

KICK-OFF ACTIVITY



Imagine your community college five years in the future, after you and your leadership team have brought about great internal change needed to achieve much higher levels of student success. Utilize whatever quantifiable “stretch” goals for student success your college has developed or devise your own (e.g., a 15 percentage point increase in graduation rates; a doubling of the number of students who transfer to four-year colleges; a 20 percentage point increase in the number of CTE graduates who earn more than \$30,000 annually in the year after graduating). Picture what the student experience at this college will be like after five years of your successful change leadership. Independently reflect, using the following questions to guide your thinking. Jot down your ideas and be prepared to share with your peers.

What will be fundamentally different about students’ college experience? What changes will you have made to bring about these changes? What will data reveal about student success?

What will students see? In the classrooms? In the advising offices? In the administrative offices? Across all parts of the campus?

What will students hear? From faculty? From the community? From senior administration? What will you as the leader hear from students?

Whom will you applaud for contributing to this success? What did he or she do?

Discuss your visions in table groups, focusing on the following questions:

What alterations in mindsets or assumptions needed to happen before these changes could take place?

Was there a “tipping point” in the change process? If so, what did it take to get there?

How would you characterize the student experience in your vision of the college, as opposed to the current reality?

CASES FOR CHANGE



While you watch presidents making a case for change, record key ideas on the organizer below.

	How did the president use data? To what effect?	What elements made the case for change compelling? What could you adapt in your own work?	How did the president tailor the case to the audience?
Case to business leaders			
Case to a board of trustees			



ARTIFACT REVIEW

Review the artifacts from *one* of the provided colleges. You should *not* seek out the Mission and Vision pages on the colleges' websites but instead look at the provided artifacts. Answer the following questions in table groups.

Based on the artifacts, what do you think is the vision of the college?

Complete the following statement for the college based on the artifacts: "It's clear that the top three or four things this college cares about are . . ."

Do these artifacts reflect goals and values related to equity? Labor market outcomes? Completion? Learning? All of the above? None of the above? How?

Next, look for similar artifacts on your own college's website and consider the same questions.

Based on the artifacts, what do you think is the vision of the college?

Complete the following statement for the college based on the artifacts: "It's clear that the top three or four things this college cares about are . . ."

Do these artifacts reflect goals and values related to equity? Labor market outcomes? Completion? Learning? All of the above? None of the above? How?

CHAMPIONS FOR CHANGE



Consider a new or proposed change effort at your college. Use the questions below to plan for the creation of a team of “champions” for the change.

Using the chart below, identify the most committed, diligent, and creative people on your campus (at least some of whom are great collaborators). Consider faculty and staff from across multiple divisions—for example, CTE professors, advisors, staff in finance, etc. Next, chart where these people currently spend their time—consider classes, committees, projects, etc.

Potential “Champion”	What division is this person from?	How do they currently spend their time?

What could be removed from each person’s workload? Go through and cross out any functions that are non-essential or that could be reassigned to someone else at the college. What structure could be put in place that brings these people together and puts them at the center of the reform?



"DEAR ABBY" LETTERS

With your group, discuss your assigned letter, drawing on ideas from the pre-reading and the information covered in this section and considering the following questions: Why are these faculty resistant to the change? What is the real problem here? What could the president do to better build college-wide ownership for the change? What strategies might the president use to build urgency and communicate the need for change given the situation?

Letter A

Dear Change Leadership Guru,

Please help! Our college is about to begin the process of building guided pathways, and some of my colleagues and I are questioning if we can ever do our jobs well enough so that we can just keep things the same for a while. It's so hard to be part of such a committed faculty and staff who are always being told we have to do things differently because our current best efforts aren't good enough to reach the stats and outcomes desired by administration. Our president says we are an exceptional faculty and staff—you should hear the praises we get at convocation. But then each year (or at least that's how it seems) in comes another proposed major change that clearly signals we aren't doing our jobs correctly. First it was about reducing the number of failing students in gateway courses, then it was about writing Student Learning Outcomes, now it is about guided pathways. It's disheartening to feel like you are working so hard for these students, many of whom come to us horribly underprepared for college, and still we are told to take on even more roles and try even more shiny new initiatives, all of which take away from the time we need to spend on teaching and working with our students. Will we ever get it right? Help us help our administration understand why we aren't enthusiastic about this change.

Sincerely, Never Good Enough

Letter B

Dear Change Leadership Guru,

Please help! Our college is about to undergo yet another major change initiative, and this one really has me and many of my fellow faculty and staff gravely concerned. We worry that this guided pathways redesign is going to limit students' choice and turn our community college into a job factory rather than a learning institution. We question whether it is right to push students onto a pathway and not allow them to explore their possibilities to the fullest. Isn't higher education about intellectual curiosity and self-exploration? Community colleges are open access institutions, but now we are limiting students' access to the possibility of falling in love with a major they didn't even know about when they arrived here. Our college is adamant about moving forward with this change, but I'm not sure it syncs with my true beliefs—and I am not alone in questioning this clash of values. All the administration has done to date has been to show us data that our students are failing to meet success outcomes—but does that mean that pathways is the right answer? I don't know. Help me and my colleagues help our administration understand why we aren't enthusiastic about this change.

Sincerely, Validating Values

Letter C:

Dear Change Leadership Guru,

Please help! Our college is about to undergo guided pathways redesign, yet another major change initiative, and many of us faculty are gearing up to take on more and different responsibilities that are nowhere to be found in our job descriptions. Most faculty are at this community college because we love teaching and our academic disciplines and want students to find their own spark in learning. But now with this change, we are going to add more advising responsibilities on top of our heavy course loads, make time to enter info into a new early alert system, track attendance and participation, serve on data inquiry committees, and on and on. When will we have time to stay current in our disciplines and focus on improving our teaching? They don't tell new faculty all of this during the hiring process, and no one has changed our job descriptions. My colleagues and I want to continue to earn high performance marks each year, but now it's getting confusing as to what matters most at this college. Were we hired to enter student data into tracking systems, or are we supposed to teach and work with students? Help us help our administration understand why we aren't enthusiastic about this change.

Sincerely, Which Way to an A?

Letter D:

Dear Change Leadership Guru,

Please help! Our college is about to undergo yet another major change initiative, and our president has gone MIA. Back when conversations first started about this initiative, our president was excited, and it seemed like every other week we were getting a message about how important faculty engagement in the effort was going to be. Big deal at convocation, town hall meetings, department presentations, you name it. It felt like this was going to be *the* big change and we were all part of a major revitalization that mattered. Now, we hear from administrators who've been handed the baton, and it seems that the president has moved on to other interests. Don't get me wrong—I admire our leadership team members. But there's a tone of "get it done" management that leaves me and my colleagues craving inspiration and vision. Add on top of that a big question mark of who has legitimate authority to lead this change. Will it last if it doesn't have strong support from the president? Or is this just the fad of the week? Help us help our administration understand why we aren't enthusiastic about this change.

Sincerely, Desperately Seeking Leadership

Letter E:

Dear Change Leadership Guru,

Please help! Our college is about to undergo yet another major change initiative, and my faculty colleagues and I have reached the point of initiative overload. We love our students and want the best for each and every one of them, but how much more of our time can we give for activities that go above and beyond our teaching commitments? Now, administrators are adding onto our plates even more formal responsibility for advising students (without, of course, adding on any more pay or reducing our teaching loads). I am not a trained advisor, I didn't go to graduate school for counseling, and I'm exhausted from taking on more and more responsibilities each year as we add one "student success" initiative after another without ever stopping to figure out if the last one worked. A small group of us faculty have decided to organize our colleagues. We are starting to make more noise at faculty senate meetings and are holding conversations within each of the departments to build an alliance against this student-success-at-any-cost drain on faculty and staff. It seems like all of these changes are whims rather than well-thought-through strategies, and the growing frustration may result in a vote of no confidence in the president. Before it comes to that, help us help our administration understand why we aren't enthusiastic about this change.

Sincerely, Survival of the Fittest

Why are these faculty resistant to the change? What is the real problem here?

What could the president do to better build college-wide ownership for the change?

What strategies might the president use to build urgency and communicate the need for change given the situation?

SUPPORT OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS



You will receive a card with one of the following stakeholder designations: Student Services, General Education Faculty, CTE Faculty/Workforce Development, Administrative Services (Finance and HR), President's Cabinet/Council. Imagining that you hold your assigned "role" at the college where you work, identify the core responsibilities and expectations of your department and the key practices that support your efforts in fulfilling that responsibility.

Role:
Core Responsibilities
Expectations
Key Practices

How would you define your college's values?

What do you see as the tensions between the goals of the department and the core values of the college?

Give examples of how these tensions might play out in real time—with leadership, with other departments, with performance reviews.

What kind of communication or administrative processes could you put into place that would be helpful in resolving the tensions between core values and departmental goals/expectations? What is the role of the president in this work?

“THE 10 STUPIDEST THINGS WE DO”



Valencia College president Sandy Shugart commonly asks his staff to think about “the 10 stupidest things we do”—that is, the things the college does that are clearly and unnecessarily misaligned to current goals and priorities. Often these “stupid things” are embedded in institutional routines—things we do “because we’ve always done them that way,” even if no one remembers why. Because some routines and practices become so familiar over time that they are invisible to us, leaders have to find ways to help the organization uncover and interrogate these practices. With your table group, select a student success reform goal listed (or add a new one of equivalent specificity) and brainstorm practices at each participant’s college that may contradict the goals of the reform effort. Then think about possible changes that could be made to better align these incentives. If time permits, continue working on one of the other goals listed.

Student Success Goal	Practices/Incentives Misaligned to Student Success Goals	Possible Changes to Incentives
Getting all students on a clear pathway to a credential		
Ensuring that 80% of students achieve a college-wide learning goal (e.g., college-level reading comprehension)		

Doubling graduation rates		
Increasing transfer and bachelor's degree attainment by 15%		



ALIGNING INCENTIVES

Independently reflect on a student success goal that your college is currently working toward. Select three critical areas of practice or policy that must change in order for your college to reach the goal, any existing incentives or disincentives pertaining to those areas (the “stupidest things we do”), and your ideas to better incentivize or support change (the “smartest things we *aren’t* doing”).

Student success goal: _____
(e.g., With supportive advising, all students will enter a program of study within their first semester)

Critical Areas of Practice/Policy That Need to Change to Reach the Goal	Existing Incentive/Disincentive Structures	Ways to Better Incentivize or Support Change
(e.g., All students will receive quality advising supported by labor market insight within their first semester)	(e.g., Faculty are evaluated on how many student-contact hours they log, not how many students select programs)	(e.g., Find ways to incentivize departmental faculty to reach out to students who declare an interest in their fields and provide faculty open houses)

Leading Internal Transformational Change: Handout 8

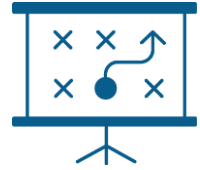
What are the most and least effective incentives that operate in your college? Why do they work or not work?

What are the most viable strategies for altering incentives?

What incentives would have to be removed for new incentives to take hold?

What possible effective incentives for change have you not yet explored? What obstacles might need to be overcome in order to implement these incentives?

Think back to the earlier sections of this module. How could the president's skills in communicating a vision and overcoming resistance help make these changes?



AGENDA REVIEW

Look at agendas from the three most recent meetings of your college leadership team. In table groups, discuss which priorities of the college are revealed by the agendas, taking notes below.

Time is a valuable resource. How is time being spent at leadership team meetings? Are equity, learning, completion, and labor market outcomes reflected in these agendas, and if so, how?

What trends do you notice as you consider the agendas of your own college as well as those from your peers? Are certain student success goals represented more frequently than others? Which ones? Are certain other topics (fundraising? enrollment?) represented frequently? Why do you think you see these trends?

Are there structured opportunities (and time) for you to review the selection of goals and the effectiveness of implementation strategies around specific student success goals that arise during the meeting? If not, what procedures might you put in place to reinforce the awareness of the connection between student success goals and implementation issues?

If you were to rewrite one of these agendas to reflect the alignment of your strategic vision, student success goals, and implementation strategies, what would it look like?

How might this discussion inform how you structure other forms of written communication at your college to reflect student success goals?

SLOW IDEAS



Independently consider all the major reforms that have been implemented at your college over the last five years and list them below. Then, review Atul Gawande’s article “Slow Ideas” from *The New Yorker*, and code each of the ideas on your list as a “fast idea” or “slow idea.” For each “slow idea,” brainstorm reasons why you believe the reform stalled or did not deliver scaled improvements.

Reform	Fast or Slow?	Why?

Discuss the following questions in small groups:

Why do you think the “slow ideas” listed failed to deliver intended improvements in the community college setting?

What could help these ideas get adopted and scaled more quickly?

What helped to make the implementation of the “fast ideas” successful?

Were any of your ideas slow to scale because of cost (or quick to scale despite large costs)?

What strategies could be used to revise or change a “slow idea” into a fast one?

PRE-MORTEM ANALYSIS



After reading Gary Klein’s article “Performing a Project Premortem” from the *Harvard Business Review*, work with your table group to complete the following pre-mortem analysis. Identify a large-scale reform effort at your college and assume that, five years from now, you have failed to achieve that goal (or, if it is a long-term strategy, have failed to achieve the elements you expected to have achieved in five years). Identify on the chart the likely major causes of that “mortality.” Consider what specifically might happen that could derail the effort. Who are the actors? What are their motivations? For each cause, delineate specific leadership strategies you will employ to anticipate and avert or address the challenges.

Large-scale reform effort (e.g., guided pathways reform, revamping on-boarding and professional development for faculty):

Cause of “Mortality”	Leadership Strategy to Employ

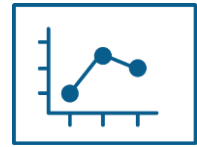


WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO LOSE?

People often resist new reforms because they fear loss—for example, faculty might be resistant to the creation of program maps because they fear losing a favorite class they’ve always taught. Take 15 minutes in your table group to consider some of the key practices in guided pathways implementation listed below, identifying what different audiences might “lose” by making the change. Then, brainstorm ideas for what could be done to mitigate those losses or ensure that stakeholders’ voices are heard.

Key Practice in Guided Pathways Implementation	Audience	What will they lose?	What can be done?
<i>Students explore careers and programs during onboarding. Advisors help new students explore careers and pathway options, and choose a pathway by the end of their first semester.</i>	Advising Staff		
	Faculty		
	Students		
<i>Faculty create program maps. Every program has a map that details the sequence of courses and activities students need to complete for completion of the degree and successful transfer or employment in their chosen field.</i>	Faculty (Gen Ed)		
	Faculty (CTE)		
	Administrators		
<i>Academic support for struggling students is integrated into college-level coursework. Instead of taking traditional “dev ed” courses, students participate in “co-requisite” courses that provide them with integrated support.</i>	Faculty (Dev Ed)		
	Faculty (Gen Ed)		
	Department Chairs		

A WEEK IN THE LIFE



Presidents have a wide range of responsibilities in a given day. We know that analyzing and examining student success data is vital for change, but how can presidents find the time to fit it in? Using the mock schedule on the next page, identify which parts of this president's week are devoted to examining student success data. Use the provided discussion questions.

How much time is explicitly allotted to analyzing student success data?

Who is present when those data are being analyzed? What type of data are they analyzing? Who might be missing from those conversations?

Where do you see other opportunities for structured time to be established for data conversations? What data might be used?

What structures could be put in place to increase the amount of time devoted by the president to collaboratively looking at data? With whom?

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00a	Phone call with faculty member re: arts initiative	Budget meeting with leadership team re: next year's budget	TV taping for state rep's program re: new initiatives	Meet with pres. of nearby private university re: transfers	Serve as a panelist for a panel on the future of the college presidency
10:00a		Meeting with nonprofit re: health care workforce development, labor market outcomes			
11:00a	Meet with final candidate for dean		Meet with VPs re: budget reduction	Meet with VP, Institutional Research and Planning, re: completion rates	
12:00p	Meet with VP, Institutional Research and Planning, re: preparing student success data for board meeting			Campus visit	Meet with director of local museum for briefing
1:00p	Phone meeting with nonprofit partner re: upcoming event	Campus visit	Lunch meeting with provost re: dual enrollment		
2:00p			Ribbon cutting ceremony on co-leased space with state university		
3:00p	Call with media outlet re: staff member's award	Board meeting			Call with pres. of nearby CC re: upcoming event
4:00p	Call with potential commencement speaker				
5:00p			Reception with local nonprofit re: community partnerships		Call with national nonprofit re: leadership curriculum

DEVELOPING NORMS OF INQUIRY



Imagine that your institution is one year into a comprehensive set of pathways reform efforts. It’s the end of the academic year and you (as president or senior leader) have asked to be put on the agenda for a series of meetings across the campus. For each of the meetings listed below, discuss as a group (*specifically related to pathways implementation*): What questions would you ask specific to the group and why? What data would you ask to see? What information or data would you want to present to the group?

Group	Questions to ask?	Data to ask for?	Data to present?
Committee on Guided Pathways redesign			
Faculty senate			
Department chairs			
Advising staff and academic affairs administrators			
Division deans and academic/student affairs vice presidents			
Academic computing and IR staff			
Board of Trustees			