SOUTHEASTERN OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY: A CASE STUDY IN TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

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Abstract

Transformational change can be an important ingredient in linking operational and functional planning to the strategic formulation process. This case study illustrates such a linkage and how one University utilized a transformational change program in preparing the next generation of leaders while employing a multi-phased approach. The initiative involved 100 participants, representing a large segment of the institution, supported by three external facilitators from a prominent graduate school of education. The case discusses how the program began, the organization context, the program framework, program phases and intervention targets, change program elements, program outcomes and conclusions, and what can be learned.

KEYWORDS: Transformational change, human resource development, organization development, intervention strategy, leadership development

INTRODUCTION

In mid-2009, the executive team at Southeastern Oklahoma State reviewed the institution's strategic plan and determined that it would be difficult to sustain a similar initiative since the current plan was through 2015. The issue of strategic and operational planning had been somewhat unique over the past ten years given the fact that there had been four changes in Presidents and four to five changes in chief academic officers. The team felt that the current strategic plan would be viable through 2015. Their greatest concern now was the development of additional capacity for transitional leadership. To some, this might appear to be a little "out of the box," but the team thought this approach provided the best alternative in preparation for the next major cycle from 2015-2020.

Subsequently, the University began a five-year process of transformational change to set the stage for development of the strategic planning cycle while building the next generation of leaders. This required moving from processes of developmental or transitional change to processes of transformational change with expansion of leadership capabilities. Developmental or transitional change involves adjustments in structure, systems, or processes in support of organizational continuity. In contrast, transformational change is aimed at fundamentally altering the core and very nature of the organization [Bass and Avolio, 1994].

Consequently, the University purposely invested in its human resources through several initiatives. Southeastern was in the third year of a 5-year compensation plan to increase faculty and staff salaries through a series of stipends that were rolled into salary the following fiscal year. Second, the creation of the Southeastern Professional Development Program (SPDP) in 2009 provided multiple opportunities for faculty and staff to participate in professional development activities both on and off campus designed to promote transformational change. Coupled with this program was the Southeastern Organization and Leadership Development Program (SOLD); this program sponsored numerous seminars, speakers, and

workshops that enhance the skills of faculty and staff, promoted university involvement, and provided critical updates on current issues in higher education.

The roots of this planning approach was in the SPDP which technically began in the summer of 2009; the program was funded by the generosity of a private donor. The intent of the program was to put theory into practice by developing both short-range and long-range action plans that addressed current challenges and better prepared Southeastern to meet the challenges of the future. The basic, stated mission of the University was "to provide an environment of academic excellence that enabled students to reach their highest potential." Accordingly, the students, faculty and University staff would be the key to the attainment of this overarching goal and the SPDP became the cornerstone of this effort.

UNIVERSITY CONTEXT

Southeastern Oklahoma State University was one of six regional institutions in the Regional University System of Oklahoma (RUSO) and was established as a normal school in 1909 with an early mission of training public teachers. The University had grown to approximately 4,000 students; 144 full-time faculty and 216 full-time staff; a total Educational and General (E&G) I budget of $47,876,066; six outreach sites in Oklahoma and two in North Central Texas; and offered 40 baccalaureate and 12 master's degrees.

Over the past five years, the institution had faced a number of challenges including fundraising in light of declining state appropriations, dealing initially with debt coverage associated with previous construction projects and gradually increasing reserve requirements to meet Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) standards. From an operational standpoint, it had also concentrated on reestablishing the University's identity and focus; continuing development of the administrative team; refocusing responsibility and accountability at the School and Department levels; maintaining emphasis on realignments and integration of key functional areas; continuing implementation of cost controls and operational efficiencies; and pursuing combinations of student recruitment and retention strategies in consideration of changing demographics and course delivery methods.

During the past ten years, the institution had experienced significant resource challenges with the percentage of state appropriations for E&G I dropping from 61.3% to 39.3% in 2014 and student tuition and fees increasing from 34.2% to 57.4%. The reallocation of existing funds to cover mandatory costs, which averaged in excess of $600,000/year, helped to minimize the increase in student tuition and fees. Operating budgets had been reduced by 5% in 2009 and vacant positions had to go unfilled during that time in order to cover the redirection of funds. Later, in 2013-2014, the 5% cut in operating budgets was restored to all units, and an additional $40,000 was allocated for professional development of faculty. In addition, during this same time period, Southeastern's Composite Financial Index (CFI) increased from 0.55 to 2.43 (the CFI had dropped to 1.7 for fiscal year ending June 30, 2013 due to decreases in University operating revenues and the University Foundation's contributions).

Although enrollment had fluctuated and semester credit hour (SCH) production hit a 20-year high in 2009-2010, SCH had been declining since 2010 dropping to 94,176 SCH forecasted for 2014-2015. Despite these challenges, there had been marked improvements the past five years in such key result areas as expanding the Southeastern Foundation asset base, significantly improving grants received, increasing endowed and foundation scholarships, and improving the amount awarded in total foundation scholarships to students.

In addition, Southeastern continued to fill faculty positions, to obtain new specialty accreditation (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business-International, Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs), to maintain other specialty accreditations (Aviation Accreditation Board International, National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, National Association of Schools of Music), to improve its reserve requirement and financial ratios, to continue campus improvements and beautifications, and to develop a comprehensive faculty and staff development program.

THE PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

GOALS

From the inception of the program, the primary goal of the Southeastern Professional Development Program (SPDP) was to build capabilities in developing the next generation of leaders at University. A related secondary goal was to develop organizational capacities in the short-term to face the uncertainties associated with the higher education environment. Thus, both goals would be working in tandem to achieve greater levels of flexibility and adaptability.

Related to these goals was a strong desire to provide a renewed emphasis of communication, leadership, and participative decision-making. Thus, the following elements were viewed as being essential components of the process:

- First, tangible and practical accomplishments needed to be achieved during very challenging economic conditions. Faculty, staff, and students must work together to turn challenges into opportunities; these efforts could potentially transform the institution and better prepare it for the future.

- Second, the timing was ideal in beginning the development of the next generation of leaders between long range planning cycles. Everyone's time at an institution is finite and new individuals must be prepared and able to step up to meet future challenges. It was essential that a large cross section of faculty, staff, and students directly participate in the programming putting theory into practice by implementing action plans. This would result in a critical mass of individuals in developing the requisite knowledge, skills, and behavior necessary to prepare them to serve as the next generation of leaders.

PROGRAM PHASES AND INTERVENTON TARGETS

The general framework of the program consisted of three distinct phases. The program phases and intervention targets are presented in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1 PROGRAM PHASES AND INTERVENTION TARGETS

Program Phase	Intervention Target
Phase I: Pre-Start (2009-2010) Educational/Seeding Process Reorientation of Administrative Groups and Linkages Survey of Values, Expectations, and Principles Statement of Primary Responsibility of Leadership Team Diagnosis of Current, Transition, and Future States	Individual and Diagnostic
Phase II: Start (2010-2011) Development Sessions With Administrative Groups Case Study Discussions With Dominant Constituency Groups Group Facilitator Briefings Program Team Formation Major Program Workshop Sessions	Process and Team
Phase III: Post-Start (2011-2013)	Structural, Intergroup,

Action Plan Implementation	and Organizational
Reorganization	
Refinement of Key Performance Indicators	

Transformational change tends to be nonlinear in nature, leveraging multiple efforts over a time period not easily controlled [Kets de Vries and Korotov in Snook, Nohria, and Khurana, 2012]. Two relevant organization development typologies for intervention strategies [Argyris, 1970] are offered by Wendell French and Cecil Bell as well as Michael Beer. French and Bell [1998] offer a classification of interventions based on target group—individual, team or group, intergroup and total organization. Similarly, Beer's [1980; 2009] model distinguishes between individual, diagnostic, process, and structural interventions.

Individual and diagnostic interventions can be appropriate during the pre-start period. Developing the initial effort requires concentration on maximizing creativity, networking, and planning, normally within a relatively short period of time. The pre-start period for the program entailed an educational process, reorientation of administrative groups and linkages, restatement of the primary responsibility of the leadership team, and diagnosis of current, transition, and future states.

Start-up is synonymous with implementation. Here, process and team interventions emerge as structure and communication needs dominate and the change effort begins to take shape. The organization engages in deep learning cycles encompassing exploration, reflection, and action [Senge, 1990]. The program start-up phase focused on developmental sessions, case study discussions with constituency groups, team facilitator briefings, program team formation, and major program workshop sessions.

Structural, intergroup, and organizational interventions become increasingly important in the post-start period. Growth, change, and organizational evolution require interventions that are system-wide in scope. As an organization begins to evolve to another stage of development, a long-term perspective is necessary. As the organization evolves, it will normally take on different structural forms. The post-start period for the program was characterized by implementation of short-term action plans, a reorganization, and refinement of key performance indicators for use at the institution or unit level.

Furthermore, with a broadened time horizon, system-wide approaches are more consistent with organizational evolution and responses to changing environmental needs. System-wide interventions normally change attitudes, behaviors, and styles more quickly and thoroughly than individual or process interventions.

THE CHANGE PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The program consisted of intervention strategies commensurate with fundamentals associated with human resource development, organization development, and leadership development in support of major change. The application of the change program focused on efforts that were planned, organization-wide, and participatory, using planned interventions to improve the organization's health [Schein, 1980]. A long-range perspective also had to be considered in addressing the organization's problem solving and renewal processes needed to confront changes through more collaboration aimed at improving organization culture using action research [Argyris, Putnam, and Smith, 1985; Stringer, 2014] as a guiding model.

PHASE I

Planning for Phase I (pre-start period) began in summer 2009 and extended into 2010 with educational interventions through an individual seeding process to establish the basic foundation for the transformational change initiative [Kotter and Cohen, 2002]. Over twenty faculty, staff, and administrators attended a variety of seminars through well known institutes on such topics as educational management, leadership for academic librarians, discussion method leadership, management and leadership, management development programs, surviving and thriving in the new normal, crisis leadership in higher

education, and inner strengths for successful leaders. Individuals attending the institutes became internal facilitators for the program.

The organization of the internal facilitators was based on Likert's [1961] "linking pin" concept. Linkages were established across eight functional areas: office of the president, academic affairs, business affairs, student affairs, enrollment management, university advancement, information technology, and intercollegiate athletics. The participant roster and linkages were then formed allowing for learning and goal setting processes in a team environment. Thus, team membership served the purpose of linking the organizational members together.

During Phase I, a final revision of statement of primary responsibility for the executive leadership team was developed reflecting values, expectations, and principles that would guide the team's behavior and performance. In September/October 2009, a survey was conducted among the administrative council, which resulted in a reorientation. Likewise, a new format and developmental orientation for the executive team also occurred during this time period.

PHASE II

Phase II (start period) began in fall 2009 and extended through spring 2010 with developmental sessions for the executive team conducted on such topics as current economic conditions and financial fundamentals, strategic and operational planning, mapping and networking external relationships, leadership/vision/values, and the changing higher education environment.

From spring 2010 through spring 2011, background materials and case studies were discussed with the executive team, administrative council, faculty senate executive and budget committees, and the student government association. The case studies covered a multi-part case on the University and Oklahoma's budget situation and a second case on the institution's current organizational structure redesign and transformation initiative. Summaries and worksheets were carried forward from individual sessions with the different groups.

In reviewing the organization structure and redesign case, individuals were encouraged to reflect on the following questions as provided on the final page of the case:

- What are we trying to achieve?
- What problems need to be solved?
- What areas of the University need attention?
- How good are our skills and our systems?
- Where can we use what we have?
- Where do we need something new?
- How do we handle the timing of implementation and the sequencing of action?

In June 2011, pre-briefings were conducted for program participants and facilitators. Materials included for facilitators encompassed background on core learning disciplines, discussion and participant learning, importance of planning for the session, session considerations, preparation for questioning and transitions, ending the session, and advanced preparation and study. Participants were provided with information on the renewed initiative in 2009, reaching a new point of convergence, opportunities to reflect on contemporary leadership challenges, using organizational frames [Bolman and Deal, 2008] as a primary point of reference, background on materials and cases, and suggested guidelines for preparing for the upcoming sessions. Also in preparation, participants were asked to think about the following: "reflect on how you will renew and affirm the centrality of what you do at the University and what it would be like to be an effective change agent in reinvigorating and reinventing (transforming) yourself and your unit in the future."

Major program workshop sessions began on June 21, 2011 with program participants organized into eight teams with facilitators and assistance provided by an external consultant. The agenda included expectations, organizational framing, the organization structure redesign and transformation case study, small group discussion and feedback sessions, large group discussions, common themes/direction, and next action steps. This first major session was designed primarily to focus on the following questions: 1) what is the central issue or problem posed (for your area/University)? and 2) in what organizational frame would you place this issue or problem and why?

From July through September 2011, facilitators met with teams to complete project assignments from June, e. g., action plan projects, development of reorganization scenarios to move the University forward, and key performance indicators. Resource materials used for the meetings included an action planning and implementation checklist, Southeastern's statement of vision/mission/strategic goals, dominant written narratives (themes) from the June session, and University key performance indicators.

An advance meeting with the facilitators in mid-September was devoted to analysis of the work to date. The action planning format involved a work out process that categorized the projects identified by quadrant depending upon degree of difficulty/implementation and cost savings/value added to the University. The analysis of the reorganization scenarios were considered to be the most difficult and involved determining category and context (e.g., structural, process, and alignment); developing concise, written descriptions; and final review for implementation purposes. In contrast, the key performance indicators were straightforward as determined by pre-defined categories.

The next major workshop occurred on September 30th utilizing all input from teams and analysis frameworks for assignments. The sequencing of the workshop involved covering the short-term action plans in the morning and the reorganization scenarios in the afternoon. Both activities were completed with sessions engaging the small groups first followed by the facilitators presenting in the general session. The focus on the two task statements used in respective sessions were those provided in the pre-work packet of materials:

- Using the attached packet of short-term action plans, list the one plan that you think will assist the University the most over the next 3-6 months. Feel free to use the number (1-33) or combinations of numbers associated with the plans as well as a modified version of the plan.
- Using the reorganization scenarios provided as background, use the space provided to develop what you think would be the most appropriate organization structure for the University at this time. Feel free to use letters (A-K) or combinations of letters associated with the scenarios as well as a separate description.

This resulted in the categorization of the 33 short-term action plans, discussion of 11 basic reorganization scenarios (structural, process, alignment), and key performance indicators (university-wide, site-delivery method, department, section/unit). The general themes emerging from the structured group process covered the following areas: student fiscal management/student billing; community/service engagement-service/volunteerism; communication/morale/information dissemination; academics/class scheduling/student resources-recruitment; faculty issues/morale/recruitment & retention; campus appearance/improve campus image/campus beautification; and marketing/social media/identity.

The final major workshop was conducted on November 10-12, 2011 with presentation of action plans and reorganization scenarios by eight teams assisted by all three external facilitators. This culminating workshop of the year was designed to ensure that all participants and facilitators had a shared understanding of the current status of the change process and the importance of it in identifying and understanding how it was consistent with and linked to the larger institutional mission.

During the workshop sessions, the three external facilitators/consultants served as respondents to the information presented—raising questions, seeking clarification, and soliciting comments/elaboration from the entire group—all in the interest of fostering a collective shared sense of priorities in terms of what needed to happen to keep the process on track. The pre-assignment packet for the workshop drew heavily from the work of John Kotter and Lorne Whitehead [2008, 2010].

The major sessions for the November workshop were designed to progress each day from general topics to specific applications:

- Day 1=Presentation of Action Plans and Reorganization Scenarios; Keys to Leading Successful Change Initiatives; and Reasons People Resist Change
- Day 2=Inspiring Change; How Will You Know When You Get There? – Key Performance Metrics, Measures, Monitoring
- Day 3=Implementation Considerations and Facilitating a Deeper Level of Commitment; and Key Learning and Insights

The entire morning of Day 1 was devoted to team presentations of the action plans and reorganization scenarios. Each team had responded to the task statement identifying the plan that would assist the University the most over the next 3-6 months. Specific topics were provided under 6 general categories as summarized from approximately 40 pages of the September 30th session. Each team then

rated the top items from the general categories. Four of the 11 reorganization scenarios were the most frequently mentioned.

An important summary at the end of Day 1 reflected on several discussion questions

provided in advance—a) in what ways do you think the change process might be resisted, slowed down, or otherwise impeded?, b) do these reasons seem logical or reasonable to you? why or why not?, and 3) what might you and others do to secure greater buy-in to advance the change process?

The initial session of Day 2 began with the individual teams responding to what they considered to be points of convergence, overlap, or combinations emerging from the action plans. This was designed to consider the underlying rationale for the ideas put forth in the change effort. Specifically, what makes them worth doing?, and what makes others want to engage in them?

Dominant themes running through the teams appeared to be communication, identity, morale, connectedness, and budget considerations.

Concluding the morning session on Day 2, one of the external facilitators invited all the participants to reflect on the discussion questions which had been provided in the pre-work to focus on clarification and understanding. The following questions were discussed:

- What is the University's current change-oriented work all about? Toward what larger end should this work be directed?
- How can this work lead to more transformational change for the institution?
- In 5-10 years, where should the institution be? Where do you want it to be? How might it best get there?

Further probing questions on Day 2 helped to focus on refinement of the key performance indicators (KPI's) that had been developed to date, linking the data back to the action plans, and viewing measurement in regard to strategy first and working backward through the plans. Targeted questions/issues for the KPI's included the following: what new performance indicators and institutional metrics will need to be identified and implemented to get the institution where it wants to be in 2021?, will focus on these metrics move the institution's action plans and reorganization scenarios in the desired direction?, and what performance evaluation tools, techniques, and approaches will best suit the transformational change work going forward?

The main segment of the workshop session on Day 3 presented task assignments to the participating teams for completion. The task assignment was to discuss their respective unit of analysis (for example, unit/department, academic school, university, or cross-institutional) relative to any ideas or challenges associated with the change process. The focus questions included—what do you see overall as the one or two most significant implementation challenges?, if you could do just one thing to advance the change process, what would it be?, and why do you think this one thing is particularly important?

An important part of the final session of Day 3 utilized a "What? So What? Now What?" discussion protocol. The outline of the protocol was prominently displayed in the room: What?—an insight/idea that is staying with you (priority); So What?—why is this important to you? (dominant theme); and Now What?--the action/next step for you (visualize/operationalize). Additional thoughts and input were then recorded on the flip charts for the action plans.

Short-term action plans were subsequently developed in the areas of academic planning and programming, civic engagement, campus beautification, a campus/community project, salary/morale, a master planning calendar, development of a founder's day event, and internal communications. Four alternative reorganization scenarios were discussed and a comprehensive listing of key performance indicators by category was distributed for further refinement.

PHASE III

Phase III (post-start period) began in December 2011 with announcement of the reorganization. After reviewing a number of organization scenarios and models it was determined that the best fit would include a flatter structure with significant enhancement of communication, coordination, and connectedness; increased speed and flexibility in adapting to rapidly changing conditions; and empowering individuals to expand their future leadership roles and capabilities. The reorganization included elimination of an administrative layer and four functional realignments. Matrix and cluster overlay designs would also be applied on a project/cross-functional team basis.

An action learning laboratory and dedicated website was established for team use in refining short term action plans and implementation details and deployed from spring 2012 through fall 2013. Program outcomes continued to be communicated through various means. Convergence of all initiatives was also stressed in communications, in particular, the upcoming Higher Learning Commission (HLC) regional accreditation visit in spring 2014, the Southeastern Organization Leadership Development Program (SOLD), ongoing faculty/staff efforts, individuals participating in institutes/development opportunities, and internal case studies and related discussions. Thirty long-term action plans were in the final preparation stage to integrate into the next strategic planning cycle (2015-2020) consistent with completion of the HLC accreditation process.

Major program outcomes have included a new academic planning and review processes, a major campus beautification project, increased civic and community engagement, a new campus/community initiative, a new mascot, development and implementation of a campus master planning calendar, development of a Founder's Day event to commemorate the University's history and identity, and a new internal communications system. Additionally, outcomes directly or indirectly related to the program were consecutive stipends/salary adjustments; revision of the tuition waiver benefit for eligible dependents; assistance in the creation of a new-shared governance forum format; and regular meetings established with key constituencies.

WHAT CAN BE LEARNED?

The introduction of new approaches in changing an organization's culture brings with it new ideas, structures, processes, and behaviors that normally depart substantially from the routine pattern of operations. Any transformational change process requires the emergence of new modes of functioning in order to contribute effectively to the change process. This requires acceptance of new roles, responsibilities, tasks, and relationships. Success in completing the process is dependent upon member acceptance with the organization. People must be willing to accept the process and be committed to it. The changes implemented encountered some resistance from individuals within the organization who were reluctant to accept the cultural implications of a different mindset relative to new structures, systems, processes, and behavior [Kegan and Lahey, 2009].

Active participation in the change effort provided individuals with the background, knowledge, and information in advance of the start-up. This clarified meaning and helped to structure the change, as well as create greater feelings of ownership and control of the effort. A large, cross-functional slice of the organization was assured of having input into the change process in order to achieve individual and organizational synergies. However, it would have been beneficial for this part of the pre-start phase to be emphasized more through reinforcement and follow up using a variety of methods.

A crucial aspect of the initial work was to create the background and educational orientation as the program progressed from diagnosis to design and implementation. This orientation was established the first year of the program through developmental sessions with the administrative teams, the faculty senate, and the student government association. Of particular significance was the creation of two comprehensive case study series on the institution to stimulate discussion and learning in creating a solid foundation prior to the three major workshop sessions.

Ideally, an organization would create this type of meaningful case study series on itself as it begins the change process. This series can also be supplemented with relevant background materials and current information applicable to the institution's situation, as in the case of Southeastern. The early developmental sessions with the executive team and the administrative council used outside cases and related materials for comparison and learning purposes. Pre-work assignments were distributed in advance of the sessions to help focus the discussions. Useful comparisons of the different outside cases and readings served to "tease out" a more thorough understanding of institution-specific differences. The following questions represent examples of those used in the study assignments and in the actual discussions of the outside cases:

- How does our context for planning (external environment, competition, leadership, governance and decision-making, and resource allocation) compare to this institution?
- In comparison, how well are we integrating academic planning, resource planning, and facilities planning?

- How do we compare in regard to performance expectations, issues/concerns, and next action steps to this situation?
- How would you compare this institution's financial situation with ours relative to concerns, conclusions, and recommendations?
- In comparison to the outside cases, how can we operationalize and communicate priorities with our cultural transformation?
- How does Southeastern's strengths, weaknesses, and outcomes compare with this institution?
- How would our networking map of external relationships around vision, mission, and strategic commitments compare? Or contrast?
- What lessons from this case can we apply to our situation?
- How would you view our current transition? What could be done differently to insure long-term success? What adjustments could be made immediately? What adjustments could be made over the next year or so?

The outside cases and related materials made it easier to transition to the institution-specific cases and background materials encompassing the multi-part case series on the University and Oklahoma's budget situation and another series on the organizational structure and redesign initiative. The discussion cycles with each group were fed back in subsequent sessions as input. This was particularly helpful in stimulating and updating discussions as new information and data became available during the legislative and budget periods. In this application, the case series and accompanying documentation became "living" documents, continually revised and updated, reflecting the outcomes of each discussion session as new information became available in preparation for the upcoming fiscal year. Examples of preparation questions can be summarized as follows:

- Identify 3-4 concerns/issues that you have about our current financial condition or direction.
- What are the major factors and conclusions that you can draw from the case study at this time (both institution and state)?
- What recommendation areas would you have in mind at this time? With what rationale?

Likewise, the organizational structure redesign case focused on the background related to the transformation initiative including reinforcement by the governing board, comparisons with sister institutions, the relationship between the transformational change and organization structure and redesign, and organizational considerations and changing capabilities. Also used during these case discussions was a progress status report for the institution outlining the situation diagnostically in terms of the current state (where are we?), the future state (where do we want to go?), and the transition state (how can we get there?).

Participant-centered discussion based leadership can be a significant factor in aiding individuals and teams in addressing planning, team building, and changing roles, responsibilities, tasks, and relationships. The discussion process, when applied in a positive and constructive manner, can bring teams face to face with institutional issues of linking strategic planning, team building, and role and task alignments. When an organization does not have someone with experience in leading discussions, a professional discussion method leader can be brought in from the outside. The alternative, as applied in the Southeastern case, is for those who work together in the team to acquire those skills.

During the pre-briefings prior to the first major work session in June, the facilitators were provided information on core learning disciplines, discussion method learning, the importance of planning for the session, considerations during the conduct of the session, preparation for questioning and transitions, how to end the session, and advance preparation and study guidelines. In hindsight, more emphasis should have been placed on discussion method leadership through such means as "micro" sessions working with the facilitators in a time shortened format for developmental purposes. While time consuming, this would have been beneficial not only prior to the first major workshop but between the workshops as well.

In August 2012, follow up development sessions consisting of two parts were conducted with the executive team. The first part offered a framework for administrative teams to engage in value-added governing. This covered concepts and propositions of generative thinking and governance as leadership [Chait, Ryan, and Taylor, 2005] and how it can influence a team's ability to govern effectively in forming strong relationships with key constituencies to achieve improved communication and results.

The second part used pre-work and diagnostic information in exploring different ways of looking at change and transformation. The main thrust was to address closing the gap between what we had intended to do and what we had actually been able to achieve to date. Individuals were given pre-work instructions in developing a "personal case study" using themselves and their own change goals in exploring new concepts and practices. Guidelines were provided in developing the "mini-case" and discussion dialogue [Isaacs, 1999].

Upon reflection, the timing of these sessions was much too late. They should have been interjected from the beginning of the program. Unfortunately, the materials had not been developed at that time. They would have been useful to participants to assist in shifting their mindsets from judgment to transformation through such processes as generative thinking combined with discovery dialogue. In short, generative thinking encompasses a cyclical process of deciding, discerning, and probing; that is, deciding what to pay attention to, discerning what it means, and probing for what to do about it [Chait, Ryan, and Taylor, 2005]. Discovery dialogue, on the other hand, focuses on listening to understand, being open minded, revealing assumptions for evaluation, and demonstrating concern for others even when they hold differing views [Isaacs, 1999]. In combination, these two practices could have impacted the entire program by providing techniques for thinking about the past in order to move toward the future, for facilitating effective deliberations, and for evaluating transformative paths.

Perhaps one of the most crucial problems of the effort involved the perceived determination of where the program would "best fit" in the institution's administrative and decision-making environment. Did the teams have the authority to implement the action plans on their own? Or, did they serve in an advisory capacity to central administration? Also, to what extent were central administration members involved in each phase of program design and development? What levels of involvement were most desirable?

Related to the decision-making environment, as might be expected, was the level of uncertainty surrounding the reorganization scenarios. When would the reorganization come? Who would make the decision? Would there be short-term and long-term reorganization plans? Issues for the longer term remained, coming to the forefront during the November workshop, in consideration of the reorganization and sequencing of action plans taking advantage of synergies that might exist in planning, structural changes, and a shared governance proposal under consideration.

Closing remarks on Day 1 had focused on the fact that there would be no decisions made on the reorganization during the workshop. The approach would be to continue to discuss and clarify ideas, concerns, and issues. However, at this point, there appeared to be some patterns emerging since September, and individuals were open to different and non-traditional forms of structural organization. In retrospect, reassurances should have been provided earlier, perhaps even during the pre-briefings and definitely in the June session. It should have also been further emphasized that transformational change, by its nature, is a highly uncertain and ambiguous undertaking [Kotter, 1996] with the emergence of a new organization culture; that in most instances, is unknown until it takes shape, emerging out of the chaos of the old organization culture.

A second problem involved the development of required skills and abilities across the organization teams. The internal facilitators involved in the seeding process had been functioning as a group for ten months prior to the time that the external consultants came on board. Therefore, very little training was provided to individual team members to build in communication, facilitation, and problem-solving skills. Later, in many instances, it was apparent that this lack of background caused some teams to slow down in dealing with and implementing specific parts of an action plan.

Another problem, as in any change effort, was institutionalizing the change program itself and communicating the results throughout the organization. The method of change implementation resided in the teams responsible for the action plans and they could modify with any adjustments as necessary. Thus, the facilitators and team members (100 individuals from across the institution) had direct input into the change program, and possessed a greater core knowledge base of the various aspects of the system than those not directly involved in the change. A better job of communicating program outcomes and results could have been achieved through campus wide emails, newsletters, periodic unit meetings, etc. in institutionalizing the acceptance of and commitment to the program. New communication strategies will be necessary in truncating various information resources in anticipation of preparing for the next planning cycle (2015-2020).

There was an additional problem of the program participants, especially the internal facilitators, becoming too detached as a special group with special status within the organization. The linkage of the

prominent external facilitators/consultants from the outset of the program, in the pre-start phase, helped to add credibility and accountability for the program throughout the organization. It was also essential that external consultants be kept fully informed on program developments so they were in the best position to provide diagnosis, problem solving, and determining interventions based on the real needs of the organization at that time.

The amount of time required to implement system wide change, as anticipated, represented another problem in the program. In this case, system wide change required three years from 2009-2011 and additional follow up of two years in 2012 and 2013. System wide change can be complex, with interdependent parts and varying structures. Many of the critical issues take considerable time to be effectively addressed and resolved. Some results may not be experienced for a longer time period as the organization gradually progresses toward increased performance levels through such means as organizational learning and changing cultural expectations. Patience is required on the part of key constituencies such as administration and governing boards. Governing and coordinating boards need to be kept apprised of program status and next steps at designated intervals.

A final learning from the case, from an overall perspective, dealt with examining the program across several dimensions including the scope and intensity of the change and the positioning of the change in response to external events that were occurring at the same time [Nadler, Shaw, and Walton,1995; Nadler and Tushman, 1997]. In relation to these dimensions, the level of organizational learning and discovery created another element for consideration as the framework of the program evolved [Garvin, 2003; Jick and Peiperl, 2010].

In the Southeastern case, a system wide change had been planned from the beginning. But we should also ask: is it better to begin a change program of this nature on a system wide basis or in a subset of the larger organization? Each organization has to diagnose its own situation and make an appropriate determination of how best to approach the change. Helpful points of inquiry and reflection in this determination might include the following: What is the University's change-oriented work all about? Toward what larger end should this work be directed? How can this effort lead to more transformational change for the institution? In 5-10 years, where should the University be? Where do we want it to be? How can we best get there?

To this end, pre-reading and discussion groups on transformational change would have been beneficial throughout the SPDP process.

In summary, there have been a number of learning considerations relevant to this case study. These include the following: 1) degree of resistance to cultural change and expectations; 2) acceptance of new roles, responsibilities, tasks, and relationships; 3) the need for ownership and control; 4) addressing ambiguity and uncertainty; 5) development of required skills and abilities; 6) uses and linkages of external facilitators/consultants; 7) program scope, intensity, and levels of organizational learning and discovery; and 8) communication and institutionalization of the program.

As far as the transformative change itself is concerned, the major question becomes one of cause and effect: did the Southeastern Professional Development Program (SPDP) and its components actually cause the organizational culture to change? The answer, in terms of tangible outcomes, is yes; however, how much of the change was related to the program is difficult to measure. The institutionalization and diffusion of the change effort and the ability of the University as a system to generate the capacity for continuous improvement and self-renewal will determine the long term impact.

Did the program achieve the goal of producing a critical mass of individuals in developing the requisite knowledge, skills, and behavior necessary to prepare them to serve as the next generation of leaders? Likewise, when looking at the breadth and depth of the program and its elements, it is crucial to recognize the following premise: if the change effort is considered to be successful, it will be adopted or modified for use within and outside the organization. Most individuals involved with a comprehensive effort, like the SPDP, would expect that a changed organizational culture is better than the one it replaced. However, due to controllable and uncontrollable forces, this may not always be true. In many instances, an organization will evolve into a new transitional state in order to better respond to the changing needs of its environment following a period of transformation. But, what will distinguish the institution's leadership development and succession planning in the future? Perhaps it will center around its ability for self-renewal and regeneration which will require an ongoing commitment to the development of individuals, teams, and coordinating mechanisms creating interdependencies for continuous problem-solving and action in order to evolve and adapt to rapidly changing conditions [Kegan and Lahey, 2010].

In conclusion, transformational change processes, as illustrated by this case study, can play an increasingly important role in creating an atmosphere for organization and leadership development, an atmosphere that allows innovation and creativity to flourish. At the same time, it is also necessary to reduce the risks inherent in trying to achieve change too fast, increasing the chances of success for the overall initiative. It is possible, however, to achieve a balance between traditional approaches to communication, problem solving and decision- making, and transformational change approaches that are flexible, responsive, and adaptive.

Developing a disciplined as well as creative and innovative atmosphere where change can flourish is not an easy task. This is because individuals and teams often spend a great deal of time in implementation and on routine, operational aspects rather than on concentrating on developing an idea to its fullest creative potential. As this case study exemplifies, the integration of human resource development, leadership development, and organization development, by their very nature, can make a substantial contribution in helping to develop atmospheres that foster creativity, innovation, self-renewal, and regeneration.

The type of transformational change process described in this case study can be an important component for higher education in the future. Historically, institutions have faced difficult and multiple forces that affected their growth, success, and even survival. In such a complex framework, it is necessary to understand institutions as open systems capable of organizational learning and transformation. In this reality, it is essential to view the interrelationships of individuals, teams, and processes needed for frequent regeneration. Regeneration, in this context, requires purposeful, planned, and systematic change.

In the highly volatile environment of the 21st century, success will be dependent upon the integration of transformational change into what has been considered to be more traditional approaches. This integration will hopefully encompass a wide variety of useful and highly practical findings, theories, models, processes, and experiences in providing a generalist perspective in support of transformational change. Therefore, this case study documenting such an approach should be of interest and relevance to practitioners. In addition, transformational change is not an end in itself and must be viewed in light of organizational priorities, the strategic issues and administrative constraints faced, and the resources available to the organization.

Transformational change requires thinking and commitment beyond the confines of an individual's own area of responsibility and demonstrates ways to lead toward higher levels of organizational learning, identity, and action. It can also assist in focusing on creating greater levels of flexibility and adaptability in meeting future challenges by providing opportunities for professional and personal growth in the development of an organization's next generation of leaders.

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