

**MnSCU Office of Internal Auditing
Customized Training Network Strategic Planning
Fiscal Year 1999**

PURPOSE: The following document is the Customized Training Network's Strategic plan developed by members of the Customized Training Network in Fiscal year 2000. It was obtained from the CTN and is presented here in its entirety.

CUSTOMIZED TRAINING NETWORK STRATEGIC PLANNING

BACKGROUND

The Customized Training Network (CTN), with all 36 colleges and universities participating, is a MnSCU system-wide, coordinated effort to serve the education and training needs of Minnesota's incumbent workforce. This effort is focused on building and maintaining relationships with employers from industries critical to Minnesota's economic growth and continuing quality of life. Service to employers -- both instructional (credit and non-credit) and consultative -- is coordinated, arranged and delivered at the local or regional level.

During the CTN's first two years in the merged MnSCU system, several colleges consolidated into new institutions, creating a larger service array to offer to employers. To further increase the service array, the remaining 8 community colleges and the 7 universities were invited in 1997 to apply for funding which had previously been set aside for CTN research and development. Ten schools applied and all received funding. MnSCU's funding allocation for the CTN remained constant at \$8.775 during the system's first four years despite the addition of 20 new MnSCU partner schools.

In the 1999 session, the Legislature appropriated \$2.5M in new funds for customized training. This 28% increase provided the CTN with three major opportunities:

1. Engage the five schools not yet participating in the CTN to begin participating, supported by base funding.
2. Increase base funding of several colleges whose activity level has grown considerably in the face of minimal CTN allocation increases based on performance since 1995.
3. Create and implement a strategic plan for the CTN which would, for the first time, systematically address the communication, marketing, research and development, accountability, organization and leadership dimensions of the Network.

Each of these three opportunities, once under way, must result in an increase in employer access to customized training which the Legislature envisioned in setting aside the additional appropriation. Strategic planning at the Network level will be successful if local/regional service delivery remains effective and if increased numbers of employers are reached.

Strategic Planning Process:

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>DATE</u>
1. Announcement made to Customized Training Network administrators that new Legislative appropriation would provide resources for strategic planing.	May 1999
2. Announcement made to college and university presidents that planning process would take place in fall, 1999, and that five schools not currently receiving funds would be able to access funds.	June 1999
3. Request made to Customized Training Network administrators for planning facilitator suggestions.	July 1999
4. RFP for planning facilitator released. Harley Consulting and Coaching selected.	Aug. 1999
5. Strategic planning team selected. Team members demonstrate a wide variety of perspectives, roles both in the CTN and in other outreach efforts to business and industry, positions, institutions and regions of the state. Team members are listed later in this document.	Sept. 1999
6. Chancellor Anderson joins a pre-planning team to identify a general strategic direction for the planning initiative.	Sept. 1999
7. The strategic planning team completes a one-day session with a number of individual, small group and large group exercises to inform the values and mission statement drafting process.	Sept. 1999
8. Drafts of values and mission statements are crafted by a sub-group and submitted to the full team for review and comment.	Oct. 1999
9. The planning team completes a two-day session which results in a 5-year practical vision, a barrier analysis and a set of strategic directions for the Network to pursue in moving toward the vision.	Oct. 1999
10. The planning team completes a one-day session to agree on a final draft of the values and mission statements and to identify a set of organizational structure criteria which could be applied to selecting a Network operating structure.	Oct. 1999
11. The planning team completes a one-day follow-up session to further define strategic directions and identify specific action teams to complete the planning process and make operational recommendations.	Oct. 199
12. An implementation timeline is drafted and agreed to by the planning team.	Nov. 1999

13. A teleconference roll-out of the strategic planning process to date, resulting documentation, planned next steps, and a call for additional participation is scheduled for November 18, 1999. Nov. 1999

Next Steps:

The following initial implementation steps and timeline have been agreed to by the strategic planning team:

ACTIVITY	DATE
Strategic planning celebration and announcement of next steps broadcast via MnSAT to all MnSCU campus locations.	11/18
Identify the Organizational Structure action team and responder pool; solicit and select team co-chairs.	Week of 11/22/99
Use MnCCECT Conference for additional open discussion of strategic planning results and to request additional input for the action team to consider as it begins its work.	Week of 11/22/99
Organizational Structure action team convenes with facilitator. Models for Network leadership are designed, presented, and selected according to structure criteria generated by strategic planning team.	Week of 11/22/99
Submit draft recommendations of Organizational Structure action team to entire CTN for feedback.	Week of 12/6/99

Organizational Structure action team meets in a follow-up session to consider feedback.	Week of 12/13/99
Recommended structure is submitted to Chancellor for approval.	Week of 12/13/99
Organizational structure is in place.	12/27/99
Roll out of new structure by Network leadership to entire Network (format undefined at this time) to generate involvement on remaining 5 action teams that will do the “work” of the Network.	Week of 1/3/00

Source: Customized Training Network

MNSCU CUSTOMIZED TRAINING NETWORK (CTN) **STRATEGIC PLANNING DOCUMENTATION**

The first phase of the MnSCU Customized Training Network (CTN) Strategic Planning Initiative was conducted in September and October 1999, and facilitated by an organization development consultant from Harley Consulting & Coaching, Inc. The initiative participants (called the Strategic Planning Team) were comprised of CTN professionals from both MnSCU colleges and universities and the CTN office.

Dave Anderson, Inver Hills CC

Becky Best, Central Lakes C/TC

Dave Dinnel, MN West C/TC

Jean Eaton, Riverland C/TC

Mary Eaton, Northwest TC

Ron Erpelding, Ridgewater C/TC

Pat Gerkey, Century C/TC

Rich Kelly, Hennepin TC

Kevin Kopischke, Alexandria TC

Sharon LaComb, Dakota County TC

Gary Levine, Anoka-Hennepin TC

Ann MacDonald, Winona SU

Rosie Mortenson, Anoka-Ramsey CC

Brenda Norman, System Office

Michelle Pyfferoen, Rochester C/TC

Randy Rosandich, Net U

Gary Seiler, Metro SU

Scott Seltveit, Moorhead SU

Richard Smestad, Fergus Falls CC

Richard Tvedten, System Office

Gary Zaudtke, Lake Superior C/TC

Key Desired Initiative Outcomes

Prior to the first meeting of the Planning Team, a sub-group met with Chancellor Morrie Anderson to mull over a general strategic direction for the Team to consider. The results of their discussion are presented here:

1. A market-driven, customer-focused mechanism providing stakeholder assurance that a customer receives appropriate training, education, and services in alignment with
 - ◆ The customer organization's strategic goals
 - ◆ The career goals and objectives of the employee/student.
2. Alignment of local, regional and statewide service delivery within the Network (external focus).
3. Strategic partnerships with other economic development organizations (e.g., MN Department of Trade & Economic Development, MN Technology Inc., MN Department of Economic Security, Regional Initiative Funds, foundations, and local and regional economic development agencies).
4. Understanding by each college or university in the system of its role in the Customized Training Network (internal focus).
5. Timely and flexible delivery of programs and services through decreased bureaucratic obstacles.
6. Positive recognition for MnSCU as a provider of education/training for skill development indicated by
 - ◆ perceived positive return on investment by our customers and stakeholders
 - ◆ legislative support
 - ◆ higher CTN profile within MnSCU

Values Statement

The Strategic Planning Team began by asking the question, “What principles and values do we want to live by in our work together in the Network?” The Team then reached consensus on key values and wove them into the following CTN Values Statement:

Customized Training Network **Values Statement:**

We embrace honesty, integrity and teamwork as critical factors in Network success. We contribute knowledge, creativity, and excellence to our Network relationships and to the work we perform.

Mission Statement

After completing a Scan of the Current Situation, the Team identified the core customer-desired outcomes of the Network. These core customer-desired outcomes, along with other key pieces of information, were then embedded in the following MnSCU CTN Mission Statement which the group created to answer the question, “Who are we and why are we here?”

Customized Training Network **Mission Statement:**

We advance the economic vitality of Minnesota by providing a dynamic statewide Network of customized education and training services for business and industry.

The Network leverages an unmatched range of education and training services, and generates:

- *Proactive solutions to customer needs*
- *Increased competitiveness for business and industry*
- *Ongoing skill and career development for individuals*
- *Effective return on investment for customers and stakeholders*

The Network achieves exceptional performance through:

- *A commitment to continuous improvement and research & development*
- *A strong identity*
- *Local and regional flexibility*

5-Year Practical Vision

(Recognizable Conditions of the Future)

The Strategic Planning Team then created a 5-Year Practical Vision by reaching consensus on the following recognizable conditions they want to have in place within Minnesota State Colleges and Universities in regard to customized training by the year 2005.

- **Customer Needs are Effectively Identified to Facilitate Achievement of Organizational Goals.**
- **MnSCU and Other State Systems Have Removed Barriers Enabling Customer, CTN and College/University Success.**
- **Sufficient Legislative Funding Is Available and Secured to Support Operations and Promote Innovation.**
- **MnSCU CTN is the Pre-Eminent Provider of Incumbent Workforce Education and Training.**
- **Our Customers Benefit From New and Innovative Service Delivery Models.**
- **CTN Is an Active and Sought-After Partner in Economic and Workforce Development Initiatives.**
- **A Marketing Plan is in Place Which Positions CTN as the Premiere Provider of Incumbent Workforce Education and Training.**
- **CTN Derives a Competitive Advantage from a Management Information System Which Supports Decisions, Operations, Accountability and Communications.**
- **The CTN Communication Strategy Generates Trust By Providing Stakeholders with Strong Evidence of Return on Investment.**
- **Customers Benefit from a Cooperative and Coordinated CTN Which Maximizes the Effective and Efficient Use of Resources.**

Barrier Analysis

Next, the Strategic Planning Team turned its attention to identifying the barriers and contradictions which create obstacles on the path to this Vision of the Future. The intent was not to identify what was missing, but to identify what was present to inhibit the achievement of the Vision. The following Barriers were identified.

- **Local Commitment to Autonomy, Control and Decision-Making Conflicts with a System Approach to CTN.**
- **The Current Funding Model is Not Aligned with the Future CTN Vision.**
- **Debilitating Past Histories and Distrust Discourage Partnering and Cooperation.**
- **Weak Commitment by the Customer and CTN to the Needs Assessment Process.**
- **State and Local Policies and Procedures Restrict Innovation and Operation.**
- **An Unfinished, Unproven MIS.**
- **The Communication Strategy Is Uncoordinated and Fragmented.**
- **Conflicting Priorities Imposed on CTs By Local Authority and the CTN.**
- **An Unfocused and Uncoordinated CTN Marketing Plan.**

Strategic Directions & Arenas of Action

When Team Members had identified the 5-Year Practical Vision and the Barriers to accomplishing that Vision, they created 1-2 Year Strategic Directions to dissolve or remove the Barriers and accelerate movement toward the Vision.

Participants brainstormed practical and innovative actions that directly or indirectly would eliminate, deal with, or resolve the Barriers and move the enterprise toward its Practical Vision. Those actions with similar intent were grouped into Arenas of Action seen as essential over the next few years. The Arenas of Action were then arranged into groups to reveal the Strategic Directions or major vectors of action to be pursued over the next 1-2 years. Following are the *numbered Strategic Directions* and the supporting **Arenas of Action** (*bulleted*) upon which the group reached consensus.

1) Position CTN for Pre-Eminence

- **Move to the Future**
- **Determine CTN Commitment & Participation**
- **Create an Effective Organizational Structure**
- **Develop an Appropriate Funding Model**
- **Leverage Partnerships to Meet Customer Needs**

2) Streamline the Process to Serve More Customers More Effectively

- **Streamline the Process**

3) Manage Data to Operate Effectively & to Communicate Success

- **Provide a Reliable MIS System**
- **Create & Implement a Master Communication & Marketing Plan**

4) Drive Excellence Through Professional Development

- **Provide Professional Development Opportunities**

The Strategic Planning Team agreed that specific and measurable goals and objectives need to be identified and implemented under each of the Arenas of Action (bulleted items). These goals and objectives will be identified in the next phase of the planning work.

Organizational Structure Criteria

Before completing its work, the Strategic Planning Team turned to the Arena of Action entitled, “Create an Effective Organizational Structure” within Strategic Direction 1) as a prerequisite for completing many of the others. The team recognized that its perspective in establishing evaluation criteria for an action team to use would be valuable.

As a first step, the Team reached consensus on the following criteria for evaluating any organizational structure models to be developed. The Team concluded that a satisfying CTN organizational structure is one which:

- **Provides Leadership and Positioning for CTN and Its Members**
- **Puts Customer Needs First**
- **Facilitates Internal and External Communication**
- **Clearly Defines Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations**
- **Allows Local Decision Making**
- **Operates Effectively and Efficiently**
- **Promotes a Performance-Based Reward System**
- **Enhances Local Service Delivery**
- **Facilitates Cooperation**
- **Promotes Synergy**

The above criteria are listed in order of importance as determined by the Strategic Planning Team. The determination was made by weighing each criterion against importance ratings as follows:

1. **Important**—desirable, but not critical to a satisfactory structure and consequently expendable;
2. **Very Important**—very desirable, but not totally critical to a satisfactory structure and consequently somewhat negotiable or expendable;
3. **Critical**—absolutely required for a satisfactory structure to the extent that, if missing or weak, the structure must be redesigned to adequately provide it.

The evaluation criteria determined to be “critical” were “**Provides Leadership & Positioning For CTN & Its Members,**” “**Puts Customer Needs First,**” and “**Facilitates Internal & External Communication.**”