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Curriculum Congruence of an HR Baccalaureate Degree Program to Industry Requirements

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WESTERN UNIVERSITY

Curriculum Congruence of an HR Baccalaureate Degree Program to Industry Requirements

by

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AN ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

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Abstract

Undergraduate students of business commonly view their time in school as a career-readying training ground preparatory to advancing into professional practice within industry settings. In preparing learners for success beyond the classroom, it is critical for post-secondary institutions (PSIs) to demonstrate alignment between program curriculum and workplace knowledge and skill requirements. This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) outlines a potential solution to improve the relevance of business degree programming (at a large, Canadian-based, polytechnic institution), according to marketplace requirements. Using a program advisory committee (PAC), a curriculum/program review of a Human Resources Management baccalaureate degree program is suggested to determine if it is relevant to industry-required knowledge and skills.

This OIP emphasizes the importance of partnering with industry stakeholders to ensure alignment between program curricula and marketplace requirements (Andrews & Higson, 2007; Azevedo, Apfelthaler, & Hurst, 2012; Porter & McKibbin, 1988; Praslova, 2010). In addition, it points to the lack of congruence that presently exists between current curricula/assessment and industry-required knowledge and skills (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Praslova, 2010).
Keywords: human resources, degree program, industry, knowledge, skills, curriculum, PACs, workplace, marketplace, relevant, responsive, business school, School of Business, polytechnic

Executive Summary

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) examines programming within the business school of a Canadian-based polytechnic and presents suggestions for addressing the following Problem of Practice (PoP): How well does the Human Resources Management baccalaureate degree program prepare students with industry-required knowledge and skills? Chapter 1 commences by establishing the organizational context and includes an overview of the institution's history and culture. In addition, the mission, vision, and values of the organization are presented. A survey of the literature highlights the criticality of relevant business education, while revealing a gap between the curriculum and assessment of business schools and the knowledge and skill requirements of the marketplace (Andrews & Higson, 2007; Azevedo, Apfelthaler, & Hurst, 2012; Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Pan & Perera, 2012; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Porter & McKibbin, 1988; Praslova, 2010).

A political-economic-social-technological-environmental (PESTE) analysis is used to frame the PoP. The inclusion of internal and external data further supports this presentation. Taken together, these considerations point to a need for pertinent degree programming that meets market demand.

Chapter 2 presents a central framework for leading the change process. Cooperrider and Whitney's (2005) appreciative inquiry model anchors this organizational improvement initiative, and includes four phases: discovery, dream, design, and destiny. Transformational leadership and servant leadership approaches further support the progression of this OIP, and are presented alongside Cooperrider and Whitney's framework. Four possible solutions are outlined in an effort to resolve the PoP. A curriculum review of the HRM baccalaureate degree program is identified as the solution to address the specified PoP, and is outlined in detail within Chapters 2

and 3. Whitney, Trosten-Bloom, and Rader's (2010) appreciative leadership model is used to support the operationalization of this OIP. Guiding tenets of inquiry, inclusion, illumination, inspiration, and integrity are presented to support the development of this change initiative.

Throughout Chapter 3, an implementation, evaluation, and communication plan is outlined. This blueprint presents long, medium, and short-range targets that are instrumental to the achievement of the program review, and are offered in detail. Deming's (1951) plan, do, study, act (PDSA) model is used to monitor and evaluate the change, and is discussed as a way of moving this plan forward. Chapter 3 underscores the essentiality of leadership ethics when advancing organizational change. Northouse' (2013) ethical leadership framework is presented as a means of helping organizational leaders gain the support of stakeholders at each stage of this change process. A plan for communicating the organizational change to constituents is presented, and includes key objectives and milestones that will ensure the advancement of this OIP and accomplishment of organizational goals.

Application of this plan will enable the organization to demonstrate a strengthened commitment to providing relevant business education that responds to market demand.

Acknowledgements

"Have you ever considered graduate school," she asked? "Who, me? Of course not," I snapped back, having just received another abysmal score on my latest accounting exam. "Graduate school is meant for smart people—not for people like me!" "So, you're not an accountant," she exclaimed, "and that's okay! You've got to start seeing yourself through the lens of what it is you do well. The minute you do, good things will happen for you."

To my professor, mentor, and friend, Dr. Mary Runte, thank you for facilitating that life-changing exchange. Thank you for believing in me, for encouraging me, and for challenging me to accomplish more than I ever thought I could. You were right!

To my incredible supervisor, Dr. Paula Brook, thank you for everything! Your commitment to craft, drive for excellence, and dedication to student success was outstanding. Your ongoing availability, often with little forewarning, was always appreciated. Thank you for pushing me to become better, and for your guidance along the way. Your constant support, quick wit, and good humor kept me going, and I could not have done it without you!

To my classmates with whom I shared this journey, thank you for the professionalism you displayed, the endurance you showed, and maintaining a sense of humor along the way. I learned much from your insights, and valued the time we spent together.

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To my colleagues within the JRSSB, thank you for the moral support you provided throughout this experience. You are coworkers who have become valued friends, and I cannot imagine reaching this point without your support.

Finally, to my three beautiful daughters, Jenna, Aubrey, and Karli, thank you for your patience, for your understanding, and for standing by me from the start. It hasn't always been convenient or easy, but you've been there every step of the way, and that means more to me than you will ever know! I love you to the moon and back!

Dedication

For my parents, Dean and Cindy

For my grandparents, Leon and Verna

For my three incredible daughters, Jenna, Aubrey, and Karli—

Dream big, work hard, and always have the courage to follow your heart!

In honour of the memory of my dear friend, Dr. William J. Kaupp, whose heart stretched even further than his many academic accomplishments, and whose encouragement along the way meant the world.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem

Organizational Context

Introduction and Contexts

Within Canada, post-secondary students can choose from among three primary pathways to realize their educational goals: universities, colleges, and polytechnics. Feltham (2015) notes that while each institution type fulfills a critical need in society, the mission, and the nature of the education provided within each context, is unique. Universities are considered primarily for knowledge creation (via theory and research); colleges as career oriented, but less theory intense.

Polytechnics exist to provide relevant and responsive programmatic solutions to the pragmatic challenges facing the marketplace (Feltham, 2015). These institutions offer an applied, hands-on approach to learning. The aim within these settings is to produce workplace-ready practitioners who possess the knowledge and skills which not only meet the needs of industry, but also support the economic growth of the regions served by these institutions (Feltham, 2015; Rosia, 2015).

Organizational and Program History

In 1959, the provincial government unveiled plans to construct a new vocational training facility in response to increased demand for technically-educated workers who could meet industry needs at a rate which workplace organizations alone could not achieve (Trembath, 2012). The economy was growing, and demand for skilled workers was increasing.

The organization opened its doors in 1962 with a mandate to produce workforce-ready graduates who possessed the knowledge and skills required by industry across an array of vocationally-oriented disciplines. From day one, industry leaders worked closely with the institution to ensure curriculum and instruction were designed, delivered, and assessed in a manner that aligned with the needs of the workplace.

The majority of instructional staff hired lacked formal classroom training and experience. Nevertheless, they were experts of practice within their fields, and learning by doing became the modus operandi for the classroom. In speaking at the polytechnic's grand opening, the Premier reflected, "This institute fulfills one of the great needs in our society" (Trembath, 2012, para. 20). The institution has continued to grow and expand its offerings since then.

The organization began offering business programming in 1964. For the next four decades, certificate and diploma programs were offered across a range of specialization areas. In 2006, the institute received approval from provincial academic quality council (the arm's length quality assurance agency which oversees degree programming, province-wide) to offer degrees. While diploma programs remain a core focus within the School of Business, the Bachelor of Business Enterprise degree was added in 2008, concentrating in general management. In 2009, the name of the degree was changed to Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA), and four program areas were added, including: accounting, finance, marketing, and human resources management (commonly known as HRM)—the latter being the focus of this organizational improvement plan (OIP).

The president reflects that the relevance of the institute to the economy remains a foremost driving priority in all that is undertaken, organization-wide. "The reason we were created has remained our raison d'etre," he explains. "We are providing skilled workers, and have remained absolutely true to ourselves" (Trembath, 2012, para. 21). Knowledge and skills training are provided within four Schools: Skilled Trades, Applied Sciences and Technology, Health and Life Sciences, and Business. Each School represents a core pillar of the polytechnic, and operates with autonomy.

The next section introduces cultural considerations which establish the organizational context.

Cultural Considerations

The applied model of education delivery, characteristic of polytechnics, has long-been entrenched as a key tenet within the organizational culture of this institute. Schein (2010) postulates that an organization's culture reflects a framework of common assumptions that has been learned by a group, and which has worked well enough to be deemed acceptable and, therefore, to be shared with incoming associates as the right approach. Langton, Robbins, and Judge (2016) point to culture as being "the soul of the organization—the shared beliefs and values, and how they are manifest" (p. 38).

The stakeholder groups within this organization include: faculty, support staff, administration, students, program advisory committees (PACs), industry partners, government, alumni, and other post-secondary institutions (PSIs). The organization offers more than 200 programs, boasts a faculty complement of 1200, and a serves a student body of nearly 30,000. Of these, approximately 120 faculty reside within the School of Business, supporting a diverse learner population of approximately 4,700. As the smallest of all School-wide programs, the HRM (human resources management) program has 4 full-time faculty, and a student complement of nearly 120.

Historically, the School of Business has operated in a siloed and fractious manner (across its 5 programs), which has given rise to divisive subcultures, School-wide. Nevertheless, the introduction of structural changes in July, 2016 has facilitated more collaboration across the School. These changes include the creation of department head positions, along with a shift in reporting relationships at the faculty level. While the School of Business is one of the largest in Canada, on a local level it stands in relative obscurity. Many area residents do not know this institution has a business school, despite a longstanding presence within the community. Though reputed for programming that prepares career-ready graduates, no data currently exists to demonstrate whether the HRM degree program, in its current form (or in the past), provides learners with industry-required knowledge and skills. Advancement of this undertaking will provide administrators (and other stakeholders) with a formalized way to show the relevance and responsiveness of this program.

Vision, Mission, Values, Purpose, and Goals

Covey (2006) suggests that an organization's vision reflects a desired future state, toward which it is actively striving, but which has not yet been attained. Schermerhorn and Wright (2014) add that a mission denotes what an organization does (or the business it is in), while Daft and Armstrong (2012) note that the mission should support realization of the vision.

Today, the institution's vision is to become the most relevant and responsive PSI in Canada (according to industry), and among the world's leading polytechnics. Supporting this is a commitment to provide a practical, hands-on education that prepares students with the knowledge and skills demanded by industry. The institution's mission is to provide relevant, responsive solutions to the real challenges confronting today's workplace organizations. Pan and Perera (2012) characterize the term relevance as the degree to which a program of study is aligned with industry requirements. This understanding is extended by Andrews and Higson

(2007), who note that "undergraduate curricula (must become) more relevant to the needs of the work environment" (p. 46). These authors further convey that accomplishment of this outcome (for applicable, market-receptive programs) will be realized as industry partners assume a more active role in guiding curriculum decisions.

Within this institution, market demand motivates all program decisions, and is the bedrock upon which teaching efforts are built. Undergirding the mission and vision is a values framework, the principles of which are woven tightly into the cultural and operational fabric of the organization. The institution's core values include: respect, collaboration, support, accountability, and celebration. Employees are expected to conduct themselves with integrity, honesty, and in a fashion which demonstrates an appreciation for diversity. Stakeholders at every level are encouraged to support one another in ways which promote a strengthened sense of community, while advancing the mission of the institution. Empowering others is seen as key to providing a work environment that is caring, and which fosters professional growth. It is commonplace within the organization to recognize the success of individuals and departments alike, and to show appreciation for those whose efforts have facilitated the accomplishment of outcomes consistent with the organization's mission and vision. In so doing, all are jointly accountable for the achievement of commitments made by the organization's leaders to students, industry, government, community, and each other.

Constant within the minds of the institution's leadership is the question of how to grow each School in ways consistent with the mission, vision, and values of the organization. Today, the Business School's Bachelor of Business Administration degree pathway, one of the newest degree programs, is poised for growth. The student population is expected to double within five years. Furthering of this endeavor will provide the leadership team with data to support and enhance HRM programming and future enrollment in ways that directly align with the guiding framework of the larger organization.

Organizational/Program Structure

Led by a dean and three associate deans, the structure of the School of Business reflects a top-down, hierarchical model, as shown in Figure 1.1.

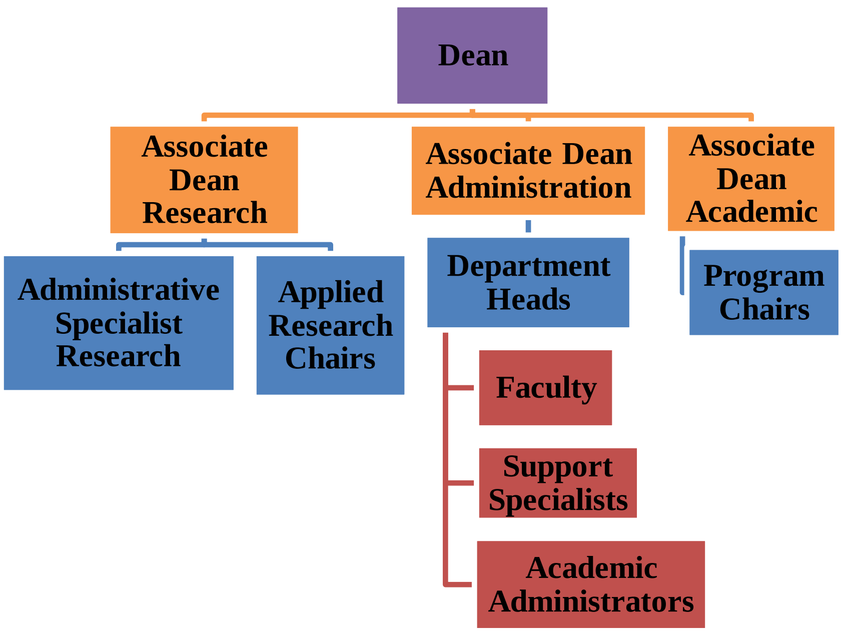

Figure 1.1. Organizational Structure of the School of Business
Adapted from "*School of Business Organizational Chart*" (Institutional Records)

Bolman and Deal (2013) observe that while a top-down approach offers certain benefits—including clear lines of communication and authority, along with uniformly, and well-defined division of responsibility—there are also key challenges. These include reduced intra-organizational communication, along with a diminished propensity to collaborate. Although the Business School operates in a manner consistent with this model, mid-level structural changes, combined with revised reporting relationships at the line level, are facilitating greater collaboration.

The current organizational structure of the School of Business took effect in July, 2016. The department head positions are newly created, as is the entire research arm of the School. Previously, responsibility for faculty supervision resided with the chairs. Faculty feedback suggests that within the new framework, removed power distance enables chairs and instructional staff to work more collaboratively, thereby ensuring a strengthened focus on curriculum and pedagogy (notably where the relationship between faculty and staff is now a coaching one).

Chairs (who are faculty members, seconded for three year terms) coach and guide faculty in areas of curriculum and instruction but do not formally supervise faculty. Reporting to the associate dean—academic, program chairs work collaboratively with the department heads in the operationalization of program and school-level initiatives. In total, there are 3 department head positions, and each one works directly with a team of 1 to 4 chairs. Currently, there is a consideration for chairs to report to department heads, but no decision has been reached. Daft and Armstrong (2012) note that changing reporting relationships can foster greater trust within constituents across organizations, particularly where such changes invite heightened collaboration and cooperation.

Another change is the introduction of academic administrator positions. These faculty members are drawn from within the School of Business and provide an added layer of support to students within a specific program area. Working alongside the program chairs, academic administrators support students in areas of program planning and program admissions. In addition, the department heads and chairs work together in areas of faculty development and workload planning. These measures have fostered a degree of collaboration that has not previously existed within the School.

Covey (2006) insists that within organizations, outcomes realized are the result of commitment to processes utilized. By extension, he counsels that if a change in outcome is sought, a change in process provides a path forward. Where each chair within the School of Business is responsible to work directly with faculty and their respective program advisory committee (PAC) in support of academic excellence on a program level, progression of this OIP will provide a tool that will facilitate HR program advancement.

The next section discusses a leadership problem of practice, and distinguishes between the organization's current state and the desired future state.

Leadership Problem of Practice

The problem of practice (PoP) for this study is: **How well does the Human Resources Management baccalaureate degree program prepare students with industry-required knowledge and skills?**

At present, no data exists that allows Business School leaders to empirically demonstrate whether the HRM degree program is equipping students with industry-required knowledge and skills. Insofar as this gap remains, the School will stand compromised in its ability to achieve its mission of providing germane and nimble programming as required by industry. The dean has indicated that by the 2018-19 academic year, program chairs will be required to show that all curriculum within their stewardship areas is expressly linked to industry-mandated requirements, and that this will be a metric for overall program success.

Program relevance is a key success measure within the institute. Aligning course offerings to industry-required knowledge and skills is essential. The dean has made it a top priority within the School of Business to ensure all programs are expressly linked to industry-required knowledge and skills. Thus, there is already a high degree of support for the progression of this important initiative from senior leaders within the School.

The dean is new to the organization, having joined in August, 2016. She has not only come from outside the institution, but also outside of academia. A recognized industry leader, she is very attuned and committed to the needs of the marketplace. She brings an optimistic, can-do attitude that is not constrained by established process, practice, or personalities—and which is not deterred by organization-specific convention. At the associate dean level, one incumbent is long-serving within the organization, while the others are new to the role and institution. Like the dean, each one is committed to, and excited about, the development of this needed change.

Guiding Questions Emerging from the PoP

Contributing Factors

Until 2008, the School of Business offered programs exclusively at the certificate and diploma levels: accounting, finance, management, marketing, and human resource management. At that time, no articulation agreements existed between the School and other PSIs. Rather, students undertook coursework with the intention of becoming immediately job-ready at the conclusion of their studies. In particular, the focus was preparing graduates for entry level (often technical) roles within workplace settings.

The introduction of undergraduate degree programming across all program areas was a groundbreaking milestone for the Business School and the institution as a whole—it had never before offered any course of study at the degree level. Although enthusiasm was high within the institution's administrative circles, awareness remained low elsewhere. For example, many of the School's own students did not realize this expansion to degrees had taken place. Consequently, enrollment levels within the degree programs were abysmal. The programs needed to grow, and quickly, if support was to be ensured from industry partners and government leaders.

While the organization has long-enjoyed the support of industry partners, it begs mention that many of those serving in advisory capacities (e.g., PAC members) within the School of Business have historically not held bachelor-level parchments. By contrast, many of these stakeholders have been trained within their employing organizations, often lacking formal qualifications. As a result, when the degree programs were introduced, two key issues emerged. First, where most industry advisors had not completed an undergraduate degree, many of them had neither a sense of the substance nor rigor appropriate for degree-level programming. Next, many questioned the value of an undergraduate credential, reasoning that workplace experience is, and would remain, the greatest teacher.

In addition, the School of Business has maintained a practice of hiring faculty whose own educational attainment remains one level higher than that of the program within which they are teaching. Thus, where the School had once offered only one year certificates and two year diploma programs, the majority of faculty held only an undergraduate degree. In such cases, many of those credentials had been earned many years earlier when the "work of business" looked very different from what it had grown to become in the twenty-first century.

Although there arose a need to critically examine program offerings in a way that not only ensured a degree of rigor befitting an undergraduate level, but also continued relevance (given the expanded roles for which program graduates would now be academically prepared), no such review has been completed, to date. There were, after all, very few people qualified to participate in such a process. Today, formal feedback on School-wide programming is received through program advisory committees (PACs). The use of PACs has a rich history at this institution in providing support, direction, advice, and leadership from industry to career/vocationally-oriented education and training. PACs are discussed in depth later.

Consequently, while the undergraduate programs have experienced modest growth since their inception in the early 2000s, the trajectory of future growth will steepen as business and educational leaders are able to demonstrate a recognition of, and commitment to, those knowledge and skill areas demanded by industry. Furthermore, as these requirements are empirically manifest within curriculum offerings, the School's degree programs will not only become more recognized as relevant and responsive, but also will enjoy the heightened and ongoing support of key stakeholder groups—image, influence, and prestige of a Business baccalaureate from this institution will accelerate.

As a new faculty member in the HRM program six years ago, I questioned why a program review, like the one being proposed, had not previously been completed. In response, it was communicated that such an undertaking was too time consuming and no one knew where to begin. I have since served as program chair and presently, I am a department head—directly responsible for providing leadership to five business programs. These include: marketing, management, entrepreneurship, hospitality management, and human resources management.

These five program areas make up a single department (known as Marketing, Management and Enterprise [MME]). These experiences have not only afforded a more complete awareness of current curriculum, but have also given me the confidence of faculty, administrators, and industry partners. Thus, the timing for this initiative is opportune.

Currently, PACs operate very informally within the School of Business. That is, while terms of reference exist governing the operation of PACs at the institutional level (see Appendix B), these are not enforced. Rather, it remains up to each program chair to use the PAC for their program (in concert with faculty members and industry partners). As a department head, I work with chairs to ensure operationalization of program specific initiatives. For example, I schedule all courses, hire all faculty and staff, and oversee all logistics which support academic programming. In addition, I am an active member of the PAC and take part in all PAC activities. Moving forward, the program needs to upgrade its credentialing of PACs and formalize the PAC process, School-wide. While this needs to occur for all programs across the School (of which there are seven), this OIP considers only the HRM degree program. Chapter two discusses the formalizing of PACs and the identification of appropriate credentialed PAC members for the HRM program.

Once completed, it is anticipated that this schematic will serve as a model for similar curriculum reviews within all other business degree program areas.

Potential Challenges

Although the use of PACs for programming has important benefits, there are also challenges. Bias represents the first potential challenge to this effort. My proximity to (and leadership of) the HRM program may lead me to look more favorably upon existing curricula.

A second challenge is the narrowness of this proposal. As one program, HRM represents the smallest program within the School of Business, both in terms of student enrollment and faculty complement. Focusing this work to a single program may limit the transferability of any findings and information gained specific to the larger Business School.

Becker, Huselid, and Ulrich (2001) note that HRM is a dynamic discipline that is continually changing, in part the result of those forces outlined with the political, social, economic, technological, and environmental (PESTE) analysis discussed later in this chapter. The authors reflect that HRM practitioners must evolve or risk being seen as irrelevant. HRM professionals must, for example, remain continually abreast of developments in technology and legislation. Where this OIP is coming forward at a single moment in time, subsequent changes in technology and legislation, as well as future issues and needs within HRM, may limit the completeness of information presented. However, it is recognized that regular curricula/program review and improvement is an ongoing activity. Subsequent program/curricula assessments will ensure the ongoing relevance and currency of the HR baccalaureate degree program.

A final challenge facing this effort is the current positioning of this Business School (relative to other program offerings available locally). At present, it is one of many post-secondary pathways in this area to a business degree, and is perceived by some as “lesser tier” or status when compared to business programs offered elsewhere. It is anticipated that a newly reconstituted PAC with all members having earned credentials (master’s and doctoral), the program review (and subsequent program (re) development) will enhance the credibility of this degree.

The next section outlines perspectives on the PoP, and includes a historical overview, a

PESTE analysis, and relevant data, including internal and external information.

Perspectives on the PoP

Historical Overview and Literature Review

The development and practice of human resources management in current times have been shaped by advances in management thought. As a discipline, Human Resources Management traces its intellectual roots to twentieth century management. This philosophy undergirds the practice of human resources management in current times. It is thus instructive to recognize those influences, and how they have shaped our awareness (and practice) of HR.

Beginning with the classical management theories, early management principles were rooted in assumptions of human rationality. They presupposed that people were ultimately motivated to work out of economic self-interest (Schermorhorn & Wright, 2014). Where maximization of monetary gain for factory owners was the pre-eminent goal of company overseers, Taylor (1911) introduced scientific management as a means of securing the same—first for owners, and next for workers. Maximization of productivity and economic prosperity were the desired endpoints, while management control and careful planning were seen as the means. Taylor viewed the worker as a cog in the business of production and assumed homogeneity of interests between worker and organization. He further believed that with a continuous supply of willing and available workers (properly selected, trained, and incentivized), process efficiency would be established, and outcome effectiveness ensured.

Subsequent contributors to management theory, including Fayol (1916), believed that management could be taught, and identified fourteen principles for managers. These were characterized as duties, and closely resemble what is today known as the four functions of management—planning, organizing, leading, and controlling (Wren, Bedeian, & Breeze, 2002). A third, and very significant influence within the classical management period, was Weber (1947), who introduced bureaucracy as a way of dealing with those inefficiencies which he believed hampered organizational productivity.

Other scholars challenged classical notions of *worker as cog*, arguing that people do not automatically behave in purely rational ways. Rather, humans are characterized as social, emotional, and self-actualizing beings. Beyond seeking monetary gain, people value relationships and desire to experience a sense of community. In addition, they want to understand the impact of their contribution—to know that what they do matters. These notions are attributed to the contributions of scholars like Follett (1924), who examined the social aspects of individual experience within organizations (Eylon, 1998), Maslow (1943), who discussed an escalating series of human needs (and the importance of meeting the same), Mayo (1949), who examined the impact of direct supervision upon human behavior within workplace settings, McGregor (1960), whose work looked at the linkage between a manager's perceptions toward his/her direct reports and his/her treatment of them, and Argyris and Schon (1974), who examined considerations related to organizational (systems) learning. Collectively, these theorists are among the pioneering contributors to what is known as the behavioural approach to management, which highlights the unique nature and impact of human needs within organizational settings.

By the end of the twentieth century, management science had adopted a systems view of organizational life. It concerned itself with how to align the interests and efforts of organizations and constituents alike, so all might profit. Becker et al. (2001) assert that in current times, the goal of organizations is to utilize human resources in ways that will create value for people and organizations alike. The authors observe that leaders must craft those conditions which will facilitate required behaviors from workers to ensure achievement of desired ends. In this way, success for organizations and constituents alike requires interdependent and willing commitment from each party. Wren (1979) identifies that management theory has evolved over time, and that such changes have, in many cases, been signaled by political, economic, cultural, and even social shifts (discussed below).

PESTE Analysis

This section examines the organization using a PESTE analysis to provide a contextual understanding of the significance of this OIP.

Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols (2016) assert that within organizational settings, change efforts often come in response to forces occurring outside the organization and include political, economic, social, technological, and (natural) environmental factors. Known as *PESTE* factors, Bolman and Deal (2013) reflect that while organizations have no control over these considerations, they must remain aware of (and responsive to) them to remain relevant and viable. The problem of practice—**How well does the Human Resources Management baccalaureate degree program prepare students with industry-required knowledge and skills?**—is contextualized by this analysis.

Political. As the largest single funder of the institute, government is the most influential stakeholder of the organization. While efforts are made to prepare students with the competencies necessary to succeed as industry practitioners, those deliverables could not be achieved in the absence of continued support from government-issued operating grants. In 2013, then-Deputy Premier, Thomas Lukaszuk, sent a letter to the institute's senior leadership team outlining those outcomes which government leaders expected the organization to achieve.

> Programming will be relevant to the needs of industry; applied research activities will be industry-driven with immediate application or commercial value; faculty and staff will enable a positive and holistic student experience that will prepare students for success in a meaningful career. (Government of the province, n.d.)

The letter directed that the organization will achieve these outcomes by "(Ensuring) continued relevance and responsiveness of programming, strengthening entrepreneurial capacity in (the province and) developing pathways that enable access into (the institute) through to completion of a degree" (Government of the province, n.d.).

These deliverables are etched into the vision, mission, and values frameworks that guide this organization's activities. The provincial government recently announced plans to progressively raise the minimum wage toward $15/hour. Legislative policies, such as these, will have repercussions for HRM practitioners as they endeavor to support organizational leaders in making strategic decisions that reflect awareness of (and adherence to) changing laws. A review of this HRM program will allow for greater awareness and course inclusion of legislative considerations for the curriculum (currently there is no such focus in the HRM degree). Advancing this proposal that identifies legislative framework as an impact measure will allow HRM program leaders to enjoy strengthened confidence from internal and external stakeholder groups.

Economic. Economic considerations also center upon recognition and achievement of HRM outcomes. In this OIP, program outcomes center upon preparing work-ready graduates to meet market needs. Grants from industry, which represent a significant funding source, will continue to come to the institute as it demonstrates relevancy. Future economic considerations might involve research grants once the program begins to attract attention to its programming, reputation and/or its collaboration with industry on vital applied research projects.

Social. Within the HRM program, the majority of students are in the 17 – 24 year old age demographic. The expectations of this group, both in terms of what they desire from, and expect to contribute to their employers, are quite different from those of previous generations (Rousseau, 1995). Wong, Gardiner, Lang, and Coulon (2008) posits that baby boomers—those born between 1946 and 1964 (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 1999)—generally demonstrate a willingness to indenture themselves to an organization for decades. By contrast, millennials—those born after 1981 (Howe & Strauss, 2000)—are showing a propensity to remain with organizations for a period of one to two years, on average. Wong et al. (2008) identify that members of Generation X, those born between 1965 and 1981, are "not likely to display loyalty to a particular company or organization" (p. 880), but are quick to leave companies in search of more favorable opportunities. The program must be cognizant of these learners as students/consumers, as well as address their characteristics (and needs) in course curricula as future employees.

Moreover, the School of Business is seeing a significant number of international students enroll in programs. Many of these learners remain in the Canadian workplace after graduation. Conversely, Canadian students often find employment in international companies and/or overseas. It is critical that curriculum and pedagogy reflect this degree of socio-cultural awareness and internationalization. Responding to the needs and interests of these learners will ensure a more inclusive program—one readies students for practice on a global scale.

Technological. Advancements in technology have extended the reach of the Business

School to an increasingly diverse and geographically dispersed learner population. Today, the HRM program is delivered to students from the around the world via online learning platforms. This expanded capability has fueled significant growth across all programs, School-wide. Within the next five years, much of the projected growth within the School of Business is expected to come from an increase in online learners. Conducting a review of course content to ensure program relevancy would demonstrate a strengthened commitment to the success of these stakeholders.

Environmental. As consumers today become increasingly environmentally conscious, business organizations are following. Awareness of an environmental footprint (and addressing any past issues) is but one way companies aim to do their part as stewards of the environment. This means understanding the expectations industry leaders have about preparing students in environmentally aware and committed ways, including locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally—think local, act global! Examining curriculum in this manner demonstrates an expressly proactive awareness, further setting this HRM degree apart from competing programs.

Internal Data

In 2014, the institution surveyed employer satisfaction levels with graduates across all programs, institute-wide (see Appendix A). When asked if employers felt that the organization provides an adequate supply of graduates (in response to industry requirements), 61% responded affirmatively. When asked whether this organization produced graduates who were better-prepared for industry roles, as compared to graduates of other institutions, 67% of respondents noted no difference in the level of preparation. Of those surveyed, only 28% felt that this organization produced better-prepared graduates than other institutions.

When asked whether the organization provided appropriate skills to graduates in response to industry requirements, 65% of those surveyed said yes. Overwhelmingly, employers reported that they would hire and recommend graduates of this institution for employment.

Data reflecting these institutional and programming goals is presented in Appendix A. As noted, employer satisfaction levels are generally high. However, there is no indication of what specific knowledge and skills are required by industry (within the HRM degree program). Advancement of this initiative will address this need for HRM program-specific data.

External Data

Beatty (2012) reports that an existing labour shortage is impacting many key sectors. This trend is expected to continue (nationwide) beyond 2020. The author contends that "the overall (workforce) participation rate is expected to decline sharply in the next 20 years as a significant share of baby boomers transition into retirement" (p. 3). More narrowly, the Conference Board of Canada (2006) suggests that "by 2025, (the province) would face an annual shortfall of 332,000 workers if current trends continued" (p. 1). The Board further acknowledges that this gap between labour demand and supply is not sustainable, and adds that "bold, fresh thinking will be required to address the province's looming labour crisis" (p. 6).

Beatty (2012) admits "a mismatch between the skills required (by industry) and those available" (nationally) (p. 3), citing "Canada must close its skills gap if it is to maintain and grow its economy" (p. 3). The author purports that "Canada's skills challenges are the leading economic issue confronting the country, and will be for years to come" (p. 7). Of those concerns facing the national economy today, the skills gap is at the top. "The evidence is clear that the rising shortfall of skilled workers, and the growing mismatch between the skills required and those available, has evolved into a skills crisis affecting the Canadian economy" (p. 7).

The closure of this gap by enhancing the HRM baccalaureate degree program in preparing students with needed industry-required knowledge and skills is a local and regional contribution to the national economy. The next section presents a leadership philosophy of practice, and includes a personal leadership philosophy.

Leadership Philosophy of Practice

Educationally and professionally, my background is in human resources management. As a scholar-practitioner, I hold that the role of theory is to inform and strengthen practice. Professional performance should be guided by both current literature and best practices. Philosophy, then, serves as a starting point to practice and not an end in itself.

Before joining this institution, I worked in industry, where my focus was in the area of leadership development. In particular, much of my time was spent supporting emerging leaders who were transitioning from individual contributor to line level supervisor. In so doing, I came to see the wisdom in Sinek's (2009) admonition to "start with why" (p. 1). In short, more than teaching people about leadership, I focused first on understanding the motivations underpinning constituents' expressed desire to lead. I asked critical questions that challenged uncontested assumptions. I taught that the most important customer a leader has is his or direct reports and the job of the steward was to support personnel accordingly. In these respects, I ascribe to Greenleaf's (1977) servant leadership philosophy, which suggests that a leader serves others first, and this motivation compels one to lead.

Later, when serving as a full-time instructor, I taught a leadership class to undergraduates. My aim was to help them engage in a process of personal introspection that would facilitate a more complete measure of self-awareness. I saw that students, like employees, want others to see them for (and judge them by) what they do well. I hold that building upon a strengths-based foundation will yield the greatest results. I do not ignore weaknesses. However, deficiencies are not my starting point (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Zenger & Folkman, 2002).

I ascribe to Covey's (2006) notion that outcomes realized are the result of commitment to processes utilized, and that one should ensure alignment between chosen means and desired ends. I see the role of education as preparatory to the enhancement of practice, and hold that organizational improvement requires interdependent dedication between all stakeholders, and is further underpinned by a commitment to process.

Thus, my leadership style is characterized as transformative. Northouse (2013) defines transformative leadership as "a process that changes and transforms people" (p. 185). The author describes leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 5). Leaders are identified as those who influence others in the process of shared goal achievement.

I believe that as people are given something to own, it becomes theirs. As personal ownership increases, commitment escalates, and outcomes strengthen. This HRM program review is the "product" of ownership by key constituents—faculty, students, industry, the organization. The next section presents a leadership-focused vision for change and explores the current gap between present and desired future states.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

Present and Future Organizational States

Pfeffer and Fong (2002) emphasize the empirical disconnect between what is taught within business programs and what is relevant to the workplace, citing that “there is little evidence that mastery of the knowledge acquired in business schools enhances people’s careers or has much effect on graduates’ salaries or career attainment” (p. 80). Bennis and O’Toole (2005) observe that “business schools are hiring professors with limited real-world experience and graduating students who are ill-equipped to wrangle with complex, unquantifiable issues” (p. 96). Azevedo, Apfelthaler, and Hurst (2012) further point out that there is very little research which explores alignment between undergraduate programming and industry requirements.

“The overall lack of research addressing undergraduate business education is especially problematic” (p. 16), note the authors, “considering the growing debate on skills gaps, lack of experiential knowledge, and employability of business undergraduates” (Azevedo et al., 2012, p. 8). The authors conclude by suggesting that “there seems to be a clear need to better understand what specific competencies are perceived to be most critical for effective work performance at entry level positions, from the employers’ points of view” (p. 16).

Porter and McKibbin (1988) point to an absence of collaboration between business school faculty members and industry experts as one reason for this lack of alignment. Praslova (2010) identifies that another gap between school-based and workplace contexts exists in the area of assessment, suggesting that most post-secondary evaluations measure theoretical content, and not concrete application of principles (the implication being that practice is not taught and/or stressed). The author suggests that in present times, “there is a pronounced and growing pressure to present evidence of educational effectiveness to various stakeholders, including students, government entities, national accrediting organizations, and representatives of the workforce” (p. 217). Praslova postulates that as institutions of higher learning align assessment techniques with industry practice, students will be better prepared for contexts beyond post-secondary. Ensuring graduates are prepared for industry practice will strengthen the overall effectiveness of the education provided by PSIs (2010).

Within workplace settings, Ulrich (1998) identifies this same issue of alignment between the human resource function and the wider organization. "HR's activities appear to be, and often are, disconnected from the real work of an organization" (p. 126). The author contends the time has come for HRM "to articulate their role in terms of the value they create" (p. 134). This value will be manifest as the HRM function (and those working within it) is expressly linked with the business of the organization. Partnering thusly will ensure effective, value-filled service delivery, which is central to the work of HRM.

Hence, there is clear evidence within the literature of a present need for undergraduate programming to align with the needs of workplace organizations—reducing any gaps and revealing a commitment toward a being a leader in HRM education.

Priorities for Change

To deliver relevant and responsive HRM programming, there needs to be some way of showing whether the industry-driven and government-supported mandate to provide students with relevant knowledge and skills is being achieved. Where the program is anecdotally marketed as accomplishing these outcomes, it is time to demonstrate it, and with solid support. Advancement of this change leadership plan represents the first step taken in that direction.

The primary role of each leader within the School of Business is to ensure academic excellence within his or her respective area. The dean sees program relevance (to industry requirements) as a foremost priority. As department head, it is my responsibility (and priority) to support curricular review of certificate, diploma, and degree programs. What follows provides details regarding implementation of an organization-specific program review.

Construction of Future State

By the end of 2017, all School of Business programs are required to complete a process of curriculum mapping. As a department head, operational responsibility for this task falls within my stewardship. The dean has indicated that the guiding metric to be used in the assessment of each course is alignment of course content with industry requirements.

To accomplish both the program review and curricula (re) development, the HRM program must be ready to begin the process. This involves organizational and stakeholder assessment tools, including change readiness and stakeholder identification.

Organizational Change Readiness

Assessing Organizational Readiness

In assessing the organization's readiness for change, Lewin's (1951) Force Field Analysis Model is used. This model helps us understand change readiness by examining the nature and strength of forces which drive and/or restrain change.

Competing Forces

As can be seen in Figure 1.2, key forces driving this change include: a new dean (who has made it a foremost priority to ensure school-wide program relevance), an institutional level leadership team (whose organization-wide strategy is driven by the need to ensure relevant and responsive programming), industry partners (who demand workplace-ready graduates), government leaders (who stipulate that the institute must deliver workplace-readying programming), students (who choose the HRM program because of its existing promise to prepare them with workplace-required knowledge and skills), and a revised organizational structure (which promotes heightened collegiality, and increased attention to program excellence).

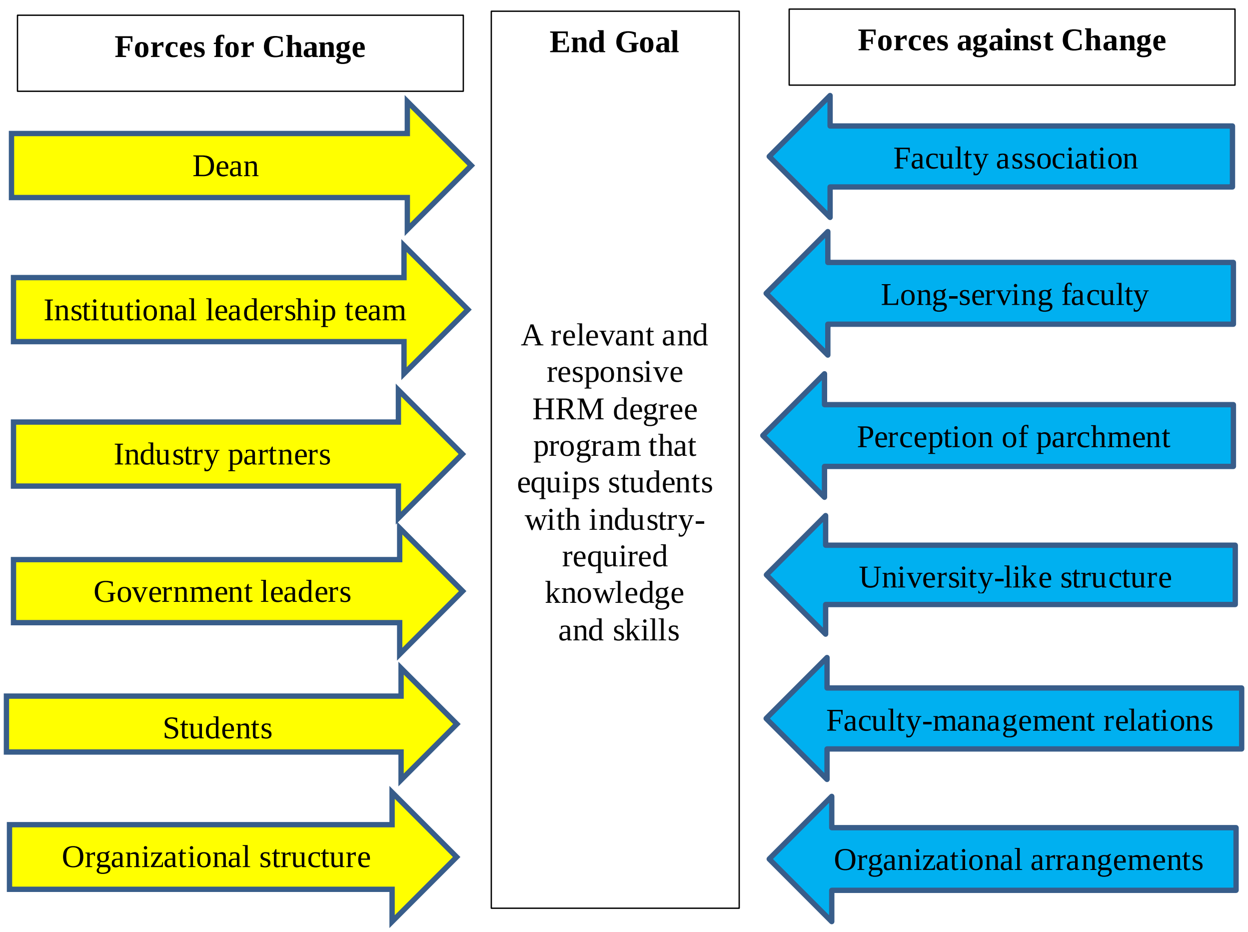

Figure 1.2. Forces For and Against Organizational Change
Adapted from *"Field Theory in Social Science"* by K. Lewin (1951). New York, NY: Harper Row.

Restraining forces include: a faculty association (that is resistant to change supported by management), long-serving faculty members, in particular, (who want to be left alone to continue teaching with unchanged content, and in a familiar manner), the perception that parchment attainment supersedes practical expertise, a university-like structure (which some faculty believe strips the institute of its polytechnic identity), strained faculty-management relations, and organizational arrangements (which perpetuate silos).

Presently, a number of additional factors supporting change exist within the organization. These include many of the considerations discussed within the PESTE analsysis: change in government policies, student demographics, a shift toward a more environmentally conscious approach to business, legislation, technology (and the way in which it shapes delivery and reach of the HRM program), and major internal restructuring at the administrative level.

At the time this OIP was first conceived, the School of Business had received a directive to hire only doctoral level faculty and discontiued the practice of hiring master's-educated instructors for classroom positions. This was not only a constraining force for change, but is also noteworthy for other reasons. Bolman and Deal (2013) note that within organizations, the significance of actions taken are often found less in what is done, and are better-reflected in terms of what those actions symbolize (e.g., a move toward university status at this institution). The hiring directive for doctoral level faculty was overturned in 2016. Since then, the introduction of a master's level-educated dean (whose professional credentials include a combination of responsbile appointments within industry) appears to signal a renewed pledge to uphold the institution's longstanding commitment to hiring scholar-practitioners who cultivate applied learning opportunities for students. This represents another driving force for change. And although all the changes noted in the Force Field Analysis, and in this section, do not have the same influence, they are all certain to be raised in the PACs review of the HRM program.

The next section introduces a plan to communicate the need for change and identifies key stakeholders. In addition, considerations for overcoming resistance are outlined.

Plan to Communicate the Need for Change

Palmer, Dunford, and Akin (2009) reflect that for a change effort to be effectual within an organization, it must be shown to move (or support) the entity toward realization of its vision. In seeking to gain support for recommended changes within this proposal, first from School-level leaders, and next from frontline faculty, it will be imperative to make that linkage between proposal advancement and vision achievement clear.

As noted, the Business School has recently undergone a significant structural reorganization. In speaking of those changes, the provost made it clear that these revisions were meant to support achievement of *Toward 2021*, the institution-produced blueprint which outlines the steps required to successfully achieve the organization's mission and vision. Creating awareness of the need for change will yield clear alignment between the proposed change activity and the organization's mission and vision.

The production of industry-ready graduates is a superordinate interest shared by faculty and administrators across the institution. As faculty feel consulted, involved, and represented by this OIP, they will support this initiative. A detailed change process communication plan, addressing each of the aforementioned points of consideration, is provided in Chapter Three.

Key Stakeholders

Key stakeholders in this change include organizational leaders (at the School and institutional levels), faculty members, industry partners, and current and future students. The former group is comprised of the dean and associate deans, department heads, and program chairs. Indirectly, this group will also include the provost, as all academic program changes must receive suport from that office to be formally enacted. As department head, I will work with identified personnel to advance this effort (details in Chapters Two and Three). To do this, it will be important to maintain the confidence of fellow Business School leaders, many of whom have already expressed support for the advancement of this endeavor.

The majority of new faculty members (all with master's level credentials, and approximately 10% with PhDs) hired to teach within the School of Business come directly from industry. These scholar-practitioners arrive professionally accomplished and current within their fields and demonstrate optimism and enthusiasm toward their faculty appointments. With the passage of time, many faculty report that their connection to industry fades—including an awareness of current trends, practices, and changing knowledge and skill requirements. This OIP invites faculty members into the discussion with industry partners and allows them to draw upon their own industrty networks, enhancing collaboration between these two critical stakeholder groups.

Industry partner input/feedback is critical to the accomplishment of this OIP. In particular, these constituents need to be current leaders in the HRM field and acquainted with trends, legislation, and marketplace needs. They also need to become famliar with current course offerings for comparison with what is required (by industry) against what is currently being taught within the HRM program (for a greater awarenss of change needs). They also have to be able to understand large amounts of information, critically assess the same, be aware of the needs existent within subfields of the HRM discipline, and know what knowledge and skills industry demands. They need to be good listeners, willing to provide feedback to the project plan/PAC to ensure effective educational programming.

Overcoming Resistance

Change is a given for any educational institution to maintain relevant and respononsive programming; yet, there may still be resistance. Palmer et al. (2009) offer that to overcome resistance to change, it is imperative to first recognize how such opposition may manifest. The authors note that while forms of disagreement may vary, these are often thematically captured as being affective, cognitive, and/or behavioural in nature. Representative considerations undergirding resistance to change may include: distaste for change; anxiety over unpredicatability; a perceived adverse effect on indididual interests; an allegiance to conventional process, culture and identity; a lack of understanding (either about the subsance of or need for the change); or, a view that the change is inappropritely timed, is being poorly rolled-out/overseen, or that there has simply been too much change (Palmer et al., 2009).

The authors suggest a variety of ways to address this disapproval. The first is to communicate with (and inform) people, which begins with a commitment to advise them on the reasons the change is needed. I plan to use this approach with senior leaders. As these constituents come to understand WHY a change is necessary, HOW it will be implemented, and WHAT it will allow them to achieve, I aniticipate growing support for this initiative.

To address any faculty resistance, I will initiate a process of instructor input and engagement. As these colleagues feel their voices are being heard, I expect that resistance will diminsh. To address any censure from PAC members, I will use the PACs to engage in a process of facilitation and support (Palmer et al., 2009). This may involve communicating via trade journals and/or industry networks, worksites, or meetings as appropriate.

Conclusion

Chapter one idenified not only the importanc of the PoP and OIP to this institution, but also to the provincial and national ecnonomies. The history and context of this intitutional change is paramount for educational programming to maintain high standards of responsiveness to employer needs. By reviewing the HRM baccalaureate degree program, students and industry will have assurance that the institution is educating for the present and the future market—the central commitment of this orgnaization's purpose.

Chapter two focuses on the planning and development for this OIP, with specific analysis on a framework and the leadership for facilitating the solution for this change.

Chapter 2: Planning and Development

This chapter uses a leadership framework and an organizational analysis to guide the planning and development process. Possible solutions to address the PoP are presented, with one selected for implementation. Leadership practices at both the program and institutional levels, as they influence the organization and program review, are discussed.

Framework for Leading Change

Cooperrider and Whitney's (2005) theory of appreciative inquiry (AI) is used to frame this change, which is informed by the values of the organization. A strengths-based approach to change, such as AI, will best-facilitate the outcomes which this OIP advocates.

As a change management tool, AI involves a process of inquiry that aims to purposefully identify (and further develop) the best in people and organizations. Departing from earlier change management techniques which begin by identifying shortfalls, AI seeks to uncover what is being done right, and how it might be done even better, in support of strengthened and sustained outcomes for people and organizations (Cooperrider, Peter Jr, Whitney, & Yaeger, 2000). This commitment to begin by celebrating what is working well, and building upon it, is central to this organization's core values framework for this important program review.

Conceptually, AI is partially rooted in the self-fulfilling prophecy view, which holds that people will live up (or down) to expectations imposed upon them (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Merton, 1948). By giving people a message that is consistent with values already central to the organization, and supported by stakeholders, the tone for this planned change will be familiar (and thus more widely accepted). Perhaps the most solid endorsement of AI as a change management tool comes from leading management thinker, Peter Ducker, who suggests, "The task of leadership is to create an alignment of strengths in ways that make a system's weaknesses irrelevant" (The Drucker School, 2011).

As depicted in Figure 2.1, AI is undergirded by four central tenets: discovery, dream, design, and destiny. The process of AI starts with affirmative topic choice. This process "involves choosing the life-affirming factors as the focus of inquiry. These topics guide the formulation of questions and, through inquiry, create the learning agenda for an organization" (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2008, p. 33). The authors further note that "the future is consciously constructed on the positive core strengths of the organization" (p. 33).

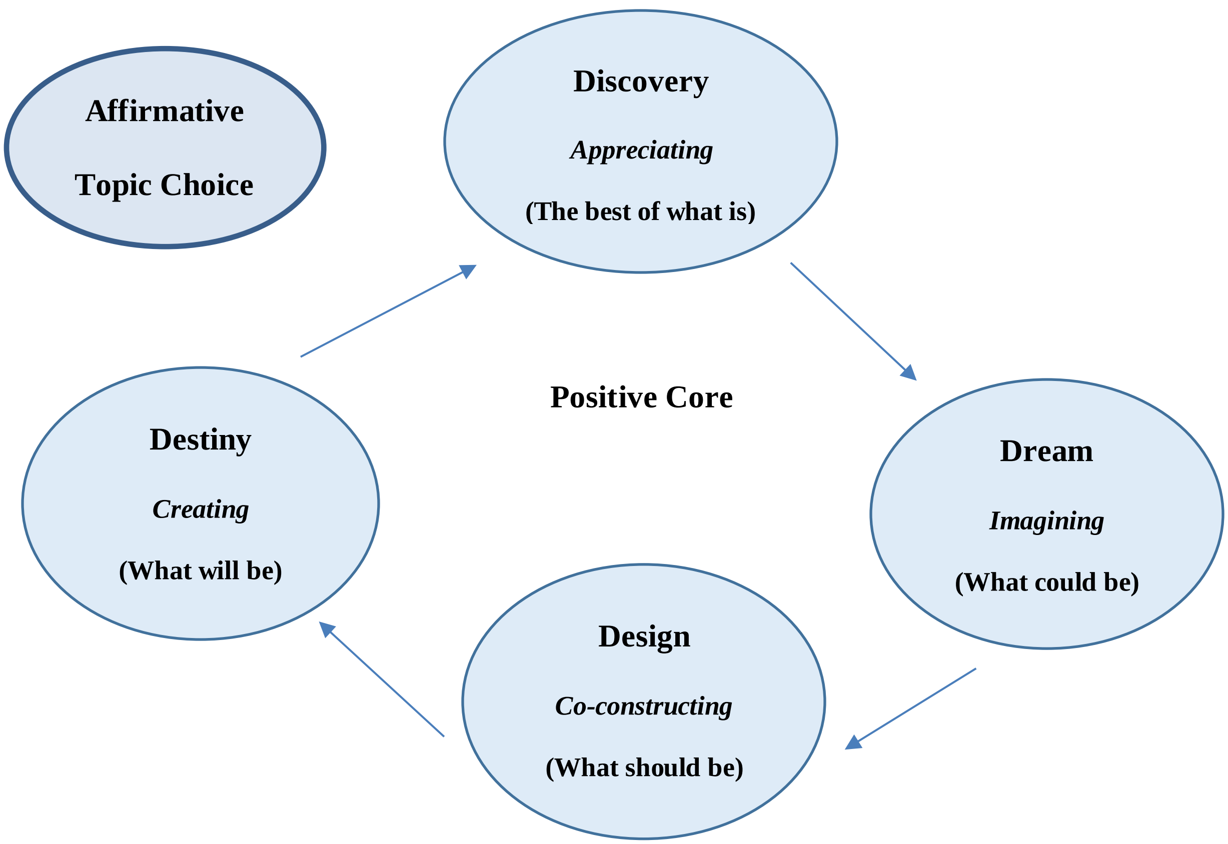

Figure 2.1. Appreciative Inquiry 4D cycle
Adapted from "*Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Revolution in Change*" by David L. Cooperrider and Diana Whitney (2005). Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler.

Discovery. Once a topic is chosen, AI begins with an assessment of what is not only working, but also working well. Hammond (2013) notes that "In every organization, something works" (p. 20), and usually well. Unlike more traditional models of change management, which often start by identifying gaps or deficiencies, AI invites an organization's constituents to first recognize what is going well, and why—and build upon it. This OIP starts with what is working well in the HRM program as it undertakes a curricular review.

Since the inception of the HRM degree program, hiring organizations have consistently recruited graduates to fill vacancies within their companies. Today, graduates of the HRM degree program report an employment rate nearing 95%. This strong performance indicates that there are plausibly a number of key strengths presently existent within the current program. Recognizing (and building upon) these strong points will lead toward a more relevant, industry-responsive HRM degree program.

Dream. The next step in AI invites people to imagine the possibilities—in short, to dream. "Reality is created in the moment, and there are multiple realities" (Hammond, 2013, p. 20). This creation of a new reality involves the "discover(y) (of) profitable opportunities, and visualize(ing) goals and strategic alternatives" (Stavros, Cooperrider, & Kelley, 2003, p. 6). Through a process of dialogic engagement, constituents are invited to go beyond the plausible, and instead picture what is possible.

Historically, many faculty felt that the School of Business provided no opportunities for career advancement. One reason had to do with how appointments into leadership positions were made—School leaders were hand-picked to assume those roles. This left many feeling unable to move forward, notably where such decisions appeared subject to the wishes of an incumbent manager. Once faculty were invited to share their views on how this process might be improved, they voiced a desire to become involved in selection decisions.

Today, faculty sit on many hiring committees, including in-scope and out-of-scope positions, which began with an invitation to dream about what might be. Additionally, they serve on range of committees, institute-wide—some of which did not historically include faculty members (e.g., *Toward 2021*). Kouzes and Posner (2017) reflect that this process of envisioning results often requires a willingness to critically challenge current procedure in ways that transcend the confines of the plausible, and move instead to a re-creation of what is possible.

This OIP invites collaborative engagement between PAC members. These stakeholders will jointly envision what knowledge and skill areas should be included within an industry-relevant, practice-readying HRM baccalaureate degree program. The goal is to work toward the creation of an enhanced future state—an HR degree program that is expressly (and demonstratively) aligned with industry knowledge and skill requirements.

Design. Faculty involvement in the decision making process enables the design of co-constructed processes and outcomes. More narrowly, this approach facilitates the accomplishment of objectives which are representative of (and driven by) all stakeholders. This is the essence of AI's third step, and is today woven into this organization's operational framework. Taken together, this is an appropriate way of advancing this essential change.

Once industry-required knowledge and skill areas have been identified and agreed upon, the process of design will involve the co-construction of "what should be", and will be accomplished by identifying which knowledge and skill areas should be empathized within the curricula of the HR degree program.

Destiny. Conventional notions of empowerment reflect a manager's willingness to provide his/her direct reports with the authority (and means) to act in ways the manager would in his/her absence (Langton et al., 2016). The authors note that a leader's support for constituents commonly ends the moment an employee acts in ways that are contrary to the manager's views.

While serving as a faculty member, I occasionally invited the organization's president to speak with my students. In so doing, he relayed a story that not only taught him about what empowerment can mean, and which also reflects the awareness (of empowerment) held by stakeholders within this organization. Prior to his presidency at this institution, he was the dean of a business school at a Canadian university. While there, he sought ways of raising the profile of the business school. In speaking with his associate deans about how this might be accomplished, one of them suggested the creation of a book club. While initially uncertain about this, he chose to learn more and ultimately a decision was made to proceed with the book club. In time, leaders of business, government, religion, community, and the non-profit sector joined the book club—including the province's premier, who arranged his meeting schedule to accommodate attendance at book club gatherings.

The president relates that the experience showed him what empowerment means—that it reflects the willingness of a leader to challenge the thinking of self and others, to embrace perspectives that may clash with one's own, and to ultimately support the ideas of others (even when they are contrary to those of the leader). Today, as then, this commitment to empowering others is moving the institute toward a shared and sustainable destiny.

Once the PAC has determined which knowledge and skill areas to include within the curricula of each course, faculty members and School leaders will work jointly to embed all such recommendations into the curricula of the HR degree program, thereby ensuring a relevant HRM degree program that is responsive to industry needs. Entrusting School-level stakeholders in this way reflects the very manner of empowerment emphasized by the organization's president, and will be essential to the success of this organizational improvement initiative.

Positive Core. Hammond (2013) states, "People have more confidence and comfort in the journey to the future when they carry forward parts of the past" (p. 21). An organization's stakeholders will respond more favorably toward a change as the process honors what worked, and crafts an outcome which builds upon (rather than abandons) historical success. This organization is doing just that—creating change built upon previous success, as AI advocates. Examples of both success and change include:

1. The creation of an applied research unit was new.
2. A commitment to value and celebrate differences as noted by the walls of campus buildings adorned with pictures of students.
3. An on-campus prayer and meditation room provides space for quiet reflection.
4. An on-campus chaplain provides spiritual guidance to students.
5. A therapy dog regularly walks the halls, and is available to students on request.
6. Student counselling services ensure a commitment to mental health and well-being.
7. An annual pride walk reflects a commitment to equality and inclusion.
8. An aboriginal student center (and elders-in-residence) celebrate a commitment to culture.
9. An international student center supports and celebrates cultural diversity.
10. A student success center supports students with academic disabilities.

These reflect positive examples of AI applied to this institution.

Another example of AI being a guiding framework for leading change is Toward 2021—developed in 2011 by institutional leaders, with input from faculty and staff. This strategic planning document outlines how the institution will accomplish its vision of becoming the most relevant and responsive PSI in Canada, and among the world's leading polytechnics. Bolman and Deal (2013) posit that effectual change efforts must be framed in ways which recognize the nature, context, and complexities of (and surrounding) the change itself. The HRM degree program review fits nicely with the AI framework because it considers key aspects of this OIP in ways which expressly reflect awareness of, and commitment to, organizational context. Utilizing a strength-based process of improvement (rather than a gap-based process of trying to "fix" the organization) will demonstrate a commitment to building upon program strength/success (as opposed to a gap-based starting point which aims to "fix" the program).

The next section builds upon this awareness by outlining approaches for leading change.

Models For Leading Change

Whitney, Trosten-Bloom, and Rader's (2010) appreciative leadership model guides this OIP, and is discussed later in this chapter. Supporting this approach will be two ancillary models for leading change, including transformational leadership and servant leadership. Each approach is aligned with AI and is congruent with the context, values, and practices of this organization.

Transformational Leadership. Northouse (2013) defines transformational leadership as "a process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and follower(s). Transformational leadership considers emotions, values, ethics, standards, and the long-term well-being of people and organizations" (Northouse, 2013, p. 186). The emphasis is on the processual nature; the goal is on changing and transforming.

Bass and Riggio (2006) contend that this approach is noted for its focus on intrinsic drive, along with a commitment to develop followers. Northouse (2013) adds that the development of others comes by way of personal connection. In applied form, this model emphasizes the importance of building and strengthening relationships—that personal connection—between leader and followers. The aim is to "broaden and elevate the interests of employees, generate awareness and acceptance of the purpose and mission of the group, and stir employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group" (p. 21). For the HRM program review, this is the basic goal.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) identify four strategies used by leaders who seek to transform organizations. First, the leader clearly understands the organization's vision and is equally effective at helping others do the same. Next, a leader effectively creates and communicates the desired future state in a manner that people accept, internalize, and identify with—creating what Senge (1990) describes as a shared vision. Third, a leader successfully generates trust which is reciprocated between leader and followers. Finally, a transformational leader is self-aware (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). He/she recognizes personal strengths and weaknesses and seeks to improve by emphasizing strengths ahead of weaknesses (Northouse, 2013). These qualities and commitments are evident within the practice of this organization's president. He is quick to hear others' views and is deeply committed to building a sense of community that fosters personal growth, respect for diversity, and a commitment to accomplishing goals through others.

In sum, transformational leadership is a philosophically appreciative process which strengthens people and organizations through engagement and collaboration. It requires a leader to recognize (and build upon) the very best in people. In this way, individual capacity is strengthened, constituent commitment (to organizational goals) are increased, and desired outcomes are ensured—endpoints which satisfy the shared interests of an organization and its stakeholders. Utilization of this approach will operationalize the principles and goals emphasized by AI (and within this program review).

Servant Leadership. In addition to transformational leadership, another type of leadership also facilitates this change—servant leadership—and has much in common with transformational leadership. Within this organization, the president acts as a self-described *cheerleader-in-chief*, and works tirelessly to champion the cause of the institute and serve its stakeholders. He is committed to recognizing the achievements of faculty and staff, and is quick to point out the relationship between their efforts and accomplishment of *Toward 2021*. He views employees as his most important "customers", and supports them accordingly. He dedicates himself to serving those he leads. This dedication not only creates a sense of pride for stakeholders, but also a deeper loyalty toward this shared vision. In these ways, the president is not only bettering the organization (and what it is achieving), but is simultaneously inspiring commitment and growing individual capacity. In speaking with the president, he is quick to point out that it is not about him. Rather, it is about supporting others. He takes the time to hear others' views, and is deeply committed to building a sense of community that fosters personal growth, respect for diversity, and a commitment to accomplishing goals collaboratively. He is a catalyst leader who attends to others' needs, and assists them in their commitment to accomplish *Toward 2021*. He is a true servant leader.

Greenleaf (1977) explains, "Servant leadership begins with a natural feeling that one wants to serve first. The leader is seen as servant first" (p. 19). The aim is to meet the needs of others in a manner which fosters individual commitment, while inspiring a similar dedication to serve others. Spears (2004) outlines ten characteristics of a servant leader:

- Listening (recognizing, respecting, and affirming others' views),
- Empathy (seeking to gain a felt awareness of another's perspective),
- Healing (engaging the whole person),

- Awareness (maintaining self-awareness, and understanding individual impact upon others),
- Persuasion (cajoling people toward his/her perspective, and in a way that helps others share that same understanding and commitment),
- Conceptualization (carrying and effectively communicating the vision),
- Foresight (maintaining a future-oriented sense of past and present),
- Stewardship (supporting others in pursuit of established goals),
- Commitment to the growth of people (valuing and developing individuals),
- Building community (helping others identify with, and value, a greater/common purpose).

This leadership approach aligns with the values, culture, and practices of this organization. Leading change in these two ways will not only be familiar to the organization's stakeholders, but also will result in increased support for the advancement of this review initiative.

As project leader, my personal commitment to advance this effort must be driven by a desire to ensure the needs of the program/organization ahead of my own needs. As constituents see that my leadership of this effort is not undertaken in a self-serving fashion, but in a way that serves the needs of the program and stakeholder groups alike, the stakeholders themselves will be driven to help advance this program review (which will be critical to the success of this endeavor).

The next section examines types of organizational change.

Types of Organizational Change

Palmer et al. (2009) note that organizational changes most often manifest as either first order or second order shifts. The former type reflect incremental changes, which the authors suggest may "involve adjustments in systems, processes, or structures, but does not involve funamental change in strategy, core values, or (organizational) identity." (p. 86). Nadler and Tushman (1989) identify that such shifts often come in response to forces occuring outside the organization—what Schermerhorn and Wright (2014) describe as the external environment.

By contrast, second order changes are “transformational, radical, and fundamentally alter the organization at its core” (p. 86). Here the goal is not to develop the organization; the objective is to transform it. Reger, Gustafson, Demarie, and Mullane (1994) characterize organizational reframing as something of a hybrid model that incorporates elements of first and second order changes in ways that respond to the demands of a changing enviorment, while maintaining a combined sense of organiational identity and employee loyalty.

The advancement of this program review initiative represents an anticipatory, continuous change (Palmer et al., 2009)—what Nadler and Tushman (1989) describe as reorientation. While the oragnizaiton is clear on its mission and vision, there is an internal recognition that accomplishment of strategic objectives requires the refinement of current processes (notably ones which build upon [and honour] the organization’s strengths, core values, and history), while demonstating a parallel commitment to processual adapatablity as a function of external forces acting upon the orgnaization.

Technological shifts, as discussed in the PESTE analysis, serve as one major driver of this change. Today, while the School experiences moderate in-classrom growth at a program level, a major contributor to increasing enrollment levels is due to the demand for online course offerings. An additional external force driving this change is government. First is legislation—including HRM laws impacting the work environment (and necessary adjustments to currciulum, the result of the same). Second is how the organization delivers education (as a public entity).

The kinds of changes are, in many respects, charactersitc of first order modifications—responses to the external environment. Yet a complete overhaul of leadership at every level of the School of Business, along with a different organizational structure (see Org. Chart, Chapter 1), bears striking resemblance to second-order change. However, because these elements do not represent a shift from what the organizaiton is trying to achieve, nor alter its identity, these changes are not second order. Rather, these adjustments reflect a commitment to incremental, continuous changes which any organization undergoes in its lifetime.

Critical Organizational Analysis

Relevant Research and Models

Nadler and Tushman's (1989) congruence model (Figure 2.2), and Quinn, Bright, Faerman, Thompson, and McGrath's (2014) competing values model (Figure 2.3) will be used to articulate the current state of this planned change, while capturing what steps must be taken to achieve the desired future state. The former framework is chosen

Congruence Model. This model depicts an organizational analysis of transformation in support of change (see p. 44). Among its features is the way it considers the relationship between the organization and its external environment—noted in the figure by way of the ongoing interaction (shown as arrows) of a system's inputs, throughputs, and outputs (Nadler & Tushman, 1989). "It specifically links environmental input factors to the organization's components and output" (Cawsey et al., 2016, p. 68). Achieving an industry-relevant HR baccalaureate degree program requires awareness of (and responsiveness to) the external environment—the place where industry resides. Preparing practice ready-graduates requires a commitment (on the part of program stakeholders) to meet the needs of industry, even where these requirements may change (and are outside the control of program leaders). Program relevance will be achieved as School leaders work (and utilize resources) in ways which meet the needs of industry, and which adapts at the pace of industry.

This will be achieved as all parts of the organization interrelate in the manner reflected in Figure 2.2. The model reflects an institution's functioning of four interrelating components: "tasks (the work of the organization), individuals, formal organization(al) arrangements (structures and systems), and informal organization (which includes) culture" (p. 68). These elements interact to transform an organization to a desired future state (the outputs)—which is the goal of AI, and also this OIP—and in a way that responds to factors occurring in the outside environment (the inputs). In applying this model, institutional history "play(s) a huge role in influencing what organizations choose to do" (Cawsey et al., 2016, p. 69). This institution reflects a proud history and is committed to building upon it.

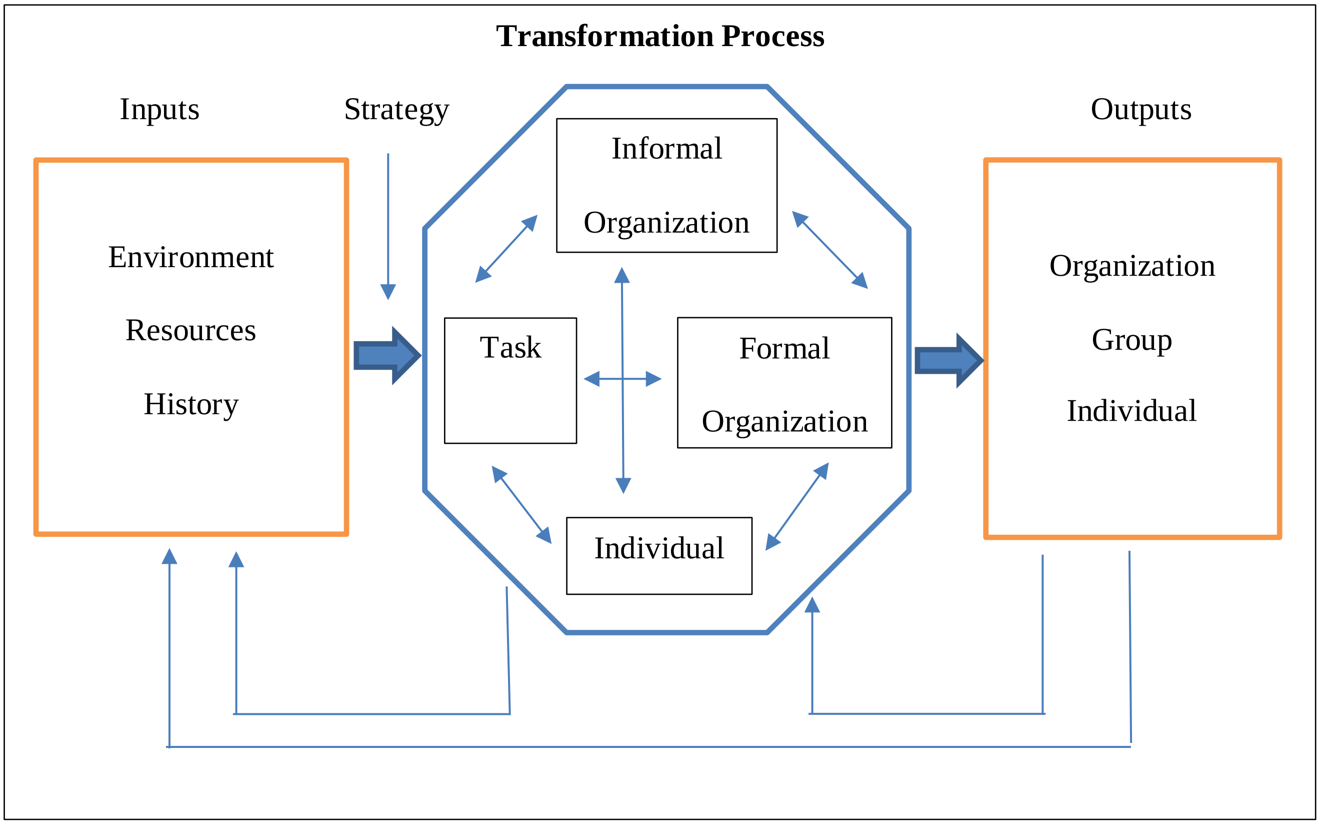

Figure 2.2. Organizational Congruence Model
Adapted from "Organizational Frame Bending: Principles for Managing Reorientation" by David A. Nadler and Michael L. Tushman (2010). *The Academy of Management Executive 3(3),* p. 194.

The Nadler and Tushman congruence model considers an organization wholly, and emphasizes that "there is no one best way to organize" (Nadler & Tushman, 1989, p. 194). Finally, the outcomes-specific focus of this model is consistent with the philosophy and practice of the organization and also with the tenets of AI, the OIP change framework. In this way, the model, like the organization, is very practical in its application. In moving toward a desired future end (of an industry-aligned HRM baccalaureate degree program), there is acknowledgement of the need to fluidly change, and in ways that continually (re)align people, systems, process, and organization to the external environment (Nadler & Tushman, 1989). This commitment is congruent with the organization's mission to operate ways that meet the needs of the marketplace.

Competing Values Model. Quinn et al's (2014) competing values model (see Figure 2.3) considers the relationship between a leader's priorities and his/her awareness of what needs changing. This is important as the views of the institution's president were paramount in crafting Toward 2021. That milestone is 10 years from the time he took office—a timeline in which he is personally invested. What also makes this model appropriate for this effort is the way it invites multiple views (including from stakeholders, departments, and the external environment). In so doing, it encourages a systems approach that emphasizes interrelationships and alignment of all perspectives and focus areas.

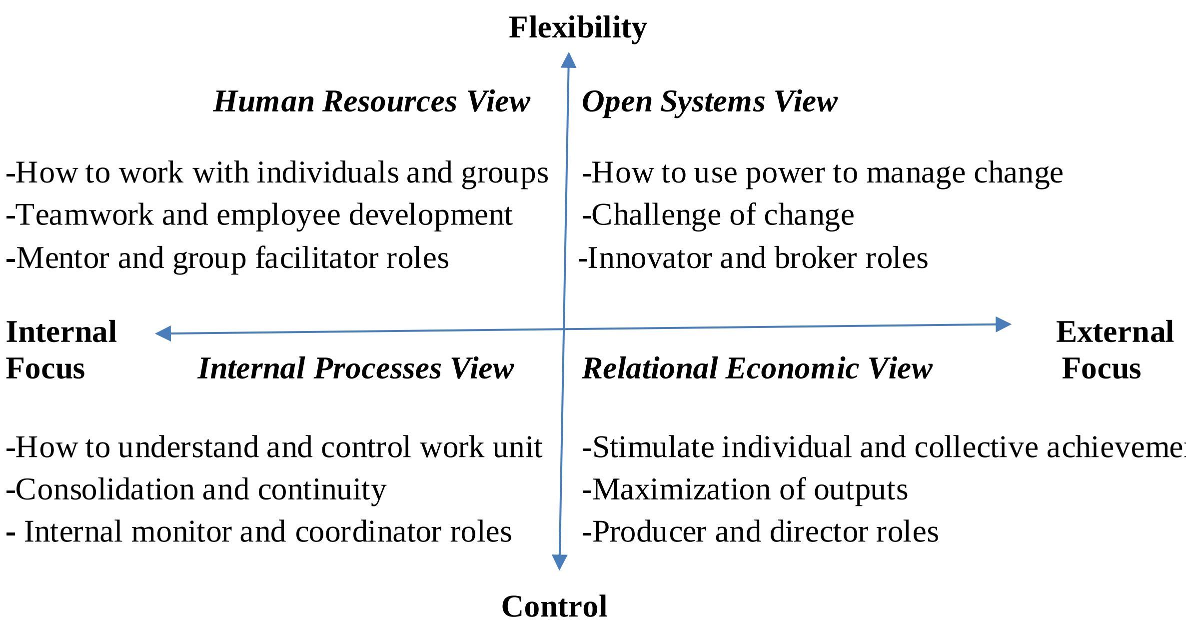

Figure 2.3. Competing Values Model
Adapted from "*Becoming a Master Manager: A Competing Values Approach*" by Robert E. Quinn, David Bright, Sue R. Faerman, Michael P. Thompson, and Michael R. McGrath (2014). New York, NY: Wiley.

Cameron and Quinn (2005) reflect that the purpose of using the Competing Values Framework is to "diagnose and facilitate change in organization(s)" (p. 32). Cawsey et al. (2016) note that this model "provides both a framework that bridges individual and organizational levels of analysis and a framework to understanding competing paradigms in organizations" (p. 84). Each quadrant is relevant to the successful operation of this organization—reflecting a set of values which provide a lens through which different stakeholders view the organization (Cameron & Quinn, 2005). As such these views may "conflict or compete with those individuals or perspectives from each of the other quadrants" (p. 82), much like the Force Field Analysis presented in Chapter One.

Quinn et al. (2014) note that organizational leaders must attend to all four quadrants to successfully achieve outcomes. The role of the leader is to support considerations, values, and people within each quadrant—moving people from disparate positions to common interests. In this way, the leader facilitates the accomplishment of mutually desired outcomes through people—which aligns with the philosophy, practices, processes, and culture of this organization—and also the framework and operationalization of this OIP.

While stakeholders share a commitment to the mission and vision of the organization, there are multiple perspectives to weigh and consider in advancing this change. Figure 2.3 shows the relationships among 4 views (Human Resources, Open Systems, Internal Processes and Relational Economic) and 4 continuums (Flexibility and Control; Internal and External). Carrying out this essential program review must be done strategically. Also, it must consider multiple viewpoints (and even motivations). It is shortsighted to infer that all stakeholders are completely aligned in their viewpoints. Drawing upon this framework, in conjunction with the organizational congruence model, invites multiple perspectives, and in ways which invite a more aware, responsive and relevant solution to emerge—in this case, an industry-aligned HR baccalaureate degree program.

Needed Changes

The critical assessment of PESTE factors emphasizes the importance of this organization's adherence to government-directed obligations—including the mandate to offer a relevant and responsive education that prepares graduates with the knowledge and skills for careers in industry. The proposed program review will enhance the future development of the new degree focus of this institution. Where this problem of practice is aimed at ensuring the continued relevance of the HRM degree program, such an outcome will allow the organization to build on this market-driven requirement.

This organization enjoys an excellent reputation, overall. All programs benefit from this, and specific units, courses, faculty, leaders, and so on, can claim similar recognition and accolades. There is nothing critically "needed" to significantly change the reputation, status, or operation at the macro level. Of course, there are the normal "micro" needs to address. But what this OIP reflects regarding this institutional change is the normal, ongoing attention to instructional and programming endeavors that have been in existence for "awhile." All programs and activities, in and at all organizations and institutions, require regular "fine tuning" for best performance. This is positive, planned, incremental change—always needed, necessary, and important for education that prepares learners for a current and future employment market of constant change.

The next section offers several considerations for addressing the important proactive modifications to current HRM programming.

Possible Solutions to Address POP

Detailed Assessment

Goldsmith (2007) observes that organizations must change, often in response to forces beyond their control to remain viable and relevant. Covey (2006) notes that among the first steps individuals or organization must make to effect meaningful outcomes is to determine why something is being done in the way it is.

A longstanding claim made by the leadership within this organization is that the education provided is both relevant and responsive to the needs of industry. Nevertheless, there is currently no empirical data to show that the baccalaureate degree program in HRM is achieving this industry-driven (and government-echoed) directive. Notwithstanding, enrollment levels continue to swell in response to student demand.

Accordingly, the <u>first solution</u> would be to maintain the status quo—to do nothing, in effect. This institution is locally reputed as the place people go to develop skills that will make them job-ready. And, where the current economic picture sees many members of the workforce involuntarily exiting the job market, many displaced workers are flocking to this organization in record numbers.

Today, program demand is currently measured by enrollment levels. And, where these levels continue to rise (with the demand for many programs/courses exceeding present capacity), it may be reasonable to conclude that doing nothing will allow the institution to better address the near-term requirement of having faculty in place. This course of action would meet increased demand. Faculty members are currently stretched to their limit (in terms of their teaching loads). Giving them more to do, notably where these activities may take them out of the classroom, will further burden them. Not only can this lead to exhaustion and burnout for faculty, but also the organization faces the added risk of delivering a lesser quality educational experience for those students who are counting on the entity to make them job-ready.

A second solution is to critically examine the composition of the program advisory committees (PACs). Today, where the selection of industry stakeholders (to the PAC) has historically come from within the narrow networks of existing faculty and past chairs, issues of member readiness and industry representativeness require redress. In particular, the perspectives coming forward (from the PAC industry partners) may not be wholly representative of all sectors for which the institute seeks to prepare graduates for employment. I propose a review of stakeholder membership for the HRM degree program PAC. In particular, it is crucial to the ongoing success of the HRM degree program to ensure that the PAC membership includes representation from for-profit, not-for-profit, government, post-secondary, alumni, community, and faculty stakeholders. Also, PAC members should minimally possess undergraduate level qualifications (with graduate level qualifications preferred), so as to have an appreciation and awareness of the rigor and substance of content befitting a baccalaureate degree program.

Moving forward, this HR degree program PAC could be expanded to include 1 to 2 additional members. The first of these would be an academic from the Faculty of Education of a local university. This would not only offer support for all PAC members (including in areas of curriculum/program development, instructional techniques, learning assessment, and curriculum/program evaluation), but also ensure a fresh perspective that would add richness and depth to the process, thereby serving to strengthen the outcomes facilitated by this change.

The second outside member of the PAC would be a faculty member from another polytechnic, ideally from an HRM program. The aim would be to not only ensure alignment with polytechnic principles of education, but also to enhance collaboration with these institution-type partners. Adding PAC members from other institutions is unprecedented at this organization. This tactic would pave the way for other programs to follow, institute-wide. It begs further mention that including these faculty members may strengthen program alignment, inter-institutionally, which would enhance program transferability between program providers. Such partnerships are not only consistent with the goals of the institution, but are also indicative of the kind of inter-institutional program level consistency encouraged by the provincial government.

A third solution is to critically examine the PAC process. Today, all credit programs, institute-wide, are mandated to utilize a PAC. PAC membership broadly represents industry, government, and non-government stakeholders. As a committee, the PAC is responsible to provide input and advice on HRM programming, which includes regular review of curriculum objectives, instructional content, and learning outcomes. The PAC is expected to identify trends and changes within industry and legislation that may impact the knowledge and skills which an HRM practitioner must possess. The PAC is also supposed to identify marketplace trends.

Process-wise, the PAC is asked to convene once per annum, and more often, if needed. Operationally, the PAC can identify the creation of sub-committees that may undertake specific assignments (such as reviewing the curriculum within a specific course) and report back to the committee. Committee members must be available to regularly participate in PAC activities. In particular, they are to offer guidance on desired outcomes to be achieved by the HRM program, though they are not asked to provide input into the way teaching and testing is done.

In all of these ways, it is instructive to note that the configuration and operation of the PAC is at the behest of the program chair, in consultation with the PAC chair, who is an industry stakeholder. And, while terms of reference exist to guide PAC procedures (see Appendix B), adherence to these guidelines are at the discretion of the program chair and PAC chair. Where the goal of the PAC is to ensure the School has a relevant and responsive HRM degree program, the potential for inconsistent and incomplete commitment to process diminishes the ability of the PAC to work toward achieving a strengthened HRM degree program, according to industry requirements.

Moving forward, the PAC could receive formal training on process and adhere strictly to PAC terms of reference. By strengthening PAC commitment to process consistency and according to identified guidelines, the PAC will be better able to ensure a competency-based curricula that is consistent with industry needs.

Beyond an intellectual awareness of the goals of the HRM degree program or committee members' roles and responsibilities, PAC effectiveness and program success will necessitate a commitment, on the part of PAC members. Moving forward in this manner would not only pave the way for near and long-term program success, but would also establish a standard for other programs (and PACs) to follow.

A <u>final solution</u> involves the critical examination of all curriculum offered within the HRM degree program on a course-by-course basis (using industry-required knowledge and skills as a baseline). Of note, while regular program review is something required by CAQC every four years, there has yet to be a review that specifically assesses alignment between HRM degree program curricula and industry-required knowledge and skills. This approach would be PAC-driven, could be seamlessly undertaken, and would serve to ensure the knowledge and skill relevance of the HRM degree program meets with industry requirements.

Resource Requirements

Maintaining the status quo requires no added resources. It is noteworthy that where program demand continues to grow and enrollment levels within each course are increasing for 2017-18, there is a recognized need to hire additional faculty resources (to maintain existing service levels). However, these possible outcomes do not hinge upon a review of the program. Conversely, the goal for status quo is to ensure that each course has a qualified instructor at the front of the room (ready to teach incoming students). Adding to the faculty complement will require an increase in financial resources.

Accomplishment of the second solution would require collaboration between myself and the HRM program chair (to critically determine the skillsets that we would like to see represented on the HRM program PAC). Snell, Morris, and Bohlander (2015) postulate that strategic utilization of a firm’s human resources begins with a process of job analysis and design. This exercise involves the identification of job-specific technical and behavioral competencies. Likewise, PAC success will require not just a technical awareness of HRM trends and practices, but also a commitment to engaging with fellow PAC members thoughtfully, critically, and collaboratively.

Dessler, Sutherland, and Cole (2005) identify that when making candidate selection decisions, it is important to develop questions around each competency area and score a candidate's responses to each question. This process allows interviewers to fairly and defensibly identify and select the most suitable candidate for a position. Using this approach, I would work with the HRM program chair to similarly meet with each existing and prospective PAC member to determine his/her suitability for service on the PAC. As department head, it is within my purview to ensure measures are taken which support the strengthening of those programs within my portfolio.

With the right personnel identified for the PAC, I would then, in conjunction with the HRM program chair, facilitate an orientation process for all PAC members. In so doing, the goal is twofold. First, it is important that every PAC member hear a consistent message, including with respect to purpose, program, and process. Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, and Wright (2006) observe that the orientation process serves to inform and socialize new recruits. More importantly, the orientation process is an enculturation tool used to help new stakeholders identify with (and commit to) the organization, including its mission and vision.

Facilitating an orientation process for PAC members would require the use of a boardroom or classroom that is equipped with a computer and whiteboard technology. I would conduct this session. Orientation packages would also be required. Each of these requirements would be supplied by the institution, and would take place during my regular work day, which would minimize cost.

Advancement of the third and fourth proposed solutions require time above all else. Because the HR program relies upon non-academic (industry) partners to provide input, there can be a disconnect between the faculty members and industry partners. For example, while the organization seeks to build each course around summative learning outcomes, such terminology is foreign to industry stakeholders. Instead, industry partners promote the development of knowledge areas and skillsets. These applied knowledge and skill areas must also retain a substantive degree of rigor and depth befitting an undergraduate parchment.

In this respect, while it is important for the institute's industry partners to recognize certain elements that are essential to the success of programs, it is equally vital that faculty and leadership teams not become so entrenched in their own views that they fail to acknowledge the interests (or fail to meet the demands) of their industry partners.

Time, information, and money represent the greatest resources needed to advance this change management effort. Funds have been budgeted for a curriculum review, and time will be available during the spring months when faculty are not teaching courses. Information is required for orientation, course syllabi availability, and government legislation. This will be made available as documents for the PAC committee.

Evaluation of Alternatives

In assessing the possibilities, doing nothing is not feasible. The situation is simply too competitive for the HR degree program to rest on its laurels. Doing nothing will limit growth, and eventually lead to a reduction in overall program demand. Solution two and three, by themselves, are a partial response to a larger issue. Once more, program knowledge and skill relevance is the chief issue. Solutions two and three do not go far enough alone to ensure program relevance. However, each one relates to solution four and is a crucial pre-cursor in support of the proposed solution. Solution four has already received support at the highest levels of School leadership. Steps have been taken to commence this program/curricula review with resources now dedicated in support of that outcome.

Leadership Approaches to Change

Appreciative leadership was introduced earlier in this chapter as a model for leading the change process. Whitney et al. (2010) note that the process of appreciative leadership begins by a willingness, on the part of a leader, to dialogically engage with stakeholders, pursuant of the collaborative creation of an elevated future state—one which strengthens people and organization alike. Underpinned by genuine concern for others, appreciative leadership is defined as "the relational capacity to mobilize creative potential and turn it into positive power—to set in motion positive ripples of confidence, energy, enthusiasm, and performance—to make a positive difference" (p. 3).

Bushe (2011) admits that "appreciative inquiry, when skillfully done with proper sponsorship and resources is a potent planned, transformational change process" (p. 19). Inasmuch as the values of this framework are implicitly and explicitly consistent with those of the organization, and where appreciative leadership is considered a companion leadership model to the AI change process (Whitney et al., 2010), the approach is well-suited to this OIP and context.

Five strategic principles underlie appreciative leadership (Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4. Appreciative Leadership Model
Adapted from "*Appreciative Leadership: Focus on What Works to Drive Winning Performance and Build a Thriving Organization*" by Diana Whitney, Amanda Trosten-Bloom, and Kae Rader (2010). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Inquiry. This step involves asking significant questions—queries which engage stakeholders by critically exploring assumptions, and inviting different perspectives about program / course content and relevancy.

Inclusion. This requires leaders to solicit the viewpoints of all participants—those more vocal ones and those more reticent. PAC membership needs to be reviewed to ensure adequate industry level representation.

Illumination. Once industry knowledge and skill areas have been identified, the purpose is to determine where, and in what ways, these are being accomplished within the program. In this way, program strengthening (as opposed to program "fixing") becomes the goal, which is the objective of this proposal.

Inspiration. The goal is to develop a shared understanding or vision of what could be, and to act upon it. The central question is: What does a 21st century HR degree program look like? These discussions and decisions will directly impact students, practitioners, and industry stakeholders for the present and into the future.

Integrity. Once agreement has been reached (about which knowledge and skill areas should be included within each course), program / curricular (re)development begins. Faculty stakeholders must work together to implement recommendations of the PAC.

Overall, the appreciative leadership model is one of facilitating planned change. For this program review, it represents an ideal, meaningful tool and technique to lead the HR degree program review.

Conclusion

Chapter two recommends appreciative inquiry as the framework for bringing together disparate yet committed stakeholders to address HR programming needs and interests. Transformational leadership will guide the planning and development of this change process. In Chapter three the implementation, evaluation, and communication of this OIP are discussed.

Chapter 3: Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication

Building upon contextual awareness and understanding presented in Chapter 1, and the theoretical framework in Chapter 2, this chapter outlines the implementation, evaluation, and communication of this initiative. Factors related to the ethics of change are discussed. The chapter concludes with next steps and future considerations.

Change Implementation Plan

Strategy for Change

This organization's commitment is to produce graduates who possess employability competencies consistent with the institutional mission. This educational commitment supports the vision of becoming Canada's most relevant PSI and a global leader in polytechnic education.

As discussed, no program-specific data exists to document the programming relevance of the Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Human Resources. The goal of this OIP is to conduct a systematic review of a relatively new degree program using the institutional program advisory committee process. When completed, both the process and the revised curriculum will serve as models for similar program reviews in all other areas. Successful implementation will also pave the way for School leaders to market and recruit more students into degree programs, ultimately providing educated graduates to the marketplace.

Strategic Organizational Chart

The current organizational chart is presented in Chapter 1. Revised reporting relationships and the creation of new positions enable school leaders to respond more completely to existing program needs than previously. The current organizational structure is a response to a recognized need (for practice-readying curricula). While the structure supports current program needs, the new organizational structure must address current and future program needs.

Moving forward, I propose the creation of two additional positons that are consistent with the existing organizational structure. The first of these would be known as chair, Bachelor of Business Administration programs. Currently, program-specific chairs (e.g., in the School of Business programs) oversee curriculum at their respective diploma level (with support from PACs), while the curriculum at the degree level for all program areas/courses is overseen collaboratively by all chairs in concert with a centralized faculty curriculum committee and PACs. This proposed chair role would be an operational one, with the incumbent working collaboratively with, and as a central point of contact for, existing chairs. In addition, he or she would serve as the leading point of contact for the dean and associate deans relating to all Bachelor of Business Administration programming. Inasmuch as the School is poised to increase degree program enrollment, and where program chairs now exist for each program area, the addition of this position could provide a single point of contact for the provincial academic quality council which regulates all provincial curricula and programs.

Supporting this role, and reporting to it, would a curriculum coordinator. This position would be a line level, tactical role, with the incumbent providing day-to-day support to all Bachelor of Business Administration programs (similar to academic administrators). The incumbent would be a current faculty member who would work directly with existing chairs, course committee teams, and the Bachelor of Business Administration chair to ensure consistent day-to-day administration of curriculum matters across all Bachelor of Business Administration programs. Currently, a faculty curriculum committee exists for the School of Business, and course release time is given for members. Under this model, instructional resources are stretched thin. Further, there is an acknowledged need to critically examine the current process of curriculum management. Likewise, there is recognition of a need for more resource support in this area. With a dedicated position, pressure would be relieved from a number of existing faculty members. The creation of these two positions would facilitate implementation of this degree review by providing support to leaders and the PAC members responsible for this initiative.

Finally, I propose that chairs report directly to department heads, thereby ensuring greater collaboration (between chairs and department heads) and enhanced program consistency (within each department). This change would also enable department heads to strengthen the degree of strategic leadership they provide within program areas for which they are presently accountable.

Transition Management Plan

Stakeholder Reactions. Government, students (including current and future), faculty, and PAC members represent key groups affected by and involved with this planned change. As the organization's primary funder, government is chiefly concerned with outcomes, and is less focused on internal processes of a program review nature. As a publicly funded post-secondary, the institute is permitted to conduct operations at arm's length, but the government does require an accounting of the extent to which required outcomes are achieved.

Students. At an outcomes level, students, like government, want to know that the program is preparing them to become career-ready practitioners. In this respect, undertaking the proposed curriculum review will accomplish this group's need to know that their education is providing them with the knowledge and skills for meaningful employment. As well, stakeholders involved in program review will become (better) acquainted with the program, courses, curricula, as well as with the types of students. Employment information and opportunities for students are thus enhanced by this review.

Faculty. Faculty members represent the third major stakeholder group impacted by this change. Involvement by some for this program review will be sought as a service commitment. In this way, the organization is able to track where service contributions are coming from, and to what extent that commitment is being offered. Because program review will be a major initiative, it is expected that faculty who express an interest in serving will receive course-release time. This is consistent with current practice for faculty involvement in related activities. In this way, a concern for operational needs, and also fairness of process, is jointly established.

PAC. The fourth impacted group would be members of the Program Advisory Committee (PAC). The main concerns I anticipate from these stakeholders include the time requirement and faculty level support for this venture. Because the majority of PAC members are working in full-time industry roles, they need assurance that the time requirement would not be too burdensome. Accordingly, I will present them with a project plan, detailing meeting dates and times, and provide letters of involvement to their employers.

Selected Personnel. Langton et al. (2016) observe that conventional notions of organizational culture include considerations of shared commitment, common identity, mutual meaning, and intra-organizational uniformity. Nevertheless, the authors contend that perceived heterogeneity across organizations is, in fact, more common, and that this gives rise to powerful subcultures. This can fracture shared commitment within the organization.

By creating the earlier-noted role of chair—Bachelor of Business Administration programs, and empowering that person to manage this effort, I believe that such an approach will foster commitment, consistency of process, and heightened engagement to ensure a much more complete process en route to a strengthened outcome. With the Bachelor of Business Administration chair reporting to me, this will ensure I provide strategic leadership to this initiative. This arrangement would further ensure I am actively engaged within this project, and all subsequent program reviews within each of the other program areas for which I am now accountable (which mandate I have already been issued). Other leaders who will support, facilitate, and embrace this change for stakeholders and the institution include administrators (e.g., program chairs, deans, associate deans, and department heads) and selected faculty. At present, there are no professional committees within the institution to involve (and none will be created for this purpose).

Additional Supports and Resources. Time represents a major and necessary resource to advance this initiative. This may include adjustments to faculty teaching loads, as noted. This program review process is a large-scale effort, involving many steps and personnel. Finding and making time requires a significant commitment.

Financially, there is a cost associated with moving this change plan forward. In particular, faculty release time costs (for added instructional coverage, if necessary) would not be factor in the advancement of this initiative. For this program review, it is only the two faculty members serving on the PAC committee. However, by utilizing faculty during regular work time only, this cost would be absorbed as part of their current salaries. Also, lunch and/or snacks would be provided each time this group meets, and/or snacks appropriate to the time of day.

Utilizing the institute's food services department will minimize this cost. Containing project costs will strengthen associate dean level support, in particular, as associate deans oversee School-wide budgets. As the associate deans increasingly see this program review strengthening the alignment of HR degree courses to industry requirements (with minimal expenditure), one would anticipate the process paving the way for similar reviews within every program, School-wide.

Technical and other human support will be provided by internal resources, as part of normal duties. It is not anticipated that this represents an undue burden to service personnel. Organizational and administrative costs will be subsumed by me as part of leadership responsibilities for such initiatives. Any informational sharing for stakeholder groups will be via the institution's digital media, local area network emails, and postal services (as appropriate).

Potential Implementation Issues. The first implementation issue that may arise is lack of understanding from the provost's office. While PACs are a normal, regular part of the organization, this is a revised approach to an established process. The provost will want to understand how it differs from the current procedure of program review. In addition, he will want assurance that this method of program review will strengthen the HR degree program, while supporting the mission and vision of the institute.

To address the potential concern, I would suggest two things. First, where the dean already supports this effort, and has been very successful at maintaining the support of the provost, I will ensure she is kept continually abreast of progress and details, so that she can champion this effort at the executive level. As the dean becomes increasingly committed to this process, I believe she will not only become more familiar with the review process, but will also begin to feel more personal ownership toward it. This will further cement the support she has already expressed for the initiative, which will be critical to its overall success.

A second challenge may be with respect to required time to completion. A detailed timeline will be developed prior to the beginning of this program review. All involved will be aware of the importance of keeping to schedule. The dean will want to see progress being made within a reasonable timeframe. This is where the communication of milestones is essential; accomplishment of these milestones will be reported to (and celebrated with) key stakeholders along the way.

A final challenge to implementation will be the logistics of finding a time when most of the PAC members can participate—faculty due to teaching schedules; industry due to work; government due to work. Project success will require ongoing commitment from PAC members. In selecting PAC members, I will ensure that participants are informed upfront of the importance of this HR degree program review. Each prospective PAC member will need to confirm availability for meetings (and an ability to meet project timelines). Communication will be sent out well in advance of PAC meeting/project deadline dates. As part of the selection process, I will confirm that each PAC member has the support of his/her organization, which will further alleviate logistical concerns.

Program Review Goals. Covey (1989) reminds leaders of the importance of approaching activities with an eye firmly upon the end goal. Based on Covey's admonition that the end goal is the most important focus in any endeavor, this project goal is: *Using a program advisory committee (PAC), conduct a curriculum/program review of the Bachelor of Business Administration, Human Resources Management degree program to determine if it is relevant to* *industry-required knowledge and skills.* Upon completion, data will be collected and a detailed report will be provided to organizational leaders outlining the extent to which the degree program is providing learners with these necessary competencies. The strategic plan for accomplishing this goal is the focus of the remainder of this chapter.

A long term goal, based on PAC review, is to undertake any required program/curriculum changes as identified during the review. These changes may be minor adjustments to courses, or significant ones (such as new courses, and/or major changes to existing courses).

Limitations. Leadership bias represents the first major potential limitation of this effort. As department head of the HR program, and a former instructor in the program, my personal familiarity with (and proximity to) the program may limit my perspective. Being embedded within the program may limit my ability to examine program curricula in complete and objective ways. The inclusion of PAC members will serve as a check against any personal bias. Drawing upon expertise and perspectives of PAC members will help to ensure course analyses are objectively critiqued and that all materials and activities are carefully scrutinized for trustworthiness.

A second limitation is the narrowness of this program review. As one program, Human Resources Management represents the smallest stream within the School of Business, both in terms of student enrollment and faculty complement. Given that it is growing and expected to continue growth, ensuring the curricula is current at this stage is critical for program development. In conducting this review, while the program specific-curricula may differ from other programs, the review process may be duplicated for other programs. This would strengthen the impact of the review and strengthen stakeholder commitment for this initiative.

A third limitation is the timing. While this proposal is coming forward at a single moment in time, information about market needs may be short-lived. However, it is understood that all PAC reviews reflect a single moment in time. Consequently, this would not diminish organizational support for this project.

A final constraint may be finding adequate numbers of academically credentialed Human Resources Management practitioners for PAC membership. Every effort will be made to balance the PAC with doctoral and master-educated members, as well as Human Resources Management practitioners at all levels of employment (e.g., senior managers, mid-career personnel, and recent graduates/new employees). Each has a contribution to offer about discipline and field-specific curricula competencies.

Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation

This organizational change process (of Human Resources Management degree program review) will be undertaken using the Plan-Do-Study Act (PDSA) model. Initially developed by Deming (1951) as the PDCA model (Plan, Do, Check, Act), and based on scientific method principles, it is a quality control tool used to support the enactment of positive change within organizations. As seen in Figure 3.1, the 4 stages represent tasks related to phases of a project—from beginning to end—and are briefly explained.

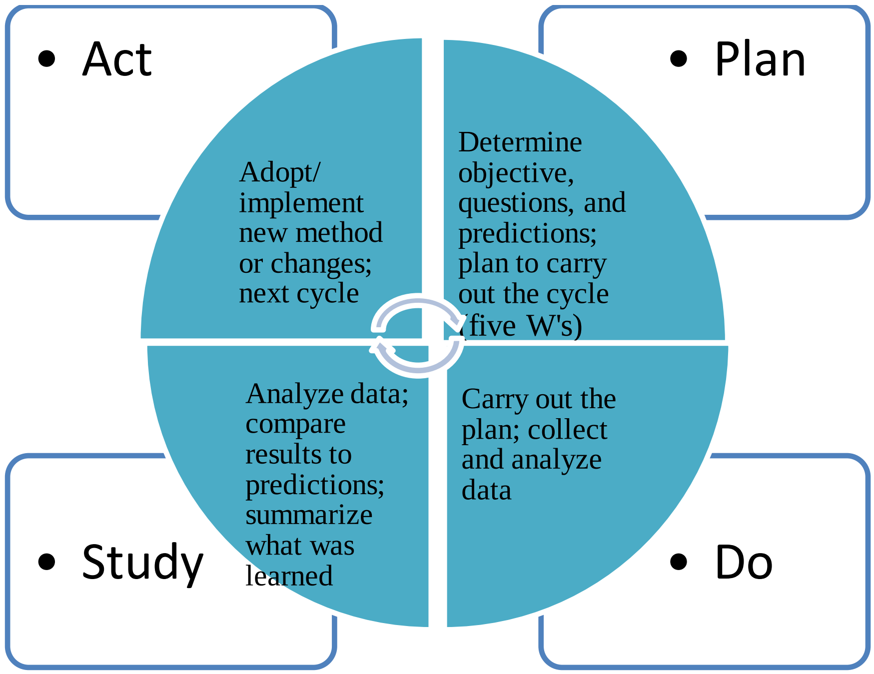

Figure 3.1. PDSA Model for Improvement
Adapted from "*PDSA Cycle*" by The W. Edwards Deming Institute (2016). Retrieved from https://deming.org/management-system/pdsacycle

Plan. The objectives of this program review are to answer: "How well does the Human Resources Management baccalaureate degree program prepare students with industry-required knowledge and skills?" Specific questions for the review will focus on two levels at this Planning Stage:

1. Overall, does the Human Resources Management degree program meet industry requirements in providing graduates with the knowledge and skills required for professional practice? and

2. Does each course address specific competencies required by students of a baccalaureate business degree program majoring in Human Resources?

The PAC will be charged with answering these questions in a specific "program review" planning process (a typical agenda of a PAC meeting is included in Appendix C).

Do. The "do" stage of this model involves the actual implementation of the program review using the identified/constituted program advisory committee (PAC). The agenda includes specific activities to undertake to answer the two questions noted in the Plan stage. For example, activities may include small groups working on a critical analysis of each course by matching the course syllabus against identified criteria of relevance for industry. Alternatively, it may involve the committee meeting with the coordinator of each course.

The program review will follow the traditional DACUM approached used by educational institutions. Developing a Curriculum was developed in the 1960s by faculty at Holland College in Prince Edward Island. Norton (1985) outlines the philosophy of the framework: "Expert workers can describe and define their job/occupation more accurately than anyone else" (p. 9). Although DACUM is generally used in the identification of content for new courses/programs, it can also serve to examine existing ones for currency/relevancy. While faculty are subject matter experts, industry employees are experts of practice, so their input is valuable. Any new competencies will be matched to existing courses or suggested as new ones.

Study and Act. I will seek to demonstrate what has been learned from this process of curriculum review through a pre-/post- approach. First, PAC members will be invited to identify the degree to which they believe the Human Resources Management baccalaureate degree program is preparing learners with industry-required knowledge and skills. Results of this "pre-activity" will be measured by comparing these responses to the results from the complete curriculum review. In other words, the group should openly discuss all activities from the Review Process that answer the 2 questions (general program and specific course relevancy).

Recommendations will be drafted for sharing with key leaders.

Next, offering a report of findings and recommendations will be presented to the dean's office for approval and/or action. Currently, this institution believes it is meetings the demands of industry by preparing learners with workplace-readying knowledge and skills in HR. If it did not, it would not promote existing curriculum/programs. Being able to present the dean with a tangible document which specifically identifies the extent to which current curriculum aligns with industry requirements will be key in gaining support for this initiative. This same process (of reporting findings/recommendations) will be followed when addressing the School curriculum committee. Normally, the curriculum committee would be approached before the dean. Because the dean already supports this effort, and in view of the priority to demonstrate industry-aligned programming, she will be informed ahead of the curriculum committee. This allows the curriculum committee to consider implantation of recommendations.

Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change

Ethical Considerations and Challenges

In identifying ethical considerations and challenges, it is important to consider the context of the institution. A central value of this organization is success through people. Leaders are encouraged to engage with direct reports in a fashion that jointly serves employee and organizational interests alike. Decisions are made in keeping with institutional values.

Conceptually, ethics considers questions of morality, beliefs, assumptions, and values. (McLachlan, 2009), and their impact on behavior. The author identifies two ethical lenses: deontology and teleology. The former emphasizes a commitment to act on duty and principles, regardless of the outcome. A teleological view stresses action which supports desired end goals.

Burns (1978) suggests that moral leaders engage followers in ways which raise the commitment of both leader and followers. This is driven by a commitment to core values, and leads to strengthened outcomes. Northouse (2013) offers five commitments of ethical leaders.

- Respects Others. Beauchamp and Bowie (1988) reflect that "persons must be treated as having their own autonomously established goals and must never be treated purely as the means to another's goal" (p. 37). Throughout this change process, it is imperative that industry stakeholders, in particular, do not feel like a means to program improvement alone. The interests and views of these partners must be considered throughout the process. Faculty must listen to PAC members' views and not allow personal commitment to longstanding (familiar) curricula cloud this willingness to engage respectfully.
- Serves Others. Northouse (2013) notes that "attending to others is the primary building block of moral leadership" (p. 432). Senge (1990) postulates that the leader is a servant of the organization (and its constituents) and must put vision achievement and stakeholder support before individual interests. This program review cannot be self-serving for any one person. Rather, it must be anchored in the organization's mission and vision (and not be seen as a reflection of the leader-centric interests). Though I have been given a mandate to lead this effort, this cannot be done in a self-serving way. Support of the institutional vision and PAC member contribution must remain at the forefront.
- Shows Justice. Northouse (2013) reflects that "ethical leaders are concerned about issues of fairness and justice" (p. 433), and, this commitment drives decision making. Langton et al. (2016) posit that leaders must exercise impartiality and ensure equal consideration for all stakeholders and viewpoints. I believe that all are invested in the success of this endeavor.

This review matters because all the stakeholders it affects matter. I will demonstrate full commitment to the views of all PAC members. This will strengthen the process, build good will, and heighten the quality of project outcomes.

- Manifests Honesty. This program review requires honest feedback from PAC members. Langton et al. (2016) explain that the purpose of feedback is to influence future behavior. A commitment to honesty and integrity is central to the values framework of this organization. It will be important for (PAC) industry partners to be forthcoming about what curricula is working (or not needed), what elements need to be added, which aspects should be removed, and which ones could be greater or lesser emphasized. These exchanges must be candid.
- Builds Community. Northouse (2013) reflects that this shared commitment toward a common goal is central to community building among stakeholders. Advancement of this curricula review requires common commitment to end goal. At the first meeting, I will lead a discussion on the purpose and significance of this program assessment. In reviewing each course (and discussing next steps), I will periodically invite PAC members to consider how a particular recommendation/approach will move us closer toward realization of our shared goal (of industry-aligned curricula). Keeping this superordinate goal central in discussion will strengthen shared commitment toward a common purpose.

Change Process Communications Plan

Objectives and Milestones

McNay (2009) identifies six criteria for measuring undergraduate degree program curricula: “depth and breadth of understanding; knowledge of methodologies; application of knowledge; communication skills; awareness of limits of knowledge, (and); autonomy and professional capacity" (p. 2). As a polytechnic, this organization is committed to an outcomes-based approach to education. Curricula emphasize real-world application and skill development. Key objectives and activities for the program review communication plan will reflect this commitment (see Table 1) and be communicated in the form of goals using the Specific-Measurable-Attainable-Relevant-Timely (*S.M.A.R.T.*) criteria. Program curricula will be measured against core competencies. Any revisions to curricula will be in alignment with required knowledge and skills and achieved with support from PAC and faculty members.

Table 1
Proposed Program Review and Communication Plan

Task	Timeframe	Person(s) Responsible	Communication Mode/channel
• Meet with Dean and Associate Deans to discuss HRM degree program review process/requirements	September, 2017	Department Head	In-person
• Advertise for BBA chair (using existing chair role advertisement template)	September, 2017	School of Business HR consultant	Electronic
• Interview/hire for BBA chair position	September, 2017	Associate Deans; Department Head; Chairs; selected faculty	In-person
• Identify curriculum to be reviewed (all degree level HRM courses; no diploma level HRM courses will be reviewed)	September, 2017	Department Head	Electronic
• Identify required qualifications for PAC members	September, 2017	Department Head; BBA Chair	In-person
• Identify current PAC member qualifications and industry/organizational representativeness	September, 2017	Department Head; BBA Chair	In-person
• Advise existing PAC members of intent to complete HRM degree program review; gauge interest of suitable existing members; release unsuitable/uninterested PAC members	September, 2017	Department Head	In-person; telephone
• Recruit for HRM degree program PAC members	October, 2017	HRM program assistant	Electronic

• Complete PAC member interviews; advise successful/unsuccessful candidates	October, 2017	Department Head; BBA Chair; Dean	In-person
• Announce initial PAC meeting/supply agenda (agenda will include a course outline for each HRM degree)	October, 2017	HRM program assistant	Electronic
• Hold initial PAC meeting, outlining purpose/process of program review • Identify general knowledge and skill competencies required for practice of HRM • Provide a list to PAC members of each course to reviewed (including date and time)	November, 2017	PAC members; Dean	In-person
• Hold second PAC meeting • Day 1: Identify knowledge and skills requirements for professional practice within the areas of: Employment Law; Compensation Management; Performance Management; Occupational Health and Safety; • Day 2: Identify knowledge and skill requirements for professional practice within areas of: Training and Development; Negotiation and Conflict Resolution;	December, 2017 (2 day meeting)	PAC members	In-person; electronic communication

<u>Arbitration and Mediation</u>			
• In-depth review of first two courses against PAC-determined knowledge and skill requirements: • What required knowledge and/or skill competencies are optimally manifest within the curricula? • What required knowledge and/or skill competencies should be emphasized in greater depth within the curricula? • What required knowledge and/or skill competencies should be added to the curricula? • What knowledge and/or skill competencies are evident within the curricula, but are not required for practice? • Recommended next steps? ○ Employment Law; ○ Compensation Management	January, 2018 (each course review will be undertaken individually using a 2 day meeting format per course)	PAC members;	In-person;
• Review remaining 3rd year courses: ○ Performance Management; ○ Occupational Health and Safety	February, 2018 (same format as January)	PAC members	In-person
• Review 4th year courses:	March, 2018 (three separate course reviews	PAC members	In-person

○ Training and Development; ○ Negotiation and Conflict Resolution; ○ Arbitration and Mediation	using same format as January and February)		
• Prepare a summary of findings	March, 2018	Department head to email summary of findings to PAC members	Email
• Discuss findings	April, 2018	PAC members	In-person
• Identify recommendations	April, 2018	PAC	In-person
• Prepare report of findings and recommendations	April, 2018	Department Head	Electronic
• Communicate findings and recommendations to Dean's office	April, 2018	Department Head	In-person
• Communicate findings and recommendations to School curriculum committee	April, 2018	Department Head; BBA Chair	In-person
• Communicate findings and recommendations to faculty and staff	April, 2018	Department Head; BBA Chair	In-person
• Revise curriculum for all BBA (in HRM) courses, in alignment with industry-required knowledge and skills	May – August, 2018	Faculty (with support from BBA Chair)	In-person
• Begin delivery of revised curriculum to all HRM degree students	September, 2018	Faculty	In-person; online delivery

*BBA = Bachelor of Business Administration

*HRM = Human Resources Management

Applying this change process communication plan will ensure a high level of ongoing stakeholder engagement and completion of this project. Once finalized, this OIP will result in a strengthened HRM degree program that demonstrates alignment with industry-required knowledge and skills. This outcome will enhance the confidence of key stakeholders and further support accomplishment of the organization's mission and vision.

Conclusion

This chapter has identified how the organization can advance a solution to address a practice problem which will effectuate progressive organizational improvement. By creating an organizational structure that addresses short-term, intermediate, and long-range goals, the terminal objective of a relevant, career-oriented HR degree program will be realized. This plan must involve organizational stakeholders at every stage, and reflect the values and goals of the institution and its constituents. The proposal may need to be periodically adjusted in response to stakeholder, institutional, or industry requirements, but proceeding with implementation the organization will be able to demonstrate how well the human resources baccalaureate degree program is preparing learners with industry-required knowledge and skills.

Conclusion: Next Steps and Future Considerations

This organizational change leadership initiative focuses on the human resources degree program of a business school at a Canadian polytechnic. Specifically, the problem of practice is: **How well does the Human Resources Management baccalaureate degree program prepare students with industry-required knowledge and skills?** As this organization seeks to become the most relevant and responsive PSI in Canada and among the world's leading polytechnics, it is imperative to critically examine program curricula for relevance and responsiveness to industry requirements. This program review allows the organization to demonstrate alignment between the HRM degree program curricula and industry knowledge and skill requirements. This directly supports the PSI's mission and vision. Graduates will be assured they are ready for meaningful employment, employers will be assured they are receiving the best graduates, and the institution will continue its reputation as a leader in polytechnic education— rigor, relevance, responsiveness, relationships, results.

The next steps are to initiate and undertake this leadership initiative.

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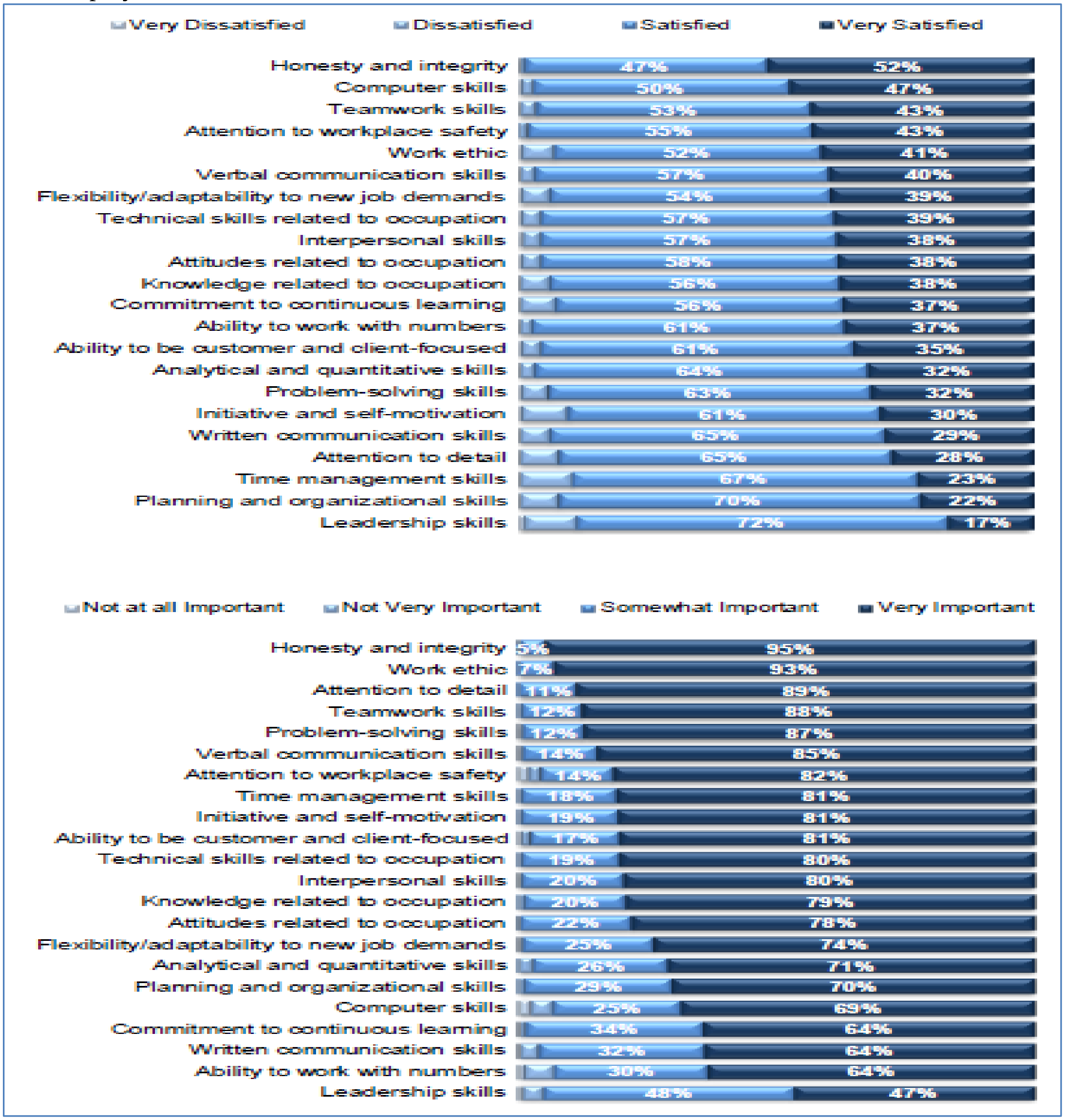
Appendices

Appendix A

Employer Satisfaction Levels and Most Valued Skills

A1. Employer Satisfaction Levels with New Graduates



A2. Skills Reported as Most Valued by Employer

Appendix B

Program Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

(Institutional policy document)

Purpose

- (The organization) is committed to providing well-qualified graduates to meet the current and emerging needs of the (provincial) economy under four pillars: business; health; trades; and science, technology and the environment. To meet these commitments, there is an ongoing need for input and advice from industry and other external stakeholders to help guide (institutional) programming and applied research priorities. Program Advisory Committees fulfill this role.

Responsibilities of the Program Advisory Committee (PAC)

- The PAC provides input and advice on programming and applied research priorities. This may include, but is not limited to:
- Regular reviewing of program-level learning outcomes, related facilities and equipment with a view to ensure outcomes meet the needs of industry and other external stakeholders.
- Reporting of trends and changes to inform existing program, the development of new program areas and potential applied research directions.
- Insights into the future graduate needs of (the province).
- Reviewing the composition relevance of the committee and the scope of recruitment for new members.
- The PAC is advisory in nature and will inform decision-making, but does not make decisions on behalf of (the institute).
- The PAC members are advocates and ambassadors for the program.
- The PAC meets at least once per year, but may meet more often if desired.
- PAC sub-committees may be struck as needed to undertake specific activities and provide information back to the committee.

Committee Membership

- External Representation

- Program Advisory Committees represent business, industry, government, non-government organizations (NGO), and other educational programs that are served by the program and/or applied research. If appropriate, a current student(s) and recent grad(s) can be part of the committee membership. PACs are optimally comprised of 12-14 external members, but may be larger as required.

Chairperson

- The Program Advisory Committee Chairperson is selected from among the committee membership of current external representatives.
- The Chairperson should have served at least one year on the committee prior to being selected.
- Associate Chairperson

- The Program Advisory Committee Associate Chairperson is selected from among the committee membership of current external representatives. The Associate Chairperson supports the Chairperson and provides continuity for the committee as the next chair.

Term of Service

- Members serve a 3 (three) year term, but can be repeatedly reappointed by mutual agreement between the member and Program Leadership.
- The committee Chairperson serves a 2 (two) year term and may be reappointed for one additional 2 (two) year term.

Recruitment

- Potential committee members may be recruited through faculty, existing committee members, institute Advancement, Work Integrated Learning partners and other appropriate methods.
- Members may be organizations that then appoint a requisite individual from within the organization to contribute to the committee.

Selection

- Members are appointed by Program Leadership in consultation with the Dean.

Responsibilities of Committee Members

- Committee members need to be available and willing to regularly participate in the activities of the Committee.
- Committee members are responsible for providing input and advice to guide programming and relevant applied research opportunities.
- Committee members represent their industry and may not advocate for actions that would only benefit a particular organization, individual or other educational institution.

- Committee members provide guidance related to the desired outcomes to be achieved by programs and relevant applied research but do not provide input into specific teaching or research methods.
- Committee members are advocates and ambassadors for the institute, and are encouraged to provide a link to community engagement activities.

Responsibilities of the Committee Chairperson

- The Program Advisory Committee Chairperson works collaboratively with the Program Leadership and is accountable to the Dean. The Chairperson is responsible for leading the meeting and normally collaborates with Program Leadership to set the agenda. The PAC Chair and Program Leadership meet quarterly to ensure feedback and information is being shared.

Chairperson or Associate is responsible for ensuring:

- Meeting packages are coordinated with the Program Leadership and distributed to committee members by the Program on behalf of the Committee Chair in advance of the meeting.
- Agenda items are addressed during the meeting.
- Members share discussion time appropriately during the meeting.
- Committee input and advice does not present any conflict of interest.
- Committee input and guidance represents the industry and other stakeholders in the broadest sense.
- Meeting minutes are reviewed.
- Any concerns about the Program Advisory Committee are communicated to the Program Leadership or Dean.
- Responsibilities of the Program Leadership

- Program Leadership participate in Program Advisory Committees. Specific responsibilities include:
- Working with the Chairperson to arrange a meeting of the Program Advisory Committee at least annually.
- Collaborating with the committee Chairperson to set the agenda.
- Orienting each new PAC member to the advisory committee's roles and responsibilities as outlined in the orientation package.
- Orienting new members to the curriculum of the program.
- Share committee membership names and contact information with Institution to ensure membership lists are current.
- Providing administrative support for committee meetings.
- Ensuring meeting minutes are distributed to committee members and communicated to the Dean of the School.

- Ensuring any concerns about the Program Advisory Committee are communicated to the Chairperson and the Dean.

Communication

- Program Leadership will provide an administrative resource to support meeting preparations, minute taking and meeting follow up.
- Meeting packages will be sent out one week in advance of the meeting.
- Minutes will be distributed within 14 (fourteen) days following the meeting and posted to the appropriate shared folder

Appendix C

Sample Program Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting Agenda

Item	Agenda Items	Lead
1	Welcome Review Agenda and Minutes Introductions	PAC Chair; PAC Chair ALL
2	Present Program Objectives Outline purpose and process of BBA (HRM) degree program review	Department Head
3	Program Review Questions 1. Overall, does the HRM degree program meet industry requirements, in providing graduates with the knowledge and skills required for professional practice? 2. In what ways does the program align with industry-required knowledge and skills? 3. In what specific ways can this program more closely align curricula with market-driven competencies?	ALL
4	Individual Course Review Does each course address specific competencies required by students of a baccalaureate business degree program majoring in Human Resources? Current State Assessment (breakout sessions) Does each course address specific competencies required by a graduate of an undergraduate degree in Business Administration (HRM major)? a) What skill knowledge / requirements are manifest within a specific course? b) What knowledge and/or skill requirements need to be emphasized more completely within a specific course? c) What knowledge and/or skill requirements need to be added to a specific course? d) What knowledge and/or skill requirements need to be removed from a particular course?	ALL
5	Next Steps Closing Remarks	PAC Chair/BBA