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A Systems Approach to Increasing Awareness and Coordination of Student Retention and Completion at a Canadian College

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Abstract

As competition for students and scarce resources increases due to political and economic pressures, awareness and coordination of student retention and completion become a critical priority for post-secondary institutions. However, despite increased attention on Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) (Black, 2010; Gottheil & Smith, 2011; Hossler & Bontrager, 2015; Wilkinson et al., 2007) and the growth of retention-focused student services in recent years, retention rates remain unchanged (Habley, Bloom, & Robbins, 2012). Post-secondary students are in the midst of a significant transition period (Tinto, 1993) and face challenges related to mental health and wellness, relationships, rigors of academic life, and personal finances (Braxton, Hirschy, & McClendon, 2006; Tinto, 1993). Furthermore, complex institutional structures are increasingly difficult for students to navigate (Karp, 2011) and are not designed around the needs of Generation Z learners (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) describes a "whole-system" solution to the problem that sorts, connects, supports, and transforms students while also transforming the institution (Beatty-Guenter, 1994). This plan describes how the higher education registrar is uniquely positioned within the organization to lead change (Duklas, 2014; Waters & Hightower, 2016) and identifies a compatible systems approach to leadership (Coffey, 2010; Senge, Hamilton, & Kania, 2015) that may be employed. To accelerate and sustain change so that it becomes embedded within organizational culture (Kotter, 2014), key stakeholders representing multiple campus subsystems (Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007) are engaged throughout the process.

Keywords: retention, enrolment management, student success, change, higher education, leadership, dual operating system

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SBCC. I have appreciated my colleagues at “SBCC” who have only known me as a student. You offered support and patience since coming to the college. You are great people to work with, and I hope you will get to know a more relaxed version of me in the months to come.

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Glossary of Terms

Completion and Graduation - Interchangeable terms expressed as a percentage of learners who complete a credential within 150% of normal time (i.e., six years for four-year degrees and three years for two-year diplomas) (Habley et al., 2012).

Digital Eco-system - An interdependent group of actors (enterprises, people, things) sharing standardized digital platforms to achieve a mutually beneficial purpose (Gartner, 2017).

Generation Z – The current generation of learners, born after 1995, that are entering and enrolled in post-secondary education. This generation is made up of digital natives who have had their world completely shaped by immediate and constant access to the Internet. They are also the most mobile-device dependent generation yet, connecting with anyone from anywhere at any time (Seemiller & Grace, 2016).

Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) - The culminating project for students in their final year of the Doctor of Education Program (EdD) at Western University.

Persistence - A student's ability to continue post-secondary study from year to year until completion (Parkins & Baldwin, 2009).

Post-secondary Institution (PSI) - A tertiary educational institution (e.g., college or university).

Retention - A PSI's ability to keep students enrolled from one term of study to the next (Habley et al., 2012).

Silver Bay Community College (SBCC) - The anonymized PSI at the centre of this OIP.

Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) - SEM is both a systematic process and a continuum that extends throughout a student's lifecycle with a PSI. Functions include marketing, recruitment, admission, retention, graduation, and alumni engagement (Gottheil & Smith, 2011; Hossler & Bontrager, 2015; Skinkle, 2010; Wilkinson, Taylor, Peterson, & Machado-Taylor, 2007). SEM relies on strategic planning and tactical action, using data for decision-making and engaging the entire campus community to address the needs of students as learners and customers (Black, 2010, pp. 5-6).

Student Information System (SIS) – A SIS is a centralized database platform for hosting and managing all aspects of student enrolment. It allows students to complete tasks such as registering for classes, paying tuition/fees, accessing personal information, viewing financial aid, viewing final grades, and viewing/printing unofficial transcripts. It enables institutions to engage learners throughout the student experience from inquiry to graduation.

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Executive Summary

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) is a theory-informed plan that addresses a Problem of Practice (POP), specifically how to increase awareness and coordination of student retention and completion at Silver Bay Community College (SBCC) in Canada.

Chapter 1 begins by providing a brief history of the organization and general enrolment information. SBCC's vision, mission, and values are also presented before the college's organizational structure is outlined. As this OIP is written from the perspective of the Higher Education Registrar (Duklas, 2014; Waters & Hightower, 2016), the Office of the Registrar structure and key relationships are identified. An analysis of political, economic, social, and technological factors reveals why the problem is a worthwhile topic for this OIP, while a review of relevant data illustrates the current organizational state—providing a baseline from which improvement may be measured.

Despite increased attention on Strategic Enrolment Management (Black, 2010; Gottheil & Smith, 2011; Hossler & Bontrager, 2015; Wilkinson et al., 2007) and the rapid growth of retention-focused services within higher education, retention and completion rates have held steady (Habley et al., 2012). At SBCC, the problem is exacerbated as SEM has not consistently been advocated for. At the same time, a criticism of SEM is that it has largely been a structural paradigm that has failed to include the core functions of a PSI such as academic experience and financial processes (Wilkinson et al., 2007).

By applying a systems approach to leadership (Coffey, 2010; Senge et al., 2015) that is coupled with servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), this OIP proposes a retention model and approach to leading change that is not the task of one champion or a business unit, but rather is

inclusive of administrative-, student-, academic-, and market-oriented stakeholders and their perspectives (Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007).

In Chapter 2, the complexity of leading change is simplified by identifying two distinct aspects of change: *who* and *what*, and *how* and *why*. First, a retention model that categorizes key strategies (Beatty-Guenter, 1994) and embraces each subsystem identifies *who* and *what*. Second, to accelerate and sustain change so that it becomes embedded within organizational culture, an eight-stage process for leading change (Kotter, 2014) brings clarity to *how* and *why*. Together, the *who* and *what*, and *how* and *why* form the basis of an organizational framework for addressing the problem. Four realistic solutions, compatible with this framework, are proposed in Chapter 2 before one is ultimately put forward and unpacked.

Chapter 3 methodically outlines a Change Implementation Plan, including the overall objective, goals, strategies, participants, timelines, and costs. The systems-based solution suggests that SBCC will be able to increase the program completion rate of certificate programs to 90%, diploma programs to 85%, and degree programs to 80%, and therefore will decrease the amount of student-related revenue lost due to attrition by 50%. This OIP recognizes the importance of understanding and anticipating stakeholder reactions to change. Therefore, a Change Process Communications Plan is provided, taking care to identify and include perspectives from each subsystem. A Monitoring and Evaluation Plan demonstrates how to measure student engagement, satisfaction, and wellness, as well as institutional outcomes related to effectiveness, efficiency, and impact. Key performance indicators (KPIs) are used to determine the overall effectiveness and progress within each category. Pursuing a systems approach to increasing awareness and coordination of student retention will not only support cultural adoption, but will also build organizational capacity for future growth and change.

Chapter 1 – Introduction and Problem

Introduction

Chapter 1 of this Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) introduces the organization, its overall purpose and structure, and an embedded leadership Problem of Practice (POP). The chapter also provides broader context by including an analysis of external factors, relevant data, and history. I introduce a multi-dimensional approach inclusive of the perspectives, priorities, and change readiness of various campus stakeholders, and argue for a Systems Approach to Leadership that, when coupled with Servant Leadership, will have the best chance of supporting change. Within the chapter, I also describe how I, as Registrar and Director of Student Services, am in a unique position to lead and influence organizational change.

Organizational Context

The institution at the centre of this OIP is a post-secondary institution (PSI) founded as an agricultural college in Canada over 70 years ago. For the purposes of privacy protection, the school is referred to as Silver Bay Community College (SBCC) and the people whom this document describes remain anonymous. SBCC prides itself on delivering niche programs in four areas of specialization. The majority of programs are closely tied to the local geography, industries, and community needs, and thus are unique in Canada or have limited competition. Today, annual new student enrolment intakes are consistent though programs tied to specific industries fluctuate with market demand. Annually, the college serves close to 1350 full load equivalent students (FLEs) or 2200 unique students. Approximately 80% of students are from the same province as the college, 18% are from other parts of Canada, while 2% are international students. Current emphases include meeting the needs of a technologically advancing agriculture industry, raising funds for a major capital campaign, and growing enrolment to 2000 FLE within the next seven years.

Vision, Mission, Values

The vision of SBCC is to be the premier Canadian PSI and global educational leader within its four specializations. The institutional mission is to create an environment for learning, inquiry, partnership, and communication that supports students, employees, and communities in the service of society. Furthermore, the school values empowerment of learners, rural community development, teamwork, and continuous improvement (SBCC, n.d.).

Key Outcomes

While each of the preceding elements inform the school's identity, several outcomes including *centre of specialization, accessibility, responsiveness*, and *accountability and sustainability*, act as key strategic drivers (SBCC, 2016). The latter four correlate to this OIP's POP concerned with increasing awareness and coordination of student retention and completion.

Centre of specialization. SBCC is a leading centre specializing in agriculture, three other focal areas (anonymized), and applied research (SBCC, 2016). Specialization keeps the organization focused on core educational areas while encouraging input and guidance from relevant external industry advisory groups.

Accessibility. SBCC operates in conjunction with other PSIs and industry partners to strategically provide access to learning opportunities (SBCC, 2016). Partnerships include: (1) a secondary campus in a metropolitan community that also offers programming from three other PSIs; (2) a dual-credit program within the regional school division that allows high school students to concurrently enroll in post-secondary studies; and (3) a joint-venture with another

PSI that delivers adult programming to underserved communities. Increasing non-traditional access to learning makes it difficult to provide a consistent level of care to all learners as regular student support services are offered at the primary campus only.

Responsiveness. SBCC maintains an administrative structure that anticipates and responds quickly and effectively to external opportunities and demands as a result of changes in industry, governments, and technology (SBCC, 2016). Examples include: (1) being among the first colleges to launch an in-demand program to support a new and burgeoning industry; (2) adding online cohorts to popular campus-based programs; and (3) increasing the capacity of fully-subscribed programs. While the school has engaged externally (e.g., industry advisory groups to assess external market demands and trends for programs) to determine where new-market based enrolment growth may occur, internal engagement on student retention and completion has not been a priority.

Accountability and sustainability. SBCC is committed to achieving excellence in educational outcomes while remaining fiscally responsible. In addition, the college achieves sustainable operations based on multiple bottom line concepts (SBCC, 2016). From my observations, accountability, and sustainability have been tied to financial management (e.g., budget, year-end planning) rather than enrolment management. For example, the financial costs associated with poor retention performance that leads to attrition have not been analyzed.

Organizational Structure

As illustrated in Figure 1.1, SBCC has over 400 employees (approximately 300 management/staff and 100 faculty association members) grouped into three quasi-autonomous units each reporting to a Vice President. After 15 years with the same president, a change has recently occurred. The transition has been well received and the incumbent—an external candidate with close ties to the core industries SBCC serves—is committed to transparency, innovation, and inclusive decision-making.

This change has also brought some structural shifts as two of the three vice-president's portfolios have changed. First, Academic & Research is now Academic & Student Experience, while Student Services is now Corporate Services. As Registrar and Director of Student Services, I used to report to the Vice President, Student Services, however, I now report to the Vice President, Academic & Student Experience. For me, the change has not been dramatic as the former Vice President, Student Services now looks after the academic portfolio. Each of the other divisions also have a new leader in place. The impact of this change is important for this OIP because most of the aspects relating to the entire student experience that influence retention and completion (enrolment services, teaching and learning, and student support services) are coordinated in one unit rather than two or three (as depicted in Figure 1.1).

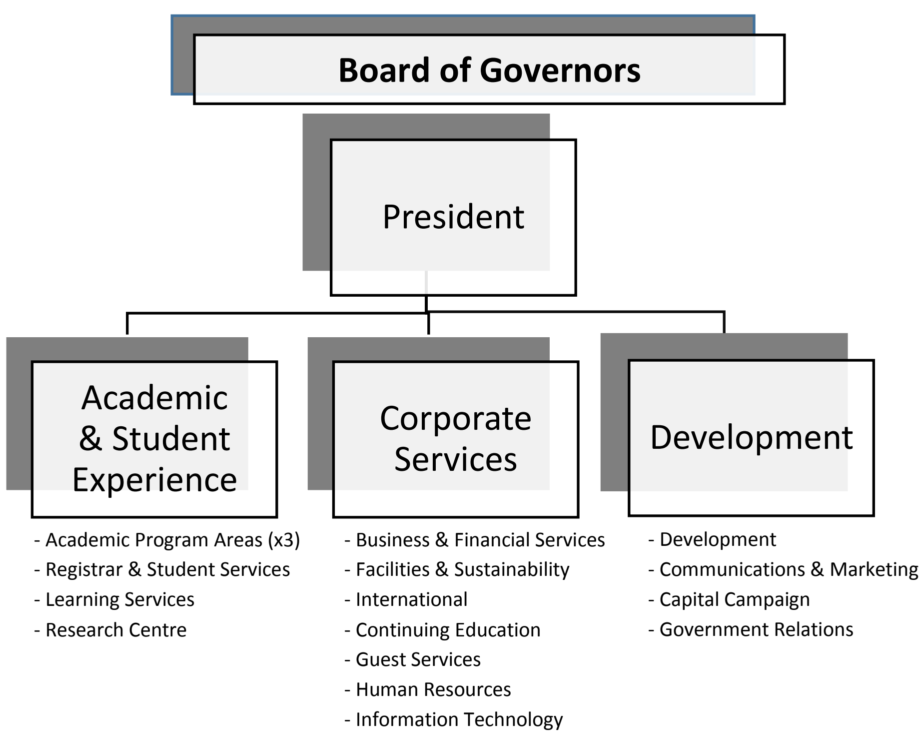

Figure 1.1. SBCC Organizational Structure and Executive Team

In addition to executive team restructuring, the college leadership team (executive team plus Deans and Directors) has had a 75% turnover within the last two years. As a result of these structural changes, a cultural shift is also occurring at SBCC as directors and managers retire or leave, and incumbents reorganize departments around current and emerging needs. For example, the Office of the Registrar has been expanded through the merger of several departments and positions including Admissions and Recruitment, Student Services, Student Accounts, and Student Awards. In the past, the Office of the Registrar was a small team solely focused on records management; today, the office is becoming a hub for student- and enrolment-related data and student services. In addition, executive team changes have resulted in increased questions about current enrolment and long-term enrolment planning, foci that are more important to the current executive team than of the previous one.

Office of the Registrar: Departmental Structure

As shown in Figure 1.2 below, as Registrar and Director of Student Services, I lead three teams including Admissions and Recruitment (focused on admitting qualified students to college programming), Registrarial and Enrolment Services (concerned with policies, scheduling, timetabling, accounts, awards, advising, records, and graduation), and Student Support Services (coordinating mental health, wellness, indigenous services, and accessibility services).

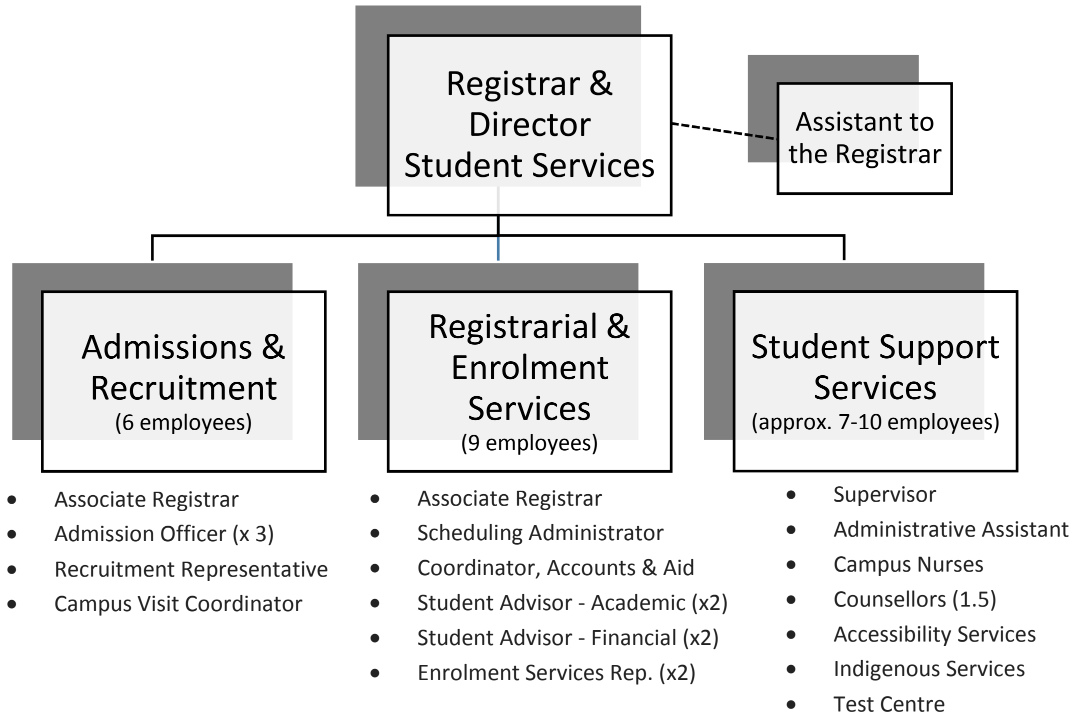

Figure 1.2. Office of the Registrar Organizational Structure

Office of the Registrar: Key Relationships

In addition to the functions noted above, the Office of the Registrar helps to maintain order within a complex organization that can have competing and divergent interests within it. Thus, some of my responsibilities include chairing Academic Council (key relationships with Deans, program chairs, and faculty); enforcing student conduct policies (key relationships with students, Campus Housing, and Campus Security); serving on the sexual violence and crisis response teams (key relationships with Campus Security and Legal Advisors); and working closely with the three academic areas (key relationships with Dean and Chair teams), the International Office, and college athletics. The Office of the Registrar also regularly connects with the Learning Services team that looks after program and course development, the online learning management system, and library services.

It is against the backdrop of changing organizational structures and a shift in cultural attitudes—coupled with the need to maintain working relationships across the organization given their own distinct priorities—that the Problem of Practice (POP) is introduced.

Problem of Practice Statement (What is the Problem?)

Despite increased attention on Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) (Black, 2010; Hossler & Bontrager, 2015; Wilkinson et al., 2007) and the rapid growth of retention-focused student services at post-secondary institutions (PSIs), retention and completion rates at many colleges and universities remain unchanged (Habley et al., 2012). Students, many of whom are in the midst of a significant transition period (Tinto, 1993), face challenges and obstacles relating to mental health and wellness, relationships, rigors of academic life, and personal finances (Braxton et al., 2006; Tinto, 1993). Furthermore, complex institutional structures are increasingly difficult for students to navigate (Karp, 2011) and are not designed around the needs of Generation Z learners (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). A lack of awareness and coordination within PSIs exacerbate retention issues including motivating campus stakeholders, developing student success strategies, collecting and sharing retention-specific data, and using this data to evaluate and monitor organizational effectiveness.

Isolated attempts at addressing retention and completion issues may have some net positive effect, but do little to engage the whole organization to positively influence retention. The POP under investigation is the need to increase awareness and coordination of student retention and completion at SBCC. Addressing retention is complex and requires a multi-dimensional approach (Beatty-Guenter, 1994; Karp, 2011) inclusive of the varied perspectives of stakeholders representing multiple campus subsystems (Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007) to accelerate and sustain change (Kotter, 2014).

Across the provincial post-secondary system, certificate and diploma completion rates are 70% and 75% respectively, while 75% of bachelor degree program registrants complete their program within their respective completion timeframes (Province, 2017). At SBCC, 10 of 13 certificate programs have completion rates over 70%, 5 of 10 diploma programs have completion rates of 75% or better, while bachelor degree programs have a combined completion rate of 60.9% (14.1% less than the provincial average) (See Appendix B). While certificate completion is satisfactory, there is work to do to support diploma and degree completion. This OIP proposes an envisioned future state where completion rates of certificate programs is 90%, diploma programs is 85%, and degree programs is 80%.

From the preceding contextual information and POP statement, it might be assumed that a compelling metric and resulting institutional pressure are the motivations behind this OIP. However, the driver is neither gross negligence nor mediocre performance; rather, SBCC suffers from a lack of campus-wide understanding of the value and impact of student retention and completion, and how intervention may not only benefit students, but the institution as a whole. Without this awareness, SBCC cannot be motivated and coordinated for improvement. Without a coordinated strategy that outlines who is to be involved, what will be done (and when), how much it will cost, and how we will know if we are making progress, SBCC will not be mobilized, but rather will operate as it has, unaware of retention realities and their impacts.

With the problem articulated, I will further frame it by (1) providing an external factor analysis, (2) examining relevant data and discussing the negative impacts of attrition, and (3) reviewing retention within the context of SEM.

Framing the Problem of Practice (Why Change?)

The purpose of this section is to situate the POP within the broader context of an external factor analysis, relevant data, and history. First, by describing external political, economic, social, and technological factors, I validate the problem by describing the milieu SBCC operates within. Second, by reviewing relevant data and discussing the impacts of attrition, I present the rationale for change. Lastly, by providing a historical overview of SEM and retention, I argue that a structural paradigm is not enough, but rather the awareness and coordination of student retention and completion must be embedded within organizational culture. These analyses together also provide a foundation that informs the “whole-system” retention model and organizational framework described in greater detail in Chapter 2.

External Factor Analysis

Political, economic, social, and technological factors described below offer context leading to greater understanding of the problem. Each factor also sheds light onto the reason why the problem is a worthwhile topic for this OIP.

Political factors. The current provincial government has taken a different stance to engagement and involvement with individual PSIs compared to the previous government. Whereas PSIs in the past were generally left to themselves, the current government is more actively involved. Specifically, five new system-wide adult learning principles including accessibility, affordability, quality, accountability, and coordination (Province, 2016) have been introduced, while substantial reviews of institutional roles and mandates, tuition fees (currently frozen to 2014-15 levels), and funding model/formula are being undertaken. As a result, the provincial government is placing greater attention on enrolment projections and student supports, and there is some speculation that future funding could be tied to performance metrics such as

FLEs and/or outcomes (e.g., graduation rates, employment rates) as has been announced in other Canadian jurisdictions (Usher & Pelletier, 2017). If these kinds of metrics were tied to SBCC's funding model, student retention and completion would become an institutional priority literally "overnight." As a result, this OIP takes a proactive approach and anticipates a political reality where awareness and coordination of student retention are of critical importance.

Economic factors. SBCC's home province has been contending with recession and an unemployment rate of 9%, the highest since 1994 (Author, 2016). The recession has contributed to provincial belt-tightening that has impacted operations at its many publically funded PSIs (e.g., salary freeze, stagnant funding). Despite uncertainty with employment, new student enrolment across the system is expected to rise by 5.6% over the next 10 years (Province, 2016). Especially pertinent for SBCC is a projected 2.2% decrease in the community college sector of which SBCC belongs. As a rural institution, the provincial population forecast also is not favourable for SBCC as it suggests that growth will be concentrated in major urban areas (Province, 2016). With increased competition for new students, declining enrolment projections, and stagnant population growth in SBCCs catchment area, an emphasis on retaining learners will be important for institutional sustainability.

Social factors. Significant social shifts are occurring both within the provincial higher education system and within society as a whole. First, significant shifts within the provincial higher education system include internationalization, indigenization, and student mental health and wellness needs (Province, 2016). Recently, SBCC has articulated a goal of increasing international participation rates from 2.7% to 10% within 5 years and has increased efforts including working with agents and collaborative partnerships to reach this goal. In addition, an indigenous strategy has been developed in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Today, 3.9% of the student body identifies as First Nations, Metis, or Inuit. As the college aspires to be a school of choice for Indigenous learners, it has set a goal to increase the Indigenous student participation rate to 6% over the next 5 years.

The second shift is related to broader society and the generation that is now accessing post-secondary education. Generation Z (those born between 1995 and 2010) is now attending SBCC, and while there are some similarities to the previous generation (Millennials, or Generation Y), they are still different and bring along new challenges. Generation Z have had their worldview completely shaped by the Internet and 24/7 access to information that is literally at their fingertips (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). As the most mobile device-dependent generation yet, Generation Z may seem distracted by their phones, but this is the primary way they connect and communicate with others from anywhere and at any time (Seemiller & Grace, 2016).

Together these social factors require a change in response relating to student services generally, and student retention specifically, as under-represented learners and those with increased mental health and wellness needs require a level of service and coordination that may not exist today. In addition, as an army of mobile-first learners, Generation Z requires a different approach to campus communication and connection than previous generations. In the following paragraphs, I suggest that current campus technologies are based on an outmoded transactional paradigm that emerged in the 1980s and 90s, whereas today's needs have evolved.

Technological factors. Whether we examine how personal computing devices are used or the evolution of campus information systems, it is clear that technology is evolving at a rapid pace. First, today's students have been described as digital natives (Seemiller & Grace, 2016), yet at the same time they demonstrate difficulty using technology as learners, employees, and entrepreneurs (ECDL Foundation, 2014). Rather than expecting that they will know how or follow instructions sent via email, Generation Z learners require being shown how and preferably by using video (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). Second, organizations are moving away from single vendor mega-systems to multiple, integrated software applications that provide greater flexibility; however, in doing so they have increased the complexity and effort required to ensure a good user experience (Pettey, 2016). At SBCC, various information systems exist for student information (SIS), learning management (LMS), financial services, human resources, residence management, and financial aid, and many of them have not been connected to each other to ensure a seamless experience. In addition, much of our educational technology has not been designed with current retention needs in mind. Rather, the current Student Information System (SIS) and Learning Management System (LMS) are based on 20th century priorities including managing transactions and storing information.

In this milieu, PSIs must be cognizant of users—those students who are challenged to connect with these technologies in order to succeed in post-secondary education, and those who are involved in teaching and learning and delivering student services. A model for today (to be discussed in Chapter 3) in contrast, is transformational—connecting the organization and its stakeholders, and providing information (e.g., events, deadline alerts, and suggestions) to learners in a way that allows them to feel emotionally connected to their school (Ellucian, 2017).

If the discussion of political, economic, social, and technological factors described above provides context leading to greater understanding of the POP, the following review of relevant data is intended to further frame and justify the POP by providing insight to the scope of the problem, lines of inquiry to the causes of the problem, and understanding of the impacts of the problem.

Reviewing Relevant Data and Understanding Retention Impacts

Pertinent data for this OIP are found in three internal reports: Cohort Incompletion Impact Analysis (Appendix B), Student Satisfaction Survey Analysis (Appendix C), and the Health and Wellness Academic Impact Analysis (Appendix D). They are important because they illustrate the current organizational state and provide a baseline from which improvement may be measured.

Cohort incompletion impact analysis. Across the provincial post-secondary system, certificate and diploma completion rates are 70% and 75% respectively, while 75% of bachelor degree program registrants complete their program within their respective completion timeframes (Province, 2017). Provincial data only consider students as stop-outs, so progress within the provincial post-secondary system is not taken into consideration. For example, students may choose to leave SBCC, or they may transfer and complete a program at another college or university. At SBCC, 10 of 13 certificate programs have completion rates over 70%, 5 of 10 diploma programs have completion rates of 75% or better, while bachelor degree programs have a combined completion rate of 60.9% (14.1% less than the provincial average) (See Appendix B). Using these figures, the financial impact of attrition at SBCC is estimated at $711,661.35 (annually), while the human impact is that 210 students (27% of an annual cohort) will not attain a credential, nor the economic, personal, and social benefits that come with it.

Student satisfaction impact analysis. The Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) is a tool that measures what aspects of the campus experience are most important to students and how satisfied they are with them (see Appendix C). The latest results identify several challenges. Academic concerns include the quality of instruction, instructor fairness, and the timeliness of assessment feedback. This last one is especially pertinent to a discussion of retention as awareness of retention-related performance is tied to assessment feedback. In other words, how will students know how they are doing if assessment is not provided in a timely way? How will they be able to seek the help they require if they don't have the information? Students also reported dissatisfaction with their residence room, a factor that can lead to disintegration with the social community and become a key determinant of student departure. Lastly, student feedback relating to financial aid suggests that scholarships and bursaries are not communicated and dispersed to students in a timely manner so that they can influence financial planning and the decision-making process.

Health and wellness academic impact analysis. A student-rated 2016 campus health assessment highlights several factors that negatively impact academic performance (SBBC, 2017b). Of concern at SBCC are rises in mental health-related impacts (i.e., stress, anxiety, and depression) and alcohol use that is over twice the national average (Appendix E). As failure to address these concerns can lead to student departures, coordinating services that can address student health and wellness are also key to this OIP.

Indeed, with these data in mind, campus leaders can understand the impact of attrition in three ways: individual, institutional, and societal. First, and perhaps most significant, is that an individual loses out on a credential—whether the symbol of the "post-secondary dream" or the actual certification that leads to greater earnings and career opportunities (Habley et al., 2012). As someone who has benefited from post-secondary education, I know first-hand that completion is not only the difference between academic failure and success, but also a means to a longer, healthier, and more prosperous life (Finnie et al., 2017; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005, pp. 628-629). Second, attrition impacts the institution through the loss of tuition, fees, and in some cases, per-student government funding (Parkins & Baldwin, 2009). Lost revenue due to attrition is likely the single greatest operational cost to a PSI (Habley et al., 2012). Third, lower educational attainment impacts society as a whole, as the level of education attained correlates with prosperity, contribution to community, and quality of life. As specific groups attain education while others do not, social inequities are exacerbated (Parkins & Baldwin, 2009).

An Historical Overview to the Problem of Practice

The term “retention,” introduced to describe post-secondary student departure in the 1970s, describes a PSI‘s ability to keep students enrolled from one term of study to the next until completion, as expressed by a percentage rate (Habley et al., 2012). Today, retention is considered as part of a SEM framework that extends throughout a student’s lifecycle (see Figure 1.3). Functions of SEM include marketing, recruitment, admission, retention, graduation, and alumni engagement (Gottheil & Smith, 2011; Hossler & Bontrager, 2015; Skinkle, 2010). As an institution-wide planning paradigm, “SEM focuses on what is best for students and how to ensure their success while addressing all aspects of the institution’s mission” (Wilkinson et al., 2007, p. 6). Skinkle (2010) describes SEM as a “fully integrated process bridging the entire student experience” (pp. 52-54) where preceding steps influence those to come. As a result, retention should not be viewed on its own, but rather within a SEM model that considers the student experience and institutional responsibilities together as a continuum. The problem at SBCC is that retention and enrolment management has not been viewed in this manner—relying on strategic planning and tactical action, using data for decision-making, and engaging the entire campus community to address the needs of students as learners and customers (Black, 2010, pp. 5-6).

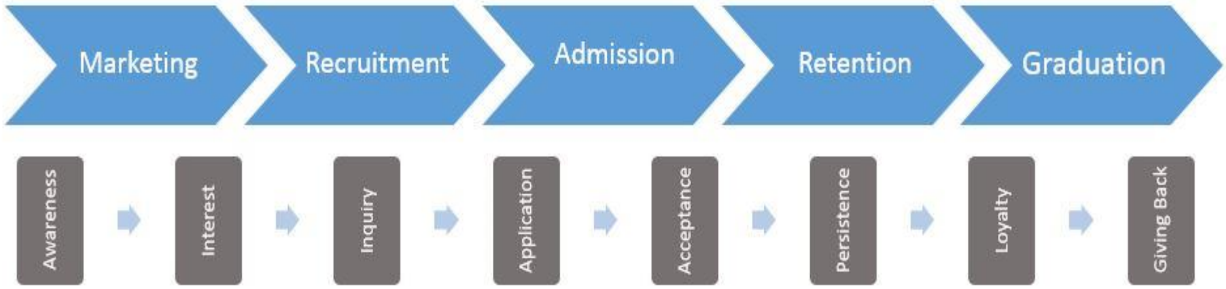

Figure 1.3 Student Relationship Continuum (Adapted from Skinkle, 2010, p. 54).

Another problem is that despite increased attention on SEM and the rapid growth of retention-focused services within higher education (American and Canadian), retention and completion rates have held steady over several decades (Habley et al., 2012; Parkins & Baldwin, 2009). At SBCC the problem is exacerbated as SEM has not consistently been advocated for, whether by individual departments or the campus as a whole. A criticism of SEM is that it has largely been a structural paradigm that has failed to include the core functions of a PSI like the academic experience and financial processes. Wilkinson et al. (2007) ask important questions that challenge the straightforward, structural assumptions underpinning the use of SEM without consideration of the larger context in which it operates or the stakeholders involved:

> How does an institution fundamentally change its recruitment, retention, and graduation rates if the faculty members are not intimately involved? How are business practices made to be more student friendly if the individuals working in those offices do not see their significance to student success? And how do you change a campus culture if all constituents are not involved? (p. 8)

In seeking the answers to these questions, this OIP strives to go beyond a SEM structure and embraces an organizational framework that will become inseparable from the organization's culture. This framework, presented in Chapter 2, addresses awareness based on a whole-system retention model concerned with the *who* and the *what* (Beatty-Guenter, 1994; Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Karp, 2011) and addresses coordination based on a change process model that tackles the *why* and *how* (Kotter, 2014). In using a compatible systems approach to leadership (Coffey, 2010; Senge et al., 2015), the core functions of SBCC are optimized and engaged through the school's key stakeholders so that SEM and retention become rooted in the school's way of doing things (Kotter, 2014). The organizational framework alluded to here will be described more fully in Chapter 2. However, to understand the problem and be better able to develop possible solutions, several guiding questions are explored in the section that follows.

Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice

Guiding questions that emerge from the POP include: What lines of inquiry stem from the central ideas of awareness and coordination? What student factors and institutional phenomena contribute to or influence the POP? What leadership challenges emerge from the POP? These questions are discussed below before a leadership approach for organizational improvement is presented.

Awareness and Coordination

Several lines of inquiry stem from the central ideas of awareness and coordination. First, what does awareness mean? How can we measure it? Is awareness sufficient to encourage stakeholders to care about student retention and completion? Second, who is it that will be coordinated and who responsible for coordinating them? What are the associated costs? What will motivate campus stakeholders to contribute to retention and completion efforts? How can we measure the effectiveness of our efforts? It is these kinds of questions that the specific strategies outlined in the Change Implementation Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (see Chapter 3) attempt to address.

Student Factors and Institutional Phenomena

Both student factors and institutional phenomena influence the POP. First, students are central to this problem as it is toward their academic, social, and career success that institutional efforts will be directed. Key student factors include involvement (i.e., participation in campus life), integration (i.e., connection to institutional culture), engagement (i.e., correlation between time and energy spent and student success), and meaning (i.e., internalization of the benefits of education) (Finnie et al., 2017; Habley et al., 2012; Karp, 2011).

Therefore, the organizational framework and possible solutions outlined in Chapter 2, as well as the final strategies presented in Chapter 3, will include these factors to promote awareness and coordination of student retention and completion as a function of the college. In addition to student-oriented factors, institutional phenomena include the alignment of the administrative components (i.e., coordinating policies, practices, and processes), academic experiences (i.e., transforming curriculum and pedagogy, student progress), and market elements (i.e., leveraging brand, positioning, institutional commitment) in order to support retention and completion.

Leadership Challenges Emerging From the Main Problem

Bolman and Deal (2013) explained that organizations are complex, surprising, deceptive, and ambiguous. This cannot be truer in the case of today's PSIs. The challenges for leaders tasked with coordinating enrolment planning efforts include recognizing the evolving and erratic nature of the PSI, understanding the changing environment that the PSI operates in, defining the

PSI's reality regardless of how popular (or unpopular) the assessment is, bringing clarity (and solutions) to complex problems, and bringing varied perspectives from disparate corners of the organization to the table. In response to these challenges, I will now outline an approach to leadership that is based on my own career journey and value formation, educational leadership theory, and current research surrounding the role of higher education registrar.

Leadership Position Statement

I describe my approach to leadership in the professional role of higher education registrar from multiple perspectives which include my own career journey and value formation, and a systems approach to leadership (Coffey, 2010; Senge et al., 2015) that is coupled with servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977).

Career Journey and Value Formation

For the past 7 years, I have strived to model servant leadership; however, this was not always my way. As a younger leader, I had a graduate degree in leadership (including a strong foundation in servant leadership), but I had not internalized this formal learning so it manifested in how I did leadership. My role at the time included a split portfolio managing enrolment and providing academic leadership to an applied arts and technology division as Dean. I had a large and experienced team who reported to me, and while I felt that I had many good ideas, I was frustrated because no one was with me, and I could not get anything done.

It was not that I was incapable or uncommitted, but rather, **my** work was all about **me** and **my** goals and priorities. ***I*** had so many good ideas, but wondered why people were not following ***me***. My problem was that it was not enough that I was in a leadership role or that I knew about leadership—I was not acting like a leader nor was I being perceived as one. The post-secondary president who I reported to had years of experience leading in large not-for-profit organizations and had built several large for-profit companies. I respected him. He did not like to use labels such as servant leadership or systems leadership, but rather believed that effective leadership included servant leadership and systems leadership. At a one-on-one meeting he passed a handwritten note to me outlining my shortcomings, and as we went through it, he told me how others within the organization perceived me. It was not a comfortable conversation, but I took the feedback, and while I recognize that leadership growth is an ongoing process, I know something changed in me that day.

The specific things he asked me to do included committing to listen more, speak to encourage and cheer others on, support the work others are doing, and follow through with what you say you will do. He told me that great leaders listen carefully, think grey, show humility in their thinking, serve others, inspire others to greatness, learn from others, follow others, and have good judgement / discernment. The years following this intervention and leading up to today have been the most enjoyable and productive of my career, and as a result, I have been given increasingly greater responsibility, trust, and challenges. I still have the piece of notebook paper as a reminder of the leadership I aspire to each day.

The point of sharing this story is that an approach to leadership for me is not simply an academic exercise, but rather the result of lessons learned the hard way and experiences that have shaped me—for which I am grateful. Through my personal experiences and understanding of leadership theory, I present a systems theory-based approach to leadership that also correlates with and draws from servant leadership. In describing the theory-based approach below, I am reminded of personal growth experiences that have taught me the importance of listening, humility, serving others, including others, collaborating, and communicating well.

A Systems Approach to leadership

A Systems Approach to Leadership is a "holistic approach . . . which can be used by any leader at any organizational level to optimize an organization (or part of it) to create sustainable high performance in conditions of high complexity and uncertainty" (Coffey, 2010, p. 18). It focuses on whole-system development including optimizing individuals, teams, business units, and the organization itself while positioning leaders as system designers, builders, and facilitators (Coffey, 2010). With emphases such as "sustainable high performance" and "optimizing the whole system," it could be easy for me to slip into a performance-first mindset that may be perceived by these stakeholders as a top-down approach based on my own goals and priorities. For me as a system leader within a higher education context, I need to work closely with diverse stakeholders such as faculty, student support services employees, and technology specialists every day. Moreover, when considering complex problems and "knowing that there are no easy answers to truly complex problems, system leaders cultivate the conditions wherein collective wisdom . . . gradually brings about new ways of thinking, acting, and being" (Senge et al., 2015). To further counteract the negative perceptions that may be associated with a system-optimization, and ensure that I cultivate the conditions to bring out the best in others, I present three specific capabilities of system leaders that I will need to develop including seeing the whole system, hearing the perspectives of others, and shifting the focus from reactive problem solving to collaboratively co-creating the future (Senge et al., 2015, pp. 28-29).

Seeing the whole system. First, by seeing the whole system and all of its parts, rather than just the part of the system I might be most connected to (e.g., administrative-oriented subsystem), I will be able to foster greater understanding of complex problems (like retention) and jointly develop solutions I could not have come up with by myself (Senge et al., 2015). As a systems leader, the Change Implementation Plan described in Chapter 3 looks at the whole system including the student experience, teaching and learning, and administrative processes that impact student retention and employment outcomes. In addition, retention efforts will be jointly led by a coalition of key stakeholders from the four subsystems of the college (see Chapter 3).

Hearing the perspective of others. Second, by having reflective conversations that challenge my own assumptions and value the perspective of others, I will be able to foster a culture of creativity and build trust with those I need to work with to solve retention challenges (Senge et al., 2015). From my experience, the less certain I am of my own opinions, and more willing I am to follow others, the more trusting others become of me. As I engage with key stakeholders on the topic of retention, I will recognize that I bring certain assumptions with me. As a result, there will be times where I will intentionally need to be quiet and hear other points of view in order to understand what reality means from other stakeholder's perspectives.

Shifting the focus to co-creating the future. Third, as a system leader, I help others move beyond simply reacting to today's problems so that they can face difficult truths about the present and build positive visions of change for tomorrow (Senge et al., 2015). This will include sharing the present realities of retention and their impacts with others (i.e., "How bad is it?"), and co-creating the future as will be described later in the final chapter.

Servant Leadership

To reiterate, the POP identified within this OIP is to how to increase awareness and coordination of student retention and completion at Silver Bay Community College (SBCC) in Canada. While I believe that the best way to address the POP is through a systems approach to leadership, a criticism is that by emphasizing optimization and performance, there is a potential for a systems leader to display an autocratic or dictatorial leadership style that will not be effective. Rather, in an organization as complex as a PSI, leading this kind of change requires an inclusive approach (Wilkinson et al., 2007). In the context of this OIP, the opportunity exists for me, as Registrar and Director of Student Services, to identify, influence, and include organizational stakeholders such as faculty, student services leaders, and administrative staff in the change process.

Therefore, to effectively engage this range of stakeholders, each with their unique perspectives and aims, there is a need for me, as a systems leader, to draw upon a complementary Servant Leadership approach (Greenleaf, 1977) to demonstrate humility and share leadership with others who will help balance system optimization priorities and lead change with me.

Servant leadership describes a leader as one who “shares power, puts the needs of others first, and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible” (Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2016). For me, my role becomes that of teaching and mentoring—or modelling the way. I will strive to understand individual strengths and circumstances and encourage the growth and development of others that—while stretching and uncomfortable at times—allows them to achieve more than they thought possible. For example, the Change Implementation Plan (described in Chapter 3) relies on leaders from all levels of SBCC to emerge and participate. Some participants may never have expected to be in a place of leadership, but this plan encourages it—I will encourage it. Robert Greenleaf (1977) said “the best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?” (pp. 13-14). What servant leadership brings is not just an approach to leadership, but a shift in culture where change is not just a thing to be done, so that when formal leaders (i.e., change agents) leave, the organization reverts back to the way things were. Rather, servant leadership fosters a culture where leaders develop other leaders and where high performance is the expectation so that change and the ability to change is normal and perpetual.

Leadership Perspectives on the Role of Registrar

My current role is Registrar and Director of Student Services at SBCC where I provide leadership to three teams (see Figure 1.2 above). The role of Registrar is evolving from an administrative position to one that is connected to academic innovation, enrolment management, and student success, and as a result is re-earning a place at the senior leadership table (Duklas, 2014). There are a number of functions that typically report to the Registrar and some that can also report to the position (see Table 1). At SBCC, all of these areas report to me, though academic policy development can also be shared with Deans depending on which policy it is.

Table 1.

Functional Responsibilities of the Registrar

Typically Reporting to the Registrar	Sometimes Reporting to the Registrar
• Academic Scheduling • Admissions • Records & Registration • Academic Policy • Frontline Student Support • SEM Data Management Analysis • Graduation & Convocation	• SEM Communications • Student Accounts • Student Awards • Financial Aid • Institutional Reporting • Recruitment

Note. Adapted from *Canadian registrars: Reporting relationships and responsibilities. Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada by Duklas, 2014, pp. 8-9.* Retrieved from https://www.arucc.ca/uploads/documents/Canadian_Registrars_Reporting_Relationships_and_Responsibilities.pdf

According to a recent qualitative study, the position also requires increasing social skills as (1) a departmental leader and mentor of professional staff with complex responsibilities and skills; (2) a campus leader whose role it is to review, understand, and communicate trends that impact higher education; and (3) a change agent (Waters & Hightower, 2016). The most important leadership skills for a Registrar include being an articulate communicator, organized, knowledgeable about higher education, and able to see the big picture (Waters & Hightower, 2016). Skills that senior administrators specifically value in the role include being a collaborative team builder and influencing others for change (Waters & Hightower, 2016).

For a position that has historically been behind the scenes and administratively oriented, the shift to the social side of leadership is a critical evolution to note, especially when determining the success or failure of planning and implementing organizational change. Efforts, like improving awareness and coordination of student retention and completion are likely to fail—not because of the operational details within the plan—but because leaders are unable to handle the social challenges of change (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Therefore, given my areas of responsibility as Registrar and Director of Student Services, I am in a unique role to influence the POP. Indeed, I will be most successful if I can balance system optimization priorities (i.e., systems approach to leadership) with the ability to collaborate, influence, and develop others to lead change with me (i.e., servant leadership). It is with these leadership perspectives in mind that that I describe a leadership-focused vision for change.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

Thus far, I have provided organizational context and a POP that is framed by external factors, data, and history. After having just shared a leadership position from which organizational improvement planning is viewed, I present a vision for change that describes how the envisioned future state at SBCC will improve the situation, clarifies the priorities for change, and identifies specific change drivers.

How the Future State Will Improve the Situation

To reiterate, SBCC's current state is due to a lack of awareness and coordination of student retention and completion. In contrast, the future state is one where retention and completion will be acknowledged and addressed through an organizational framework (see Chapter 2) that is embedded within SBCC's culture. By this I mean that SBCC will embrace a retention model and approach to leading change that is not the task of one champion or a business unit, but rather is inclusive of administrative-, student-, academic-, and market-oriented stakeholders and their perspectives.

Through the solution proposed in Chapter 3, I envision that SBCC will be able to increase the program completion rate of certificate programs to 90%, diploma programs to 85%, and degree programs to 80%, and therefore will decrease the amount of student-related revenue lost due to attrition by 50%. Earlier in this chapter, I identified the impacts of attrition as individual, institutional, and societal; therefore, when extrapolating how the future state will improve the situation, I will continue along these themes.

Future state: Improvement for individuals. Through increased awareness and coordination, improvement for individual students will be the most meaningful impact to occur at SBCC. This perspective is simple, nonetheless a future state where an organization is better equipped to support student success is the crux of this OIP; for how can this problem be examined apart from a concern for the individual student? By improvement for individual students, I mean that students enrolled at SBCC will have access to the supports needed to be successful. A campus that is optimized for student success and retention will also result in a positive working environment for faculty, and staff who will be better connected to each other and find increased satisfaction from their jobs. For administrative staff, an optimized system might mean greater efficiency. For faculty members, it could mean more engaged learners in the classroom. For student affairs staff, it is being able to see how their daily work makes a positive difference in the lives of students.

Future state: Improvement for organization. The next greatest impact is on the organization itself. First, addressing the problem should increase coordination by bridging gaps between the disconnected facets of the organization (e.g., administration and faculty, student experience and policy, or academic programs and market demands). Second, as the college prioritizes increased awareness and coordination of retention and completion as a means to achieving its vision, key performance indicators (e.g., measures relating to student satisfaction, completion, and employment) will show improvement. Sharing these success stories (see Change Process Communications Plan, Chapter 3) will raise awareness of retention challenges, but will also show how the college is successfully addressing them. Ultimately, as the organization improves and more students perceive that it is committed to their success, the less likely they are to depart (Braxton et al., 2004, pp. 37-38). Third, the envisioned future correlates with three of four institutional drivers including centre of specialization, responsiveness, and accountability and sustainability. These are expanded upon below.

Centre of specialization. By acknowledging, analyzing, and responding to retention issues through formal and informal channels, the organization develops centres of specialization. Formal examples include identifying enrolment management champions who will serve on a Guiding Retention Coalition (see Chapter 3). A less formal example is that through my and others' leadership, we will be able to apprise the organizational teams and units we work with and report to—through awareness, education, and collaboration.

Responsiveness. SBCC's culture includes anticipating and responding quickly and effectively to opportunities and demands as a result of changes in industry, governments, and technology (Organization, 2016). While the college has taken this to heart when exploring external opportunities (e.g., new programs) it has not had the same internal focus. This OIP and proposed solution (Chapter 3) will increase engagement and response to internal opportunities like student retention and completion.

Accountability and sustainability. As lost revenue associated with attrition have the potential to be a PSI's single greatest cost (Habley et al., 2012), the future state enables SBCC to have greater accountability (i.e., understanding the impact of attrition) and sustainable practice (i.e., planning and operating to reduce the impact of attrition). The annual cost of attrition is estimated at $711,661 (see Appendix B). Over a five-year period, the cumulative loss becomes $3,558,305. Ultimately, by reducing lost revenue due to attrition by 50%, this plan proposes $1,779,153 of recaptured revenue over five years and for $620,000 of this to be reallocated to fund new initiatives (see Chapter 3). When considered along with the political and economic factors leading to scarce financial resources and increased competition for students (discussed on pp. 12-13), every dollar saved becomes important.

Future state: Improvement for society. In light of a depressed economy and a high unemployment rate, the future state also improves the situation for society. The provincial government has stated through its Adult Learning System Principles that good jobs begin with a good education and that education is the cornerstone of a healthy economy (Province, 2017). Furthermore, it has committed to investing in high-quality, affordable post-secondary education system to secure a diversified economy and a strong society for all of its citizens (Province, 2017). Therefore, a future state that produces additional graduates who will lead longer and healthier lives (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005) is aligned with the province and its economic and societal goals.

Priorities for Change

This OIP proposes that administrative-, student-, academic-, and market-oriented subsystems are present and active within SBCC (Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007). As a result, priorities for change that can lead to increased awareness and coordination of student retention and completion are proposed from the perspective of each of these subsystems.

Administrative-oriented subsystem. From this viewpoint, priorities for change include the coordinating structures like policies and information systems (Kalsbeek, 2006b, 2013). Policy changes should prioritize those that have the ability to impact the greatest number of students. For example, an Academic Standing Policy should emphasize greater student accountability and increased advising services for all students, including those that are at risk of attrition. Technology is also a focal point for change. At SBCC, information systems are most commonly used to manage the transactions related to managing education processes rather than to transform how these processes occur.

When prioritizing strategies for change that will have an ability to impact the mobile device-dependent Generation Z, deploying mobile-based technologies could be a transformational approach. For example, how could a mobile application (i.e., “app”) be used to track engagement, decisions, and behaviors throughout the student lifecycle? Integrated with artificial intelligence (AI) and predictive analytics, it is not difficult to imagine just-in-time mobile-delivered notifications and interventions between students and key campus contacts (program chair, counsellor, disability coordinator, advisor, residence life manager, etc.). By engaging with members from the administrative-oriented subsystem, I will have insight to the internal processes and systems that are the backbone of a future solution.

Student-oriented subsystem. While other subsystems respond to students in general, the student-oriented subsystem views them as individual persons and emphasizes an institutional climate where priorities are centred on their success (Kalsbeek, 2006a). Therefore priorities include (1) creating meaningful social relationships within learning communities (i.e., cohorts characterized by supportive classrooms, interactive pedagogy, and engaged instructors); (2) enhancing college commitment, through utility (i.e., understanding employment outcomes and implications for the future), satisfaction (i.e., enjoying student life), and goals (i.e., believing that education is important); (3) cultivating a culture that assists students to internalize the unwritten rules, expectations, and norms of the post-secondary world; and (4) making college life feasible by helping students balance the demands of work, family, and school (Finnie, et al., 2017; Karp, 2011). By including the perspective of a student-oriented subsystem, I will ensure that actual student concerns and needs are being addressed.

Academic-oriented subsystem. Retention within an academic-oriented subsystem is concerned with sequential progress that leads to graduation. Retention priorities include encouraging the acquisition of foundational academic skills, emphasizing success in the first year, finding scheduling alternatives, and establishing an optimal pace for timely completion (Habley et al., 2012; Kalsbeek, 2006b). Relating to the last point, SBCC, as a hands-on PSI, requires fieldwork in most programs; however, coordinating these practical program elements has proven challenging, resulting in delayed completion especially for degree students. By including academic-oriented stakeholders, I will demonstrate how barriers to learning that leads to graduation is central to the problem.

Market-oriented subsystem. Stakeholders with this perspective prioritize retention as a core institutional function by identifying the gap between the school's brand promise (i.e., identity, purpose) and the student experience, and then influencing the campus experience to ensure alignment (Kalsbeek, 2006b, 2013). Priorities for change will include developing key performance indicators for measuring, comparing, and communicating retention performance in a consistent way. Student satisfaction scores, employment statistics, and revenue lost due to attrition are examples of metrics that could be used. Monitoring and evaluating before and after states also become important for demonstrating the effectiveness of change strategies (see Chapter 3, Figure 3.4). Having just summarized the priorities for change from the perspective of four organizational subsystems, I will now describe organizational change readiness at SBCC.

Organizational Change Readiness

In the section that follows, organizational change readiness at SBCC is assessed vis-à-vis four premises including an action orientation, change as a learning process, building urgency, and from the perspective of four subsystems.

An Action Orientation

The first premise for assessing organizational change readiness recognizes that having a specific theory is not good enough; instead, what is needed is an orientation that focuses on results, takes theory to the next level, and links strategy to outcomes (Fullan, 2006). In other words, the question is not "how is the organization ready for change (i.e., reactive)?" but rather, "how is the organization ready to drive change (i.e., proactive)?" For example, a criticism of SEM is that in attempting to gain campus-wide adoption, there is little uptake in championing key initiatives. Organizational change requires a whole-campus vision that leads to ownership and action. This degree of pragmatism forces campus leaders to answer questions like "under what conditions will sustainable improvement happen?" and "how do we change culture" (Fullan, 2006)? In systems theory, this action orientation can be summarized by the need transform inputs to outputs as well as the constant battle against entropy (Skyttner, 2006, pp. 53-54). A systems approach to leadership summarizes this concept as being able to see the whole system and optimizing it for sustained high performance (Coffey, 2010; Senge et al., 2015). As discussed earlier in this chapter, this action orientation has been catalyzed by new leadership as well as political and economic pressures.

Change as a Learning Process

From a systems theory-based approach, the learning process is referred to as "feedback," a continuous process of regulation between interrelated parts and the environment so that goals can be realized (Skyttner, 2006, pp. 53-54). It seems suitable (yet ironically fresh) to consider change in higher education as a continuous learning exercise. Put another way, change is not a one-time event nor a one-size-fits-all approach, but rather a perpetual cycle of listening, adapting, evaluating, and adjusting.

Building Urgency

Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols (2016) introduced the Change Path Model as a comprehensive framework from which to view change management. The linear model builds urgency through an initial awakening step—a starting point that identifies the gap between the current reality and the envisioned future, and asks the question, "why change?" Similarly, Kotter (2014) suggested that building urgency is a critical first step for leading the change process and can gain momentum through the creation of a "Big Opportunity" statement. This statement, preceding both organizational vision and strategic initiatives, should be reasonably short (and understandable), rational, compelling, positive, authentic, clear, and aligned (see Figure 3.3). By raising awareness of the impacts of retention and completion (i.e., individual, organizational, and societal as has been described in Chapter 1) the organization, its leaders, and key stakeholders will be confronted with compelling reasons for change that cannot be ignored.

The premise of building urgency is also consistent with a systems-based approach. A tenet of systems theory is goal seeking which suggests that systemic interaction must result in some goal or final state to be reached or some equilibrium point being approached (Skyttner, 2006, pp. 53-54). Awakening and building urgency through the identification of a Big Opportunity can help to demonstrate what the end state might look like (see previous Leadership-focused Vision for Change section).

Change Readiness within Four Subsystems

Viewing change readiness from the perspective of four organizational subsystems provides insight into the responses to the POP by various organizational actors (e.g., administrators, students, and faculty). By recognizing that these orientations coexist at SBCC I can better understand what is most meaningful for each group and that there may be a number of equally valid ways of solving the problem.

Change readiness: Administrative-oriented subsystem. Change readiness from an administratively oriented perspective is the most internally focused and considers structure and personnel. One example is the Office of the Registrar that has undergone significant change over the past two years. For various reasons, nearly half of the department's staff has turned over, and internal reorganization has grouped employees so that centres of expertise can be developed, cross-training can occur, and organizational needs can be met. In addition, the Registrar now reports to the vice president responsible for academics, a change that more naturally supports collaboration with other academic units (Duklas, 2014). Elsewhere at SBCC, three new vice presidents were appointed, five of six dean and chair positions turned over, and a new president was installed—all within a one-year period. Bolman and Deal (2013) suggest that these kinds of changes disrupt existing patterns which can be realigned to support new directions. While concurrently restructuring a department and replacing the leadership team could have negatively impacted administrative functioning, a shared commitment to learner success and collaborative approaches to problem-solving have led to improved policies, communication, and program development. As a result of these transitions, the administrative-oriented subsystem has the appetite, capability, and capacity to lead change and be changed.

Change readiness: Student-oriented subsystem. Change readiness within the student subsystem recognizes those aspects of the student experience that need to change and mobilizes resources to influence improvement. At SBCC, a Student Support Services team has been disconnected from enrolment management. As Student Support Services has been recently restructured, I have hired a Manager and Mental Health Coordinator, and in response to current needs this team now coordinates Indigenous student services, counselling, accessibility services, and health and wellness. Also due to a reorganization, the student association is more willing to engage with college administration on joint initiatives. Externally, the provincial post-secondary system has also placed greater attention on student mental health and wellness by increasing funding to support mental health and wellness initiatives. Together, the restructured student support services team, re-engaged student association, and increased government funding result in a student-oriented subsystem that is willing to engage in student-centred change.

Change readiness: Academic-oriented subsystem. At SBCC, change readiness within the academic subsystem is influenced by previous negative experiences with change management including a lack of transparency and confidence in leadership (Cawsey et al., 2016). SBCC's previous administration made difficult decisions that were unpopular with some faculty; specifically, faculty felt that their voice was not included in the decision-making process, and as a result, they can be perceived as a distrusting and inflexible group. Recognizing that in the past change was *done to them*, current change leaders and members of other subsystems are wise to intentionally *engage with them*. For example, over the past two years, I have been careful to develop relationships with Faculty Association Executive Team members specifically related to policy development and developing a scheduling process. As a result, I believe there is a greater level of trust between faculty and me if not the Office of the Registrar as a whole. Likewise, the new vice president responsible for academics and deans are taking a similar inclusive approach. Due to the formation of positive working relationships, faculty may be more receptive to being involved in the change process than they were a year or two ago; however, many of them may still need to be convinced (see Figure 2.4).

Change readiness: Market-oriented subsystem. The market perspective is the most externally focused. It is concerned with finding alignment between student experience (i.e., "what is actually happening on campus?") and perception (i.e., "what is said about SBCC out there?") (Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007). The school's brand and reputation is rooted in its history as a rural, agriculture-based school. Through this lens, the key decision relating to change readiness is whether the college wishes to align itself with its historical foundation or if it is going to blaze a new trail (or perhaps consider a hybrid).

In the following chapter, I suggest that the primary stakeholders here are the Executive Team members. In the 6-12 months they have been at SBCC, they have clearly committed to a future that will embrace technological advances in core program areas, and setting high expectations for international and Indigenous student enrolment. They recognize the external context including the economic and political climate, and have prioritized growing overall enrolment (FLEs). These emphases are in line with this OIP's focus on increasing awareness and coordination of student retention and completion, and as a result I anticipate that they will respond in support of the Change Implementation Plan (see Chapter 3).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced SBCC along with an organizational context and specific POP that is the subject of this OIP. By identifying a clear POP, I underscored the need to increase awareness and coordination of student retention and completion at SBCC. An external factor analysis, breakdown of relevant data, and review of student retention and completion further framed the problem, suggesting that individual students, the organization, and society are impacted as a result of the current state. I suggested that increasing awareness and coordination of student retention and completion at SBCC will not be the result of a simple solution. Rather, I proposed a multi-dimensional approach inclusive of the varied perspectives, priorities, and change readiness of campus stakeholders representing administrative-, student-, academic-, and market-oriented subsystems.

Given the problem, I argued that a Systems Approach to Leadership coupled with Servant Leadership will have the best chance of supporting change that will transcend structural modifications and become embedded within the culture of the organization. I offered that I, as Registrar and Director of Student Services, am in a unique position to lead change as I, perhaps more than other leaders at SBCC, have both the responsibility for leading enrolment management and ability to influence key relationships for change. With the stage set, Chapter 2 moves from these introductory concepts to planning and development—offering a theory-informed organizational framework, proposing a leadership approach to change, and describing four possible solutions for consideration.

Chapter 2 – Planning and Development

Introduction

In Chapter 1, I presented the need to increase awareness and coordination of student retention and completion at Silver Bay Community College (SBCC) as the Problem of Practice (POP) at the centre of this Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP). I argued that this is a worthy topic for investigation as the financial impact of attrition at SBCC is estimated at $711,661.35 (annually), while the human impact is that 210 students will not attain a credential, nor the economic, personal, and social benefits that come with it. I further described external factors validating the problem and shared current data providing some insight into the causes. First, external factors included political (i.e., reduced funding, uncertain funding formulas), economic (i.e., increased competition for students), social (i.e., emphasis on underrepresented learners and a generational shift including increasingly mobile device-dependent students), and technological challenges (i.e., state of campus information systems). Current student experiences included dissatisfaction in several areas important to students including the timeliness of feedback from faculty and quality of the residence life experience. At the same time, health and wellness impacts drew attention to increasing levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and alcohol use that is higher than the national average.

Chapter 2 describes an organizational framework based on a retention model that considers the "whole system" and a process for leading change. It also provides a critical organizational analysis, describes possible solutions that may be implemented to address the problem, suggests a leadership approach to change that will help to achieve the vision, and summarizes a plan to communicate the need for change. Thus, this middle chapter is a bridge between the identification of a problem (as identified in Chapter 1) and the implementation of a plan (as proposed in Chapter 3).

Organizational Framework for Leading the Change Process

This OIP suggests that attempts to increase awareness and coordination of retention and completion efforts at SBCC will be unsuccessful if the whole-system is not engaged. Moreover, an approach must include the perspectives of diverse campus stakeholders and be embedded into organizational culture. Therefore, instead of pursuing isolated solutions that may address retention-related issues from a narrow perspective and in a piecemeal fashion, an organizational framework—based on (1) a literature-informed whole-system retention model (Beatty-Guenter, 1994; Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Karp, 2011) and (2) an approach to leading the change process (Kotter, 2014)—is proposed.

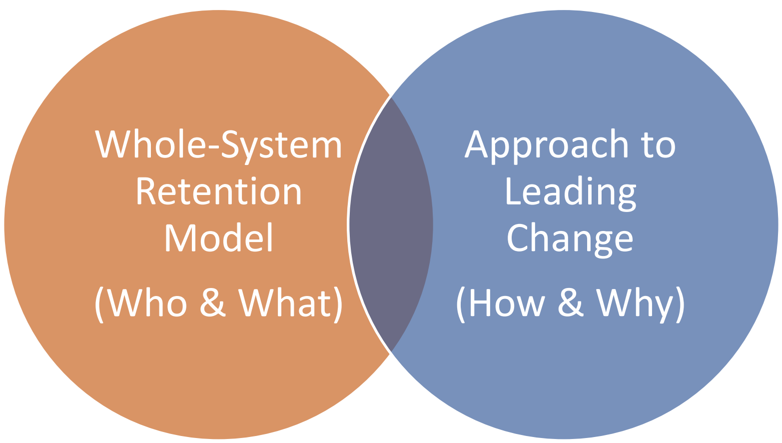

Figure 2.1. Organizational Framework from which to Address the Problem of Practice

In presenting this framework, I share how the central challenges of coordination and awareness can be addressed. Moreover, through this framework, the complexity of change is simplified by identifying two distinct aspects of change: *who* and *what*, and *how* and *why*. First, a retention model that embraces a whole-system approach (Beatty-Guenter, 1994; Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007) addresses the *who* and *what* at the centre of coordination. Second, an inclusive approach to leading the change process (Kotter, 2014) addresses the *how* and *why* at the heart of awareness. The convergence of these two concepts will form the Organizational Framework for this OIP (see Figure 2.1 above). This framework will be expounded upon in the sections that follow.

Towards A Whole-System Retention Model

In order to arrive at a retention model that considers the whole system, the paragraphs that follow explore relevant contributions to the field of student retention (Braxton et al., 2004; Tinto, 1993) and examine a literature meta-analysis that suggests four proven mechanisms that encourage student success (Karp, 2011). I also describe how the various components related to retention and completion might be organized to increase institutional awareness and system coordination (Beatty-Guenter, 1994). Together, these concepts are synthesized to form a whole-system retention model that I can use, along with the model for leading change (Kotter, 2014) described further in this section, to bring about organizational improvement.

Tinto's (1993) Longitudinal Theory of Departure suggested that Post-Secondary Institutions (PSIs) are both social and academic communities with their own cultures and subcultures, and that voluntary student departure is the result of inadequate integration with the formal and informal academic and social communities of the institution. Braxton, et al. (2004) proposed a revision to Tinto's (1993) seminal work, arguing that student entry characteristics, the external environment, and the internal academic community of the institution also influence a student's commitment to persist.

Tinto's (1993) work and revision (Braxton et al., 2004) provide an understanding of the root causes of attrition as well as a nexus to strategies and solutions. In answering the question, "What works in retaining students?" Tinto (1993) highlighted several principles including an enduring commitment to student welfare, a broader commitment to the education of all students, and an emphasis on the importance of the social and intellectual community in the education of students. Tinto (1993) reminds me of the importance of integration. Yes, students must be integrated with the social and academic subcultures in order to persist, but as a system leader, I ask "what actually integrates the disparate components of today's higher education enterprise?" In other words, what is the glue that ties retention and completion to the various subsystems of a college community? Is it our policies? Committee structures? Information systems? In Chapter 3, I describe how a systems-based approach can connect people, places, and things to support student retention and completion.

However, having a concept—however well-defined—is not enough. Braxton et al. (2004) added that the Senior Leadership Team must embrace and support the policies and practices developed to reduce institutional departure and that all members of the college community need to have a stake in retention-related policy development and practices to reduce student departure (p. 68). Therefore, it is critical for me to engage with the entire campus, from SBCC's leadership team to faculty and staff, collaborating with them and influencing them for change (Waters & Hightower, 2016); the nuances related to this are described in Chapter 3.

A meta-analysis of 128 books, journal articles, and reports points to four proven mechanisms that encourage student success including: (1) creating meaningful social relationships within learning communities (i.e., cohorts characterized by supportive classrooms, interactive pedagogy, and engaged instructors); (2) clarifying aspirations and enhancing college commitment (i.e., understanding employment outcomes and implications), student satisfaction (i.e., enjoying student life), and goal commitment (i.e., believing that education is important); (3) assisting with the shift to tertiary education (i.e., internalizing the unwritten rules, expectations, and norms of the post-secondary world); and (4) making college life feasible (i.e., helping students balance the demands of work, family, and school while providing the necessary supports) (Karp, 2011). These are some of the strategies and concepts that can be incorporated in the whole-system retention model for SBCC.

As illustrated in Table 2 below, Beatty-Guenter (1994) proposed that comprehensive retention approaches include five categories for organizing strategies, like those mentioned above, including: *sorting students, supporting students, connecting students, transforming students,* and *transforming campuses*.

Table 2.

Organizing for Increasing Awareness and Coordination

Category	Strategies	Departments/Stakeholders
Sorting Students	• Best-fit admissions • Entry assessment and placement • Program/course planning • Early warning/academic alert	• Office of the Registrar • Information Technology
Supporting Students	• Child care • Financial Aid • Health and wellness programs • Security and transportation	• Student Support Services • Office of the Registrar
Connecting Students	• Student activities, student groups • Peer programs • Orientation • Faculty/student events • Attendance policy • Faculty Advisors	• Student Support Services • Campus Housing • Student Association • Faculty

	• Work study	
Transforming Students	• Learning assistance, tutoring • Remedial education • Counseling about goals, careers	• Faculty and Academic Staff • Learning Services
Transforming Campuses	• Curriculum change • Building community, teaching environment • Policy changes • Instructor development programs	• College Leadership Team • Executive Leadership Team

Note. Adapted from Sorting, supporting, connecting, and transforming: Retention strategies at community colleges. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* by Beatty-Guenter, P., 1994.

By identifying and grouping strategies together under these five banners, and describing which stakeholders are primarily involved in delivering them, I can begin to illustrate a multi-dimensional, whole-system approach to increasing awareness and coordination of student retention at SBCC. Identifying strategies and stakeholders this way is not an attempt at providing an exhaustive or constrained listing, but rather is illustrative of the various components related to retention and how they might be organized to increase institutional awareness and coordination.

First, by *sorting students*, the Office of the Registrar, assisted by Information Technology Services, is able to organize students into actionable subsets. For example, students at SBCC may be segregated into various at-risk categories (e.g., high, medium, or low) as informed by program and program type (e.g., business or agriculture and certificate or diploma), entry characteristics (e.g., age, high school performance), and ongoing performance (e.g., grades, attendance). In doing so, the college may be made aware of which students are more likely to succeed and which may need intervention or continued monitoring. Without sorting strategies, I will be unable to direct attention where it is needed.

Second, *supporting students* is the fundamental task of the Student Support Services and Office of the Registrar Teams. At its core, supporting students is about removing those barriers that exist in everyday life for students and impede their success. From a systems perspective, these strategies—whether they be about providing childcare, enhancing transportation, increasing access to financial aid, or ensuring that counselling or tutoring services are available—are implemented to optimize learning conditions for students so that they will have the best chance of being successful.

Third, by *connecting students*, SBCC is able to engage multiple areas of the college that are frequently face-to-face with students (e.g., Student Support Services, Campus Housing, Student Association, and faculty) and foster key student relationships in both social and academic communities of the college. At SBCC, this can start right from orientation, but also from student and peer groups, faculty/student events, and ensuring that work-study is coordinated well. From a systems approach, connecting students and supporting strong communities ensures that all components of the organization are integrated and aligned with student success goals.

Fourth, *transforming students* is about shifting student perspectives “from uncommitted to committed, from uninvolved to involved, from passive to active, from failure threatened to achievement motivated” (Beatty-Guenter, 1994, p. 121). A recent example of this is an Ontario College that used a future authoring assignment to reinforce the value of a post-secondary education to increase motivation and completion rates (Finnie et al., 2017). Transforming strategies like this are critical because they reinforce why education is important and helps students connect the dots between success in college and life.

Fifth, and perhaps most enticing to me as a systems leader, *transforming campuses* is about transcending structural paradigms and realizing systemic change so that the whole organization embraces student retention and completion thus embedding a new way of doing things in its culture. In this sense, tangible changes may include curriculum and policy changes. However, and perhaps more important, transformational ways of doing things that place student success at the centre replace transactional approaches built around organization- or subsystem-specific needs. It is this level of change that is pursued through the exploration of four possible solutions later in this chapter. Ultimately, a single solution is identified and expanded upon in Chapter 3—a solution that involves all levels and layers of the organization to increase awareness and coordination of retention and completion organization-wide.

With a theory-informed understanding of student retention, my role as a System Leader benefits from increased focus. In reviewing Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) (Black, 2010; Gottheil & Smith, 2011; Hossler & Bontrager, 2015; Skinkle, 2010; Wilkinson et al., 2007) and its limitations as a structural approach in Chapter 1, and examining paradigmatic retention theories (Braxton et al., 2004; Tinto, 1993), a meta-analysis of literature (Karp, 2011), and a multi-dimensional approach to retention (Beatty-Guenter, 1994) here in Chapter 2, I have endeavoured to narrow the focus for a whole-system retention model. I now introduce and integrate systems theory, and four organizational subsystems that coexist at SBCC, before visually presenting the whole-system retention model.

Systems theory is a theoretical perspective that considers a phenomenon (e.g., post-secondary retention) as a whole and not as simply the sum of its parts (Mele, Pels, & Polese, 2010, p. 127). While identifying essential parts is important, simply having organizational parts or subsystems perform at their best is no guarantee that the entire system will be effective. So, at SBCC, it is not enough to have excellent programs, quality student supports, efficient registrarial processes, or well-thought-through policies. Rather, the performance of a system depends also on how these various parts interact with each other (Ackoff, 1981, p. 18). In fact, part of the problem at SBCC is precisely this—they have not interacted with each other, nor have they been coordinated with each other in mind, but rather have operated independently. As a systems leader (and Registrar), my role at SBCC should be one of collaboration and team building (Waters & Hightower, 2016), ensuring that the "whole system" and its parts representative of student-, academic-, administrative-, and market-oriented subsystems is well coordinated.

According to systems theory, social systems (like colleges and universities) have purposes of their own, have essential parts that have purposes of their own, and are parts of larger systems that have purposes of their own (Ackoff, 1994; Ackoff & Gharajedaghi, 1996). As illustrated in Figure 2.2, these parts are also in relationship with each other as supra-systems and subsystems (Mele et al., 2010). In the case of a higher education retention or enrolment

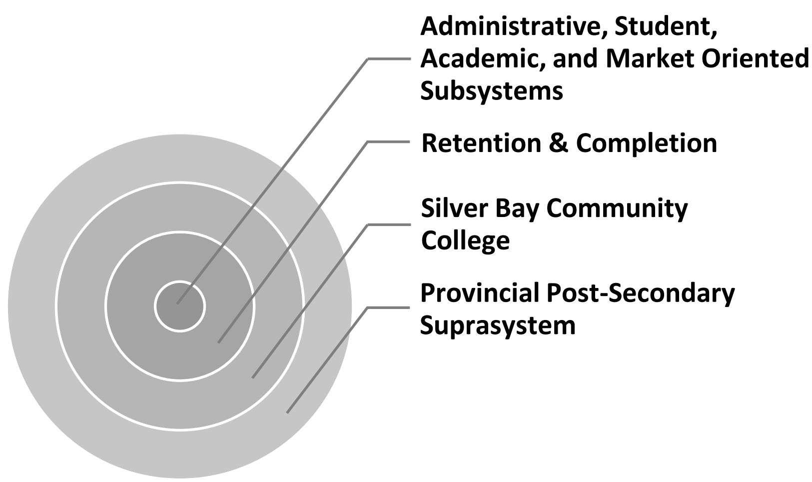

Figure 2.2. Relationships of Subsystems and Suprasystem within Higher Education.

management system, the suprasystem can be the provincial post-secondary system or the college itself, while subsystems are those specific business units like schools, departments, or offices having administrative, student, academic, and market orientations (Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007). The implication of these interrelated parts is this: Just as an automobile cannot function without a motor and transmission, or a person without a major organ, a post-secondary retention model also has inseparable parts. If one is absent, or if the relationship between the essential parts is severed, retention suffers. Therefore, it is important to know what these parts are and who is involved in them at SBCC.

A subsystem with an administrative orientation emphasizes the organization of interrelated processes, practices, and policies that ensure proper function of an institution (Kalsbeek, 2006a). Key organizational stakeholders at SBCC with an administrative orientation include the Office of the Registrar and the Internet Technology Department. A student-focused subsystem considers learners as individual persons and emphasizes a climate where individual care and institutional priorities are centered on their success (Kalsbeek, 2006a). Student Support Services (reports to me), Residence Life (third-party independent organization), and Student Association (self-governed) find a natural fit in this subsystem.

The academically-aligned subsystem is concerned with both program development and integrity, and the primacy of teaching and learning (Kalsbeek, 2006a). It may not come as a surprise that faculty and Academic Leadership (Deans/Chairs) along with Learning Services find a fit here, though the Office of the Registrar is also involved in developing academic policies and advising students on academic progress and completion. Finally, a market-oriented subsystem focuses “on the external realities of the marketplace that prescribe parameters and possibilities and position for each college and university” (Kalsbeek, 2006a, p.8). It is more difficult to isolate the key stakeholders within this subsystem as they don’t belong to a specific department; however, I suggest that the majority of SBCCs executive team share a market orientation because they, as stewards of the organization, are the ones who are concerned with the parameters, possibilities, and position for the college. It is through their roles that the institutional strategic planning processes are led.

Although my role and department are most closely aligned with administrative and student-oriented subsystems, naturally, my pre-disposition is with a market-orientation. First, I am biased towards SEM—both the external market-focused program development potential that can fuel growth and internal processes related to retention and student success. Second, even though I view education as a holistic academic experience, given today's economic and political climate, I believe that tertiery education must be informed by and brought to the marketplace strategically. This emphasis includes what we offer (product), where we offer them (place), how much we need to charge (price), and how people find out about us (promotion).

I am convinced that the challenges relating to coordinating retention are compounded because organizational subsystems have varying perspectives and priorities, and at times they are at odds with each other. Rather than learning from each other and finding ways that organizational parts can work together in solving problems, disparate subsystems and their stakeholders remain disconnected at SBCC. Kalsbeek (2006a) makes an important observation:

> Our ability to get a full, comprehensive picture [of enrolment management] depends upon our ability to see how all of these various perspectives may coexist in a complementary or even paradoxical way. Perhaps by considering different orientations [to enrolment management] and their relative strengths and shortcomings, we can better understand this complex enterprise and then better design our organizational structures and strategies accordingly. (p. 8)

The emphasis for a working retention model, then, is not only on improving services (e.g., efficient administrative processes, academic quality, or suite of student support services), but also on understanding and improving the interactions and relationships between essential functions and stakeholders (e.g., how does faculty work with the Office of the Registrar to solve a problem? What communication methods are preferred by learners when seeking help?). Therefore, when illustrating a whole-system retention model below, I have taken care to outline

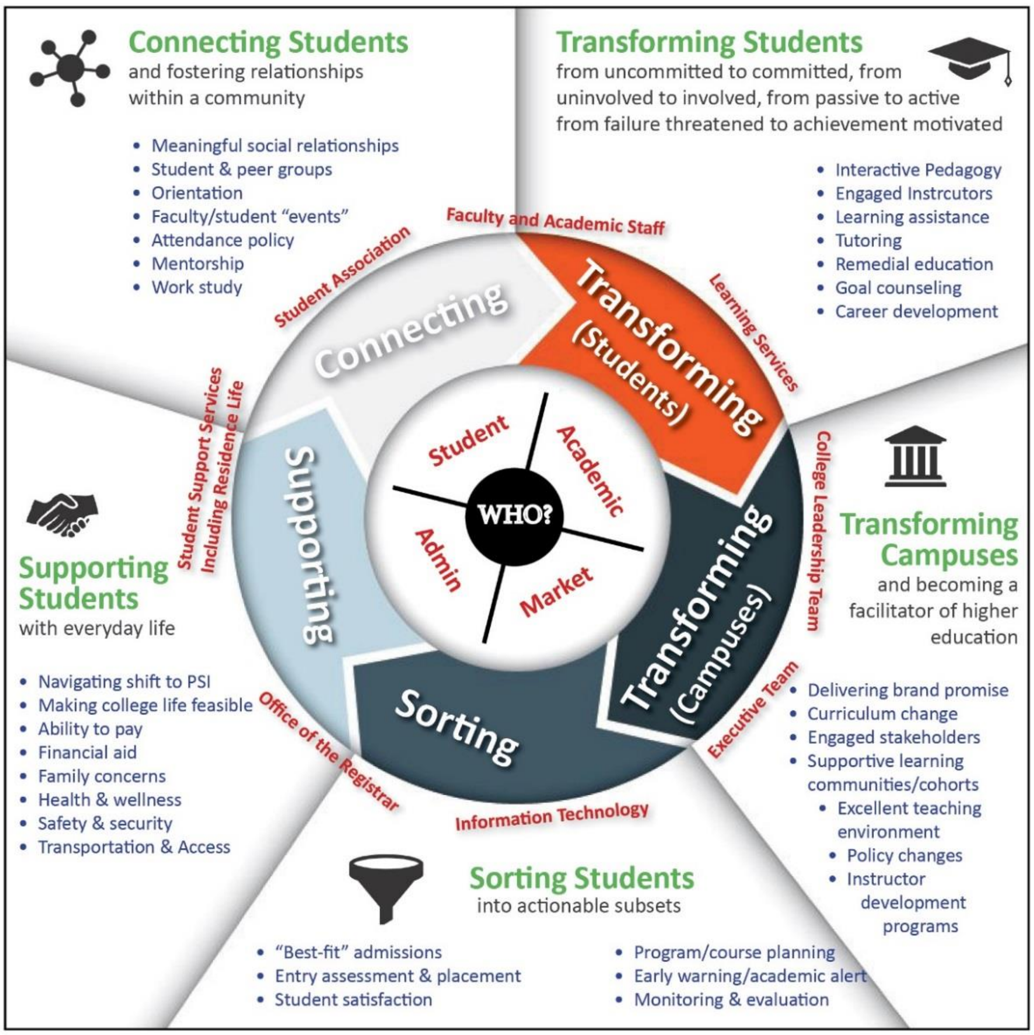

Figure 2.3. A Whole-System Retention Model (Adapted from Beatty Guenter, 1994; Kalsbeek 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Karp 2011).

broad categories and specific strategies within them (Beatty-Guenter, 1994; Karp, 2011). I have also overlaid the four subsystems (Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007) and corresponding stakeholders at SBCC. This whole-system retention model describes the specific things that SBCC will need to do to increase awareness and coordination of retention and completion (the *what*), and who is responsible for them (the *who*).

Towards a Model for Leading the Change Process

In addition to a whole-system retention model, the organizational framework is also informed by a model for leading the change process. I considered two models for leading change, first the Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2016) and second, the Dual Operating System and its Eight Principles for Accelerating Change (Kotter, 2014). I will briefly summarize the Change Path Model and its limitations for this OIP before describing how the Dual Operating System is a compatible and recommended way forward.

Change path model. The Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2016), as illustrated in Figure 2.4, describes four stages—awakening, mobilization, acceleration, and institutionalization—to lead the change process. Essentially, it suggests that leading change first starts with an organizational analysis that awakens the organization to action. Next, mobilization makes sense of the required change and communicates it in a way so that organizational

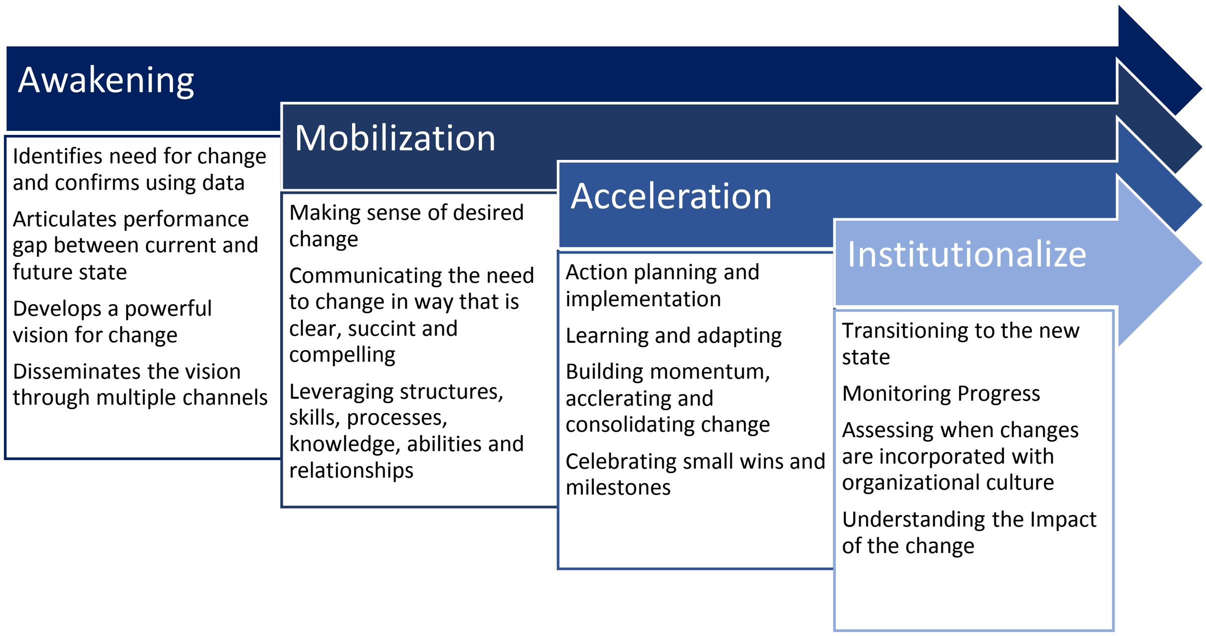

Figure 2.4. Change Path Model (Adapted from Cawsey et al., 2016, pp. 53-55).

stakeholders and change recipients will support the change. Acceleration is presented as an action planning and implementation stage that will bring the change to life. Finally, institutionalization describes a monitoring and evaluation framework that gauges progress towards goals and proposes new structures and processes that help to cement the change within the organization (Cawsey et al., 2016). It is clear that throughout this approach, formal managers and change leaders are the ones driving organizational change.

Overall, the Change Path Model is a well-articulated model for leading the change process; however, I have two criticisms that caution me from its implementation at SBCC and for this OIP. First, it is too unwieldy of a model and therefore intimidating to implement in the "real world". Because increasing awareness and coordination of retention and completion across a post-secondary institution is complex and involves multiple stakeholders, a change model that is simple to understand, communicate, and enact will be preferable. As a system leader, the last thing that I want to do is to lose people in jargon and avoidable complexity. Second, the Change Path Model comes across as top-heavy and dictatorial, relying on formal leadership which conflicts with my systems and servant leadership position that encourages participation from all layers and levels of the organization (see Chapter 1).

Dual operating system. While some have criticized Kotter for being too prescriptive (Cawsey et al., 2016), the Dual Operating System (Kotter, 2014) is compatible with my framework and POP. It resonated with me because of (1) the complementary approach, (2) the step-by-step process that is conducive for my POP, (3) the use of a guiding coalition and "volunteer army" (defined on pp. 51-52 below) as collaborative mechanisms for leading change, (4) the overall compatibility with a systems approach to leadership, and (5) the clarity around why change is necessary. I will summarize each of these strengths as they relate to SBCC below.

A complementary approach. Kotter (2014) found that the traditional organizational hierarchy is too large (i.e., bureaucratic) to have the strategic agility required to effectively promote a culture where change can occur. However, rather than destroying the hierarchy, Kotter (2014) proposed a dual operating system where a network that most resembles a "start-up", comes alongside the hierarchy and helps to facilitate change. Kotter is clear that this is not simply another task force, or committee, but rather an innovative, heart-driven, and goal-oriented network of organizational change leaders. A benefit of this approach is a lack of disruption for SBCC, as a dual operating system doesn't require a massive change to the organizational hierarchy and therefore does not carry the risk that might be associated with wide-reaching restructuring (Kotter, 2014).

Eight accelerators. Through sequential stages that are expanded upon in Chapter 3, (Change Implementation Plan and Change Process Communications Plan) Kotter's (2014) prescriptive framework can assist me and other change leaders with knowing how and when they should act. The stages include: (1) creating a sense of urgency around a big opportunity, (2) building a Guiding Retention Coalition, (3) clarifying strategic initiatives, (4) enlisting a campus-wide support base, (5) enabling action by removing barriers, (6) generating short-term wins, (7) sustaining acceleration, and (8) instituting change. Having clear and progressive stages is important at SBCC because it will allow participants from all levels and layers to know where we are in the change process in easy-to-understand language.

Guiding coalition and volunteer army. Another attractive element of this approach is the collaborative nature that relies on a guiding coalition and volunteer army. Rather than a group of consultants or specialists that have to be hired, a guiding coalition is a smaller group of individuals from various departments and levels who have a desire to take on strategic challenges while demonstrating the drive, commitment, connections, skills, and information to co-lead the change process (Kotter, 2014). The volunteer army, comprised of supporters from all levels and subsystems, likewise brings energy, commitment, and enthusiasm to problems. When developing retention and completion initiatives, they will be invaluable when deploying focus groups, trialing new ideas, or giving "ear-to-the-ground" feedback. This will be important at SBCC because in the past change was done to people, but in contrast, this plan proposes how informal leaders will be the ones to play a significant role in leading the change process.

Compatibility with a systems approach to leadership. This model is also compatible with a systems approach to leadership. Presented in Chapter 1, a systems-based approach can be used to optimize an organization (Coffey, 2010) by cultivating system conditions so that collective wisdom can bring about new ways of thinking, acting, and being (Senge et al., 2015). In a complementary way, Kotter (2014) summarized his approach to leading change using similar systems language:

> [The Dual Operating System and its eight accelerators]…create conditions under which people generate not just ideas, but ideas that are backed by good data from all silos and levels in a hierarchy. They create conditions under which people do not just develop initiatives, but understand that it is their job to implement them. They create conditions which guide people not just to keep daily operations running smoothly, but to improve day-to-day processes to make the work of the organization easier, more efficient, less costly, and more effective. (pp. 35-36)

Clarity around why change is necessary. This model for leading change suggests that simply identifying a problem, regardless of how important, is not an effective way to build momentum for change. Rather, identifying and clarifying a big opportunity is the way to build urgency and gain support. In advocating for a Big Opportunity statement, I, as a system leader, am required to think deeply about increasing awareness and coordination of retention and completion, and articulate it in a way that is rational (why us, why now), emotionally compelling (sincere, positive, authentic appeal to the heart), and memorable (clear, short, no jargon) (Kotter, 2014, pp. 139-141). An example statement can be found in Chapter 3.

The previous administration at SBCC had many strengths including an entrepreneurial spirit and vision. However, with the drive to be entrepreneurial and visionary, some decisions were made (or perceived to have been made) without full transparency or authenticity. By transparency, I mean that organizational stakeholders did not always know why decisions were being made, nor were they included in the decision making process. By authenticity, I mean that decisions were not made in a way that resonated with faculty and staff. In developing a Big Opportunity statement, I am intentionally providing opportunities to clarify why change is necessary and including the perspectives of those who may be impacted by the change the most.

To reiterate, the POP under investigation is how to increase awareness and coordination of retention and completion activities at SBCC. In the preceding section, I have summarized an organizational framework based on a literature-informed, whole-system retention model (Beatty-Guenter, 1994; Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Karp, 2011) that addresses the “who” and “what” at the centre of coordination, while an approach to leading the change process (Kotter, 2014) clarifies the “how” (i.e., eight accelerators) and the “why” (i.e., big opportunity) at the centre of awareness. It is from the perspective of this framework that four possible solutions to the POP are presented for consideration.

Possible Solutions to Address POP (What do do?)

When constructing possible solutions, there is not a single “magic bullet” answer, nor are solutions based on independent strategies. For example, increasing counselling support or introducing career services, while relevant, are not considered valid for the purposes of this OIP. Stated another way, pursuing fragmented strategies is ineffectual to address systemic challenges related to awareness and coordination; rather, holistic solutions are presented for consideration. Qualifying solutions are those that purposely involve key stakeholders, include perspectives from other subsystems, rely on a high degree of interaction and relationship between the subsystems, and support a primary goal (though solutions may also meet mutually exclusive secondary goals and objectives that may also be valuable for a particular subsystem).

Four solutions are proposed for possible implementation. They include: (1) establishing a retention committee, (2) implementing an early alert system, (3) launching a comprehensive orientation program, and (4) developing a Digital Eco-system. After discussing each of these proposals in detail, I advocate for and chose one solution for this OIP.

Solution Proposal 1 – Establishing a Retention Committee

One solution for consideration is establishing a retention committee. Tinto (1993) maintained that "institutions should place ownership for institutional change in the hands of those across the campus who have to implement that change" (p. 150) and that "institutional action should be coordinated in a collaborative fashion to ensure a systemic, campus-wide approach to student retention" (p. 151). In this way, a committee, as described in Table 3 (below), would be expected to assess and influence retention-related awareness and coordination initiatives from start to finish.

Retention committees can be effective, but only when they are chaired or comprised of senior academic or administrative officers who have the capacity and responsibility to shape policies, practices, expectations, and processes (Kalsbeek, 2013, p. 106). As Registrar, I have the agency to either lead or influence key directions related to academic policies and student services, so for this solution, I put forward a retention committee that is chaired by the Registrar (i.e., an academic and administrative campus leader) and includes representation from multiple subsystems (see Table 3). Given that I provide oversight to enrolment management at SBCC (see Table 1, Functional Responsibilities of the Registrar), and interact with each subsystem, I suspect that it will not come as a surprise that I would lead this group, and when anticipating who might protest, I am thankful that overall, SBCC does not have a territorial culture. At the same time, I will need to be cognizant of faculty, who not too long ago had greater "say" in

Table 3.

Retention Committee Composition

Stakeholder Group	Possible Positions
Student Oriented Subsystem	• Student Representative • Student Support Services Manager • Residence Life Coordinator
Academic Oriented Subsystem	• Program Chairs • Faculty Representative (up to 3) • Learning Services - Learning Coach
Administrative Oriented Subsystem	• Office of the Registrar – Student Advisor • IT – Information Systems Specialist • Learning Services – Learning Management System Course Developer
Market Oriented Subsystem	• Director, Communications • Career Services • Registrar (Committee Chair)

program planning and operations, but have recently had this level of autonomy taken way. As a leader, I will counteract the negative sentiments resulting from previous decisions by intentionally including faculty representatives, perhaps as many as three to represent each school division at SBCC.

Braxton et al. (2004) exemplified a retention committee that is both student-initiated and run, focusing on minority, underrepresented populations that are at risk (p. 56). While a student-driven approach is not necessarily intended for SBCC, a future committee would prioritize student-oriented perspectives (i.e., student representation, residence life coordinator). In the past the Student Association did not engage with administrative committees and task forces in a healthy and productive way. However, due to recent restructuring conducted by the Student

Association, there seems to be a much more healthy approach to collaboration in place, and there is a greater appetite on all sides to work together.

Some of the benefits of this solution include negligible costs to get going (Hossler & Anderson, 2005) and the intentional inclusion of multiple stakeholders. I anticipate that faculty, who have at times felt neglected in planning process, especially will embrace this solution. At the same time, unionized employees may feel that additional work is being added to their roles, and that they don’t have adequate time to fully commit to additional responsibilities. It is this release of time for each member to participate fully in committee activities that will likely be the greatest hurdle to overcome. As a leader, it will be my role to advocate for this group and the important work they will do. Negotiating this will be my responsibility and one that I will address through my interactions with the College Leadership and Executive Leadership Teams.

However, the risk is that simply by establishing a committee, there is no guarantee that anything will change. In addition, there is a danger that additional committee responsibilities will be done off the side of someone’s desk without the expertise and time required to make retention a priority. To minimize risk and be effective, Katzenbach and Smith (cited in Bolman & Deal, 2013) advised that high performance teams should (1) have the authority to act without management getting in the way, (2) set specific and measurable goals, (3) be of a manageable size, (4) have the right mix of expertise, (5) develop a common commitment to working relationships, and (6) hold themselves accountable (pp. 107-108). In light of this, a retention committee, if developed, should emphasize these priorities to ensure effectiveness. In essence, ensuring that these conditions are in place becomes my role as a system leader and chair.

Solution Proposal 2 – Creating an Early Warning System

According to the *2010 What Works in Student Retention Survey*, an Early Warning System was listed among the top four retention initiatives (Habley et al., 2012). The premise behind it is that by identifying students at-risk of dropping out early enough in the term, appropriate resources and interventions can be put in place to help the student recover and raise their grades (Habley et al., 2012). The most academically-focused of the proposals, this solution raises awareness of retention by engaging with each subsystem to develop administrative processes, change policies, and connects students with campus services.

Administrative-oriented priorities within this solution include scheduling, grading and attendance, and systems limitations. First, in order to be useful, notification needs to occur within the first five or six weeks of the term to be effective (Tinto, 1993). At SBCC, a large portion of course offerings are offered in 3 to 7 week blocks. Therefore, by the time risk factors are identified, the student may be 30% or 50% through a course which is too late to prescribe appropriate interventions. Second, the current grading policy does not require assessments to be graded prior to a specific point in a given course. In addition, SBCC does not have a formal attendance policy. So, it is possible for one student to attend every class yet not have a graded assessment within the first six weeks, though another student (in a different class) could miss every class and pass the first assessment. The third challenge is to ensure that there is proper integration between the Student Information System (SIS), Learning Management System (LMS), and reporting software so that data are accurate and accessible. Herein lies a risk. In collecting data, SBCC should avoid being data rich and information poor—in other words, having access to lots of data (e.g., who is struggling), but not understanding what they mean (e.g., why they are struggling) or knowing what should be done (e.g., how to change the results).

When identifying those who may resist, from an academic-oriented subsystem perspective, I anticipate that faculty will be hesitant to provide grades early as it would require, in some cases, a re-write of course material and assessment methodology. This conclusion is based on a policy proposal that was recently put forward that would have required instructors to ensure that 25% of course assignments would be graded by 25% of the way through the course. Faculty were strongly opposed. In this instance, I feel that my shortcoming was that I did not provide a strong enough rationale for why the policy was proposing the change. In addition, the motion was coming from me as Registrar, and it was clear that in this case I did not conduct appropriate prior consultations. In the future, I would take care to inform faculty of why this kind of change would be helpful and allow the recommendation to be revised and perhaps presented by a faculty member rather than me.

From a student-oriented subsystem perspective, SBCC is likely not equipped to support an influx of students deemed to be "at-risk". Without changes to staffing, this course of action could place extra demands on key stakeholders (e.g., support services staff). To assuage the concerns of staff, I would take care to ensure appropriate staffing levels by advocating for moderate staffing increases and budgeting appropriately.

In order to implement an early warning system at SBCC, four policy and procedure changes are recommended. The first is to amend the existing grading policy so that 25% of a course grade is due and recorded in the SIS within the first 25% of the course. Percentages are used so that courses offered in shorter blocks (i.e., modules) can be accommodated. The second recommendation is to establish an attendance policy where student participation is required and recorded. The third recommendation is to collect early alert data (based on grading and attendance information) and generate a report that can be sent to the program chair (or academic coach) for follow-up purposes. A fourth recommendation is to augment existing learner services staff with additional tutors and an academic coach assigned to each of the three program chairs.

The positive contribution for an early alert system is that, in the future, key college staff will be aware of which students require academic assistance. For example, when an alert is issued for a particular student, an academic coach would be notified and mobilized to meet with the student and develop a learning plan that includes (1) clarifying goals (e.g., what does the student wish to accomplish; what are the consequences of poor performance), (2) identifying appropriate resources to access (e.g., tutors; accessibility services accommodation plans), and (3) scheduling follow-up activities (e.g., mid-term check-in; tutor/academic coach follow-up). This process will require accessing student-data, coordinating multiple systems, and connecting key personnel to students in a timely way. Costs to implement an early warning system are related to system configuration as well as an increase of part-time wages for tutors and academic coaches (see Table 4).

Table 4.

Early Warning System Estimated Costs

Description	Cost	Type
System Configuration	**$20,000**	**One Time**
Additional Tutors, Academic Coaches	**$50,000**	**Annual, recurring**

Solution Proposal 3 – Coordinating an Orientation Program

Tinto (1993) found that the transition from past associations to the new reality of college life is a significant one. Because the first term is critical, transitional programs (e.g., orientation) assist students with overcoming or coping with social and academic difficulties that arise during the transition period to college (Tinto, 1993).

From a student perspective, post-secondary orientation programs are the foundation upon which student success is built (Habley et al., 2012). As a collaborative institutional effort, first-year orientation initiatives balance and blend a number of activities including (1) helping students understand their responsibilities; (2) providing students with information about policies, programs, procedures, and requirements; (3) informing students about the availability of services and programs; (4) assisting students to become familiar with the campus and community; and (5) providing structured opportunities for students to interact with faculty, staff, and current students (Habley et al., 2012; Mullendore & Banahan, 2005). More succinctly, orientation is a connecting process that bonds a student and the institution—counteracting tendencies of non-involvement—so that college can quickly become a meaningful part of a student's life (Beatty-Guenter, 1994).

Orientation programs typically occur within smaller learning communities or cohorts (i.e., the group shares common interests and are engaged in learning with and from each other) or through a first-year seminar approach (i.e., the group engages in discussion based courses designed to assist students in their social and academic development) (Habley et al., 2012). Regardless of form, orientation is concerned with integrating the student within the various subsystems of the PSI ensuring they are equipped for success.

At SBCC, there is no formal orientation program. Rather, students enroll, register, and commence study with very little primer of available services and little coordination between the Office of the Registrar (administrative subsystem), Student Support Services (student subsystem), and academic program areas (academic subsystem). Because all programs at SBCC are standalone (i.e., with little shared academic connection to other programs), and since there are over 10 program start dates scattered throughout the year, offering a single orientation program each September is not a viable option. Instead, this solution recommends an online orientation hosted on the school's LMS that would be made available 6-8 weeks prior to a program's start date. Completion of the online orientation module would then be required prior to the program's add/drop date with incentives for students who complete it early.

Overall, this solution is driven by a commitment to student welfare (Tinto, 1993, p. 146) and will include content to support their ongoing success (Beatty-Guenter, 1994; Karp, 2011). For example, content grouped within four modules could include topics related to Mental Health and Wellness, Personal Accountability, Academic Support, and Campus and Personal Safety. Each module would contain several short videos, quizzes, and tasks for students to complete once on campus (see Figure 2.5).

SBCC's Student Support Services team has the expertise and ability to deliver content though the team does not have the capacity to produce or host videos. Learning Services has a video production team that can be contracted by organizational departments. Another need is to hire a project manager or First-Year Transitions Coordinator capable of working with the Office of the Registrar, Learning Services, Student Support Services, and individual program areas to plan, coordinate, and monitor results. I propose that this position be situated within the Student Support Services Team.

Figure 2.5. A First-year Online Orientation Program

While up-front costs, described in Table 5 below and related to video production and hiring of staff, are not insignificant, the challenges related to multiple enrolment intakes per year can be addressed through this approach. If only one or two strategies are considered, focusing scarce intuitional resources on a frontloaded orientation strategy is a smart investment (Tinto, 1993).

Table 5.

Orientation Program Estimated Costs

Description	Cost	Type
Video Development (12 videos)	**$36,000**	**One Time (3-5 year life cycle)**
First-Year Transitions Coordinator	**$80,000**	**Annual, recurring**
Incentives for Early Completion	**$2,000**	**Annual, recurring**

Overall, an online orientation program will be well-received at SBCC. First, with multiple new student intakes per year, administrative staff have debated how best to do new student orientation, concluding that it would require an enormous amount of energy and resources to conduct a consistent on-campus orientation program over ten times per year. With an online approach, the college will be able to provide a common onboarding approach to all students—not just to those who live in residence or who might be fortunate enough to start in September. I have also spoken with the Director of Learning Services who manages the LMS and video production teams. They are very open to collaborating in this way, and their video production team in particular is available to help in the spring, a downtime for them. In addition, during my time at SBCC, I have demonstrated the ability to advocate for change, including funding related to new positions, physical spaces, and technology. The common denominator has been that these changes have been for the benefit of students and our ability to serve them. This proposed solution is no different as it is strategically focused on improving the conditions that support student success—in this case, from the moment they arrive on campus.

Solution Proposal 4 – Developing a Digital Eco-system around the Mobile-first Learner

In a recent survey of 1,000 students, 87% indicated that the tech savviness of a PSI is important when applying (Ellucian, 2017). At SBCC, education-related technology is not just one software system, but rather a hybrid of various platforms including an independent student SIS, LMS, productivity (email, document management), apprenticeship registration, residence life management, and athletics systems. This multiplicity results in the fragmentation of systems. For example, students at SBCC are required to log into 4-6 systems depending on their program and choice of living arrangements. In contrast, 93% of learners today expect that they should only have to login once (Ellucian, 2017).

This solution proposes a single Digital Eco-system built around the mobile-first learner (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). A Digital Eco-system is an interdependent group of enterprises, people, and things sharing a standardized digital platform for a mutually beneficial purpose and requiring the same technology, organization, and leadership (Gartner, 2017). In an enrolment management context, a Digital Eco-system is a single integrated information system built around a mobile application (i.e., “app”) connecting stakeholders (e.g., faculty, service providers, students) and services (e.g., advising, tutoring, counselling, student life) via a mobile app for the purpose of supporting student success.

This idea is consistent with current expectations as 97% of students indicated that technologies to support them outside of class are just as important as learning technologies (Ellucian, 2017). Moreover, 94% of students believe that “connecting with faculty members, other students, events suggestions, deadline alerts, and course suggestions based on academic performance and interest would help them feel more emotionally connected to their institutions” (Ellucian, 2017, p. 4).

The proposed solution would be built around a mobile application (or app) that allows learners to connect with the educational technologies they are required to use every day (using a single login). Ideally, the Digital Eco-system would be introduced and used prior to arrival, hosting orientation-related modules as well as future authoring questions that can reinforce the correlation between success in school and life after school (Finnie et al., 2017).

Once students begin their college journey, this solution could consider entry characteristics (e.g., previous academic performance, demographics), current enrolment (e.g., course load and selection), and behaviour (e.g., current academic performance, attendance) and use AI to determine the level of risk associated with each student and send learner-specific, "just-in-time" mobile notifications to the student including reminders of assignment due dates, grades, and connections to instructors, tutors, resources, and student success-related events. These messages will allow learners to know if they are on track in a given class, what is required in order to be successful, and who they may connect with for help. The Digital Eco-system is also compatible with the whole-system retention model included in this paper's organizational framework as it becomes the means of sorting students, connecting students, supporting students, and transforming both the student experience and the organization itself. It is also compatible with the current generation's expectations around technology and using it to enhance the student experience in and out of the classroom (Ellucian, 2017; Seemiller & Grace, 2016).

In 2012, SBCC launched a mandatory entrepreneurship app for all students. As a co-curricular graduation requirement, the gamified app (recently discontinued) helped students understand the key concepts of entrepreneurship. The cost to develop the technology was over $100,000 and included research and development, app hosting, and an annual service/ maintenance contract. The scope of this project is similar, so an estimate of costs should at least start with this figure. In addition, because the scope of the project is large and will likely have a 3-5 year cycle, a Systems Analyst salary ($90,000) is also proposed (see Table 8 for detailed costs and approval process for funds).

Because the experience with the entrepreneurship app is quite recent and had mixed results, a risk is that the college community may view any new solution involving an app through the lens of that experience. The primary benefits of this solution include: (1) engagement with subsystems across the organization through a coordinated Digital Eco-system platform and (2) communicating with students in a meaningful way (e.g., mobile device-based notifications).

A Combined Solution

When considering these four options in the context of this OIP, I conclude that a single solution may not provide a complete answer. First, as increasing awareness and coordination of retention have been identified in the POP, Solution # 1 (Retention Committee) brings campus stakeholders together to satisfy the need for awareness; however, this option does little to identify which activities will be pursued and coordinated. The danger is that a lack of focus will result in ineffectiveness. Solution # 2 (Early Warning System), while shown to improve academic performance, is primarily linked to academic stakeholder interests and may not engage other stakeholders as fully. In contrast, Solution # 3 (Orientation Program) emphasizes campus-wide engagement to a greater degree, however does so near the start of each program rather than throughout the student lifecycle. Lastly, Solution # 4 (Digital Eco-System) suggests a robust way of engaging mobile-first learners throughout the post-secondary experience using a medium that is comfortable for them; however it does not outline who will lead the change process.

It is because of these strengths and limitations that I propose a hybrid or combined solution. Solution # 1 (Retention Committee, called a Guiding Retention Coalition in Chapter 3) identifies those campus stakeholders who will co-lead the change; and Solution # 4 (Digital Eco-system) outlines the primary task of coordinating the campus to benefit the current generation of students. In identifying a combined solution, SBCC will have reasonable chance of success by placing ownership of change in the hands of those who have to implement the change (Tinto, 1993, p. 150) and taking a collaborative and systemic approach to student retention (Tinto, 1993, p. 151). After having articulated a solution that is inclusive of major stakeholders and the broader student lifecycle, it is important now to anticipate and prepare for various responses to change. This is addressed in the following section.

Leadership Approaches to Change

I recognize that when leading change as significant as this, it will be difficult to get everyone on board. Habley et al. (2012) described four attitudes toward change, including cynics, skeptics, collaborators, and activists, that can be visualized on a bell curve (see Figure 2.6 below).

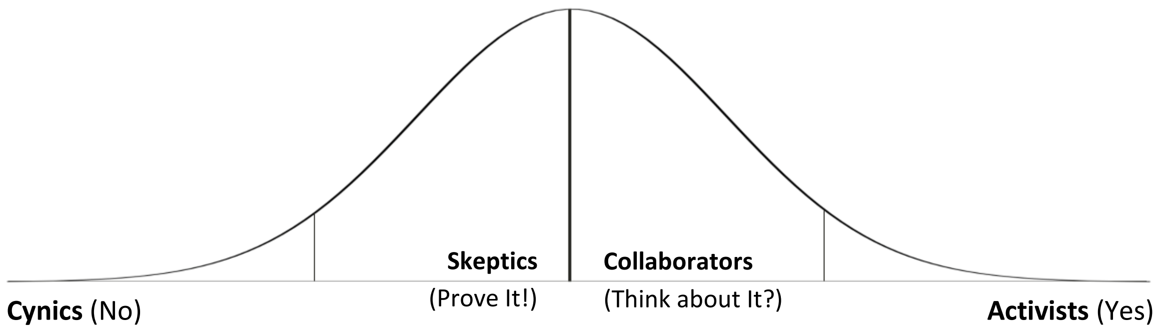

Figure 2.6. Attitudes toward Change (Adapted from Habley et al., 2012, p. 393).

First, cynics are those individuals who oppose change and start with "no" even prior to engaging in discussion. Second, skeptics are those who are willing to change, but need to be convinced that the change is a good idea. Third, collaborators are open to change but usually need to think about first. Fourth, activists thrive on change and always start from "yes" (Habley et al., 2012). When preparing for these responses to change, I can see how my own bias and perspective of various stakeholders can colour my judgement.

For example, whether at SBCC or elsewhere, I often see faculty members balk at change—not all, but I do stereotype this group as skeptics, if not cynics. If I take a step back and recognize that negative or cautious reactions to change may be due to previous experiences with change, such as forced-change or failed change attempts (Cawsey et al., 2016), I can see that the majority of faculty may actually be willing to change, but to do so, they may need to be convinced. Therefore, I anticipate that it will be with groups like this where much of my time and energy (especially in the communication stage in Chapter 3) will be focused (Habley et al., 2012). In fact, when choosing retention committee/coalition members, I should ensure that skeptics are included to ensure that their responses to change are considered up front, rather than later in the process (where they may be viewed as resistors or barriers to change).

At the same time, I should be conscious of ensuring that there are enough collaborators to balance the group. From my experience at SBCC, members of the administrative-oriented subsystem (e.g., Office of the Registrar, Internet Technology Services Department) and student-oriented subsystem (e.g., Residence Life, Student Support Services) are collaborators who are open to change and being involved in the change process. As the plan to communicate the need for change is presented in the next section, anticipating these responses to change will be helpful to effectively reach specific audiences.

Plan to Communicate the Need for Change

For a change plan to be successful, communication focused on the need to change is critical, as it is from this point that change can be catalyzed. For organizational staff who are concerned with their day-to-day responsibilities, they may not have an understanding of student retention and completion, its implications for their role, and why it is important to the institution. While a Change Process Communications Plan is included in Chapter 3, I describe a plan to communicate the need for change as depicted in Table 6 below. This plan supports the hybrid solution proposed earlier in this chapter and considers key audiences and their anticipated response to change as described in the previous section.

Table 6.

Plan to Communicate the Need for Change (First Six Months)

Audience	Anticipated Response	Timeline	Objectives
Executive Leadership Team	**Activist**	**Month 1**	• **raise awareness of key issues (situation analysis)** • **gain perspective from others who may see the problem in slightly different ways** • **get initial support, including budgetary approval to keep moving**
College Leadership Team	**Activist**	**Month 2**	• **raise awareness of key issues (situation analysis)** • **get support for Guiding Retention Coalition**
Guiding Retention Coalition	**Activist/Collaborators**	**Month 2-6**	• **raise awareness of key issues (situation analysis)** • **understand the needs of Generation Z Learners** • **importance of drafting the Big Opportunity** • **recognize current system limitations** • **clarify digital eco-system concept**
Faculty	**Skeptics/Cynics**	**Month 3-6**	• **raise awareness of key issues (situation analysis)** • **emphasize inclusive process**
Student Support Services Staff	**Collaborators**	**Month 3-6**	• **raise awareness of key issues (situation analysis)** • **recognize current system limitations** • **clarify digital eco-system concept**
Students		**Month 6**	• **This is what you told us (what we have heard),** • **This is what we are doing about it**

The plan to communicate the need for change is also contained within the Change Process Communications Plan Phase 1: Building Urgency, Support, and Momentum (see Chapter 3). It is during this phase, approximately six months long, where priorities such as raising awareness of the facts around student retention and completion to various campus stakeholders, building the Guiding Retention Coalition, and drafting a Big Opportunity statement, are included. While communication plan details are reserved for Chapter 3, I describe the plan to communicate the need to change from the perspective of key audiences.

Executive and College Leadership Teams

I will start with the Executive (vice presidents and president) and College Leadership Teams (Executive team plus Deans and Directors). SBCC's current leadership is attuned to engaging in enrolment management-related discussions with me, and based on my experience with them so far, I anticipate that they will be supportive. Using the approaches to change described in the previous section, I believe that the executive and college leadership teams will be activists who will support and advocate for change. This is not to say that they will be passive, so I will need to be prepared with accurate information, clear presentations, and an ability to provide well-thought out answers to their questions. By raising awareness of the facts around student retention and completion to various stakeholders, I provide a situation analysis that essentially answers the question "how bad is it?" For this, I will draw from the Cohort Incompletion Impact Report (see Appendix B), Wellness Academic Impact Analysis (see Appendix D), and provide an overview of Generation Z learners and our ability to meet their expectations.

Guiding Retention Coalition

As the Guiding Retention Coalition comes together, I will ensure that they understand the needs of Generation Z Learners. Practically, this may mean providing a copy of *Generation Z Goes to College* (Seemiller & Grace, 2016) to each member and facilitating a group exercise that assesses our collective readiness to serve these students in a way they will resonate with. With this fresh in their minds, I will also introduce the Big Opportunity statement and the rationale for why this is important. My ability to describe our current system limitations and clarify the concept of the Digital Eco-system will also be a driver supporting the need to change.

Faculty

In an earlier section, I have mentioned that the majority of faculty may be skeptical of change. In my experience, faculty are skeptical, not because they are resistant to all change, but because they wish to be involved and to help shape it. Recognizing that they may have good reason to be skeptical based on past experiences, I will take an approach that, more than anything, attempts to be inclusive. By this I mean that they will also have a situation analysis presentation where they can be informed and heard. They will also be one of the first groups that I will target for recruiting Guiding Retention Coalition Members.

Student Support Services

The last thing that student support services staff will want is increased workload or complexity in their workload. These employees care most about students, so when proposing the need for change, specifically to migrate towards a Digital Eco-system, the rationale has to focus on students and not on the shiny, new technology. Emphases for me to communicate the need to change will be centred on our current system limitations and what the future might look like (including possibilities that will make their day-today tasks more efficient and connections to students more effective).

Students

While each of the previous groups will have a situation analysis presentation, for students, I believe the approach will be more casual, essentially sharing what we have heard from them and what we are going to do about it. For example, explaining that the need for change will be focused on supporting students with the goal of completion, will be a priority. Referring to three of the challenges indicated in the most recent Student Satisfaction Survey (Appendix C) will reinforce to students that their feedback is important and will be acted upon.

Specifically, students cited the following as challenges: (1) The institution does whatever it can to help me reach my educational goals, (2) Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course, and (3) Students are notified early in the term if they are doing poorly in a class. Furthermore, illustrating how the change will address Health and Wellness Academic Impacts (Appendix D) including anxiety, depression, alcohol use, relationship difficulties, and finances, is a significant opportunity. By engaging students in this way, I will be able to share how a Digital Eco-system designed around their needs will address these student-identified challenges.

Altogether, if these five groups—leadership, Guiding Retention Coalition, faculty, student support services staff, and students— are aware of the need for change based on solid data and a vision for the future, they will not only be supportive but engaged collaborators and activists, committed to optimizing the system.

Conclusion

Within this bridging chapter, I have proposed an organizational framework that addresses two distinct aspects of change: first, the *who* and *what* at the centre of coordination, and the *how* and *why* at the heart of awareness. First, recognizing that PSIs are complex and have student-, academic-, administrative-, and market-oriented subsystems, I have suggested that a whole-system retention model (Beatty-Guenter, 1994; Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Karp, 2011) is necessary to identify and incorporate the various perspectives (*the who*) and coordinate them to sort, support, connect, and transform students (*the what*). Second, to mobilize the college community and increase awareness of student retention at SBCC, a process for leading the change is required. Therefore, I chose the Dual Operating System (Kotter, 2014) because, as a system leader, I appreciate the clarity around *how* change will be led (i.e., eight accelerators) as well as a strong case for *why* it is necessary (i.e., the Big Opportunity). I suggested Kotter's (2014) approach because it (1) complements SBCC's existing structure yet encourages strategic innovation, (2) is compatible with the POP, (3) intentionally relies on collaboration to lead change, (4) is supportive of a systems approach to leadership that is focused on optimizing system conditions for greater organizational effectiveness, and (5) provides clarity around why change is necessary.

Together this framework enables me as a system leader to raise awareness of student retention and completion at SBCC while coordinating efforts in a way that will resonate with today's Generation Z learner. It is against this backdrop that Chapter 3 describes how to implement, evaluate, and communicate a Change Implementation Plan introducing a Guiding Retention Coalition and Digital Eco-System that is designed around the needs of today's mobile-first learners.

Chapter 3 - Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I argued for an organizational framework based on (1) a "whole-system" retention model (Beatty-Guenter, 1994; Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Karp, 2011) and (2) an inclusive approach to leading the change process (Kotter, 2014). An advantage of the proposed framework is that it addresses the central challenges of coordination and awareness by identifying two distinct aspects of change. First, a retention model that embraces a whole-system approach (Beatty-Guenter, 1994; Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Karp, 2011) addresses the *who* and *what* at the centre of coordination. Second, an inclusive approach to leading the change process (Kotter, 2014) addresses the *how* and *why* at the heart of awareness.

I also advocated for a systems approach to leadership (Ackoff, 1994; Coffey, 2010; Senge et al., 2015) and outlined four possible solutions including (1) establishing a retention committee, (2) creating an early warning system, (3) coordinating an orientation program, and (4) developing a Digital Eco-system around the mobile-first learner. In presenting these proposals, I argued for multi-dimensional solutions each requiring a high degree of interaction between organizational subsystems inherent within the college environment to operationalize the retention model (Beatty-Guenter, 1994; Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Karp, 2011). Moreover, the presented solutions were realistic for me, as an aspiring systems leader, to implement given my position as Registrar, a director-level role that intersects and interacts with each subsystem. For example, I work directly (and indirectly through my teams) with academic program areas (e.g., program approvals, academic council), student affairs (e.g., accessibility services, mental health and wellness, residence life) administrative support services (e.g., Student Information System (SIS), enrolment services), and the market (i.e., career services, recruitment).

I’m not sure that there is another position at SBCC that works within and can influence all four subsystems as much as mine does. Rather than exercising authority or using position to force direction, goals, and strategies upon college stakeholders, leading this kind of systemic change requires a collaborative team builder who can influence others (Waters & Hightower, 2016). This is where a Systems Approach to Leadership and Servant Leadership find their nexus.

First, a Systems Approach to Leadership requires a system builder (i.e., enabler, facilitator, and supporter) who optimizes the whole system including individuals (e.g., faculty members, students, administrative staff), teams (e.g., advisors, counselors), and business units (e.g., Student Support Services, Office of the Registrar, Information Technology Department, and Faculty Association) to facilitate change (Coffey, 2010). Because a problem like increasing awareness and coordination of retention and completion at SBCC is complex, I will not be able to realize transformational change by myself. Rather, when solving complex problems, system leaders rely on collective wisdom to co-create the future, always ensuring that the right people are in the room (Senge et al., 2015). The right people who will be relied upon to share their wisdom and co-create the future in this case are key stakeholders from academic-, student-, administrative-, and market-oriented subsystems (Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007).

Together, they will be part of a Guiding Coalition (Kotter, 2014)—a retention-focused working group designed to initiate, accelerate, and sustain change. This coalition, to be unpacked in the Change Implementation Plan and Change Process Communications Plan sections that follow, works within the college’s established hierarchy, is inclusive of multiple perspectives within the organization, and is empowered to facilitate change. The primary task for this group will be to develop a Digital Eco-system (Gartner, 2017)—designed for mobile-first learners

(Ellucian, 2017; Seemiller & Grace, 2016)—thereby transforming the college experience by ensuring that the whole system is connected and supports student success.

Second, my role is that of Servant Leader, someone who shows the way (Greenleaf, 1977) and encourages growth and development of Guiding Retention Coalition members that allows them to achieve more than they thought possible (Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2016). By demonstrating Servant Leadership, I intentionally include informal leaders from various levels of the college rather than rely on those in formal leadership positions. When approaching the coalition in this way, some participants may not believe that they are in positions to facilitate change; however, in this plan they are encouraged and empowered to do so.

Chapter 3 now outlines a Change Implementation Plan before describing Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation and Leadership Ethics sections respectively. I also propose a Change Process Communications Plan that highlights the importance of a systems-centric approach. Finally, next steps and future considerations are presented.

Change Implementation Plan

This Change Implementation Plan demonstrates a SMART (i.e., specific, measurable, attainable, results-focused, and time-bound) approach. I present an overarching objective indicative of the desired future organizational state along with specific goals and their supporting strategies, timelines, key participants, and anticipated results. I also discuss possible stakeholder reactions to change and how various concerns will be addressed. Finally, I present additional supports & resources that may be required, identify implementation issues that may arise, and acknowledge limitations of the change plan. In doing so, I demonstrate to what end this plan is attainable and how it will mitigate against possible future obstacles.

Objective, Goals, and Strategies

The overarching objective of this Change Implementation Plan is that within 5 years, Silver Bay Community College (SBCC) will develop a student-focused retention and completion culture supported by a Digital Eco-system designed around the mobile-first learner. In doing so, SBCC will increase the program completion rate of certificate programs to 90%, diploma programs to 85%, and degree programs to 80%, and as a result will decrease the amount of student-related revenue lost due to attrition by 50%. To achieve this objective, I outline two goals along with supporting strategies, participants, timelines, and results.

- **Goal 1 –** Within the next 6 months, I will establish and lead a responsive and empowered team comprised of institutional stakeholders representing the college's four subsystems (Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007) and based on Kotter's (2014) dual operating system.

- **Goal 2 –** Within the next 4 years, this team will develop a Digital Eco-system (Gartner, 2017) for the mobile-first learner (Ellucian, 2017; Seemiller & Grace, 2016) in order to coordinate the organization (i.e., system) and its parts (i.e., subsystems) to support student success.

The Change Implementation Plan, delineated as Table 7 below, presents the above goals, strategies, and key participants in a clear and concise manner. To describe how the plan will be implemented, it will also be organized as an eight-stage change process including specified timelines.

Table 7.

Change Implementation Plan

Goals		Strategies	Key Participants	Timeline
Goal 1: Within the next 6 months, I will establish and lead a responsive and empowered team of institutional stakeholders representing the college's four subsystems (Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007) and based on Kotter's (2014) dual operating system.	**Stage 1**	A. Draft a Big Opportunity Statement	• Registrar and leaders from each Subsystem (Draft 1) • Guiding Retention Coalition (Draft 2)	Month 1 Month 5
		B. Gain support from Executive Team by providing a situation analysis and building a sense of urgency	• Registrar • Executive Leadership Team (ELT) • (Vice Presidents & President)	Month 2
	Stage 2	C. Build the Guiding Retention Coalition	• Registrar • College Leadership Team • (ELT, Deans, and Directors)	Month 4
		D. Hire a Systems Analyst	• Registrar • Director of IT • Human Resources	Month 3
	Stage 3	E. Gather data and review primary retention challenges	• Registrar • Guiding Retention Coalition	Month 6
Goal 2: Within the next 4 years, this team will develop a Digital Eco-system (Gartner, 2017) for the mobile-first learner (Ellucian, 2017, Seemiller & Grace, 2016) in order to coordinate the organization (i.e., system) and its parts (i.e., subsystems) to support student success.		F. Understand current information systems capabilities, strengths, limitations, and gaps	• Registrar • Director of IT • Guiding Retention Coalition	Month 9
		G. Coordinate information systems so that they speak to each other and connect institutional users	• Guiding Retention Coalition • Director of IT • Volunteer Army (with Stage 4)	Month 12-24 months
	Stage 4	H. Enlist a campus-wide support base (a.k.a. "volunteer army")	• Guiding Retention Coalition • Volunteer Army	Month 12-36 months
	Stage 5	I. Remove system barriers (e.g., lack of data, system limitations, policy, curriculum)	• Guiding Retention Coalition • Volunteer Army	Month 12-Ongoing

	Stage 6	J. Generate short-term wins	• Guiding Retention Coalition • Volunteer Army	Month 24-Ongoing
	Stage 7	K. Develop and trial a mobile application (or "app") that allows learners to connect with the educational technologies they are required to use every day	• Registrar • Director of IT • Guiding Retention Coalition • Volunteer Army	Month 36-48
	Stage 8	L. Sustain culture change through strategic communications	• Registrar • Director of Communications • Guiding Retention Coalition • Volunteer Army	Months 37-60
Results	**What are the anticipated outcomes?**			
• Organizational subsystems will be aware of retention-related factors and outcomes and are engaged with solutions • Stakeholders across the organization will be coordinated with the goal of student success • Students will benefit from a Digital Eco-system designed around their needs and with their success in view • Data will become robust and the institution will be better able to respond from a place of knowing (vs ignorance) • Increased numbers of students will graduate with college credentials • The college will generate additional student-related revenue • Through greater system-wide collaboration, the college will be transformed with greater ability to innovate and lead change in other areas				

To translate the change plan above, into sequential steps from which the change process can be led, it is also disaggregated into eight stages. These stages stem from Kotter's (2014) Dual Operating System and accompanying principles for accelerating change as described in Chapter 2 including: (1) create a sense of urgency around a big opportunity, (2) build a Guiding Retention Coalition, (3) clarify strategic initiatives, (4) enlist a campus-wide support base, (5) enable action by removing barriers, (6) generate short-term wins, (7) sustain acceleration, and (8) institute change. By aligning the Change Implementation Plan with Kotter's (2014) principles for leading and accelerating change, I demonstrate why the specific strategies are important, how they can be implemented, and in what order they should occur.

Stage 1: Create a Sense of Urgency around a Big Opportunity (Strategies A & B)

As a systems leader committed to optimizing SBCC for increased awareness and coordination of student retention and completion, I will develop a sense of urgency in the early stages of this plan. To do so, I will draft an initial “Big Opportunity” statement within the first month in collaboration with leaders from each subsystem (strategic initiative “A” in Table 7). Through my internal network of professional colleagues, I will form an ad hoc working group including a faculty representative (academic subsystem), IT leader (administrative subsystem), student leader (student subsystem), and development leader (market subsystem). For the statement to be successful, it will be rational (i.e., why us, why now), emotionally compelling (sincere, positive, appealing to the heart), and memorable (clear, short, without jargon) (Kotter, 2014, pp. 140-141). By developing and sharing a statement that can be used to create a sense of urgency (strategic initiative “B”), I will need to be careful not to use negative language causing undo concern or suggest that the current state is the result of one particular stakeholder group. Successful statements are developed by leaders who want (1) a strategy accelerated immediately and (2) a new way of operating to win in a twenty-first century (Kotter, 2014, p. 141).

Immediacy. First, with the solution at the centre of this organizational improvement plan in focus, I will want to accelerate its development right away so that the changes can have immediate benefit for today’s students. As discussed previously in Chapter 2, post-secondary students now expect a level of organizational tech-savviness and recognize the importance of technologies that support them in and outside of class (Ellucian, 2017). When I as a systems leader know this, a failure to respond is negligence that can exacerbate retention related issues causing frustration for students and institutional stakeholders alike.

There are times however, when organizational bureaucracy can stall the change process. This plan anticipates this eventuality and relies on a dual operating system (Kotter, 2014) with its empowered Guiding Retention Coalition and "volunteer army" rather than the traditional hierarchy alone. In addition, this plan recognizes and celebrates wins along the way, thereby informing the college of progress and the effectiveness of change, thus making the campus community more receptive to ongoing change. In this way, only 5-10% of an organization is required to be engaged to make the change a reality (Kotter, 2014).

New ways of winning. Second, the challenge of developing a Digital Eco-system as a new way of operating is in response to the shifting expectations of mobile-first learners. While there are elements of a Digital Eco-system in place such as a SIS and Learning Management System (LMS), they are based on a 20^{th} century modality concerned with managing transactions and storing information. A 21^{st} century perspective, in contrast, is transformational, connecting the organization and its stakeholders, and providing information (e.g., events, deadline alerts, and suggestions) to learners allowing them to feel emotionally connected to their school (Ellucian, 2017). Creating this environment not only allows students to "win," but the college as well.

Some of the barriers that may prevent this change to be realized are technological in nature. For example, what are the capabilities and limitations of current systems and how integrated are they (i.e., how well do they "talk to each other"?)? Other barriers may be experiential. For example, multiple mobile apps have been introduced in the past and previous experiences were not all positive. While most of the students and many of the staff who developed or used them are no longer at SBCC, in my experience institutional memory is difficult to erase. As a result, I along with the Guiding Retention Coalition and volunteer will need to be diligent in explaining the purpose of the Digital Eco-system and corresponding app and how they are different from previous technologies.

The initial Big Opportunity statement will be used as the catalyst for raising awareness, building excitement, and creating urgency among campus leaders and stakeholder groups (Strategic Initiative “B”). Details, including a sample Big Opportunity statement and how I will create a sense of urgency with campus leaders are detailed in the Change Process Communications Plan (see Figure 3.3).

Stage 2: Build a Guiding Retention Coalition (Strategies C & D)

As a system leader, my role will be to recruit, coordinate, and support the Guiding Retention Coalition (strategy “C”) by the 4-month mark (see Figure 3.1). Comprised of staff, students, and faculty from various levels and subsystems of the organization, this will be the change team at the heart of and driving this plan. While coalition members will serve as bridges to their own areas of influence, I will act as a liaison to both the Executive and College Leadership Teams. This will allow the coalition to focus on leading change, while the traditional hierarchy can be focused on sustaining operations. In this way and through my reports, the Executive team will be informed of ongoing progress (Kotter, 2014).

The overall composition of the coalition will include influencers from each subsystem. From the Academic-oriented subsystem I have identified Program Chairs and a faculty member to represent teaching and learning. From the Administrative-oriented subsystem, a staff member from the Office of the Registrar and a Systems Analyst are included. The Systems Analyst role is currently not in place at SBCC, so acquiring this role (strategic initiative “D”) is discussed in the forthcoming Additional Supports & Resources section. Student representation along with a student support services professional (e.g., counselling, accessibility services) will ensure that student perspectives and needs are included. In addition, market-oriented coalition members will include representation from Corporate Communications and Development, areas of campus that are in constant contact with the external market. As the lead of this coalition, through my own bias, interests, and connection to the Executive Team, I will also represent the market-oriented subsystem. Additional information indicating how these members will be recruited will be provided in the Change Process Communications Plan to come.

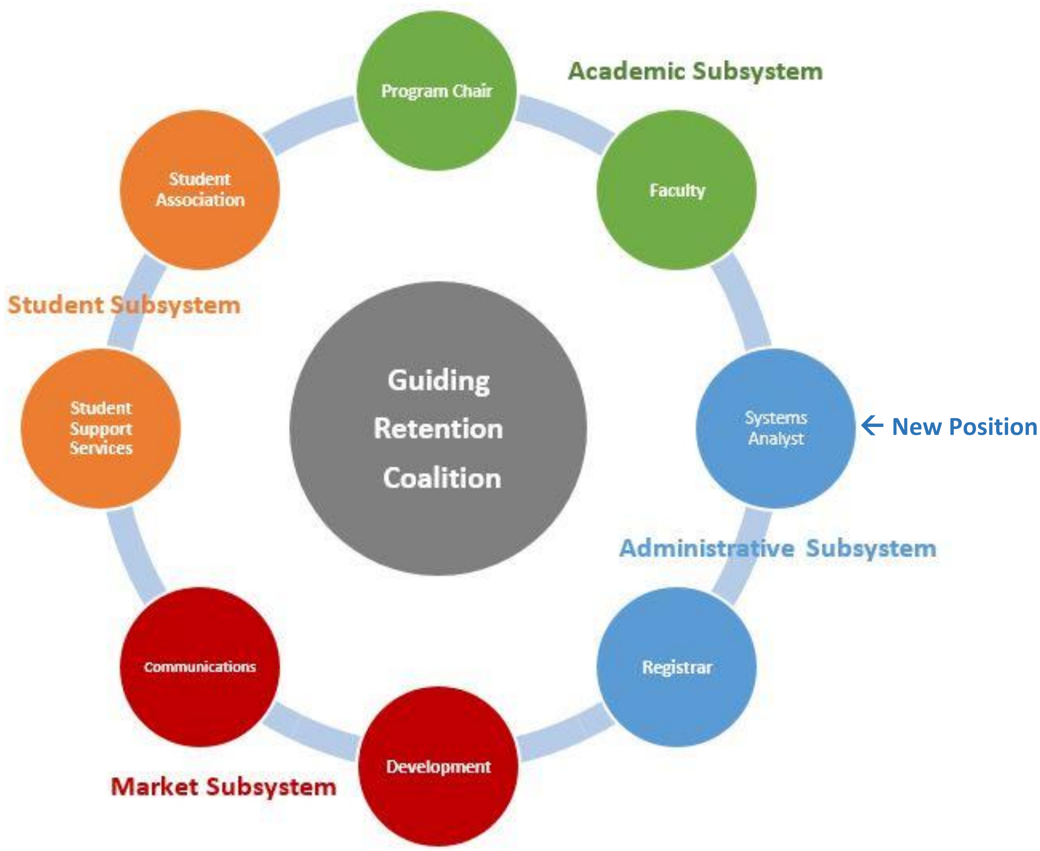

Figure 3.1. Guiding Retention Coalition Composition (Adapted from Kotter, 2014, pp. 29-30).

Stage 3: Clarify Strategic Initiatives (Strategies E, F, G)

Together with the guiding coalition, I will clarify three specific strategic initiatives that will support the development of a Digital Eco-system. I envision them to be similar to the following: Gather data and review primary retention challenges (within 6 months); Understand current information systems capabilities, strengths, limitations, and gaps (within 9 months); and coordinate information systems so that they speak to each other and connect institutional users to each other (e.g., student to student, student to staff, or staff to staff) (within 12-24 months).

Gather data and review primary retention challenges (within 6 months). This strategic initiative ("E" in Table 7) is about knowing and understanding retention challenges at the college, a critical step for raising awareness. The coalition will review key data related to retention including cohort completion, student satisfaction, and health and wellness and share this information back to their own subsystem so that they and eventually the whole college know about key issues that will be discussed and addressed within the Digital Eco-system.

Understand current information systems capabilities, strengths, limitations, and gaps (within 9 months). This strategic initiative ("F" in Table 7) is the first step of the other key challenge within the problem of practice—coordination. The college currently has numerous information systems, and in addition to being disintegrated (i.e., not connected), they are also underutilized (i.e., not used to their fullest potential). Pulling this information together is a critical step in determining what we have to work with when developing a Digital Eco-system.

Coordinate information systems so that they speak to each other and connect institutional users to each other (e.g., student to student, student to staff, or staff to staff) (within 12-24 months). Information system coordination (strategic initiative "G" in Table 7) is central to the problem of practice as it is about how students connect to digital information systems and each other. For example, 93% of learners today expect that they should only have to log in once (Ellucian, 2017) while 94% believe that "connecting with faculty members, other students, events suggestions, deadline alerts, and course suggestions based on academic performance and interest would help them feel more emotionally connected to their institutions" (Ellucian, 2017).

Altogether, these three initiatives together set the stage for the development of a Digital Eco-system. However, to implement such an idea will require broader organizational buy-in and expertise to innovate. The next stage ensures that an enthusiastic "volunteer" army is standing by to work on its development.

Stage 4: Enlist a Campus-wide Support Base (Strategy H)

The fourth stage begins at the 12 month mark and includes building an enthusiastic base of support (strategic initiative "H", Table 7). When this commences, I along with other Guiding Retention Coalition members will have had time to share the Big Opportunity and strategic initiatives widely (e.g., with co-workers within their own subsystem) in order to get buy-in. For example, the faculty representative of the coalition could discuss possible features and benefits of the Digital Eco-system with fellow faculty members and ask if they would be willing to participate in future trials (a process that may include reviewing how notifications are sent and received, meeting with students identified as being at risk, and developing a course success intervention plan for them). In this way, support will be encouraged from within (i.e., by a trusted faculty member) rather than a top-down directive.

Having a base of support or volunteer army reinforces that retention and completion is a campus-wide responsibility and allows people from every level of the organization to be involved in system optimization and Digital Eco-system development in both small and large ways. Several methods for engaging with the community are shared in the Change Process Communications Plan section to come later in this chapter.

Stage 5: Enable Action by Removing Barriers (Strategy I)

Identifying and removing barriers (strategic initiative “I”, Table 7) is a critical and ongoing process that demonstrates the power of the dual operating system (Kotter, 2014). Where once, obstacles were known and approached from the perspective of only one person and subsystem, the coalition now has its varied members as well as a group of passionate volunteers to help with problem solving and creating the conditions for innovation to occur.

To ensure that the volunteer army can be innovative and remain on-task, the coalition will do whatever it can to remove systemic barriers that prevent innovation. Examples might include information system functional limitations, policy shortcomings, budget restrictions, or curriculum inconsistencies. Another barrier might be organizational bureaucracy, in other words silos, rules, operational pressures, and complacency (Kotter, 2014). In fact, the concept of the dual operating system is designed as a parallel and complementary alternative to the intuitional hierarchy. Acting more like a start-up, the alternative network is “nimble, swift, and creative”—able to circumvent organizational barriers that exist in established organizations with their deeply embedded cultural norms and ways of doing things—“in order to grab opportunities” (Kotter, 2014, p.13). As a group of leaders paving the way, the Guiding Retention Coalition will intentionally seek out and remove barriers, ensuring that the conditions are in place for an enthusiastic volunteer army to innovate and build a Digital Eco-system to increase awareness and coordination of student retention and completion.

Stage 6: Generate Short-Term Wins (Strategy J)

The Digital Eco-system can sound like an intangible concept that is too far in the future to be comprehended in the here and now. Because of this, identifying and celebrating short-term wins will be important to reinforce progress towards implementation (strategy J). At first, wins could be as simple as a significant policy revision that supports student retention. Further along in the change process, a win could be celebrating information system integration milestones like the first time disparate systems are able to speak to each other. Once app development starts, another win may be the progression through the various stages of app development (e.g., the release of a near-final beta version). Regardless of the type of win, each should be shared and celebrated with organizational stakeholders, especially students who will be the beneficiaries of these wins and the departments that may have played a role in achieving them.

There is a tendency, when leading change, to lose focus after realizing a win or two. As a result, it will be important for me as a systems leader to encourage and support the coalition and volunteer army to remain fixated on future wins and our primary objective and goals. This may mean keeping their accomplishments at the forefront of the Executive and College Leadership Teams and helping to problem solve when innovation stalls around a particular problem or obstacle.

Stage 7: Sustaining Acceleration (Strategy K)

Sustaining acceleration is all about keeping the system moving forward. From months 36-48, this Change Implementation Plan envisions that the Digital Eco-system and corresponding app will have some significant functionality that can be trialed. Based on entry characteristics (e.g., previous academic performance and demographics), current enrolment (e.g., course load and selection), and student behaviour (e.g., current academic performance and attendance), the app through the use of AI will be able to determine the level of risk associated with each student and send learner-specific, “just-in-time” mobile-based notifications back to the student including assignment due dates, grade information, and connections to faculty members, tutors, resources, and student success-related events. In this way, learners will know if they are on track in a given class, what is required in order to be successful, and who they may connect with for help. This idea (strategic initiative “K” in Table 7) is consistent with current student expectations as 97% of them indicated that technologies to support them outside of class are just as important as learning technologies themselves (Ellucian, 2017). Unsatisfied with simply launching the application at this stage of the change process, the Guiding Retention Coalition will take advantage of a year-long trial period where feedback can be collected and the user experience can be continuously refined. Sustaining acceleration in this way ensures that a continuous improvement process is in place resulting in a well-tested Digital Eco-system that is ready for a broader launch.

Stage 8: Instituting Change (Strategy L)

The final phase of the Change Implementation Plan (strategic initiative “L”) sustains organizational change by demonstrating how organizational awareness of student retention and completion has been achieved through the work of the Guiding Retention Coalition. Likewise, intentional messaging to the campus will demonstrate how the Digital Eco-system assists in coordinating student supports and services. In this stage, change leadership becomes less about developing and implementing the solution, and more about communicating how the changes are integrated with the organization and reinforcing “the new way of doing things.” With a collaborative framework already in place, the coalition will shift their focus from development and implementation to monitoring and evaluation (i.e., determining overall effectiveness of change) and sharing success stories (see Communications Process Change Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Plans for further details).

Understanding Stakeholder Reactions to Change and Responding to Concerns

I recognize that my own bias causes me to be very optimistic and enthusiastic about change that will transform the student experience. That is why it is important for me as a systems leader to anticipate how major stakeholders within each subsystem will respond to change (Cawsey et. al., 2016). Due to recent negative experiences, initial student, faculty, and administrative employee reactions may be cautious, while market-oriented stakeholders are likely to be receptive. For example, students may have an initial negative reaction based on a recent experience. Five years ago, SBCC instigated a mandatory iPad app requirement for students to graduate. Dubbed as gamified curriculum, the response from students (who were not involved in initial project planning) was lukewarm at best with many students seeing the additional work as inapplicable to their program area and too time consuming. Even though this requirement will be removed later this year, avoiding introducing something that may be misinterpreted as being similar (e.g., a non-mandatory app designed to support learners) will be important to navigate.

As a systems leader, I will alleviate concerns by ensuring student representation on the Guiding Retention Coalition and that students are involved in strategies G, J, and K specifically (See Table 7). Engagement with students will also include student surveys, student information sessions, and facilitated group sessions where questions and concerns can be raised, and their feedback can be collected. By including students throughout the change process, I hope to avoid confusion with past experiences while building awareness, enthusiasm, and support for the Digital Eco-System, but most importantly, show what it can do to improve student success.

Likewise, faculty response may also be tepid. In Chapter 1, when examining change readiness, I indicated that events in recent memory were unpopular with faculty. Specifically, their voice was not included in major decisions affecting them resulting in distrust of administrative leaders. By including faculty throughout the change plan, I hope to model a collaborative systems approach to leadership that will help to dissipate any lingering sentiments of distrust.

Giving consideration to administrative employees (e.g., Office of the Registrar, Internet Technology), I expect a mixed reaction to change stemming from recent missteps around information system procurement as well as the aforementioned iPad application. Regarding the former, a new Enterprise Resource Platform (ERP) was imposed on the organization a few years ago. It was heralded as a single solution to manage Student Services, Business Services, and Human Resources. Less than a year into implementation, and after the leader who led the initiative left, the college decided that it would seek an alternate solution. While it is widely believed that the college should never have proceeded in that direction in the first place—and consequently that the decision to explore other options is a good one—there may be some who view a Digital Eco-system in a similar vein: a costly error not to be repeated. I believe that this example illustrates the outcomes of decisions made without broad consultation and collaboration. In adopting systems leadership described in this change plan, I will take the opposite approach ensuring inclusive decision-making.

With respect to student, faculty, and administrative subgroups, understanding their reactions to change (along with underlying assumptions) and responding to their concerns will be one of the strengths of the Guiding Retention Coalition. As a systems leader, I will be careful to ensure that change will not be done to them as it was in the past. To achieve this result, this plan depends on students and employees alike engaging with the coalition members closest to them to provide input and feedback. In each case, the coalition member will be close to stakeholder groups, familiar with their concerns, and available for two-way dialogue. For example, a senior faculty member who is on the Guiding Retention Coalition is likely to be viewed as someone who has the best interests of the faculty as a whole. As she engages in policy review, communication, and Digital Eco-system development, other faculty members who know and trust her, will be appeased that their voice and contributions will be included throughout the change process.

A skeptic might argue that this approach puts too much power in specific stakeholder groups, but for me—as a systems leader espousing servant leadership—that is precisely the point. To reiterate, servant leadership is a paradigm where the leader “shares power, puts the needs of others first, and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible” (Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 2016, para. 4). Therefore, in order to optimize the system around student retention and completion so that individuals and business units perform as highly as possible, sharing power with those who have the potential to retain students the most (i.e., faculty, student leaders, student support services staff) as illustrated is the best way forward.

Having looked at possible negative reactions to change, I expect those with a market orientation to welcome the change plan. Specifically, increased student success and revenue, and positioning SBCC as a retention leader are positive outcomes that can serve as brand messages. That being said, this group, which include Executive Leadership Team members, may have concerns about the resources required for this project. By sharing a realistic budget (see following section) and providing quarterly financial and progress reports, these concerns can be assuaged.

Determining Additional Supports & Resources

As highlighted in the Change Implementation Plan (strategic initiative "C"), a current limitation is the lack of an identified role that can bridge the gap between information systems and the functional processes that will be included within the Digital Eco-system. As a result, this plan proposes the creation of a Systems Analyst position that will reside in the Office of the Registrar, work closely with Internet Technology Services, and serve on the Guiding Retention Coalition. While I have the autonomy to hire within my budget, budget increases will require Executive Team approval. I will make a formal budget request (including Systems Analyst salary and Digital Eco-system development costs) of $620,000 over five years (see Table 8 below) during the first stage of the Change Implementation Plan. At this time, I will also share critical information with the Executive Leadership Team and ask for their support. As a systems leader, I recognize that "continuing to do what we are currently doing but doing it harder or smarter is not likely to produce very different outcomes" (Senge et al., 2015, p. 29). Therefore I will explain this and show that organizational improvement requires doing things differently and at a cost.

Table 8.

Digital Eco-system Development Costs Over 5 Years

	Cost of Attrition (est.)	Budget Requested	New Cost Allocations
Year 1	$711,661	$90,000	Systems Analyst Salary
Year 2	$711,661	$115,000	Systems Analyst Salary, Ecosystem Exploration
Year 3	$711,661	$150,000	Systems Analyst Salary, Ecosystem Development
Year 4	$711,661	$150,000	Systems Analyst Salary, Ecosystem Development
Year 5	$711,661	$115,000	Systems Analyst Salary, Ecosystem Maintenance
5 YR Total	$3,558,305	$620,000	

On the positive side, the plan is based on recapturing costs; however, the other side of the argument is that a Digital Eco-system at SBCC is unproven, and if no additional student-related revenues are realized, the losses will be compounded. Thus far, I have been able to demonstrate good judgement to the Executive Team, and I believe that this plan is grounded in good data and educational leadership theory and therefore represents a feasible solution. The rationale for this budget request hinges on recapturing tuition revenues resulting from increased retention. As a systems leader, I ask the question "what could be done with a portion of future revenues in order to influence student success?" To coincide with this five-year Change Implementation Plan, I propose that $620,000 will be required to optimize the system. The annual cost of attrition is $711,661. Over a five-year period, the cumulative loss becomes $3,558,305. Ultimately, by reducing lost revenue due to attrition by 50%, this plan proposes $1,779,153 of recaptured revenue over five years and for $620,000 to be reallocated for new initiatives. Put another way, a $620,000 investment will provide nearly a 200% return (net $1,159,153 after proposed expenditures). The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (See Table 9) will accompany this request so that the Executive Team knows how performance metrics will be used by the Guiding Retention Coalition to determine overall effectiveness.

Acknowledging Limitations of the Change Plan

I acknowledge that this Change Implementation Plan has several limitations, namely my own personal biases, the scope of the project, and the reality of unaligned priorities of other campus stakeholders.

My own biases. I have positioned myself as a systems leader within the organization. While I have first-hand experience within the organization and a sense of my own ability to navigate within it and be an agent of change, my bias, as a leader who views the organization as a system, is not shared by everyone. In other words, both a systems framework and systems approach to leadership provide me with clarity for viewing the problem consistently, but it is most meaningful for me and to a lesser degree for the organization insofar as I can influence others and realize change as a systems leader. As summarized throughout this document—and most recently in the previous section—this OIP suggests that stakeholders from student-, administrative-, academic-, and market-oriented subsystems will view the problem from differing perspectives and respond to change in different ways. By understanding their lens, including the priorities and stereotypes of each group, and being inclusive rather than dismissive, I hope to bring a whole-system approach that is in contrast with a unilateral approach to change.

Scope of the project. In addition to my own bias, the scope of the project—specifically how deep the Change Implementation Plan can go into the details of the Digital Eco-system—is a limitation. For example, the Change Implementation Plan does not seek to provide step-by-step instructions for how to create a Digital Eco-system designed around the mobile-first learner, but rather presents the concept in a general sense to be further refined. This limitation exists because developing this idea will be the primary project for the Guiding Retention Coalition and volunteer army to focus their collective and innovative energies (Kotter, 2014). As a result, the coalition will determine how much of the development can be accomplished internally and which pieces will be better reserved for specialists in this field. For example, stage 3 of the Change Implementation Plan includes gathering data and reviewing primary retention challenges; understanding current information systems capabilities, strengths, limitations, and gaps; and coordinating information systems so that they speak to each other and connect institutional users to each other (e.g., student to student, student to staff, or staff to staff). As the coalition comes together on these issues, they will determine where our technical capacities are. Thus far, and based on my experience at SBCC, I am confident that we have the ability to conduct stage 3 internally, however a larger project such as developing the app may need external resources as have been accounted for in the previous section (Table 8).

Unaligned priorities. Finally, as Registrar with the responsibility of enrolment management, I have a bias that prioritizes retention and completion. For me, this Change Implementation Plan is a priority that is aligned with my job description. For other stakeholders, including those on the Guiding Retention Coalition, their involvement is based on interest and their ability to negotiate the time required to work in an area that is secondary to their regular work duties. By creating a sense of urgency that is understood broadly and within stakeholder groups, retention and completion will become a greater priority, however it is unlikely that it will become as significant of one for others as it is for me.

Identifying Implementation Issues and Mitigating Against Anticipated Obstacles

I anticipate that the greatest obstacle at SBSS will be personal reactions to change. Moreover, I anticipate that reactions to change will include resistance (I won't change), anxiety (I'm afraid of change), and negativity (It will never work). Cawsey et al. (2016) explained that these reactions are common because of previous personal negative experiences with change as well as the views of coworkers (especially opinions and relationships from trusted mentors, managers, and friends). To mitigate against this reaction I will use proven tactics including engagement, two-way communication, making continuous improvement the norm, and "flipping the script"—encouraging people to be change agents rather than change recipients (Cawsey et al., 2016). These concepts are clarified in the paragraphs that follow.

Engagement. First, I will demonstrate engagement through the use of a Guiding Retention Coalition and volunteer army to build support rather than drive change management through formal leadership channels. In doing so, the coalition will be able to model a new culture of listening and break previous cycles of change where change was done to people.

Two-way communication. Second, I will facilitate two-way dialogue within the Guiding Retention Coalition and between the coalition and stakeholder groups. For some, being included in change plan discussions will be a new experience, so it will be important for me and the coalition to model the way and bring people along (Change Implementation Plan stage 1, 2, 4).

Continuous improvement. Third, building a college culture where continuous improvement is the norm requires me as a system builder to make space for trial and error, entrepreneurial spirit, and the freedom to fail (and learn from that failure). The Guiding Retention Coalition specifically will adopt this culture that celebrates the process of learning and sharing both the process of learning and what has been learned with stakeholders.

Flipping the script. Lastly, people who find themselves on the receiving end of change can be resistant to it (Cawsey et al., 2016). That is why this plan relies on a Guiding Retention Coalition representative of four organizational subsystems and an enthusiastic base of support who together become the primary agents of change. In this sense, a greater proportion of organizational stakeholders become change agents than if change was initiated solely by me or executive leaders. In other words, rather than keeping campus stakeholders on the receiving end of a change plan, I intentionally include them in the shaping and implementing of one.

If previous negative experiences with change have negative consequences, my hope is that positive experiences stemming from this plan will result in positive consequences including advocacy, enthusiasm, and momentum. A one-year trial period, as referred to in stage 7, will minimize the impact of a sudden and abrupt change, allowing different user groups to become familiar with the Digital Eco-system and application. Furthermore, with a phased approach, the transition will be given space to occur naturally. It will also allow for real-life stories to be captured and shared as part of an overall communications plan to support the broader launch. With an understanding of personal reactions to change and how to mitigate against these concerns, I now propose a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan that will allow me and the Guiding Retention Coalition to track this plan's performance.

Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation

By increasing awareness and coordination of retention and completion at SBCC, I hope to create the system conditions that will support the increase of completion rates of certificate programs to 90%, diploma programs to 85%, and degree programs to 80%. In doing so, the amount of student-related revenue lost due to attrition will decrease by 50%. To measure system-wide change and change plan effectiveness, I propose that the Guiding Retention Coalition take ownership of a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan as outlined in Table 9 below. Within this plan, there is a differentiation between monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring measures student engagement, satisfaction, and wellness, while evaluation assesses institutional outcomes related to effectiveness, efficiency, and impact.

Table 9.

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Monitoring	**Name of Report**	**Description**	**How is it Helpful?**	**KPIs**
Engagement **(annual)**	Digital Eco-system Effectiveness Report (See Table 10)	Shows engagement levels of students within the Digital Eco-system and correlating performance	Helps to justify the effectiveness of the Digital Eco-system by correlating Digital Eco-system usage with academic performance	Tracked logins, interactions, notifications sent, messages originating from app, GPA
Satisfaction **(biennial)**	Student Satisfaction Survey Report (See Appendix C)	Indicates areas where students are dissatisfied	Provides focal areas for campus leaders to place time and attention	Year over year satisfaction in areas identified by students
Health **(triennial)**	Health and Wellness Academic Impacts Report (See Appendix D)	Summarizes percentage of students whose academic performance is being impacted	Indicates which factors are areas of concern and should be targeted for awareness campaigns and training	Stress, Sleep Difficulties, Anxiety, Sickness, Depression, Alcohol use, Concern for others, Internet/Gaming, Relationships, Finances
Evaluation	**Name of Report**	**Description**	**How is it Helpful?**	**KPIs**
Effectiveness **(annual)**	Program Cohort Graduation Rate Report (See Appendix A)	Highlights percentage of students in each program cohort graduating within 150% of the traditional time allotted to complete	Enables campus leaders to know which programs have retention and completion challenges and require attention	certificate programs - 90% diploma programs - 85% degree programs - 80%
Efficiency **(annual)**	Financial Impacts of Attrition Report (See Appendix B)	Suggests financial impacts of attrition by program and type of program	Justifies budget resource allocation for student retention initiatives	Reducing lost revenue due to attrition. Currently at $711,661 per year
Impact **(annual)**	Graduate Outcomes Benchmark	Provides a benchmark for graduate employment outcomes	Helps justify changes to career services or curriculum content if performance is lower than provincial average	Provincial Average - 91% (Province, 2016)

Also, as this plan hinges on the Digital Eco-system, its overall effectiveness will be critical for me to measure and communicate. Therefore, as described in Table 10 below, a Digital Eco-system Effectiveness Report will be used to monitor how student performance changes relative to their engagement within the Digital Eco-system.

Table 10.

Digital Eco-system Effectiveness Report

Engagement Level	Characteristics (General Sample)	Entry GPA (Average)	End of Term GPA	% of Sample
High	• Application installed • Regular monitoring of notifications • Many links are followed (to assistive resources, did you know quiz) • Outgoing messages are sent	2.7	2.85	18%
Moderate	• Application installed • Regular monitoring of notifications • Some links are followed (to assistive resources) • Some outgoing messages are sent	2.7	3.25	35%
Low	• Application installed • Little monitoring of notifications • Links are not followed (to assistive resources) • No outgoing messages sent	2.7	2.60	27%
None	• Application not installed • Zero engagement with Digital Eco-system	2.7	2.9	20%
		2.7	**2.9**	**100%**
Engagement Level	**Characteristics (At Risk Sample)**	**Entry GPA(Average)**	**End of Term GPA**	**% of Sample**
High	• Application installed • Regular monitoring of notifications • Many links are followed (to assistive resources, did you know quiz) • Outgoing messages are sent	2.0	2.2	25%
Moderate	• Application installed • Regular monitoring of notifications • Some links are followed (to assistive resources) • Some outgoing messages are sent	2.0	2.4	30%

Low	• Application installed • Little monitoring of notifications • Links are not followed (to assistive resources) • No outgoing messages sent	2.0	2.3	30%
None	• Application not installed • Zero engagement with Digital Eco-system	2.0	1.9	15%
		2.0	**2.2**	**100%**

This report will be generated by the Associate Registrar, Systems & Analysis, within the Office of the Registrar using several sets of available data. This position, reporting to me, has access to report generation tools and is used to fulfilling report requests originating from me. First, demographic information including age, gender, and program will be collected through the app installation and setup process. Second, usage data corresponding with the engagement level will be tracked from the app itself. Third, GPA (Grade Point Average) data is collected for all students through the college's SIS. The first time that the Digital Eco-system Effectiveness report is generated, it will be based on a specific sample of second-year students whose performance will be tracked for 1 term. 70% of the sample will be based on random students who are not considered to be at risk of attrition (GPAs above 2.3), while 30% will be identified as "at risk" with GPAs of 1.7 to 2.3. Splitting the group in this way will allow me to know not only how overall student engagement correlates with academic performance, but also how at-risk student performance is improved through Digital Eco-system engagement. In both cases, an overall GPA increase of 2 grade points is the result (illustrative purposes only).

While it is intended that this report will demonstrate a positive correlation between engagement within the Digital Eco-system and student performance as indicated by GPA, it could also point out that certain demographics (e.g., women over 25 years of age in science-related programs) are not engaged nor are benefiting. With this information, the Guiding Retention Coalition could coordinate additional training opportunities for certain student populations or target specific groups who are not engaging within the Digital Eco-system. In this way, the coalition may send traditional communications (e.g., email) to reinforce features and benefits and invite participation (e.g., link to app download). While monitoring and evaluation as described are important for the change process, so too is a consideration of leadership ethics.

Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change

The ethical dilemma when leading organizational change in today's post-secondary contexts relates to balancing system optimization priorities (i.e., the perception of doing more with less, emphasizing high performance, and managing external reputation) with what may be considered to be the primary purposes of tertiary education (i.e., passing on knowledge, developing critical thinkers, and equipping students for careers). While the realities for twenty-first century PSIs and the fundamental purposes for education may be interpreted as antithetical to each other, I believe that understanding and managing these competing priorities is the job of system leaders.

In Chapter 1, I pointed out a criticism of systems leadership: Because of the emphasis on optimization and performance, there is a potential for a systems leader to slip into an autocratic or dictatorial leadership style. To mitigate against this, I proposed Servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) to encourage humility, share leadership, and develop others so that they too can become leaders, modeling the way.

For the institution, the consequences are also significant. Greenleaf (2009) suggested that institutions, as they grow "large, complex, powerful, impersonal; not always competent;

sometimes corrupt," fail to care and therefore must be intentional about raising the capacity to serve and act as a servant (p. 1). This is interesting to me, because thus far, I have only thought about servant leadership as a leadership paradigm pertaining to me and other leaders (i.e., people). However, in describing the institution as a servant, Greenleaf (2009) exhorts large organizations—churches, universities, and businesses—to also demonstrate care for individuals so that so that as organizations improve, in turn all of society will improve as well.

Therefore, a consideration of leadership ethics centres on motivation—both of the institution and of the individual leading the change process. First, the reality of reduced government funding and increased costs is a powerful driver for organizational change. Nevertheless, institutional motivation for improving student success must not only be financial, operational, or reputational, but must also come from a commitment to serving our students and improving the conditions that will support their success. Second, it is important for change leaders to be mindful, protecting themselves from believing that they have all the power or ability to affect change on their own. I believe that system leaders should ensure that they too are part of the change process remembering that "real change starts with recognizing that we are part of the systems we seek to change" (Senge et al., 2015, p. 29). For me, this means intentionally pursuing humility, taking care to share power with others, and ensuring that I am flexible and open to change. Self-reflection keeps my motivations in check, and allows me to ask myself if I have an open mind (to challenge my preconceived assumptions), heart (to listen to other perspectives), and will (to let go of pre-set goals) (Senge et al., 2015, p. 29). Problem solving, building the reputation of my department, and gaining efficiencies will always be there; as I have a pre-disposition to efficiency and high performance, this kind of self-reflection reminds me to prioritize people and their success over system optimization priorities.

As a systems leader seeking real organizational change, I need to create space for change so that collective solutions (that may be different from my own ideas) can emerge; "Ineffective leaders try to make change happen. System leaders focus on creating the conditions that can produce change that can eventually cause change to be self-sustaining" (Senge et al., 2015, p. 29). This statement is profoundly re-assuring as it reminds me that it is not my role to make any change happen for the sake of change or at any cost (which can result in unilateral and perhaps unethical decisions), but rather to create conditions where the right kinds of change can occur (good decisions informed by broad input that have the best chance of organizational acceptance). With an ethical foundation in place, this OIP turns its attention to the Change Process Communications Plan, a vital component that assists with the transition of organizational planning from a document to action.

Change Process Communications Plan

Prior to presenting a four-phase Change Process Communications Plan, I will review the role of communication within a systems framework.

Communication within a Systems Framework

This OIP proposes a systems approach to leadership (Ackoff, 1994; Coffey, 2010; Senge et al., 2015) to assist with increasing awareness and coordination of student retention and completion at SBCC. I have chosen it because colleges are large, complex, and interconnected organizations with multiple stakeholders with seemingly contradictory perspectives (Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007), and a systems framework specifically recognizes and relies on these various points of view while moving the organization forward. In fact, systems leadership advocates that "sustainable development of any "whole system" requires developing all . . . layers in a coordinated way. It means that as well as improving aspects of the organisation's functioning, there also needs to be a corresponding development in the way leaders interact with the organisation" (Coffey, 2010, pp. 25-26). It is this interaction—through the vehicle of communication—that will be highlighted in the communication plan that follows.

A limitation however, based on my review of relevant literature, relates to how system leaders are to communicate. For example, Ackoff (1994) suggested that the best way to solve a problem includes a "collaboration of multiple points of view, a transdisciplinary point of view" (p. 187). In offering this assessment, there is no guidance offered to the practitioner relating to how communication can help make such collaboration possible. Coffey (2010) devoted 224 pages to *A Systems Approach to Leadership: How to Create Sustained High Performance in a Complex and Uncertain Environment*, yet after reviewing it, I am left wondering if there is a preferred communication method. Perhaps Ackoff and Coffey assumed that communication, regardless of form, will play a key role, however, the systems leader is left wondering "how?"

Rather than a prescriptive approach to communicating who should do what, a Systems Approach to Leadership requires a change in how the leader engages with the organization. A systems leader strives to create the conditions for optimization ensuring that the right people are brought together while fostering a trusting environment where questions can be asked and multiple perspectives can be considered (Coffey, 2010). Understood this way, systems leaders should communicate not by force, personality, or style, but through the ability to bring diverse perspectives together, see problems through the eyes of others, listen deeply, ask obvious questions, and embody an openness and commitment to learning (Senge et al., 2015).

An example of forceful or ineffective communication might be making a decision like implementing a new information system without broad stakeholder consultation. Another might be sharing incomplete information that does not provide a complete picture of organizational retention and completion impacts. My approach, regardless of the medium used in each phase of the communication plan (described further in this section), will be to bring people together and encourage transparency, listening, and asking and allowing for questions. It is with these principles that a Change Process Communications Plan is outlined in Figure 3.2 below.

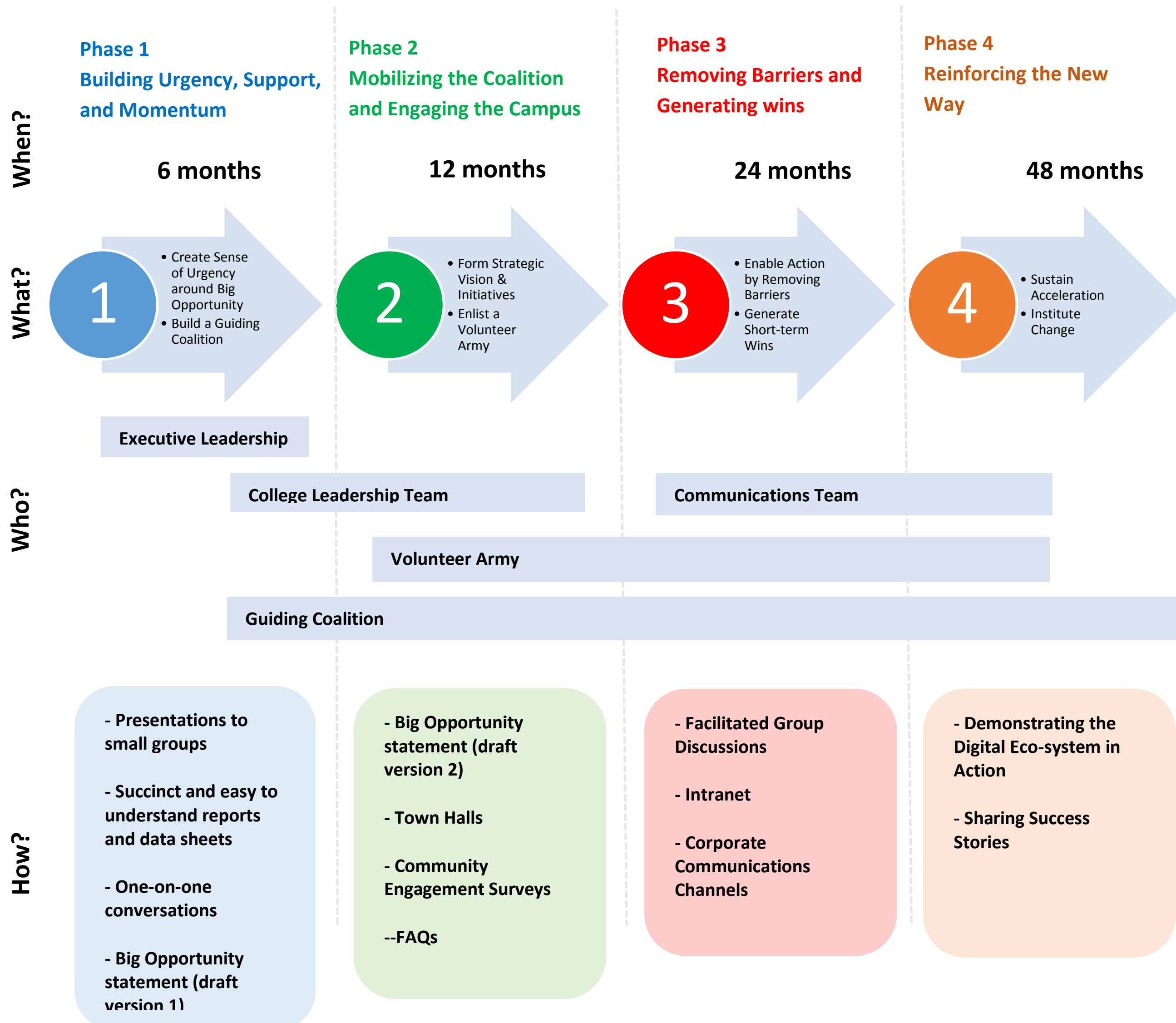

Figure 3.2. Change Process Communication Plan through Four Phases (Adapted from Kotter, 2014, pp. 27-40).

Phase 1 communication is about sharing and refining the change plan with the Executive and College Leadership Teams and recruiting a Guiding Retention Coalition. The second phase engages campus community members and solicits input from them. In phase 3, communication is focused internally—ensuring that Guiding Retention Coalition members are connected to each other and can effectively identify and remove barriers while generating (and celebrating) short-term wins. The fourth phase is about using communication to reinforce how changes are being integrated with the college's new way of doing things.

Phase 1 – Building Urgency, Support, and Momentum

Drawing from Figure 3.2, the first phase of the communications plan, approximately six months long, requires me to share critical information that will help to build urgency, gain support, and catalyze momentum. Three distinct steps within this phase will include raising awareness, building a Guiding Retention Coalition, and drafting a Big Opportunity statement (version 1). The primary methods of communication will involve me sharing in small group presentations, providing easy-to-understand reports and data sheets, and engaging in one-on-one conversations with both the Executive and College Leadership Teams.

Raising awareness. The first step of phase 1 will be an opportunity for me to raise awareness of the facts around student retention and completion to SBCC's executive team comprised of the president and vice presidents (see Figure 1.1). Through the Vice President, Academic and Student Experience (my immediate supervisor), I will request an opportunity to make an in-person presentation to the Executive Team where I will provide a situation analysis based on a current Cohort Incompletion Impact Report (see Appendix B), Wellness Academic Impact Analysis (see Appendix D), and an overview of Generation Z learners and our ability to meet their expectations. In essence, my presentation will provide a situation analysis that answers the question "how bad is it?" Presenting to the Executive Team is envisioned as a two-way conversation—passing along critical information and welcoming responses and questions. It is my goal that they would feel a sense of urgency and in turn support the Change Implementation Plan and corresponding budget request. By using a systems approach to leadership that brings key people together, is transparent with key data (see Monitoring and Evaluation plan), encourages listening, and asks and allows for questions, I will be able to raise awareness of the issues, gain perspective from others who may see the problem in slightly different ways, and ultimately get the support I need to lead the change process.

Building the guiding retention coalition. The next step of phase 1 supports the building of the Guiding Retention Coalition (see Figure 3.1). With Executive Team support, I would make similar situation analysis presentations to both the College Leadership Team (comprised of about 18 Directors, Deans, and Executive Leadership) and student association in order to inform them of the retention trends and gaps and why it is important to put time, energy, and resources into the Change Implementation Plan. While some College Leadership Team and student association members may become part of the coalition, as a systems leader, it is my goal for the leadership team to suggest and invite representatives from their own areas and representative of the four subsystems of the college. In this way, I envision that the Guiding Retention Committee will be made up of volunteers; however, their recruitment will be facilitated through their immediate supervisors.

For example, the Director of Internet Technology Services may wish to be part of the coalition. However, there may be specialists he may be aware of within the IT team who may be better suited (i.e., actually be able to devote time and energy to related projects). I am hopeful that one-on-one conversations will identify the right candidates while sparking genuine interest and engagement. If requested, I would be available to present to specific groups (e.g., faculty association, student association, college departments) in order to assist the College Leadership Team in identifying and recruiting coalition members. The last thing I would want is for people to feel that they have been "voluntold," so providing a clear presentation with an exciting picture of the future may assist in generating authentic and organic enthusiasm.

Drafting a Big Opportunity statement (initial version). The final step of phase 1 includes the genesis of a Big Opportunity statement. While I have provided a draft as a starting point (see Figure 3.3 below), the Guiding Retention Coalition's and other constituents' input will be integrated in the next phase of the communication plan. This statement's purpose is to bring alignment of multiple stakeholders and their perspectives to an emerging opportunity that will be emotionally compelling for those at SBCC (Kotter, 2014). It is from the identification of such an opportunity that everything else will flow.

Big Opportunity Statement Example

Students today have changed their approach to personal technology. Through the emergence of powerful mobile devices, we have the opportunity to revolutionize the student experience by harnessing the power of what really are mini-computers to gather important information from learners, communicate with them, and support them in ways that are meaningful to them and can lead to their overall success. As a result, there is no reason that in 5 years we cannot reduce attrition by 50%, greatly increasing the number of career-equipped graduates and student-related revenue. Our programs and support-services will be built around student success, and—utilizing a Digital Eco-system designed for the mobile-first learner—our information systems will connect students and staff together in a way that will increase retention and completion. As a result, our students will be satisfied and equipped for meaningful careers, our staff will be engaged, society will benefit, and there is a realistic possibility that a transformed Silver Bay Community College will be a national leader in student success.

Figure 3.3. Big Opportunity Statement Example

Altogether, the communication methods in phase 1 resemble a start-up—raising awareness, building urgency, and gaining support (Kotter, 2014). Phase 2 communication, as described below, engages the broader organization through one-on-one conversations, town hall events, and a community engagement survey.

Phase 2 – Mobilizing the Coalition and Engaging the Campus

Phase 2 of this communication plan is about informing the campus as a whole and equipping the Guiding Retention Coalition so that their work can accelerate. As a result, my efforts will be directed to completing the Big Opportunity statement and building campus wide support through the coalition. Communication methods depicted in Figure 3.2 and described below include interactive Town Hall style events and community engagement surveys.

Fine-tuning the Big Opportunity statement (final version). I will facilitate the creation of the Big Opportunity statement (Figure 3.3) through my involvement with the Guiding Retention Coalition ensuring that it is reflective of all four subsystems and is clearly understood by everyone in the organization. To do this, I will collect broader feedback at Town Hall events and through a community engagement survey taking care that broader staff input is considered by the coalition. Once final, it will be important for me to share the milestone directly with the Executive and Leadership Teams for their comment before making it public.

Town halls. With the recent leadership changes (see Chapter 1), quarterly Town Hall forums have been adopted as a forum to share information on strategic initiatives with the wider campus community. I will request a 15-minute timeslot from the Executive Team where I will introduce the Guiding Retention Coalition and co-share an interactive presentation on retention and the Big Opportunity. While other approaches such as email or video could be used, interactive in-person presentations co-hosted by me and coalition members will be used to apprise relevant audiences of current retention and completion challenges. By taking a systems approach inclusive of multiple perspectives, the campus community will be able to see the coalition's work rather than one person's (e.g., mine as Registrar or enrolment manager). Furthermore, the broad-natured make-up of the coalition will demonstrate how each subsystem's interests are well-represented (Figure 3.1).

Our interactive presentation will include a slide show summarizing the current situation, share a version of the Big Opportunity statement, and provide a method to receive questions using text message-to-presenter software. The ability to submit questions in real time via text message will ensure that participants can be heard without fear of embarrassment or having to speak in public. Overall, the Town Hall event will enable me to be transparent about the current organizational state, share a consistent message, demonstrate openness, increase excitement around the concept of a Digital Eco-system, and recruit advocates. Because a lot of information will be shared in a short time, the session will also be recorded (video) and posted on the college's intranet. As we will be answering questions, we will capture them along with answers and create a "Frequently Asked Questions" webpage that will also be made available on an intranet page. A benefit of the Guiding Retention Coalition is that each member works within a different area of the college, so each member can also informally gather feedback from colleagues whether on the Town Hall event itself or the Big Opportunity statement. In this way, the coalition can gain a pulse on the campus and integrate broader feedback within the change plan.

Community engagement survey. Shortly after the Town Hall, I will send a community engagement survey (Figure 3.4) to all staff via email to gather feedback on the Town Hall presentation and Big Opportunity statement. The survey, developed by the coalition, will help us assess the effectiveness of our communication approach, to what extent the statement was understood, and how engaged staff are on the topic of student retention. The survey will not require participants to provide identifying information and data will be stored in a secure, cloud-based service available only to coalition members. As part of the survey, participants will be informed that a separate sign-up will be made available for those who wish to take part in upcoming facilitated group discussions or other related work.

Community Engagement Survey Example

1) The Town Hall was an effective way for the Guiding Retention Coalition to inform the campus community of the student retention challenges at SBCC.

   Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

2) I understood the "Big Opportunity" statement and what it was trying to convey.

   Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

3) As a result of the presentation, I have greater understanding of the retention challenges at SBCC

   Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

4) Even though it is not fully developed yet, I am excited about the concept of a Digital Eco-system designed around the needs of a mobile-first learner.

   Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Agree

5) Would you like to take part in a facilitated group discussion to further refine the Big Opportunity statement? (A separate sign-up will be available on the Intranet and sent via email)

   Yes____ No ____

6) I would like to be involved in future work related to student retention and completion. (A separate sign-up will be available on the Intranet and sent via email)

   Yes____ No ____

7) What do you believe to be the greatest challenge to student retention and completion?

8) Additional Comments:

Figure 3.4. Community Engagement Survey Example

The Guiding Retention Coalition and I will review the collected information and summarize it. By sharing the results with the Executive and College Leadership Teams, I will enable SBCC's leadership to know how effective the event was and how engaged the campus community is regarding these topics. Sharing a summary with staff via email and the staff intranet will further affirm that their feedback is important to the process and valued by the coalition.

Phase 3 – Removing Barriers and Generating Wins

Phase 3 communication ensures that the Guiding Retention Coalition and volunteer army are connected to each other as well as the college (formal hierarchy) in a way that removes barriers and generates (and celebrates) short-term wins. The primary communication methods that I will use include facilitated group discussions and utilizing an intranet website to organize the Guiding Retention Coalition's work. As milestones are accomplished, corporate communication strategies such as an e-newsletter, future Town Halls events, and team meetings may be leveraged to share progress within the wider organization. In all cases, I will direct credit to the coalition, ensuring they are recognized for the wins and the work being done behind the scenes.

Removing barriers. Developing a Digital Eco-system designed around the mobile-first learner is truly about understanding the user experience—whether student, faculty member, or administrator—and optimizing it to positively influence student success. Because of this I, along with Guiding Retention Coalition, will work on identifying and removing those barriers that prevent students from succeeding.

Some barriers we currently know about include the perception of fair and biased feedback from instructors, timely feedback regarding assessments, and residence life satisfaction (see Appendix B). In these cases coalition members will be able to go back to their stakeholder groups to solve the problems. For example, to address timely feedback regarding assessments, four policy and procedure changes may be required. The first would be to amend the existing grading policy so that 25% of a course grade is due and recorded in the SIS within the first 25% of the course. The second recommendation might be establishing an attendance policy where student participation is recorded. The third recommendation could be to collect early alert data (based on grading and attendance information) and generate a notification that could be sent to the program chair (or academic coach) via the Digital Eco-system indicating which students might need follow-up. A fourth recommendation may be to augment existing learner services staff with tutors and an academic coach assigned to each of the program chairs.

A key communication tool for us as a coalition to use in identifying barriers will be questioning (Coffey, 2010; Senge et al., 2015). For example, when students are struggling with mental health, do they know where to go? When an instructor observes student behavior or assessment results that suggest the student is at risk, what do they do? When administrative staff members recognize a policy or process deficiency, what steps can they take? These questions can be asked through facilitated group discussions with various users (e.g., students, faculty, and administrative staff) to understand the variety of services offered, business process, areas of frustration, and desired functionality or remediation.

As the coalition embarks on this important work and discovers factors impeding student success and improves the ability to increase awareness and coordination of student retention, it will be important for them to track and organize their work. Ergo, the use of internet-based tools like an intranet site and shared documents will be important for tracking and consolidating information. In particular, the Google for Education suite may be a starting point, and one that the college already has made available to all staff and students. However, a dedicated intranet site or an online project management tool might provide greater functionality.

Generating short-term wins. As the Change Implementation Plan moves forward and milestones are accomplished by the coalition, I will communicate short-term wins with all stakeholders. For example, in moving toward a Digital Eco-system, wins may include identifying and categorizing critical gaps in the student experience (Karp, 2011), increasing functionality within the student information system, launching a text message service to access student support, or advancing down the path of mobile application development (e.g., selecting a mobile application developer, beta testing, or setting application launch dates). By sharing these markers with the campus community via email, social media, and the website, I ensure that stakeholders are aware of progress and how the whole system is being optimized to support student retention.

Phase 4 – Reinforcing the New Way

To sustain organizational change so that it eventually becomes an integral part of SBCC's culture, I along with the Guiding Retention Coalition will demonstrate how the Digital Eco-system makes a difference for students, staff, and faculty alike. By communicating success stories through video, newsletters, and in everyday conversation, I will be able to demystify the change and encourage greater buy-in and participation from all stakeholders.

Demonstrating the Digital Eco-system in action. In order to demonstrate the capabilities of the Digital Eco-system, two approaches will be taken. First, it will be in showcased as a year-long trial so that staff and faculty in particular can become accustomed to it.

While the Digital Eco-system and related app will be operational, the trial period will only involve selected programs, providing an opportunity for the Guiding Retention Coalition to learn from positive and negative user experience and feedback. This information will be invaluable when fine-tuning prior to the full launch. Second, in the lead-up to the official launch, the Guiding Retention Coalition will produce a series of short (no longer than 3 minutes) demo videos with subsystem-specific audiences in mind. In this way, a faculty member may demonstrate various functions and benefits to an academic audience, while students will provide their own experience, tips, and instructions to fellow learners. These videos, which can be sent to faculty in the summer or students prior to their arrival on campus, will highlight the features and benefits of the eco-system and provide any installation and setup instructions. Students in particular will benefit from this approach as the current generation is more likely to learn from a short video than by following instruction sent in an email or student handbook (Seemiller & Grace, 2016).

In-person user sessions may also be held for faculty members (e.g., in August prior to the start of the Academic Year), while tips and reminders will be shared on social media throughout the school year. If students/staff need additional support, they will be supported by SBCC’s IT Help Desk which provides assistance for all approved applications (e.g., student portal, Google for Education Suite, LMS).

Sharing success stories. Just as it was important to include the voices of institutional stakeholders in both the establishment of the Guiding Retention Coalition and the development of the Digital Eco-system, it will be equally important for us to include stakeholder-specific stories of student success (e.g., the Digital Eco-system allowed me to raise my grades by 10%); faculty transformation (e.g., the difference of having engaged students in the classroom);

completion stats (e.g., how many more graduates compared to previous years); and financial performance (e.g., the college realized $200,000 of additional student related revenue). As a systems leader, I will coordinate a multi-channel and multi-audience campaign—utilizing the college’s alumni magazine, student association newsletter, campus e-newsletter, internal signage, and social media—highlighting 6-8 success stories over a 2-month period. Collecting and disseminating this information as a campaign will provide subsystem-specific messages upon which momentum can grow.

This Change Process Communications Plan has depicted a systems approach through four distinct and progressive phases. Each demonstrates how I as a system leader can engage a Guiding Retention Coalition around a Big Opportunity, and optimize the whole system around student success. Despite the prescriptive nature of these phases, the reliance on a Guiding Retention Coalition and a Systems Approach to Leadership that is also informed by Servant Leadership behooves me as a change agent to interact with the various subsystems at SBCC and their stakeholders and pause long enough to ensure that their concerns can be heard and their feedback is incorporated into the plan.

Conclusion

In Chapter 3, I outlined how a Digital Eco-system, designed around the needs of mobile-first learners, can increase awareness and coordination of student retention and completion at SBCC. In presenting this solution, I demonstrated how a PSI and its four disparate and disconnected subsystems can be transformed, not only by the introduction of new technologies, but also through the engagement of a Guiding Retention Coalition that is empowered to lead the change process. As a result, I anticipate that the future program completion rate of certificate programs will rise to 90%, diploma programs to 85%, and degree programs to 80%. Moreover, the amount of student-related revenue lost due to attrition will decrease by 50%.

In adopting a paradigm that is in line with current student expectations, I demonstrated how SBCC's learners will become beneficiaries as they (1) are made aware of their progress towards completion (i.e., *sorted*), (2) are *supported* with the challenges faced in everyday life, (3) *connect* to various social and academic communities on campus, and (4) experience *transformation* as they become committed, motivated, and ultimately successful learners.

The Change Implementation Plan outlined specific goals, supporting strategies, timelines, and participants. In addition, stakeholder reactions to change were identified, along with additional resources that would be required and a consideration of how future obstacles would be mitigated against.

A Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, to be taken on by the Guiding Retention Coalition, proposed how monitoring would measure immediate student engagement, satisfaction, and wellness, while evaluation would assess longitudinal outcomes related to effectiveness, efficiency, and impact. Central to this plan was a Digital Eco-System Effectiveness Report developed to monitor student performance relative to engagement within the Digital Eco-system.

A section on Leadership Ethics, also in Chapter 3, suggested that the pressures of the current environment—where balancing system optimization priorities (i.e., the perception of doing more with less, emphasizing high performance, and managing external reputation) with what may be considered to be the primary purposes of tertiary education (i.e., passing on knowledge, developing critical thinkers, and equipping students for careers)—requires a motivation check of both the leader and organization. I argued that a systems approach to leadership and its emphasis on system optimization can lead to poor or unethical decisions. Therefore, I proposed how Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977; 2009) can protect against some of the pitfalls, both for the individual leader as well as organization.

Finally, Chapter 3 proposed a Change Process Communications Plan that described the role of communications within a systems-based framework and demonstrated how four distinct and progressive phases could be used to engage a Guiding Retention Coalition around a Big Opportunity. These stages, catalyzed by a Big Opportunity and compatible with the overall change plan, are designed to support the optimization of the whole system around student success.

Considering the POP and the overall direction of this OIP, SBCC has an excellent opportunity to embrace a systems approach to increasing awareness and coordination of student retention and completion that will not only promote cultural adoption today, but will also build the capacity within the organization to respond to emerging needs, growth, and future directions in the days ahead. This OIP will conclude by articulating next steps as well as future considerations.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

Despite increased attention (Black, 2010; Hossler & Bontrager, 2015; Wilkinson et al., 2007) and the rapid growth of retention-focused student services at PSIs, retention and completion rates at many colleges and universities are static (Habley et al., 2012). This OIP aspires to change the prevailing trend of static retention and completion performance by implementing a retention model designed around the needs of today's mobile-first learners and

(1) sorts students into actionable subsets, (2) supports learners with day-to-day challenges, (3) connects students to each other and key staff and faculty members, and (4) transforms both students and post-secondary institutions to support student retention and completion (Beatty-Guenter, 1994). Through a Systems Approach to Leadership (Ackoff, 1994; Coffey, 2010; Senge et al., 2015) requiring a high degree of interaction between organizational subsystems (Kalsbeek, 2006a, 2006b, 2007), I have described how a Guiding Retention Coalition (Kotter, 2014) can design and implement a Digital Eco-system (Gartner, 2017) that will transform the college experience for mobile-first learners (Seemiller & Grace, 2016) ensuring that the whole system is optimized, connected, and supports student success.

One of the challenges not addressed by this plan is the rapid pace at which technology is evolving. Just as we could not envision how much computing power could be packed inside of today's phones (if we can still call them that), how will current and emerging leaders at SBCC be able to predict the future and the inevitable evolution of technologies that will further disrupt educational enterprises? Mobile devices and information systems are just some aspects of technology. With advances in AI, nanorobotics, and augmented and virtual reality (and these are just some of the ones we know about), educators and change agents will need to be prepared to accelerate change on a more rapid and exponential basis in order to prepare for tomorrow's learners and future organizational realities and pressures.

Many of our products, services, and supports rely on face-to-face interactions within "brick and mortar" institutions. Considering the aforementioned emerging technologies, perhaps a future model of post-secondary education, and its related supports and services, would benefit from an augmented reality- or virtual reality-based eco-system rather than a digital one. Regardless of the technological advances that we may or may not be able to predict, I believe that a systems-centred approach is a way of preparing SBCC for tomorrow as it requires all organizational participants to be aware of and respond to internal tensions and external pressures—regardless of what they are—to keep the system in balance for optimal performance.

As a result, future organizational planning should not only focus on tangible steps like strategic, monitoring and evaluation, and communication plans, but also on the future readiness of the organization. In other words, when external environments change (e.g., politically, socially, or technologically) how prepared is the organization and its leaders to adapt? How is the organization "keeping an ear to the ground"? I believe that SBCC along with most educational organizations are simply too focused on monitoring current performance and immediate problem solving to answer these questions adequately. As a result, PSIs, who are unprepared to adapt, risk falling further behind or remaining in a planning cycle focused solely on today. To change this pattern, learning organizations should commit to mentoring the next generation of responsive, flexible, and collaborative system leaders who will be capable of sustaining the organization, both now and in the future, regardless of future internal dilemmas or environmental pressures.

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Appendix A

Program Cohort Graduation Rate Report						
Program Name	**Program Type**	**Year 1 Cohort**	**Year 2 Cohort**	**Year 3 Cohort**	**Year 4 Cohort**	**Combined Grad Rate**
Certificates						
Program 1	CERT	88%	73%	75%	85%	78.6%
Program 2	CERT			100%	87%	93.3%
Program 3	CERT	45%	46%	67%	43%	49.5%
Program 4	CERT	75%	64%	100%	83%	79.5%
Program 5	CERT	53%	63%	27%	27%	42.5%
Program 6	CERT	100%	73%	69%	75%	78.9%
Program 7	CERT			79%	70%	74.5%
Program 8	CERT	75%		94%	92%	87.5%
Program 9	CERT	100%	100%	83%	83%	89.5%
Program 10	CERT	73%	70%	0%	100%	69.2%
Program 11	CERT	84%	65%	90%	97%	79.7%
Program 12	CERT			58%	NYA	58.3%
Program 13	CERT	50%	87%	83%	93%	81.1%
Diplomas						
Program 1	DIPLOMA	94%	100%	81%	90%	90.0%
Program 2	DIPLOMA	70%	72%	69%	NYA	71.0%
Program 3	DIPLOMA	77%	90%	93%	NYA	86.7%
Program 4	DIPLOMA	87%	90%	73%	NYA	83.5%
Program 5	DIPLOMA	57%	39%	39%	NYA	43.1%
Program 6	DIPLOMA		62%	50%	NYA	55.8%
Program 7	DIPLOMA		100%	100%	83%	94.0%
Program 8	DIPLOMA	63%	72%	51%	NYA	61.8%
Program 9	DIPLOMA	71%	67%	63%	NYA	67.2%
Program 10	DIPLOMA	87%	95%	86%	NYA	89.0%
Degrees						
All Programs	APPL. DEGR.	73%	59%	57%	NYA	60.9%
Combined Grad Rate (By Year)	**ALL TYPES**	**71.1%**	**71.2%**	**69.3%**	**NYA**	

Appendix B

Cohort Incompletion Impact Analysis

Program Name	Cohort Size*	Avg** Grad Rate	Estimated Non-Completers	Incomplete Semesters	Tuition per Semester	Financial Impact***
Certificate						
Program 1	15	0.933	1.005	0.5	$ 2,190.00	$ 1,100.48
Program 2	18	0.895	1.890	0.5	$ 2,190.00	$ 2,069.55
Program 3	18	0.875	2.250	0.5	$ 2,190.00	$ 2,463.75
Program 4	30	0.852	4.440	0.5	$ 2,190.00	$ 4,861.80
Program 5	30	0.811	5.670	1	$ 2,190.00	$12,417.30
Program 6	16	0.797	3.248	1	$ 5,222.55	$16,962.84
Program 7	12	0.795	2.460	0.5	$ 1,017.90	$ 1,252.02
Program 8	16	0.789	3.376	0.5	$10,990.05	$18,551.20
Program 9	36	0.786	7.704	1	$ 2,190.00	$16,871.76
Program 10	50	0.745	12.750	1	$ 2,190.00	$27,922.50
Program 11	12	0.692	3.696	0.5	$ 1,717.00	$ 3,173.02
Program 12	28	0.583	11.676	1	$ 2,190.00	$25,570.44
Program 13	50	0.495	25.250	1	$ 2,190.00	$55,297.50
Diploma						
Program 14	16	1	0.000	1	$2,190.00	$0.00
Program 15	16	0.94	0.960	1	$2,190.00	$2,102.40
Program 16	24	0.9	2.400	1	$2,190.00	$5,256.00
Program 17	50	0.89	5.500	2	$2,190.00	$24,090.00
Program 18	30	0.867	3.990	2	$2,190.00	$17,476.20
Program 19	125	0.71	36.250	2	$2,190.00	$158,775.00
Program 20	22	0.69	6.820	1	$2,190.00	$14,935.80
Program 21	36	0.618	13.752	2	$2,190.00	$60,233.76
Program 22	30	0.558	13.260	2	$2,190.00	$58,078.80
Program 23	36	0.431	20.484	2	$2,190.00	$89,719.92
Degree						
Program 24	54	0.609	21.114	2	$2,190.00	$92,479.32
Total	770		209.9			$711,661.35

Appendix C

Student Satisfaction Survey - Greatest Challenges	2017*	2015	2013	2011
The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent	1	1	1	1
Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individuals	2	4	3	4
Scholarships and bursaries are announced in time to be helpful for college planning	3	11	12	12
The institution does whatever it can to help me reach my educational goals	4		7	6
Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course	5	5	2	3
My room in residence met my expectations	6			
Adequate financial aid is available for most students at this institution	7	10		
Students are notified early in the term if they are doing poorly in a class	8	9	5	7
Faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach a course	9	13		

*Note that 2017 results are listed in descending order of importance

Appendix D

Health and Wellness Academic Impacts

	2016 SBCC	2013 SBCC	2016 National	2013 National
Stress	37.60%	31.50%	42.20%	38.60%
Sleep Difficulties	31.20%	20.20%	28.40%	27.10%
Anxiety	22.90%	22.60%	32.50%	28.40%
Cold/Flu/Sore Throat	20.30%	22.60%	20.60%	21.60%
Depression	15.30%	14.50%	20.90%	17.30%
Alcohol use	10.80%	11.40%	4.50%	4.90%
Concern for Friend/Family	10.80%	9.70%	15.60%	15.20%
Internet/Computer Games	10.30%	3.30%	18.70%	21.00%
Relationship Difficulties	9.50%	16.40%	13%	12.90%
Finances	9.00%	8.10%	10.30%	9.00%