

# Using *Microcosms* to Reshape the Community College- A HANDBOOK



*A tool for creating shared values, unified vision, and measurable outcomes*



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# **Using *Microcosms* to Reshape the Community College – A HANDBOOK**



# Table of Contents

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Part 1: <b>Designing a Microcosm</b> .....	9
When should a <i>Microcosm</i> Be Used?.....	11
Microcosm Size .....	12
Selecting a Microcosm .....	13
Inviting and Selecting Participants.....	14
Microcosm Ground Rules.....	15
Microcosm Design Team .....	16
Part 2: <b>The Microcosm Event</b> .....	17
Planning the Event .....	19
Data and Information .....	20
Communication .....	21
Event Facilitators.....	22
Leadership’s Role .....	23
Event Moderator.....	24
Multi-sensory Experience .....	25
Importance of Logistics.....	26
Part 3: <b>Microcosm Process and Tools</b> .....	27
Individual → Small Group → Whole Group.....	29
Max/Mix.....	30
Table Group Discussion And Report Out.....	31
Gallery Walk.....	31
Brainstorming .....	31
Real Time Surveys.....	32
Multi-voting .....	32
Relationship map.....	33
Affinity Diagram .....	33
Draw a Picture .....	33
Write/Tell a Story .....	34
Book Discussions.....	34
Scavenger Hunts .....	35
Table Discussion .....	35
Scenario Building.....	35
Mini-lectures .....	36
Come to Consensus.....	36
Evaluations .....	37
Part 4: <b>Appendices</b>	

# Acknowledgements

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We take no credit for inventing the concept of microcosms. We learned from many of the leading change experts working today, picking up bits and pieces from a variety of sources and putting them back together in a way that seemed right for us at Grand Rapids Community College.

We would especially like to acknowledge the work of the *School for Managing and Leading Change*. Two teams from GRCC were fortunate to attend an early SFM session in 1997. The foundation of learning built during that year is the single most profound and lasting professional development experience we have ever encountered. If you are at all interested in the microcosm work, we urge you to consider sending a team to the School starting in April (See Appendix G). A special thanks to Robert Jacobs for his work entitled *Real Time Strategic Change* published by Berrett-Koehler Publishers in 1994. Many of the tools and techniques we use in our microcosm work are adapted from his book.

We hope you find this Handbook helpful and informative as you work to create shared values, unified vision, and measurable outcomes in your organization.

*GRCC Microcosm Design Team*

Transforming the community college to better meet student and community needs will only occur when a *critical mass* of the organization has undergone the required mindset change to perform in new ways.

The fastest way to achieve critical mass, as well as wide spread commitment to the change, is through the use of

*Microcosm Teams.*



# **Part 1:**

# **Designing a Microcosm**



# **When Should a *Microcosm* Be Used?**

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*Microcosms are useful when:*

- A problem or situation exists which has campus-wide implications
- A number of different viewpoints must be considered
- Input from a wide variety of stakeholder groups is desired
- Getting widespread consensus on the decision is important to moving forward
- Related environmental scanning data is available
- A number of plausible solutions exist
- A common vision is desired when moving forward

*Examples of situations for which microcosms can be successfully used:*

- Strategic planning
- Designing new processes that cut across departments
- Collecting data from stakeholder groups

# Microcosm Size

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Microcosms can range from very small (3 people) to very large (over 100) depending on a number of factors:

- Size of the total population
  - The larger the total population, the larger the microcosm
- The number of subpopulations within the total population that you want to have represented
  - The more subpopulations, the larger the team
- The nature of the task the microcosm is asked to accomplish
  - The more work, the larger the team
- The timeline for task accomplishment
  - Larger teams often have scheduling problems
- The scope of the work
  - The broader the scope, the larger the team

# Selecting a Microcosm

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- Step 1: Identify the total population that you want the microcosm to represent
- Step 2: Determine the specific demographic or other significant characteristics from the subpopulations that must be maintained in the microcosm
- Step 3: Determine the optimal size of the microcosm
- Step 4: Determine the number of slots for each subpopulation group
- Step 5: Invite/select people to participate in the microcosm
- Step 6: Code potential participants according to their subpopulation characteristics
- Step 7: Randomly fill available slots from potential participants
- Step 8: Notify participants of microcosm selection

*See example in Appendix A*

# Inviting and Selecting Participants

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## Inviting Participants

Potential microcosm participants can be identified in one of two ways: appointment or volunteer. When making appointments, the microcosm sponsor selects specific people to fill the slots. When asking for volunteers, a general announcement is sent about the new microcosm describing its task and the population to be represented. A variety of media can be used to announce openings on a new microcosm team including e-mail, website, direct mailings, flyers, etc.

It is important for volunteers to understand that the microcosm will be formed to represent the total population, thus not everyone who volunteers will be selected.

## Selecting Participants

It is highly likely that some cells will have more volunteers than needed, while others are empty. In the case of more volunteers, randomly select the number needed within the cell.

If not enough participants volunteer, more encouragement may be needed including direct contact.

## Caution

Every attempt is made to insure the microcosm is reflective of the entire population. In reality, however, it rarely works out so nicely. Some cells may be over-represented and others under-represented. What is important is to create as true of a microcosm as possible given the circumstances.

*Examples of microcosm announcements can be found in Appendix B.*

# Microcosm Ground Rules

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Every microcosm operates under a common set of ground rules:

- Have fun
- Everyone participates
- No one dominates
- No rank in the room

In addition, it is important for each new microcosm to create their own unique set of ground rules specific to their task and situation. It is also suggested that each microcosm creates a set of principles to guide their work.

*A sample of guiding principles for the Strategy Microcosm is found in Appendix C.*

# **Microcosm Design Team**

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A successful microcosm is the result of the skill and hard work of the Microcosm Design Team. The role of this team is to design the microcosm event activities in terms of how the microcosm will accomplish its purpose and task. This team should have between 5-7 members who are skilled in large group process, facilitation, systems thinking, and quality tools. The team should include members from a variety of areas within the college.

Although the microcosm design team can plan and direct the activities of several different microcosm groups simultaneously, it is recommended that one or two members serve as the lead process facilitator for each microcosm team.

It is highly recommended that the Microcosm Design Team be carefully nurtured and provided with the necessary skill training development to successfully lead the microcosm process.

# **Part 2:**

# **The Microcosm Event**



# Planning the Event

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The Microcosm Design Team is responsible for breaking down the work of the microcosm into a series of events or sessions designed to accomplish necessary tasks. Once the desired outcome of the event has been determined, the Team creates microcosm activities best suited to the task at hand using a wide repertory of large group process and quality tools.

A detailed facilitator's agenda is prepared and shared with all stakeholder groups prior to the event. Microcosm events can last from as little as two hours to an entire day. Care must be taken to design a plan that accomplishes the work without overtaxing the participants.

*A copy of a microcosm event agenda is found in Appendix D.*

# Data and Information

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A key component of a successful microcosm is the extent the data and information needed is available for informed discussions. Without quality background information, the conversations are nothing more than people expressing personal opinion.

## Where does the data and information come from?

- Institutional research department
- Environmental scanning efforts
- Community report cards
- Other reports from community agencies
- Best practice information
- Benchmark information from other organizations

## How is this data disseminated to the Microcosm Team?

In small pieces!

One way that has proven very successful is to break the information down into smaller chunks. These chunks can then be sent electronically to the microcosm participants over several days or weeks prior to the event.

*An example of ScaNotes, an electronic newsletter provided to the Strategy Microcosm, is found in Appendix E.*

# Communication

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Microcosm teams require regular and frequent communication. E-mail and shared network directories are excellent tools for keeping the team up to speed on the results of their work. Data collected from the microcosm is processed and put out on the shared drive for review and comment. The microcosm must also be kept informed of how their work connects with work done by other teams, and how what they have accomplished is used by the larger system.

It is also important to share the work of the microcosm teams with the larger population that they are intended to reflect. College newsletters or other publications should focus on the accomplishment of the microcosm teams and keep the campus updated on their activities.

Microcosm teams including members of the community often attract the attention of the local media with the events covered in newspaper articles and television news broadcasts.

*A copy of Grand Rapids Press coverage of a recent student microcosm event is found in Appendix F.*

# Event Facilitators

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Most microcosm teamwork is done in small table groups. It is important that each table includes a trained facilitator who is skilled in small group process and understands the intended outcome for each activity.

It is important to build a large stable of facilitators coming from several different areas. Once facilitators have general training and some experience, the actual amount of time spent training facilitators for a specific event is minimal. For most microcosm team, facilitators are asked to attend a training led by a Microcosm Design Team member a day or so prior to the event.

Many of the table facilitators are members of the microcosm team itself. To insure they can function as a team member as well as facilitator, the facilitator role is often shifted for different activities throughout the session.

There are a number of good facilitation skill building resources available in the educational arena.

# Leadership's Role

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For a microcosm team to stay motivated, it is important that they feel confident that their work has value to the greater organization. One way to demonstrate their value is for key college leaders (including Trustees) to attend and participate in microcosm team events.

For microcosms comprised of community members, this may include the Board chair opening the event. For staff or student microcosms, the President or Provost is on hand to situate the day. The critical component is that the microcosm team understands the importance of the work they do to leadership.

# Event Moderator

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A member of the Microcosm Design Team serves as the overall event moderator. She or he acts as “emcee” guiding the participants through the activities of the session. Instructions for each activity should be given both orally and in writing. PowerPoint presentation software is a useful tool in keeping the microcosm team on course throughout the session.

Specific roles for the event moderator include:

- Reviewing the microcosm team purpose
- Reviewing team ground rules or guiding principles
- Reviewing past team accomplishments
- Provide an overview of how today’s activities fit within the larger team purpose
- Review the agenda
- Introduce each specific activity and then turn it over to table facilitators
- Moderate the table report outs or any other whole group activity
- Determine break times and length
- Keep the group on schedule
- Re-design doomed processes or activities on-the-fly when things don’t go as expected
- Taking advantage of “teachable moments” to reinforce college culture

# Multi-sensory Experience

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Microcosm team events must be designed with the whole person in mind. It is important to incorporate as many senses and experiences into the event as possible. Successful microcosm events share the same characteristics as successful parties – good food, good music, fun activities, and interesting people.

Provided below are a number of ways to build multi-sensory experiences into a microcosm session:

- Live music
- Creating pictures with paint or markers
- Building a model
- Lots and lots of great food
- Use of multiple technologies
- Sharing poems or stories
- Moving from one location to another
- Use of video or movie clips
- Art work
- Disposable cameras on each table
- Funny table favors or trinkets
- Door prizes or other takeaways
- Scavenger hunts
- Down time for people to “visit”
- Cheerleaders or a visit from the college mascot

# **Importance of Logistics**

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Logistics can make or break a microcosm event. Careful attention to details must go into the planning and implementation of the event. A separate microcosm logistics team is recommended. Some issues to consider include:

- Facilitator boxes with everything a table facilitator might needs (and more)
  - Tape
  - Markers
  - Voting dots
  - Pens
  - Paper pads
- Prepared nametags for each participant (Be sure names are spelled correctly!)
- Quick, efficient check-in procedures
- Candy on each table (especially chocolates!)
- Food and water available throughout the session
- All the technology works on cue
- Handouts are on each table before the session begins
- Microphones are used when needed
- Accommodations for special populations are handled sensitively
- Session evaluation forms

# **Part 3:**

# **Microcosm Process and Tools**



## **Individual → Small Group → Whole Group**

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One way to think about designing a microcosm team activity is to move the work from the individual to the small group to the whole group.

For example, let's say that the goal of the microcosm activity is to identify potential ways to measure "improvement." The activity begins with asking each person to sit silently for three minutes thinking about how improvement might be measured. After this individual work, a variety of techniques could be used to get the individual ideas out for the table group to consider.

Once the table group comes to consensus on their best measures, the work is brought to the whole group level. Another process is then used to bring the entire group to consensus on the top five indicators of "improvement." Going from individual to small group to whole group keeps everyone involved in the process and creates unity of purpose within the microcosm team.

# Max/Mix

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Participants are assigned to table groups with people they don't know from other parts of the organization. Robert Jacobs calls these Max/Mix groups—the maximum mixture of individuals from diverse backgrounds.

The table group is given an opportunity to brainstorm/discuss a topic and then each person is assigned to another group. Within each group the individuals are assigned an identifier (like a number – so that the people at a table of eight each have a number 1-8), then the large group is mixed so that all the 1's meet, all the 2's and so on. The large group team is the "home" team and the re-shuffled group is the "max/mix" team. Each person reports the results of the discussion generated by his/her home team to their max/mix group. In this way information is shared throughout the whole microcosm without having to repeat it a number of times, and each person becomes responsible (invested) in the process and the report-out.

## **Table Group Discussion and Report-Out**

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Each person is assigned to a table. Each table is given a discussion topic. Sometimes every table discusses the same issue, other times each one may be different. The group is asked to summarize the discussion into a manageable number of bullet points. A reporter from the group reports these summary points to the large group.

## **Gallery Walk**

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Each group may be asked to draw a picture of something they have discussed (“What will the future look like?”) or to highlight their top solutions to a problem or some other results from the days proceeding. These are put on flip-chart paper and hung in a special room/hallway or other space, which becomes the gallery. The microcosm participants then walk through and look at all of the results.

## **Brainstorming**

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The participants are asked to brainstorm a topic in their groups. They list as many ideas as they can in the time allotted with no judgments as to the quality of the idea, whether it is “doable”, or even if it is practical. This allows for creativity while also creating energy for the group and the Microcosm.

# Real Time Surveying

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Likert scale survey questions are printed on a large sheet and posted on the wall. Participants are given “dots” and asked to rate each question. After each person has given a rating, the results are discussed with the whole group. Examples of questions include:

- How likely are the people in your office to support this idea?
- To what extent do you feel comfortable in using the technique of 6-Hat Thinking without any review?

# Multi-Voting

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Participants are asked to narrow some choices down or to select the best from a list of ideas or solutions or some other list generated by teams or be the Microcosm. The votes are usually sticky dots given to each individual. They place the “votes” on the flip-chart paper alongside an idea they feel is best. Depending on the number of items to select from, or the number of final solutions desired, the participants may vote from 2-8 times. Each dot represents 1 vote. Ground-rules should be stipulated as to whether an individual is allowed to vote for the same thing more than once. Afterwards the top vote-getting results are revealed to the group.

## **Relationship Map**

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Ideas/Topics are listed on a big sheet of paper on the wall. Participants show the connections between the various items. Different colored string or yarn can be used to illustrate network or pattern of relationships.

## **Affinity Diagram**

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Everyone is given a “sticky-note pad” and asked to silently brainstorm and write one idea per page. After an allotted amount of time (10-15 minutes) the group members post their ideas on the wall or large sheet of paper. Then, in silence, the group arranges the sticky notes into groups of similar ideas. The group decides on a name for each collection of ideas.

## **Draw a Picture**

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Each group is asked to draw a picture of the topic just discussed. Usually in response to a question like “What will the future look like?” This exercise is designed to engage the creative side of the brain as well as to have people think differently about various ideas. The group may be asked to report-out the meaning of their picture or there may be a gallery walk to display them. Sometimes both are employed with a gallery walk and a person from each team giving a report-out.

## **Write/Tell a Story**

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Small groups are asked to write or tell a story about an event, situation or fictitious person. This is designed to again generate creativity and use the left side of the brain. It also appeals to those that have a hard time with the Draw a Picture strategy.

## **Book Discussions**

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One way of incorporating the concept of being a Learning Organization into the Microcosm Process has been to give everyone a choice of books to read before the next session. These books are generally about organizational change, teaching and learning or future visioning. GRCC purchases the books and delivers them to the individuals. At the next Microcosm session, participants are divided into groups based on their choice of books. They are then given discussion topics and a facilitator leads them through a "Book Discussion". The summary of the book or the answers to the questions is reported to the large group. One of the discussion questions usually asks how these concepts (introduced in the book) might be applied to GRCC.

## **Scavenger Hunts**

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Used as an icebreaker, a list of questions is given to each table. The group members attempt to answer the questions in the time allotted. The questions involve little known facts about Microcosm members or college figures as well as historical facts and figures about Grand Rapids Community College and the work we do. A prize is awarded to the group with the most answers correct.

## **Table Discussion**

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A topic is presented for discussion at each table. The participants give genuine thought and attempt to answer or discuss the topic. Many times this follows a look at some data that indicates trends for the future or what other Community Colleges are doing, or what experts are saying. The discussion group may have an assigned facilitator or be self-facilitated.

## **Scenario Building**

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Given some introductory information about the future, the small groups are asked to write a scenario describing how the world at Grand Rapids Community College would look like if the statement came true. For instance an introductory statement may be "In the year 2022 the state of Michigan no longer funds Community Colleges." The group would then be asked to build a scenario of our future in light of that fact.

## **Mini Lectures**

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Used in the case where the microcosm needs to learn specific content in order to accomplish the task. Examples include information about the college budgeting process, the new marketing plan, or results from a community satisfaction survey. Mini-lectures are limited to 15 minutes.

## **Come to Consensus**

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After a table discussion (or maybe brainstorming or some other technique), the small groups will be asked to "Come to Consensus" regarding the issue at hand. If there is a table facilitator, he/she may ask the individuals to identify their top two or three from a list. Noting where there is common thought the facilitator will ask if everybody is in consensus and keep working until consensus is reached. In a non-facilitated group, they may use some other process such as multi-voting to narrow their selections until one or two stand as the choice of the "group".

# Evaluations

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After every session, participants are asked to identify what they liked about the day and what they didn't like. In addition they are asked what could have been done differently. This allows us to apply a quality application to our process so that we can continuously improve our work. The evaluations have alerted the Microcosm Design Team to ideas of new things to try and also when we need to go faster or slower to achieve desired outcomes. Evaluation results are tallied and shared with the microcosm group.

## Selecting a microcosm

- Step 1: All full time employees = 500
- Step 2: Gender (250 Male/ 250 Female)  
 Length of Employment (200 Less than 5 years/ 300 Five years or more)  
 Employee Group (250 Faculty, 50 Administrative, 50 Technical, 150 Support)
- Step 3: Optimal microcosm size = 50
- Step 4: Calculate number of participant slots by subpopulation

Total population = 500 (Identify actual number in each cell from employee records)

	Employed less than 5 years		Employed 5 years or more		TOTALS
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Faculty	50	50	75	75	250
Admin	10	10	15	15	50
Tech	10	10	15	15	50
Support	30	30	45	45	150
TOTALS	100	100	150	150	500

Microcosm = 50 (Calculate the corresponding number of slots per cell based on population ratios)

	Employed less than 5 years		Employed 5 years or more		TOTALS
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Faculty	5	5	(7.5) 8*	(7.5) 7*	25
Admin	1	1	(1.5) 1*	(1.5) 2*	5
Tech	1	1	(1.5) 2*	(1.5) 1*	5
Support	3	3	(4.5) 4*	(4.5) 5*	17
TOTALS	10	10	15	15	50

\* Since we only want whole people on the microcosm, we need to systematically bump the cells up or down one person.

**WE NEED 50-70 GRCC COLLEAGUES FROM ALL AREAS (FACULTY, ADMIN, TAPS, CAMPUS POLICE, PART-TIME FACULTY, OFFICE PERSONNEL, CEBA, B & TT/CCOT) TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2001-2002 GRCC STRATEGY TEAM!**

The GRCC Strategy Team brings together a **microcosm** of the GRCC community in a *continuous improvement* effort to learn and work together to support our efforts to make our vision, mission, and strategic outcomes a reality.

In spring of 1999, the Strategy Team worked to revise the mission and vision, identify college values, and determine the 8 strategic outcomes or "ends" the college desires. During the 1999-2000 school year, the Strategy Team authored the GRCC strategic plan after studying a wide range of college and community trends that will impact our future. Last year was a year of action as the Strategy Team worked with strategy cluster leaders on implementation issues, provided direction to the GRCC communications and marketing plan, and determined criteria for strategy prioritization.

2001-2002 will be another exciting year as we study best practices in each of the strategic outcome areas and update our strategic plan. We will also work to better understand how the GRCC mission, vision, and values are demonstrated in all areas of the college. Please join our team!

The 50-70 GRCC colleagues who volunteer for this year's Strategy Team will meet in three morning sessions to further the strategic vision for the direction of the College through the following activities:

- **Learn and practice the principles of a *learning organization* in the context of strategic planning activities**
- **Learn to apply the GRCC mission, vision, and values into your daily work**
- **Review "best practices" related to our strategic plan implementation**
- **Review pertinent data related to our mission, vision, and ends and determine continued strategic direction for the college**

### Strategy Team Work Sessions

**October 4, 2001:** 7:30am to 1:00pm (Thursday)

**January 25, 2002:** 7:30am to 1:00pm (Friday)

**April 12, 2002:** 7:30am to 1:00pm (Friday)

(You)

**Call  
234-4044 to  
volunteer  
for the  
Strategy  
Team!**

**We need good team members!**

We encourage both former team members and those who have not participated in planning activities previously to consider this opportunity. The proportions in the microcosm will equal the percentage of staff in each of the GRCC bargaining units. The employee groups will select half of the participants while the others will be randomly selected from individuals that volunteer. Every attempt will be made for the Strategy Team to represent the diversity of the GRCC staff.

Please contact Donna Kragt (Phone: 234-4044, Fax: 234-3929, E-mail: [dkragt@grcc.cc.mi.us](mailto:dkragt@grcc.cc.mi.us)) by **September 14** if you would like to volunteer for the Strategy Team.

Given the importance of this work, faculty will be given leaves to participate in the three work sessions.

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Process Planning Team: *Steve Abid, Don Boyer, Gary Burbridge, Mark Champion, Frank Conner, Dan Keyes, Donna Kragt, Ruth Kurlandsky, Patti Trepkowski, Cami Zawacki.*

Sample microcosm invitation letter for  
community member

September 17, 1999

Dr. Kenneth P. Spackly  
Grand Rapids Rotary  
224 East Fulton  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Dear Dr. Johnson:

For the past 3 years, the GRCC Board of Trustees has been holding a series of Strategic Conversations to get input from the community regarding the future mission and vision for the College. This work has resulted in the identification of eight outcomes that the college will provide for the greater Grand Rapids community. They include Lifelong Learning, Workforce Development, Transfer and Articulation, Developmental Education, Community Outreach, Community Partnerships, Diversity, and Flexible Learning.

As a valued member of the community, the Board needs you once again to participate in a Strategic Conversation on **Monday, October 18, 1999 from 4:15 to 6:15 in the Board Library on the campus of GRCC.**

The purpose of the session is to answer the question, **"How will the community be assured that GRCC is successfully achieving or making acceptable progress toward these outcomes?"** We need you to tell us your ideas about what evidence the College needs to collect and report to the community about our progress. It is important that the monitoring system be designed using measures that the community finds useful and informative. At the session you will also hear first hand about the new vision, mission and future plans as we work to be the community's college. The session will be lively and interactive! We strongly urge you to attend.

**Please RSVP by October 8<sup>th</sup>. Upon confirmation of your participation we will fax or mail you a pre-session packet including maps and parking information.** For your convenience, you may RSVP by:

- Calling 234-4039
- Faxing the registration form to 234-3929
- Mailing the registration form in the envelope provided

If you have any questions, please call the College at 234-4039. The Grand Rapids Community College Board of Trustees thank you sharing your valuable time with us as we continually work together to meet the learning needs of the greater Grand Rapids Community.

Sincerely,

Gary Schenk  
Chairperson

## **PRINCIPLES** Used to Guide the Process of the Strategy Microcosm

*We desire to be a vibrant learning organization. A learning organization has the ability to organize its activities to create its desired future. (Senge)*

*The College will be different 5 years from now than it is today. We can choose to either let chance take us there, or work together to set realistic goals and action plans that move us toward our desired future.*

*Improvement happens when individuals and work groups decide to do something differently.*

*All staff must have the opportunity and the responsibility to participate in the planning for their individual work, department work and college wide.*

*The plan is not nearly as important as the planning process. What's important is the dialogue about our desired future and mutually agreed upon efforts to move us there.*

*A plan that looks pretty, but only sits on the shelf is useless.*

## Strategic Conversation #7: Developing Quality Measures

### October 18, 1999

<p>Registration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants will pick up name tags, parking pass</li> <li>• Participants will select small group assignment (random)</li> </ul> <p>Handouts: Vision, Mission, Ends, Values document GRCC note pad, pen Agenda</p>	<p>4:00- 4:15</p>	<p>Greeters Ed Nina</p>
<p>Welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome participants</li> <li>• Introduce other Trustees, President Olivarez</li> <li>• Introduces Jan to begin session.</li> </ul>	<p>4:15- 4:20</p>	<p>Gary Schenk</p>
<p>Overview: "How did we get here?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jan reviews timeline of activities to date</li> <li>• Jan introduces the revised vision, mission, values and ends</li> <li>• Jan introduces Donna Kragt to describe small group work</li> </ul> <p>Material: Power Point</p>	<p>4:20- 4:30</p>	<p>Jan Maggini</p>
<p>Situate small group work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donna explains that desired outcome is to have community identify our measures of success on the outcomes (ends) we have selected</li> <li>• Donna explains that participants will break into 4 small groups. Each group will have a GRCC staff facilitator, recorder, and BOT "host".</li> </ul> <p>Material: Power Point</p>	<p>4:30- 4:35</p>	<p>Donna Kragt</p>
<p><b>Transition to small group rooms.</b></p> <p>Group1: 506M (Frank, Sandy) Group2: 507M (Steve, Judith) Group 3. 510M (Ruth, Fred) Group 4. 512M (Patti, Dan)</p>	<p>4:35- 4:40</p>	

<p>Small group introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator welcomes participants and introduces BOT hosts.</li> </ul> <p>Facilitator invites each person to briefly introduce himself/herself to the group by giving name and telling what drew them to participate in this session.</p>	<p>4:40-4:50</p>	<p>Facilitator</p>
<p>Activity 1: 2005 Scenario</p> <p>“The year is 2005. A delegation representing GRCC and the Grand Rapids community are in Washington, DC to accept an award for being ranked the #1 Community College in the United States. The question for you to consider is simple: ‘Why did we win?’ What would GRCC be doing that was so innovative or would produce such tremendous results that we would emerge as the national model for community colleges?”</p> <p><i>Give people 1-2 minutes to consider the question. Encourage them to make notes on their notepads.</i></p> <p><i>Begin by asking for volunteers to report out. Recorder records all thoughts on flip chart.</i></p> <p><i>Materials: Flip charts &amp; markers, notepads</i></p>	<p>4:50-5:15</p>	<p>Facilitator Recorder</p>
<p><b>Activity 2: Brainstorm measures or indicators for each end.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each person is asked to spend 1-2 minutes thinking about the question, “<i>What data does GRCC need to collect and report to the community to show we are making progress toward accomplishing these outcomes?</i>” “<i>What would you consider to be acceptable and convincing <u>evidence</u>?</i>”</li> <li>Participants are instructed to write down each measure on a separate post-it note.</li> </ul>	<p>5:15-5:25</p>	<p>Facilitators</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the hall way will be posted 8 flip charts, one for each end.</li> <li>• Participants go out into the hallway and post their post it notes on the appropriate sheet.</li> <li>• After all the post-its have been placed on the sheets, each team will take two of the ends and return to their small group room. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group1: 506M (Lifelong learning, Workforce Development)</li> <li>Group2: 507M (Transfer and Articulation, Community Outreach)</li> <li>Group 3. 510M (Developmental education, Community partnerships)</li> <li>Group 4. 512M (Diversity, Flexible learning)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Materials: Post-it notes, pens , flip chart sheet with questions/ends</p>		
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<p><b>Activity 3: Sort and organize measures for ends</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitators will post the flip chart sheets for their 2 ends in the small group room.</li> <li>• The team will sort, organize and label the ideas.</li> <li>• Each team will prepare a list of specific ideas (no more than 10) for their End. Facilitator will transfer these ideas to a <u>new sheet</u>.</li> <li>• Each participant will be given 4 dots and asked to vote on the two indicators for each of their 2 ends they think the college should measure and report to the community.</li> <li>• Facilitator for each group will prepare to report out to large group.</li> </ul> <p>Materials: Flip chart paper, markers, dots</p>	5:25-5:45	
<p><b>Transition back to Board Library</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitators hang the new sheets with dots in the Board Library.</li> </ul> <p>Materials: Evaluation forms placed on chairs</p>	5:45-5:50	Facilitators
<p><b>Report Out</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terri Handlin acts as Emcee</li> <li>• Recorders from each group report out those quality measures which received the most votes for each of the ends</li> </ul>	5:50-6:00	Terri
<p><b>Next Steps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Juan describes the value of this work for the College and how the Strategy Team will use this information in the next few months.</li> <li>• Juan invites comment from participants if time allows.</li> <li>• Juan reminds participants to complete evaluation sheet</li> </ul>	6:05-6:15	Juan
<p><b>Thank you and dismiss group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gary to give a final Thank You and dismiss group.</li> </ul>	6:15	Gary

**APPENDIX E**

A bimonthly electronic newsletter for those interested in trends, issues and events that may affect Grand Rapids Community College.

Vol. 7, Issue 5

January 14, 2002

**What You'll Find:**

TRENDS, ISSUES, EVENTS: **Managerial, professional and technical jobs continue to grow despite looming recession and the effects of terrorism**

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING: **More on Story Telling**

USEFUL LINKS & RESOURCES: **Track Caribou and Polar Bears from Space**

COMMENTS: **An Invitation**

ENDNOTES: **Carpe Diem**

**TRENDS, ISSUES, EVENTS**

**Issue:** Continued loss of jobs in the manufacturing sector.

Trend: Technical and professional jobs are on the rise. At 80.5 million, managerial, technical and professional jobs currently account for 60 percent of all jobs in the American workplace.

Summaries: Changing U.S. Economy Places Emphasis On Education and Skills

Managerial, professional and technical jobs continue to grow despite looming recession and the effects of terrorism Washington, D.C. - While concerns about a recession and terrorism dominate the news and focus the nation's attention on changes in total employment, a deeper look at the workforce reveals a long-term shift in the economy to occupations and sectors that require enhanced education and skills. These overall trends are likely to be reflected in the October unemployment report to be released Friday, Nov. 2.

Over the past 12 months ending September 2001, total employment declined by 165,000, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data. However, most of the job loss was concentrated in the traditional areas of production, craft and agriculture. Those sectors lost almost 1 million jobs in that time. By contrast, employment in managerial, technical and professional occupations - jobs at the core of the changing economy - grew by 636,000.

"What is noteworthy about the managerial and professional occupations is their strength during a year of slowing economic growth, widespread layoffs and Sept. 11," said EPF President Ed Potter. "The growth of these sectors in 2000 was actually greater than the increase in such jobs from September 1999 to September 2000, when 504,000 jobs were created."

The net loss of 165,000 jobs over the 12 months ending September 2001 masks massive shifts in employment - a total of 2.7 million new jobs were created in 27 different industry sectors while nearly 2.9 million jobs were lost in 24 other industry sectors, Potter said. Job gains were widely spread across many sectors, including retail (583,000), education services (417,000), medical services (252,000), construction (213,000), business services (192,000) and finance (113,000). By far, the biggest loss was manufacturing (1.2 million jobs), followed by wholesale trade occupations (738,000).

These trends point to a continuing critical need for skills and education. Between September 2000 and September 2001, more than 944,000 new jobs went to applicants with post-secondary training. Specifically, workers age 25 and over with a four-year college degree gained 366,000 new jobs. Workers with vocational training or certificates gained 511,000 new jobs. Meanwhile, job losses of 1.1 million were concentrated among workers with no post-secondary education.

"The loss of jobs for those with no post secondary training continues a long-term trend that was only briefly interrupted by a buoyant job market of 1997-1999," Potter said. "Among workers age 25 and older, the number of job-holders with only a high school diploma or less has been stagnant for the past decade."

During the past 12 months, the unemployment rate for persons with less than a high school diploma has spiked from 5.6 percent to 7.1 percent. The rate for workers with college degrees remains at a low 2 percent, which is effectively full employment, Potter said. Vocational program degree holders are similarly in high demand, with their rate at only 2.7 percent. In contrast, workers with some college education but no degree had a rate of 4.2 percent, reinforcing the importance of demonstrated and certifiable accomplishments and skills. The overall unemployment rate for September was 4.9 percent.

An area of much attention has been the information technology (IT) sector, as dot.coms have suffered heavy losses in the past 18 months. While large layoffs have occurred, total employment of IT professionals remains essentially unchanged at 4.4 million. The unemployment rate is higher for this group at 4.9 percent compared to 1.7 percent a year ago, but the number of workers laid off (227,000) appears to be predominantly composed of new entrants. IT professionals remain in demand and most find new jobs quickly when layoffs occur.

At 80.5 million, managerial, technical and professional jobs currently account for 60 percent of all jobs in the American workplace.

From Employment Policy Foundation, For the entire article, go to:

<http://www.epf.org/media/newsreleases/2001/nr20011031.htm>

The EPF site is very interesting and can be found at: <http://www.epf.org/>

October 31, 2001

Contact: Dan Lara

**Implications, Threats and Opportunities:** This closer look at what's happening to the American Labor Market is good news for community colleges in general. The opportunity for CCs to provide postsecondary learning experiences that enhance knowledge and skills will be unlimited if we continue to watch where the jobs are going. On a more local level, I have some concern for Michigan and more importantly west Michigan and its dependence on manufacturing. Don't get me wrong the greater GR area has shown itself to be premier manufacturing region. We do manufacturing. We do quality. And we do it well. However, as everyone gets leaner and meaner, the number of jobs in manufacturing will continue to decline over the next 10 years and those jobs will not return. Some futurist predict that by 2025 only 5% of the US workforce will be in manufacturing jobs and those jobs will require a very high skill level.

If the above numbers are right this recession may be caused more by skill mismatch than by a slowing economy. There are other bothersome trends that affect this region. Shifts in the way people work has caused a slow down in the need for office furniture. Again, some futurists predict that 30% of the workforce may be working out of their homes by 2025. Many workers go from hotel to hotel working on the road and have no need for a permanent office. Are the new furniture markets home and hotel office furniture?

In the realm of automobile manufacturing, cars used to have a 10-year life, many coming off the assembly line today and tomorrow may have a 30-year life span. The perceived need to decrease the use of fossil fuels may spur more mass transit and personal transport vehicles that run on fuel cells will be available to the general public next year. Will such disruptive technologies end America's love affair with the car. Maybe, maybe not, but it is possible and the possibilities point to dramatic changes in the area of manufacturing over the next 5-10 years.

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#### **WHAT, WHEN, WHY AND HOW: ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING**

I skate to where the puck will be. Gretsky

This year we will focus on some tools that use scanning information to help an organization examine its preferred future. Our first tool: Scenario Planning

I've been reading a fascinating book: 2025: Scenarios of U.S. and Global Society Reshaped by Science and Technology by Joseph F. Coates, John B. Mahaffie, and Andy Hines. Oakhill Press. 1996. Approx. 300 pages.

<http://josephcoates.com/index.html#>

It is full of stories that make us think. Based on trends, issues and events Joe Coates (one of the early pioneers in issues management and environmental scanning) makes 107 assumptions and then writes 15 scenarios (stories) about what the world will look like in 2025 and sketches in how it got there through the influences of science and technology.

For instance, about education he says: "The effects of education have been three-fold, representing the effective meeting of 100-year objective of the public education in the United States:

1. Universal Education
2. Lifelong Education
3. Individually-tailored education

What are the implications for the community college given the culmination of those outcomes in 2025? How will we need to be different? What will we be doing?

If your really want to practice Peter Schwartz's "suspension of disbelief" (The Art of the Long View) get 2025 and try to imagine how your life would differ if these things actually happened.

O.K. I know the skeptics are saying why would I think about what might not even happen?

Arie de Geus, the coordinator of Group Planning at Royal Shell during the 80's best expressed it this way:

"When people play with mental models of the world they are actually creating a new language among themselves that expresses the knowledge the have acquired. And here we come to the most important aspect of institutional learning, whether it be achieved through teaching and or through play as we have defined it: the institutional learning process is a process of language development. As the implicit knowledge of each learner becomes explicit, his ore her mental model becomes a building block of the institutional model. How much and how fast this model changes will depend on the culture and structure of the organization. Teams that have to cope with rigid procedures and information systems will learn more slowly than those with flexible, open communication channels. Autocratic institutions will learn faster or not at all--the ability of one or a few leaders being a risky institutional bet. (The Art of the Long View, Schwartz, 1996.)

#### **USEFUL LINKS & RESOURCES**

Don't miss this click of the month. This is a perfect example of what some have called cross-disciplinary specialization. This site combines biology, conservation, and environmental studies with space technology. Really cool, your kids will like it too.

#### **CLICK OF THE MONTH:**

SPACE FOR SPECIES, <http://www.spaceforspecies.ca>

Track your favorite caribou this winter (or peregrine falcon or leatherback turtle). Learn what the biggest threats to polar bears are and what space technologies can do to help them.

Space for Species is a Canadian consortium whose fascinating and educational Web site is ideal for anyone interested in both the environment and space exploration.

Hosted by Bob Thirsk, a Canadian astronaut currently working with NASA as a spacecraft communicator for the international space station program, the site includes links to information on satellite telemetry and on how researchers use the data to track animals, predict weather changes, and monitor other conditions on Earth. The site also offers information on careers in space science.

"When astronauts first traveled to the Moon, they gathered rock samples and answered questions that people had been asking for thousands of years," according to the site. "Astronaut observations give us a unique outlook on our home turf. Apart from the pure beauty of the Earth, they furnish new knowledge of our planetary habitat."

The preceding Click of the Month is from:

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#### **COMMENTS**

This area is the arena for your ideas, thoughts and opinions on information presented in ScaNotes and/or your perceptions of trends, issues and events you see around you. If you participate, this is where the sharing, the learning and the fun can take place.

Given the above comments under Implications, Opportunities and Threats, I would expect that your comments would go nicely in this spot in the next edition of ScaNotes.

#### **ENDNOTES**

Well, it has been quite a year. 9-11-01 has changed our lives, our thinking and it has changed our opportunities. Many have said nothing will be the same after 9-11. Since the future has not happened, we as a people either on a personal level or as a society have the power to shape the future, we always have. 9-11 may have changed how we will shape our future, but it will not change the fact that we will shape it. We will shape it by paying attention to our environment (trends, events, issues), by continually evaluating and reevaluating our situation and by making conscious decisions that will move us forward. No, I am not naive; I know there are things that are beyond our control, as a people we learned that very well in 2001. However there are still opportunities to make things better and move things forward. Community colleges can play a huge role in shaping the future. So can you. Let's keep our eye on the horizon, there's bound to be something really worthwhile on the other side. Happy 2002!

