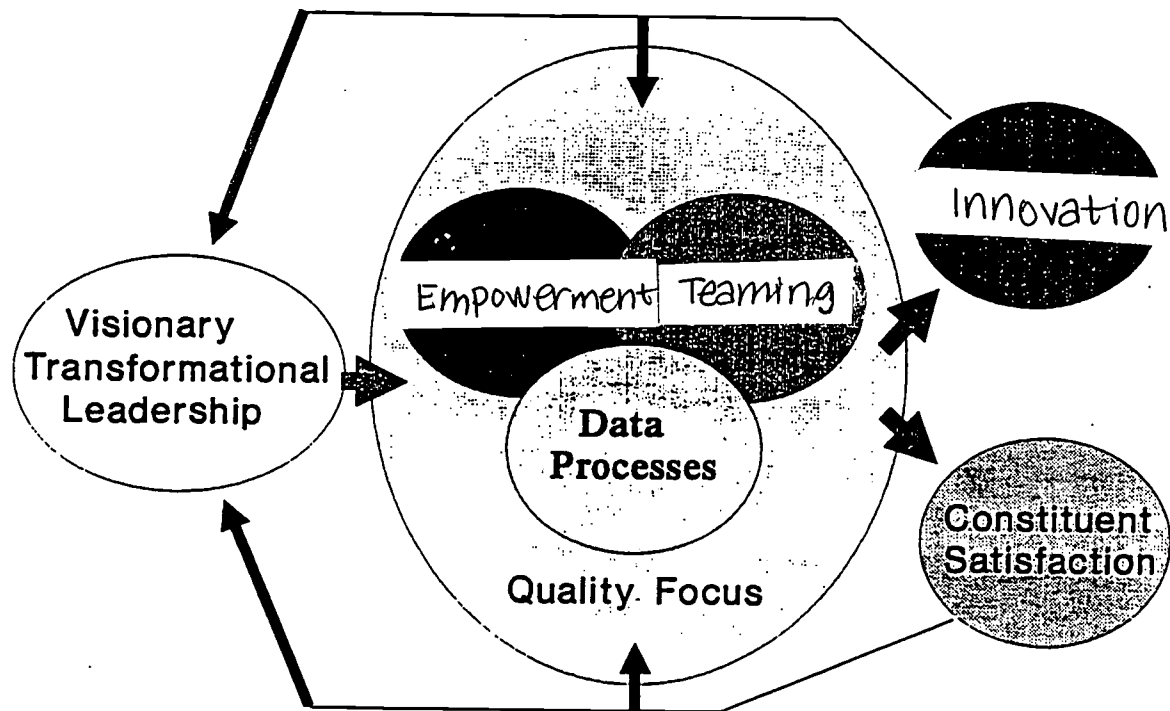
Inherent with any major change effort is some degree of instability and unpredictability. A new mind-set is emerging that recognizes this instability as an opportunity for institutional growth and development. It is no longer practical to assume that change will "just happen" with or without the support of stakeholders. Instability from change that is constructively and productively harnessed has both personal and institutional value. It is indeed a paradox that the more uncertain the environment, the more there is a need for a well-designed organization that is energized to thrive in such uncertainty.

Dr. W. Britt Watwood (1996) studied two community colleges to determine the role that chairs took in their college change process. Both colleges were in rural sections of a midwestern state and approached change in different ways. At one institution, change was feared, administrators worked to maintain the status quo, and chairs were very reactive towards change. At the other institution, leadership was not defined as a single person. From the presidential level to the chair level, individuals talked about the team in accomplishing goals. Leadership was collaborative, and many used the word "consensus" in describing how decisions were made. The following model reflects the seven concepts that emerged from this study regarding the role community college chairs should take in the change process at their college.

Debra Frank and William Rocks (1995) have examined the management of change at their institution. Allegany College of Maryland has experienced significant change initiatives over the past three years, and strategies have evolved that have assisted in managing the change process. Their model, a product of "learning while doing", is part of the change process and is subject to continual review and revision. Strategies that develop conceptualization, communication, commitment, and control systems form the framework for this model.

PREREQUISITES FOR EFFECTIVE CHANGE MANAGEMENT

# Framework for Proactive Change



## Driver

## System

## Outcomes

Watwood's study of two midwestern community colleges formed the basis for the above model that reflects seven concepts (or "prerequisites") regarding the role community college chairs should take in the change process of their college. These concepts are:

1. **VISIONARY TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP.** The president must set the tone for his or her college, having clearly articulated where the college is going (vision), as well as employing the Four I's of Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration. In turn, chairs must exercise visionary leadership with their college units. Leadership is the driver of the change process.
2. **EMPOWERMENT.** Empowerment is the degree to which an individual believes that he or she is free to act on change, without guidance or direction from above. Empowerment is a factor of the culture of an institution together with the individual's intrinsic motivation and level of skill/knowledge.
3. **TEAMING.** Teaming involves the use of more than one person to creatively sense the environment, generate solutions, and reinforce implementation of change. Teams are also a factor of the institution's culture.
4. **QUALITY FOCUS.** College leaders must have a customer-focus, and must identify processes such as the various tools identified in the literature to ensure that they manage by fact.

5. **DATA PROCESSES.** An integrated process for gathering and using data as a natural part of daily life is integral to the TQM philosophy. Meaningful data should underlie every change process. The quality tools enable the chair to establish benchmarks of quality performance, which in turn form a baseline from which continuous improvement and innovation can depart.

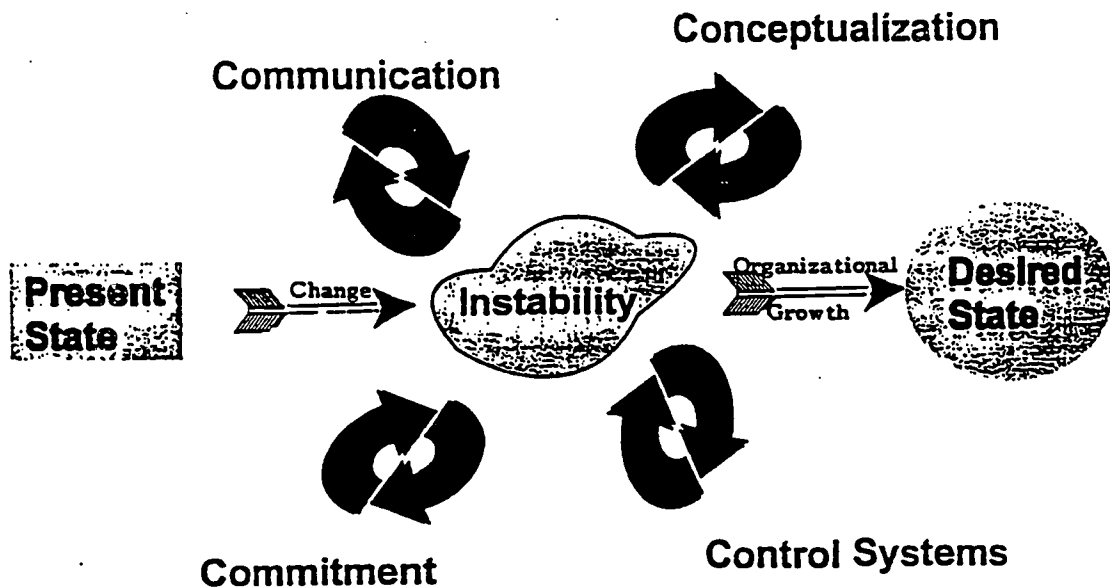
Empowerment, Teaming, Quality Focus, and Data Processes form the system under which proactive change can occur. The outcomes of this process are:

6. **INNOVATION.** The degree to which an institution proactively flows with change and uses change to continually improve the products and services that it provides to its community.
7. **CONSTITUENT SATISFACTION.** The degree to which the external customers and internal customers perceive that their needs are being met (or exceeded) by the products and services that the college provides to its community.

There are four major implications for recommended practice which arise from the conclusions and theoretical implications above. First, the president's role is as critical as the chair's role in dealing with change. A culture conducive to change needs to exist for chairs to proactively deal with change. Second, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award criteria can provide a means by which presidents, deans, and chairs assess their focus and performance, and in the process, become more proactive. Third, the study has major implications for staff development. To establish a quality culture, all levels of the institution need training in TQM/CQI, quality tools, teaming, and transformational leadership. Finally, the study raises questions as to the balance necessary in assigning chairs to handle both instruction and administration. Presidents will need to re-examine the division of labor, the reward structure, and the overall focus of the college to shift the emphasis from classroom instruction to the broader issues of student-centered outcomes, divisional quality and innovation.

### STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Several similarities exist between the model developed by Watwood and the following model developed by Frank and Rocks. As an organization undergoes a change effort, instability results which can provide an opportunity for growth and development. Specific strategies must be identified to enable the organization to make the transition from the present state to the desired (or "changed") state. These strategies must address conceptualization, communication, commitment, and control systems.



## Model for Managing Organizational Change

( Frank and Rocks)

1. **CONCEPTUALIZATION.** Stakeholders must embrace the relationship of the parts to the whole and recognize that change perceived as negative in one area may, in fact, be positive for the college. Individuals must be given opportunities to view change from another's perspective. This is best accomplished through cross-college representation on committees and task forces. All-college participation in the development of the College Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles began the shared experience of a singular purpose or direction. In an effort to continue to develop conceptual skill, Planning and Advancement Teams were formed to develop strategic plans and conduct environmental scans. There is a general sense of "we're in this together" which helps to build strength and unity during a period of instability.
2. **COMMUNICATION.** Active, two-way communication is a powerful adjunct to traditional communication and can help make change happen. The Speakeasy, an innovative technique where all college administrators meet with individuals who have concerns, began several years ago. Other strategies recommended for strengthening communication include: Planning and Advancement Teams; broad representation on President's Council; president meetings with randomly selected employees for input on major issues; frequent "Reports to the Stakeholders" from the president.
3. **COMMITMENT.** For stakeholders to share in the commitment to change, certain attitudes and behaviors must be clearly evident in the organization's leaders. Leaders must be aware of signals that they send through behavior

and act to align their behavior with the stated commitment. Leaders must support a "learn while doing" mode by investing in development and education. Strategic planning that is developed from the "bottom up" is most effective in securing commitment. In addition, frequent workshops have been held on campus to address resistance to change and methods to overcome this resistance.

4. **CONTROL SYSTEMS.** It is wise to create management systems and support services that are dedicated to managing change and monitoring progress in the change process. Resources and experts from across the organization should be identified that will "manage the management". Members of the President's Council, President's Staff, and Planning Council are frequently asked for advice and feedback pertaining to the change process and how it might be improved or strengthened. Organization leaders are sensitive to managing change and deploying resources and expertise to assist in the transition.

### SUMMARY

If today's organizational leader accepts that the future is unknowable, he or she is likely to recognize that stability, harmony, and predictability are not prerequisites for long-term success. Instability that naturally flows from change should be used in a positive way to generate new perspectives and provoke learning.

To effectively and proactively deal with change, chairs need to become transformational leaders. This cannot occur in a vacuum. A culture of empowerment, teaming, open communication, conceptualization, and quality, which starts at the presidential level, is needed as a foundation for a proactive change process at the college. When the leadership, at all levels, works toward continuous improvement, the outcomes will be satisfied constituents and innovative services, two ingredients necessary for college survival.

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