

**Community College of Philadelphia
Leadership Institute
2005 – 2006
Final Project Report**

1. **Project title:** “Quick Tips” for Faculty
Team members: Maria Diaz-Aparicio
Susan Herron
Christina Knox
Michael Remshard

2. **Overview of Project Proposal and Goals**

Originally, we proposed to develop three products: a) a laminated bookmark guide for CCP faculty to serve as a portable, quick access, central source for information, b) a simple, but fairly inclusive organizational chart of the college so new faculty can see CCP at a glance; and c) a new employee task checklist. Through preliminary investigation we learned that the organizational chart was already a project undertaken within Academic Affairs. Additionally, the team learned new employee orientations varied by department and standard new employee tasks were communicated in different ways. Therefore it seemed unnecessary to outline these tasks in pre-set college-wide manner. As a result, the proposal was abridged to creating the bookmark. The purpose of the bookmark was to orient new faculty to CCP, expediting and facilitating their transition from “new” to “familiar,” in a practical manner. At CCP students come first. We believed that by providing faculty with information and resources needed to support students in a timely fashion, faculty would be better able to serve them.

3. **Summary of Research**

- a) **Institutional Research -Administrative**

We contacted all Community College departments and a number of similar institutions in the Philadelphia area. The findings from each institution, as well as from CCP, were similar: there is very little in writing. As was indicated, each department hired their own faculty. Therefore, what was done to orient new faculty varied from one department to another. We discovered the information that was written down at CCP and elsewhere related to policies and procedures and generally was not targeted to direct new faculty to available resources.

We met with Mary Ryan-Williamson, Human Resources Academic Administrator, who was in the process of preparing a “Faculty Handbook: - A Guide for Full Time and Adjunct Faculty.” It was very well done, informative and inclusive. But it was longer and more detailed than the bookmark. We hoped that

it would serve as an adjunct informational resource to the larger handbook, and might be adopted by the Human Resources Department for future distribution, Ms. Ryan-Williamson, as well as our mentor, Dr. Mary Anne Celenza, have been kind and motivational supporters of this project.

b) Institutional Research – Faculty

We conducted a survey among 215 full-time and part-time new faculty hired in 2003 and 2005. Our objectives were to inquire what kind of information they received as part of the new hire orientation package and what information they would like to be added. Only 27 surveys were returned and 5 instructors stated that they received a formal orientation. It included topics such as: affirmative action, benefits, ITS, resources, human resources, the faculty federation, marketing and government relations, syllabus, classes, and grading. Twelve instructors answered that they received written materials indicating the resources available. Only 3 instructors felt confident to accomplish their tasks with the information received. The areas where the majority of respondents acknowledged receiving information included: 1. bathroom or office keys, 2. audio-visual resources, the mail room, duplicating, faculty federation and employees' benefits.

Even though factors such as: the Christmas Break and returned mailings affected the survey results, we inferred that new hired faculty can benefit with a guide like the bookmark. It's portable, quick and easy to understand.

c) Literature Search

We conducted a web search and found faculty guides from the University of Texas and New York University, among others. All were long and detailed. Included information entailed school and departmental policies, teaching regulations and grant submissions. Quick details about how to contact support services were not easily accessible.

4. Completion Steps

1. Complete list of phone numbers – Christina, email to Mike (February 24th)
2. Feedback (February 2nd)
3. Revise and edit the bookmark –(March 31th)
4. E-mail and send hard copy completed draft to Christina, Maria, Susan for editorial comment and feedback (April 3rd)
5. Make revisions based on feedback (April 5th)
6. Send edits to Christina, Susan, and Maria

5. Short-Term Next Steps

1. Contact Mary Ryan Williamson (Human Resources) and solicit any suggestions for funding, based on her feedback (April 15th)

6. Long-Term Project – Not applicable

7& 8. Project Institutionalization & Assessment

We held a meeting with Mary Ryan-Williamson and showed her the bookmark draft and discussed its possible implementation. She seemed very impressed with its appearance and convenience in contrast to the pending draft of the Faculty Orientation Manual. She explained that she will meet with Mr. Jack Muraskin, Executive Assistant to the President for Human Resources, who will make the final decision pertaining the bookmark's future.

We hope that our joint effort will be welcomed and the merits of the bookmark be recognized as a fast instrument of information that will derive in a better informed and confident faculty.

9. How Project Relates to Theme

Goal #2 of the College's Student Retention/Persistence Plan establishes the enhancement and creation of new systemic structures designed to encourage students' academic success and persistence. A well informed instructor, who is consistently aware of useful information in both day to day activities and crisis management, creates an environment conducive to learning and to productive student-faculty relationships. Instructors are expected not only to master their area of expertise but to also understand the College's culture. The bookmark is an excellent tool to start up the new hire faculty immersion process. We believe that they will feel supported and simultaneously, they will project a more positive image as mentors to the students. Hence, there will be less conflict and confusion, reducing the drop out percentage.

10. What We Learned and How it Impacted us as Leaders

Maria Diaz-Aparicio

Through the different phases of the project I have learned to be more flexible and understanding of my team mates' motivations and ideas. I learned that as a leader, I will encounter professional challenges where I must embrace antagonistic ideas, take ownership of them on behalf of the common goal and to contribute towards the team's success. By intuitively applying the principles established in the Six Thinking Hats, I changed from the black hat thinking method to the white hat thinking method. It certainly worked! I also learned the complexity of accomplishing a project at an institution of higher education; when you need the support and expertise of other organizational components.

Christina F. Knox

The project was an excellent idea! It took on many different facets of which it was not originally intended to do. The project grew to proportions that were not feasible to meet. However through much turnabouts and weeding through we came up with a final solution. Doing the project taught me that everyone is different with different mindsets, different ideas and different ways to go about getting to the finished product. But no matter what way we may choose to go about getting to our final destination, if we stay on track and stay focused on the main idea we can reach our goals. Goal setting was the only way of attaining our desired end. Working as a team allowed me to broaden my horizons, and deepen my depths. Its impact as a leader, well I learned one basic lesson, "just get the job done!"

Michael Remshard

I learned the importance of listening more and talking less. It is important to identify the strengths of each individual and to utilize those gifts as a team. I discovered that conflict is natural, inevitable and unavoidable. Conflict can strengthen relationships, it can inspire positive change, and can be managed resulting in positive outcomes.