

The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

Colorado Mountain College

Project Details		
Title	Improve Workforce Training & Professional Development	Status COMPLETED
Category	1-Helping Students Learn	Updated 09-11-2009
Timeline		Reviewed 09-16-2009
	Planned Project Kickoff 01-01-2006	Created 11-24-2009
	Actual Completion 03-26-2010	Version 3

1: Project Goal

A: Establish the current baseline of workforce training not including the campus level contributions. This includes credit and noncredit programs and services designed to meet the workforce development needs of organizations and individuals, including: • Customized business and industry training, • Continuing education units (CEU's) and • Professional education. □ Define the process for campus level contribution for: business and industry training, customized contract training, continuing education units (CEU's) and professional education included in the workforce goal by Fall 2007

2: Reasons For Project

A: As we survey and build partnerships with local entities, workforce Training & Professional Development seems to be needed by the communities we serve. Our old workforce goal focused on increasing the number of workforce trainings and less on systematically improving how CMC provides these trainings and the processes involved. • As we invest in the culture of the learning college and helping students learn all learning will be equally important, whether credit, non-credit or CEU's and is considered a primary goal. • Workforce training considers the stakeholders as individuals, businesses and industry within the communities we serve to train a 21st century workforce.

3: Organizational Areas Affected

A: -Technical & Vocational Education -CMC's 11 campuses & sites

4: Key Organizational Process(es)

A: Define, track/account for all delivery of workforce training & professional development. Create & implement the mechanisms within our database to enable this. Gather feedback on the quality of training from those served.

5: Project Time Frame Rationale

A: The mechanisms for data entry began to be implemented in January 2006, but since one of the 2 coordinators left last year, this area has been studied extensively by an external consultant, as well as an internal team to determine and address areas for improvement and any necessary restructuring that may be necessary. This is still in progress.

6: Project Success Monitoring

A: Accurate capturing into the database and reporting of all workforce training & professional development to the Board, leadership, and other internal and external stakeholders for each year beyond the baselines determined at the inception of this project. Satisfaction with the training that is provided. To this end, a policy & procedures manual/guide is being developed and campus staff will be trained to accurately track college wide workforce training.

7: Project Outcome Measures

A: Workforce training & professional development trend data (entered into & available from Datatel) and increasing levels of employer/trainee satisfaction with the quality of training over baselines. The development & implementation of the policy & procedures manual/guide.

8: Other Information

A:

Project Update

1: Project Accomplishments and Status

A: The 2008-09 workforce or customized business related initiatives were very successful. Due partially to the economic downturn, an ever increasing number of organizations employees sought training. Furthermore, strong partnerships/relationships were built with area Chambers of Commerce based on attempts to offer classes at a Chamber University. We were also able to identify which Chambers would most proactively support the college in its customized business training efforts and help sustain future growth in this area. The college's workforce FTE, calculated using our noncredit formula, has increased from 5 FTE during 2003-04 to at least 112 FTE (3,823 trainees) during 2008-09. Our Dean for Business & Industry Services, who is now our Executive Director for Customized Business Services (CBS), has continued to apply her extensive expertise to grow this area. CBS now more broadly reflect all aspects of business & industry training and avoids confusion with state-level workforce development entities that the college also works with. A Program Manager assists the Executive Director promote/manage trainings to public & private customers and improving related processes e.g. data entry, expedited payment of trainers, etc. A very attractive new promotional brochure that can be tailored to fit our various training locations was developed and is being utilized. The following positions now serve as training managers for our 7 campuses: one Regional Director serving college wide CBS needs and 4 CBS Directors located at the Timberline, Vail Eagle Valley, West Garfield & Aspen Campuses. These CBS staff has been meeting regularly to discuss best practices and resources for training, as well as new program development and potential new clients. Examples of services provided to and in partnership with local businesses this past year include: financial planning, leadership, ESL, computer skills & retirement planning; computer skills & customer service related training; Starting a Business; E-Marketing & marketing in general; communications; public speaking; managing 4 generations; harassment & diversity; business writing; wellness conferences; national mining summit, Independence Film Festival; sustainability; leadership; planning; safety; retirement planning; home health care & stress management; outdoor emergency preparedness and Spanish. In addition, to serve the Roaring Fork Transit Authority (RFTA) training needs, RFTA University is being formed for the start of October, with some preliminary classes having already run this past summer. The Colorado Workforce Center partnered with Colorado Mountain College (CMC) for 53 classes, as did Colorado Northwestern Community College on this initiative. Our President has also been leading & training continuous improvement teams to target key processes for improvement over the past year, with workforce training being among those processes. Thus, with continually increasing college wide we have made much progress with automating and engrafting best practices throughout the college and its service area.

2: Institution Involvement

A: Our main source of anticipating training needs & feedback on provided training has been driven primarily by 1-1 visits with our customers and surveys, but also our community advisory groups for each campus. A Chamber Business Symposium will be held again in October with professional speakers and CMC registration personnel assisting so that employees will be able to obtain professional development units. There will be another Bizopoly with the Glenwood Chamber of Commerce. CMC's President is a strong advocate for building community partnerships and will be speaking at the event like he did for an economic development community gathering this past year. His vision for CMC includes the college becoming first choice for partnerships and he models frequent communication & collaboration with our area businesses. Our Executive Director has developed a consistent CMC philosophy of serving our area business & industry and she is working closely with the other CBS & college staff (e.g. registration, campus leadership, Academic Affairs) to improve programs & services. We now have a knowledgeable leader to help us standardize & centralize practices and keep us cutting edge. She has been focused on continuing to grow CBS college wide and relies on the expertise of our large number of adjuncts and numerous private industry consultants for facilitating trainings. CBS also offers professional development opportunities for our internal constituents. Many opportunities for CBS exist within our communities and CMC has been capitalizing on these opportunities through partnerships with our area businesses & industries, as well as our employees.

3: Next Steps

- A: Next steps include the afore-mentioned RFTA University, a CMC "Managing Leadership Summit" to attract future leaders and writing a Department of Labor grant to support business incubators in Garfield & Lake Counties. The Executive Director will also continue to work collaboratively & creatively with the college wide CBS staff and add to the types of training being offered based on trainee needs using internal & external expert trainers, as well as ensure the necessary infrastructure to help maximize our training efforts. As resources and support for CBS continues to grow, it is hoped that each campus will have its own CBS Director. Related processes & paperwork have been streamlined to help facilitate this growth e.g. registration form, billing. Although a procedure was developed in 2007 for capturing our training data, it still needs improvement. Based on all the progress on this project, we plan to retire this project in its current form over the coming months.

4: Resulting Effective Practices

- A: Strong partnerships with community businesses & Chambers of Commerce have been key to success with furthering CMC's CBS efforts e.g. RFTA, Colorado Workforce Center, Human Services, Colorado Northwestern Community College and local Chambers of Commerce, etc. The personal visits and surveys with these constituents have provided helpful feedback on CMC's training. A large trainer database comprised of skilled internal & external database is available. An artifact from all this has been positive word-of-mouth promotion of CMC's training opportunities. The strong support from CMC has helped increase the responsiveness & capacity of CBS tremendously.

5: Project Challenges

- A: We will continue to work on improving the timely entry of CBS training information into our database, However CBS is functioning well and being engrafted college wide, so we are not facing notable challenges and will retire the project later this fall.

6: AQIP Involvement

- A: Not needed at this time, however we will let you know at the November Strategy Forum should we need assistance with next steps. The Executive Director of CBS can be reached at bshaw@coloradomtn.edu should you need any additional information.

Update Review

1: Project Accomplishments and Status

- A: Leaders cannot always control what happens in their organizations specifically, not to mention in our society in general, yet Colorado Mountain College personnel are adapting their efforts to promote student learning in a workforce environment that is in flux largely due to the ongoing economic depression of this country. Since the inception of this action plan, CMC has made extraordinary strides in not only improving student learning, but promoting collaborative external relationships with its constituents as well as enhancing the internal leadership and communication at the institution. As determined by institutional personnel, the 2008-2009 customized business related initiatives were "very successful." CMC leadership is to be commended for its "brave new world" approach to train students for the 21st century work environment. It appears CMC is making continuous and reasonable ongoing progress toward achieving its action project goal of helping students learn while building external collaborative relationships and improving leadership and communication within the organization.

2: Institution Involvement

- A: CMC personnel working directly on this action project are to be congratulated for their efforts to improve student learning through the institution's training programs designed to develop a workforce capable of performing to the expectations and standards of contemporary business and industry. The institution is "reading" and responding to the expressed needs of its constituents which allows it to provide educational leadership in training its clientele. This is a key to ensuring CMC's achievement of its action project goal. The commitment to and involvement of the president toward the achievement of this action project is crucial, and therefore not only appreciated, but to be commended. The Executive Director is another key person in the goal achievement process. Together they are framing the vision and modeling the desired outcome for the entire campus. The institution's efforts to help students learn is enhanced

by the president's and executive director's efforts to help all employees to understand the vision behind this action project, show employees how the project is relevant to their daily activities, continue to demonstrate enthusiasm for the project, connect and integrate this "new" vision with existing practices, procedures, and programs, and assist internal and external stakeholders to be aware of and understand future actions necessary for the achievement of this project. As CMC moves forward with this action project, the institution's continuing use of advisory groups (both internal and external) along with collaborative ventures with the community and business entities as well as local chambers of commerce will assist CMC in the achievement of its base goal -- helping students learn. Additionally, CMC is tangentially promoting two other important goals: leadership and communication as well as building collaborative relationships. In addition to upper-level commitment by knowledgeable leaders, it is important to include other levels within the institution in the ongoing efforts related to this action project. CMC has been doing just that by involving other individuals and groups in the standardization and centralization of workable practices that allow the institution to stay on the "cutting edge" in its efforts to prepare a workforce for the 21st century. Efforts have been and continue to be focused on continuing to grow the CBS effort college-wide. This effort has relied on the expertise of many adjuncts and numerous private industry consultants. According to CMC, their procedures developed in 2007 for capturing training data still needs to be improved and it will; however, given the current progress on this action project they intend to end this project in the coming months. The institution is making reasonable progress toward completion of the project although it appears to be somewhat behind the original time line (completion by 9-1-08).

3: Next Steps

A: CMC has identified and articulated a number of "action possibilities" (Rosabeth Moss Kanter, 1983). The RFTA University, Managing Leadership Summit, and grant writing for business incubators are among the future projects at CMC. Additionally, CMC leadership plans to continue to work collaboratively college-wide with their CBS staff on training offered internally and externally along with the appropriate infrastructure to maximize training. The institution plans for each campus to have its own CBS director at some point in the future. Ultimately CMC intends to streamline its processes, procedures, and paperwork in an effort to facilitate a positive and an effective student learning experience through improvements in the registration form and billing. CMC is making steady and reasonable progress on this action project in its efforts toward continuous quality improvement.

4: Resulting Effective Practices

A: In the fast changing world facing CMC, the institution has made viable strides forward in its efforts to help students learn. In part, this appears to be a result of CMC's leadership's efforts to integrate various subgroups (e.g., community businesses, chambers of commerce, CBS) into the larger overall culture and work environment. A good way to determine the effectiveness of CMC's efforts is to listen to what is being said about the institution. As noted above, stakeholders are saying positive things about CMC. Because of the increased responsiveness of and the capacity to deliver desired training, the "word-of-mouth promotion of CMC's training opportunities" is positive. CMC is making reasonable progress toward the completion of this action project.

5: Project Challenges

A: Congratulations to the CMC leadership and its employees (and stakeholders) for the arduous and massive task they have been working on as they plan to retire this action project.

6: AQIP Involvement

A: N/A.

Project Outcome

1: Reason for completion

A: Our Customized Business Services (CBS) program is running stupendously now and is showing constant growth with the numbers of employees & businesses it serves in our communities.

2: Success Factors

A: CMC has provided CBS with the infrastructure and expertise it needed to be successful.

3: Unsuccessful Factors

A: The data entry, tracking of data in our database could be improved still.