

*Development of Strategic Leadership:
A Model to Promote, Sustain, and Advance Institutional Significance*

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This article uses a qualitative methodology to present the methods, materials, and manpower characteristics required to create a local community college strategic leadership program to promote, sustain, and advance institutional significance. The functionality of the program is based on the Original Case Study Design (OCSD) methodology, in which participants are given actual college issues to investigate from a leadership perspective. Participants in the program work in teams to maximize the development of their individual and group leadership skills. Program outcomes are demonstrated by formal presentations that identify an organizational problem and the design of a solution. The identification of problems and strategies for solutions occurs within the framework of strategic leadership development. It is argued in this paper that layered strategic leadership is the key element to promote, sustain, and advance institutional significance. Implications and recommendations for community college strategic leadership practice are also addressed in this article. A subsequent quantitative study uses comparative analysis to assess the relationship between Leadership Trenholm and community colleges in the sample surveyed.

Why Create a Local Strategic Leadership Program?

Although there is significant controversy over the issue of a reduction of leadership skills resulting from the retirement of baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964), it has been, and continues to be, argued that a vast array of leadership skills and experiences may be lost in the next several years (Brandel, 2008; Brewer, 2007; Buhler, 2008; Carlson, 2004; Helton & Soubik, 2004; Kiyonaga, 2004; Ragalevsky, 2008; Ringo & MacDonald, 2008; Wellins & Byham, 2001). The shortage of leadership acumen is not simply a matter of boomers leaving the workforce, but rather the concern is correlated to the *depth* of the experiences and skills of these individuals. According to the research literature, baby boomers have been in the workforce approaching 30 or more years and it is the loss of these extensive experiences that concern organizational leaders (Flynn, 2007; Hardy & Katsinas, 2006; Shults, 2001; Wallin, 2006).

Howard Carlson (2004), Superintendent of the Delano Public Schools in Delano, Minnesota, argued that there will be “a changing of the guard” (p. 36) as organizational leadership transitions from baby boomer methodologies to Generation X (Gen X) practices (individuals born between 1965 and 1979). Additionally, Jacquelyn Barretta (2008), CIO of

Con-way, a provider of logistics and supply chain services, took the issue of Gen X further by delving into the realm of the millennials (born between 1980 and 2000). As an outcome of these generational concerns, succession planning has become a method to address the potential future dearth of leadership resources in organizations, including community colleges. This trend is of particular concern for community colleges because of their dependence on public funding; public entities faced with fiscal constraints may also be faced with a serious deficit of proven leadership resources as a result of the aging workforce (Kiyonaga, 2004). As noted by Fitzgerald (2008), “Unless today’s CIOs [educational administrators] take the time now to invest in tomorrow’s leaders, what looms ahead is a potential leadership void that threatens the value proposition of IT [education], the legacy of the profession and the very health of business and the overall economy” (p. 38).

Educational (and other) institutions have begun to develop in-house programs to create leaders from within and throughout the organization or field of practice as a method of succession planning (Berke, 2005; Blair, 2005; Campbell, 2002; Ebbers, Gallisath, Rockel, & Coyan, 2000; Fink & Brayman, 2006; Geroy, Caleb, & Wright, 2005; Lucie, 2006). This emerging trend depends upon institutional foresight to create an infrastructure in which resources and practices are used to develop proactive leaders at all levels within the organization. Prigge (2005) postulated that community colleges will experience an exodus of leaders during the next decade. Therefore, the impetus exists for community colleges to develop their own leaders – training employees with potential who are accustomed to the reality of the workplace (Prigge, 2005). According to Coonan (2005), developing leaders from within an organization facilitates long-term organizational sustainability by gaining a leader already familiar with the culture of the organization while shortening the learning curve about the organization.

An example of this leadership methodology, titled *Leadership Trenholm*, is a local institutional program developed by H. Councill Trenholm State Technical College in Montgomery, Alabama. *Leadership Trenholm* intends to positively impact the institution by developing quality, innovative, action-oriented, and engaged leaders from the ranks of the college. The development of strategic leadership from within the college will provide future leaders across all operations of the college who possess insight into the culture, operations, and mission of the college; moreover, this type of leadership promotes and sustains the validity and reliability of institutional effectiveness (Skolits & Graybeal, 2007) or what VanWagoner, Bowman and Spraggs (2005) termed “the significant community college” (p. 38). Therefore, the rationale for this paper is to add to the body of knowledge in the area of strategic leadership, especially as it relates to practices promoting, sustaining, and advancing institutional significance. The methodology used in this paper consisted of a literature review and interviews to assess the value of developing strategic leaders to promote, sustain, and advance institutional significance, correlating the findings to the expected outcomes of *Leadership Trenholm*.

The Codependency of Strategic Leadership and Institutional Significance

Water is composed of two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen. Thus, the chemical nomenclature of this most precious resource is H₂O. It becomes, then, a natural law that hydrogen and oxygen are codependent elements required to form water. Without water, life as we know it would cease to exist. The same type of relationship is true in the two-year college system; without strategic leadership and institutional significance, life in the community college will cease to exist as we know it. The first question that must be answered then is: what is institutional significance?

Institutional significance in the community college is characterized by “economic drivers and essential community resources” (VanWagoner, Bowman, & Spraggs, 2005, p. 41). These characteristics go beyond institutional status quo; rather, institutional significance in this context becomes a strategic weapon to elevate competitive advantage for the communities and workforce served by community colleges. Competitive advantage, therefore, places community colleges at the forefront of leadership in the communities they serve. Furthermore, institutional significance requires that a community college becomes a significantly value-added partner to each individual and organization in its local and extended service domain. Institutional significance requires a community college to not think in the same terms as the workforce thinks, but to think one step ahead of the workforce so that students leaving the community college are prepared to hit the ground running. This type of strategy is not just proactive, it is pre-proactive, meaning institutional significance defines a community college which understands the questions of tomorrow and is able to simultaneously provide the answers (Flynn, 2007).

Community colleges achieve significance by performing beyond any consideration for the norm. To achieve institutional significance, institutional practices must be reviewed and questioned on a consistent and continuous basis. When practices do not promote and advance significance in the community college, the practices must be modified or replaced. Effective practices do not require 12-hour days and endless work on weekends; effective practice simply means that the community college must adhere to an incessant culture of inquiry about itself, its intended outcomes, and its future. In the words of VanWagoner, Bowman, and Spraggs (2005):

A significant organization, on the other hand, has a vibrant organizational culture. The focus of a significant community college is more on the underlying culture. It goes beyond positive perceptions to a pervasive passion for mission and accomplishment. Employees striving to go beyond serving students to amazing them symbolize organizational culture in a significant community college. A vibrant culture manifests itself in a demonstrable effect that all employees consider themselves ambassadors of

the college. They seek to connect the college and community in their external interactions. Consequently, the members of the college community leverage the reputation of the institution as an integral community asset. Self-interest and self-satisfaction are replaced with self-reflection and significant improvement. (p. 47)

Consequently, the second question which must be addressed is: what type of leadership should community colleges offer to their respective communities?

Strategic leadership is the type or style of leadership in which the longevity of the community is best served. For example, strategic leadership is concerned with a holistic approach to serving the community, students, and business partners over the entire life-cycle of education, training and community service (Barron & Henderson, 1995; Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006; Bossink, 2007; Canavan, 2003; Tushman, O'Reilly, Fenollosa, Kleinbaum & McGrath, 2007; Wiessner & Sullivan, 2007). This type of educational leadership seeks to improve the organizational infrastructure, implement effective practices, and integrate innovative technological advances throughout the college to effectively serve the workforce. Strategic leadership is a collaborative process in which all individuals of authority are open to feedback across all spectrums of institutional operations and at all levels of local and community input.

Leaders who practice a strategic leadership style are more likely to embrace a vision of institutional significance. When a community college has leadership that is *both* leader and visionary, strategic leadership becomes codependent with institutional significance to establish and promote the community college as a force-multiplier lever for change. As stated by Barron and Henderson (1995), "A strategic leader—classroom teacher, support staff, administrator, and [or] supervisor—serves as an agent for positive change in schools and school systems [and surrounding communities]" (p. 178). Logically, then, because strategic leadership is an agent for change *and* because institutional significance has been characterized as possessing both

“economic drivers and essential community resources,” there is the formation of a natural law, (e.g., as in the example of H₂O). In the context of the community college, a natural law exists *only* if the institutional leadership framework will promote its existence. This natural law is (AC)S₂, or one part agent (A) for change (C) and two parts of significance (S): 1) economic driver and, 2) essential community resource. Once the presence of (AC)S₂ is identified, the development of strategic leadership to promote, sustain, and advance institutional significance is ready for organizational implementation.

The Model of Strategic Leadership and Institutional Significance

Once succession planning has begun, the process to develop strategic leaders as champions of institutional significance gives rise to organizational considerations that must be factored into the succession equation. Figure 1 provides a model from which organizational considerations may be viewed. To develop strategic leaders within the community college, resources must be set aside for the process. To achieve institutional significance, resources must not only be set aside, but the resources must be effectively used. When two-year college administrators consider developing their own leaders, additional factors must be considered as direct and indirect positive outcomes of this effort. In Figure 1, there are ten outcomes of the (AC)S₂ phenomenon. These outcomes are the direct results of a community college becoming an institution of significance, co-dependent with and heavily reliant upon successful strategies of strategic leadership.

For example, Figure 1 indicates the flow of the major components of the process. Strategic leadership is a change agent for improving the methods, materials, and manpower domains within the community college. The intended and expected result of strategic leadership

practices is to provide economic drivers and essential community resources to local communities and business partners in the service area. Within this development cycle, institutional significance promotes global competitiveness, professional development, university transfer, community service, improved life skills, life-long learners, workforce development, student achievement, mastery of subject matter, and social networking. Consequently, the application of (AC)S₂ promotes, sustains, and advances institutional significance resulting in a culture of inquiry for continuous organizational improvement. The outcomes noted in Figure 1 are critical workforce resources within the infrastructure of institutional significance, as well as the goals of *Leadership Trenholm*.

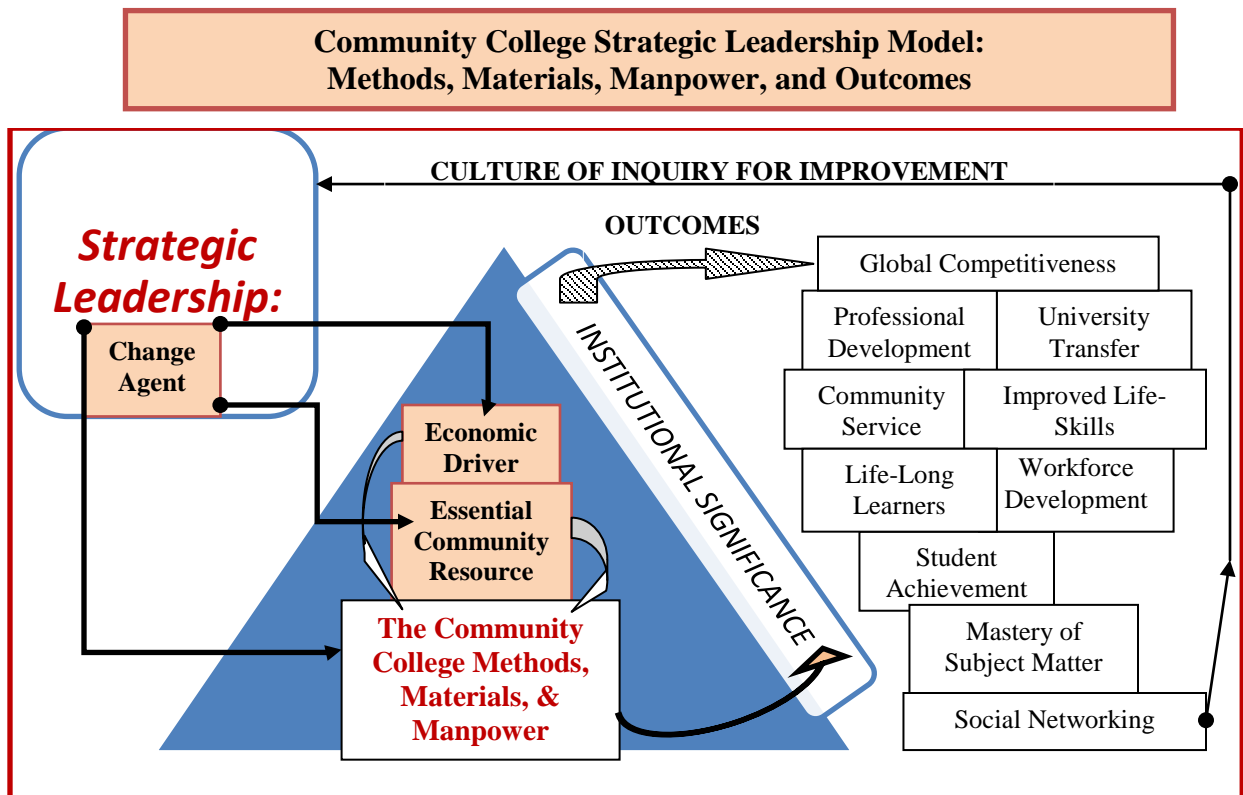


Figure 1. Strategic Leadership to Achieve Institutional Significance Model

Strategic leadership is a powerful force which promotes, sustains, and advances institutional significance. This force is available to any person who desires to accept the values of leadership and who, in turn, applies these values in every single action undertaken. The leadership force is always seeking methodologies and practices to improve educational outcomes. These outcomes are not based on sacrosanct practices that cannot be changed as needed. Merely to meet the needs of the workforce is no longer the order of the day; rather, community colleges are critical-mass forces in the overall scheme of the national economy and a variety of outcomes is expected of them. This, then, is the essence of why there is the dire need to develop strategic leadership throughout the institutions known as community colleges. The logical flow of Figure 1 indicates that strategic leadership is a highly dynamic process which influences institutional resources, educational outcomes, and workforce expectations.

The Resources of Strategic Leadership to Promote and Sustain Institutional Significance

To reach institutional significance, resources must be identified and be made available to those in the strategic leadership pipeline. The pipeline includes individuals *participating* in leadership training and individuals *conducting* the leadership training. There are three major resource categories that are important in this process: methods, materials and manpower. To maximize the overarching success of strategic leadership development, thereby undergirding, promoting, and sustaining the co-requisite of institutional significance, the institution should understand, support, and provide for the methods, materials, and manpower resources that must be allocated for strategic leadership to develop and perpetuate itself in the context and culture of the institution—past, present, and future.

The Methods of Strategic Leadership to Promote and Sustain Institutional Significance

Methods are the policies and practices associated with the community college. Practices may be considered as those actions taken by faculty, staff, students, community, administrators, legislators—and all other stakeholders—that impact the college. When the development of strategic leadership is underway, the infrastructure and threads of institutional practice command center stage. According to McClenney and Greene (2005), “Why, then, do some [community college students] [or strategic leader-trainees] persevere while others leave before they meet their goals? Institutional practice can tip the balance” (p. 5). Thus, methods are the practices within and throughout the community college to promote the success of developing strategic leaders, subsequently promoting, sustaining, and advancing institutional significance. Unfortunately, institutional practice may also result in negative outcomes. For example, prospective leaders may be discouraged by institutional practices that do not give support to their ideas. Consequently, positive strategic leadership is dependent upon methods or practices that promote, sustain, and advance institutional significance, not on negative organizational practices that tip the balance of strategic leadership in a negative direction.

One specifically required institutional practice is the need to develop local institutional leadership. To alter one’s mindset from status quo to innovative approaches to creating strategic leaders, community college administrators will be faced with thinking outside the proverbial leadership box. As noted by VanWagoner, Bowman, and Spraggs (2005):

The move from success to significance will not be easy. Community college leaders will have to think differently, act differently, and respond differently to their environments. Nevertheless, the parts are there. Community colleges have long attracted leaders within their organizations who want to make a difference, who rise above the traditional culture, and who share a vision for the future. There has never been a better time or a greater need for community colleges to assume their significant

role in creating the future...Community colleges are the right institutions at the right time, if we make the critical move to significance. (p. 50)

A critical move to significance includes a conscientious effort on the part of community college leaders to understand the framework of institutional practice as a methodology to improve institutional significance. Consequently, institutional practice and strategic leadership development are direct correlates of one another; unfortunately, they are not always positive correlates. Figure 2 indicates a graphical representation of strategic leadership practices correlated to institutional significance. Note the differences and similarities in Figure 2. In Figure 2.a., the correlation between strategic leadership and institutional significance is a 1:1 relationship and is positively or negatively correlated over the life cycle of the institution. In Figure 2.b., the correlation between strategic leadership and institutional significance is an inverse 1:1 persistently negative relationship. Although Figure 2.a. is a parallel function, Figure 2.b. indicates an inverse relationship regardless of leadership efforts.

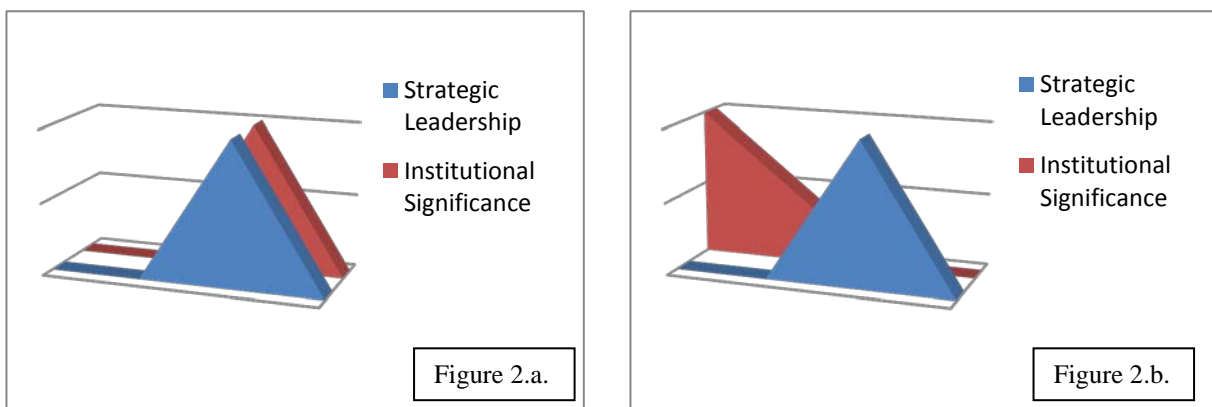


Figure 2. Strategic Leadership and Institutional Significance Correlations.

In terms of the methods or practices to achieve codependency between strategic leadership and institutional significance, Figure 2.a. is the preferred method of practice.

However, even in this scenario, if leadership begins to decline, the institutional significance also declines in a proportional response. For a community college functioning as noted in Figure 2.b., there is little hope that the development of strategic leadership will unravel the historical and negative outcomes associated with institutional insignificance; the institution is mired in status quo. A community college operating as noted in Figure 2.b. is cause for a critical reassessment of the institutional mission and respective outcomes. Although methods or practices are crucial to the development of strategic leadership to promote, sustain, and advance institutional significance, co-equal to *Leadership Trenholm* success is the type and quality of the materials used in the program.

The Materials of Strategic Leadership to Promote and Sustain Institutional Significance

Materials for strategic leadership to promote and sustain institutional significance are more tangible items than methods or practices. Unfortunately, practices are more prone to interfere with successful leadership development and therefore may require a more diligent approach to their influence (Barron & Henderson, 1995; Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006; Fulton-Calkins & Milling, 2005). Materials are the items which are more easily recognized. Examples might include landmark references such as Peter M. Senge's *The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization*, or Jim Collins' *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't*. Additionally, other types of materials are found in peer-reviewed journals, such as the *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, *New Directions for Community Colleges*, *Thrust for Educational Leadership*, or *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*. Also, there are many organizations which offer various types of leadership materials, such as *Corexcel* (Linking Learning to Performance:

<http://www.corexcel.com>) or *Velsoft* (We're All About the Training: <http://www.velsoft.com>).

Although all of these types of materials are excellent resources, they only constitute one side of the materials equation.

The other side of the materials equation is culture-based. For example, *Leadership Trenholm* has developed its own in-house *Leadership Trenholm Resource and User Guide* (under copyright). This document is a published instrument for strategic leadership development to identify, assess, promote, sustain, *and* advance institutional significance. The document was written by a committee whose members have considerable educational experience in the community college, but more specifically, in the local college. It is these local experiences which create the framework for success when developing local leadership. This is not to say that the leadership training is not transferrable; on the contrary, the leadership skills developed in *Leadership Trenholm* are *explicitly* applicable to any college or university; the difference, however, is in the applicability to the local organizational and community structure. In other words, the *Leadership Trenholm Resource and User Guide* supports both strategic leadership development throughout the organization and institutional significance at all levels of operation, (e.g., the elements or outcomes of (AC)S₂).

The argument in this paper is to suggest that to maximize the outcome of local strategic leadership development, the materials included in the process should be those which are known as *leadership proven* and those that are known as *local proven*, (e.g., *Leadership Trenholm Resource and User Guide*.) The *combination* of these two genres of materials will maximize the types and quality of materials used by individuals who are motivated to achieve strategic leadership status so that these same individuals might identify, assess, promote, sustain, *and* advance institutional significance.

Regardless of the materials used, the key component in this process is the effective application of the materials. To effectively develop strategic leaders, there is a truth that should be considered: “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.” For the community college to develop strategic leadership through its local system is to propose the axiom of building effective leaders today so that future leaders may be developed for tomorrow’s needs. In other words, perpetuate the strategic leader species through the use of invigorating materials which challenge, inform, and guide the journey to success. Materials that motivate and inform are more likely to aid the development of strategic leadership, thereby promoting, sustaining and advancing institutional *and* cultural significance (Berke, 2005; Claxton, 2007; VanWagoner, Bowman & Spraggs, 2005).

A sampling of strategic leadership and related institutional significance literature is provided in Table 1 (see Appendix A). This list is not all inclusive but demonstrates the types and qualities of the materials used in the *Leadership Trenholm* program. It is noted that the materials used in the program are primary sources; however, any valid sources related to leadership development are cited as useful for individuals in the program, inclusive of general studies, journals, books, data-based research, and other forms of media. The sources also integrate current issues and theories with classical themes, theories, and leadership styles. The materials are selectively gathered to address the needs of the institution and the individual, concurrent with the structure and function of the overall culture of the organization and inclusive of manpower issues, as local leaders are developed from college employees.

Table 1

Sample Items for Strategic Leadership and Institutional Significance Materials

Type of Reference	Title Author	Leadership Purpose
Text	Collins, J. (2001). <i>Good to great: Why some companies make the leap...and others don't</i> . New York, NY: HarpersColling Publishers, Inc.	Global Impact
Text	Senge, P. (2006). <i>The fifth discipline: The art & practice of the learning organization</i> . New York, NY: Doubleday.	Global Impact
Guide	<i>Leadership Trenholm Resource and User Guide</i> . ©2008, TSTC Leadership Program Steering Committee.	Local Application
Journal	<i>Community College Journal of Research and Practice</i>	Global Research
Journal	<i>New Directions for Community Colleges</i>	Global Application
Article	VanWagoner, R., Bowman, L., & Spraggs, L. (2005). Editor's Choice: The Significant Community College. <i>Community College Review</i> , 33(1), 38-50.	Issue Application
Article	Shults, C. (2001). <i>The Critical Impact of Impending Retirements on Community College Leadership</i> . American Association of Community Colleges, Leadership Series No. 1	Issue Application
Case Study	Scott, K. (2008). <i>Original Case Study Design (OSCD)</i> , Author.	Project Guide

(see Appendix A)

The Manpower of Strategic Leadership to Promote and Sustain Institutional Significance

Manpower, or the human element involved in the development of strategic leaders who will promote and sustain institutional significance, is a dynamic variable. For *Leadership Trenholm*, there are two types of manpower: (a) prospective leaders and, (b) facilitator-leaders. In the context of *Leadership Trenholm*, the prospective leaders are the individuals participating in the *Leadership Trenholm* training program. Conversely, the facilitator-leaders consist of the *Leadership Program Steering Committee* who guide the training process, as well as provide instruction and mentoring, and who function as liaison between the prospective leader, community personnel, and other human assets.

The committee that heads up the manpower process is comprised of a diverse group of individuals with various backgrounds, education, and work experiences. One of the core issues for success of *Leadership Trenholm* is the support of the college administration for the *Leadership Program Steering Committee*. As noted by the research of Hardy and Katsinas (2006), community colleges are in the business of developing human capital. Human capital is the primary human resource necessary for all sectors of the workforce, including strategic leadership skills. In order to develop strategic leadership in the local college, the administration must provide the support and resources necessary for committee initiatives to take institutional form. Subsequent to administrative approval, the development of strategic leadership to promote, sustain, and advance institutional significance becomes policy. At this point, the institution now has a mandate to move toward the goal of institutional significance *beyond any consideration of status quo*.

Individuals may request to participate in *Leadership Trenholm* by one of two methods: (a) he or she may be nominated, or (b) he or she may nominate himself or herself. Any qualified employee is eligible to participate in the program. However, because the college has been granted authority to train and build a new generation of strategic leaders, manpower issues surface. What are these issues? Not everyone in the organization will embrace the opportunity to become a strategic leader within the college. There are several potential reasons for the lack of engagement by prospective participants, such as, he or she: (a) is happy in his or her current job, (b) is not motivated to take the challenge, (c) questions the added value for participating in this leadership program, or, (d) is currently overwhelmed by the pressures of other job responsibilities. These brief examples suggest to the *Leadership Program Steering Committee* possible responses.

First, participants in the program must understand and perceive the tangible benefits to themselves in their present position. If the person is a faculty member, for instance, participation in a leadership program must correlate well with instructional duties. For example, if a faculty member decides to follow the path to strategic leadership, how does this correlate to teaching, learning, assessments, and student outcomes? Simply stated, research and application would suggest to the professor or instructor that faculty members make excellent strategic leaders and that their individual and collective practices result in actions which promote, sustain, and advance institutional significance (see Figure 1) (Flynn, 2007; Wallin, 2006), for institutional significance includes elements of teaching, learning, assessments, and student outcomes.

Second, participants must perceive that their efforts to become strategic leaders in the college are going to be acknowledged and, furthermore, that they will be given every opportunity to practice their new skill set. Assume that a graduate of *Leadership Trenholm* completes the program, is now highly motivated, and seeks a place to practice this newly acquired set of leadership skills. Also, further assume that this individual is motivated to promote and sustain institutional significance by serving on the *Recruitment and Retention Committee*. The first time the individual attends a *Recruitment and Retention Committee* meeting, the gathering is conducted with lackluster effort and this particular person's comments are perceived as unappreciated. A chink in the strategic leadership armor has now formed. From this point on, the individual—now highly motivated to do many good things for the college—may recall the meeting as a disconnect between words and actions.

The third and final example that a *Leadership Program Steering Committee* may consider in promoting the development of strategic leadership in the local college is applications research. Each person who successfully completes *Leadership Trenholm* may not have a life-long goal to

become the President of the College. In this case, one innovative practice that has huge potential to identify, assess, promote, sustain, *and* advance institutional significance is to allow successful graduates of the leadership program to collaborate in applications research. Applications research is both simple and complex, but the benefits to the community college have enormous potential. Imagine that two staff members go through the leadership program and these two individuals begin to see data streams which are critical in nature, but have either not been noticed before or have not been collected and processed. As strategic leaders promoting institutional significance, this data collection has potential that is heretofore untapped. In other words, because of the continuous culture of inquiry and open support, these types of practices can become significant contributors to institutional significance.

Consequently, to promote, sustain, and advance institutional significance, the community college is informed that strategic leadership is the responsibility of *each* stakeholder in the process. Faculty, staff, administration, students, and community leaders are all part of the equation. Initially, *Leadership Trenholm* begins with college employees and expands the program from that perspective. Before addressing the conclusions and implications for community college practice, this article will discuss the Original Case Study Design (OCSD) as a prima facie methodology for developing strategic leadership.

The Original Case Study Design (OCSD): Methodology to Develop Strategic Leadership

In contrast to the de facto case study (Yin, 2003), the Original Case Study Design (OCSD) involves the definitive application of collaborative methods. For example, effective leadership does not exist in a vacuum where only the leader makes decisions; rather, strategic leadership involves others in decisions and outcomes. Therefore, the OCSD is a practice in

which working in leadership teams is required. The OCSD promotes this practice as the most effective method to train leaders to function in dynamic environments. Dynamic environments require leaders to be self-assured team leaders and team players, yet highly efficient and effective managers of methods, materials, and manpower considerations.

Actual leadership development requires areas of concentration that guide and nurture the development of strategic leaders. The areas of concentration identified in this article include the following domains: (a) intellectual capital, (b) the global commodity, and (c) social networking. Each of these items will be briefly discussed as they impact the leadership development process.

Intellectual capital is the domain of leadership in which the future leader begins to understand the value and power of the work ethic. (Note: intellectual capital in this context is not restricted to intelligence capital.) Although the construct of the work ethic has many different tags that have been applied in the workforce (e.g., life skills, soft skills, employability skills, etc.), the lack of work ethics has been deemed as a national crisis in many recent studies (BATEC (Boston Area Advanced Technological Education Connections), 2007; Conference Board, 2007; Flynn, 2007; Hardy & Katsinas, 2006; Ringo & MacDonald, 2008; The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), 2005). According to BATEC (2007), “The case for soft skills might appear to be open-and-shut, given industry’s strong endorsement. Paradoxically, despite the importance of employability skills, neither educators nor students appear to appreciate them as employers do.” (p. 33).

As a result of this type of feedback from the workforce, *Leadership Trenholm* includes the development of intellectual capital as a major component of strategic leadership development. According to the Conference Board (2006), soft skills include written communications, professionalism as a work ethic, critical thinking and problem solving, oral

communications, ethics as a social responsibility, teamwork and collaboration, diversity, and information technology application. A similar set of characteristics has been used by WorkEthics.org (2008) to define characteristics of intellectual capital for students. The characteristics noted in Table 2 have been adapted in this paper to reflect the intellectual capital of strategic leaders; most of the attributes have remained unchanged from the original attributes suggested for student leaders.

Intellectual capital is defined as the core work ethic value system of the leader. Strategic leadership is an action-based process in which the individual bases decisions on core values intended to guard the institution against failure, lackluster performance, insensitive attitudes, poor student achievement, ineffective community support, and all types of improper matters negatively impacting institutional significance. In other words, intellectual capital is the guiding principle of the strategic leader in identifying, assessing, promoting, sustaining, *and* advancing institutional significance. A strategic leader seeks above all else to ensure that the community college is a prime responsive asset to its entire service area, leaving no stone unturned to support students, the community, and the workforce. Table 2 indicates the work ethics (intellectual capital characteristics) of the strategic leader.

Table 2

Intellectual Capital Characteristics of the Strategic Leader

Characteristics	Description
Attendance	Is available and accessible to college personnel and individuals in the community by maintaining a presence throughout the influence of the community college
Character	Displays loyalty, honesty, trustworthiness, dependability, reliability, initiative, self-discipline, and self-responsibility
Teamwork	Respects the rights of others, respects confidentiality, is a team worker, is cooperative, is assertive, displays a customer service attitude, seeks opportunities for continuous learning, demonstrates mannerly behavior

Table 2, *continued*.

Characteristics	Description
Appearance	Displays appropriate dress, grooming, hygiene, and etiquette
Attitude	Demonstrates a positive attitude; appears self-confident; has realistic expectations of self, the college, and the community
Productivity	Is a leader and motivator of productive energies applied to positive outcomes throughout the college and the community; utilizes resources to maximize outcomes to meet the needs of the workforce and service area(s)
Organizational Skills	Manifests skill in prioritizing and management of time and stress; demonstrates flexibility in handling change; is an effective collaborator in shared governance
Communication	Displays appropriate nonverbal (eye contact, body language) and oral (listening, telephone etiquette, grammar) skills; is a strong advocate of social networking
Cooperation	Displays leadership skills; appropriately handles criticism, conflicts, and complaints; demonstrates problem-solving capability; maintains appropriate relationships with peers and subordinates; effectively uses the chain of command, but is not inflexible or demanding beyond reason
Respect	Deals appropriately with cultural/racial diversity; does not engage in harassment of any kind; supports all differences in individuals

Adapted from WorkEthics.org. (Source: <http://www.workethics.org/contact.htm>)

Although intellectual capital is a major portion of developing strategic leaders within *Leadership Trenholm*, strategic leadership also is the driving force for the development of technical skills in the institution. As noted by the Conference Board (2006), in today's highly complex global marketplace, technical skills are no longer within the sole purview of the U.S.; in fact, technical skills have been dubbed as a "globally sourced commodity" (BATEC, 2007, p. 19). Friedman (2007) noted that jobs are going to those who demonstrate the motivation to do a job well. The problem addressed is not that the educational system in the United States is a failure, but that the educational system is suffering from what Friedman termed "the ambition gap" (p. 354). The ambition gap is related to the intensity students demonstrate in learning, or what Friedman identified as a "passion for learning" (p. 355). What does this mean for the strategic leader in the community college?

Community college technical skills include some form of Information Technology (IT). IT is based on computer systems, whether those systems are diagnostic tools in the Automotive Industry or Java-programming web site design throughout the global Internet. According to BATEC (2007), “If US students can offer employers something in addition to rote technical skills, they often represent a better value proposition than their foreign competitors; [employers] discount basic IT skills and candidates are differentiated by the creativity, passion, and effectiveness with which they apply whatever skills they have. It is these traits employers look for” (p. 19). The concept of the “globally sourced commodity” falls squarely on the shoulders of the strategic leader who promotes, sustains, and advances institutional significance. How?

First, *Leadership Trenholm* educates future leaders with the knowledge that global competition is no longer removed from the local community college. And, second, the development of strategic leadership requires that leaders in the community college use their intellectual capital to motivate students, faculty, and the community to work together to not only build intellectual capital in students and faculty, but also create innovative methods to go beyond the norm of technical skills as a “globally sourced commodity.” Stated differently, strategic leaders are guided to think beyond global competition for students entering the workforce, to *competitive advantage* for those students entering the global workforce. This advantage is derived from advanced leadership thinking. *Leadership Trenholm* promotes strategic leadership as a methodology to address global competition at the local level, which includes technical skills and intellectual capital. How can strategic leaders use intellectual capital to infuse the workforce with employees with advanced skills? One simple response is social networking.

Once the leader has forged the bond between global commodity skills and intellectual capital, the process must also include elements of effective social networking. Social networking

is the process whereby systems or structures are used to accomplish collaboration throughout the organization and for the purpose of promoting, sustaining, and advancing institutional significance. Social networking bridges all elements within the sphere of influence of the local community college. *Leadership Trenholm* fosters the development of social networking skills to empower future leaders as excellent communicator-collaborators. As excellent communicator-collaborators, strategic leaders guide the college, with its extensive capabilities, toward maximization of institutional significance. For example, *Leadership Trenholm* empowers potential leaders with the insight to view the college as a conduit of open communication flow. In other words, social networking is viewed as fluid channels of information flow, both formal and informal, to promote, sustain, and advance institutional significance. Channels of information flow include, but are not limited to, structured email usage, text messaging, an interactive and intuitive web presence, data access, informal committees, formal committees, community service, job shadowing, Web 2.0 applications, and *all other forms of interactive communication*. Figure 3 indicates the relationship of the elements of the Original Case Study Design methodology as the framework in which strategic leadership development occurs. Each element is co-dependent upon every other element and if one element is omitted in the framework, practices that identify, assess, promote, sustain, *and* advance institutional significance are more likely to be ineffective in advancing institutional change.



Figure 3. Framework for strategic leadership development.

The development of strategic leadership addresses methods, materials, and manpower issues to achieve institutional significance. *Leadership Trenholm* approaches the development of its future leaders with its own unique brand of intellectual capital and social networking. The goal of *Leadership Trenholm* is to prepare for the future by developing dynamic leaders today. These dynamic leaders create a culture of inquiry in which practices are challenged, followed by progressive solutions to promote, sustain, and advance institutional significance.

Implications and Recommendations for Community College Strategic Leadership Practice

As funding for community colleges begins to decline, shared resources necessary for programs and services will result in competing agendas. According to Levine, Templin, McPhail, Roueche, Shannon, and Omundson (2004), there are major challenges facing community colleges in the future. These challenges are noted as follows: (a) choosing among competing agendas, (b) meeting the needs of a changing society, (c) staying focused on suitable missions, (d) having more students and less money, (e) hiring employees—and motivating them, and (f) experiencing fragmentation, isolation, and divisiveness. Assuming these six topics are just the tip of the iceberg of issues facing community colleges, there is no dispute that strategic leadership is a key component in responding to these issues. Furthermore, for the community college to reach institutional significance in light of these issues, strategic leadership is now more in demand than at any time in the history of the community college system of education.

Leadership Trenholm will develop strategic leadership throughout its institution and sphere of influence. While this process is presently on-going, what are the implications, recommendations, and transfer abilities of *Leadership Trenholm*? To respond to this question, the following discussion is submitted.

Implications

1. *Where there is no vision, the people perish.* The implication in this axiom is that without a vision for the future, community colleges will relegate themselves as reactionary institutions. The development of institution-wide strategic leadership in community colleges is a vision whose time has come. Where there is no strategic leadership development, the community college will perish, e.g., subjugate its existence to status quo.

2. *Institutional significance is no longer optional.* Each community college must provide economic drivers and essential community resources to its service area, thereby significantly impacting the workforce of the United States. These elements of institutional significance are no longer options when the global economy is included. Community colleges are no longer isolated islands of education; these institutions are significant forces in the overall process of preparing individuals to enter the workforce ready for work and ready to use their intellectual capital as a lever to promote, sustain, and advance the national economy.

3. *Global competition is as much a concern of the community college as any workforce entity in the international economy.* Community colleges must cease to think *only* in terms of their local service areas. Students must be prepared to enter a workforce which competes internationally. Therefore, the implication is that skills development, intellectual capital, and social networking are key co-dependent elements in the training and education of each student.

4. *Current administrations are responsible.* Current community college administration is responsible for initiating the development of strategic leadership in the local colleges. Local leaders, from Presidents to Deans, are the authority figures who have the institutional resources required to promote strategic leadership programs. Without the initiation of these programs, in

five to ten or fifteen years the permeation of strategic leadership is more likely to not have become a de facto standard in the community colleges across the United States.

Recommendations

1. *Begin inclusion immediately.* To prepare the leaders of tomorrow today, an institution-wide program needs to include all employees. This process, therefore, is open to all qualified individuals. *Leadership Trenholm* believes that all employees should be afforded the opportunity to participate in developing their respective strategic leadership skills.

Consequently, the leadership program includes all individuals, and an application process is in place to allow each person the opportunity to participate. Inclusion is summarized best by Komives, Lucas and McMahon (2007, p. x):

A popular sentiment wisely reminds us that all of us are smarter than one of us. The wisdom, common purpose, inclusivity, sense of community, and personal empowerment embedded in that statement are profound. Leadership is not something possessed by only a select few people in high positions. We are all involved in the leadership process, and we are all capable of being effective leaders. Through collaboration with others, you can make a difference from any place within a group or organization, whether as the titled leader or as an active member.

2. *Include the college and the community.* As the leadership program takes shape, including not only all college employees, but also the community, is feasible. The community may include local business persons, K-12 teachers, and any other person who may benefit from the leadership training. The more strategic leadership is committed to the development of the workforce and communities, the better the outcomes for all stakeholders.

3. *Create a culture of inquiry.* The community college system must embrace a culture of inquiry whereby the organization enables its employees to ask questions freely, carefully considers the answers, and embraces change with a willingness to learn new and unexpected ideas. This type of culture will yield innovative and productive employees. It will allow the community college to provide the best possible services to its constituents.

4. *Apply the findings.* One of the most common reasons that research fails to cause change is the lack of application. According to Cohen (2005), “research on community colleges has been conducted for many decades, and for just as many years it has been ignored by community college practitioners...even when the practitioner and the researcher are the same person” (p. 51). *Leadership Trenholm* educates and trains strategic leaders in the techniques to collect and process data to apply the findings to promote, sustain, and advance institutional significance. It is imperative that research applicable to *Leadership Trenholm* is made available to participants in the program; moreover, it is critical for institutional significance that research findings are correlated to practices, whether the research is qualitative, quantitative, case studies, or a mixed-methods approach. This article combined a literature review and interviews to correlate the expected outcomes of *Leadership Trenholm* with background information as a benchmark to establish the leadership program. The goal of the benchmark was to correlate applicability of the program to trends and research throughout the two-year college system of educational.

5. *Transfer ability.* *Leadership Trenholm* is open to collaborative efforts to improve community colleges across the nation. Sharing the success of the program is a primary goal of the program and *Leadership Trenholm* seeks feedback and data from other community colleges.

6. *Listen to Participants.* “I think that the practices really helped us to get a feel for what we had to do. The course has helped me in my job in a lot of ways; it has afforded me the opportunity to get funding for a work project that I have been trying to get for the past year. I think the college should incorporate this type of program in every class” (Personal Student Comment related to the OCSD Methodology; “RB”, *IT Systems Technician, State Department of Veteran Affairs*). Although this was a student comment, the applicability of the statement is expressly the type of outcome *Leadership Trenholm* seeks to achieve. The Original Case Study Design (OCSD) methodology is used in the development of employee leaders *and* student leaders.

7. *Develop a Process With Measurable Outcomes.* To understand the success of any endeavor, there must be some form of measurable outcome. *Leadership Trenholm* uses various forms of assessment to evaluate the success of the program, including surveys, interviews, committee assessment data, and follow-up application after participant graduation. One of the most important data items is the application of practice by the graduate. Has the individual graduate used leadership skills to identify, assess, promote, sustain, *and* advance institutional significance? For example, has the person used leadership at any level to improve practices related to student support, teaching methods, teamwork development, acquisition of funding sources, community service improvement, web services, etc. In other words, the *application* of leadership to each college function is the ultimate goal of *Leadership Trenholm*. Stated differently, “improve for tomorrow what is practiced today” (see Appendix B).

Summary

Leadership Trenholm is a program to create layers of strategic leadership throughout the institution. The purpose in this program is to develop strategic leaders who will promote, sustain, and advance institutional significance. The advantage of in-house leadership development is the understanding that successful candidates will have in regard to the culture of the college and how this culture might be developed as a culture of inquiry for success and improvement across all operations and outcomes of the college.

Leadership Trenholm develops strategic leadership so that methods, materials, and manpower are utilized to maximize institutional significance. Moreover, the strategic leaders in the program also learn the methodologies associated with the Original Case Study Design (OCSD). The OCSD is based on building intellectual capital, the maximization of skills acumen, and the application of social networking. These three facets of the OCSD are the foundation for strategic leadership to flourish in the community college.

Assuming that the forecast reduction in leadership is a viable concern, it behooves community colleges to begin an immediate process to develop local leaders. By being proactive today in developing strategic leaders, tomorrow's leadership crisis may no longer have the potential negative impact on institutional significance that it may have had without insightful action.

To reiterate, as noted by Fitzgerald (2008), "Unless today's CIOs [educational administrators] take the time now to invest in tomorrow's leaders, what looms ahead is a potential leadership void that threatens the value proposition of IT [education], the legacy of the profession and the very health of business and the overall economy" (p. 38). *Leadership Trenholm* is taking action *now* to address this crucial leadership issue.

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APPENDIX A: Strategic Leadership and Institutional Significance Materials *

* Subject to Change, Not in Alphabetical Order *

Type of Reference	Title Author	Leadership Trenholm Purpose
Text	Collins, J. (2001). <i>Good to great: Why some companies make the leap...and others don't</i> . New York, NY: HarpersColling Publishers, Inc.	Global Impact
Text	Senge, P. (2006). <i>The fifth discipline: The art & practice of the learning organization</i> . New York, NY: Doubleday.	Global Impact
Guide	<i>Leadership Trenholm Resource and User Guide</i> . ©2008, TSTC Leadership Program Steering Committee.	Local Application
Journal	<i>Community College Journal of Research and Practice</i>	Local/Global Research
Journal	<i>New Directions for Community Colleges</i>	Local/Global Application
Article	VanWagoner, R., Bowman, L., & Spraggs, L. (2005). Editor's Choice: The Significant Community College. <i>Community College Review</i> , 33(1), 38-50.	Issue Application
Article	Shults, C. (2001). <i>The Critical Impact of Impending Retirements on Community College Leadership</i> . American Association of Community Colleges, Leadership Series No. 1	Issue Application
Case Study	Scott, K. (2008). <i>Original Case Study Design (OSCD)</i> , Author.	Project Guide
Article	Buss, D. (2001). <i>When Managing Isn't Enough: Nine Ways to Develop the Leaders You Need</i> . Workforce.com Workforce; December, 2001.	Leadership Application Guide
Text	Kuh, G., KInzie, J., Schuh, J., & Whitt, E. (2005). <i>Student success in college: Creating conditions that matter</i> . San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.	Exceptional Leadership Practices
Text	Akpan, O., (2007). <i>Strategic Alignment: The business imperative for leading organizations</i> . Mustang, OK: Tate Publishing & Enterprises.	Strategic Strategy for Organizational Leadership
Research	Ringo, T., & MacDonald, R. (2008). <i>Unlocking the dna of the adaptive workforce: The global human capital study 2008</i> . Somers, NY: IBM.	Major Research, Includes Leadership Concerns
REQUIRED PROGRAM TEXT	Komives, S., Lucas, N., & McMahon, T. (2007). <i>Exploring leadership: For college students who want to make a difference</i> . San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.	Participants are Students in Leadership Trenholm
Text	Roberts, C. (2007). <i>Deeper learning in leadership: Helping college students find the potential within</i> . San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.	Participants are Students in Leadership Trenholm
Article	Flynn, W. (2007). <i>The coming tsunami: Leadership challenges for community colleges</i> . White Paper presented at the National Council for Continuing Education and Training (NCCET) Annual Conference, October 7 – 10, 2007, Louisville, KY. Retrieved May 21, 2008, from http://augusoft.net/docs/NCCET_Augusoft_Monographfinal(2).pdf .	Keystone Elements of Leadership in the CC
Article	Romero, M., Purdy, L., Rodriguez, L., & Richards, S. (2005). Research Needs and Practices of Community-College Practitioners; <i>Community College Journal of Research and Practice</i> , 29(4), 289-302.	Link Between Leadership and Research
Article	Hughes, R., & Beatty, K. (2005). <i>Five Steps to Leading Strategically</i> . Retrieved May 21, 2008, from http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa5366/is_200512/ai_n21385482 .	Specific Elements for Investigation
Article	Turner, R., & Hamilton, S. (2007). <i>Faculty work in a changing world</i> . Association of American Colleges and Universities, Fall 2007 peerReview; 14 – 16.	Dynamic Environments in which Leaders Function
Article	Lanan, F., Hardy, D., & Katsinas, S. (2006). Documenting and assessing the role of community colleges in developing human capital. <i>Community College Journal of Research and Practice</i> , 30 (10), 855-869.	Leadership is Human Capital in the CC

APPENDIX B: Leadership Trenholm Program Algorithm.

