



**RED ROCKS
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**Committing to Conversation
Acting on What Matters**

October 2004



Red Rocks Community College

Vital Focus Conversations

AGENDA

Time	Topic	Results
7:30 - 8:30	▪ Arrive, receive materials	Session starts on time
8:30 - 9:00	▪ Introduction and Overview of Agenda, Results of Index, Outcomes of the Day	Clear understanding of process and expected results of the day
9:00 - 10:20	▪ Conversation One: What do we agree matters most?	Identify those aspects about your work and the culture of RRCC that you value most and want to preserve or build
10:20 - 11:20	▪ Conversation Two: What do we agree are our strengths--the aspects about RRCC that shine vibrantly?	Identify and recognize the strengths of areas, processes, cultural aspects of RRCC
11:20 - 11:30	▪ Report out on what matters most	Present collective agreement on RRCC priorities
11:30 - 11:50	▪ Conversation Three, Part I: What holds the greatest opportunity for making a significant difference at RRCC?	Overview and invitation to join a focused discussion.
11:50 - 12:50	▪ Lunch	
12:50 - 2:30	▪ Conversation Three, Part II: What holds the greatest opportunity for making a significant difference at RRCC?	Identify 8-10 areas for acting on what matters and for drafting recommendations.
2:30 - 2:50	▪ Report on recommendations for action	Read propositions for change
2:50 - 3:10	▪ Review and next steps	Understand how next steps, AQIP, and RRCC future may be integrated
3:20 - 3:30	▪ identify Quick Fix Possibilities	Quick Fix ideas discussed and identified.
3:30 - 4:00	▪ Closing	Final ideas, critical comments posted; informal discussion

Note: Given the number of people, breaks are taken by individuals as needed during sessions.

PROPOSED GROUND RULES

1. All ideas are valid
2. Listening is as important as speaking
3. Plans and discussions are confidential
4. Time frames will be observed
5. All questions are important
6. New ideas are welcome
7. We'll have fun

THE "ONE-MINUTE" SELF MANAGER

Each small group manages its own discussion, recording, time, and reports. Below are roles for managing this work. Leadership roles can be rotated. Divide up the work as you wish.

Convener - Assures that each person who wants to speak is heard within time available. Insures all questions are addressed. Keeps group on track to finish on time.

Time Keeper - Keeps group aware of time remaining for each assignment.

Recorder - Writes group's results of the discussion on forms and post-it notes.

Reporter - Delivers report to large group in time allotted.

CONVERSATION ONE

What do you collectively agree is of greatest importance -- matters most -- at Red Rocks Community College?

Goal: Identify what you agree matters most about your work that of Red Rocks Community College.

Time: 60 - 80 minutes

Roles: Identify who will be convener, timekeeper, and recorder for your group.

CONVERSATION

Individually:

1. Think about a peak experience you have had at Red Rocks Community College --- a time when you felt really engaged in and excited about your work — when both you and the college seemed to be operating at peak performance.

Paired Discussion (trio if needed)

2. (15-20 minutes) Interview your partner for about 10 minutes using these questions:
 - ◆ What is your peak experience or "high point"?
 - ◆ What things do you value most about your work? About RRCC?
 - ◆ What gives life and vitality to RRCC--those things that draw you to and keep you there?

As a group:

3. (20-25 minutes) In your table group, briefly summarize (do not retell--take only 2-3 minutes) the notes from your interviews.
4. (10 - 15 minutes) After listening to the stories/notes, discuss the common themes in your peak experiences.
 - ◆ **Record on separate hexagonal post-it notes (one per note)** your group's opinion on the 3-4 most important themes you heard in the peak experiences--characteristics, ways of working, that matter most. LIMIT your responses to the 3-4 MOST important.
5. (15 - 20 minutes) Compare your individual and group conclusions to Part 1 of Constellation Results.
 - ◆ **Record on a post-it note** the process that you agree is most important for focus right now. **Write "Process" at the top of the hexagon.**
 - ◆ **Record on a post-it note** the high-performance principle most important to develop now. **Write "Principle" at the top of the hexagon.**
6. Handoff your group's post-it notes to be posted on the "What Matters Most" wall.

As a table, take your own 10-minute break during this discussion.

CONVERSATION TWO

What do you agree are core strengths or vibrant aspects of Red Rocks Community College and its culture?

Goal: To identify strengths in performance and culture at Red Rocks Community College.

Time: 50 - 60 minutes

CONVERSATION

Individually

1. (4-5 minutes) Jot down your endings to these statements:

- ◆ Two real strengths about RRCC that I've noticed are.....
- ◆ A process (advising, recruiting, new program development, budgeting) that really works well right now is.....

As a large group

2. (25-30 minutes) We'll discuss questions like these:

- ◆ What is a specific example of a recent change that has resulted in RRCC being more student-focused or student-centered?
- ◆ Where is collaboration thriving at RRCC (internal, external, among departments, etc.)?
- ◆ What have students told you are your strengths? Employers?
- ◆ What do you see as the core strengths (specific) of your faculty? Support staff? Administrators?

In your group

3. (20 minutes) Review Part 2 of Constellation Results. Prepare to identify:

- ◆ What according to the data is one strength your table agrees is a "highlight" or a "defining quality" or "best practice" at RRCC

Take your own 10-minute break during this discussion.

CONVERSATION THREE

What do you most wish for Red Rocks Community College? What, if accomplished, would make a significant difference?

Goal: To write a provocative proposition or recommendation for action that will make a significant difference at Red Rocks Community College.

Timeframe: 2 - 2 1/2 hours (including introduction and report out)

CONVERSATION

Individually

1. (2-3 minutes) Jot down your answer this question:
 - ◆ If you could make three recommendations for action at RRCC that would make a significant difference, what would those be?
2. (15 minutes) As a group, we'll review the Constellation data in Part 3 of the report.

Break & move to the table and topic you've chosen for this conversation.

At the new table

3. Volunteer for self-managing roles of convener, timekeeper, recorder, reporter.
4. (10-15 minutes) Complete Parts A & B of the *Idea Analysis Form* (attached) for your recommendation.
5. (15 - 20 minutes) As a group, give each person 2-3 minutes to share his/her recommendation and its critical aspects and differences to be made.
 - ◆ ***Record common themes across the recommendations, critical aspects, and desired results or differences to be made.***
6. (30 - 40 minutes) Discuss the common ideas across the recommendations, arriving at one provocative proposition you most want to make for the future of RRCC
 - ◆ ***Take time to dream in the most ideal terms of what really would make a difference at RRCC and to the students and others it serves. Really stretch your thinking, be creative, think big, think beyond today.***
7. (20 - 25 minutes) Draft a provocative proposition using the *Idea Analysis Form*.
8. Present your proposition to the whole group.

As a table, take your own 10-minute break during this discussion.

Sample Provocative Propositions:

We recommend that the college commit the financial and human resources to establish itself as the preferred provider throughout the Midwest of premier on-line adult literacy and college prep/developmental courses and services...

Because we have concluded that in the highly competitive online learning world, there will be two types of participants, those who originate the courses and those who use the courses. the college has the mission and intellectual resources as well as the competitive drive to be creative originators of top-quality learning opportunities for those who most need basic skills and knowledge and learning aptitudes, as well as technological abilities.

We recommend that we establish communication, decision-making, recognition, and resource-allocation processes that create an environment permeated by trust, where everyone experiences themselves as creators of rich learning experiences for students--where everyone shares and understands the "big picture" purpose and vision for the college--where everyone at all levels feels the college is theirs to improve, change, and help become what it can potentially become.

Because we have concluded that what holds us back most is our own assumptions and ways of doing things and that to focus on student academic achievement and excellent educational programs and services we need a fully engaged staff whose talents and expertise are tapped and who have resources to learn and development professionally to better serve the institution.

We recommend that the college have the most efficient and user friendly technology available in the classroom and across the campus. Telephones, computers, networks, communication media, and so on are all available to every employee and student who needs access. Training is provided so that we make maximum use of our college's investment and that we reduce cost by increasing efficiency and reworking processes to maximize technology. We become a culture that uses technology to free us.

Because we have concluded that we must rethink our work versus simply add to our work and that maximizing technology not only does both for our college and our staff, but also prepares students to maximize their time and efforts. Integrated, effective use of technology will be a hallmark of our image; we'll be known for being the place for real learning that's high-tech and high-touch.

We recommend that the college create, fund, and provide the human resources and technology necessary for a district-wide on-line exploration, advising and registration process for all community members to ensure equal access regardless of major or program and continual access by stakeholders to student support services. This new process would begin a complete rethinking of traditional student support and enrollment services as a 24/7/356 operation accessible to all in the community, particularly high schools.

Because we have concluded that we must go to the community with our strengths in teaching and learning, that we must tap the high school students through technology, and that we must rethink our work by maximizing technology.

We recommend that the college create a learning environment and general education and professional curricula on the assumption that students must continually recreate their careers and their lives and are responsible for constructing the global society that preserves and values the diversities of our world. The curricula and the entire college experience would be designed to develop the whole student as an entrepreneurial learner, discoverer, and thinker; as an entrepreneur of careers; and as an entrepreneur of the future.

Because we have concluded that we are still providing teaching and learning that reflects a mechanistic society which assumes life-long, stable careers, and a steady slow pace of evolution. We believe the teaching and learning in American Higher Education should reflect, even create, the ways of thinking and being of the future.

Making A Significant Difference by Acting on What Matters

Idea Analysis Form

Idea Title _____

Report from Table Group _____

A. Most Critical or Pressing Aspects that Make this Area Most Important for Action:

1.

2.

3.

B. Difference to be Made by Acting on this Area: (What results do you most want to see? What processes, people, and cultural characteristics of the college would benefit?)

1. Results desired:

2. Processes impacted:

3. People benefited:

4. Culture/High-Performance Principle to be developed:

C. Provocative Proposition that we forward for consideration:

We propose:

Because:

ON BACK: WRITE SPECIFIC STRATEGIES OR ACTIONS FOR ACCOMPLISHING YOUR RECOMMENDATION-----I.E., IDEAS ON SPECIFICALLY WHAT COULD BE DONE.

AQIP Criteria and Principles of High Performance

Note: In-depth information on the Academic Quality Improvement Project, its processes, and its services can be found at www.aqip.org.

AQIP CRITERIA

Helping Students Learn identifies the shared purpose of all higher education organizations and is the priority of any institutional analysis. It focuses on the teaching-learning process within a formal instructional context, yet also addresses how your entire institution contributes to helping students learn and overall student development.

Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives addresses the processes that contribute to the achievement of your institution's major objectives, that complement student learning, and that fulfill other portions of your mission.

Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs examines how your institution works actively to understand student and other stakeholder needs.

Valuing People explores your commitment to the development of your faculty, staff, and administrators since the efforts of all are required for institutional success.

Leading and Communicating addresses how your institution's leadership and communication structures, networks, and processes guide your institution in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities, and building and sustaining a learning environment.

Supporting Institutional Operations addresses the variety of your institutional support processes that help to provide an environment in which learning can thrive.

Measuring Effectiveness examines how your institution collects, analyzes, and uses information to manage itself and to drive performance improvement.

Planning Continuous Improvement examines your institution's planning processes and how your strategies and action plans are helping you achieve your mission and vision.

Building Collaborative Relationships examines your institution's relationships and partnerships--current and potential--to analyze how they contribute to the institution's accomplishing its mission.

AQIP HIGH PERFORMANCE PRINCIPLES

Focus: A mission & vision driven by students' and other stakeholders' needs.

Involvement: Broad-based faculty, staff, and administrative engagement and participation.

Leadership: Leaders and leadership systems that support a quality culture.

Learning: A learning-centered environment.

People: Respect for and willingness to invest in people (faculty, staff, administration).

Collaboration: Collaboration and a shared institutional focus.

Agility: Ability, flexibility, and responsiveness to changing needs and conditions.

Foresight: Planning for innovation and improvement.

Information: Fact-based evidence-gathering and thinking to support analysis and decision-making.

Integrity: Integrity and responsible institutional citizenship

AQIP CRITERIA DETAIL

Areas within each Criterion

HELPING STUDENTS LEARN

- ✓ Clear learning objectives, performance, improvement
- ✓ Teaching excellence, faculty/others' roles in teaching & learning
- ✓ Assessing & improving learning, learning environment, technology
- ✓ Student preparation, intellectual climate
- ✓ Academic programs and courses--currency
- ✓ Student advising, counseling, library--instructional support
- ✓ LEARNING, INFORMATION, FOCUS

ACCOMPLISHING OTHER OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Other institutional work/mission (civic, cultural, environmental, etc.)
- ✓ Aligning other work with the priorities of teaching/learning
- ✓ Faculty and others' roles in relationship to other objectives (research, service)
- ✓ Preserving a distinct culture related to a unique mission/objective (faith-based, niche, training, etc.)
- ✓ Evaluating the "other work" of the institution
- ✓ LEADERSHIP, FORESIGHT

UNDERSTANDING STUDENT/STAKEHOLDER NEEDS

- ✓ Defining different students and others you serve
- ✓ Analyzing needs & designing programs & services
- ✓ Use of complaints, evaluations, feedback from students/others
- ✓ Improving satisfaction of students/stakeholders
- ✓ Process for getting information from students, employers, other stakeholders
- ✓ INFORMATION, FOCUS, AGILITY

VALUING PEOPLE

- ✓ Work and job environment, clear job roles, responsibilities
- ✓ Recruiting, selecting, hiring, orienting, evaluating processes
- ✓ Investing in people--professional development, trust, respect, motivation
- ✓ Recognizing and rewarding--aligned with priorities
- ✓ Safety, satisfaction, well-being of all employees
- ✓ PEOPLE, INVOLVEMENT

LEADING AND COMMUNICATING

- ✓ Governance, decision-making structures, processes
- ✓ Leadership developed across employees
- ✓ Information available to do job well
- ✓ Setting directions, communicating the vision, mission, goals
- ✓ Supporting overall institutional movement & development
- ✓ Committee, team, other structures for accomplishing work
- ✓ Building and sustaining a learning environment
- ✓ Communicating across the institution, departments, colleges, etc.
- ✓ LEADERSHIP, INVOLVEMENT, FORESIGHT

SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS

- ✓ Budgeting, endowment, fund-raising processes
- ✓ Security, campus facilities, institutional technology
- ✓ Food service, housing, extra-mural activities
- ✓ Administrative support systems
- ✓ Contribution to learning and other objectives
- ✓ Day to day operations
- ✓ Safety, satisfaction, well-being of all employees
- ✓ LEADERSHIP, FOCUS, PEOPLE

MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

- ✓ System for gathering and using information and data
- ✓ Analyzing and acting on information--in a timely fashion
- ✓ Tracking & measuring improvement
- ✓ Processes to compare institution to other peer institutions
- ✓ Processes for determining what data to gather when and how...and processes for using data for improvement
- ✓ Processes for discussing and acting on information
- ✓ INFORMATION, LEADERSHIP, AGILITY, FORESIGHT

PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- ✓ Supporting--actually strategizing and pursuing innovation, change, improvement
- ✓ Turning the vision, mission, strategic plan into real action
- ✓ Pursuing resource needs--building people's capacity for institutional work
- ✓ Measuring, evaluating, improving the institution's effectiveness as a whole
- ✓ Aligning priorities, planning, and work across all levels & areas of institution
- ✓ LEADERSHIP, FORESIGHT, AGILITY

■ BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

- ✓ Partnerships with other educational institutions, businesses, agencies, organizations
- ✓ Current structures and processes that encourage internal and external collaboration
- ✓ How you create and build relationships at your institution
- ✓ Support for teamwork, new collaborative projects--work that includes people from across the institution
- ✓ PEOPLE, INVOLVEMENT, COLLABORATION