When It’s About Students: Instructional Transformation and Student Learning

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15 years in North Carolina Community Colleges

6 years VPI/CAO at Odessa College, Odessa, TX
• Leah Meyer Austin Award, Achieving the Dream
• Back to back Rising Star Award, Aspen Institute

Recent move to Lone Star College, Houston, TX
• 7 campuses, 90,000+ credit students
• Newest campus developed on student success initiatives
We Don’t Need Buy In
We need to INSPIRE, we need to IGNITE

When asked “WHY?”:

• “BECAUSE SACSCOC said so.”

• “BECAUSE we have to.”

• “BECAUSE you have to.”
Start with WHY, Simon Sinek

The Golden Circle + Human Brain

Resources to learn more

WIRED TO CONNECT
The Brain Science of Teams and a New Model for Creating Collaboration and Inclusion
Britt Andreatta, PhD

TRUST FACTOR
The Science of Creating High-Performance Companies
Paul J. Zak

dare to lead
Brené Brown

New York Times and Wall Street Journal Bestseller
Daring Greatly and Rising Strong at Work
Identify your Why

Why do we exist as a college or university?

Meet your Elbow Buddy and answer this question with as many different brief responses as you can

• Use a phrase, not a noun

• Think about various perspectives:
  • From a tax payer
  • From a politician
  • From a student
  • From a president
  • From a parent
  • From a faculty member
  • From a staff member
  • From an employer

Identify your Why

Why do YOU work in higher education? What do you BELIEVE about higher education?

• OC: Higher education hasn’t done enough for enough people – we are the instrument of change
• We are the engine for social mobility and generational change
• We are the heart of innovation, creativity, & technology
• Our society depends on us to grow the future leaders and contributors to an ever improving democracy
• We are the space for critical, life-changing research
Identify your Why

Lead from where you are

Don’t depend on your boss, your president, your provost, or your chancellor to give you a why

When an institution rallies around a shared why, amazing, synergistic things happen

Be prepared for the Inquisitive “Why?” too

Student Learning

The HOW in the Golden Circle of higher education

When student learning isn’t the HOW, what is?

• Maintain the normal – how we’ve always done it
• Politics – internal and external
• Personal workload impact – don’t move their cheese
• Business practices and norms

Banking Education (Freire), Blank Slate (Locke) v. Pedagogy, Drop Rate Improvement Program, Student Ready College & Meta-learning
How: Student Learning

Also examine HOW you message and approach the issues
Be attentive to language:

- Language choice saves lives:
  - “Let’s eat Grandma!” ”I enjoy cooking my family & dogs”
  - “Let’s eat, Grandma!” “I enjoy cooking, my family, & dogs”

- Caution re: blame “They”: “They make us…They don’t understand”
- Caution re: “Faculty”: diverse collection of humans

Student Learning

How do you know what students are learning?
Consider here or later Insert SACS flow and Modified Language Flow models

1) Identify Expected Outcomes

2) Identify appropriate ways to measure these outcomes

3) Assess Achievement of Outcomes

4) Analysis of what the results mean

5) Use Results for Improvement

6) Repeat

1) What do you expect them to know?

2) How will they be able to show you what they’ve learned?

3) How well did they do in each aspect of what you hoped they learned?

4) What impacted the areas in which they fell short of your expectations?

5) How can you improve the process to improve student learning?

6) How did it work? Did it help? No change? Repeat the process
How: Student Learning

Be attentive to your own values and triggers, be attentive to learning the values and triggers of your team

Professionally, I feel good when…
   I feel accomplished when…
   I feel relevant and needed when…

Elbow Buddy:
- IE/Assessment/Data Leaders
- Faculty
- Instructional Leaders

Scenario:

You are hired into your role as the college is asked for its first monitoring report on Program Learning Outcomes, Student Learning Outcomes assessment. You realize there’s a lot of anxiety and confusion about what SACSCOC wants from them and a lot of insult felt because they are a good school. You are asked to fix this problem and get them through SACSCOC.

2 Elbow Buddy pairs: Define your 1) Why 2) How 3) What
Scenario: Resist the Urge

WHY: Because we are in soooo much trouble & THEY are coming after us

HOW: We have to create this really complex data analysis process to WOW SACSCOC. And we have to do it FAST, so the 3 of us will just get it done.

WHAT: A 200 page document that 3 people understand, has no meaningful impact on student learning and drained energy from all the faculty while driving your IE/Assessment team to sitting in the corner in the fetal position

Scenario:

You are hired into your role as the college is asked for its first monitoring report on Program Learning Outcomes, Student Learning Outcomes assessment. You realize there’s a lot of anxiety and confusion about what SACSCOC wants from them and a lot of insult felt because they are a good school. You are asked to fix this problem and get them through SACSCOC.

2 Elbow Buddy pairs: Define your 1)Why 2) How 3) What
Scenario: One Experience

WHY: Higher Education isn’t doing enough for enough people – we can be the instrument of change and hope for our students

HOW: Bring together your key collaborators, your top 20%, & explore “How do you KNOW what students have LEARNED?”

WHAT: Collaboratively designed process to answer the questions:
• “How do you know what students have learned?”
• “What are you going to do with that insight?”
• “What do you hope they will be able to demonstrate next time you check in?”

SACSCOC Resource Manual Language

1) Identify Expected Outcomes
2) Identify appropriate ways to measure these outcomes
3) Assess Achievement of Outcomes
4) Analysis of what the results mean
5) Use Results for Improvement
6) Repeat
WHAT: Replace Initiative Fatigue with Initiative Synergy

Anchor around your WHY and HOW

Question your assumptions

Challenge your normal

Embrace the Inquisitive “Why?”

QEP exploration?
WHAT: Replace Initiative Fatigue with Initiative Synergy

8 Week Terms

Anchor: IF Student Learning drives the course and program

THEN is there anything magical about a 15 or 16 week term?

• Could student learning benefit from taking only 2 courses at a time if FT or 1 course at a time if PT?
• Could a different learning structure result in completion and financial benefits, too?

WHAT: Replace Initiative Fatigue with Initiative Synergy

Open Education Resources (OER)

Anchor: IF Student Learning drives the course and program

THEN is there anything magical about a print, conventional text?

• Could we save students millions of dollars in book costs without compromising quality?
• Could those savings address life issues we can’t change?
• Could faculty have more control over learning materials?