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## Addressing the Skills Awareness Gap through Impactful On-Campus Employment

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## Abstract

The pressure and expectations on institutions of higher education to ensure that graduates are equipped with the skills required to successfully transition from a learning environment to the work force are increasing. Growing societal and political expectations to effectively prepare post-secondary graduates for successful career outcomes are intensifying. Ongoing criticism from employers indicates that many new graduates lack career readiness to enter the workforce, due to the absence of required skills, often referred to as a *skills gap*. These skills are regularly identified as soft, human, or non-technical, and transferrable across multiple settings. This Organizational Improvement Plan counters that position and proposes that the issue is not a skills gap but rather a *skills awareness gap*, with graduates unaware and unable to articulate the skills gained from various curricular and co-curricular learning experiences throughout university. To address this problem, a solution supported by the literature, and the knowledge and expertise of the change leader, proposes redesigning a large, on-campus employment program at Institution X into a High Impact Practice, increasing students' awareness of the transferrable employability skills acquired through this experience. The solution is presented through transformational and collaborative leadership approaches and uses the Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2020) as an implementation framework. The Plan-Do-Study-Act Model of Improvement (Langley et al., 2009) and a Program Logic Model (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016) are applied to iteratively monitor and evaluate the change. A detailed communication plan is outlined to garner support from various internal stakeholders to address the skills awareness gap and embrace the proposed changes to an established, existing on-campus employment program.

*Keywords:* on-campus employment, student employment, skills gap, skills awareness gap, high impact practice, employability, collaborative leadership, transformational leadership.

## **Executive Summary**

Preparing post-secondary graduates to be engaged and productive citizens, while thriving in their chosen careers, is a priority shared by various stakeholders, including students, post-secondary institutions, governments, parents, and employers. Despite these mutual goals, employers have expressed concern about the lack of graduates' preparedness when they enter the labour market, illustrating a disconnect between industry and academia (Cumming, 2010; Lapointe, 2021). Evidence has suggested that new graduates at times struggle with the transition to the workforce, due to a lack of awareness and inability to articulate the valuable skills gained throughout their education (Edge et al., 2018). This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) proposes a solution to the problem of practice (PoP) that increases students' awareness of their skills and successfully supports their transition from school to work.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of Institution X, a large university located in Atlantic Canada. It provides a synopsis of the organization's history and structure, as well as the political, economic, social, and cultural contexts influencing current and future priorities. These contexts impact the PoP presented and the desire to address it, while considering the mission, values, and goals of the organization (Institution X, 2019a). The author's long history in senior leadership positions in student affairs at Institution X provides the relationships and reputation to gather support and address the skills awareness gap problem. Employing transformational and collaborative approaches to leadership encourages understanding the factors and change drivers influencing the problem, while garnering support for an institutional response (Burnes, 1978; Heifetz, 1994; Rubin, 2002; Spillane, 2005). The current organizational state is presented along with an envisioned future state that redesigns a large, campus-wide, student employment program into a high-impact practice (HIP) that increases awareness of skills and addresses the

PoP. The chapter concludes by confirming the organization's readiness to change by completing the Readiness for Change Questionnaire (Cawsey et al., 2020).

Chapter 2 presents the leadership approaches to propelling the change forward and a framework to lead the change in relation to the PoP. This change required is described as second order, or a transformational change, requiring shifts in attitudes and mindsets to recognize the learning and impact that on-campus employment can have on skill development and awareness (Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Keeling, 2013). Transformative and collaborative leadership models that will lead the change are presented. Inspiring a vision that demonstrates the change will benefit students and organizational outcomes, and using adaptive and distributed collaborative leadership styles, provides a strong tool kit to drive the change. These approaches will be utilized through each stage of the change path model, the framework chosen to lead the process and address *how* to change. Nadler and Tushman's (1980) organizational congruence model is also engaged as a framework to examine the problem and assess *what* needs to change. Four potential solutions are presented and analyzed to address the skills awareness gap problem, with the most impactful chosen and described through a plan-do-study-act (PDSA) model (Langley et al., 2009). The chapter concludes with an examination of the ethical responsibilities of the leader, organization, and stakeholders.

Chapter 3 provides an in-depth examination of the change implementation plan to transform an on-campus employment program into a HIP that increases students' awareness of the transferrable skills gained through this experience. Stakeholder reactions and responsibilities, human and financial resources required, potential implementation issues and solutions, and a time-line with clear benchmarks are presented in greater detail as the change plan is charted. To track the change and gauge progress, the PDSA model of improvement (Langley et al., 2009)

and a Program Logic Model for Skill Development Awareness, which the author created based on their understanding of Markiewicz and Patrick's (2016) Program Logic Model, will be used to monitor and evaluate the change implementation plan. A detailed, four-phase communication plan, as outlined in Cawsey et al. (2020), is presented, with a focus on building awareness among various audiences and preparing for probable responses. Next steps and future considerations conclude the chapter, with the recognition that the outcomes could inform current literature and policy on the skills awareness gap problem and presents a viable solution, which if successful at Institution X, could be replicated at other post-secondary institutions.

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### List of Acronyms

CEWIL	(Co-operative Education and Work Integrated Learning)
HEIs	(Higher Education Institutions)
HIPs	(High Impact Practices)
KPI	(Key Performance Indicators)
NSSE	(National Survey of Student Engagement)
OIP	(Organizational Improvement Plan)
PESTE	(Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental)
PoP	(Problem of Practice)
PDSA	(Plan-Do-Study-Act)
T & L	(Teaching & Learning)
SSAO	(Senior Student Affairs Officer)
SSC	(Student Success Collaborative)
SWPP	(Student Work Placement Program)
WIL	(Work-Integrated Learning)

## Glossary of Terms

**Curricular:** Related to learning and experiences in academic courses or programs

**Co-curricular:** Related to learning or experiences not directly connected to academic programs

**College:** Refers to an educational institution in the United States that offers courses towards a degree in a particular subject area. It is often interchangeable with the term university.

**Co-operative Education:** A form of Work-Integrated Learning that has students alternate between paid work placements related to area of study, and academic terms

**Employability:** A process utilizing principles of career development that has individuals use their skills and abilities throughout their lives in many contents for personal and societal good

**High Impact Practices:** Learning experiences that promote student engagement and have been shown to increase student success

**Neoliberalism:** Supports free markets and the corporatization of higher education, with a focus on education for human capital rather than societal good

**Program M:** Campus-wide, on-campus employment program at Institution X employing approximately 2000 students each year across all faculties and administrative units

**Supervisors:** Faculty and staff who supervise students participating in on-campus employment

**Transformative:** Creating a lasting and deep change

**Work-Integrated Learning:** A method of curricular experiential learning that connects what is being learned in the classroom to a workplace setting

## **Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem**

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) examines the role of higher education in addressing the skills gap of university graduates identified and perpetuated by various stakeholders. The following chapters will introduce the leadership problem of practice (PoP) to be examined in the organizational context of Institution X (a pseudonym of the author's institution); present leadership theories to inform the preparation and development of a change plan; and share an implementation, evaluation, and communication plan for the change. Chapter 1 specifically examines the internal and external factors shaping the organization, as well as the leadership theories and lens of the author that further cultivates the PoP at the centre of this OIP. The broader contextual forces shaping the problem and guiding questions emerging from the PoP will also be presented. The chapter will conclude with a leadership-focused vision for change and an examination of Institution X's readiness to address the problem and required actions.

The purpose of higher education is one of great debate and public discussion. Once focused solely on broad learning to develop educated citizens and address the needs and concerns of society, subtle changes occurring over time have created institutions influenced by market-driven needs and multiple stakeholders with various expectations and priorities (Brown, 2015; Busch, 2014). With the debate raging on, 77% of Canadian post-secondary students articulate their primary motivation for attending a post-secondary institution is to prepare for a chosen career (Skinkle & Glennie, 2016). Preparation to enter the workforce is a driving motivator for students to attend university; however, feedback from employers suggests that new graduates often lack desired employability skills and are unprepared for the workforce (Cumming, 2010; Maybrey, 2020; UdeMY Research, 2018). A study by McKinsey & Company conducted in 2015 specified that only 44% of students and 34% of employers sensed that

graduates possessed sought-after employability skills upon graduation. This contrasted with 83% of higher education institutions reporting that graduates did possess the desired skills. This clearly suggests a misalignment between the perception and reality of graduate readiness between these three key stakeholders. The author's position in creating this OIP places great value on the virtues of higher education but recognizes the shifting pressures and expectations influenced by neoliberalism, including institutional goals and external stakeholder expectations.

### **Organizational Context**

Institution X, a large university in Atlantic Canada, has one of the highest student populations in the region, comprised of approximately 75% undergraduate and 25% graduate students, of which 20% are international (Institution X, 2020b). Like many universities, Institution X is committed to student success and its role in preparing graduates for the world of work. Core to its existence is its distinct obligation to the people of the province, with a focus on meeting the educational and workforce needs locally, nationally, and internationally (Institution X, 2020d). The ongoing discourse regarding graduates' lack of preparedness to enter the workforce is not only at the national and international level but also one that is particularly recognized regionally and provincially (Coates, 2011; Robotham, 2012; Seniuk-Cicek et al., 2017). When exploring the variety of perspectives impacting the preparation of students to enter the workforce, it is useful to consider them through the political, economic, social, and cultural contexts of the organization.

### **Political and Economic Contexts**

Like most post-secondary institutions in Canada, Institution X has experienced the impact of declining provincial government funding and has responded with cuts to programming, deferring maintenance, hiring more contractual instructors, and offering retirement incentives

(Chan, 2015). That the province is under significant financial strain indicates this decrease is one that is likely to continue into the foreseeable future (Government X, 2020). In response to these challenges, the province has initiated a provincial public post-secondary education review to evaluate effectiveness, accountability, accessibility, and sustainability (Government X, 2019b).

Traditionally, in Atlantic Canada, small- to medium-sized businesses report labour shortages, as employers have had a higher level of difficulty in hiring qualified individuals (Riley, 2019). With an aging workforce and a declining youth population, it is imperative that students in the Atlantic region be equipped with the necessary skills sought by employers (Bundale, 2017). In 2019, the provincial government released a workforce development document forecasting over 62,000 job vacancies from 2019 to 2028 in the province (Government X, 2019b). This report reiterated employers' concerns that many post-secondary graduates often do not possess the desired transferrable human or soft skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem solving (Government X, 2019b). To address this, the provincial government has highlighted four priority areas and several action items, including the value of experiential learning opportunities for students, such as work-integrated learning (Government X, 2019b). As well, ongoing dialogue with industry partners is critical for Institution X to remain aware of workforce needs in the province and region. Such dialogue can inform the development of curricular and co-curricular learning experiences, activities outside the classroom that can complement the academic curriculum, to develop these sought-after employability skills ("Co-Curricular," 2013).

### **Social and Cultural Contexts**

As acknowledged in its historical and strategic documents, Institution X has a special obligation to the province and its people (Institution X, 2020d). It recognizes its important

provincial and regional role in providing affordable, high quality education, and meeting the local workforce needs. Pride, affection and fierce loyalty from alumni, employees and the community is apparent (Institution X, 2018a). Because they have strong ties to the institution, citizens of the province have a sense of ownership and expect certain levels of accountability. Due to the high expectations of parents, students, and employers about the outcomes of higher education, and given the community's emotional investment in the institution, both the social and cultural contexts are critically important factors (Kezar & Eckel, 2002).

### **Mission, Values, and Goals**

A review of the mission, vision, and values of Institution X demonstrates a commitment to supporting students, providing exemplary teaching and learning, community service, and research and scholarship (Institution X, 2020d). Institution X is aware of its role in developing students' employability skills and preparing graduates for future career success. It has long been a leader in developing students' skills through various forms of experiential learning and was one of the first three Canadian institutions to establish co-operative education, in 1969 (Institution X, 2020c). More recently, it released an updated framework for teaching and learning that focuses on providing transformative curricular and co-curricular opportunities for students (Institution X, 2018b). The framework has clearly identified eleven graduate outcomes that align with those skills desired by many stakeholders, which include students, faculty, parents, employers, the university, and others. With a commitment for students to gain employability skills, it is imperative that they also develop awareness and an understanding of the skills gained, as well as the ability to articulate them post-graduation.

Institution X has recently undergone senior leadership changes, including a new president, new provost, and ongoing searches for other senior administrative roles. It is currently



developing a new strategic plan and embarking on wide consultations with internal and external stakeholders. This will likely influence future direction and impact the problem presented. Also noted previously, the provincial government is completing a provincial post-secondary review, which emphasizes effectiveness and accountability. This will likely include measuring specific outcomes of higher education, such as graduate employment rates, and potentially influence institutional priorities (Government X, 2019a).

### **Organizational Structure and Leadership Approaches**

Institution X has a bicameral governance system with a Senate that oversees academic matters and a Board of Regents that manages all other responsibilities (Institution X, 2020c). Although the president is the institutional leader, the provost provides leadership to numerous academic and non-academic units on campus, including the student portfolio, led by a senior student affairs officer (SSAO). As a long-time employee of the university, reporting directly to the SSAO, the author provides a level of leadership that has authority, cultural and historical knowledge, as well as meaningful connections throughout the institution. These strengths will be beneficial to providing a vision for change, particularly relevant to student engagement and career development, two units within the author's current portfolio.

The institution has traditionally followed a transactional approach to leadership which "focuses on the exchanges that occurs between leaders and followers" (Northouse, 2016, p. 162). Similar to many other post-secondary institutions, the author contends that Institution X functions under a functionalist paradigm, with a focus on "providing explanations of the status quo, social order, consensus, social integration, solidarity, need satisfaction and actuality" (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 26). Generally, a functionalist paradigm focuses on finding practical solutions to problems (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). This approach may be to the author's advantage

in garnering support to address the problem identified and to explore possible solutions. However, with a new president who is very collaborative and actively engages with stakeholders, it appears that the institution's leadership approach may be moving towards a more collegial and transformative style. Gravitating towards leadership approaches theoretically founded in collaborative and transformational leadership, the author welcomes the opportunity to engage with senior leaders and work towards shared goals.

### **Organizational History**

Founded almost 100 years ago as a teachers' college and elevated to a university more than 70 years ago, Institution X has grown into a large comprehensive, doctoral institution that currently offers over 100 degree programs across numerous faculties and multiple campuses (Institution X, 2020b). It is one of the province's most critical resources and a major contributor to provincial, social, economic, and cultural well-being. In addition to its special obligation to the region and the people of the province, it also remains focused on the institutional priorities of teaching, research, scholarly pursuits, community service, and student success (Institution X, 2020a). These commitments are at the forefront when setting priorities and decision making, as the university recognizes its role in educating the future workforce of the province and supporting the economic stability of the region.

### **Leadership Position and Theoretical Lens**

As a senior administrator in student affairs, with a long history at Institution X, the author leads a diverse portfolio that is focused on supporting student success in the areas of career development, student engagement, accessibility, student support, code of conduct, and internationalization. Core to this work is providing supports and services that will assist students in successfully navigating the transition into university, thrive while attending, and successfully

transition out as productive members of society. Having been employed at Institution X for over 20 years, 16 of which have been in senior leadership roles, the author has developed strong relationships and a positive reputation for working collaboratively to address a variety of issues with internal and external stakeholders. Often, these issues are complex, requiring collaboration and leadership from multiple units to support students.

Northouse (2016) defined leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p. 6). Leadership is also defined as a process, requiring activity or involving action to address problems, rather than a focus on attributes, personal traits, or titles (Heifetz et al., 2004; Randall & Coakley, 2007). These portrayals resonate with the author, as well as a strong belief that leadership requires taking action and working together with others to achieve shared goals. When working collaboratively towards mutual outcomes and objectives, it is imperative that leaders provide support, recognize the contributions of others, and are flexible and adaptable (Kezar, 2014; Kotter, 2012; Kouzes & Posner, 2002). It is critical that a leader build and maintain positive working relationships, value communication, and be viewed as trustworthy (Koenig, 2018). The author strongly leans towards collaborative environments, which are described as “ones in which members can stay problem focused, listen to and understand one another, feel free to take risks, and be willing to compensate for one another” (Northouse, 2016, p. 370).

The area of career development in student affairs can play an important role in addressing an issue as complex as students’ skill development and ensuring that students are aware of their attainment. Hardy-Cox and Strange (2010) acknowledged that “there is a growing consciousness throughout Canadian higher education that student services is a critical partner in fulfilling the promises and enhancing the outcomes of the post-secondary opportunity” (p. xii). However,

opportunities for students to develop sought-after employability skills is not relegated to one unit or area of an institution. Instead, the author believes that the responsibility lies campus-wide and is intertwined with experiences both in- and outside the classroom. The learning that transpires throughout a student's time at university is a "complex, holistic, multi-centric activity that occurs throughout and across the college experience" (Keeling, 2004, p. 5). The author's personal focus on employing collaborative and follower-centric leadership approaches will be useful in engaging stakeholders from across the campus to work collaboratively to address this complex issue. Given that the author's position often requires participation in conversations at the senior level to address institutional strategic goals and objectives, the author is likely to be successful in leading an appropriate response.

### **Theoretical Lens and Leadership Approach**

As stated, the author thrives in leadership opportunities that provide the occasion to work collaboratively with others to address problems. Getting individuals excited about potential opportunities and envisioning an improved future state are also the author's strengths. The problem identified is one that requires the author to present a vision to increase student and organizational success by addressing the skills awareness gap. It is imperative that institutional leaders, faculty, staff, and students recognize the problem and work collaboratively to address it. Both transformational and collaborative leadership approaches provide paths to successfully address this issue and align with the author's personal leadership values and beliefs.

Transformational leadership encourages strong connections between leaders and others, motivating all parties to envision what could be and work towards achieving great things together (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). It is dependent on presenting new ideas and inspiring people to think differently (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Eckel & Kezar, 2003). Encouraging colleagues to

strive for improved student outcomes not only positively impacts students, but it is also intrinsically rewarding for faculty and staff (Berdahl, 2021). Inspiring others to see these benefits will be part of a compelling vision that illustrates the changes proposed will have widespread positive effects.

Transformational leadership often uses moral undertones to motivate action (McCleskey, 2014; Northouse, 2016). The expectation that post-secondary institutions have a moral obligation to prepare students with the necessary skills to successfully transition to employment upon completion of their education is increasing (Edge et al., 2018; Mitchell & Kay, 2013; Munro et al., 2014). As previously stated, career preparation is a primary reason why students report participating in post-secondary education (Skinkle & Glennie, 2016), yet reports from employers have indicated that university graduates are not prepared to enter the workforce upon graduation (McKinsey & Company, 2015). This requires Institution X to further contemplate the personal and societal benefits of higher education and its obligation to ensure that students are aware of the skills gained through their various experiences and education (Berdahl, 2021). This moral obligation aligns with the author's personal position and will be a discussion point with leaders, faculty, and staff.

Collaborative leadership focuses on building bridges with others and works strategically to achieve a common objective or shared outcome (Rubin, 2002). It is further defined as the "skillful and mission-oriented facilitation of relevant relationships" and "the juncture of organizing and management" (p. 4). The focus is on getting initiatives accomplished with others by building, nourishing, and guiding the commitment, skills, and attentiveness to the issue at hand, which, addressed collaboratively, will be achieved more quickly and effectively (Rubin, 2002). Given the speed of change and the complexity of challenges facing higher education, it is

unlikely that these issues can be addressed unilaterally; rather, they require the insight from various stakeholders to find solutions (Northouse, 2016; Yukl & Mahsud, 2010). Adaptive and distributed leadership are two specific collaborative approaches that resonate strongly with and inform the author's leadership style. Both are focused on engaging individuals to address complex problems that are often not easily defined (Gronn, 2010; Heifetz et al., 2004; Northouse, 2016).

Distributed leadership is one form of collaborative or team leadership. Gronn (2010) described it as "the totality of the organizational influence is not concentrated or monopolized by just one person, but instead dispersed or shared around so that there are a number of sources of influence, initiative taking or forward thinking" (p. 417). Distributed leadership in higher education advocates for all employees to participate in supporting students and engage with learning and teaching, while offering a framework that encourages participation designed to support organizational change (Jones et al., 2012). Since this approach is more inclusive and acknowledges that anyone can contribute to leadership practice, it flattens the decision-making process (Harris & Spillane, 2008). This approach will allow participants and stakeholders to feel that they have the power to influence change. Given the author's intention to engage students, staff, and faculty, it will be important that each member feel empowered to take part in the skills awareness gap discussion and know that their opinions and diverse ways of thinking are valued.

The skills discussion is not new to post-secondary education, but there has been little effort to address it on an organizational level at Institution X. Accrediting bodies have required some professional schools to ensure that students develop specific skills, but this is not replicated across all faculties. Addressing this disparity will be a valuable discussion point and will require meaningful dialogue on the quality and equality of educational programs. Again, distributed

leadership is a fitting approach to undertaking this work, as it “takes shape in the interactions of the leaders, followers and their situation, thus breaking new ground rather than simply relabeling old ideas” (Spillane, 2005, p. 146). Those involved in the change will include a cross section of stakeholders across the organization. This distributed approach will require those involved to play a critical role in discovering solutions and communicating the change message to their peers and colleagues, ultimately leading to greater buy-in throughout Institution X.

The second collaborative approach that resonates with the author’s values and style is adaptive leadership. It is congruent with distributed leadership in that it views the leader as a mobilizer, assembling and working with others to take on tough problems (Northouse, 2016). Also considered a collaborative, follower-centric leadership style, it espouses “leadership defines itself through action,” rather than individual attributes and capabilities (Heifetz et al., 2004, p. 4). Adaptive leadership focuses on mobilizing others to address complex and not easily defined problems, while tapping into their knowledge to discover solutions (Heifetz et al., 2004; Northouse, 2016; Randall & Coakley, 2007). The skills awareness problem is one that may be controversial given the neoliberal undertones of such a topic; however, this approach is considered appropriate. The goal of adaptive leadership “encourages shifts in mind-set . . . [and] achieves positive change by provoking debate, encouraging new thinking and advancing learning” (Heifetz et al., 2004, p. 26).

To address biases and strong beliefs on this issue, the author will lead by demonstrating adaptive leadership behaviours. To address this adaptive challenge, one will be required too often, as Heifetz and Laurie (1997, p. 125) explained, “Get on the balcony.” Doing so will allow the author the opportunity to step back, reflect, and appreciate what has been shared in order to continue guiding the change process. The ability to move back and forth from actively

participating to observing and reflecting will provide the opportunity to appreciate the views shared by the stakeholders' various vantage points (Heifetz & Laurie, 1997).

To lead change, the leader must be a strong communicator, transparent, collaborative, authentic, and trustworthy. To successfully address an overarching problem at Institution X, shared buy-in and responsibility among a number of individuals and groups with various perspectives will be required. The theoretical tenets of transformative and collaborative (i.e., distributed and adaptive) leadership are each effective to address the problem and align with the author's personal values and leadership philosophy.

### **Leadership Problem of Practice**

The ongoing discourse regarding graduates' lack of preparedness to enter the workforce is not only a national issue but also one recognized internationally (Lapointe & Turner, 2020). It is largely portrayed in policy papers, in various academic articles, and in the media as a "skills gap" among recent graduates (Bauer-Wolfe, 2018; McKinsey & Company, 2015; Udem Research, 2018; Whitford, 2018). Others, however, have maintained that the issue is not a *skills gap*, but rather an *awareness gap*, with graduates ultimately possessing the skills and competencies desired in the workplace, but lacking the opportunity to reflect and increase their awareness of the skills gained through their experiences, both in- and outside the classroom (Craig, 2017; Maybrey, 2020; Rancourt, 2019). The need for students to develop, articulate, and have confidence in the skills they gained while attending a post-secondary institution increases their motivation when linked to achieving career success and requires a student-centred, collaborative response (Seniuk Cicek et al, 2017). With a rapidly evolving world of work, and predictions that 85% of the jobs required in 2030 will be invented in the coming decade,



universities must acknowledge their role and shared responsibility in preparing students and graduates for a changing labour market (Edge et al., 2018; Weise et al., 2018).

Numerous suggestions are available on how universities can address the skills awareness gap, with the majority encouraging that strategies be embedded both early and throughout a student's academic journey (Edge et al., 2018; Lapointe, 2021). With a commitment to providing transformative and skill-building experiences, Institution X offers a wide variety of co-curricular opportunities for students throughout their studies, thereby addressing both the early and ongoing need. These experiences can enrich student learning and, together with curricular education, support the holistic development of a student (Stirling & Kerr, 2015). However, many of these experiences at Institution X have previously provided limited or no formal opportunities for reflection or evaluation of outcomes, thereby failing to link these experiences with skill development, career objectives, and achieving graduate outcomes. Baker and Henson (2010) stated, "The development and awareness of one's employability skills is increasingly viewed as a way of improving individuals' career prospects after graduation" (p. 73). Institution X provides valuable, yet underdeveloped, experiences that can, if further developed and refined, play a role in addressing the skills awareness gap existing for many post-secondary graduates. Thus, in considering on-campus employment as a valuable co-curricular experience, this PoP will explore how a mid-sized Atlantic Canadian university can increase students' acquisition, awareness, and translation of the skills gained through this educational experience.

Like many universities in Canada, Institution X is committed to student success, while recognizing its critical role in educating and meeting the needs of the region and province (Institution X, 2020b). It has acknowledged the important and shared responsibility that it holds in ensuring that graduates have the employability skills coveted by employers. The release of an

updated teaching and learning framework exemplifies Institution X's commitment to providing transformative co-curricular and curricular experiences. Although it is committed to graduates' attainment of specific attributes outlined in the framework (Institution X, 2018a), it is imperative that Institution X ensures that graduates have access to impactful learning experiences, are aware of the skills gained, and have the ability to understand and articulate them. This awareness and understanding of skills often leads to more meaningful learning and increased motivation, as students recognize "their pragmatic application to their professional lives" (Seniuk Cicek et al, 2017, p. 2). Intentionally designing on-campus employment into a high impact practice (HIP), and increasing students' awareness and translation of skills gained through this experience, will contribute to addressing the problem.

### **Framing the Problem of Practice**

Preparing students to possess the required employability skills, encourage creativity, resilience, and preparedness to *upskill* and be lifelong learners is a critical priority for post-secondary institutions (Murphy, 2018). Through meaningful dialogue with various stakeholders, such as governments, employers, faculty, policymakers, and others, higher education can be an active participant in improving graduates' readiness and their successful transition to the workforce. The following section will explore a brief historical and current overview of internal and external forces that have, and continue to influence, this problem. Through the lens of organizational theory, an overview of the particular broad forces influencing the problem will be shared. A further examination through a PESTE analysis will explore the political, economic, social, technological, and environmental factors that impact the problem. This will be followed by a review of the literature that explores the impact of part-time employment on students and its intersection with the PoP.

## Historical Analysis

Greater accountability and the corporatization of higher education has been creeping into post-secondary institutions for some time (Siemens et al., 2018). In the early 1990s, *Maclean's Magazine* introduced its guide to Canadian Universities/Colleges and Maclean's University Rankings, comparing various measures of Canadian universities and ranking them accordingly. This coincided with various provincial governments introducing the collection of key performance indicators (KPIs) under the pretense of improved outcomes, greater efficiency, meeting students' needs, and addressing labour market outcomes (Botas & Huisman, 2012). It has been argued that this increased accountability has decreased the autonomy of institutions, as governments have tightened their hold on higher education under the pretenses of improving outcomes and student satisfaction (Browne & Rayner, 2013). While evidence-based decision making is valuable, it is best done when determined by the institution, or at least in collaboration with post-secondary institutions, for the purposes of planning, measuring outcomes, and impact (Chan, 2015).

Currently, KPIs, such as graduate employment rates, are now embedded neoliberal accountability levers in higher education policy across Canada, resulting in governments having greater impact on post-secondary institutions. Such data continue to reshape higher education from broad, deep learning to professionalism, outputs, and human capital (Brown, 2015; Kezar, 2014). This increased accountability for higher education to meet societal and economic neoliberal demands, particularly in relation to graduate employability outcomes, is an issue that shows no sign of dissipating, and is likely to increase for Institution X. The focus on examining effectiveness and accountability in the provincial post-secondary review will likely require

measuring key indicators, including graduate employment data and other outcomes (Government X, 2019a).

### **Framing through Organizational Theory**

It is important to explore the PoP through a theoretical perspective. One specific lens through which to examine the problem is organizational theory, particularly institutional and political perspectives, both of which clearly resonate and shape the problem presented. Through the lens of institutional theory, institutions are defined as “larger entities, external to the organization, that exert influence through policies, rules, and cultural norms” (Manning, 2018, p. 114). External institutions such as governments, employers, parents, and accreditation boards have gradually impacted higher education and its outcomes for many years (Edge et al., 2018; Lapointe & Turner, 2020). While post-secondary institutions are being held more accountable, how they respond to these external demands generally remains an internal choice (Manning, 2018). Addressing the problem presented is an approach that Institution X can take in order to positively increase student awareness of skills and assist students’ transition to the workforce.

Political theory also acknowledges the role of external influences on internal policies and procedures. In addition, it also recognizes the complexity of higher education and the conflicts that may arise internally due to numerous internal stakeholders with competing priorities and interests (Manning, 2018). The role of the leaders in developing relationships and soliciting input and support when addressing problems is stressed. Given the complexity of higher education and conflict arising from competing views, political theory is an applicable organizational lens to consider for the PoP, particularly given the internal stakeholder engagement that will be required (Manning, 2018). This theoretical lens also resonates with the author’s values and collaborative leadership style in addressing such a complex and provocative topic. Examination of both

institutional and political factors, as well as others, will be contextualized further through a political, economic, social, technological and environmental analysis.

### **Factors Shaping the Problem of Practice**

In addition to broad theoretical influences, other more specific factors in the internal and external environment shape the PoP. These include political, economic, social, technological, and ecological/environmental (PESTE) factors (Cawsey et al., 2020). By applying the PESTE framework, internal and external factors can be analyzed further to identify additional key factors shaping the problem. For the purposes of this PoP, a brief overview of the first four factors will be presented and illuminate the broader forces shaping the problem of addressing the skills awareness gap. In addition, the literature on student employability, research regarding part-time employment, and similar HIPs will also be presented in relation to the problem identified.

#### ***Political Factors***

As already acknowledged in this paper, political factors focus on greater government influence and accountability. This influence can be realized at both the provincial and federal levels. Cumming (2010) has identified three ways that government has tied itself to the skills agenda in higher education: (a) intentionally connecting education and economics, (b) responding to concerns raised by employers about graduates' work readiness, and (c) increased accountability measures such as graduate outcomes linked to funding. As stated previously, increased accountability will be an outcome of the provincial post-secondary review. This will likely include increased measuring and reporting on specific results. Identification and measurement of graduate skills attainment, as identified in Institution X's (2018b) teaching and learning framework, will support a response for such requirements.

The federal government has clearly indicated that the skills agenda is a high priority. It has made a significant financial investment and supported the creation of the Future Skills Centre, whose purpose is to assist Canadians in attaining the skills required to excel in an evolving labour market (Future Skills Centre, n.d.). It also recently made a significant investment supporting skills development through work-integrated learning, allocating almost \$800 million to create 84,000 new opportunities per year over the next five years (Stevens, 2019). Such action signals the federal government's investment in the skills agenda and cannot be ignored by higher education.

### ***Economic Factors***

Economic success is tied closely to a skilled labour force that is ready to meet industry need and willing to upskill as needed (Aoun, 2017; Munro et al., 2014). Hooley and Dodd (2015) tied graduates' readiness to enter the workforce with economic growth, lower unemployment, and having a knowledgeable, skilled, adaptable workforce with substantial financial benefits both locally and nationally. Given that the Atlantic Provinces have a declining youth population, coupled with labour shortages and greater challenges in finding qualified candidates, it is imperative that Institution X be acutely aware of the workforce needs of the region (Riley, 2019). In order to meet these workforce demands, Institution X must remain in tune with the skills and knowledge required to ensure that graduates are both acquiring them and aware of these in-demand skills to support a thriving economy.

### ***Sociological Factors***

The societal value and purpose of higher education is also a factor to consider when examining this PoP. Students, parents, and employers expect "that graduates at all levels should acquire a set of transferrable employability skills" upon completion of their post-secondary

education (Cumming, 2010, p. 407). With high competition, increased student mobility, and higher expectations of securing meaningful employment, Institution X must illustrate its commitment to offering transformative education and experiences that assist students in developing and being aware of skills gained. Given the ongoing discourse that graduates lack required employability skills, Institution X must find ways to mitigate this message. It must demonstrate the value of a university education in the context of stakeholders' expectations of anticipated career outcomes upon completion of higher education.

### ***Technological Factors***

Finally, in a time of rapid technological change, higher education leaders must remain aware of technological factors and be attuned to new developments. Given the accelerated pace of change in this area, post-secondary institutions should ensure that they are preparing “an agile workforce, who are equipped with futureproof skills to take advantage of new opportunities through continuous retraining and upskilling” (World Economic Forum, 2018, p. v).

Technological advances are important; however, higher education must also maintain the value of uniquely human skills such as creativity, communication, and adaptability, as current and future employment will see humans and machines working collaboratively side by side (Aoun, 2017). It would be advantageous for Institution X to continue engaging with employers to assess needs as well as ensure that students are increasingly aware of the value that employers place on human or non-technical skills.

### **Academic Literature**

The previous paragraphs provide the broad external and internal contextual forces that play a significant role in shaping the problem of students' awareness of skills gained throughout their educational experiences. Also worth examining is the academic research on the issue,

particularly the impact of on-campus employment on students' employability. Evident throughout the research was the value that employers place on this experience and the employability skills that students gain through part-time employment; often acknowledging it positively impacts graduates' transition to the workforce (Evans & Richardson, 2017; Robotham, 2012). Numerous studies have demonstrated that students who participate in these experiences often report the development of several skills, such as problem solving, communication, leadership, time management, and professionalism (Fede et al., 2018; Rinto et al., 2019). In addition to skills development, studies indicate that on-campus, part-time employment increases students' connection to their university, improves awareness of their employability skills, and connections to future careers (Mitchell & Kay, 2013). More recently, the literature has focused on developing learner-centred, on-campus employment as it pertains to other active learning experiences, labelled HIPs (McClellan et al., 2018). The term high impact practice "refers to institutionally structured student experiences inside or outside the classroom that are associated with elevated performance across multiple engagement activities and desired outcomes such as 'deep learning' and include six specific characteristics" (McClellan et al., 2018, p. x). These characteristics can easily be aligned with on-campus employment, shaping a student's experience at university and contributing to skills acquisition and awareness (Mitola et al., 2018). With an increased recognition of the value of transformative learning opportunities for students, on-campus employment, if designed to incorporate the characteristics of HIPs and experiential learning best practices, could be a viable means for Institution X to increase a student's ability to develop employability skills, increase awareness of skills gained, and their transferability to future professional success.



### **Guiding Questions Emerging from Problem of Practice**

In reflecting on and examining the problem of the skills awareness gap, additional guiding questions have emerged that further explore the problem presented. Who owns the responsibility of preparing job-ready graduates? Should co-curricular experiences, such as on-campus employment, be modeled after existing HIPs that have proven to be successful? How will faculty and staff be motivated to play a role in ensuring that students develop awareness of the skills gained throughout their experiences in- and outside the classroom? Each will be further examined.

#### **Who Owns the Responsibility of Preparing Job Ready Graduates?**

In discussions about graduate employability, a common question or debate that arises is, who is responsible for preparing graduates to meet the needs of the labour force? Much of the literature presented has focused on the role of higher education, but a deeper analysis of employers' role in skills acquisition is also necessary. Many employers argue that it is the responsibility of post-secondary institutions to ensure that graduates are job-ready, with some employers calling for educational reform in order to meet the needs of the employer community (McKay, 2017). Others contend that it is the employer's role to invest in training and assist new graduates in gaining the required skills (Bessen, 2014). Despite who is ultimately responsible, it is worth noting that employer investment in employee training over the last 25 years has significantly decreased, with Canada lagging behind many of its international counterparts (Munro, 2014). This is despite numerous studies demonstrating the positive impact that training and staff investment has on overall productivity and motivation in the workplace (Ballard, 2017; Munro, 2014). There appears to be mounting agreement that higher education has an important role in skill development and awareness through transformative, reflective learning experiences

with linkages to career aspiration (Seniuk-Cicek et al., 2017). Further examination of the PoP highlighted that the skills development and awareness debate is complex and requires a more collaborative approach between employers and post-secondary institutions.

**Should Co-Curricular Experiences, Such as On-Campus Employment, be Modeled on Existing High Impact Practices that Have Proven to be Successful?**

This second question is related to the impact of co-curricular experiences on developing employability skills, awareness of their acquisition, and the ability to articulate them. With significant literature available on a variety of student activities to increase student success, aligning on-campus employment with the characteristics of HIPs to assist in addressing the skills awareness gap is worth examining (Mitola et al., 2018). Given that Institution X provides significant financial support for on-campus employment, and employers value the experience gained from this activity (Mitchell & Kay, 2013), further examination of how HIP literature can inform this activity to maximize the benefits to students is required.

**How Will Faculty and Staff be Motivated to Play a Role in Ensuring that Students Develop Awareness of the Skills Gained Throughout Their Experiences in and outside the Classroom?**

Many faculty and staff may not recognize their role in addressing the skills awareness problem. It may also fundamentally counter the philosophy of some faculty that they have any role in preparing students for employment and resist any neoliberal undertones of such priorities (Berdahl, 2021). Educating faculty and staff to understand the benefits of helping students connect the dots between what they are learning in the classroom and its translation to employability skills may provide the motivation for such influencers to embed meaningful

reflection, deepen the learning experience, and support an integrated learning approach to skills awareness (Berdahl, 2021; Martini et al., 2015).

### **Leadership-Focused Vision for Change**

The following paragraphs will provide an overview of the current state of Institution X in assisting students to increase their awareness of the required employability skills gained throughout their education. Key priorities and a vision for change will be identified, while also balancing organizational and stakeholder interests. This section will conclude with an examination of the current change drivers impacting the organization and necessitating action. It will align the activities proposed to present an improved future organizational state that supports student success, the desired outcomes of Institution X, and the interests of internal and external stakeholders.

### **Current Organizational State**

Like many other post-secondary institutions, Institution X offers a wide variety of co-curricular experiences for students outside the classroom. These are intentionally designed opportunities with various learning outcomes that generally include: (a) cognitive complexity, (b) knowledge acquisition and application, (c) humanitarianism, (d) civic engagement and interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, (e) practical competence, and (f) academic achievement (Keeling, 2004). Currently, at Institution X, there is little coordination to ensure that co-curricular opportunities are designed intentionally or assess learning outcomes. Many do not incorporate the tenets of experiential learning and have minimal to no reflection incorporated, resulting in students' lack of awareness and understanding of the skills and learning occurring from these experiences (D. A. Kolb, 1984; A. Y. Kolb & D. A. Kolb, 2005). This is reflected in institutional data collected through the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2021), a valued benchmark for higher education institutions, and an internal Graduating Student Survey

conducted by the institutional analysis and planning office at Institution X. Both surveys are implemented on a three-year cycle and administered in different years, providing some data on skills awareness two out of every three years.

The co-curricular experience of on-campus employment is one opportunity that has been supported by the literature as directly relating to skills acquisition and requiring further exploration. Currently, Institution X offers a wide-reaching on-campus employment program (Program M) that was created in the early 1990s as a response to rising tuition costs. An established part of the culture at Institution X, it provides over 2,000 part-time, on-campus employment opportunities annually to undergraduate students, across all academic and administrative units. While Program M provides meaningful work experience, often directly related to a student's area of study, it has limited reflection with minimal evaluation of learning outcomes. As a result, it fails to link these transformative experiences with future career goals and the graduate attributes identified by Institution X (2018b) in the teaching and learning framework.

### **Future Organizational State**

The leadership-focused vision for change proposed for Institution X envisions a future state where on-campus employment is respected as a transformative learning experience by students, staff, and faculty and is recognized for its valuable role in increasing student employability skills and future career success. Without an institution-wide approach to on-campus employment that supports institutional goals for student success, Institution X is omitting an opportunity to address the skills awareness gap problem. Also being overlooked is achieving key institutional outcomes required by various stakeholders, including students, parents, and government.

The literature strongly supported a positive correlation between working on-campus with an awareness of skills acquisition and transferability to future careers as well as stronger connections with peers and faculty, deeper learning, increased retention, higher graduation rates, and increased post-graduation job satisfaction (Fede et al., 2018; Mitola et al., 2018; Rinto et al., 2019). An active appeal to post-secondary institutions is to recognize the value of on-campus employment as an opportunity to intentionally address the skills awareness gap, recognizing that:

One of the key failings of graduates is a frequent inability to demonstrate their skills . . . [while] failing to recognize, and fully embrace, the skills derived from their part-time jobs in order to enhance their attractiveness to prospective employers. (Evans & Richardson, 2017, p. 284)

More recently, comparisons of on-campus employment to other HIPs have indicated numerous positive student outcomes. McClellan et al. (2018) defined HIPs as “institutionally structured student experiences inside or outside the classroom that are associated with elevated performance across multiple engagement activities and desired outcomes, such as deep learning, persistence, and satisfaction with college” (p. 186). By intentionally redesigning Program M to align with the characteristics of HIPs, students will gain valuable employability skills, an awareness of their acquisition, the ability to articulate them, and their transferability to a rapidly changing workforce. The six elements of HIPs as they relate to on-campus employment are illustrated in Table 1.

**Table 1***Characteristics of High Impact Practices Aligned with On-Campus Employment*

HIP Elements	HIP On-Campus Employment Elements
Time and Effort	Time and effort student employees dedicate to purposeful tasks
Faculty and Peer Interaction	Interaction students have with supervisors and peers
Diversity	The experience provides evidence of commitment to diversity
Formal and Informal Feedback	Students receive formal and informal feedback about performance
Integration, Synthesis, and Application	The experience encourages the developments and awareness of transferrable skills
Connection	Evidence of cumulative impact of student employment on the students' overall post-secondary experience

*Note:* Adapted from Mitola et al. (2018) to specifically align with on-campus employment.

The future state would also experience increased collaboration and recognition of the influential role that faculty and staff play in students' skills development and awareness. This would raise the mindfulness of various constituents that there is a shared role in addressing this problem. As supervisors of students working on campus, their role is critical in developing meaningful work experiences, reflecting with the student to deepen the learning, while also providing valuable feedback (Rinto et al., 2019). It will also highlight the notion that learning occurs "throughout and across the college experience" and can take place in many activities in- and outside the classroom (Keeling, 2004, p. 4). Involving all stakeholders in these discussions will increase the recognition of their various roles and responsibilities and engage them in finding solutions.

This envisioned future state would provide numerous benefits. In addition to increased skills awareness, student satisfaction, and graduate success, it would intensify the role and

responsibility of faculty and staff in students' skills development and awareness; increase Institution X's outcomes in NSSE, the Graduate Student Survey, and other surveys; clearly measure graduate outcomes as defined in the teaching and learning framework; place the institution in a better position to respond to requests for graduate outcomes from various stakeholders; increase the reputation of the institution; and be recognized as a leader in on-campus employment and HIPs.

### **Priorities for Change and Balancing Interests**

In order to address the PoP and implement the recommendations in the OIP, it will be critical to balance the various, and often competing, stakeholder interests. Some may not consider the skills awareness gap as a problem or feel any responsibility to address it. In order to raise awareness among stakeholders, including senior leadership, institutional data and relevant literature will be shared in an effort to highlight the issue and the responsibility of the institution to seek solutions. Persuasive arguments to address this problem will also be presented in the context of three specific change drivers impacting Institution X. As well, the information communicated to stakeholder groups, including faculty, staff, and students, will be nuanced, requiring individual consideration.

### **Change Drivers**

In order to determine what requires organizational change, an examination of change drivers provides additional insight. Change drivers are defined as "events, activities or behaviours that facilitate the implementation of change" (Whelan-Barry & Sommerville, 2010, p. 179). Three specific driving forces, both internal and external to Institution X, influence the PoP, several of which have been previously mentioned briefly. The first, an external driver, involves the provincial review of post-secondary education currently under way, and its focus on

examining effectiveness, accountability, accessibility, and sustainability (Government X, 2019a). Both effectiveness and accountability will likely involve measuring key outcomes, including graduate employment data, and increased accountability for specific outcomes. These outcomes will likely be shared with various stakeholders, presented in the media, and published in widely disseminated documents. Institution X will be required to examine the recommendations from the review, determine its response and demonstrate that outcomes are being achieved.

Two internal factors require further examination. The first is the updated teaching and learning framework that highlights specific graduate attributes and skills (Institution X, 2018b). Faculties and units are being challenged to examine how they contribute to the development of these outcomes. This will require internal analysis of curricular and co-curricular offerings to determine how they contribute not only to the development of these skills, but also to graduate awareness of their acquisition and transferability. An additional internal change driver is the creation of a strategic plan currently being developed at Institution X to be released in spring 2021. Internal and external stakeholders are being consulted and will be influential in determining the institution's goals and priorities. It will likely include student and graduate success outcomes, leaving faculties and departments eager to find ways to achieve such goals. While these drivers will necessitate action, the following paragraphs will examine the organizational change readiness of Institution X and explore the competing internal and external forces that shape the change.

### **Organizational Change Readiness**

Research has acknowledged that approximately 70% of organizational change plans fail (Judge & Douglas, 2009). To avoid failure, a critical first step in any change process is to examine the organization's readiness to change. This also includes the human element or



employee's openness towards change and an understanding of the organizational culture (Napier et al., 2017). Higher education is not immune to the rapid pace of change happening throughout all organizations. While the change required to address the problem identified in this OIP will potentially increase student success, to be fully embraced at Institution X and a change process initiated, the author "needs to demonstrate that the need for change is real and important" to motivate others to alter past actions or behaviours (Cawsey et al., 2016, p. 96). Universities have been traditionally slow to change and adapt; however, internal and external forces require change at an unprecedented pace (Edge et al., 2018; Lapointe & Turner, 2020). Many of these forces, including improving efficiency, increased quality and productivity, and remaining competitive (Kezar, 2014; Kotter, 2012), require Institution X to adapt and evolve by choosing how it will respond to current and future demands. Often an organization's readiness for change is predicated on the previous change experiences of its participants, the organization's flexibility and ability to adapt, as well as trust and confidence in the leadership (Cawsey et al., 2020; Judge & Douglas, 2002). With a new president having been installed in recent months, Institution X has been injected with a fresh energy focused on developing an exciting path forward. While the timing may be ripe to implement changes to address this PoP, a thorough examination assessing readiness for change at Institution X is required. The application of a specific tool to assess readiness, and a discussion on the competing internal and external forces shaping the change will be presented.

### **Tools to Assess Readiness**

Organizational change readiness tools are available to assist change leaders in determining an organization's readiness to embrace change. The author chose the Readiness for Change Questionnaire developed by Cawsey et al. (2020) to examine Institution X's inclination to address

the problem identified and incorporate the necessary changes. The questionnaire provides an opportunity to consider a variety of factors that may enhance or impede an organization's readiness to embrace change. The tool contains thirty-six factors to ponder within six readiness dimensions, resulting in a score between -25 and +50. The greater the score, the more likely the organization is open to change, although Cawsey et al. suggested a calculation of less than 10 strongly indicates that an organization is presently not ready for change. It should be noted that analysis and scoring of the instrument were solely based on the author's personal interpretation. The analysis of each dimension is described and applied to Institution X and presented in Table 2. The overall accumulated score of 37/50 has been interpreted to mean that Institution X is ready for change, with a careful consideration of identified areas that require strengthening.

**Table 2**

*Organizational Readiness for Change - Institution X*

Readiness Dimensions	Institution X – Strengths	Institution X – Requires Strengthening
Previous Change Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little significant change has occurred in recent years due to senior leaders being the end of their term and a focus on maintaining status quo in the face of significant budget constraints.</li> <li>• Recent change in senior leadership has been welcomed warmly with a positive, renewed energy looking forward to innovative new ideas and plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness of long-term employees who may have had negative change experiences.</li> </ul>
Executive Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some senior managers and leaders will be directly involved in supporting the change. Many are open to embracing new ideas that will benefit students and the overall organization.</li> <li>• Consultations are underway for a new strategic plan expected to be released in spring 2021.</li> <li>• The success of senior leaders is not dependant on the change occurring, but</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While not all senior managers and leaders will be involved, communication to leaders across the institution will be essential.</li> <li>• Strategic plan still under development and clear picture of the future not clear.</li> <li>• Ensure leaders are aware of how addressing this problem</li> </ul>

Readiness Dimensions	Institution X – Strengths	Institution X – Requires Strengthening
Credible Leadership and Change Champions	<p>if implemented, the change will positively impact student success and institutional outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The senior leaders at Institution X are currently respected and trusted. They work collaboratively and encourage others to do the same to achieve shared goals.</li> <li>• Institution X is an employer of choice in the province. Middle management is strong and there exists respect and positive relationships between various levels of leadership within the organization.</li> <li>• Senior leaders will view addressing the problem as a valuable exercise.</li> </ul>	<p>will support the institutions success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure leaders are aware of the value of addressing this problem, and therefore, viewed as needed.</li> </ul>
Openness to Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture of scanning internal and external environment.</li> <li>• An openness to trying new strategies and staff are generally provided the opportunity to voice concerns without fear of retribution.</li> <li>• The institution values innovation. Addressing this problem will be viewed as an innovative approach with general support from all levels of the organization if viewed to support student and organizational success.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institution X does not always react to findings from environmental scans, nor focus on root causes.</li> <li>• Additional resources may be required.</li> <li>• Those affected will require assurance the necessary work to implement the change will be minimal.</li> <li>• Communication channels will require ongoing monitoring to ensure appropriate messages are being shared with different stakeholders.</li> </ul>
Rewards for Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institution X values innovation and resulting changes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While valued, currently no rewards and minimal recognition.</li> </ul>
Measures for Change and Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institution X regularly collects data to assess satisfaction and for planning purposes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data are collected, but not always used to implement change.</li> </ul>

A further specific key factor in assessing organizational change readiness includes the trustworthiness of the change leader (Judge & Douglas, 2019; Kezar, 2014; Kotter, 2012). While an organization may appear ready for change, if change recipients do not trust the change leader or have confidence that the leader can accomplish the proposed change, resistance and failure to execute the change may result (Kezar, 2014). The author has a long history as a senior leader at Institution X in the areas of student affairs and career development and has worked diligently to cultivate and maintain positive relationships, both internal and external to the organization. Koenig (2018) stated, “People will guide their choices, in some part, based on past interactions with other people they know” (p. 109). The author’s current and past collaborative partnerships, reputation as an effective communicator, and previous experiences implementing change initiatives will increase the author’s credibility as a trustworthy change leader who is capable of addressing the problem and leading the change.

### **Addressing Internal and External Forces**

To address the competing internal and external forces shaping the change, is it imperative to have an awareness of various stakeholder perspectives. Doing so will provide insight as to why there may or may not be support to address the problem presented (Cawsey et al., 2020). Discussions with students, faculty, staff, senior leaders, employers, parents, and others will offer understanding of various views on this problem and the opportunity to consider responses to questions that may arise, such as, *why is this problem important*, or *why should I care?* This critical component of change readiness aligns with the author’s transformative and collaborative leadership approaches and may assist in identifying change facilitators to engage during the change process.

Various internal and external factors have been identified throughout the previous sections that influence the skills awareness gap in university graduates. Internally, student satisfaction and success are factors that Institution X cannot ignore. Providing transformative, curricular and co-curricular learning experiences, with outcomes that align with those desired by various stakeholders, such as graduate employment and career success, requires Institution X to find innovative solutions so that it can remain competitive and meet stakeholder expectations. Internally, such neoliberal and corporate explanations may not be favourable to all constituents, but aligning Program M, as well as skills development and awareness, with academic learning outcomes will likely increase the support needed to address this issue (Kezar, 2014; Mitchell & Kay, 2013; Schwartz et al., 2018; Yorke & Knight, 2007).

Externally, increased accountability is inevitable, given the current government initiatives under way, growing interest in graduate outcomes, and the economic needs for the province and region. This unavoidable coercive isomorphism is challenging, but Institution X has internal choice in how it responds to these external demands (Manning, 2018). To achieve desired outcomes, if facilitated with a student-centred approach, a stronger effort to create meaningful and intentional learning opportunities across the entire student experience will be required, necessitating buy-in throughout the organization. Addressing the problem as presented is one approach that Institution X can take to positively increase students' awareness of skills and graduate outcomes, while attaining sought after data to share with both internal and external stakeholders.

### **Chapter Summary**

Chapter 1 has outlined a complex, multi-layered problem at Institution X and situated it within the broader contextual forces influencing it. The preceding discussion has shared the

organizational history and context of Institution X, as well as provided a deeper understanding of the author's leadership position and philosophy. A leadership-focused vision for change and an examination of the institution's readiness for change have also been offered. Institution X is committed to improving the educational experience for current students and enhancing their post-graduation success. A rapidly changing workforce and the desire to prepare students for successfully pursuing their desired career paths are growing priorities for educational institutions, students, faculty, parents, government, employers, and others. Through a collaborative, student-centred process, Institution X is well positioned to address the skills awareness gap and improve students' overall experience and future career success, while addressing internal and external pressures. To further develop the path forward, Chapter 2 will present a leadership framework to drive the change, analyze institutional data to inform the selection of an appropriate change path model to address the PoP and present several potential solutions.

## **Chapter 2: Planning and Development**

Chapter 2 explores the planning and development required to address the problem presented in Chapter 1. It begins by sharing leadership approaches to propel the change forward as well as a framework describing how to lead the change in relation to the problem presented. A critical organizational analysis using Nadler and Tushman's (1980) congruence model will diagnose and analyze what needs to change and further explore Institution X's readiness for such action. Also presented are a variety of possible solutions to address the problem and considerations of leadership ethics in relation to the problem and organizational change.

### **Leadership Approaches to Change**

The future state envisioned through addressing this PoP is one in which students participating in on-campus employment (Program M) will have an increased awareness of the skills gained through this experiential and impactful activity. Currently, Program M, which launched in 1992, is a campus-wide, paid, employment program that provides 40 or 80 hour work placements across all faculties and administrative units at Institution X. It is voluntary, open to all students, in all years and disciplines, not always linked to area of academic study and has an optional reflection component. The author contends that by enhancing Program M, graduates will be more conscious of the skills and attributes attained, be more confident in their employability attributes upon graduation, and have more confidence in achieving future success (McCowan, 2015). This vision is in line with Institution X's priorities as identified in Chapter 1, and outlined in its teaching and learning framework (Institution X, 2018b), by providing transformative experiential learning activities that develop skills and knowledge outside of the traditional classroom environment. This change could be described as a transformational or second-order change, requiring a shift in attitude and altering mindsets (Eckel & Kezar, 2003) to

recognize the deep learning that can occur outside the traditional classroom in an activity such as on-campus employment (Keeling, 2013). To address the PoP outlined in the OIP, the chosen leadership-focused solutions include transformational leadership and collaborative leadership approaches, specifically adaptive and distributed leadership. The remainder of this section will explore each leadership approach in relation to the PoP.

### **Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leaders are those that engage with others to work collectively to “act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations—the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations—of both leaders and followers” (Burns, 1978, p. 19). Connections between the leaders and the followers raise the motivation and morality of all involved (Bass, 1985). This is achieved by increasing the consciousness of followers regarding the importance of reaching specific goals, seeing beyond themselves to focus on better outcomes for others or the organization, and encouraging followers to achieve more than they thought was possible (Bass, 1985). Kouzes and Posner (2002) proposed five practices that can assist transformational leaders in accomplishing significant outcomes: (a) modelling the way, (b) inspiring a shared vision, (c) challenging the process, (d) enabling others to act, and (e) encouraging the heart. These practices are important for assisting others in making sense of the change required and shifting their assumptions.

In relation to the PoP, transformational change is imperative for “having people collectively think differently about important institutional activities, reinterpret central goals, forge new identities and develop new meanings and beliefs for the process of organizational sensemaking” (Eckel & Kezar, 2003, p. 40). Sensemaking is focused on altering individual mindsets, including priorities, behaviours, and values and making new sense of things (Kezar,



2014). Having students, staff, faculty, and senior administrators place greater value on the experience of on-campus employment, and understand the impact that Program M can have on graduate outcomes and institutional goals, will encourage buy-in to address the problem. The longstanding history and support for Program M at Institution X will create interest and encourage engagement from numerous stakeholders across campus. The merits of transformational leadership will inspire a new vision for on-campus employment, challenge the current processes, and explore changes that will enhance skill development and awareness, thereby positively impacting individual students and the overall organization. That said, it is important limitations of this leadership approach are also considered and mitigated. It is often criticized for a lack of defined parameters, perceived as a personality trait rather than a learned behaviour and focuses primarily on the leader, giving inadequate recognition to followers and shared leadership - considered essential to achieving desired outcomes (Northouse, 2016). Blending collaborative and transformational leadership approaches will utilize the strengths of each and diminish concerns identified.

### **Collaborative Leadership**

Collaborative leadership focuses on working with and through others towards a shared purpose or outcome to achieve a wider impact (Rubin, 2002). Like transformational leadership, collaborative leadership focuses on relationships and the exchange of ideas. It, too, plays a role in creating sensemaking for participants, as it brings together a variety of stakeholders from across campus to work together towards achieving a shared goal or outcome (Kezar, 2014). It requires that the leader engages others to address problems, while providing a safe, co-operative environment where members can focus on the problem, share opinions, and explore solutions

(Rubin, 2002). Adaptive and distributed leadership are two forms of collaborative leadership that will be applied to address the skills awareness problem and propel the change forward.

Adaptive leadership focuses on addressing complex problems that are not easily defined and mobilizing stakeholders to engage in a process to determine solutions and shifts in mindset (Heifetz et al., 2004; Randall & Coakley, 2007). The model of adaptive leadership provides a framework for leaders to determine when and how to mobilize others (Heifetz, 1994; Northouse, 2016). In applying the framework, an examination of the situational challenge identifies the PoP as an adaptive challenge, which Heifetz (2004) described as a problem not easily identified or having clear solutions. The framework also identifies six specific leader behaviours, each of which is useful for leaders to employ when they are assisting others to address complex challenges and subsequent changes (Heifetz & Laurie, 1997; Northouse, 2016). The final component of Heifetz's model of adaptive leadership is adaptive work. It is often described as a "holding environment" and the place in which the work is actually conducted (Northouse, 2016, p. 273). This space allows the leaders to work with stakeholders to do what is needed, often resulting in changes of behaviours and values. It is often criticized for being abstract and based more on assumptions and ideas, rather than recognised research. However, its strengths as a process and follower-centric approach will increase awareness of an issue that many on-campus stakeholders may not be aware of, shifting their thinking on Program M and the role that they play in addressing the skills awareness gap.

Distributed leadership, another form of collaborative leadership, relies on developing partnerships and non-hierarchical networks; it will be instrumental in addressing the PoP (Black, 2015). It focuses on the activity of a group or team as opposed to the efforts of individuals (Bolden, 2011; Gronn, 2000; Spillane, 2005). This shared approach will be helpful in

recognizing the responsibility of many in supporting student awareness of skills developed both in- and outside the classroom, but particularly through on-campus employment. In order to successfully address the PoP, supporting the success of a diverse group will be a priority. Larson and Lafasto's (1989) extensive research on successful teams indicates eight characteristics of team excellence: (a) clear evaluating goal, (b) results-driven structure, (c) competent team members, (d) unified commitment, (e) collaborative climate, (f) standards of excellence, (g) external support and recognition, and (h) principled leadership. As the change agent, these specific characteristics will be prioritized as engaged stakeholders come together to explore innovative approaches to address the PoP. That said, distributive leadership is sometimes criticized for its lack of acceptance that the roles of leaders and followers may shift over time, pending the leadership skills required at various points of the change process (Norhouse, 2016). However, given the stakeholder diversity, "distributed leadership offers a framework which encourages the active participating and partnering of experts and enthusiasts" to accomplish organizational change, utilizing the skills of all (Jones et al., 2012, p. 69). A distributed approach is efficient and impactful, with a team of faculty, staff, and students engaged in the process, championing the change, and working as change facilitators to support the communication and desired outcomes (Bolden, 2011; Cawsey et al., 2020).

The use of transformational and collaborative approaches to leadership has particular synergies that provides a strong tool kit in propelling the change forward. Each approach provokes discussion and debate, encourages new thinking, and proposes working collaboratively with others to determine solutions and incorporate change. Each inspires shifts in mindset and encourages stakeholder sensemaking. For the OIP to be successful, the author, who has a strong collaborative leadership style, will also lean into the aspects of transformational leadership to

ensure greater buy-in and success. Inspiring a vision, addressing a complex problem, and providing attributes for team excellence will create sustainable solutions. The application of each of these leadership approaches will be beneficial in addressing the adaptive challenge of the skills awareness gap and, together, assist in driving the change forward.

### **Framework for Leading the Change Process**

HEIs are increasingly being required to change and adapt in response to a variety of internal and external pressures, necessitating flexibility and innovative solutions to address both problems and opportunities (Yukl & Mahsud, 2010). In Chapter 1, the skills awareness gap problem in post-secondary graduates identified specific political, economic, societal, and technological factors as well as specific change drivers, signifying the need for Institution X to address this issue. Although the need has been demonstrated and will be further discussed in this chapter; it is important to examine the type of organizational change required. Doing so will also assist in determining the most effective model to lead the change process.

The proposed change presented in this OIP can be defined as incremental/continuous and adaptive. Incremental and continuous change is described as “emergent and self-organizing, where change is constant, evolving and accumulative” (Cawsey et al., 2016, p. 20). Adaptive changes are often reactive responses to things occurring in the environment and require collaboration for implementation (Cawsey et al., 2020). As discussed in the previous chapter, addressing the problem is a direct response to the increased expectations of students, parents, employers, government, and others in holding HEIs accountable for graduates’ employability skills and career readiness (Edge et al., 2018; McCowan, 2015; Viczko et al., 2019). Using Program M as a tool to address the problem presented will require transforming an existing, wide-reaching, on-campus employment program into a HIP, with deeper reflection on skills and

learning outcomes. It is hoped that the transformation of this experience will potentially increase the value placed on this and other co-curricular experiences, leading to a fundamental mind-shift across Institution X and potentially being viewed as an exemplar of success throughout Canadian higher education. This mind shift will result in a greater appreciation of all campus educators and the positive impact experiences outside the classroom can have on student learning and development (Keeling, 2013).

### **Change Path Model**

To address the proposed problem of practice and lead the change process, Cawsey et al.'s (2020) change path model has been selected. The change path model has many strengths that benefit this OIP. First, it provides a structure to thoroughly examine how to implement change in an organization. Second, it provides a combination of both process and instruction in leading a change process. Third, it has been developed by extracting from established and tested organizational change models that address their limitations, resulting in a more comprehensive framework to lead the change. A criticism of the change path model may be that it is relatively new. Originally introduced in 2016, it has not had the benefit of time to be effectively tested in comparison to other more established frameworks, such as Kotter's (2012) eight-stage model of organizational change or Lewin's (1951) stage theory of change. However, given that it is based on the strengths of numerous past organizational change models, in addition to the experience and knowledge of its creators, the change path model provides a solid and thorough approach to addressing the PoP. The remainder of this section will examine the four stages of the change path model: (a) awakening, (b) mobilization, (c) acceleration, and (d) institutionalization (Cawsey et al., 2020, p. 54). Each will be examined in relation to the problem.

### *Awakening*

The discussion about the perceived skills gap, labour market shortages and the role of higher education are a topic of ongoing debate and not currently aligned in Canada (Viczko et al., 2019). Several reasons have been provided to explain the skills gap, including the quality of higher education (Munroe et al., 2014), a lack of experiential learning opportunities for students to gain skills (Anon, 2012), and the absence of updated data and labour market information that can guide students to being informed on in-demand jobs and required skills for a changing workforce (Drummond & Halliwell, 2016). This lack of alignment is also present in post-secondary institutions, with a call to increase student awareness of the skills gained through their classroom learning (Martini et al., 2015) and co-curricular experiences (Keeling, 2004, 2013; Lapointe & Turner, 2020). The awakening stage is defined by Cawsey et al. (2016) as “the stage of the process in which the needs for the change or vision is characterized in terms others can understand” (p. 59). This stage will be important in demonstrating the need for Institution X to engage in the skills gap discussion, propose that the issue is not actually a skills gap but rather a skills awareness gap (Craig, 2017; Maybrey, 2020), and present a vision to address the problem. This stage will lean on transformational leadership traits to identify current gaps, share data and change drivers external to the institution, prioritize this as an issue requiring attention, and communicate an attractive vision for change with multiple audiences and stakeholders. As a senior leader at Institution X, the author’s position, network, and expertise in the area of career and student development will be beneficial. Access to discussions with senior leaders and membership on strategic committees will be instrumental in garnering support.

### *Mobilization*

The second phase, mobilization, requires “the identification of the distance between the desired state and the present state at which the system operates” (Cawsey et al., 2020, p. 52). Building from the initial phase, this phase will utilize the data and information available to communicate and engage others in envisioning and working towards an improved future state. It is imperative the change leader pay careful attention to the existing formal structures. Generally, these structures determine what and how things support the strategic priorities of the organization (Cawsey et al., 2020). Utilizing these formal structures at Institution X, while aligning the problem with institutional goals, will be leveraged to drive the change forward. Currently, the author participates on numerous cross-campus committees focused on supporting student success, teaching and learning, reviewing NSSE outcomes, graduating student surveys, and others. These are chaired by the provost and other senior administrators and will be leveraged to engage leaders across the campus to support this issue. With a new strategic plan under development, the skills awareness gap is a topic that has been raised by multiple constituents as one requiring attention. Aligning this problem with strategic priorities will increase the success of mobilizing key stakeholders to work collaboratively to address the issue and increase the likelihood for any approvals required.

During the mobilization phase, it will be critical to observe where there is support for change, but also to recognize the naysayers. Scott (2003) stated, “People will not engage in or stick with a change effort unless they see it as being relevant, desirable and feasible for them to do so” (p. 73). Leaning into adaptive leadership, “mediating between these conflicts and internal contradictions, and providing the leverage that motivates people to learn new ways of thinking” will be essential (Heifetz et al., 2004, p. 25). Within this stage, ongoing communication, working

with supporters, and being open to stakeholder feedback are critical. This phase also relies heavily on the experience, networks, and reputation of the change leader, as well as being regarded as trusted and knowledgeable (Cawsey et al., 2020).

### ***Acceleration***

The third phase, acceleration, is “the stage of the process in which plans are developed for bridging the gap between the current mode of operation and the desired state, and the means by which the transition will be managed” (Cawsey et al., 2020, p. 59). Once again, when building from the information gained in the previous stages, it continues forging momentum and planning. Leaning into the author’s distributed leadership approach, success will be best achieved by including a cross-functional group of engaged and interested individuals working collaboratively towards solutions and implementation to address the skills awareness gap (Jones, et al., 2012). Having key stakeholders such as faculty, staff, and students engaged in examining how on-campus employment can play a role in addressing this issue will provide a sense of ownership and commitment to dealing with the problem and engaging in the change process. Ensuring that these individuals are equipped with the information and knowledge to support the change and communicate it to their stakeholder groups will also be a priority (Cawsey et al., 2020).

As the change plan proceeds, key steps will include continuing to gather information and feedback, providing ongoing communication, and recognizing successes. Changes made to Program M will need to be clearly communicated to supervisors and students. Collecting data and feedback will provide an opportunity for continuous improvement and for sharing the stories of those students positively impacted by the changes. These narratives may be used as part of a communication strategy to demonstrate impact and small wins to foster continued support.



### *Institutionalization*

Institutionalization, the final stage, is “the process of making the change inherent in organizational processes” with specific attention to measuring the change and determining success (Cawsey et al., 2020, p. 59). In order to embed the change permanently, measuring outcomes will be critical. If the change has a positive impact, members of University X will more likely be motivated to accept the change (Cawsey et al., 2020). Measurement is also essential for ongoing, continuous improvement. The changes implemented in this OIP will be phased in. Measuring each iteration will provide an opportunity to adjust and modify as needed, thereby improving future offerings as it is expanded (Cawsey et al., 2020). Changes to Program M will be specifically measured to determine the impact on skills awareness. Institutional data, such as NSSE and the Graduating Student Survey, will also be closely examined to determine if outcomes are attained. Ongoing methods for collecting feedback and communicating outcomes will also be established to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the impact of the changes on reaching the intended outcome—increasing student awareness of the employability skills gained through Program M (Cawsey et al., 2020). New processes, training, skills, and knowledge required for supervisors and students participating in this experience will also be permanently embedded and become established practice.

The change path model provides the steps and tools to address the skills awareness problem. Each phase of the organizational change plan is comprehensive and combines a balance of “process and prescription” to systematically explore how to implement change within an organization (Cawsey et al., 2020, p. 53). The strength of this model in addressing the skills awareness gap is both its comprehensiveness and its practical, linear approach to implementing

change. It provides the steps, tools, and frameworks to address each phase, while allowing the change agent to choose relevant approaches depending on the stakeholders and forces at play.

### **Critical Organizational Analysis**

Through an examination of Institution X's organizational change readiness as presented in Chapter 1 and offering a framework to lead the change, it is apparent that modifications will be required to address the existing skills awareness gap for students and new graduates. Using Program M as a means supports the functionalist approach of Institution X in finding practical solutions to address problems (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). With specific changes required in order to engage faculty, staff, and students in new practices, these changes will likely lead to increasing student awareness and translation of the skills gained through this educational, co-curricular experience.

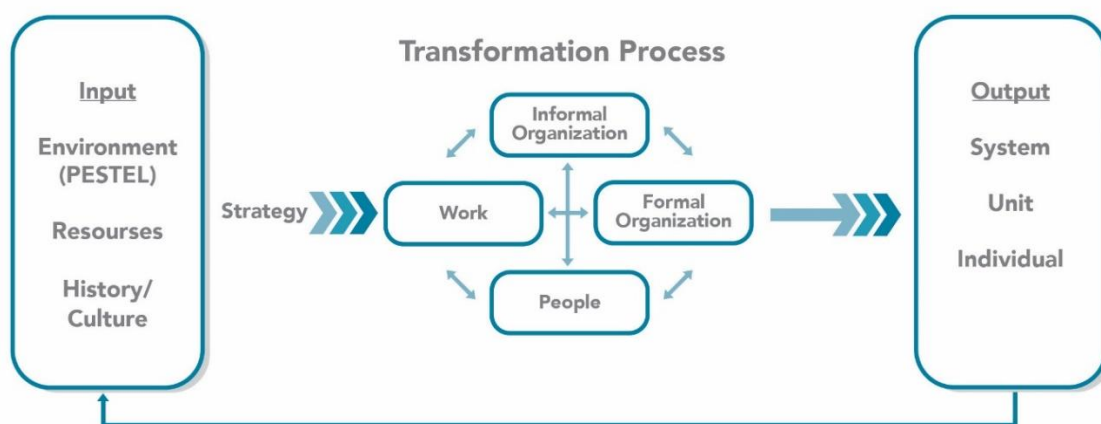
### **Organizational Congruence Model**

With transformative and collaborative leadership approaches, as well as the change path model providing a clear route on *how* to approach change at Institution X, equally as important is identifying *what* needs to change. Cawsey et al. (2016) suggested using an organizational framework to understand the "complexity and interrelatedness of organizational components" at various levels of the organization and in relation to their environments to fully analyze and understand the necessary changes (p. 64). Various frameworks exist to facilitate this analysis. For the purposes of this OIP, Nadler and Tushman's (1980) Organizational Congruence Model has been chosen to diagnose what needs to change. This comprehensive framework guides analysis and action and examines inputs, throughputs, and outputs through an open systems lens (Sabir, 2018). It contends that the performance of an organization is primarily derived from four areas: (a) the work of the organization, (b) the informal organization or culture, (c) the formal

organization, including systems and structures, and (d) the people (Cawsey et al., 2020; Sabir, 2018). If these four elements are congruent, the likelihood of alignment addressing external environmental pressures, and working together to meet outcomes is greater (Cawsey et al., 2020). Based on their understanding of Nadler and Tushman's (1980) concepts, the author provides a visual representation of the organizational congruence model in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**

*Organizational Congruence Model*



**Inputs**

Nadler and Tushman (1980) identified four inputs: (a) the environment, (b) resources, (c) history/culture, and (d) strategy as influencing the change process and requiring examination. Each of these will be studied in more detail in relation to this PoP and help identify what needs to change and why.

### *Environment Analysis*

In Chapter 1, factors shaping the skills awareness gap problem at Institution X, using a PESTE analysis, were briefly presented. Further examination of the political, environmental, social, and technological factors provides additional insight into driving forces behind the problem, what needs to change, and why it should be a priority.

**Political and Economic.** Noteworthy political and economic factors drive the need to address the skills awareness gap. Recently, the Government of Ontario (2020) announced a new funding model for universities and colleges which was focused on helping “students get the education, skills and experience they need to find good jobs by ensuring post-secondary institutions offer programs that align with labour market demands” (para. 1). It is quite likely other Canadian provinces will follow suit and develop similar funding priorities. Government expectations of higher education are increasingly being aligned with the employer’s desire that new graduates are career-ready and possess the skills required to successfully transition to the workforce (Lapointe & Turner, 2020). The skills gap discussion has been prevalent in numerous documents over the past two decades, particularly with the release of several reports from the Conference Board of Canada (Edge et al., 2018; Howard & Edge, 2013; Munro et al., 2014), delineating the current state of skills development across the country and higher education’s role in addressing “national, economic and social well-being” (Viczkó et al., 2019, p. 120). While this may contradict the viewpoints of many people in higher education, it can no longer be dismissed and requires universities to take action.

Continued investment by government and industry demonstrates a commitment to enhancing students’ skill development, with a focus on experiential learning opportunities, both in- and outside higher education. A recent example is the Government of Canada’s Student Work

Placement Program, a program that provides a large amount of funding in the form of wage subsidies to employers in specific industries to hire students who will gain skills related to their education and career goals (Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada [CEWIL], n.d.). Such actions demonstrate the government's focus and degree of responsibility in preparing students for their transition to the workforce. It also exemplifies that government has been listening to the employer feedback that new graduates lack the employability skills that they need to enter the workforce and are taking steps to address this issue (Lapointe & Turner, 2020). These actions require that Institution X pay attention and find ways to address the skills issue through existing opportunities, such as on-campus employment.

**Societal and Technological.** Post-secondary education is increasingly being tied to changing political and economic priorities (McCowan, 2015). This results in a societal shift in the value and purpose of higher education from one of broad learning to a societal responsibility to produce human capital (Brown, 2015; Busch, 2014; Viczko et al., 2019). As presented in Chapter 1, students, parents, and employers increasingly expect that completing a degree will lead to enhanced employment outcomes for graduates (Cumming, 2010; Lapointe & Turner, 2020). Graduates are expected to possess and be aware of acquired technical and human skills, such as teamwork, communication, and problem solving, that they have attained throughout their education (Burnside et al., 2019; Edge et al., 2018). Higher education is increasingly responding to stakeholder expectations by more strategically examining all opportunities for students to develop skills in co-curricular programming, increased experiential learning opportunities, and improved on-campus career services (Burnside et al., 2019; Lapointe & Turner, 2020). Societal expectations strengthen the call for Institution X to intentionally design programs that will increase students' awareness and translation of the skills gained through these experiences.

### ***Resources***

In the context of the current environment, examination of the human, technological, and financial resources required for the change is necessary, primarily to analyze the ability to shift resources to accommodate new initiatives (Nadler & Tushman, 1980). In order to change the current state of student lack of awareness of skills gained to a desired state of increased awareness of skills acquired through Program M, human and financial resources are required. Program M is currently facilitated by a centralized career centre. With limited dedicated professional staff, an inadequate capacity to enhance the program currently exists. To successfully develop an impactful, campus-wide employment program like Program M, additional professional staff is required (McClellan et al., 2018).

Interest is also high in providing a platform for students to document their experiences and skills developed, thereby increasing awareness of the skills gained. This resource would produce an official experiential transcript upon graduation and complement academic transcripts. Such documents are attractive to students and employers, as it provides a tangible way to demonstrate the employability skills gained through co-curricular experiences such as on-campus employment (Elias & Drea, 2013). Institution X has recently purchased a trial license for the technology to produce such a product. Demonstrating the positive impact of such a tool on students would strengthen the likelihood of continued resources for the technology platform and administration.

### ***History/Culture***

The next input to examine is the culture and history of the institution. Doing so provides valuable insight into how the institution has evolved, in what way past events have influenced it, and how it is managed and organized (Cawsey et al., 2020; Nadler & Tushman, 1980). The

history of the skills discussion at Institution X has evolved in tandem with the national focus on this topic, particularly over the past two decades (Viczo et al., 2019). It has resulted in Institution X placing a greater focus on the attainment of graduate employability skills by embedding these in its teaching and learning framework. It requests that educators strengthen experiential programming for students and specifically highlights the value of knowledge and skills gained outside the traditional classroom environment (Institution X, 2018b). Such a call to action provides an opportunity to address the skills awareness gap by enhancing Program M, which was previously explained as being created in the early 1990s to address increasing tuition hikes. While originally created solely to provide financial support, it has evolved to incorporate some experiential attributes. Current change drivers, outlined in Chapter 1, provide an opportunity for Institution X to transform Program M into a HIP that will assist in addressing the skills awareness gap. Mitchell and Kay (2013) highlighted “the role part time on-campus employment can play across dimensions of graduate capability development, student engagement, and learning outcomes” (p. 191), making a compelling argument “for institutions to move in the direction of systematic on-campus employment opportunities for students” (p. 192). Based on the author’s knowledge and experience, current and past senior leaders at Institution X have never considered on-campus employment as a means of enhancing students’ employability skills and its role in reaching specific organizational outcomes. Given its history and culture exemplifying a commitment to student success, Institution X is likely to embrace this OIP.

### ***Strategy***

Strategy, the final input, “determines how the organization responds to or deals with the basic inputs” (Nadler & Tushman, 1980, p. 43). Strategy is presented as the most important input. It examines the ability to match resources to the environment based on the organization’s

core business, strategies to achieve its mission, and specific outputs or deliverables (Nadler & Tushman, 1980; Sabir, 2018). With the development of a new strategic plan, expected in spring 2021, Institution X has relied heavily on other guiding documents, such as its teaching and learning framework. This framework acknowledges new and increased expectations of students' career goals and employers' requirement for graduates to possess diverse knowledge and skills (Institution X, 2018b). Despite these priorities, a commitment to support transformational learning experiences outside the classroom, which would assist in developing specific graduate attributes, has not been prioritized. Little focus has been placed on utilizing on-campus employment as a means to enhance graduate skills awareness and support institutional goals. This gap highlights a lack of congruence between what Institution X publicly states, what it actually does, and how this gap impacts achieving desired outcomes (Nadler & Tushman, 1980). Addressing the skills awareness gap through the adoption of this change plan can support Institution X's overall strategy and goals with minimal resources (Cawsey et al., 2020).

### **Transformation Process and Throughputs**

The transformation process involves four components, which in combination, produce the outputs of the organization: (a) the work to be completed, (b) the informal organization, (c) the formal organization, and (d) the people. Each will be examined in relation to the PoP.

#### ***Work***

The work includes the tasks that must be completed within the organization to achieve the core purpose or important priorities (Nadler & Tushman, 1980). For this OIP, it is likely that others, including Program M supervisors, will take on a more active role than they currently do in onboarding, coaching, and assisting students to reflect on the skills gained through their work (McClellan et al., 2018). Greater support, training, and coordination will likely be required from



the career centre, impacting staff and increasing their role in the skills awareness conversation. Attention will also need to be paid to ensuring that staff are not overburdened with the increased responsibility of this essential work.

### ***Informal Organization***

The informal organization refers to the informal way the work gets done within an organization that is not documented, is implicit, and captures cultural nuances (Cawsey et al., 2020; Nadler & Tushman, 1980). Institution X often prides itself on its experiential learning opportunities for students (Institution X, 2018b), yet many do not meet the rigors of a truly experiential practice with reflection and learning outcomes (D. A. Kolb, 1984). Greater accountability demonstrating the outcomes of experiential learning requires additional focus.

The current perception within Institution X is that faculty and staff who apply to hire a student through Program M will automatically receive it. While there is a selection process, generally those positions that meet the minimal criteria receive at least some financial support. This is an important factor to keep in mind, as changes to the program will require a commitment to complete mandatory requirements in order for both supervisors and students to participate. Those who choose not to complete the required components will no longer be eligible for funding, which may create tension between the career centre and supervisors. By relying on transformational and collaborative approaches to leading the change, informal relationships among various stakeholders will likely improve buy-in and influence a successful change process (Burns, 1978; Rubin, 2002).

### ***Formal Organization***

The formal organization includes “the range of structures, processes, methods, procedures and so forth that are explicitly and formally developed to get individuals to perform

tasks consistent with organizational strategy” (Nadler & Tushman, 1980, p. 44). Chapter 1 described the formal structure at Institution X as transactional and operating under a functionalist paradigm. Transactional organizations focus on exchanges between leaders and followers (Northouse, 2016), and a functionalist paradigm focuses on finding practical solutions to support the status quo and social order (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). Despite skills development being clearly identified as a strategic priority (Institution X, 2018b), no one unit or group is responsible for organizing a coordinated, institutional approach to ensuring that students are aware of the desired employability skills gained throughout their time at Institution X. Programs that support skills development, like Program M, are primarily transactional between the career centre and other units. Institutional leaders need to strategically examine how the current formal structures can hold academic and non-academic units more accountable for ensuring that students are aware of the skills they are gaining. This would potentially create greater buy-in from all units who hire students through Program M to value this experience further.

### *People*

Throughout the change process, it will be essential to appreciate the roles of various people within the organization and consider how they will respond to the change (Cawsey et al., 2020). While support from senior leaders will be required, changes to Program M will directly impact supervisors (i.e., staff and faculty), students, and career centre staff. Gaining support for the change will require clear communication, sensemaking, and the author’s transformational and adaptive leadership traits to create an appealing vision and future state that increases students’ post-graduation career success, and encourages new thinking (Burns, 1978; Eckel & Kezar, 2003; Heifetz et al., 2004).

## **Outputs**

Nadler and Tushman, (1980) explained that “outputs are what the organization produces, how it performs and how effective it is” (p. 43). To analyze the desired outputs at the system, unit, and individual levels, the organization can implicitly or explicitly define its preferred outcomes and be intentional in collecting data to demonstrate what is being achieved (Nadler & Tushman, 1980).

## ***System***

At a system or institutional level, an output would be Program M being viewed as supporting graduates’ acquisition of employability skills to ease their transition into the workforce. This could be measured by increased financial and human resources to enhance the program and create further student opportunities. Outcomes could also include higher results in institutional surveys such as NSSE and the Graduating Student Survey, indicating greater student awareness of skills gained through their experiences in- and outside the classroom.

## ***Unit***

At the unit level, additional supports and increased participation in on-campus employment can be measured. As well, other co-curricular experiential programs that are offered may become more highly valued and recognized as transformative learning opportunities. This will create a plethora of opportunities for students to take part in, resulting in higher student engagement and increased opportunities to develop sought-after employability skills.

## ***Individual***

At the individual level, students will feel more supported, see the value in participating in on-campus employment as more than financial gains, and express more confidence and preparedness to enter the workforce post-graduation. Faculty and staff will also be more

confident in ensuring that students are aware of skills gained through their on-campus employment and the benefit of such support on student success and graduate outcomes.

With the analysis of these inputs and the application of the four elements, addressing this problem will support the desired outputs that benefit students, the institution, and external stakeholders. Nadler and Tushman's (1980) organizational congruence model provides a rigorous framework with which to assess complex problems in organizations. It provides flexibility in thinking through and "identifying the symptoms of problems, determining the gaps between inputs and outputs, describing the fit between an organization's components, identifying problem areas and developing an action plan to deal with those problems" (Sabir, 2018, p. 37). In summary, based on the organization readiness for change described in Chapter 1, and further analysis using the congruence model for organization change, Institution X is poised and ready for this change.

### **Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice**

To address the skills awareness gap, several possible solutions are worth exploring. These solutions involve opportunities to use Program M as a tool that, if administered in an intentional way, can increase student awareness and understanding of skills gained through this experience. This section will present four possible solutions. Each will be presented in detail and analyzed by examining the resources required, benefits, and consequences for each option. Evolving from the guiding questions presented in Chapter 1, important questions also underpin the analysis of each solution. These include, does the proposed solution (a) increase student awareness and translation of skills gained, (b) increase supervisor engagement in the skills conversation, (c) advance the strategic framework of Institution X, (d) impact performance on benchmarking assessment (i.e., NSSE & Graduating Student Survey), and (e) improve key stakeholders'

expectations/ perceptions of the value of developing student employability skills? An analysis will support a solution that addresses the issue with the most favourable outcomes for students.

### **Solution 1: Status Quo**

The first solution is to maintain the status quo. Currently, Program M has experiential components with supervisors and students voluntarily reflecting on the experience, with minimal documents being provided by the career centre. Participation rates remain low, but for those students and supervisors who participate, feedback is positive and some students informally report the acquisition and awareness of employability skills (Institution X, 2019a). A review of the required resources, including time, human, and financial resources, show no change from current demands, thereby placing no additional strains on current fiscal or staffing models.

### ***Evaluation of Solution 1***

Contradictory to improving the current state, several reasons support not doing anything as a viable option. First, it would be easy to leave things as they are, given that the program is well established and provides students with financial resources and valuable career-related experience. Keeping the status quo will not cause conflict or opposition, particularly from faculty, who may challenge the responsibility of Institution X to develop career-ready graduates as a primary purpose. The debate about who owns the skills problem has already been presented, clearly demonstrating contradicting views; however, McCowan (2015) contended that “at no point in history was the university completely divorced from the realities of political economy, nor the requirements of preparing individuals for work” (p. 270). As it is, the current program has wide support and engagement and established processes that would require no additional human or financial resources.

Although maintaining the status quo is a viable option, doing nothing has many disadvantages. Staying with the status quo does not increase the number of students who gain greater skills awareness from participating in on-campus employment. It does not challenge supervisors (i.e., faculty or staff) to rethink their impact on student skills awareness and future career success. It misses an opportunity to strengthen the relationship between Program M as a HIP and the value of such co-curricular experiences on learning and development (Keeling, 2013; Hardy-Cox & Strange, 2010; Stirling & Kerr, 2015). It also does not improve student and institutional outcomes in rankings and surveys, such as NSSE and the Graduating Student Survey. As well, it ignores increased expectations from various internal and external stakeholders for which a university education prepares students in terms of career opportunities (Edge et al., 2018; Lapointe & Turner, 2020; McCowan, 2015). Continuing to facilitate Program M as it currently exists is a missed opportunity that Institution X cannot afford.

### **Solution 2: Supervisor Responsibility (Training Program)**

The second proposed solution relies on the supervisors of student employees to be solely responsible for identifying and reflecting on the skills related to their positions. This would require that supervisors participate in training on reflection techniques, skills identification, career development, and labour market information. In addition to training, supervisors would write job descriptions, identify skills to be developed, reflect with students, submit documents, and link the experience to the student's personal and professional goals, while the career centre would post positions and facilitate the paperwork. Faculty and staff can play a powerful role as mentor and coach to students, leading to increased student retention, engagement, and success (Astin, 1984; Keeling, 2013; Kuh, 2008; Kuh et al., 2005). Given that many supervisors may not have the knowledge, experience, or comfort level to facilitate such activity, the career centre

would develop some resources. This solution requires an active role for supervisors and a passive role for career centre staff. Additional time and human and fiscal resources would be required to implement this solution. The time commitment from supervisors to participate in training and additional hours actively engaging in discussion and reflection with students will increase. Furthermore, career centre staff will require additional time and staff to develop materials and training modules, and to provide support to new supervisors.

### ***Evaluation of Solution 2***

There are benefits to the supervisor training model. First, some faculty and staff currently participating in Program M acknowledge the value in reflecting with student employees on the skills gained from the experience. These supervisors avail of the supports through the career centre, resulting in some students reporting awareness of skills gained (Institution X, 2019a). Those supervisors who do not presently engage may not feel comfortable or equipped to take on such tasks, but would do so with additional knowledge and support. This would increase the likelihood that students recognize the value of this experience beyond strictly financial benefits and recognize the worth in attaining skills to support their future career goals (Seniuk-Cicek et al., 2017). A greater focus on supporting supervisors will increase the number of students who benefit from this experience.

The literature was also rich with the positive outcomes associated with interactions between faculty, staff, and students. On-campus employment provides a meaningful way for students to connect and engage with faculty and staff, creating a more supportive environment and an increased sense of belonging (Astin, 1984; McClellan et al., 2018). As well, supervisors are best positioned to assist students in identifying and reflecting on the skills that they have gained through their on-campus employment experience, since they are the creators and

overseers of the work. Like course instructors, supervisors are acutely aware of the learning outcomes and skills to be achieved from the job and are better equipped to assist students in connecting their experiences with the skills acquired.

While many advantages accompany the supervisor responsibility solution, disadvantages also need to be noted. Some supervisors may refuse to commit to the additional time and work. For those who do not comply, students will miss the opportunity to learn more deeply from the experience. Another risk is that leaving it entirely to the supervisor may result in a lack of standardization, causing uneven student learning. Some supervisors may spend a great deal of time reflecting with a student; others, only minimally. With only the supervisor's perspective, the potential that student experiences and skills gained may not be linked meaningfully to their personal and professional lives exists (Seniuk-Cicek et al., 2017). Finally, it situates the on-campus career centre primarily in a supporting role, mainly behind the scenes with administrative functions rather than being a partner in learning.

### **Solution 3: Career Centre Responsibility (Centralized Skills Awareness)**

The third solution recommends that Institution X's centralized career centre not only create the tools, but also facilitate the identification of skills for each position and the reflection activities for all students participating in Program M. The supervisor's role would be primarily to submit a job description and oversee the work being completed. Participation would be mandatory for students and their participation tracked. Career centre staff would be trained to analyze submitted job descriptions and identify the employability skills that students would gain, particularly in line with those identified in the teaching and learning framework. This supports the premise that campus career centres can play a critical role in "helping students articulate and communicate the skills developed through programs" (Lapointe & Turner, 2020, p. 29). From a



resource perspective, this solution would require additional time and human and financial resources to facilitate, as the sole responsibility for the learning would fall to career centre staff. Existing staffing models could not support this increased responsibility and workload. It would require the hiring of additional staff, whose focus would be on facilitating and supporting this initiative.

### *Evaluation of Solution 3*

The strengths of this solution include those administering the program, and facilitating the reflection with students, would be trained career professionals. These individuals have in-depth knowledge of career development theories, labour market insight, employer connections, and the ability to help students connect the dots between their academics, on-campus employment experiences and other involvement with future career goals (Edge et al., 2018). This centralized approach would guarantee continuity and quality, ensuring that all participants have an equitable experience. It would negate relying on supervisors to commit to additional work, thereby removing responsibility and a possible lack of support to address the problem.

Drawbacks for this approach must also be examined. First, career staff may not be the best suited to determine what skills will be developed from each position. The skills expertise may be better suited to the supervisors, who best understand the role and requirements of the position. A greater disconnect exists between the student and supervisor if the opportunity to discuss and reflect on the work and skills gained is now delegated to a separate office. Contradictory to best practices, it also delegates addressing the skills awareness gap to one unit, rather than sharing the responsibility more widely throughout the campus (Edge et al., 2018; Keeling, 2013; McCowan, 2015). This makes it significantly more difficult to integrate or create a mind shift on the value of co-curricular learning experiences, such as on-campus employment,

in addressing the problem and supporting the institution's strategic priorities. In addition, students may not feel the same level of commitment with career staff as they would with their supervisor with whom they interact regularly. Finally, a fiscal drawback results, as significant resources will be required to hire additional staff to administer and facilitate all aspects of the program.

#### **Solution 4: Supervisor and Career Centre Collaborative Approach**

The final solution is a blending of solutions two and three. A collaborative approach leverages the unique advantages of using both the supervisors and career centre staff to optimize what each can contribute. This solution would result in the supervisors' identification of skills and participation in reflective activities with their students. Career centre staff would share the responsibility for student success by providing resources, training, and additional opportunities to engage students in reflection activities and share in the responsibility for student skills awareness outcomes (Ceperley, 2013). It distributes the responsibility of ensuring that students are aware of, and can translate, the skills gained through on-campus employment between multiple units and stakeholders. It also relies on partnerships and collaboration between stakeholders in co-educating and actively supporting student learning. This solution would require some additional time for supervisors and extra time, as well as human and financial resources for the career centre, without putting significant strain on one or the other to address the problem.

#### ***Evaluation of Solution 4***

This solution supports the university's priority of shared responsibility for creating a student-centred environment with "more accessible, supportive, engaging experiences in and out of the classroom, and more opportunity to apply new knowledge in practical ways" (Institution

X, 2018b, p. 3). It provides a balance of standardization and individualization for students participating in on-campus employment. This student-centred approach optimizes the student learning environment by taking a more systematic method to helping students articulate and communicate skills developed through Program M (Lapointe & Turner, 2020). It utilizes the expertise of both the supervisors and career centre staff and distributes the resources required more equitably across multiple units and stakeholders, increasing the likelihood that it will be sustainable.

Although it is an attractive option, shortcomings do exist. The proposed collaborative approach requires an increased degree of communication and coordination in order to achieve and maintain success. This will require the management of information and at times, require “persuasive communication” when garnering support and buy-in from supervisors and students new to the program (Armenakis & Harris, 2002). It will also need career staff and supervisors to work collaboratively and equally towards the goal of increasing students’ awareness and translation of skills gained through Program M. As with other solutions, success depends on shifting mindsets, which may be challenging in some cases and cause tension due to differing viewpoints on the purpose of higher education and its role in developing employability skills (Brown, 2015; Busch, 2014; Viczko et al., 2019).

### **Summary and Analysis**

Four solutions have been presented to address gaps identified in the critical organizational analysis using Nadler and Tushman’s (1980) organizational congruence model. Each has been analyzed and presented in Figure 2, reflecting their strengths and weaknesses in achieving desired outcomes and the resources required for implementation. Based on this analysis, solution four appears best suited to address the skills awareness and translation gap

currently existing at Institution X. This solution embodies the transformational and collaborative leadership approaches to achieve the desired future state by pulling on the collective expertise, motivation and cooperation of various stakeholders to purposefully address the skills awareness gap by improving Program M. Although it is not a perfect solution, as it requires securing fiscal and human resources during a time of significant financial restraint, it does produce the highest return on investment over the other solutions proposed. This approach supports a holistic student learning method (Keeling, 2013), is most likely to increase student skills awareness to achieve desired learning outcomes (McClellan et al., 2018; Mitchel & Kay, 2012), supports and advances the teaching and learning framework at Institution X (Institution X, 2018b), will positively impact institutional outcomes (Kuh, 2008; Kuh et al., 2005), and supports a campus-wide mind-shift on the impact of on-campus employment on increasing student skills development and awareness (Edge et al., 2018; Lapointe & Turner, 2020). This solution also answers the call:

that it is time for a shift toward an institutional strategy that integrates both critical reflection and career preparation more deliberately into and across every aspect of post secondary education, ushering in a new paradigm of education and career goal development. (Skinkle & Glennie, 2016, p. 17)

**Figure 2***Summary and Evaluation of Proposed Solutions*

<b>Solution Focus</b>	<b>Proposed Solutions</b>			
Addressing the Skills Awareness gap	Status Quo	Supervisor Responsibility	Career Centre Responsibility	Supervisor & Career Centre Shared Responsibility
<b>Does the proposed solution...</b>				
Increase student awareness and translation of skills gained?	✘	✓	✓	✓
Increase supervisor engagement in the skills conversation?	✘	✓	✓	✓
Advance teaching and learning framework of Institution X?	✘	✓	✓	✓
Impact performance on benchmarking assessment (i.e., NSSE & Graduating Student Survey?)	✘	✓	✓	✓
Improve key stakeholders' expectations/perceptions of the value of developing student employability skills?	✘	✓	✓	✓

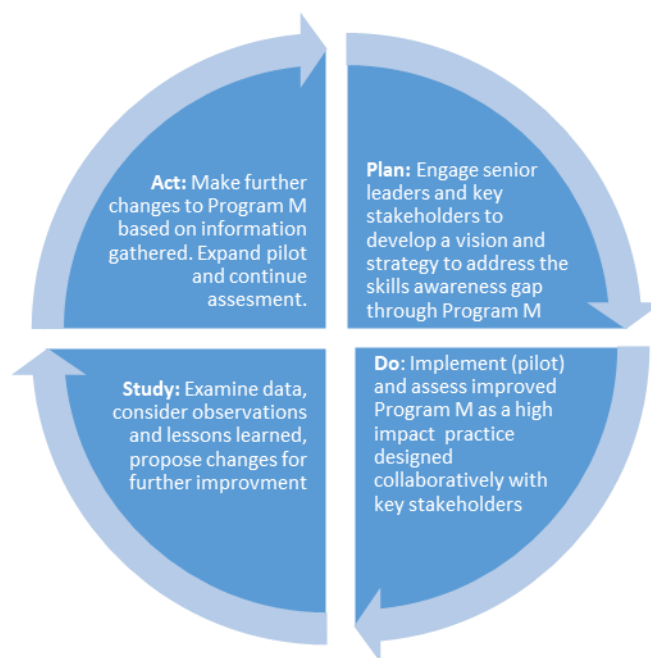
<b>Key</b>			
<b>Impact of Solution</b>	<b>Minimal</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Required Resources (Time, Fiscal, Human)</b>	<b>Minimal</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>

The chosen solution requires thorough analysis and planning, with ongoing assessment and evaluation. The model of improvement (Langley et al., 2019; Moen & Norman, 2009) provides a framework to assess, monitor, and evaluate the solution. This model follows a PDSA cycle (Figure 3) and asks three additional questions: What are we trying to accomplish? How will we know that a change is an improvement? What change can we make that will result in

improvement? A synopsis of each aspect of the cycle in relation to the chosen solution is provided in Figure 3.

**Figure 3**

*Supervisor and Career Centre Collaborative Approach*



A deeper analysis of each question and element of the model of improvement and PDSA cycle directly related to the implementation of solution four will be presented in Chapter 3.

### **Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change**

Ethical leadership is often linked to the perception of the leader's ethical behaviour, and is exemplified by the leader's trustworthiness, fairness, and honesty (Kacmar et al., 2011).

Ethical leaders are perceived as "balanced decision makers who consider the ethical consequences of their actions" (p. 634). Northouse (2016) identified five principles that provide

a foundation for ethical leadership: (a) respect others, (b) serve others, (c) show justice, (d) manifest honesty, and (e) build community. Each of these provides direction for leading ethically. The remainder of this chapter will explore the author's transformational and collaborative leadership approaches by examining ethical considerations and challenges related to the skills awareness gap, as well as the ethical responsibilities of Institution X and stakeholders.

### **Leader**

As change agent and leader, the author views ethical leadership from a philosophical approach that focuses on leadership behaviour, being honest, trustworthy, transparent, and supportive (Liu, 2017). These attributes were also highlighted in the previous chapter as important factors for successfully leading any change initiative (Judge & Douglas, 2019; Kezar, 2014; Kotter, 2012). Also critical for both transformational and collaborative leadership approaches, these traits focus on working with others to tackle complex problems that take time to solve, often encouraging new ways of thinking and shifting long-held beliefs and/or values (Burns, 2009; Heifetz, 1994). To facilitate a mind shift and change people's thinking, as this OIP proposes, requires ethical consideration, given its impact on the lives of others (Northouse, 2016). Both transformational and collaborative leadership approaches provide opportunities for open, participative, and ethical change processes, as the leader supports the participants through "a process of learning" and gaining new insights (Burnes & Ty, 2011, p. 242). A transformational aspect of this PoP that was highlighted in the previous chapter, will encourage those involved to acknowledge the moral responsibility of higher education to prepare graduates who can successfully transition to society, including achieving career goals. The desire to

address this problem comes from an “ethic of caring,” focused primarily on the needs and success of the individual student (Glanz, 2010, p. 75).

### **Organization**

Northouse (2016) stated, “Ethics is central to leadership, and leaders help to establish and reinforce organizational values” (p. 337). A growing body of research links on-campus employment to a wide series of favourable “engagement indicators, that unlike off-campus work, provides a growing argument for institutions to move in the direction of systematic on-campus employment opportunities for students” (Mitchel & Kay, 2013, p. 192). Institution X’s responsibility to address the untapped potential for increasing linkages between Program M and skill development and awareness should be a high priority. Student success is a core value that has been repeatedly articulated throughout Institution X’s history, culture, and strategic institutional documents, displaying a commitment to providing transformational educational experiences in- and outside the classroom that prepare graduates for success (Institution X, 2018a). Repeatedly, students, parents, employers, government, think tanks, and others have called for higher education to step up and do more to address the skills awareness gap (Edge et al., 2018; Government X, 2019a; Howard & Edge, 2013; Lapointe & Turner, 2020). With a high percentage of students indicating that their primary reason for attending university is to prepare for their chosen career (Burnside et al., 2019; Skinkle & Glennie, 2016), HEIs must reflect on the changing expectations of various stakeholders and examine ethically if they are delivering what they are marketing (Berdahl, 2021; Evans & Richardson, 2017).

### **Stakeholders**

Glanz (2010) stated, “Good leaders lead not through knowledge and skills, but through responsibility and integrity” (p. 67). This PoP is an adaptive problem, which tends to be “value



laden and stir up people's emotions" (Northouse, 2016, p. 264). Ethical responsibility for stakeholders requires that the leader normalize distress and provides what Heifetz (1994) referred to as a "holding place" to work through conflicts and differing views (p. 127). This is a critical component of assisting stakeholders, which in this case will be primarily faculty and staff, who may have differing views regarding the importance of the problem or their role in addressing it. The goal will be to find ways to work together to address the problem and ethically change it with buy-in and support from as many stakeholders as possible. Providing a safe and supportive space for dialogue and discussion to address conflict will encourage organizational change (Heifetz, 1994; Liu, 2017). At the core of the future state is the greater recognition and value stakeholders will have for learning that occurs through on-campus employment and their role as educators in helping students achieve specific outcomes (Keeling, 2013).

### **Chapter Summary**

Through a student-centred, collaborative process, Institution X can improve the student awareness and translation of skills, as well as graduate outcomes, while addressing the external forces that impact higher education. By employing the appropriate theoretical/conceptual frameworks, and tools to lead organizational change and engaging key stakeholders, Institution X's graduates will leave with insight and confidence in the skills they have gained through their participation in Program M, ready to successfully contribute to their future careers.

Chapter 2 has provided an overview of the author's leadership approach to change, utilizing transformational and collaborative approaches to drive the change forward. Employing the change path model (Cawsey et al., 2020) as a comprehensive framework to lead the change provides an effective path to improve the organization and positively impact students. Nadler and Tushman's (1980) organizational congruence model provided valuable insight into the existence

of the skills awareness gap and what needs to change, while emphasizing why Institution X needs to address this problem. A variety of solutions were proposed and examined, with one ultimately being selected for implementation. Finally, consideration of leadership ethics was presented through the lens of transformative and collaborative leadership and the ethical responsibility of the organization and stakeholders to address the PoP. Chapter 3 will present a detailed change implementation plan of the selected solution, along with methods to evaluate and communicate that change.

### **Chapter 3: Change Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication Plan**

The problem of practice (PoP) identified addresses the frequently cited skills awareness gap relevant to many new university graduates (Craig, 2017; Edge et al., 2018) and how it can be addressed through participation in on-campus employment (Evans & Richardson, 2017; Fede et al., 2018; Mitchell & Kay, 2013). To execute any change within an organization, the development of a detailed implementation plan is critical for success (Cawsey et al., 2020). This chapter will provide a thorough analysis of the factors required for a change implementation plan; a monitoring and evaluation strategy to track, gauge, and assess change; and the development of a strong communication framework to communicate the need and process for change. This chapter will examine each of these elements in relation to the PoP.

#### **Goals and Priorities**

Examining the lack of awareness many graduates have of the skills gained throughout their curricular and co-curricular post-secondary experiences is an increasing priority for higher education, including Institution X (Edge et al., 2018). As presented in Chapters 1 and 2, the teaching and learning framework at Institution X has identified key attributes and skills which graduates should possess upon completion of their education, but it does not methodically assess if these outcomes are achieved (Institution X, 2018bc). On-campus employment has been identified as one student activity that can “shape the college experience and contribute to the development of skills that employers seek in college graduates” (Mitola et al., 2018, p. 352). The change plan outlined throughout this OIP involves intentionally redesigning Program M into an HIP to assist in addressing the skills awareness gap, a problem that concerns numerous stakeholders, including students, parents, employers, and governments (McClellan et al., 2018; Rinto et al., 2019). The goals of the change are: (a) increase student, faculty, and staff awareness

of the acquisition, value, and transferability of employability skills gained through on-campus employment; (b) support the engagement of supervisors (i.e., faculty and staff) to play an active role in facilitating reflection conversations about skills with student employees; and (c) increase students' awareness of their skills and improve future career prospects.

Addressing the skills awareness gap aligns with organizational teaching and learning priorities, as Institution X develops a strategic plan with renewed focus on student learning and success. The release of the provincial post-secondary review in spring 2021 will outline the government's expectations of Institution X, with increased accountability measures such as expected graduate outcomes predicted (Government X, 2019a). Taking affirmative action to enhance Program M will directly impact thousands of students each year. Benefitting both students and the organization, it will transform on-campus employment from its current state as a primarily transactional experience with little skills awareness to an envisioned state that aligns with the characteristics of HIPs, resulting in students' greater awareness of employability skills (Kuh, 2008; McClellan et al., 2018).

### **Solution and Stakeholder Reaction**

The solution proposed in Chapter 2 to address the PoP is a collaborative approach between supervisors and career centre staff, with the strengths of both being leveraged to create an optimal learning experience for students (Lapointe & Turner, 2020). The exact tools and supports required will be determined through an adaptive leadership approach with the stakeholders deciding on what is required (Heifetz et al., 2014). Once decided, career centre staff will create these resources to support faculty and staff in their supervisory roles to facilitate effective reflection with students on skill development and awareness. This contributes to positive outcomes and enhances student employment prospects through a more "integrated all-

campus approach with shared accountability for student outcomes” (Ceperley, 2013, p. 24). This solution assumes that students and supervisors will perceive the value in completing the additional components to Program M and linking the skills gained from on-campus employment to future career goals (Berdahl, 2021). Despite the research and justification for such changes, some students and supervisors will likely view the change as additional work or will not see the value in partaking in this initiative. Such negative reactions are expected, and being considerate of this response will be critical (Cawsey et al., 2020). These reactions will also provide valuable insight where gaps may require further examination and actions by the author and others involved in driving the change.

The transformative and collaborative leadership approaches employed throughout this change implementation plan play a critical role in working with those negatively reacting to the changes. In addition to the time required and workload concerns, it has been noted previously that supervisors may also question the value of skills awareness or whether they should hold any responsibility for addressing this issue (Brown, 2015; Busch, 2014). Students also may not be interested in committing additional time for skills identification and reflection if they have multiple responsibilities or if their primary motivation for participation is solely to earn additional income.

As the change initiator and implementer, it is essential the author exhibit characteristics of transformational leadership. Providing a clear vision of an improved future state, sharing research that supports the change, and motivating supervisors to think beyond themselves to recognize the benefits to students will be imperative (Bass, 1985; Cawsey et al, 2020). The feedback provided will guide the pilot of an enhanced Program M and shape various changes.

Establishing a compelling vision and explicitly identifying the benefits of participating will be critical components of the communication plan for both students and supervisors.

To prepare for reactions from various stakeholders, and ensure that the implementation plan has diverse perspectives, many theories and models of organizational change processes recommend having input from various stakeholders (Cawsey et al, 2016). Kotter (2012) recommends creating a “guiding coalition” comprised of key individuals representing various viewpoints who are credible, influential, and can “drive the change process” (p. 59). These individuals should be what Duck (2001) describes as influencers, people who can change the minds and attitudes of others. It is critical a change leader “allows for and encourages the involvement and input of others” (Cawsey et al, 2016, p. 217). This will be particularly important in selecting faculty and staff who can present the change favourably and influence others’ participation. Utilizing a distributed leadership approach, as described previously, will allow the author to focus on creating a successful team built on the characteristics of team excellence, as outlined by Larson and Lafasto (1989) identified in Chapter 1. The collaborative leadership approach will encourage a “cross-fertilization of ideas” (Kezar, 2014, p. 71) and be inclusive of diverse experiences, opinions, and backgrounds, while working towards a compelling goal and organizational change (Jones et al., 2012). This group will assist in preparing and introducing the change, while gathering and analyzing incoming information that will guide adjustments and shifts to the implementation plan (Cawsey et al., 2020). Institution X’s key stakeholders who will support addressing the PoP and the responsibilities of each are identified in Appendix A.

The creation of a Steering Committee comprised of representatives from many of the stakeholder groups, including the change agent, two faculty members, two staff, two students,

one teaching and learning staff member, one career staff member, one communications representative, and one institutional analysis staff member, will be particularly important. These individuals will include those representing groups affected by the change, as well as others with various expertise who will support the change at different stages (Cawsey et al., 2020). All members will be brought together early in the change plan with the expectation that participants will step forth and back as situations and various stages require (Northouse, 2016). This distributed leadership approach “offers a framework which encourages the active participation and partnering of experts and enthusiasts” required to support organizational change (Jones et al., 2012, p. 69). Steering Committee members will serve as champions of the change within their stakeholder groups, sharing information among formal and informal groups inside their units and gathering feedback that will inform the change and development of the pilot.

### **Supports and Resources Required**

The success of the change is strongly connected to the availability of supports and resources required to implement the change plan (Cawsey, 2020). This change will not require organizational changes, working within the existing structures, but resources will be required in order for the plan to be successful. Through a critical organizational analysis using Nadler and Tushman’s (1989) organizational congruence model described in Chapter 2, resources (i.e., human, financial, and technical) have been identified as critical in implementing the change. The human and financial resources required for implementation are identified in Table 3. A more detailed description for each acknowledged resource is provided in Appendix B. In particular, dedicated staff in the career centre focused on this initiative will play a significant role in its success.

**Table 3***Summary of Supports and Resources Required for Change Implementation Plan*

Resources	Purpose	Amount Per Annum
Human (staff & supervisors)	1 Project Lead and Coordinator of On-Campus Employment	\$65,000.00
	0.5 Administrative Staff	In-kind
	1 Student Assistant	In-kind
	1 Institutional Research Office or Graduate Student Supervisors	\$5,000.00
		In-kind
Technical	Experiential Transcript	\$25,000.00
Materials	Supplies	\$1,500.00
Total		\$95,500.00

Time is another factor requiring consideration. The implementation of the Program M pilot will be presented through a phased-in approach, expanding each year, and resulting in campus-wide implementation upon completion in a three-year time frame. Varying amounts of time will be required for the Steering Committee, career centre staff, and Program M supervisors for planning, implementing, and evaluating. This important factor will be taken into consideration, particularly when developing the communication plan.

**Potential Implementation Issues**

Potential issues may arise throughout the various phases of implementation. Each will require consideration, discussion, and potential changes to the current or future implementation plan. Possible issues, raised previously in this OIP, may include push-back from supervisors, lack of student commitment, and lack of awareness of the benefits of on-campus employment



and HIPs on student success. Each of these issues will be examined more closely with recommendations on how they may be addressed.

The feedback and needs of both supervisors and students will be addressed independently. To encourage supervisors' participation, actions such as crafting specific messaging that highlights the literature which supports the benefits of reflecting with students on skills development and awareness will be presented. As well, sharing narratives of students who demonstrate the impact of such experiences on their success post-graduation will be another approach. Berdahl (2021) explained that helping students identify the connection between learning experiences and career outcomes is intrinsically rewarding for the supervisor, thereby enhancing their motivation to participate. Participation may also be increased by highlighting political and societal factors linking higher education to career outcomes, thereby necessitating that Institution X proactively address the skills awareness gap (Berdahl, 2021). Finally, after the post-pilot information has been collected, data comparing the skills awareness and other outcomes for Program M participants versus students not participating will also be disseminated widely.

Communication to students will require clear messages that highlight what they will gain from participating, including the impact on their current and future career success (Cawsey et al., 2020). Sharing stories and testimonials from students, graduates, and employers will demonstrate the benefits of reflecting on skills gained through participation in Program M, with concrete examples of success. Organizing the information and resources in a way that students can access asynchronously will be more convenient and positively increase the likelihood of participation.

A third issue at Institution X relates to the lack of awareness pertaining to the research and positive outcomes of implementing HIPs on post-secondary campuses. HIPs are measured

through NSSE, a third-party survey administered every three years at Institution X focused on collecting information on activities and programs offered to students to support personal development and learning (NSSE, 2021). A Career and Workforce Preparation module has been added in 2021 to specifically examine how higher education contributes to employability skills and career goals, further signifying the increasing value in preparing students for future careers (Brandon, 2021). An awareness campaign, in partnership with the teaching and learning unit, would support strategic investment in HIPs at Institution X, including on-campus employment. Increasing awareness of the importance and impact of such experiences would encourage greater buy-in for this and additional high-quality activities offered.

### **Building Momentum**

The change path model (Cawsey et al., 2020) described in Chapter 2 will be used to present the phases and timelines associated with the change implementation plan. Each of the four phases includes critical components to plan, build momentum, implement, evaluate, and institutionalize the change. Each of the stages, with timelines and key outputs, is presented in Table 4. The timeline is associated with the academic semesters, which coincides with the start of each Program M cycle. As momentum builds from the planning stage to the action and implementation stages, change facilitators will move from planning to communicating among stakeholder groups, sharing results, garnering interest, and answering questions.

**Table 4***Change Implementation Timeline and Benchmarks*

Phase	Timeline	Benchmarks (Actions)	Outputs
Awakening	May-August (Spring Semester)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present to key internal groups the current situation and a vision for an improved future state</li> <li>• Identify stakeholders to join Steering Committee</li> <li>• Identify current gaps with best practices</li> <li>• Identify potential pilot groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of meetings/presentations</li> <li>• Steering committee members identified</li> <li>• Completed environmental scan and literature review</li> </ul>
Mobilization	September-December (Fall Semester)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilize Steering Committee</li> <li>• Align the change plan with institutional priorities</li> <li>• Develop enhanced rubric to adjudicate job postings</li> <li>• Create resource materials</li> <li>• Start developing evaluation tools</li> <li>• Develop communications plan</li> <li>• Examine feedback and address issues raised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key stakeholders join Steering Committee</li> <li>• Endorsed by senior admin</li> <li>• New job posting adjudication process in place</li> <li>• Engaging materials available for students and supervisors</li> <li>• Evaluation tools developed</li> <li>• Communication plan developed</li> </ul>
Acceleration	January-April (Winter Semester)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation-enhanced Program M</li> <li>• Gather data and feedback</li> <li>• Share success stories</li> <li>• Implement evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of students and supervisors who participated in training and reflection</li> <li>• # of students and supervisors who completed survey</li> <li>• # of success stories to share</li> </ul>

Phase	Timeline	Benchmarks (Actions)	Outputs
Institutionalization	May-August (Spring Semester)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine and disseminate evaluation findings</li> <li>• Make adjustments where required based on results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students report greater awareness of skills developed and their transferability</li> <li>• Supervisors report positive experience</li> <li>• # of students who reapply for program</li> <li>• # of supervisors who continue to participate</li> </ul>

### Limitations

The goal of this change implementation plan is to institutionalize the changes to Program M such that it becomes part of the day-to-day operations at Institution X (Cawsey et al., 2020; Kezar, 2014). Although it is a meaningful approach to addressing the PoP, it is acknowledged that the scope of the project is large, impacting every academic and non-academic unit on campus. Its success is dependent on supervisors and students embracing the changes embedded in Program M and the career centre being resourced to support the transformation. The transformative and collaborative leadership approaches described in previous chapters will be instrumental in building capacity for the change. Providing a compelling vision, adjusting as needed, and distributing responsibility among key stakeholders to develop, communicate, and implement the proposed change plan will be critical for success.

A further limitation to implementing and sustaining the change are the financial resources required. Institution X finds itself in particularly challenging economic times, with minimal resources for new initiatives. The amount required is not unattainable and may be supported within Institution X by applying for competitive internal funding sources focused on supporting student success initiatives. Another resolution may be partnering and co-resourcing with other

units, for example, teaching and learning, which are interested in achieving similar outcomes. Increasing skills awareness is a priority recognized by various levels of government and private organizations that are funding innovative projects and research regarding skill development (CEWIL, n.d.; Edge et al., 2018; Munro et al., 2014). Funding may be available to address the skills awareness gap through such initiatives as the RBC Future Launch (Royal Bank of Canada, n.d.) and the Future Skills Centre (n.d.). Securing external monies for a pilot will provide time to demonstrate outcomes and increase the probability of securing future internal funding.

A final limitation is that of securing the expertise needed for quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. This expertise is not currently available in the change agent's portfolio; therefore, support from the institutional research office to assist with the collection and analysis of data will be required. To address this concern, a staff member from the analysis and planning office will be invited to join the Steering Committee and graduate students in psychological sciences will be employed to assist with monitoring and evaluation. Linking this change plan and its outcomes to institutional strategic priorities is expected to increase the probability of this support.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating the Change Process**

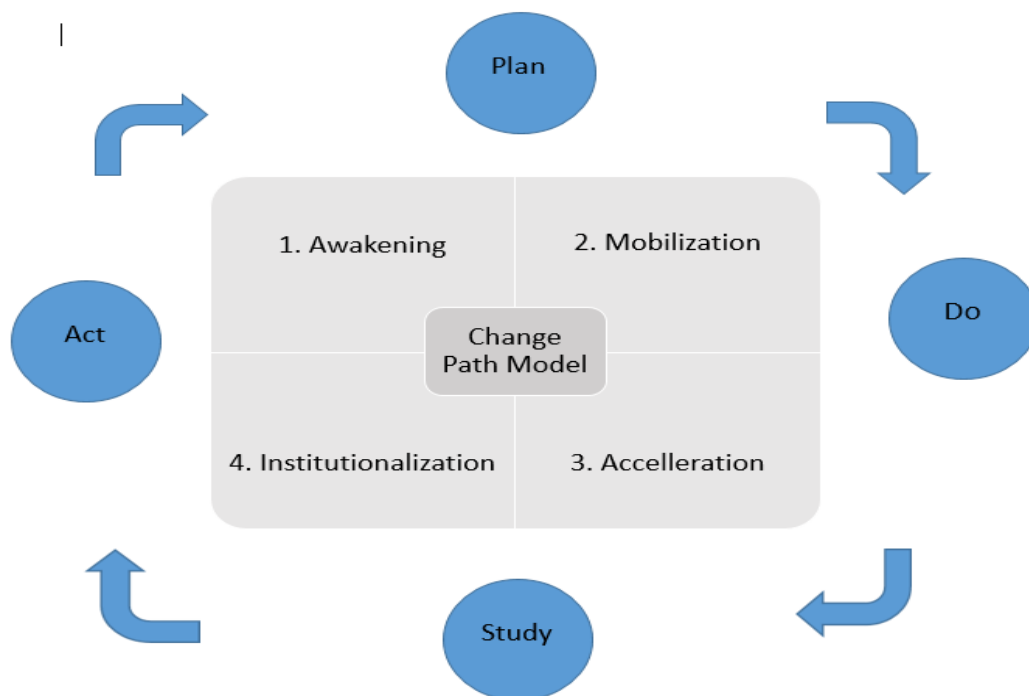
Measurement is a critical element of any change plan, as it increases accountability, clarifies anticipated outcomes, informs decision making, guides implementation, and solidifies future actions (Cawsey et al., 2020; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Collecting and sharing outcomes may also motivate others to engage in a program or change plan if there are positive results that impact them or students attending Institution X (Cawsey et al., 2020; Clarke, 2011). The following section will provide details on the monitoring and evaluation plan by presenting

the tools and measures that will be used to illuminate the need for change, as well as track and guide the required modifications.

### **The OIP Change Cycle**

As was presented in Chapter 2, Cawsey et al.'s (2020) change path model has been chosen to implement the change process of this OIP. It is critical that change agents be "clear about the stage of the change process and what dimensions are important to monitor at a particular stage, given the desired end result" (Cawsey et al., 2016, p. 345). To monitor and evaluate the solution presented through the stages of the change path model, the model for improvement will be employed (Langley et al., 2009). Following a PDSA cycle, supplemented by three key questions: What are we trying to accomplish? How will we know that a change is an improvement? What change can we make that will result in an improvement? The phases of the PDSA cycle in relation to the change path model framework are presented in Figure 4.

As noted previously, this cycle represents three semesters, equalling one calendar year at Institution X. In year one, four units, two academic and two administrative, would participate in the pilot. Year two would expand to include eight units, four academic and four administrative, with the goal of campus-wide implementation in year three. A program logic model will also be incorporated to complement the PDSA cycle and provide a visual representation of the change from action through to results, identifying both monitoring and evaluation plans (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016).

**Figure 4***The OIP Change Cycle***Plan and Awakening Phases**

The first phase of the PDSA cycle is the Plan phase. Its main components include identifying the change plan objectives; developing questions and predictions; and planning who, what, where, and when are required (Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009). The actions necessary in this stage closely align with the Awakening stage of the change path model, which focuses on identifying the problem and the need for change (Cawsey et al., 2020). The problem will be identified through the collection of existing institutional data, such as the Graduating Student and NSSE surveys, to provide insight into the skills awareness gap at Institution X. Current literature, research, and policy documents will also be examined and compiled to present the current state and demonstrate the need to address the issue. Using the tenets of

transformational leadership, it will be imperative to “raise the followers’ level of consciousness about the importance and value of desired outcomes and the methods for reaching those outcomes” (Burns, 1978, p. 141). Many faculty, staff, students, and senior leaders may not be thinking about this problem or the practical solutions that can be implemented (Forman, 2018). By presenting the problem, a powerful vision for a future state and offering an available solution, support from institutional leaders, faculty, staff and students to enhance Program M and address the skills awareness gap will be forthcoming (Cawsey et al., 2020; McCleskey, 2014). A summary of key activities and outputs associated with monitoring and evaluating the success of this phase was presented earlier in Table 4.

### **Do and Mobilization Phases**

The second stage, the Do phase, requires further developing and implementing the changes to address the problem articulated in the planning phase. This aligns with the Mobilization stage of the change path model. Both phases encourage learning and adapting plans through trial and error (Langley et al., 2009) and by implementing change incrementally through such actions as a pilot, so that “system based approaches can be used to acclimate organizational members to the change ideas” (Cawsey et al., 2016, p. 165). Specific actions defined in Table 4 will continue to gain momentum for the OIP in this phase, including the work of the Steering Committee in guiding the development of rubrics, materials, evaluation tools, and a robust communications plan. The units identified and student participants would be invited to engage with the changes to Program M, initiating the pilot and the tracking of outputs, such as participation in on-line training modules and students completing a pre-/post-test evaluation tool.

In addition to monitoring engagement and ongoing communication, responding to those resisting the change will also be critical in this phase. Mobilizing supervisor and student support



will be ongoing, both through the work of the Steering Committee guiding the change plan and their working directly with those resisting the change. Engaging with naysayers and leaning on adaptive leadership qualities to work “towards a solution through debate and creative thinking” focuses less on the person and more on the process, thereby encouraging engagement and collaborative solutions (Randall & Coakley, 2007, p. 327).

### **Study and Acceleration Phases**

The Study phase focuses on analyzing data, comparing findings to predications, and examining what has been learned (Langley et al., 2009; Moen & Norman, 2009). It aligns with the Acceleration phase of the change path model, which encourages the use of suitable tools to determine impact, gain momentum, and establish progress, while also acknowledging successes and milestones (Cawsey et al., 2020). Again, the outputs to be monitored and evaluated at this phase are articulated in Table 4. These outcomes and additional observations from the pilot will provide valuable insight, preliminary findings, and successes, which can be shared with various stakeholders. Kotter (2012) identified numerous benefits for sharing successes, including that it reinforces that the change is having a positive impact, motivates the guiding coalition leading the change, provides tangible evidence to share with naysayers, encourages ongoing support from senior leadership, and builds continued momentum for the next iteration of a pilot. Data, such as participation rates and testimonials from students and supervisors who were positively impacted by the changes to Program M, will be shared as part of the communications strategy.

The findings and feedback will be critical in further understanding the skills, abilities, and knowledge required by those impacted by the change (Cawsey et al., 2020). Career centre staff creating resources, supervisors facilitating reflective skill conversations, and participating students all require knowledge to successfully undertake these roles. Feedback collected through

surveys, focus groups, and interviews will provide insight and ensure that the needs of change recipients are being met.

### **Act and Institutionalization Phases**

The final stage of the PDSA cycle, Act, requires a complete review of the previous stages and examines the information to determine what changes or improvements are required prior to the start of the next iteration (Langley et al., 2009). This stage coincides with the Change Path Model's Institutionalization stage, which involves assessing the change "through multiple balanced measures to help assess what is needed, gauge progress toward the goal, and to make modifications as needed and mitigate risk" (Cawsey et al., 2020, p. 54). Both phases assume that supervisors and students have completed the pilot with the intended outcome of increasing student awareness of the skills gained through participation in Program M. The author's distributed leadership approach will be relied on to have members of the Steering Committee actively review the outcomes and collectively decide on further changes required. Throughout the various phases, this group will be champions for the change and communicate outcomes and successes (Bolden, 2011). Once the analysis has been completed, the elements that have worked will be permanently embedded, required changes will be introduced, and the PDSA cycle will begin again for an expanded pilot in year two.

### **Program Theory and Logic Model**

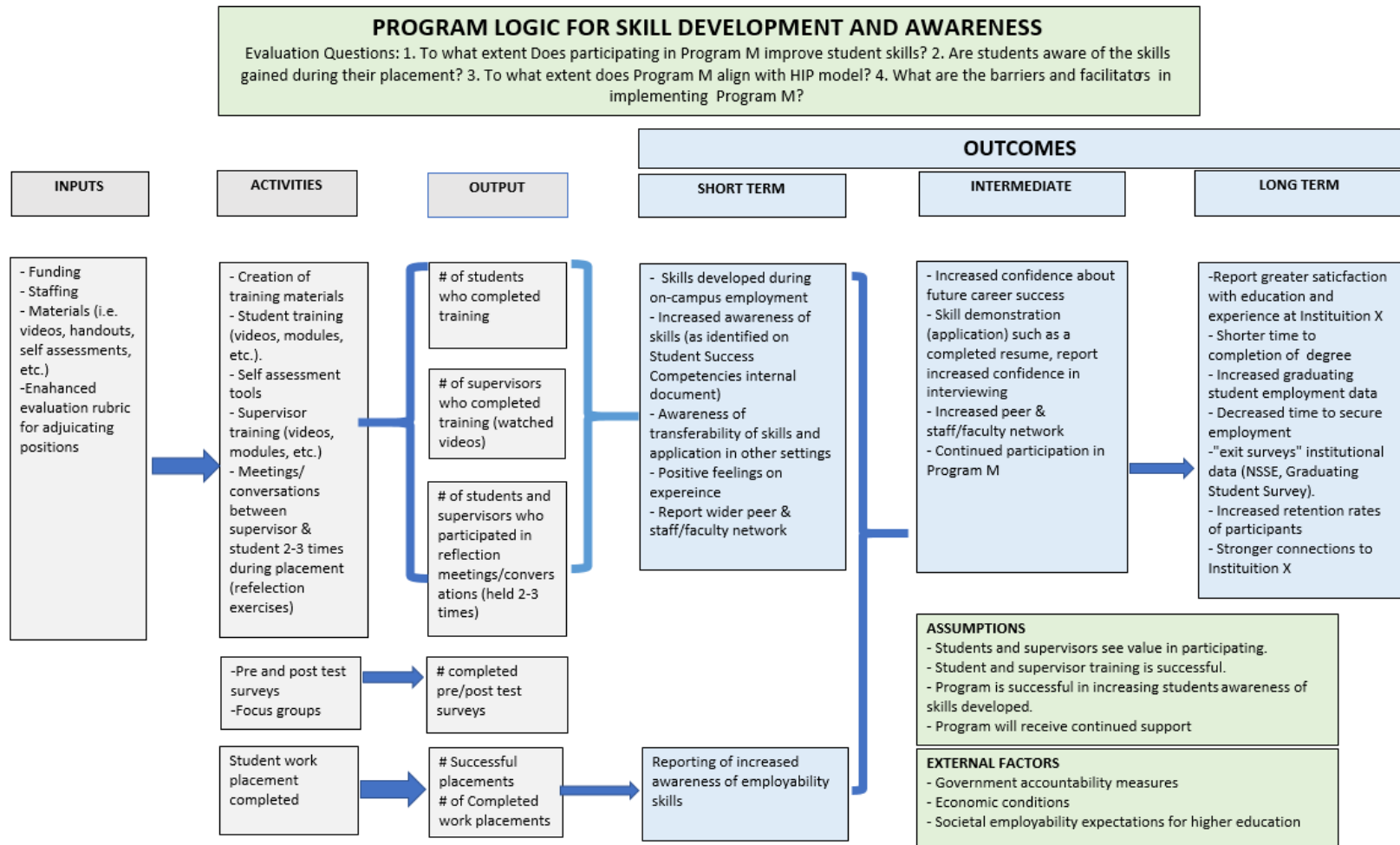
Throughout the change process, both monitoring and evaluation functions will be required. Monitoring and evaluation complement each other but have different intentions. Monitoring tends to be performed regularly and is focused on tracking the progress of program implementation, reporting on outputs, processes, and activities that show what and how something is being done (Clarke, 2011; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Evaluation builds on the

monitoring information, but is performed periodically and delves into long-term impact, examines why something was or was not successful, and informs strategic decisions (Clarke, 2011; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Identifying a set of evaluation questions that examines “formative process-oriented questions about implementation of activities and outputs, and more summative questions relating to achievement of specific outcomes” connects the monitoring and evaluation activities that can be presented in a “Program Logic Model” (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016, p. 107).

The change plan proposed in this OIP involves multiple stakeholders across the campus. Therefore, a theory-based approach to monitoring and evaluation that “clearly establishes anticipated casual relationships, identifies anticipated results from a program, and uses theories to organize and guide the evaluation process” (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016, p. 29) is considered an effective approach to an increasing understanding of how and why this change plan will produce the projected results. Utilizing a logic model will explicitly demonstrate how the changes proposed for Program M will assist in addressing the PoP and provide a visual representation of the change from action through to results. This ongoing collection of data and feedback from stakeholders will also provide opportunity to make necessary changes and adjustments as needed. A logic model for skill development and awareness at Institution X, including three evaluation questions, is presented in Figure 5.

**Figure 5**

*Logic Model for Skill Development Awareness*



This program logic model also identifies assumptions and external factors influencing, either positively or negatively, the progress of the change. For the purpose of this OIP, the logic model assumes that supervisors and students realize the value and benefit of increasing student awareness of employability skills developed through Program M. It also assumes that the changes to Program M will provide the necessary knowledge and resources for supervisors and students to successfully increase their awareness of skills gained through this experience. Increasing skills awareness ties directly to Institutions X's goal for graduates to attain specific attributes and skills, thereby warranting ongoing institutional support for Program M (Institution X, 2018a).

External factors may influence the change plan and are also identified in the logic model. As presented in the previous chapters, external factors were identified through a PESTE analysis, particularly political, economic, and societal factors driving this change. While they pose potential risks, they may also be positioned as opportunities in the logic model. Politically, the release of a provincial post-secondary review will require action from Institution X to address increased accountability outcomes, including improving graduate employment results (Government X, 2019a). Provincial economic conditions require a skilled workforce to meet employer needs (Bundale, 2017; Riley, 2019), and societal expectations that higher education leads to career outcomes require Institution X to show leadership (Berdahl, 2021; Cumming, 2010). Addressing the skills awareness gap through this change plan, as demonstrated in the logic model, will exhibit positive action, provide data to share internally and externally with stakeholders, and address institutional and political pressures (Manning, 2018).

The logic model used to monitor and evaluate the changes to Program M will include a mixed-methods approach for data collection, engaging a variety of different methods and thereby

reducing limitations that may occur with using only one means (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Within a mixed-methods approach, both qualitative and quantitative methods will be employed. Given that there is limited baseline data to indicate the students' awareness of skills from past participants in Program M, a pre-/post-test survey, including open-ended questions, will be developed for students participating in the pilot. The results from the pre-test survey will construct baseline data to determine if changes implemented in the pilot increase student awareness of specific employability skills developed through Program M (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Focus groups with students will also be facilitated if open-ended questions do not gather the required information. A survey and interviews with supervisors will be executed to gauge their feedback on the changes to Program M and its impact, if any.

#### **Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and the Change Process**

A critical component of any change process is communication. Change initiatives often fail, not because the ideas were inadequate, but rather due to various levels of understanding which can impact stakeholders' reactions to the proposed change (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Cawsey et al., 2020). Ensuring that the message and changes are communicated carefully and repeatedly requires significant attention and planning (Beatty, 2015; Kotter, 2012). In developing a communications plan, Cawsey et al. (2020) indicated four primary objectives that should be accomplished. Infusing the need for change across an organization is the first step. If stakeholders do not recognize the need for change, or accept the proposed vision, the change is likely to fail (Kotter, 2012). Second, those involved need to be aware and understand the impact of the change on them. This will help to alleviate anxiety, confusion, and potential resistance (Klein, 1996). Third, the communications plan should outline structural and/or role changes that impact current processes for achieving success. The final objective requires ongoing

communications with those involved throughout the change process. Key messages must be conveyed at each stage to keep individuals informed throughout the pilot. Given the scope of the OIP, the change will impact various stakeholder groups, including faculty, staff, and students, requiring a tailored communications plan for each group (Mento et al., 2010).

### **Phases of the Communications Plan**

The communications plan chosen to address this problem is the four-phase approach, as outlined in Cawsey et al. (2020): (a) pre-change approval, (b) creating the need for change, (c) midstream change and milestone communications, and (d) confirming/celebrating the change success. Each of these will be further examined and a summary provided to build awareness for various audiences and prepare for anticipated responses.

#### ***Pre-Change Approval Phase***

The first phase of the communications plan aligns with the Awakening stage of the Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2020). It requires recognizing that a problem exists and gaining approval from senior leadership to address it. A primary purpose of communications during a change process is to identify a gap and present an improved future state through a compelling vision for change (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Beatty, 2015; Cawsey et al., 2020; Kotter, 2012). At this point, the change agent will present the skills awareness gap issue at Institution X. A change plan that involves developing Program M into a HIP to address the skills awareness gap identified in many new graduates will be presented (Craig, 2017; Maybrey, 2020). This will be achieved by presenting relevant and current internal and external research to various stakeholders. With Program M falling within the Student Affairs portfolio, support from the Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) will be required. Student Affairs reports directly to the provost; therefore, their support will be essential. Aligning this particular change with attaining

institutional outcomes and goals will increase the likelihood of garnering support from the SSAO and provost (Cawsey et al., 2020; Klein, 1996). Using primarily persuasive communications, face-to-face meetings will be the principal method to communicate information and employ transformational leadership characteristics to inspire a vision for an improved future state (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Beatty, 2015; Northouse, 2016). With SSAO and provost support and presentations to Deans' Council and the Student Success Committee (SSC), a group comprised of senior academic and non-academic leaders focused on student success, will be initiated to gather further support from campus influencers. It is expected that these individuals and groups will have a variety of questions and will support the initiative to varying degrees. Questions about evidence of the problem and resource requirements are expected and will necessitate the change agent to have convincing data and viable options available for discussion. A summary of the Pre-Change Phase is presented in Table 5.

**Table 5**

*Pre-Change Phase*

Stakeholders	Communication Plan	Communication Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provost</li> <li>• SSAO</li> <li>• Deans</li> <li>• SSC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present internal and external data identifying skills gap</li> <li>• Share current research and literature on the problem identified</li> <li>• Present current and vision for future state</li> <li>• Align with institutional goals and priorities</li> <li>• Present an achievable solution to address the problem</li> <li>• Provide a summary document for review and wider dissemination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face-to-face meetings</li> <li>• Presentations</li> <li>• Email</li> </ul>



### *Developing the Need for Change Phase*

The second phase aligns with the Mobilization stage of the change path model and is focused on answering the why, what, and how questions related to the change and its impact on the institution (Beatty, 2015; Cawsey et al., 2020). Explaining why the change is required, what we are striving for, and how the proposed changes will be implemented requires clear, simple, and compelling communications to garner buy-in and create eagerness to address the problem (Beatty, 2015; Kotter, 2012). As with the Pre-Change phase, it will rely heavily on the qualities of transformational leadership in creating a compelling vision for a future state that motivates stakeholders to engage in the change process (Beatty, 2015; Cawsey et al., 2020; Kotter, 2012). This phase requires broader communications to a larger number of stakeholders, including those impacted by the change. It is a critical stage, as Cawsey et al. (2016) explained, “If a strong and credible sense of urgency and enthusiasm for the initiative isn’t conveyed, the initiative will not move forward” (p. 321).

Reassuring those impacted by the changes to Program M will be crucial in minimizing the effects of misinformation and confusion (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Cawsey et al., 2020). Different stakeholders will have different issues and concerns. To gather these, it will be advantageous to engage supervisors and students in interviews or small focus groups to hear the issues and prepare communications to address each group’s specific concerns (Beatty, 2015). One cannot over communicate at this stage. Distributing the communications task to Steering Committee members and other influencers for broad communications will repeat and reinforce the need and vision for the change (Cawsey et al., 2020; Kotter, 2012). Using multiple methods of communications such as face-to-face meetings, presentations, email, internal newsletters, brown bag lunches, a website with FAQs, and resources will be employed and nuanced for different

audiences throughout this time. A summary of the Developing the Need for Change Phase is presented in Table 6.

**Table 6**

*Developing the Need for Change Phase*

Stakeholders	Communication Plan	Communication Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Supervisors (Faculty &amp; Staff)</li> <li>• Teaching and Learning Staff</li> <li>• Associate Deans</li> <li>• Department Heads</li> <li>• Steering Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present internal and external data identifying skills gap</li> <li>• Share current research and literature on the problem identified</li> <li>• Current situation and vision for future state</li> <li>• Present an achievable solution through enhancing Program M to address the problem</li> <li>• Align with institutional goals and priorities</li> <li>• Share examples of similar High Impact Practices and outcomes</li> <li>• Share sample resources and tools for students and supervisors</li> <li>• Create website with FAQs, videos, resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face-to-face meetings</li> <li>• Presentations</li> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Brown Bag Lunches</li> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Videos</li> </ul>

*Midstream Change Phase*

The Midstream Phase aligns with the Acceleration Stage of the change path model and focuses on keeping stakeholders aware of progress, sharing milestones, understanding any issues that arise, and maintaining momentum for the change (Cawsey et al., 2020). Providing progress reports to senior leaders, deans, SSC, and the Steering Committee will keep key influencers focused on the change and interested in the outcomes. This information will also be intentionally designed for various audiences and shared widely with all stakeholders, particularly those impacted by the change. It will include monitoring data such as participation rates, preliminary findings from the pre-/post-test, and testimonials from supervisors and students who benefitted from the changes made to Program M. As well, it is imperative that feedback on issues and

attitudes regarding the changes to Program M are collected and reviewed, so that concerns or problems can be addressed. Assessment data may identify issues, but relying on members of the Steering Committee to listen acutely within their groups for informal comments, rumours, or fallacies will assist in developing communications to address misconceptions (Cawsey et al., 2020; Klein 1996). Sharing positive outcomes and success stories will be a critical strategy to debunk the mistruths and keep people excited about the changes to Program M. A social media and print campaign, including videos and stories, will be employed to share these successes. A summary of the Midterm Change Phase is provided in Table 7.

**Table 7**

*Midstream Change Phase*

Stakeholders	Communication Plan	Communication Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provost</li> <li>• SSAS</li> <li>• SSC</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Supervisors (Faculty &amp; Staff)</li> <li>• T &amp; L Staff</li> <li>• Deans</li> <li>• Department Heads</li> <li>• Steering Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present data and findings from pretest/post-test to senior leaders, Deans, SCC</li> <li>• Create testimonials (print and video) of supervisors and students who benefited from changes to Program M</li> <li>• Update website and FAQs as needed</li> <li>• Encourage and collect feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face-to-face meetings</li> <li>• Presentations</li> <li>• Preliminary report</li> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Internal publications</li> <li>• Brown Bag Lunches</li> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Videos</li> <li>• Focus Groups</li> </ul>

### *Confirming the Change Phase*

Aligning with the Institutionalization stage of the change path model, the final phase of the communications plan is Confirming the Change. This phase prioritizes communicating and celebrating the successful outcomes of the change and preparing for the next cycle of implementation (Cawsey et al., 2020). Building from the successes identified and shared in the previous phase, additional milestones and successes will be highlighted and disseminated. This will include data from the pre-/post-test and identifying if students' awareness of skills increased after participating in the Program M pilot. Students who benefitted will share the impact of the experience in their own words. This will be used to assist other students, supervisors, senior leaders, and naysayers to appreciate the value in the change and the impact such programs can have on students' skills awareness and success. An annual report and a presentation will be prepared and shared where possible. Face-to-face meetings with senior leaders, deans, the undergraduate senate committee on teaching and learning, and other influential groups and individuals will be facilitated, with the expectation that they will communicate the successes through their circles as well. A Steering Committee assembly will be organized to reflect on what has been learned, celebrate the success of year one implementation, and discuss an expanded pilot for phase two. A summary of the Confirming the Change Phase is provided in Table 8.

**Table 8***Confirming the Change Phase*

Stakeholders	Communications Plan	Communications Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provost</li> <li>• SSAS</li> <li>• SSC</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Supervisors (Faculty &amp; Staff)</li> <li>• T &amp; L Staff</li> <li>• Deans</li> <li>• Department Heads</li> <li>• Steering Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present key data and findings from first full cycle of pilot to senior leaders, deans, SCC, and other stakeholder groups</li> <li>• Present key data and findings from pre-/post-test at internal annual teaching &amp; learning conference</li> <li>• Create additional testimonials (print and video) of supervisors and students who benefited from changes to Program M</li> <li>• Update website and FAQs as needed</li> <li>• Update resources and materials</li> <li>• Encourage and collect feedback through focus groups, surveys</li> <li>• Share next steps for second phase</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face-to-face meetings</li> <li>• Presentation</li> <li>• Annual report</li> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Internal publications</li> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Videos</li> </ul>

**Faculty, Staff, and Student Communication Strategies**

Cawsey et al.'s (2020, p. 349) "Four Phase Communications Plan" has provided a thorough guide to building awareness throughout Institution X by demonstrating the need to change and addressing the skills awareness gap through Program M modifications. The presented plan has identified various stakeholders, communications priorities, and methods to disseminate the information. However, those most impacted by the change will require the greatest persuasion to participate, necessitating a well-defined communication strategy for each specific group to guide the change process. Buy-in from senior administration, deans, SSC, and other senior leaders will be critical, but with minimal resources required, no structural changes necessary, and the potential positive impact on organizational goals, it is highly likely that there will be support for the proposed change. Those primarily impacted include the supervisors and

students. The change will only be successful if these key stakeholder groups participate. The Program M supervisors include both faculty and staff throughout Institution X. Both of these unique audiences require tailored messaging and answers to a variety of questions. Just as critical are the students who participate in Program M. Without their time and engagement, the change will not be successful. Each of these three stakeholder groups will be examined more closely, with specific communications strategies presented for each.

### ***Faculty Communications Strategy***

Faculty make up a large number of supervisors in Program M, as many hire students to conduct research and assist with various projects related to their work. Acknowledged throughout this OIP, some faculty will likely question their role in preparing students for careers and profess that the purpose of education is for “intelligent democratic citizenship” rather than knowledge acquisition for human capital (Brown, 2015, p. 177). Allowing space for such discussions will rely on adaptive leadership qualities that recognize change as a process that encourages people to address problems that are not easily solved (Heifetz et al., 2004; Randall & Coakley, 2007).

As touched on previously, facilitating sensemaking and changing mindsets to grasp new opportunities in familiar and existing concepts, or in this case, an existing on-campus employment program, will be presented (Kezar, 2014). Once more, addressing such concerns will rely on a distributed leadership approach, with the faculty representatives on the Steering Committee, deans, and other faculty influencers sharing responsibility in engaging in these discussions. Specific approaches to communicating with faculty will include multiple face-to-face interactions (i.e., faculty, departmental, and one-on-one meetings) and written correspondence (i.e., email, internal list serves, and publications). Addressing the why, what, and

how questions will be instrumental for gaining support (Beatty, 2015; Berdahl, 2021). Evidence from the literature identifying the skills gap issue (Edge et al., 2018), the impact on-campus employment can have on in addressing the problem (Mitchell & Kay, 2013), the changing societal expectations of higher education (Berdahl, 2021), positive links between co-curricular and curricular experience (Keeling, 2013; Stirling & Kerr, 2015), and the tools provided for this work will address many of the questions posed.

Throughout the stages of the change, regular updates, again through face-to face presentations and meetings, will be provided to share milestones and small wins (Kotter, 2012). Participating faculty and staff who had positive experiences will be invited to present to faculty, and video testimonials will be shared through social media, websites, and presentations. As well, faculty involved in the pilot, department heads, associate deans, and deans will be emailed an executive summary at the midterm point and at the end of year one to share outcomes, lessons learned, and future plans.

### ***Staff Communications Strategy***

Staff from across Institution X also supervise a large number of students participating in Program M. Some staff view learning as occurring only in the classroom and do not necessarily recognize the value of the learning that occurs in non-academic settings (McClellan et al., 2018). Some staff will not perceive themselves as educators and, therefore, not qualified to facilitate learning and reflection activities. As Keeling (2004) stated, “Learning is a complex, holistic, multi-centric activity that occurs throughout and across the college experience” (p. 5). Engaging, educating, and training staff to view their roles as contributing to the development and success of students will motivate staff to embrace the role of educator within the context of Program M.

To share the current state and encourage staff to envision an enhanced future for students and Institution X, direct communication through one-on-one meetings with leaders and supervisors in administrative units across the campus will be facilitated. Securing buy-in from leaders in those units will be essential. Cawsey et al. (2020) noted that having support from individuals' supervisors is instrumental for success, as many employees will look to them for direction. Steering Committee members, with support from unit leaders, will attend and present at staff meetings to share information and answer the why, what, and how questions (Beatty, 2015). Following up directly with managers and attending future staff meetings to share milestones will facilitate continued enthusiasm for the change. A student and staff member who participated in the pilot will be invited to share their experience and key takeaways through a video or in person when possible. Similar to faculty, staff who participated and their leaders will be emailed an executive summary at the midterm point and the end of year one to share outcomes, changes, and future plans.

### ***Student Communications Strategy***

Student engagement will be critical for this change to be implemented. The change is directly related to enhancing student success by increasing students' awareness of skills gained through Program M. A key message that targets students will address the question, "What's in it for me?" (Beatty, 2015; Cawsey et al., 2020). With large numbers of students reporting that they attend university to secure employment (Seniuk-Cicek et al., 2017), linking the development and awareness of skills through participation in Program M to their future career readiness will motivate participation (Burnside et al., 2019). Communications to students will include evidence that demonstrates the value that employers place on this type of work (Evans & Richardson, 2017; Robotham, 2012). Highlighting the connection between sought-after employability skills



articulated by employers and those reportedly gained through on-campus employment will create a direct correlation between both and boost greater student buy-in (McClellan et al., 2018; Mitchell & Kay, 2013). This messaging will be shared through social media (e.g., Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, etc.), hosting employer panels, video testimonials, email; and face-to-face meetings with campus clubs and societies, student unions, and other groups that have significant outreach to students. Creating enthusiasm and excitement for changes to Program M will raise its value and encourage student participation.

### **Chapter Summary**

The preceding paragraphs have presented the year one implementation cycle of a three-year pilot using the change path model (Cawsey et al., 2020). Through transformative and collaborative leadership approaches, the author will support the change plan with particular attention to stakeholder reactions, supporting change facilitators, and securing required supports and resources. The model of improvement with a PDSA cycle and a Program Logic model have been presented as tools to measure progress and identify the changes required in future iterations, ultimately leading to institutionalization. A four-phase detailed communications plan has been shared to engage multiple stakeholders, with a particular focus on the key groups most impacted by the OIP, supervisors (i.e., faculty and staff), and students.

### **Next Steps and Future Considerations**

The following paragraphs will highlight the next steps for Institution X and the impact of this change on future policy, on-campus employment as a HIP in higher education, and added research in the fields of career development and student affairs in Canada.

Initial next steps will be securing support, identifying influencers willing to join the Steering Committee, and selecting the two academic and two non-academic units to participate

in the pilot. The creation of tools and resources to facilitate the learning and reflection need to be simple, yet impactful. Training for both supervisors and students will require time to create and gather initial feedback. Consideration must also be given to providing ongoing support to those participating in the pilot and making that scalable as the pilot expands and reaches full campus-wide implementation.

While developing Program M into a HIP will not completely solve the skills awareness problem at Institution X, once institutionalized it will increase skills awareness for the thousands of students who participate in this meaningful experiential learning opportunity every year. By demonstrating that on-campus employment can be designed to address the skills gap issue, future consideration should be given to replicating the model to other co-curricular experiences such as service learning and leadership roles. This will expand the skills awareness conversation across multiple student experiences at Institution X. Outcomes will demonstrate the impact that these transformative learning experiences can have on student success and encourage viewing the entire campus as a blend of formal and informal learning opportunities (Keeling, 2013).

Another issue and future consideration is the relatively small body of literature that currently exists on the impact and role of on-campus employment on student success, particularly in the Canadian context. Implementing and evaluating the changes to Program M would add valuable insight to the field of career development and student affairs. If successful, the changes implemented in Program M could stand as a model for on-campus employment programs at other post-secondary institutions across the country. New ways of designing on-campus employment also warrant further consideration, such as systematically linking it more directly to students' area of study and/or providing academic credit (Mitchell & Kay, ).

Continuing to increase employers' awareness of the valuable skills gained through on-campus employment and other forms of experiential learning should also be considered. The most valued skills reported by employers are those proven to have been developed through a combination of classroom and experiential learning (Edge et al., 2018). Employers place value on work-integrated learning experiences, such as co-operative education and internships, but often fail to recognize on-campus employment with the same esteem. Consideration of an educational campaign targeting employers' understanding and awareness of skills developed through this experience may be worthwhile. The Steering Committee may also consider inviting an employer to join the group as a means to gain their insight and raise the awareness of on-campus employment as a HIP.

Finally, the outcomes from this change initiative could inform future policy, as well as internal and external decisions. Sharing outcomes with multiple audiences, including governments, employers, parents, and students, will increase awareness and the importance of such transformational learning experiences. Edge et al. (2018) recommended that provincial and federal governments, along with post-secondary institutions, prioritize funding for increased experiential learning opportunities. Demonstrating the impact that on-campus employment can have on students' awareness of skills and successful transition to the workplace supports such calls to action.

### **OIP Conclusion**

This OIP has presented a specific PoP within Institution X that is multilayered, has many stakeholders, both internal and external to higher education, and raises numerous questions. The skills awareness gap and graduates' lack of preparedness to enter the workforce is a prominent subject, with growing expectations that post-secondary institutions play a more active role in

addressing the issue (Lapointe & Turner, 2020; Mitchell & Kay, 2013; Viczko et al., 2019). A rapidly changing world of work and the desire to prepare graduates to successfully pursue diverse careers is a priority for students, faculty, parents, employers, and governments (Berdahl, 2021; Edge et al., 2018; Lapointe & Turner, 2020). This OIP aspires to have students gain transferrable employability skills and be fully aware of their acquisition and the ability to clearly articulate them. A growing body of literature has positively identified the impact that on-campus employment has on skills acquisition, with students feeling “significantly engaged” with their institution and reporting that “working on-campus contributed to developing their graduate capabilities” (Mitchell & Kay, 2013, p. 185). Intentionally redesigning Program M, an on-campus employment program at Institution X, in accordance with the research on HIPs, is presented as one way to address the skills awareness gap and positively impact students’ transition to the twenty-first-century workforce and their future career success.

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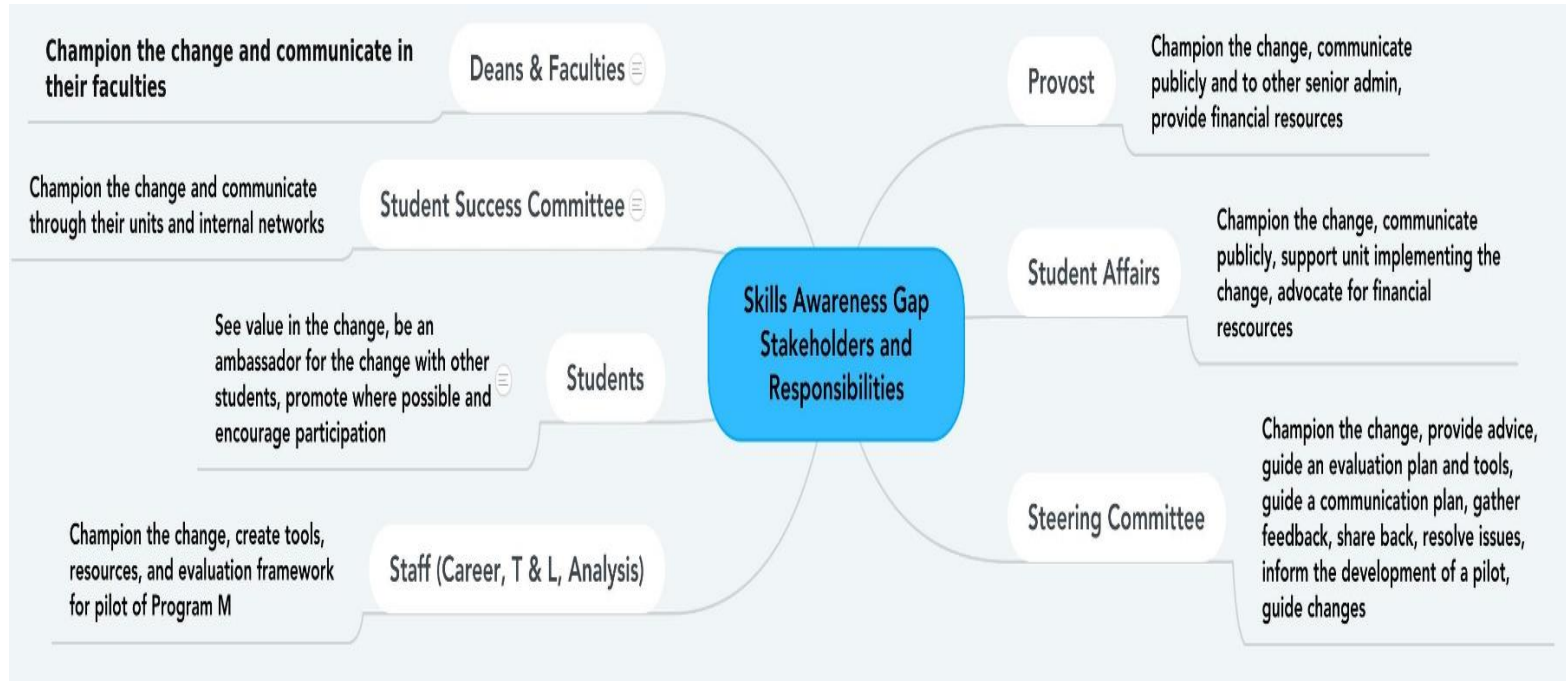
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**Appendix A: Skills Awareness Gap Stakeholders and Responsibilities**



## Appendix B: Detailed Summary of Supports and Resources Required for Change

### Implementation Plan

Resources	Purpose	Amount
Human (staff and supervisors)	1 Project Lead and Coordinator of On-Campus Employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure elements of HIPs are incorporated in all on-campus employment programs</li> <li>• Create/update resources for students and supervisors</li> <li>• Facilitate training for students and supervisors</li> <li>• Maintenance of on-line platform that recognizes experiential learning activities on-campus and skills development</li> </ul>	\$65,000.00/per annum
	Administrative Staff (.5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support to On-Campus Employment Coordinator as needed (i.e., assistance with accepting applications, communication, and other related duties)</li> </ul>	In-kind
	1 Student Assistant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create communications to student participants</li> <li>• Marketing and communications responsibilities (i.e., social media promotion, written articles for internal publications profiling success stories and champions, etc.).</li> </ul>	\$5,000.00/per annum In-kind
	1 Institutional Research Office or Graduate Student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring and evaluation support</li> </ul>	
	Supervisors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time to meet with students to reflect on skill development, awareness, and transferability</li> </ul>	
	Materials	Supplies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs to support training, promotional materials, recognition events</li> </ul>