



**AACC Leadership Summit of Affiliated Council Leadership Development Programs
Web Summary
November 18, 2003**

A. WELCOME and explanation of Leading Forward

George Boggs, President and CEO of the American Association of Community Colleges, welcomed the 40 people, representing 19 AACC Affiliated Councils, to the first Leading Forward Summit on November 18, 2003, at the Sofitel in Washington, D.C.

“I know that many of our Affiliated Councils have had leadership initiatives, but this is the first time that we’ve gotten together to talk about how we’re going to meet the challenges ahead.” Lynn Barnett, AACC vice president of academic, student and community development and co-director of **Leading Forward**, then explained **Leading Forward’s** goals.

Leading Forward is exploring ways to coordinate information about various community college leadership development programs for an integrated action plan, or a national framework. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation awarded AACC a two-year planning grant to support this initiative, which is beginning with four summit meetings to gather ideas from those individuals already working on community college leadership programs.

The goal of the planning grant is to come up with an instrument that makes leadership development information more useful to attendees and program designers. It is hoped that this effort will encourage collaborations and other steps that build on the many excellent leadership programs already in existence. Most importantly, **Leading Forward** will strive to bring AACC and various stakeholders together to develop strategies for addressing community colleges’ unmet leadership needs.

Steve Brigham, a facilitator for AmericaSpeaks, then asked those in attendance to identify themselves for the group. They were also asked to identify the council with which they are affiliated and their institution.

The day’s work then began with Brigham’s request that participants talk with the people seated at their tables about the issues presented on four worksheets. He noted that the first worksheet asks that the conversations focus on the knowledge, skills and values of community college leaders. He asked the participants to list the knowledge, skills and values that they think community college leaders need to be effective. The small groups were then asked to use these lists to report to the plenary session the qualities their groups identified as the most important knowledge, skills and values a community college leader needs.

B. WORKSHEET #1: Knowledge, Skills & Values for Effective Community College Leaders

Key Leadership Knowledge Identified by the Groups and Shared during the Plenary Session

Knowledge of the institution and community, with a strong understanding of the local, regional and national factors that affect it

Knowledge of the community college mission
Knowledge of one's self, including one's limitations
Knowledge of one's job, particularly administrative processes, budgeting, planning, and legal issues
Knowledge of individual behavioral styles and organizational behavior
Knowledge of leadership theory and practice
Knowledge of the local, regional and national political process
Knowledge of research, so that one is able to investigate an issue thoroughly and then apply one's findings
Broad-based knowledge, particularly about the external and internal issues affecting one's community college
Knowledge of technology
Knowledge of academia
Knowledge of leadership theories and the process for accomplishing change
Knowledge of students' learning processes

Other types of knowledge mentioned during the small group discussions include:
Knowledge of culture and resources, access issues and belief in opportunity, quality, expansive thinking, creativity, innovation, high standards, risk taking and courage.

Key Skills Identified by the Groups and Shared during the Plenary Session

Team-building skills that help one build relationships and motivate people
Interpersonal skills, such as the ability to communicate well, which was defined as the ability to listen carefully and present information in an engaging and coherent fashion
A sense of humor
Personal management, including the ability to manage one's time well and to balance competing demands in one's personal and professional life
Decisiveness, which was defined as the ability to size up problems, to make thoughtful decisions and then to move on
The ability to compartmentalize
Understanding of the human and financial resources of the community college
A willingness to be accountable
A willingness to be a public figure in one's community
Creativity
Courage
Tenacity
Critical thinking that prompts one to assess everything
Good Intuition
The ability to get information and synthesize it in order to accomplish what one envisions.
The ability to delegate
The ability to plan and budget
The ability to size up problems and solve them
Consistency, with a willingness to be flexible when necessary
Persuasiveness that moves people beyond the point of agreement to action and follow through to completion
Fundraising

360-degree vision, which was defined as the ability to think outside the constraints of one's job to get a "big picture view" of a situation

An entrepreneurial spirit

Other skills mentioned during the small group discussions include the ability to: hire and keep good personnel, work within a culture, solve problems, manage conflict, collaborate, mentor, coach, solve problems, manage conflict, build confidence, empower, calculate risks and take appropriate chances.

Key Leadership Values Identified by the Groups and shared during the Plenary Session

Belief in the community college mission including access

People-oriented and opens to all parts of the community and that values employees

Inclusive in a way that appreciates and acts on diversity, including diverse opinions

Integrity, defined as honesty, openness, courteousness, and respectful behavior toward people who express opposing or different opinions

Character, defined as "not a people pleaser" but someone willing to make a decision and do the right thing

Creativity and Innovation

Loyalty

Responsiveness

Appreciation of diversity & a willingness to act in ways that foster diversity

Leadership lifestyle, defined as an acceptance of the way leadership makes one's personal life more public and makes one a constant representative of their institution

Fairness

Trustful and trustworthy

Someone who appreciates the value of one's co-workers, and who co-workers hold in high-esteem

Balance, defined as someone whose good work ethic does not make them so serious that they lack a sense of humor or interests outside their job

Values quality

Passion, Compassion and Empathy

A willingness to collaborate

Values learning for all

All of the values itemized by the groups during their discussions were included on the list during the plenary session.

C. Worksheet #2: A Working Definition of Leadership Development & Most Effective Ways of Developing Leaders

After the plenary discussion of Worksheet #1, Steve Brigham asked the small groups to work on two questions: What is leadership development? What are most effective ways of developing leaders? At the end of these discussions, a representative of each group reported to the plenary session the answers the groups had arrived at by consensus.

What is leadership development?

Leadership development:

Is ongoing

Is intentional

Is reflective

Is structured

Provides informal and formal learning experiences and activities that prepare individuals and organizations to improve theoretical knowledge and practical leadership skills as well as values

Is a process of renewal, growth, and change

Identifies potential leaders, mentors them, and monitors their activities

Develops the personal and professional skills of potential leaders at various levels of community colleges

Allows potential leaders to improve continuously and to demonstrate a commitment to the development process

Creates opportunities for leaders to emerge, identifies potential leaders and develops their abilities by providing knowledge and skills

Provides access and opportunities to professionals who are committed to shaping the future of community colleges

Includes planned efforts to deal with the potential shortage of leaders at all levels in community colleges

Is a system through which appropriate tools, including a reward system, are provided

Creates opportunities for leaders to emerge

Offers opportunities for current leaders to renew their leadership skills

Steve Brigham then pointed out that the common themes from all the answers are that **LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT identifies potential leaders, includes structured and informal preparation opportunities, and nurtures those who participate in the leadership development process.**

Brigham then led the entire group in a discussion about what is new about the issue of leadership development for community colleges. It was generally agreed that the public acknowledgement that the imminent, widespread leadership turnover at community colleges is a new phenomenon. Participants also noted that the realization that new leaders must not only do things in the way that they learned or replicate existing managing methods, but that they must accomplish goals in new ways is different. The ability to manage change was then suggested as an important characteristic for leaders.

Many of the participants nodded in agreement when someone said the reward system needs changing. This individual pointed out that some leadership positions are unattractive because there are so few rewards for doing them. Someone else said there must be some way to entice people who are being identified as leaders so they will want to take up the challenge of leadership. Money helps but it has to be more than this, he said.

A strong counterpoint was then offered by another participant. "If you are thinking in terms of money you are in the wrong business," a woman said, adding that the reward for leadership comes from seeing metamorphosis. When one sees how institutions and individuals change, she said, one becomes passionate about community college work and finding solutions. Others suggested that the rewards of leadership are intrinsic.

What are the most effective ways of developing leaders?

The strategies identified include:

Processes for identifying potential leaders including self assessments
Internships
Informal and formal mentoring
Graduate degree programs
Structured readings with debriefings
Other academic work on the theory and practices of leadership
Structured examinations of the process of leading by example
Utilization of case studies for problem solving.
Community college policies that encourage leadership development
Institutional commitments that make existing leaders responsible for developing new leaders
Provision of educational and career opportunities for aspiring leaders
Financial support for continuing education to develop leadership skills
Release time for workshops, national conferences and statewide activities
On-campus delivery of leadership development activities
Job rotation
Networking
On-the-job training
Mentoring
Job Shadowing
Distance learning
Cohort collaboratives
Opportunities for new leaders to hone their skills through practical application
Feedback from professional appraisals, institutions and academies so aspiring leaders can evaluate their experiences and consider how to apply the lessons they learned
Graduate school recognition of self-guided learning, community service and leadership, and conference participation when determining what credit to grant graduate degree seekers.

During the large group discussion it was suggested that “noticing what individuals are doing in communities” would be a good way for graduate schools to recognize the accomplishments of community college educators who are not involved in research. Another group noted that many of the leadership development strategies listed by the groups can be done simultaneously, or as overlapping, complimentary activities. This group was unanimous that on-line learning should be a supplemental, not primary, source of leadership development. Another person suggested that many of the strategies identified could be accomplished at the workplace. One group representative reported that his group had discussed the uses of self-assessments and feedback on performance appraisals. This group also talked about the need for safe spaces for debriefing on problems and learning dialogues. It suggested that assessment centers could be useful.

Steve Brigham pointed out to the large group that the top priority strategies most frequently mentioned by the small groups for effectively developing leaders are

identifying potential leaders, assessment, practice or on-the-job learning, formal strategies and a reward system within institutional policies.

He pointed out that **job rotation as a leadership-grooming tactic and the suggestion that new community college leaders come from business and other non-campus entities** generated a number of affirmative comments from the group.

D. Worksheet # 3: Leadership Inventory of Affiliated Councils

The summit participants were asked by Steve Brigham to reexamine the leadership inventory compiled from the information submitted in advance of the Leadership Summit by the various AACC Affiliated Councils. This inventory can be viewed at: www.ccleadership.org. Working again in their small groups they were asked to consider several questions:

What do you see on the list? What is missing? What collaborations are not happening? What are promising leadership development activities?

After discussing the inventory in small groups for about 30 minutes, representatives of the tables shared the following observations:

- The focus of most leadership activities among the Affiliated Councils is traditional.
- The activities miss people from outside community colleges who might have leadership skills that could be helpful to community colleges.
- Some councils' programs are small, either because of lack of funds or because they are targeted to a particular audience.
- Most activities are discipline specific.
- Some of the programs help one get the job, others help one do the job.
- Most of the programs are aimed at preparing people for senior administrative positions or the community college presidency.
- Nothing is aimed at less than the executive level or helping non-executives do their jobs better. The focus seems to be on upward mobility, not excelling in current posts.
- Many of the programs are short-term, lasting only a few days or a week.
- None of the councils offered anything on finance or budgeting.
- The councils did offer specific race, ethnic and gender programming that offered a peer approach to leadership development
- All the programs listed are done in "real time," which does not allow for flexible scheduling.
- The councils are working alone, almost oblivious to what others are doing.
- Most do not even know what topics or programs they could collaborate on.
- There is a limited system of outcomes for all of them.

Regarding the potential for the Affiliated Councils' collaboration on leadership development, participants responded as follows:

- The challenge is to share resources and preserve the identity of councils.
- Perhaps some programs, particularly those that are expensive, could be offered immediately before the American Association of Community Colleges' annual convention.

- The councils do not have money to bring big-name presenters to their workshops, but could pool their funds to pay the higher fees of national speakers
- Leadership development presenters should be prepared to be more effective with diverse audiences.
- There is a need to create win-win situations so people interested in leadership don't have to leave their field, or aspire to community college presidency, in order to advance in their field or to serve their institutions well.
- It was suggested that a coalition of the Affiliated Councils could help develop 1) a speakers' bureau that would offer train-the-trainer courses for leadership development that would spread these skills within and among institutions, and 2) that these programs use case studies from across the councils.
- A generic on-line leadership development program could be developed that would blend with discipline-specific, small group meetings at council events.
- University graduate school programs should create advisory committees comprised of community college presidents and other community college personnel to advise them about revising their curricula so that the courses that aspiring community college leaders take match the needs of these institutions.
- Some of the councils (such as the Council for Resource Development, the National Council on Workforce Education, the National Council for Continuing Education and Training, the National Coalition of Advanced Technology Centers) with more experience obtaining federal funds could provide programs on this topic for other councils.
- The National Council for Marketing and Public Relations could offer programs that would help community college leaders improve the image of their institutions.
- A registry of leadership candidates would be helpful.
- There is also a need for a widely accepted assessment instrument
- A database of leadership development opportunities would be useful.
- A matrix that would identify what councils offer and what individuals and institutions need should be developed.

During the discussion that occurred as the suggestions for collaboration were made, one participant noted, "One of the things we talked about at our table is if we could move from topics to competencies we could maybe develop modules that could be used by several different councils." When the suggestion was made that the NCMPR offer programs, another person suggested that if leaders more effectively told the "community college story," the image of community colleges would improve and perhaps colleges' fundraising would grow. In regard to an assessment instrument, a participant suggested that by working together community colleges could obtain a volume discount from a company that offers one of the well-accepted assessment instruments. One of the benefits mentioned when it was suggested that councils pool their financial resources for well-known speakers at national meetings is that it would expose people from discipline-specific councils to the broader world of community colleges. This comment was followed by the suggestion that a coalition of Affiliated Councils work on this possibility and help plan a convention program. The idea of creating a matrix that would identify what the Affiliated Councils offer and what individuals and institutions piqued

participants' interest. If the matrix is done, it would show how the councils could use their shared interests to fill the gaps between current programming and unmet needs.

In closing this portion of the meeting, Steve Brigham noted that many of the summit participants were already talking about a national plan for leadership development.

E. Worksheet #4 National Framework

Steve Brigham asked the summit participants “to give us your best thinking about how to accomplish a national framework.” He explained that at its inception, those working on **Leading Forward** developed three guiding principles for the as-yet-undefined national framework. They would like the national framework to be comprehensive, to offer real choices and to be useful.

He then asked the participants to work in their small groups to consider: How AACC can ensure the comprehensiveness of a national framework? What can be done to help people make real choices and distinguish between leadership development programs and curricula? How can a national framework be structured to be useful to individuals, institutions and employers?

Comprehensiveness: How do we ensure comprehensiveness?

It was suggested comprehensiveness could be accomplished by:

- Inventorying competencies in a way that identifies general competencies all leaders need and breaks down specific competencies needed for particular positions or by particular councils;
- Acting on Affiliated Councils' input to define competencies for various levels like president, dean, and faculty;
- Establishing an advisory committee that would continually monitor leadership programs;
- Listing opportunities in institutions for women and minorities;
- Addressing different management levels;
- Using a variety of delivery mechanisms;
- Allowing for multiple entry points;
- Conducting a gap analysis of what is needed in leadership development and what programs already exist;
- Publicizing best practices;
- Providing an ongoing environmental scan of programs available to all community colleges, not just those offered to the largest colleges with the biggest professional development budgets;
- Capturing all non-traditional paths to establish competency;
- Identifying leadership choices beyond career ladders.
- Considering multiple levels for developing leadership;
- Utilizing AACC to set strategic directions, coordinate resources and be a repository for leadership development information.

During the discussion of comprehensiveness, one group asked for attention to the issue of “glass ceiling” limits on the careers of people who do not have earned doctorates. This group also questioned how it could address questions about the inclusiveness of a national framework when such a framework has not been defined.

Another group asked what is meant by a national framework. In addition to the issues mentioned in the preceding paragraph this group had the following questions: Is there a component for theory? Is there a component for experiential learning? Is there a mechanism to identify and to measure competencies? Is there a mechanism to provide placement opportunities? Is it ongoing? Is it intense? What is the duration of this effort?

Questions were raised by others about leadership development efforts that focus exclusively on candidates from community colleges. Several people suggested that community colleges connect with industry and foundations in their leadership development efforts. One person noted that in the past there were leaders and followers, but that new management models and technologies have made everyone a leader at some point. For this reason, this person asked that a national framework consider multiple levels for developing leaders.

The group that wanted a gap analysis about what is needed in leadership development and what is already in existence suggested using assessments, a literature review and an examination of existing programs to complete this task.

Real Choice: Within it, how do we help people make real choices and distinctions of leadership development programs/curricula?

Real choices can be provided by:

- Conducting personal inventories, perhaps from on-line sources, for individuals to determine needs;
- Using on-line resources to guide individuals to what they need for specific competencies;
- Utilizing career ladders to maximize participants' choices about what to do;
- Blending theoretical and practical applications;
- Tapping into the Affiliated Councils' networks to disseminate information about the national framework for leadership development;
- Obtaining foundation support for sabbaticals and other professional development expenses to help ensure accessibility by keeping direct costs to individuals or institutions low.

One of the small discussion groups questioned to whom, for what and how the choices could be adaptable. It suggested self-assessments as a starting point. It also suggested that choices on a framework would follow from the definition of competencies. It would like an adaptable framework that includes traditional and non-tradition paths.

Another group inquired whether individuals who use the suggested on-line resource would then be guided to programs that address specific competencies. This group stressed that it is important to provide multiple ways of delivering leadership development curricula. Also, it wanted costs to be considered.

People at another table had questions about content and how the content would be delivered. This group pointed out that there are issues of modularity, length, and modality. It also wondered whether the framework would be competency-based or theoretical.

Usefulness: How do we make sure this is useful to individuals? Institutions?

Employers? It was suggested that the framework:

- Provide substantive examples of leadership.
- Add value.
- Cover the entire nation.
- Develop outcomes assessment models.

- Act as a catalyst.
- Consider credentialing.
- Include state programs.
- Evaluate what was learned in programs by considering participants' behavior changes and results.
- Be easy to access and easy to use.
- Offer mentor training.
- Make best practices available and market them.
- Use successful individuals to tell success stories.
- Build feedback loops with participants and employers.
- Encourage continuous improvement.
- Evaluate learning development efforts and activities.
- Consider the fit between activities and individuals.
- Include information on cost.
- Offer tracks or modules that are prescriptive.
- Consider regional delivery models and distance learning options.
- Track the progress and success of participants.
- Publicize achievement.
- Evaluate the return on participants' investments in programs.

In addition, one group suggested if programming is delivered on-site that it has to be regional, because of travel costs. But, it also stipulated that distance learning alone would not be effective. It pointed to the Maricopa Community College District's professional development as an example of a blended program that could serve as a model. Maricopa does an on-site workshop complimented with year-long virtual interactions and a closing workshop

One table posited that a national framework will lead to some type of certification, not necessarily an academic credential, but some sort of certification that would be recognized by institutions.

The small group concerned about an evaluation component suggested that AACC's role could be in the mentor training mechanism.

FURTHER DISCUSSION

After hearing the responses to the previous questions, Steve Brigham said he and the others organizing this meeting realize that the summit asks many questions about a national framework without providing much information about what it is. He pointed out that the day's discussions will actually help fill in those details. The points raised during this discussion included:

- Tests of various competencies
- The pros and cons of AACC as the backer of a national framework
- How a national framework could help when financial resources are scarce
- University perspectives on certification
- How the absence of leaders with doctoral degrees impedes institutions' efforts to obtain funding like some federal grants.
- Obsolete skills
- Methods to address the need for life-long learning

When he opened the floor to comments, one speaker pointed out that Dale Campbell has already formulated a leadership competency test that could be used to create a national framework.

It was then suggested that if a national framework had 20 to 30 modules then university graduate school programs might be willing to accept these for partial credit toward a doctorate.

Someone else pointed out that it is very important for AACC to be the backer of a national framework because, in the future, resources will be scarce.

One participant asked those present from university graduate programs to share their perspectives on the question of certification or as he called it “the C word.” One university person replied by asking how much credit community colleges extend to people for activities completed at other colleges or in the workplace. He pointed out that community colleges require students to take a minimum number of courses from them before granting associate degrees.

While suggesting that community colleges grant credit for many experiences, another participant said community colleges are not utilizing some of their best human resources because these people lack paper qualifications. This speaker considered the PhD as a secondary consideration to whether a person possesses the other skills needed to do the job.

Someone else suggested that a national framework would put pressure on graduate schools. It would also put pressure on individuals to prove they can obtain leadership positions and perform their duties well without PhDs.

Another person said if the framework looks at leadership from competencies, it will leave out other possibilities. All educators know the limits of testing, this speaker said, “Be cautious about working solely within such a framework.”

Another person pointed out that there is a very real problem with obtaining national funding if a college or even division within a college cannot list its leader as having a doctorate. “You have to have those degrees sometimes,” this speaker said.

Someone else pointed out that as much as people would like to obtain doctorates, many universities have ended their higher education administration degree programs.

This was countered by a speaker who declared that the issue is lifelong learning because so many skills are obsolete within five years. What leaders needed before is different than what they will need in the future, she said.

Another person suggested that if AACC came up with a list of recommended competencies it would provide a lever for graduate school programs to make sure their students are well prepared to become community college leaders.

Someone else suggested that if AACC comes up with a certification process it has to certify people who go through programs other than its own.

A speaker familiar with one state’s leadership development program, noted that when it began there was concern that those who went through it would simply move up by moving on. Community college administrators had to be convinced that they were not simply training their staff members for the benefit of other institutions.

OPINIONS ON A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Following these comments, Steve Brigham asked the group, “What do you think of a national framework?”

“Achieving consensus will be difficult, but if reached it could have a powerful effect by informing universities” and others who can offer programs, one man said, adding, “While difficult, it’s terribly important if that consensus can be achieved.”

Another person said she is excited about the prospect of a national framework but thinks it is unrealistic for AACC do to it alone. Others have to contribute, she said.

Someone else said the framework would be most useful for non-credit training. This person suggested it would be useful as a bridge to credit courses or to get universities to revise their offerings.

Another person cautioned that a framework would be good if it moved forward with ideas for council activities, but that careful consideration should be given to the idea of industry certification. He pointed out that it is usually the holder of intellectual property that does the certifying. "Are leaders certifiable?" he asked facetiously. More seriously, he questioned what will happen to deans, vice presidents and others if AACC certifies them. The association could quickly find itself in the business of moving people through career ladders.

Another speaker pointed out that time is of the essence. There is a need for a helpful tool, this speaker said, adding, that may not be the same as providing a credential.

Another person acknowledged that certification would be a big leap, but he insisted that work could be done on building a national framework while the certification issue is sorted out.

CLOSING

Lynn Barnett closed the meeting, calling it a good first step for engaging the Affiliated Councils in the effort to help community colleges address the leadership development challenge. She encouraged those in attendance to use the network created by the summit and fostered by the day's group discussions.