

## Research Project

### 1. What was the purpose of the Saunder's Strategic Plan model?

Pull from all the various work groups like us, service providers, opinions, brainstorming, open ended meetings and discussions, trying to break down some very large things into an accountable plan that then feed back into a budgeting system, that is, goals and objectives to be evaluated.

Data-warehousing, getting enrollment information into a longitudinal data base, that is, extracting data off student information system and financial information system to serve the client, the student.

A generic kind of assessment process, institutional assessment program.

As broad a base of planning and investment in planning as possible, a distributed planning model which counted on sort of a bottom up or bubble up process of everybody involved, then feathering up to the next level, an accumulative plan, making planning as broad a base concept as possible in the organization, rather than top down planning.

The purpose was to determine a broad range of institutional outcomes, to bring the college together in a systematic way.

A means to bring some order and semblance to planning.

Its purpose was to come up with a strategic master plan for the institution, a task list, not what you would envision a strategic plan to be.

To determine from the college's mission, goals, and objectives what we wanted to achieve and the strategy that would be used to achieve these goals.

**SYNOPSIS**            The purpose of the Saunder's Strategic Plan model was to collect data from all sites of the college in preparing a systematic master plan that would address the immediate and long range needs of the institution in preparing a coherent budget, mission, and goals.

### 2. What process was used in the Saunder's Strategic Plan model?

Everybody had some input, a master committee pulling together the work of many other committees.

Open ended meetings and discussions, brain storming, not a lot of paper and pencil work.

Get enrollment information into a longitudinal data base for executive decision-making, that is, extracting data off student information system and financial information system for the benefit of students.

Two different ways of developing: lots of meetings involving key people-- administrators and people who ran programs and taught courses--what do you think you need? and then pulling it together. Then it was a matter of getting information out to people and having them look at it and see if it helped them in making decisions on campuses.

Numerous committees and sub-committees were formed around key component areas of strategic planning.

Overall goal was a framework for effective review to give the college the analytical tools that it needed. Each campus, each site developed strategic plans that fit into the overall strategic plans of the college to identify ways to measure performances.

A planning tool involving specific strategic planning and looked at different ways strategic planning affected the college and the individual campuses.

Meetings, a steering committee, sub-committees discussing topics like finance, the idea being to establish a strategic plan for the institution, a two or five year plan.

Using a broad section of the college personnel, people met to engage in strategic planning from grassroots to district level to make decisions.

Look at the goals and objectives of our specific areas which were consolidated into a college plan. After analysis by different groups the objectives would be identified in a college plan using resources reasonably and effectively.

**SYNOPSIS** A very involved, complex process was employed in the Saunder's Strategic Plan model: Steering Committee, Sub-committees, Open Ended and Brainstorming Meetings--attempting to engage the whole college community--in seeking information to create strategic plans and ways of measuring them, a framework for effective review in order to give the college the analytical tools it needed to use its resources effectively.

3. What do you feel the Saunder's Strategic Plan model accomplished?

The Saunder's model was a kind of catharsis, making us feel good, a kind of pulling together of ideas and forming a vision, but not much follow through.

The Saunder's model got people thinking about what other institutions were doing, what our competition was doing, and what planning we needed to be about.

His plans were successful putting good things in people's heads, but not a lot of written documentation came from it, not a lot of hard core results.

The Saunder's model did not accomplish much. Just as we were getting underway with it--a year to a year and a half, some pilot work--it was ignored.

The Saunder's model showed that the college was willing to engage in planning on a comprehensive basis and could make strides in establishing strategic directions for itself, an empowerment piece, kind of a master of one's own destiny.

The Saunder's model raised people's awareness analytically about planning and the need for assessment and measurement.

Generally speaking the Saunder's model had a modicum of success in the way to approach things, but it was never really well rooted in the institution.

It did make an attempt to distinguish between an academic and an administrative plan, which should follow the academic plan.

It was a cumbersome plan needlessly complex.

From a day to day stand point it wasn't all that useful except in making some financial decisions.

**SYNOPSIS** The Saunder's Strategic Plan model made people feel good by having them pull together their ideas and begin to form a vision about what other institutions were doing, what our competition was doing, and what planning we needed to be about, that is, engage in planning on a comprehensive basis and make strides towards strategic directions, empowering the college to be a master of its destiny.

4. Do you feel that this process helped you in accomplishing your day to day responsibilities? Why or why not?

You just get your feet wet with a certain program or an idea and then boom you change and you've got to look at this new one.

I was a dean at the time and thought his plans were successful, but not a lot of hard core results came from it. A lot of good things came into people's heads and a lot of discussion, but not a lot of written documentation.

How effective was it? We did not give it a fair chance. It wasn't very effective at all. We didn't use it.

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The timing of it was not conducive to the operation. It came out in mid-cycle. The timing was not right, but it was not a bad first attempt.

I don't have enough operating knowledge on it to speculate on that.

Fifty percent successful. Planning never came long enough before budgeting so that decisions could be made before budgeting was implemented.

**SYNOPSIS** I was dean at the time and thought his plans were successful suggesting that the institution was interested in engaging in planning on a comprehensive basis and could take initiatives in establishing strategic directions for itself, but his model, not given a fair chance, was not a bad first attempt.

5. When you compare Saunder's purpose to its results, to what degree do you believe it was successful?

His plan was not around long enough for people to establish ownership.

It was successful, but not a lot of hard core results came from it. The discussion part was good and bringing in outside consultants was very good as well as putting things down on paper, outlining exactly where we were going and what we were trying to accomplish, and measuring what we accomplished.

It never had a chance to be successful.

It could have been more successful by focusing on fewer expected strategies and outcomes, not produce all things for all people.

It was probably fifty percent successful because we started off in another direction.

It was successful to a degree and could have been more successful if better leadership were initiated especially by the presidents, commitment from the right people.

On a scale of 1-10, a five. The document sat on itself.

It was very successful because everything we planned to do was addressed. There was not a disconnect between the plan and what we seemed to be doing for the next couple of years.

As a percentage, 50%. We need the planning process on a time table with the budget so that the budget is driven by the planning, which it was not.

**SYNOPSIS** The Saunder's Strategic model was about fifty percent successful bringing in outside consultants, putting plans on paper, outlining exactly where we were going and what we were trying to do, and measuring what we accomplished. If better leadership and commitment had been given by the presidents, the plan would have been even more successful.

6. What was it about the Saunder's model that was not successful? In your opinion, what caused the problems with the Saunder's model?

Everyone has to be involved to have ownership of a plan, and that did not seem to be the case with Saunder's model.

It was successful although not a lot of hard core results came from it.

It wasn't successful because it did not have enough life, never able to use it to find out its potential.

It could have been more successful if it focused upon fewer strategies and outcomes.

The Saunder's model needed to play out longer. One of the problems was we allowed people to write strategic directions and goals in ways that were absolutely not measurable.

It may have been more successful if more thought was given to leadership and using campus presidents. It just didn't get commitment from the right people.

Number one timing was a problem. Number two there was not a complete buy in because this was the first time people were asked to come up with this kind of plan.

It was successful but would have been more successful if it were more simply structured.

Saunder's model was fifty percent successful and his or any plan would be successful if planning preceded budgeting, that is, if planning drove budgeting.

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**SYNOPSIS** The Saunder's Strategic Plan model was not successful because it was not owned by the college personnel and did not have an

adequate chance to survive to learn of its real potential. This occasion was the first time the staff was asked to come up with a plan, and the people were not ready to engage in such an activity at the time.

7. How could Saunder's model have been more successful at OCC?

The Saunder's model did not have the leadership support or ownership by the college as a whole.

The discussion part was very good and bringing in outside consultants was very good. But a written plan was critical, outlining exactly where we were going and what we were trying to accomplish, then measuring what we did.

It did not have enough life and most people were not aware of it. The problem was a failure to implement.

If the Saunder's model could have been more clearly focused, it likely would have been successful.

The Saunder's model needed a better chance to succeed, a longer time to play itself out to determine if it were successful.

More time, better leadership, and commitment from the right people would have given the Saunder's model a chance for success.

It really wasn't used, and I really don't think it could have been even though it wasn't a bad concept. In effect it was a first pass at a master plan.

If the Saunder's model had been more simply structured, there would have been a greater buy in.

The Saunder's model or any planning model has to drive the budget, not budgeting before planning, and that is how the Saunder's model or any planning model could be successful.

**SYNOPSIS** More time, better support from the leadership, and commitment from the right people would have given the Saunder's Strategic Plan model a chance to succeed, a strategy which placed planning before budgeting, that is, planning driving budgeting.

## Synthesis of Saunders Model

*Q1. What was the purpose of the Saunders Model?*

- ◆ To provide a broad, overarching planning process for the college. It was also used to determine the college's mission, goals, and objectives.
- ◆ It would provide a model to assess the institution by establishing various college outcomes. Focuses the college in a direction of where it should go in future planning decisions.
- ◆ The planning process is from the bottom-up and not a top-down approach. It allows individuals throughout the campus to become involved and have their voices heard. This would allow departmental and individual concerns to be addressed in the planning process, instead of hoping that they would be discussed in a more traditional hierarchical pyramid structure.

*Q2. What was the process used in the Saunders model?*

- ◆ There were open-ended meetings and discussions; brainstorming was a norm in the beginning. Everyone had some sort of input into the various discussions.
- ◆ Different committees and sub-committees formed around various topical issues (e.g., finances) to commence areas of strategic planning.
- ◆ Each campus and site developed strategic initiatives which would fit into the overall institutional plan. We looked at how planning affected the college as a whole and individual campuses also.
- ◆ The meeting deconstructed some of the barriers between various groups and levels of administration. People met to engage in dialogue about strategic planning; a very grassroots or bottom-up paradigm. We became part of team, each attempting to look for the same goals.

*Q3. What do you feel the plan accomplished?*

- ◆ It mostly made employees feel good about the college. It provided a common vision for all involved.
- ◆ It also raised awareness of the need for institutional planning and what our competition was doing to secure their positions. It also increased people's awareness of the need for measurement and assessment within the institution.



- ◆ Although the plan felt empowering it never was firmly grounded in the college. It did not accomplish much because it seemed it was ignored after a year and a half. A few individuals thought it was cumbersome and needlessly complex. Overall, it did not seem useful except for making some financial decisions.

*Q4. Did the process help you in your day to day responsibilities?*

- ◆ At the macro level the concepts were successful and showed that people would be willing to engage in planning. However at the micro level it was never given a chance to succeed. As soon as we began to become immersed in the planning, it was terminated. It was not effective because we never had the opportunity to implement it college wide. Unfortunately it was a good concept but had bad timing.

*Q5. When you compare the Saunders model purpose to its results, to what degree do you believe it was successful?*

- ◆ Variations of success were reported by the respondents: Some thought the model was very successful but did not have sufficient time to provide successful results because of its short life span. Others thought it would have been somewhat successful if there had been either fewer strategies and outcomes in the discussions, or if better leadership was in charge of the process. Others also thought it did not have time to be successful given that the administration changed, and a new planning process was adopted. Many felt as if it was never given a chance to succeed at all.

*Q6. What about the Saunders model was not successful? What caused the problems with the model?*

- ◆ Various reasons were addressed by the individuals: Some believed that there was no ownership on behalf of the participants in the discussions. It seemed that people were going through the motions rather than actually believing it was a realistic planning process. There was not complete buy-in because it was the first time people were asked to be involved in this type of campus-wide planning process.
- ◆ Others believed that it was not around long enough for it to be successful. Once the administration changed, the college seemed to forget about this planning technique and move on to another one. A few thought there were too many strategies in the beginning and that it could have been more simplistically structured. They also voiced their concern about having the right individual or group of individuals in leadership positions. It did not seem to get strong commitment from the right people.

*Q7. How could have the Saunders model been more successful at OCC?*

- ◆ Four salient issues seemed to emerge from this question: First, leadership seemed to be lacking from campus presidents and those in charge of the planning process. There did not seem to be commitment from influential individuals. Second, there was not a sense of campus ownership or buy-in with the planning process. Although individuals were brought together to strategize, it still was a select group of people. Those participants also did not feel totally connected with the process. Third, because of the change in leadership, it was never given the chance to become fully integrated into the campus culture. The process was terminated because of a change in administration at the top. At OCC, the top level people do not seem to stay long. So those of us in middle or lower levels have to take a wait-and-see approach to determine if we continue on the same track, modify our approach or stop the process all together. Finally, conceptually speaking, the planning process should drive the budget. However in this case, it seemed that the budget was already developed and it modified how the planning process would proceed. For instance, if we chose a strategic plan which would utilize a large amount of resources, the strategy was abandoned because the budget would not allow for that particular strategy to be implemented.