Reorganizing University Outreach: NIU’s Progress Toward Engagement

Outreach Scholarship Conference 2003
Madison Wisconsin
October 13, 2003
Our Purpose Today

• Show how a vision of engagement can aide reorganization efforts

• Share a planning model for integrating and streamlining disconnected units.

• Demonstrate use of reorganization to energize an outreach mission and focus.
Realities - Spring 2002

- Strong history of regionalism and commitment to outreach
- Continuing education decentralized in 1992
- Strong Presidential support for engagement
- Mergers and acquisitions = 12 disconnected units mainly focused on off-campus activities
Realities (Continued)

• Mixed performance and reputations
• No centralized planning or marketing
• Significant duplication of effort
• Ineffective internal communications
• Little commitment to engagement
Realities (Continued)

- Campus Wide Outreach Activities
  - Community College Partnerships
  - Contracts and Grants

- 3 Regional Centers
  - courses – 776
  - Enrollment – 13,112
  - Credit hours – 37,403
This reorganization was NOT about:

- Downsizing
- Budget Cuts
Our goal: turn the pyramid upside down.
Phase I - Core of Strategic Planning

- **Time:** 10 weeks – May 1st to July 15th
- **Staff:** 10 key members both internal and external to NIU Outreach
- **Outcomes:**
  - vision  mission  goals  strategic priorities
- **Communications:**
  - regular updates from VP to all staff
Results

• Produced core planning documents
• Launched division-wide planning
• Generated internal and external skepticism
Phase II - Core of Strategic Planning

- **Time:** 10 weeks – Aug 1st to Oct 15th
- **Staff:** 3 teams of 12 staff each – Programs and Services, Shared Services, Outreach Centers
- **Outcomes:**
  - Analysis of operations
  - Recommendations for organizational design
- **Communications:**
  - Sub team meetings
  - Unit meetings
  - Email updates
  - All staff meeting
“Moving Towards” University Outreach

Ongoing Strategic Planning

Phase II - Planning
⇒ UO Goal Setting
⇒ Service Areas Goal Setting
⇒ Defining Org Structure
⇒ Staffing Requirements
⇒ Implementation Planning

Ongoing Communications
Results
New Organizational Structure

VP

AVP

Programs & Services
• Education and Training
• Research and Technical Assistance

Shared Services
• Customer and Partnership Relations Support
• Human Resources
• Operations Support
• Business Services

Outreach Centers
• Community Engagement
• Outreach Center Operations
Phase III - Initial Implementation

- **Time:** 10 weeks - Oct 15th to Dec 31th
- **Staff:** AVP, Management Team, new working groups
- **Outcomes:**
  - reassignment and relocation of personnel
  - realignment of functions
  - in-depth study of operations
- **Communications:**
  - regular emails from AVP
  - unit meetings
### Ongoing Strategic Planning

#### Phase II - Planning

- UO Goal Setting
- Service Areas Goal Setting
- Defining Org Structure
- Staffing Requirements
- Implementation Planning

#### Phase III - Implementation

- Staffing
- Change Management
- Action Planning
- Staff Development
- Developing Performance Management Process

### Ongoing Communications
Results

• New leadership appointed – Management Team
• Units consolidated and personnel relocated
• Individuals reassigned
• Functional teams launched at new unit levels
• Two new units launched
  ▪ Customer and Partnership Relations
  ▪ University Business Development
**Functional Teams**

- VP
- AVP

**Programs & Services**

- Ongoing “Virtual Teams” (Example: Business Management, Communications, etc.)
- Strategic Teams (Example: Performance Management, Customer Satisfaction, etc.)
- Ad Hoc Teams (Example: Office Location/Space etc.)

**Shared Services**

**Outreach Centers**
Phase IV - Implementation

• **Time:** Jan 1\textsuperscript{st} to Dec 31\textsuperscript{st} 2003

• **Staff:** Management Team, unit leaders, individuals

• **Outcomes:**
  - business plans to meet strategic priorities
  - goals and objectives

• **Communications:**
  - VP and AVP
  - Unit leaders
  - Management Team
  - Inside Outreach newsletter
Strategic Priorities

- Culture of *Engagement*
- High level of customer and partner satisfaction
- Universal understanding of NIU outreach values and capabilities
- Strategic resource for NIU
- Strategic resource for region
Additional Results

- Business plans aligned with vision, mission, priorities

- **Performance Management Process**

- **Branding and identity standards**

- New economic development and regional planning activities
Additional Results

- Two units added – IMEC and WESTEC
- Increased services to colleges
- CE Technologies market research
- Successful community college partnerships
Performance Management Process

- Emphasizes integration of Engagement into departmental, unit, and individual activities
- Performance Goals
- Development Goals
- Built on NIU Outreach Business Plan
  - division, departments, units
- Leadership – 360’s
Transition Strategies

- Communications
- Personnel changes
- Business planning
- Culture building
- Leaders who Walk the Talk
Continuing Challenges

- Leadership
- Centralization
- Engagement
- Relationship with NIU
- New acquisitions and mergers
- Funding
**Things we learned…..**

- Realignment is not the same as reorganization.
- Inclusive processes improve results and acceptance.
- Performance management is the key to long-term change.
- Transition management can make or break realignment.
- Reality checks can be a springboard to greater vision.
www.outreach.niu.edu/outreach