

To: LCCC College Community
From: Leading and Communicating Action Team and Quality Council
Date: March 1, 2010
Subject: Leading and Communicating Survey Results and Action Team Recommendations

The following pages contain the report presented by the Leading and Communicating Action Team to the LCCC Quality Council on Friday, February 26, 2010. The report describes the issues identified by the team as well as its recommendations for action projects and quick fixes to address these issues. The tabulated results from the January 2010 survey on leading and communicating are included as an appendix.

The Leading and Communicating Action Team used the tabulated percentages and the comments when developing the recommendations for both the action projects and the quick fixes. Quality Council is now in the process of reviewing the recommendations to determine next steps. At their March 12 meeting, it is expected that Quality Council will refine or combine the recommendations made by the Action Team to identify the next action project to be undertaken.

Recommendations to Improve Leadership, Communication, and Decision Making at LCCC

Presented to the LCCC Quality Council by the Leading and Communicating Action Team:
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Introduction

In October 2009, the Leading and Communicating Action Team was formed to delve into issues of leading and communicating at LCCC. As stated in the *Action Project Commitment* submitted to the *Higher Learning Commission*,

Results from a Campus Climate Survey (August 2009) indicate that, of the nine AQIP categories, Category 5 has the most room for improvement in terms of how employees rate the college. Results from a Learning College Survey (January 2009) support this conclusion. Calls for specific action project proposals revealed that, while most agree the college has big issues in areas related to this category, we are struggling to define these issues. Because of this lack of clarity, we also struggle with developing practical recommendations for how to address these issues.

The goal of this project is two-fold.

1. By analyzing available data and conducting more focused research as necessary, the project will lead to a better institutional understanding of communication and decision making issues the college faces.
2. The project will also result in specific, prioritized recommendations for future action projects to develop and implement strategies for addressing those issues and improving the overall institutional climate related to this AQIP category.

To achieve these goals, the action team first reviewed the results of the two recent surveys mentioned above, as well as input collected from college employees during the October 2009 inservice. The team concluded that issues fell into three categories: communication, leadership, and trust and respect. To further define these issues, the team decided to conduct a follow-up survey. In order to shed more light on the issues, the survey was designed to examine specific areas and includes several focused items. Survey items were drawn from surveys in literature, with the language adapted to meet the needs of a college campus.

On January 19, 2010, the survey was launched in a web-based format. Three hundred twenty-nine (329) benefitted employees who were employed as of the December 2009 payroll and were still employed at the time of the launch were invited to participate. The survey was open for ten days; reminders, both email and hard-copy, were sent to encourage participation. In addition, paper versions of the survey were made available to employees who preferred that format. By the close of the survey period, 218 surveys were submitted. This response rate yields a margin of error of $\pm 3.86\%$ (95% confidence).

Through analysis of the survey results, the team was able to more clearly define several issues related to leading and communicating at LCCC. These issues, along with recommendations for action projects and quick fixes to address them, are discussed below. The tabulated results of the survey are included as an appendix to this report.

Issues and Recommendations

1. There is a perceived climate of fear and distrust. The team drew this conclusion based on several items, as shown in the table below.

Survey Item	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Agree or Strongly Agree	Don't Know
I am fearful about my job at LCCC.	47.3%	46.8%	2.8%
I am fearful about speaking my mind at LCCC.	39.0%	56.4%	1.4%
I would be afraid to file a complaint or grievance.	37.6%	57.8%	1.8%
Open and ethical communication is practiced.	65.1%	27.5%	4.6%

Note: Percentages may not total 100% because responses of "Doesn't Apply" and non-respondents are omitted from the table. See survey items 1g, 1h, 1m, and 1n in the appendix.

To address this issue, the action team recommends the following action project.

Action Project 1: Develop a system, short of the formal grievance process, for employee complaints and issues related to the enforcement of policy and procedure. This system should include an ombudsman function (an individual or a team) and a process for reporting back to individuals how their complaints or issues were handled.

2. Respondents were perceived to be unclear about the functions of the President's Cabinet. As shown in the following table, at least 20% of respondents answered "don't know" to each of the items in the section on this group. On 14 of the 25 related items, over 30% responded "don't know."

Survey Item	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Agree or Strongly Agree	Don't Know
The President's Cabinet makes decisions about jobs in a fair and equitable manner.	40.30%	12.90%	42.20%
The President's Cabinet listens to employee concerns before making a job decision.	46.80%	10.10%	38.50%
The President's Cabinet collects accurate and complete information about job decisions.	41.20%	10.50%	43.10%
The President's Cabinet clarifies decisions and answers additional questions.	46.80%	10.60%	37.20%
The President's Cabinet applies decisions consistently across all employees.	44.90%	11.00%	39.40%
The President's Cabinet allows me to challenge or appeal job decisions.	31.20%	10.60%	47.20%
Members of President's Cabinet treat me with respect and dignity when making job decisions.	26.10%	25.70%	36.20%
Members of President's Cabinet are truthful.	35.80%	15.60%	42.70%
Members of President's Cabinet show concern for my rights as an employee.	37.20%	19.70%	36.20%
Members of President's Cabinet explain decisions in a way that makes sense to me.	45.50%	17.40%	29.40%

Survey Item	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Agree or Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Members of President's Cabinet take me seriously.	32.20%	22.90%	34.40%
Members of President's Cabinet are too busy to spend meaningful time with employees.	26.20%	39.40%	28.40%
Members of President's Cabinet keep employees informed about decisions that affect their jobs.	45.00%	20.10%	29.80%
Members of President's Cabinet are concerned about our fears.	46.40%	15.20%	33.00%
There are opportunities available to me to express my ideas to the President's Cabinet.	37.60%	24.30%	31.20%
I believe and trust the information I receive from the President's Cabinet.	46.30%	22.90%	24.30%
Communications from the President's Cabinet are adequate for me to know what is going on in the organization.	53.30%	21.60%	20.20%
Members of President's Cabinet share information regularly with employees.	45.80%	25.30%	23.40%
Members of President's Cabinet make themselves accessible to me.	38.50%	28.00%	25.70%
I am treated with respect by members of President's Cabinet.	25.70%	39.90%	23.90%
Members of President's Cabinet demonstrate effective leadership.	45.90%	22.50%	24.80%
I have confidence in the leadership of President's Cabinet.	49.10%	21.10%	23.40%
I am comfortable raising any concerns or issues with members of President's Cabinet.	51.40%	20.20%	22.50%
My VP advocates for me in President's Cabinet.	26.20%	32.10%	30.30%
If members of President's Cabinet make mistakes, they will admit to them.	43.10%	7.80%	43.60%

Note: Percentages may not total 100% because responses of "Doesn't Apply" and non-respondents are omitted from the table. See survey items 3a – 3y in the appendix.

To address this issue, the action team recommends the following action project.

Action Project 2: Define the existing committee/council structures, including purpose, membership, responsibilities, and role in decision making. This should include decision-making bodies, such as President's Cabinet and the Learning Leadership Team, as well as all standing operational groups. The second phase of this project would be to develop a system or process to orient employees to these structures.

3. There is perceived dissatisfaction with communication from members of President's Cabinet, as well as accessibility of the members. This conclusion is drawn from responses to the following items.

Survey Item	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Agree or Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Members of President's Cabinet explain decisions in a way that makes sense to me.	45.50%	17.40%	29.40%
Members of President's Cabinet are too busy to spend meaningful time with employees.	26.20%	39.40%	28.40%

Survey Item	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Agree or Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Communications from the President's Cabinet are adequate for me to know what is going on in the organization.	53.30%	21.60%	20.20%
Members of President's Cabinet share information regularly with employees.	45.80%	25.30%	23.40%
Members of President's Cabinet make themselves accessible to me.	38.50%	28.00%	25.70%

Note: Percentages may not total 100% because responses of "Doesn't Apply" and non-respondents are omitted from the table. See survey items 3j, 3l, 3q, 3r, and 3s in the appendix.

To address this issue, the action team recommends the following quick fixes.

Quick Fix 1: Have all members of President's Cabinet hold sessions with the faculty and staff, similar to the sessions that the president has held in the past with staff members. The suggested format is an update followed by a question-and-answer period. Questions can be submitted prior to the sessions, but there should also be time for follow-up questions during the allotted time. These sessions should occur at least twice a semester at the onset with one-time offerings in subsequent semesters.

Quick Fix 2: Use the organizational structure and face-to-face division/department meetings to inform the college about decisions that have been made, and, as appropriate, rationale behind decisions, in a timely manner. It is also recommended that weekly or biweekly updates on the "state of the college" be available for the entire community via email. This could facilitate communication and build trust.

4. There are perceived breakdowns in communication among departments, as shown in the table below.

Survey Item	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Agree or Strongly Agree	Don't Know
There is good communication among departments.	73.90%	17.50%	6.00%
There is good communication between my department and the administration.	49.50%	40.80%	6.40%

Note: Percentages may not total 100% because responses of "Doesn't Apply" and non-respondents are omitted from the table. See survey items 1i and 1j in the appendix.

To address this issue, the action team recommends the following action project.

Action Project 3: Identify existing barriers to communication among departments and between departments and administration and develop strategies and activities to remove these barriers. This could include clarifying the organizational structure and orienting employees on the functions of various departments and divisions. The second phase of this project would be to implement the strategies and activities to open channels of communication and build trust

between departments, administration, and employees. The team for this project should be broad-based and represent all areas of the campus community.

5. As shown in the following table, employees perceive that policies and procedures are not enforced equitably or in a timely manner. It may be that, due to the number of new employees the college has hired in the past five years, many are unaware of current policies and procedures.

Survey Item	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Agree or Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Policies and procedures are enforced equitably.	59.60%	26.20%	11.50%
Policies and procedures are enforced in a timely manner.	56.90%	24.70%	13.80%

Note: Percentages may not total 100% because responses of "Doesn't Apply" and non-respondents are omitted from the table. See survey items 1q and 1r in the appendix.

Strategic goal 3.2, when accomplished, should lead to improvement in this area. In the meantime, the action team recommends the following quick fix.

Quick Fix 3: Require all administrators to review existing policies and procedures and inform their employees of those policies and procedures relevant to their jobs by May 1, 2010.

6. There is a perceived lack of confidence and trust in president's leadership. As shown in the table below, with one exception, at least 40% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the items directly related to this issue.

Survey Item	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Agree or Strongly Agree	Don't Know
The president makes decisions about jobs in a fair and equitable manner.	49.10%	21.50%	24.80%
The president listens to employee concerns before making a job decision.	49.60%	26.20%	20.60%
The president collects accurate and complete information about job decisions.	45.40%	22.40%	28.00%
The president clarifies decisions and answers additional questions.	51.40%	31.70%	13.30%
The president applies decisions consistently to all employees.	50.00%	21.50%	24.30%
The president treats me with respect and dignity when making job decisions.	29.30%	44.00%	19.70%
The president is truthful.	42.20%	31.60%	22.00%
The president explains decisions in a way that makes sense to me.	51.00%	36.70%	8.70%
I have confidence in the decisions of the president.	56.40%	28.40%	11.50%
Communications from the president are adequate for me to know what is going on in the organization.	56.90%	31.20%	7.80%
The president demonstrates effective leadership.	55.90%	32.60%	7.80%
I have confidence in the leadership of the president.	58.30%	28.90%	9.60%
I am comfortable raising any concerns or issues with the president.	58.70%	29.80%	8.30%
The president shows compassion toward employees.	46.40%	35.30%	14.70%
If the president makes mistakes, he will admit to them.	49.50%	19.80%	27.50%

Note: Percentages may not total 100% because responses of "Doesn't Apply" and non-respondents are omitted from the table. See survey items 4a – 4o in the appendix.

The team urges the Quality Council to bring these results to the attention of the Board of Trustees, in addition to implementing the following action projects to address this issue.

Action Project 4: Reinstitute the College Council to facilitate communication and transparent decision making. This should be a team of individuals who are elected by their peers, rather than appointed by college administration. The Council would communicate directly to the president and Board of Trustees concerns, input, and recommendations they gather from the college community. Furthermore, the Council must be an independent body to provide needed channels of communication to improve trust and confidence in the college leadership. Formal procedures for this group should include assurance that any council meeting is a safe place where any member, regardless of position, may express his/her opinions without fear.

Quick Fix 4: Present the results of the Leading and Communicating survey to the Board of Trustees and the ACCT consultant to be used in conjunction with the Board's annual evaluation of the president.

In addition to the action projects and quick fixes outlined above, the action team recommends that this survey be administered yearly to document improvement that has been made. While items could be added to address other issues that may arise, the items included in the January 2010 survey should not be changed so that meaningful comparisons may be made.

Appendix: Survey Instrument and Tabulated Survey Results

Notes:

1. Percentages are based on 218 submitted surveys. Percentages for items may not total 100% because not all 218 respondents answered every item.
2. Although the responses to the open-ended items are not included in this appendix to protect the anonymity of respondents, all comments were considered by the action team in the development of its recommendations to the Quality Council.

LCCC Leading & Communicating Action Team Survey

January 2010

Introduction: The Leading and Communicating Action Team was formed last semester to look into issues of Leading and Communicating at LCCC. Results from a Campus Climate Survey (August 2009) indicate that, of the nine AQIP categories, Category 5 (Leading and Communicating) has the most room for improvement in terms of how employees rate the college. Results from a Learning College Survey (January 2009) support this conclusion. Calls for specific action project proposals have revealed that, while most agree the college has big issues in areas related to this category, we are struggling to define these issues. Because of this lack of clarity, we also struggle with developing practical recommendations for how to address these issues.

The goal of our project is two-fold:

1. By analyzing available data and conducting more focused research as necessary, the project will lead to a better institutional understanding of communication and decision making issues the college faces.
2. The project will also result in specific, prioritized recommendations for future action projects to develop and implement strategies for addressing those issues and improving the overall institutional climate related to this AQIP category.

This survey will help us achieve the first of these goals. Your participation is critical in helping us accomplish this goal. Results of this survey will be anonymous; individual responses will not be reported.

Directions: Please indicate your level of agreement with following statement using a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4(Strongly Agree). Answer "Don't Know" if you don't know or understand or if you don't have enough information. Answer "Doesn't Apply" if the item doesn't apply to you.

2. About Your Supervisor

	<i>Strongly Disagree (1)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(3)</i>	<i>Strongly Agree (4)</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>	<i>Doesn't Apply</i>
a) My supervisor makes decisions about my job in a fair and equitable manner.	7.8%	10.6%	33.9%	41.3%	3.7%	0.0%
b) My supervisor listens to employee concerns before making a job decision.	7.8%	13.8%	29.8%	40.8%	5.0%	0.0%
c) My supervisor collects accurate and complete information about job decisions.	8.7%	11.9%	34.4%	35.8%	6.9%	0.0%
d) My supervisor clarifies decisions and answers additional questions.	7.8%	13.3%	32.1%	41.3%	2.8%	0.0%
e) My supervisor applies decisions consistently to all employees.	14.7%	18.3%	25.2%	32.1%	6.4%	0.5%
f) My supervisor allows me to challenge or appeal job decisions.	9.2%	14.2%	27.5%	30.7%	11.0%	5.0%
g) My supervisor treats me with respect and dignity when making job decisions.	6.4%	11.5%	27.5%	50.0%	2.3%	0.0%
h) My supervisor is sensitive to my personal needs when job decisions are made.	7.3%	11.9%	25.2%	47.2%	4.1%	1.8%
i) My supervisor is truthful.	6.0%	9.2%	28.4%	47.7%	6.0%	0.0%
j) My supervisor shows concern for my rights as an employee.	6.9%	10.6%	29.4%	47.2%	3.7%	0.0%
k) My supervisor explains decisions in a way that makes sense to me.	9.2%	12.8%	28.9%	44.0%	2.8%	0.0%
l) I have confidence in the decisions of my supervisor.	11.5%	14.7%	27.1%	41.3%	3.2%	0.0%
m) I am kept well informed about my department's goals, plans and progress.	7.3%	17.4%	33.5%	35.3%	3.2%	0.9%
n) Communications from my supervisor are adequate for me to know what is going on in the organization.	10.1%	19.3%	29.4%	35.8%	3.2%	0.0%
o) My supervisor keeps me up to date on work place issues.	7.8%	18.3%	31.7%	36.7%	3.2%	0.0%
p) My supervisor demonstrates effective leadership.	8.7%	18.8%	27.1%	39.9%	2.8%	0.0%
q) I have confidence in the leadership of my immediate supervisor.	10.1%	16.1%	27.1%	41.7%	2.8%	0.0%
r) I am comfortable raising any concerns or issues with my supervisor.	10.1%	11.5%	29.8%	44.0%	1.8%	0.0%
s) My supervisor advocates for me.	10.6%	11.0%	23.9%	42.7%	9.6%	0.0%
t) If my supervisor makes mistakes, he/she will admit to them.	10.1%	12.8%	25.7%	39.0%	10.1%	0.0%

3. About the President's Cabinet - The President's Cabinet consists of the President, the Vice President of Administration and Finance, the Vice President of Instruction, the Vice President of Student Services (currently filled by three interim appointees), the Vice President of Workforce and Community Development, the Assistant Vice President of Human Resources, and the Director of Public Relations. Please think about President's Cabinet as a whole as you answer the items in this section.

	<i>Strongly Disagree (1)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(3)</i>	<i>Strongly Agree (4)</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>	<i>Doesn't Apply</i>
a) The President's Cabinet makes decisions about jobs in a fair and equitable manner.	22.0%	18.3%	11.5%	1.4%	42.2%	1.4%
b) The President's Cabinet listens to employee concerns before making a job decision.	23.9%	22.9%	7.8%	2.3%	38.5%	1.4%
c) The President's Cabinet collects accurate and complete information about job decisions.	20.6%	20.6%	8.7%	1.8%	43.1%	1.8%
d) The President's Cabinet clarifies decisions and answers additional questions.	22.5%	24.3%	8.3%	2.3%	37.2%	2.3%
e) The President's Cabinet applies decisions consistently across all employees.	27.5%	17.4%	9.6%	1.4%	39.4%	1.4%
f) The President's Cabinet allows me to challenge or appeal job decisions.	17.4%	13.8%	9.2%	1.4%	47.2%	7.3%
g) Members of President's Cabinet treat me with respect and dignity when making job decisions.	13.3%	12.8%	21.1%	4.6%	36.2%	8.3%
h) Members of President's Cabinet are truthful.	17.0%	18.8%	12.4%	3.2%	42.7%	2.8%
i) Members of President's Cabinet show concern for my rights as an employee.	20.2%	17.0%	15.6%	4.1%	36.2%	2.8%
j) Members of President's Cabinet explain decisions in a way that makes sense to me.	21.6%	23.9%	14.2%	3.2%	29.4%	4.6%
k) Members of President's Cabinet take me seriously.	16.1%	16.1%	17.4%	5.5%	34.4%	5.5%
l) Members of President's Cabinet are too busy to spend meaningful time with employees.	12.4%	13.8%	17.4%	22.0%	28.4%	1.8%
m) Members of President's Cabinet keep employees informed about decisions that affect their jobs.	23.9%	21.1%	18.3%	1.8%	29.8%	1.8%
n) Members of President's Cabinet are concerned about our fears.	24.8%	21.6%	11.5%	3.7%	33.0%	1.8%
o) There are opportunities available to me to express my ideas to the President's Cabinet.	19.3%	18.3%	18.8%	5.5%	31.2%	2.8%
p) I believe and trust the information I receive from the President's Cabinet.	20.2%	26.1%	19.7%	3.2%	24.3%	2.3%
q) Communications from the President's Cabinet are adequate for me to know what is going on in the organization.	21.6%	31.7%	17.9%	3.7%	20.2%	1.8%
r) Members of President's Cabinet share information regularly with employees.	18.3%	27.5%	21.6%	3.7%	23.4%	1.8%
s) Members of President's Cabinet make themselves accessible to me.	17.4%	21.1%	23.4%	4.6%	25.7%	4.1%
t) I am treated with respect by members of President's Cabinet.	10.1%	15.6%	32.1%	7.8%	23.9%	6.9%
u) Members of President's Cabinet demonstrate effective leadership.	22.5%	23.4%	20.2%	2.3%	24.8%	2.8%

v) I have confidence in the leadership of President's Cabinet.	23.9%	25.2%	17.9%	3.2%	23.4%	1.8%
w) I am comfortable raising any concerns or issues with members of President's Cabinet.	29.4%	22.0%	16.1%	4.1%	22.5%	2.8%
x) My VP advocates for me in President's Cabinet.	13.8%	12.4%	20.2%	11.9%	30.3%	8.3%
y) If members of President's Cabinet make mistakes, they will admit to them.	24.8%	18.3%	6.4%	1.4%	43.6%	1.8%

4. About the President

	<i>Strongly Disagree (1)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(3)</i>	<i>Strongly Agree (4)</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>	<i>Doesn't Apply</i>
a) The president makes decisions about jobs in a fair and equitable manner.	28.9%	20.2%	15.1%	6.4%	24.8%	1.8%
b) The president listens to employee concerns before making a job decision.	32.6%	17.0%	19.3%	6.9%	20.6%	0.9%
c) The president collects accurate and complete information about job decisions.	26.1%	19.3%	17.4%	5.0%	28.0%	1.4%
d) The president clarifies decisions and answers additional questions.	28.0%	23.4%	23.4%	8.3%	13.3%	0.5%
e) The president applies decisions consistently to all employees.	34.4%	15.6%	14.2%	7.3%	24.3%	0.9%
f) The president treats me with respect and dignity when making job decisions.	17.4%	11.9%	30.7%	13.3%	19.7%	3.7%
g) The president is truthful.	24.8%	17.4%	20.6%	11.0%	22.0%	0.5%
h) The president explains decisions in a way that makes sense to me.	29.4%	21.6%	27.1%	9.6%	8.7%	0.9%
i) I have confidence in the decisions of the president.	33.5%	22.9%	18.8%	9.6%	11.5%	0.9%
j) Communications from the president are adequate for me to know what is going on in the organization.	31.2%	25.7%	23.4%	7.8%	7.8%	1.4%
k) The president demonstrates effective leadership.	33.0%	22.9%	23.9%	8.7%	7.8%	0.5%
l) I have confidence in the leadership of the president.	37.2%	21.1%	20.2%	8.7%	9.6%	0.5%
m) I am comfortable raising any concerns or issues with the president.	35.8%	22.9%	18.8%	11.0%	8.3%	0.5%
n) The president shows compassion toward employees.	29.4%	17.0%	24.3%	11.0%	14.7%	0.0%
o) If the president makes mistakes, he will admit to them.	34.4%	15.1%	13.8%	6.0%	27.5%	0.5%

5. Please give specific suggestions for improving leading and communicating at LCCC.

34.4%

Note: Although the responses to the open-ended items are not included to protect the anonymity of respondents, all comments were considered by the Action Team in the development of its recommendations to the Quality Council.

6. Please add any other comments related to leading and communicating at LCCC.
24.8%

Note: Although the responses to the open-ended items are not included to protect the anonymity of respondents, all comments were considered by the Action Team in the development of its recommendations to the Quality Council.

About You - Demographic information will be used to determine if there are different leadership and/or communication issues for different groups of employees.

7. What is your job classification?

- 3.2% *Upper-level administrator (Dean or higher)*
- 5.0% *Other administrator*
- 31.2% *Faculty*
- 25.2% *Non-teaching professional staff*
- 30.7% *Educational services staff*

8. How many years have you worked at LCCC?

- 25.2% *0 to 3 years*
- 38.5% *4 to 10 years*
- 20.2% *11 to 20 years*
- 11.5% *More than 20 years*