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## Creating Shared Vision Among Faculty to Enhance Student Learning

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WESTERN UNIVERSITY

Creating Shared Vision Among Faculty to Enhance Student Learning

by

Eleanor Ann Barbour-Stevenson

AN ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

LONDON, ONTARIO

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## **Abstract**

Canadian universities are expected to have policies to ensure program quality (Universities Canada, n.d.). To augment the existing institutional quality assurance practices, this Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) suggests that the creation of a shared vision among faculty will enhance the learning outcomes achieved by students in a bachelor of education program. The integrity of the program has been challenged by various factors including the multi-site delivery model, the organizational culture, and the fusing of culturally distinct pedagogical approaches. To create a shared vision, a collaborative approach will be used. Faculty will work collegially to develop a shared vision and to embed that vision into program documents and practices. The Plan, Do, Study, Act change model will both guide the change process and provide a framework requiring faculty interaction. In addition to describing a change plan, obstacles to the successful implementation of the plan are considered and contextual realities are explored. Although the ultimate goal of the change plan is to assure that all program graduates are well prepared for their chose profession, the research and suggestions provided in this OIP can be adapted for use with other post-secondary programs.

*Keywords:* Indigenization of Curriculum, Multi-site Delivery, Post-Secondary, Shared Vision, Quality Assurance Practices

## Executive Summary

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) focuses on a bachelor of education program located at a small post-secondary institution and makes recommendations for a Problem of Practice (PoP) that seeks to develop a shared program vision to enhance the learning outcomes and experience of students in a bachelor of education program. A brief organizational context and history which highlight the unique mandate and the relatively newness of the institution are highlighted in Chapter One. The approaches of team and adaptive leadership are described and aligned with collaborative focus of the problem of practice (PoP) and the philosophical underpinning of the teacher education program. The PoP is examined in terms of a historical overview and analyzed using an Input-Throughput-Output Systems model. The model specifies a shared vision, improved culture, increased faculty engagement, and articulation of program outcomes as desired outputs of the change plan. A brief literature review of *vision* emphasizes the role of vision in providing cohesion, direction, and motivation within organizations. Shared vision also serves to direct the evolution of an organization and provides a framework for organizational activities and interactions (Kopaneva & Sias, 2015). Thus, shared vision can be linked to organizational culture. Kantabutra's (2010) model that proposes linkages between organizational vision and faculty performance is presented.

Using the Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) model, Chapter Two outlines the planning and development of the organizational improvement plan. Three possible solutions to address the PoP are presented and evaluated. The chosen solution of creating a collaborating to create a shared vision is examined in detail. Adaptive and team leadership are examined in terms of their appropriateness and relevancy for the OIP and connected to the selected solution.

Finally, Chapter Three presents the implementation, evaluation, and communication plan. Using the PDSA change model, the plan outlines the implementation schedule of specific change strategies. Embedded within the PDSA model is the expectation that each change initiative is assessed and studied. Thus, the change plan is continuously being evaluated. The data which will be gathered and/or measured along with anticipated timeframes for collection are stated. The chapter explores the importance of leadership ethics when pursuing organizational change and examines the ethics of the change planning through Northouse's (2016) five principles of respect, service, justice, honesty, and community. Finally, a communication plan inclusive of internal and external stakeholders is shared.

The organizational improvement plan provides a feasible approach to creating a shared vision within a bachelor of education program which will improve the learning outcomes and experiences of program students. The plan relies on the active engagement of faculty to enact the plan and to enliven the shared vision.

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## Glossary of Terms

**Course learning outcomes:** The knowledge and skills acquired through the successful completion of a course.

**Instructor:** Within a university, an individual who typically possesses a master's degree hired to teach courses within a program of study (WPSI, 2014).

**Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP):** A theory- and research- based plan to address an organizational problem.

**Professor:** A rank of university appointment. Typically a professor has earned a terminal degree in his/her area of expertise. In addition to teaching, professors are expected to pursue scholarly work and/or research and to provide service to his/her community (WPSI, 2014).

**Program Coordinator:** A faculty member designated to manage the daily operation of a program, including tasks such as chairing meetings, creating schedules, and tracking program students.

**Program-level outcomes:** The knowledge and skills acquired by students after successfully completing an entire program of study.

**Program of study:** An approved group of course at the post-secondary level which upon completion, a graduate is awarded a certificate, diploma, or degree.

**Wasakam:** a pseudonym name of a bachelor of education program. The word comes from an Indigenous language and means *all of us*.

**Woodlands Post-Secondary Institution (WPSI)** – a pseudonym of a post-secondary institution located in Western Canada that offers university and college programs.

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

In Canada, bachelor of education programs provide prospective teachers with basic knowledge, skills, and experiences to enter the teaching profession (Van Nuland, 2011). However, a national regulatory body for teacher education programs does not exist; rather, the teacher certification requirements are prescribed by provincial government education departments or ministries. Among provinces, bachelor of education programs vary in structure, length, and content. Within provinces, bachelor of education program are designed to be responsive to local contexts including history, language, culture and community needs (Van Nuland, 2011). With minimal government regulation or professional oversight, the onus falls upon universities to ensure that their bachelor of education programs graduate individuals equipped to teach in the kindergarten to grade twelve system. This organizational improvement plan focuses on ensuring quality and responsiveness within a multi-site bachelor of education program. More specifically, the plan describes how the creation of a shared vision among faculty could lead to greater program consistency and improved learning outcomes and experiences for program students. In this chapter, the context, vision, problem and leadership approach for organizational change are introduced.

### **Organizational Context**

The Wasakam Bachelor of Education program is offered through Woodland Post-Secondary Institution (WPSI). By establishing WPSI in 2004, the provincial government created a single institution to offer college and university programming to serve the northern region of one of the Prairie Provinces (Usher & Pelletier, 2017). Thus, WPSI serves a vast geographical area encompassing over half of the province but having a modest population of less than 90, 000 (Look North Economic Task Force, 2017). The residents are dispersed among a few small cities,

towns, hamlets, and several First Nation communities. Many of the region's communities are remote, accessible only by gravel roads, winter roads, rail, or air. The communities of the WPSI catchment area are unique in terms of their political, economic, social, and cultural realities.

To support the social and economic development of its communities, WPSI is mandated to ensure that Northern communities and people have access to appropriate training and education. In addition, the provincial WPSI Act states that programming at the institution should be inclusive of local Indigenous knowledge and perspectives. The vision statement of WPSI reaffirms the institution's commitment to Indigenous values and emphasizes the role of WPSI graduates in strengthening Northern communities. With emphasis on social justice, equity, and empowerment, the institution's mandate, mission, and vision statements embed a critical philosophical approach to the educational purposes and practices of WPSI (Shields, 2010).

To enact the mandate to provide equitable access to training and educational opportunities, WPSI is comprised of two main campuses and twelve regional centers which are located primarily in First Nation communities. Each year, the main campuses enroll students in over twenty established apprenticeship, college, and university programs. The programs offered at each of the regional centers vary as determined by community need and interest. WPSI also provides training and programming to communities not served by a campus or regional center through individual contracts. Annually, the institution delivers education and training to approximately 2000 students of whom approximately 70% identify as Indigenous.

## **History**

Woodlands Post-Secondary Institution (WPSI) was established through the reimagining of an existing community college. A university-college model was adapted enabling a broader range of training and educational programming to be developed and offered in the North. The

transition from a college to university-college continues to influence organizational culture. During the development of WPSI, institutional leaders focused on structural aspects of the institution such as developing a governance model, establishing administrative practices, securing accreditation for academic programs, and creating policy (Harman, 2002). The sociocultural tensions created by the transition affected the beliefs, values, and customs foundational to an institution's culture were not addressed (Ribando & Evans, 2015). Thus, the institution continues to struggle to forge a unified culture based on shared values and attitudes. Additionally, the creation of a cohesive culture at WPSI is exacerbated by the innately *uncomplimentary* cultures associated with university and college systems (Harmon, 2002, p. 99) and the multi-site structure of the institution.

### **Leadership and Governance**

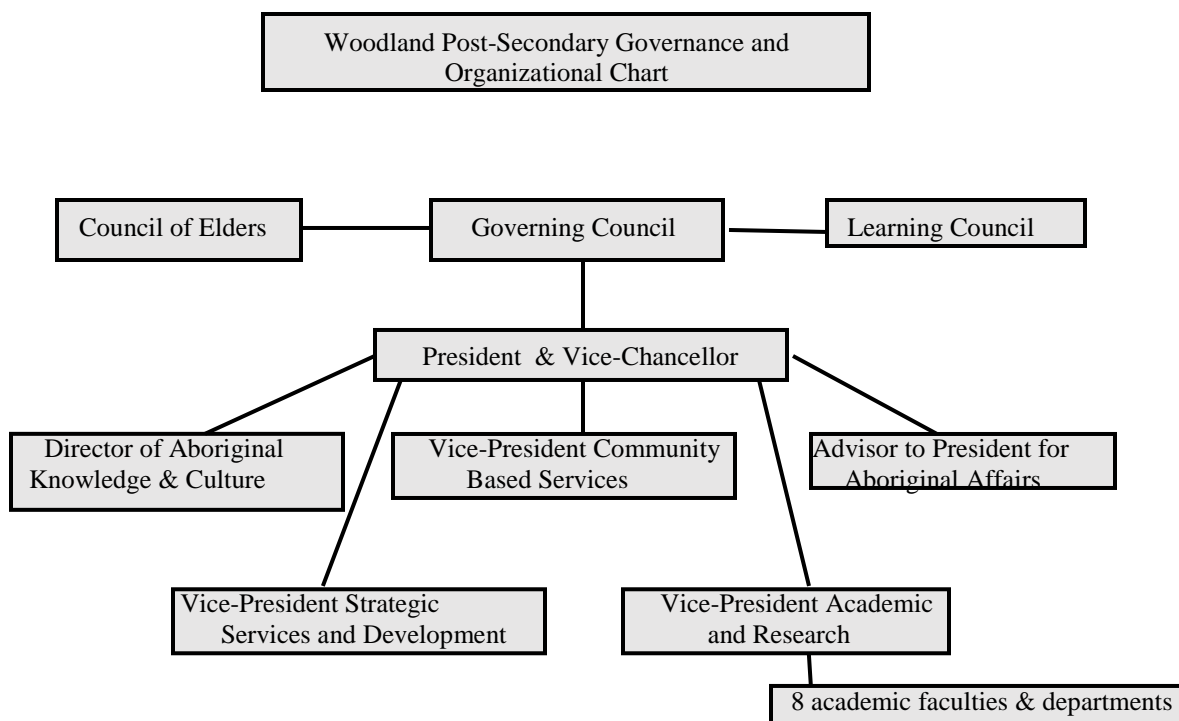
As legislated in the WPSI Act, the institution relies on three governing bodies: the Governing Council, the Learning Council, and the Council of Elders (see Figure 1.1, page 5). The Governing Council hold overall responsibility for institution. Thus, the Governing Council is governs and manages the affairs of WPSI including setting the vision and mission, appointing the president, overseeing financial aspects, and determining strategic direction. The Council is composed of a maximum of twenty members with a maximum of ten individuals appointed by the government, two individuals appointed by the Council itself, employee representatives, and others by virtue of their office including the institution's president. The WPSI Act states that due regard must be given to the Indigenous composition when appointing members to the Council .

The Learning Council is responsible for the academic policy of the university college. As such, the Learning Council is entrusted to determine courses or programs offerings, to provide oversight on the academic conduct of students, and to identify curriculum content for courses

leading to degrees, certificates, and diplomas. All members of the Learning Council are employees of the organization with the majority of members in either professorial or instructor roles.

The Council of Elders promotes an environment at the university college that respects and embraces Aboriginal and northern cultures and values. Therefore, the Council of Elders is not a third decision-making body of equal standing to the Governing Council or Learning Council (Usher & Pelletier, 2017). Rather, the Council of Elders provides guidance by sharing traditional knowledge, wisdom, beliefs, and values. The Council of Elders consists of fourteen Elders. Members are recommended to and appointed by the Council of Elders with consideration given to representation of the Aboriginal language groups within the WPSI area. The governance model of WPSI gives voice to a breadth of key stakeholders and reflects the current trend toward inclusive and collegial leadership in higher education (Bolden & Petrov, 2014).





*Figure 1.1.* A simplified leadership chart of WPSI depicting the governance Councils and most of the senior academic management team. The Wasakam Bachelor of Education program falls under the 8 academic faculties and departments.

Although the Governing, Learning, and Elders' Councils provide governance and guidance, much of the leadership authority resides in the position of the institution's president and vice-chancellor. The WPSI president acts as the organization's chief executive officer and is empowered to supervise and direct the academic and general administration of WPSI. As illustrated in Figure 1.1, a senior administrative team supports and reports to the president. The bureaucratic leadership approach is similar to leadership structures found in most post-secondary institutions where the lines of authority are clearly delineated and established policies and procedures inform daily functioning (Manning, 2013). More specifically, WPSI leadership configuration can be described as a *professional bureaucracy* (Mintzberg, 1980). A professional bureaucracy is suited to educational organizations which are typically both stable and complex.

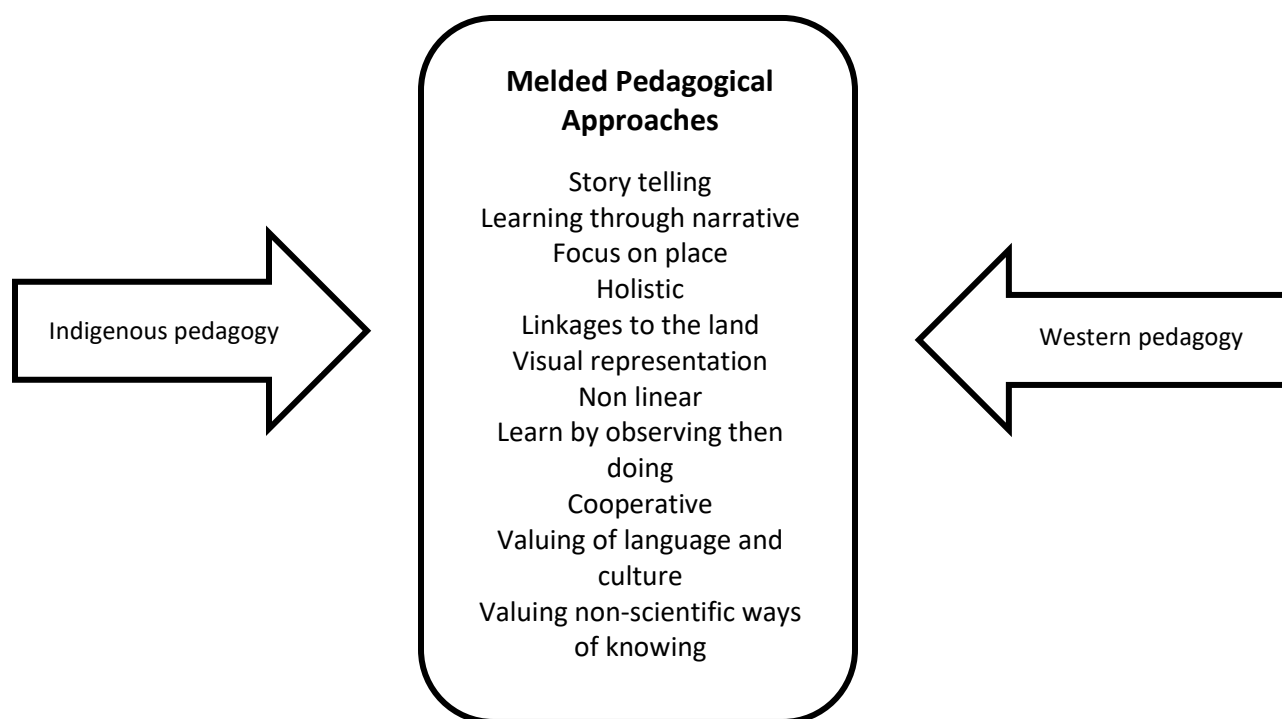
The professional bureaucracy enables leadership to be both coordinated and decentralized (Mintzberg, 1980). With the president and senior administration team at the apex, certain powers and authority are distributed to the institution's deans, coordinators, and directors. Although not in formal leadership positions, the well-educated faculty are afforded high levels of autonomy to perform their jobs and in their academic pursuits within the professional bureaucracy model (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Traditionally, the individuals who have assumed senior leadership roles at WPSI have ascribed to either transformational or transformative leadership. Transformational leaders create a desirable future vision and use optimism and enthusiasm to encourage followers to pursue that vision (Bass, 1997). Thus, the goals of the leader become the goals of the followers. WPSI depends on transformational leaders to nurture partnerships and to develop innovative programming to enhance local economic growth and community development (Basham, 2012). Likewise, the social justice underpinning of the institution attracts transformative leaders who are concerned with issues relating to equity in access to education and issues relating to the acceptance of Indigenous knowledge and pedagogies in Western educational institutions (Shields, 2010).

### **Wasakam Bachelor of Education Program**

The tenets of transformative leadership resonate with the philosophy of the Wasakam Bachelor of Education program. WPSI campuses and regional centers are located in a region where nearly 75% of the population self-identify as Indigenous (Look North Economic Task Force, 2017). Although educational attainment data specific to the region do not exist, provincial data indicate that only 55% of Indigenous individuals graduate from grade 12 (Richard, 2016). Thus, the Wasakam program was designed to respond to these realities. The creation of the

program relied on the insights and wisdom of a group of Elders who continue to provide guidance to faculty. In addition to the Elders, numerous community consultations were held to solicit local input into the teacher education program. The program fuses Indigenous and Western pedagogical approaches and emphasizes relationships, culture, and place as foundational to effective educational practices. The information presented in Figure 1.2 was shared with the Wasakam faculty by one of the program's Elders.



*Figure 1.2* A representation of elements central to the Wasakam Bachelor of Education based on integrating Indigenous and Western pedagogical approaches.

As indicated by Figure 1.2, practices that link Indigenous and Western pedagogy are at the core of the program. Additionally, the program highlights the realities of teaching in rural and remote areas.

Since its implementation in 2008, the Wasakam program has been delivered continually at the two main WPSI campuses. Additionally, from 2012-2016 the Wasakam program was

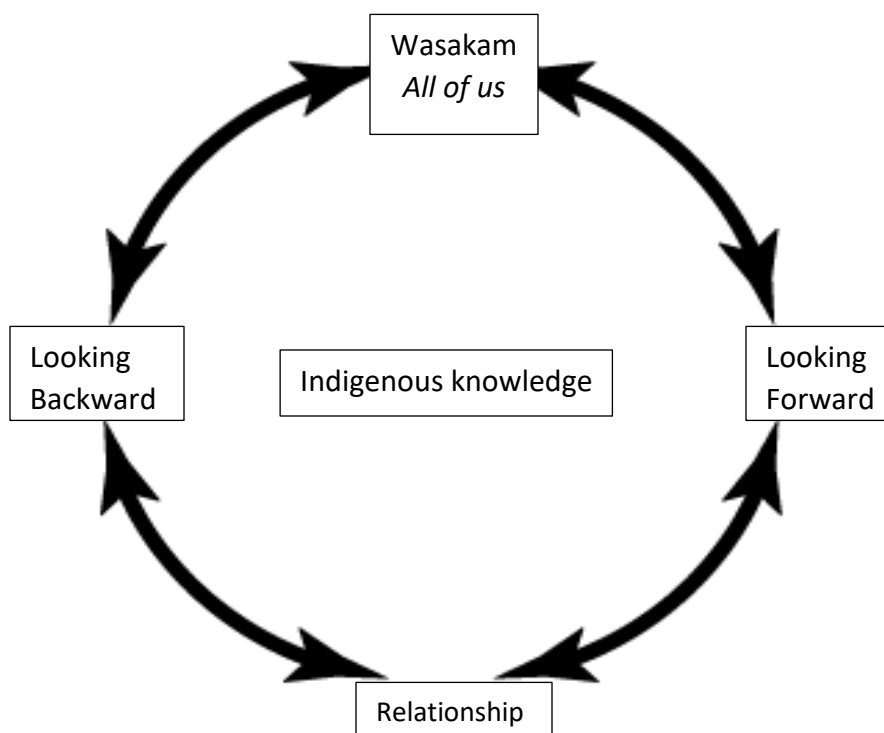
offered in a cohort-based model in five First Nation communities. In September 2016, new program cohorts began in five new communities. In total, approximately 130 students are registered in the program annually. A complement of approximately fifteen full-time instructor and/or professorial positions exists to deliver the program across all sites. Some faculty members work solely in one program delivery location while others travel to various communities. Also, the program relies on sessional instructors in part due to the travel requirements and in part due to on-going faculty vacancies.

To manage the Wasakam program, the dean of the Faculty of Education uses a form of a divisionalized organizational configuration (Mintzberg, 1980). Each of the two main campuses, and collectively, the community-based sites comprise the three divisions of the organizational structure. Each division is managed by a site-based coordinator. These three division act as “quasi-autonomous units” (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 80). Although the dean oversees each of the divisions, each division is empowered to serve its students with minimal interdependence and interaction among other divisions or delivery sites. Consequently, a limited, parallel form of decentralization exists (Mintzberg, 1980). The divisionalized configuration has contributed to inconsistency in program content. Varying iterations of the program have emerged based on delivery site and students graduate from the program with differing knowledge and skills. Additionally, faculty focus on their site-based programs and are not committed to overall program development and growth.

### **Leadership Position Statement**

Indigenous Elders from local communities thoughtfully and deliberately selected *Wasakam* as the name for the bachelor of education program at WPSI. Wasakam is an Indigenous model and philosophical approach to education. Based on the English translation of

*all of us*, the term highlights relationships, connections, and collaboration. The Wasakam model illustrated in Figure 1.3 is based on the model shared by the program Elders.



*Figure 1.3.* A visual representation of the Wasakam model. The representation is based on an illustration developed by the Wasakam Elders' group.

As depicted in Figure 1.3, the Wasakam model is based on the connections among the past, present, and future. Thus, education must value traditional knowledge and ensure that future generations have the skills and abilities to flourish in diverse environments. As a faculty member and site-based program coordinator, the ideals of Wasakam resonate with me. I view and strive to enact leadership and organizational change as an inclusive practice achieved through connections and interactions. To align with Wasakam philosophy, the problem of practice addressed by this OIP is framed using a collegial model to approach change and will be implemented using team and adaptive leadership styles.

The Wasakam philosophy and the collegial frame stress collaboration, the sharing of power, and a collective commitment to an understood goal (Bush, 2011). In practice, the

collegial frame can be enacted through team and adaptive leadership. Heinen and Zaccaro (2008) describe team leadership as “a process where one or more individuals direct, structure, and facilitate the collective efforts of members to achieve effectiveness” (p. 1515). Pearce (2004) notes that a shared approach to leadership is appropriate for *knowledge* work characterized by interdependence, creativity, and complexity. Team leadership embraces a flatter, more flexible, and collaborative approach to work (Amos & Klimoski, 2014). Individuals not in designated position of power assume leadership roles. Thus, formal and *informal* leaders contribute significantly to team effectiveness (Wang, Waldman, & Zhang, 2013). Individuals are called upon to act as leaders when their skills, knowledge, and expertise are required (Bergman, Rentsch, Small, & Bergman, 2012). These principles of team leadership reflect the skilled faculty and the goal of creating a collaborative culture.

Team effectiveness is evaluated in broad terms including the quantity and quality of work output, the augmented capability of team members to work together independently in the future, and the learning and well-being of the individual team members (Heinen & Zaccaro, 2008). The success of shared leadership is influenced by the team’s commitment to a shared purpose, social support, voice, and external support (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007). However, the ability of individuals to naturally engage in shared leadership cannot be assumed. An organizational culture that supports collaboration must be cultivated by formal leaders (Curry, 2014). Team leadership supports both organizational and individual growth.

A culture of collaboration is entwined with adaptive leadership. As the term *adaptive* implies, the adaptive leadership approach is designed to respond to external and internal organizational challenges. According to its creators, rather than “...analytical problem solving, crisp decision making, the articulation of clear direction...”, leadership must be embraced as “an

improvisational and experimental art” (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009, p. 3). Thus, adaptive leaders must foster adaptation, embrace disequilibrium, and generate leadership in their organizations (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009). Adaptive leaders do not lead through solutions. Rather adaptive leaders believe that solutions lie in the collective knowledge of all organizational members who rely on one another as resources (Heifetz & Laurie, 2001). Within their organizations, adaptive leaders promote new relationships, new values, new behaviours, and new approaches to enhance workplace performance (Heifetz & Laurie, 2001). Although adaptive leadership highlights change and *newness*, the approach also values existing practice. Adaptive leaders “capitalise on history without being enslaved by it” (Loren, 2005, p. 47) and Adaptive leaders appreciate the knowledge accumulated through the organization’s history.

The shared or distributed tenets of adaptive and team leadership mirror the collaborative approaches espoused by the Wasakam philosophy. As one of the site-based program coordinators, I strive to work collaboratively with my colleagues to improve program content and delivery. The faculty are highly educated, possess specialized knowledge, and exhibit diverse skills. They expect to assume leadership roles and to have influence over the program. With fewer than twenty members, the size of the faculty lends itself to high levels of engagement and faculty empowerment. However, the existing organizational culture is a significant barrier to the enactment of adaptive and team leadership. Over the years, many faculty, even those at the same delivery site, have opted to work in isolation. The isolationist approach is reinforced by the distributed program delivery model. The lack of a collaborative program culture is central to the problem of practice presented in the next section.

Although I view myself as a team and adaptive leader, I will, at times, also rely on the bureaucratic organization structure of WPSI to enact change. While adaptive and team

approaches focus on collaboration and consensus, bureaucratic models depend on hierarchical authority, are goal orientated, and are governed by rules and regulations (Bush, 2011). I depend on the power granted to positions within the institution's bureaucratic hierarchical structure to lead change. When required, my position of as a site-based coordinator enables me to make certain decisions unilaterally, to act quickly and responsively, and to direct change. Additionally, I rely on the support of the dean and the power of her position to ensure faculty involvement with program-level initiatives. Similar to the inherently complex nature of post-secondary institutions, my approach to leadership is diverse, multi-faceted, and contextually derived.

### **Leadership Problem of Practice**

A collegial frame supported by team and adaptive leadership will be used to address the following problem of practice. Since the implementation of the Wasakam program in 2008, varying manifestations of the program have emerged. Divergent perspectives related to program ideology, standards of student performance, and instructional content exist among program delivery sites and individual faculty members. Consequently, the skills and knowledge acquired by program graduates has varied and program integrity has been compromised. Ensuring program quality is a complex endeavour requiring both faculty and leadership commitment and collaboration. The problem of practice investigated in this organizational improvement plan is the need to create a shared vision among faculty to ensure consistency in the content, delivery and practices of the Wasakam Bachelor of Education program. Through a shared vision, the learning experiences and outcomes achieved by students will be improved and program graduates will be better equipped to teach in kindergarten to grade twelve educational systems.

A shared vision extends beyond a solitary statement that describes an idealized future state. Rather, a shared vision creates commonality among colleagues that provides a sense of



purpose and coherence to organizational activities (Senge, 1991). A shared vision guides daily work and informs future plans. In addition, a shared vision creates connections among faculty by establishing a set of beliefs to guide the actions and interactions of colleagues (Strange & Mumford, 2002). For the Wasakam program, a shared vision will ensure consistency in ideology, practices, and curriculum. Kouzes and Posner (2007) assert that “the best leaders inspire a shared vision, as opposed to selling their own idiosyncratic view of the world” (p. 6). Thus, the creation of a shared vision will be guided by the input of all program faculty. The creation and implementation of a shared vision aligns with the Wasakam program’s adherence to the Seven Teaching of truth, wisdom, honesty, humility, courage, love, and respect.

Although the dean did not initiate the plan, she supports collaborative efforts to create a shared program vision. As the change agent, I acknowledge that the implementation and development of the plan hinges on her support. Her support is grounded in recent issues including problems with program graduates meeting provincial certification requirements, divergent interpretations of course learning outcomes by faculty, and differing interpretations of Indigenous perspectives and knowledge. Using the established institutional framework, the program was scheduled to begin its first program review process during the 2017-2018 academic year. However, the review has been postponed and the dean believes that the creation of a shared vision will enhance the program review process.

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

In this section of the chapter, the aforementioned problem of practice (PoP) is framed terms of its historical context, examined through a Systems Model, considered through a literature review, and assessed through PESTE analysis. The section concludes with a brief leadership perspective on the PoP.

## **Historical Overview of the Problem of Practice**

The creation of a shared vision is a complex and time-consuming task (Casey, 2005). Prior to the implementation of the program in 2008, the program's Elders with input from other stakeholders spent significant time developing a vision for a unique, responsive, and place-based teacher education program. As the program has been implemented and evolved, the vision has failed to be consistently communicated and enlivened through program practices and activities. A singular cause is not responsible for the failure to embed in shared vision within the program. However, the primary causes of a lack of shared vision relate to the multi-site delivery model and the existing organizational culture.

The Wasakam program is offered consistently at the two main campuses of Woodlands Post-Secondary Institution (WPSI). Since 2011, the program has been delivered in an additional ten communities. Although program expansion to these regional centers is positive for the institution and the communities, Pruitt and Silverman (2015) note that rapid program growth often results in decline in program quality and integrity, thus impacting on the shared program vision. Furthermore, research indicates that university programs offered in regional centers struggle with gaps in institutional services (such as student advising), significant student learning needs, and instructor isolation (Wirihana, et al., 2017). Wasakam students who pursue their studies in community-based programs do not have access to academic learning center supports, study and writing skill workshops, peer tutoring service, or personal counselling. Library services are minimal and, in some communities, internet band width is highly problematic. The limited access to supports is particularly problematic as some community-based students enter the program lacking requisite academic skills. Local sponsors, often First Nation bands, fund the community-based programs with the expectation that students graduate after five years

regardless of the academic or social barriers encountered by students. As a consequence, program expectations are modified to respond to the context of the delivery site. Differences that exist in programs based on delivery site have been exacerbated by the divisionalized leadership configuration used by the dean.

The two main WPSI campuses are located over four hundred kilometers apart with the current community-based Wasakam programs located from 250 to 400 kilometers from either campus. The geographic separation of students and faculty has influenced the program's organizational culture and hindered the establishment of a shared vision. Rarely do faculty meet to either discuss the program or to build community among colleagues. During the 2016-2017 academic year, the dean scheduled only one program-level meeting which several faculty did not attend. Among faculty a commitment to program development and to improvement initiatives is absent. Systematic plans for faculty professional development and for new faculty orientation do not exist. Formal and informal communication among most faculty is minimal. Even within the same sites, faculty tend to approach their work as an individual endeavour. The existing organizational culture of the Wasakam program has hindered the adoption of shared vision among faculty.

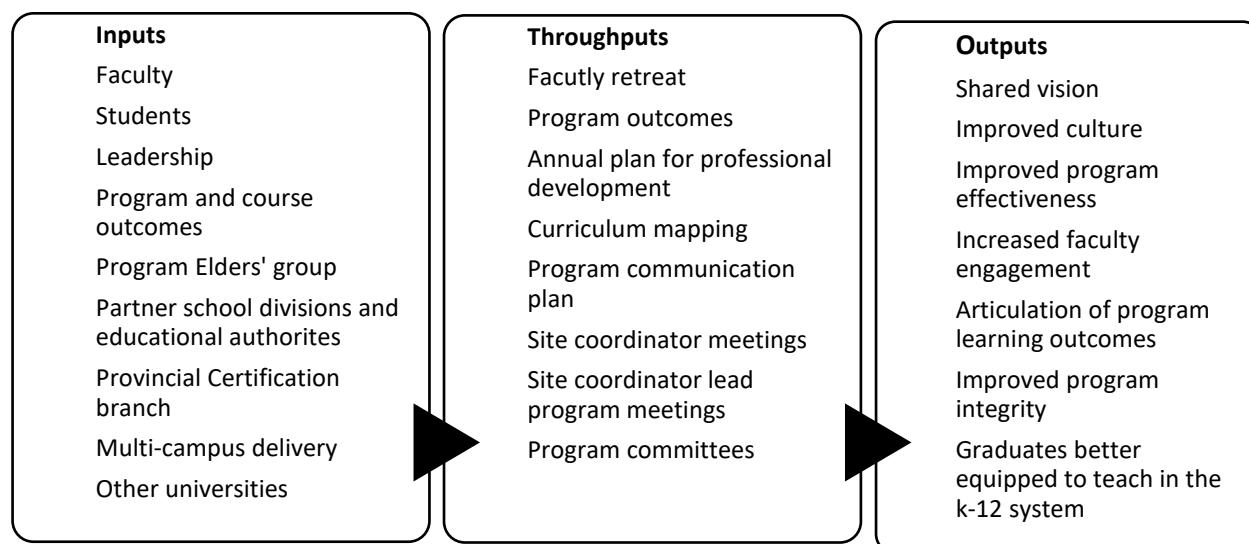
However, some faculty at one main campus have made efforts to strengthen the program vision. During the last academic year, they met several times to review course outcomes, course topics, and assessment practices. Through the process, a unified vision of program expectations began to emerge. Additionally, communication among faculty was enhanced through scheduled meetings and bi-weekly program updates. Although not reflective of the complexities of creating a shared vision among all faculty, these activities have created momentum and interest to develop a shared vision among some faculty.

## Input – Throughput - Output Systems Model

Building from the historical overview, the problem of practice (PoP) is framed using a Systems Model (see Table 1.1). The model provides insights into the factors influencing the organization, change activities, and desired outcomes. The inputs, throughputs, and outputs of the plan are listed.

Table 1.1

### *Systems Model – Creating Shared Vision*



According to Systems Theory, inputs are the resources required for a system to function. As illustrated in Table 1.1, the operation of the Wasakam program relies on a number of inputs. This plan focuses on the inputs of faculty, students, leadership, and program outcomes. The inputs of partner school divisions and education authorities, the provincial certification branch, and other universities are beyond the scope of the plan and are not addressed. However, the characteristics, attributes, and expectations of all inputs are considered in the formulation of the throughputs.

The throughputs are the actions or processes used to achieve the final products or outputs. The proposed faculty retreat is foundational to the shared vision improvement plan. During the retreat, the creation of a shared program vision will begin. The vision will inform and direct the subsequent throughputs and actions. To actualize a shared vision, the throughputs will concentrate on integrity program and faculty collaboration.

The outputs listed in Table 1.1 connect with one another. While the creation of program-level outcomes and increased faculty engagement are important, they are not ends in themselves. Ultimately, all of the outputs are intended to ensure that program graduates are better equipped to be responsive and effective teachers in the kindergarten to grade twelve educational systems.

### **Shared Vision Literature Review**

The framing of the PoP moves from the pragmatic view of the Systems Model to a brief overview of shared vision literature. The inclusion of vision in leadership and organizational change literature corresponds with the emergence of transformational and charismatic leadership (Strange & Mumford, 2005). Although based on different theoretical models, both transformational and charismatic leadership contend that excellence in leadership is contingent on the creation and communication of a viable vision (Strange & Mumford, 2002). Leaders use a vision to provide cohesion, direction, and motivation within organizations.

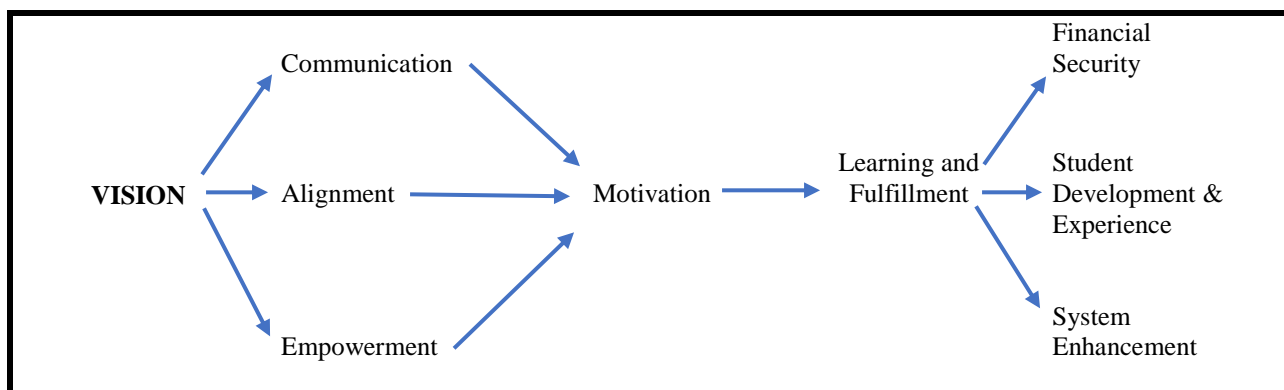
Leadership and organizational literature define the term *vision* in a variety of ways. Definitions includes an idealized state to be achieved in the future; an image of the future that articulates the values, purposes, and identity of followers; the essence of work; a concept inclusive of organizational values and guiding philosophy; an idea; and a set of core values (Haque, TitiAmayah, & Liu, 2016; Strange & Mumord, 2002). Baum, Locke, and Kirkpatrick 1998, argue that a singular definition of vision is not required, suggesting that vision is fluid and

conceptualized by the organizational leader (p.44). Likewise, Strange and Mumford (2005) favour a flexible interpretation contending that “vision involves a set of beliefs about how people should act, and interact, to make manifest some other state” (p. 122). This definition is significant as it positions vision as *mental model* or conceptual representation to interpret systems operation and to direct employee actions within the system (Strange & Mumford, 2005). Based on his work in higher education, Kantabutra (2010) integrated the work of Baum et al. (1998) and Strange and Mumford (2005) to define vision “as a mental model each faculty leader defines, used to both understand systems operations and guide actions within the systems” (p. 377). Regardless of the definition applied, vision serves to direct the evolution of the organization and provides a framework for organizational actions and interactions (Kopaneva & Sias, 2015). Moreover, an organizational vision reflects the environment and context in which the organization is situated (Kantabutra, 2010).

While a variety of interpretations of vision exist, studies attest to the positive influences that a clearly articulated and thoughtfully enacted vision can have within an organization. A foundational benefit of a shared vision is the creation of a cohesive work environment based on stated values. The sense of purpose fostered by shared vision contributes to positive employee attitudes, commitment, and job satisfaction (Cole, Harris, Berneth, 2006; Levin, 2000). Additionally, organizational vision provides clarity to roles and encourages the retention of staff (Myers & Wooten, 2009; Cole et al., 2006). Studies also link vision to organizational growth and development (Baum et al., 1998; Haque et al., 2016), as well as improved organizational performance, productivity, and financial success (Jing, Avery, & Bertsteiner, 2014).

Although studies have been conducted in the business sector, limited research has evaluated the influence of vision in post-secondary institutions. According to Kantabutra (2010),

“Empirically, no published studies have linked vision components specifically to educational institution performance...” (p. 377). To address this gap, Kantabutra developed a research model that suggests a link between organizational vision and faculty performance (see Figure 1.4).



*Figure 1.4* Vision and Faculty Performance. Proposed model linking vision and faculty performance in post-secondary educational institutions. Adapted from “Vision Effects: A Critical Gap in Educational Leadership Research” by S. Kantabutra, 2010, *International Journal of Educational Management*, 24(5), p. 384.

The model remains untested; however, Kantabutra believes that study results will conclude eventually that shared vision can be used to improve faculty performance, student satisfaction, growth, and process improvement. Currently within the Wasakam program, linkages between vision and the model elements of alignment, empowerment, and communication have not been solidified. Although concrete data do not exist, As Kantabutra proposes, these broken connections appear to hinder student learning, satisfaction, and growth, as well as program improvement efforts.

### **PESTE Analysis**

While the literature review provides a theoretical frame for a shared vision, the PESTE analysis contextualizes the realities of WPSI and the Wasakam program. The analysis considers the influence of political, economic, social, technological, and ecological/environmental factors

on the PoP. The political, economic, and social factors appear to have the greatest impact on the problem.

**Political.** WPSI is accountable to the provincial government. Based on issues identified in the most recent provincial college review report and auditor general's report, government scrutiny of the WPSI has intensified. The government has given the institution's senior administration the mandate to increase programming, enrollment, and graduation rates and to reduce spending (Usher & Pelletier, 2017). Issues of program accountability have also been raised by senior administration. The focus on accountability aligns with goals of creating a shared vision within the Wasakam program. However, the requirement to reduce costs could impact the multi-site delivery model of the program.

More favourably, the philosophy of the Wasakam program aligns with federal government interest in improving educational outcomes for Indigenous students and integrating Indigenous perspectives into curricula. The program must continue to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action (Truth and Reconciliation Canada, 2015) and use the Calls to Actions to support and to guide its vision.

**Economic.** Teacher recruitment and retention continues to be problematic in many Northern, remote, and First Nation communities in the province. At the start of the 2017-2018 academic school year thirty-six teacher vacancies existed in First Nation communities within WPSI catchment area: Due to the teacher shortage, one community postponed the start of the school year (Monkman, 2017). Given this reality, there appears to be a need for a teacher education program to respond and to address the realities of the northern teacher labour market. Innovative planning and partnerships could be created between communities and WPSI to address teacher shortages. The partnership agreements may include tuition waivers for teachers



who agree to work in communities lacking teachers and regular professional support provided by Wasakam faculty including ongoing visits and inservices by instructors in communities.

However, the Wasakam program cannot assume the security of its role in providing teacher education in the northern part of the province. In the last year, a First Nation community traditionally affiliated with WPSI contracted with a southern university to provide a community-based bachelor of education program. This university was selected as Wasakam was unable to provide the specialized programming requested. To remain viable and be seen as the school of choice, the Wasakam program must better market itself and be willing to offer innovative and responsive programming to communities. Being responsive to new demands requires that the program has a well-established foundation with clearly articulated outcomes, philosophy, and standards for student performance.

**Social.** The majority of students in the program can be described as *non-traditional* university students. These students tend to be older and to enter the program with diverse work and life experiences. Many are Indigenous, first-generation post-secondary students who begin the program questioning their place in university. As an institution, WPSI grapples with providing the essential supports, including child care, housing, and academic tutoring. In establishing standards for student performance, Wasakam instructors wrestle with accommodating student needs and adhering to high academic and professional expectations. In response to the academic realities of students entering the Wasakam program, some faculty feel that performance standards are comprised. As a result, the knowledge and skill expectations acquired by program graduates are inconsistent.

**Technology.** The provincial teacher education accreditation department stipulates that all courses within a bachelor of education be delivered entirely in a face-to-face format.

Consequently, instructional staff must travel to each of the program delivery sites. Although this is the current practice, it may not remain the standard. As a small institution, the Wasakam program does not have the capacity to develop quickly courses for distance delivery. Therefore, should the province change the mandate of face-to-face delivery, other universities in the province will be better positioned to introduce a technology mediated program to communities and individuals located in areas considered to be part of WPSI catchment area.

**Ecological/Environmental.** In kindergarten to grade twelve education, land-based education has gained prominence. In developing the shared vision for the program, Wasakam is well-positioned to take advantage of this trend. Recently, the program has described itself as land-based with some instructors in some delivery sites embracing this pedagogical approach. However, faculty have not worked collaboratively to discuss the Wasakam's land-based philosophy and implications for instruction and content. If the program is to capitalize on this educational niche, deliberate and collaborative efforts must be made to ensure that all courses within the program reflect a land-based mandate and the focus become part of a shared program vision.

This improvement plan does not respond to all of the opportunities and challenges presented in the PESTE analysis. However, the creation of a shared program vision will establish a solid program foundation that will better equip faculty to respond to evolving contextual realities. While the PESTE analysis highlights the influence of internal and external factors on the program, the problem will be considered further through the use of internal institutional data.

### **Internal Data**

Internal data cannot be used to frame the PoP. As elaborated on in Chapter Three, the collection and distribution of internal data related to the Wasakam program is problematic at

WPSI. Faculty do not have access to summative reports on topics such as course completion rates and reasons for student attrition. Additionally, data gathered from the annually conducted graduate follow-up surveys is aggregated by faculty and not presented by program.

Consequently, information specific to the Wasakam Bachelor of Education is not generated. As the institution continues to grow, improved systems will be required for the collection and dissemination of internal data.

### **Leadership Perspective on the PoP**

In considering the problem of practice, leaders must be cognizant of the contextual realities of the Wasakam program. The program serves a unique role in improving the learning outcomes for children in the Northern region of the province. However, instead of adopting the Wasakam approach of *all of us*, the program has evolved and developed based on individual ideals and visions. To ensure program integrity and to establish a path for growth, a shared vision of the program must be created.

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

The problem of practice addressed by this organizational improvement plan is the need to create a shared vision among Wasakam faculty to ensure program integrity and to improve the learning outcomes of all program students. In exploring the problem, the complicated and involved realities of teacher education emerged. My efforts to create a viable solution to the problem have generated further areas of inquiry related to the Wasakam program.

In considering program consistency and the skills required by teachers, the following question for inquiry emerged: Would greater oversight by an external agency or organization help or hinder the quality and responsiveness of the Wasakam program?

Education is a provincial responsibility; thus, neither federal department of education nor an integrated national system of education exists (Van Nuland, 2011). To become accredited, the Wasakam program received approval from the post-secondary education and teacher certification branches of the provincial government. Once approved, the little oversight is provided by any provincial government department to ensure that quality standards are being maintained. No other external body evaluates the performance of the province's bachelor of education programs.

However, some researchers and experts believe that greater external oversight of teacher training programs is required. Gimmett (2011) asserts that the realities of teaching in Canada have created a turning point for the governance of teacher training. He argues that teacher education programs require a collaborative and professional governance framework. According to Gimmett, a professional governance framework would rely on a supervisory body, separate from government control or union influence, to establish and ensure professional standard of performance for pre-service teachers. Connecting to Gimmett's work, Crocker and Dibbon (2008) suggest that a national collective dialogue among stakeholders is required to begin to ensure optimal quality in all of Canada's teacher education programs. Van Lund (2011) notes that the baseline data collected by Crocker and Dobbin provides a blueprint for a more cohesive approach to teacher training in Canada.

A single training model for teacher education could not meet the diverse needs and interest of all university programs. However, through a collegial professional regulatory body the content and quality of teacher education programs could be assessed on established criteria. Thus, graduates from Canadian bachelor of education programs would possess the same core knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Although not the current reality, the inquiry question seeks to evaluate the benefits and challenges of such a system on the Wasakam program.

A second line of inquiry stemming from the main problem is: Is the community-based delivery model an effective model for the Wasakam program? The community-based delivery provides equity in access to education. Students are able to stay in their home communities while pursuing universities. Additionally, this pedagogical approach is responsive to the criticism that many Indigenous teacher education programs are assimilative in their orientation (Kitchen & Hodson, 2013). The approach ascribes to the assertion:

firm grounding in the heritage language and culture indigenous to a particular tribe is a fundamental prerequisite for the development of culturally-healthy students and communities associated with that place, and thus is an essential ingredient for identifying the appropriate qualities and practices associated with culturally –responsive educators, curriculum, and schools. (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998, p. 2)

When offered in communities, local knowledge and culture are incorporated into course content. Thus, the approach aligns with holistic traditional educational methods that include community pedagogical practices (Kirkness, 1998).

Despite the natural connections with the philosophy and intentions of the Waskam program, challenges are associated with the community-based delivery approach. The approach limits opportunities of students to establish collegial relationships with a broad range of peers, to gain insights into other communities, and to learn experientially in a diversity of school settings. Additionally, the opportunities for students to personalize their program of studies is also limited. As a cohort-based program, the courses which are offered and the major and minor areas of study are determined by the program coordinator. Also, as described in Chapter Two, community-based students do not have equitable access to institutional supports and resources.

While the multi-site delivery aligns with the philosophy and intention of the Wasakam program, flaws exist with the approach. Further study is required to determine the overall effectiveness of the approach.

On a more pragmatic level, the following inquiry questions were key in the development of the organizational change plan: How can faculty be motivated to engage in organizational change? How does organizational culture influence change?

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

The questions presented in the previous section either grounded the plan's development or suggested areas for further study. In this section, the pragmatic consideration of the plan continues with the preferred future state contrasted with the existing realities.

The goal of this OIP is to create a shared vision among Wasakam Bachelor of Education faculty. A shared vision is created collaboratively and provides a sense of unity and purpose to organizational activities (Senge, 1991). Therefore, a shared program vision will influence actions to create consistency in program content, expectations of student performance, pedagogical approaches, and administrative policies and practices. Additionally, through adaptive and team leadership, a collegial organizational culture will be introduced to align with the Wasakam philosophy of *all of us*.

From the initial implementation of the program, a shared vision has been lacking. In educational contexts, a shared vision informs the behavioural norms of faculty and provides direction for student learning (Huffman, 2003). A shared vision can be communicated through program-level outcomes. Program-level outcomes describe the knowledge, skill, and attitudes that students should acquire by graduation. Faculty rely on program-level outcomes to set expectations for student performance and to guide their teaching (Lam & Tsui, 2016). Daniels

(2008) suggests that quality university programs first define the outcomes, then structure course curriculum to connect with the outcomes. However, the original Wasakam program proposal did not include program-level outcomes. Therefore, faculty have conceptualized and enacted the curriculum without a common appreciation of the attributes and understandings that graduates should possess. Without program outcomes, faculty deliver varying manifestations of the program. For example, at one program delivery site students spend a week during each academic year at a culture camp. The learning that occurs at the culture camp differs significantly from other sites where a culture camp is not used. One of the first tasks of the improvement plan is to have faculty work collaboratively to establish program-level outcomes. In the future, faculty will align their instructional practices with the outcomes creating result in greater consistency in program delivery.

The creation of program-level outcomes will help to establish common expectations for student performance. No common standards or measurements for student performance exist. Therefore, the types of products used to evaluate students differ significantly. Faculty assess students based on their individual understandings of the program and their interpretations of course expectations. Inconsistency with assessment practices have become problematic. Some faculty evaluate students based solely on their academic performance. Other faculty consider the personal growth of achieved by students as part of their evaluation practices. Greater consistency in the assessment of students by faculty would reflect a shared vision and would contribute to program integrity (Young, 2011). While respecting the academic freedom of faculty, in the future a few common tasks would be used by all faculty to assess student performance.

In the future, faculty will be more engaged with the program. Livingston (2011) defines faculty engagement as "...perpetually focused attention, enjoyment, and enthusiasm for the

activities associated with faculty work...” (p. 9). While faculty engage currently with their teaching and personal academic pursuits, the future goal is to increase faculty engagement with program level activities such as policy and document development. In part, the higher level of faculty engagement will be facilitated through regular faculty meetings, professional development, improved communication, and shared leadership practices. Also, orientation sessions for new faculty will be implemented to provide information about their faculty role, but also to share the values, goals, and vision of the program and the institution (Miles & Polovina-Vukovic, 2012). The dean and the site-based program coordinators will assume leadership roles in encouraging greater program level faculty engagement. Increased faculty engagement level will help to sustain a shared program vision. In the envisioned future state, faculty autonomy will be balanced with expectations for involvement with program initiatives.

A shared program vision provides a unifying framework to inform and to direct the work of faculty and leadership. Instead of approaching their work as unconnected to a greater whole, a shared vision will highlight the interconnectedness of all aspects of the program. Additionally, a shared vision is a conduit to establish program identity, quality, and integrity. The gap between what currently exists at this institution, and what a future state can be, is wide. Much work needs to be done by faculty and program leadership to narrow this gap.

**Priorities for Change.** One priority of the change plan is to re-configure the program’s existing organizational culture. Similar to other universities, the norms of the program encourage faculty to work autonomously and independently (Uchiyama & Radin, 2009). The organizational culture must shift from one that values individualism to one that values collaboration. Collaboration involves colleagues working interdependently and cooperatively to achieve goals (Salas, Salazar, Feistosa, & Kramer, 2014). Research indicates that collaboration and collegiality



among faculty are factors that contribute to high quality university programs (Uchiyama & Radin, 2009). The plan seeks to establish a collaborative culture in which faculty interact regularly, communicate frequently, and value the contributions of their colleagues. A collaborative culture echoes the Wasakam emphasis on *all of us*.

Before a collaborative culture can develop, trust must be established among faculty members. Joshi, Lazaova, and Liao (2009) describe trust as an antecedent to successful teamwork and collaboration. In educational environments, trust underpins all productive relationships and interactions among stakeholders (McMurray & Scott, 2013). An atmosphere of trust relies on individuals demonstrating benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness (Tschannen-Moran, 2001). The multi-site delivery model to the program causes additional challenges in the creation of a trusting work environment. The dispersed program delivery sites hinders the development of a common identity, reduces opportunities for informal cooperation, and impedes face-to-face and informal communication (Joshi et al., 2017). Issues such as differing employee perspectives, unshared information, and tension between groups are also common to multi-site work environments (Hinds & Mortensen, 2015). Therefore, the change plan must include activities designed explicitly to create trust among the program's faculty members.

**Change drivers.** The impetus to enact change in the Wasakam program stems from two main sources. First, a small number of faculty are committed to and invested in creating a shared vision for the program. Having faculty as the catalyst to create a shared vision brings to life Kouzes and Posner's (2007) assertion that shared vision is not created by the leader, but that employees inform and direct the process. The leader's role, therefore, is to frame but not impose a vision (Murphy & Torre, 2015). The faculty members are motivated to create a shared vision

based on their desire to improve the program and concerns with the current practices. A main concern articulated by the group connects to program integrity and relates to the vastly different knowledge and skills acquired by program graduates. Using the terminology of Kotter (1996), the invested group of faculty can be considered the guiding coalition. The coalition group is motivated and willing take a leadership role to implement the improvement plan.

Second, the creation of a shared vision complements the institutionally mandated program review which has been rescheduled to begin in the next academic year for the Wasakam program. Quality assurance of university programs is monitored by the institution's internal program review process and internal governing bodies (Universities Canada, n.d.). Program reviews focus on program quality. Program quality "is achieved when the products or services meet the stated purposes" (Goff, 2016, p. 181). Like the program review process, the improvement plan focuses on program quality. The plan also includes actions to define the *stated purpose* or standards to determine program quality. The improvement plan will enhance the program review process and will begin to address program shortcomings likely to be identified by an external reviewer.

### **Organizational Change Readiness**

In the previous section, a concrete and realistic vision for change began to emerge. In this section, Wasakam program's readiness to enact change is assessed. Organizational readiness for change is a multi-level and multi-faceted construct that evaluates the willingness and ability of an organization to enact change (Weiner, 2009). The Wasakam program readiness to enact the shared vision plan is evaluated using the *Rate the Organizational Readiness to Change* questionnaire.

## **Rate the Organizational Readiness to Change**

Caswey, Deszca and Ingols' (2016) *Rate the Organization Readiness to Change* questionnaire is composed of thirty-six questions categorized into six readiness dimensions: previous change experience, executive support, credible leadership and change champions, openness to change, rewards for change, and measures for change and accountability. Each question is allocated points with the cumulative questionnaire scores ranging from -10 to 35. The change readiness of the Wasakam program is described according to each of the six readiness dimension.

**Previous Change Experience.** Aside from the addition of community-based delivery sites, the program has not changed significantly since its implementation in 2008. Most faculty are content to maintain the status quo. However, a coalition of faculty desire program change and innovation. For this dimension, the program has a readiness score of -2 indicating that the lack of program change and the existing organizational culture may hinder change efforts.

**Executive Support.** The plan describes a clear picture of the future based on the change. However, senior administration is not invested heavily with the change plan. For this dimension, the program has a readiness score of 2.

**Credible Leadership and Change Champions.** The proposed change aligns with the president's intention to ensure greater consistency and accountability with institutional programming. However, recent changes in senior leadership have lead to an atmosphere of uncertainty among some faculty. For this dimension, the program has a change readiness score of 6 hinting that organizational leadership leadership may support the change, but that faculty do not fully trust senior administration.

**Openness to Change.** Although the score achieved for this dimension is relatively high, turf protection and communication are significant challenges. The improvement plan challenges all faculty members to examine critically their work and to be open to alternative perspectives and approaches. Faculty may not be willing to change their course delivery based on recommendations from faculty at other sites. For this dimension, the program has a change readiness score of 7. This high score echoes some faculty members' desire for change, while acknowledging that the organizational culture is a barrier for change initiatives to happen,

**Rewards for Change.** The absence of a rewards system is not perceived to be a barrier to change. Innovation within the organization is supported. For this dimension, the program has a change readiness score of 0.

**Measures for Change and Accountability.** There is a lack of institutional data. In the development of the change plan, a system to measure and to collect data is required. For this dimension, the program has a change readiness score of 1. This low score indicates that as part of the change plan, assessment and measurement practices will need to be included to evaluate the impact of the change.

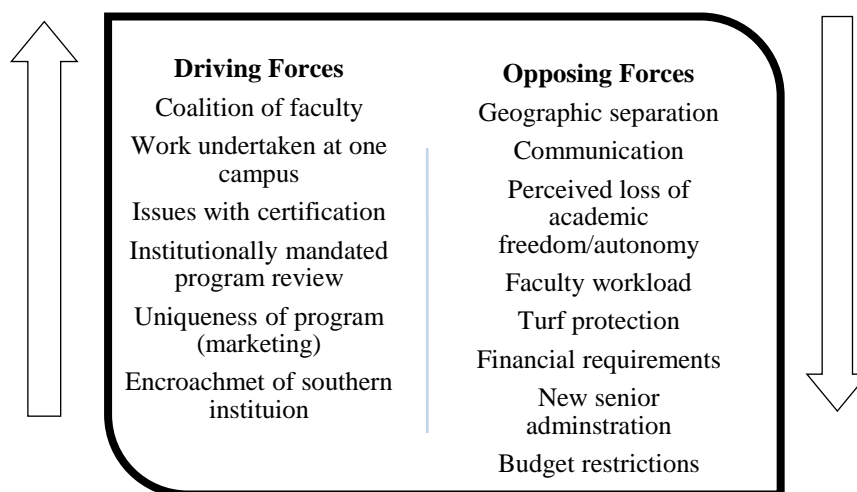
Overall, the program scored fourteen on the *Rate the Organizational Readiness to Change* questionnaire. This score indicates that the organization demonstrates some readiness for change; however, areas need to be addressed. In the case of the Wasakam program, turf protection, communication, and uncertainty in new senior administration impede organizational change readiness.

The dimensions of the Cawsey et al. (2016) questionnaire focus on organizational, not individual readiness to change. However, the change plan challenges faculty to evaluate their beliefs about education. Also, the plan relies on the commitment and contributions of faculty

members. Therefore, in addition to organizational change readiness, the change readiness of individuals should also be considered. Weiner (2009) suggests that individual change readiness consider whether individuals value the change and perceive the change as needed, important, beneficial, or worthwhile. Although faculty have not individually assessed their change readiness, I anticipate that not all faculty will value the change nor perceive the plan as needed. Thus, the perceptions of individuals to the proposed plan may be a barrier to change readiness.

### **Driving and Opposing Forces Influencing Change**

To supplement the information gathered by the *Rate the Organizational Readiness to Change*, the organizational readiness to change is considered by examining the forces that are driving and opposing the change. Figure 1.5 provides a summary of these factors and a discussion of the follows.



*Figure 1.5* Driving and Opposing Forces Influencing Change within the Wasakam Program

Based on the information provided in Figure 1.5, at least four the opposing forces connect directly with faculty. An analysis of the figure highlights the need for the change plan to be responsive to the concerns and opposition of faculty. However, countering the opposing forces of

faculty, I perceive that the coalition of faculty who support the plan to be a powerful driving force. Also, the pending program review can be used to leverage support for the plan.

Challenges exist in the implementation of the change plan in term of organizational and individual readiness. However, in developing the change plan, I will be cognizant of these challenges and incorporate strategies to minimize the barriers.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter introduced WPSI and the Wasakam Bachelor of Education program. In order to provide accessible teacher training, the Wasakam program uses a multi-site delivery model. This delivery model and the existing isolationist program culture have contributed to varying manifestations of the program. Thus, Chapter One identified the lack of shared vision as problem of practice within the program. Through the creation of a shared vision, program integrity and consistency will be increased and the learning outcomes of students improved. The change plan to address the lack of shared vision will use a collegial framework and rely on adaptive and team leadership approaches. The chapter explored the problem of practice from a variety of perspectives and assessed the readiness of the organization for change. Chapter Two continues to explore the problem of practice. In the next chapter, solutions to address the problem are proposed and evaluated. Additionally, the plan's change model is identified and a communication strategy articulated.

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

Chapter One introduced the WPSI organization and described a problem of practice that exists within the Wasakam Bachelor of Education program. In this chapter, an improvement plan to address the problem (PoP) begins to emerge. Based on a collegial leadership framework, solutions to the problem are evaluated. As the model selected to enact change, the Plan, So, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle is described and aligned with the chosen solution. The chapter concludes with an analysis of leadership approaches for implementing the solution, and communicating the need to change are overviewed.

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

A collegial model of leadership would best frame the Wasakam problem of practice of creating a shared vision. The bureaucratic models of leadership which dominate post-secondary institutions are in contrast to the flat and circular structure of the collegium perspective of leadership. However, Manning (2013) notes within university systems, multiple and seemingly contradictory organizational perspectives can exist synchronistically. A collegial framework is well suited for organizations where large numbers of *professional* staff work (Bush, 2011). The expertise and professional knowledge of staff members are called upon to inform and to guide organizational direction. Shared power and decision-making are central the collegial frame (Bush, 2011). Venues are provided to enable organizational members to engage in open discussion about organizational issues and plans. These attributes of the collegial model resonate with the Wasakam faculty and is foundational to addressing the PoP.

Wasakam faculty members are highly educated individuals who were hired on the basis of this knowledge and expertise and who expect to contribute to the evolution of the program. The circular structure of collegium mirrors the Wasakam philosophy. Both emphasize

collaboration, cooperation and equality (Manning, 2003). The collegial framework respects and is inclusive of diverse perspectives and ways of knowing. Like the model of Wasakam, the collegial frame provides a mechanism to implement a circular contextual leadership frame into a linear organizational structure.

### **Model for Change**

Corresponding to the circular structure of the collegial frame, the circular Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle for change will guide the improvement plan. The PDSA cycle was devised by Walter Shewhart and Edward Deming to facilitate continuous organizational improvement (Taylor, McNichols, Nicolay, Darzi, Bell, & Reed, 2014). First implemented in manufacturing industries, the PDSA cycle has been applied recently within higher educational contexts (Gazza, 2015). The emergence of the PDSA cycle in educational improvement planning represents a return to the origins of the model. Shewart, one of the creators, credits John Dewey, an influential educational reformer, as the inspiration for the model (Major & Major, 2011). While the PDSA cycle relies on a scientific model, it also ascribes to the pragmatic theory espoused by Dewey (Major & Major, 2011).

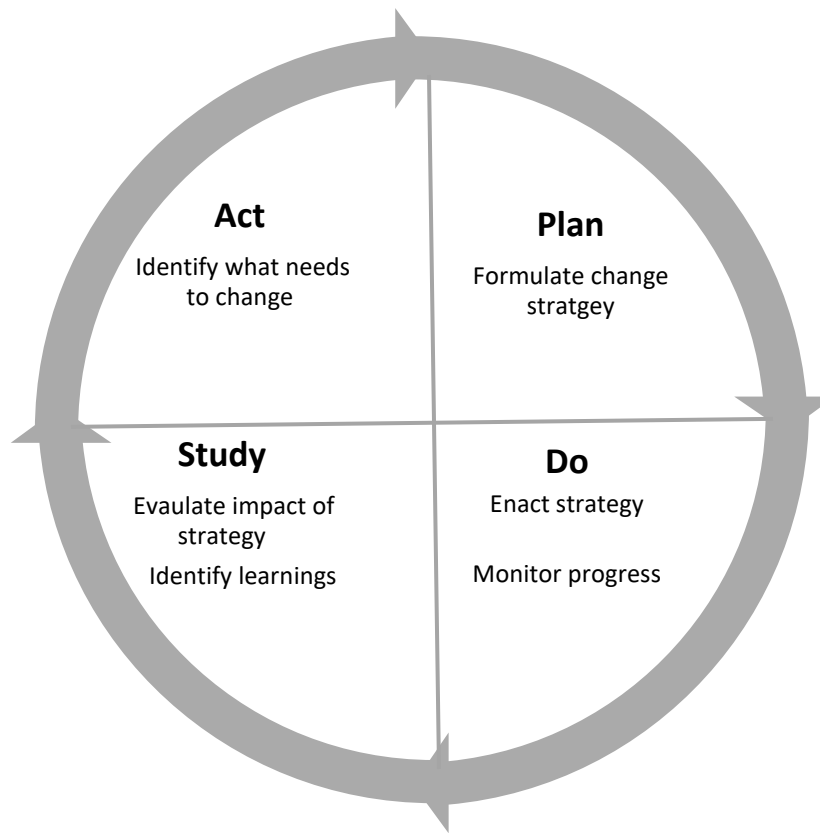
The scientific method is evident within the PDSA cycle by the approaches to problem-solving employed by the model (Moen & Norman, 2010). The cycle is premised on the notion that change is accomplished by understanding relevant systems, recognizing relevant internal and external forces, developing theories, and using predictions to anticipate the outcomes of actions (Cleary, 1995; Moen & Norman, 2010). Pragmatic aspects of the cycle encourage the implementation of small-scale and iterative solutions that enable quick assessment of effectiveness and the ability to adapt the change plan according to the implementation realities (Taylor et al., 2014). I believe that the scientific and pragmatic aspects of the process will appeal



to a broad range of Wasakam faculty. Rather than generating radical change, the model encourages thoughtful and reflective incremental change.

The PDSA cycle has been used in healthcare, education and other industries to address organizational problems and issues: however, the effectiveness of the model to enact change has been criticized. In their analysis of the PDSA cycle in healthcare, Reed and Card (2015) identified a litany of shortcomings. The shortcomings included failure to accurately identify the problem, failure to consult with stakeholders, failure to collect appropriate data, failure to consider the side effects of the intervention, and failure to plan for sustainability of the interventions. Despite these shortcomings, the PDSA cycle provides a suitable change model for the Wasakam problem of practice. The awareness of the shortcomings will be used to inform the development, implementation, and assessment of the change plan.

As illustrated in Figure 2.1, the PDSA cycle purports that organizational change and improvement are accomplished through a four-stage iterative process.



*Figure 2.1. Plan Do Study Act Cycle for Improvement. Adapted from “Circling Back: Clearing up myths about the Deming cycle and seeing how it keeps Evolving,” by R. Moen and C. Norman, 2010, *Quality Progress*, 43, p. 27*

The visual representation of the cycle can be likened to a circular flow chart for learning and improvement (Moen & Norman, 2010). The model breaks down the change process into four stages to emphasize thoughtful development, implementation, reflection, and evaluation.

Although the four stages are interconnected, the model outlines specific actions to be taken during each cycle.

**Plan.** During this stage, the change team identifies a problem within the organization, then conducts an in-depth analysis of potential causes, and overviews organizational context (Donnelly & Kirk, 2015). After relevant information and data have been studied and multiple perspectives considered, the change team devises a plan predicted to improve the situation or to

solve the organizational problem (Taylor et al., 2014). In the formulation of the plan, the team envisions the effectiveness and the implication of proposed solutions (Moen & Norman, 2010). The change plan is comprehensive and includes goals of the change, strategies to accomplish the change, assessment measures, and an implementation framework.

Like the other stages of the PDSA model, the plan stage relies on the direct participation of employees (Cleary, 1995). The insights and experiences of staff are used to identify problems or areas requiring improvement. Not only is the plan cycle designed to achieve organizational improvement, the stage also serves to empower individuals within their work environments by soliciting and valuing their participation (Cleary, 1995). With the Wasakam problem, as the principle change agent, I must be cognizant of the role of faculty in all cycles of the PDSA model. Although a problem has been identified and an improvement plan formulated, I must remain flexible and open to the opinions and perspectives of my colleagues. The divergent perspectives and views of faculty will enrich and strengthen the work done during the planning stage of the PDSA model.

**Do.** The Do stage focuses on the implementation of the change plan. Although the change plan may incorporate many change strategies, the PDSA model advocates for the progressive or cyclical implementation of the strategies (Taylor et al., 2014). Therefore, one strategy is undertaken at a time. The small-scale implementation plan enables change teams to assess the influence of each strategy. In addition to implementation, during this cycle the change team tracks the influence of the change strategies, documents problems, records unexpected observations, and begins to analyze collected data (Cleary, 1995; Taylor et al., 2017). Given the distributed delivery model and the regular work demands place upon faculty, approaching change in small, incremental steps suits the Wasakam program. The design of the Do stage puts

manageable expectations on faculty. Also, during this cycle, the change is not deemed to be permanent, which will appeal to Wasakam faculty.

**Study.** During the study cycle, the change team assesses the influence of the change strategy based on the data collected, information gathered, and observations made. The influence of the change strategy is compared to the predictions made during the plan stage. In addition to the data and information pertaining to the effectiveness of change, the process used to enact the change is evaluated and reflected upon (Donnelly & Kirk, 2015). Based upon the study, recommendations and revisions are made to the initial plan. Thus, the change plan is conceptualized as an evolving and reforming document. The study stage is critical to the Wasakam PoP. As faculty are separated geographically, this stage mandates that time be allocated to reflect upon and to evaluate the change. The study stage will help to ensure that the change has been enacted consistently and will identify arising in the different locations.

**Act.** During the act stage, the implemented change is either adopted or abandoned (Taylor et al., 2017). If the change is adopted, during this stage leaders must ensure that the required supports are given to ensure longevity of the change (Donnelly & Kirk, 2015). If the change is abandoned, the effectiveness and relevancy of the plan is assessed. Cleary (1995) notes that “no improvement is ever ‘finished’, since systems can always be improved further” (p. 38). The act stage completes the first PDSA cycle and connects to the next plan stage which will build upon information collected and knowledge gained through the previous PDSA cycle. Again, the act stage will encourage Wasakam faculty to engage in critical discussions about the program, thus creating an on-going cycle of improvement and ensuring greater consistency among program delivery sites. Additionally, the reflective nature of the model will disrupt the isolationist culture that currently exists within the program.

While the PDSA model will be used to implement the change plan, contrary to the ideal process, more than one change strategy will be introduced at a time. As described in Chapter Three, the complexity of the change initiative requires that adequate time be allocated to each change strategy. Consequently, strategies will overlap, but be connected. For example, during the first year of implementation, faculty will work to create a vision statement and program-level outcomes simultaneously.

The PDSA model incorporates a collegial approach to planning, implementing, and evaluating organizational change. The change model uses the insights and suggestions of stakeholders to inform and to manage the improvement process (Donnelly & Kirk, 2015). Thus, in addition to being a framework for change, the PDSA model empowers employees and facilitates teamwork (Cleary, 1995). These attributes resonate with the adaptive and team leadership approaches that I will use to enact the plan. The circular visual representation of the model suggests an iterative process. The iterative approach and circular representation resonate with traditional Indigenous ideologies ascribed to by the Wasakam program. Like the pedagogical approach of connection within the Wasakam program, the PDSA model acknowledges and seeks to understand connections between events. The PDSA model conforms to the worldview of many Indigenous people who examine life and relationships from a 360 degree or holistic perspective (Toulouse, 2011).

**Appreciative Inquiry.** While the PDSA model will provide a systematic approach to enact and to measure change within the Wasakam program, philosophical elements of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) will be incorporated into the plan stage and used to guide the improvement process. Appreciative inquiry is based on the premise that “every organization has something that works well, and those strengths can be the starting point creating positive

change” (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Starvos, 2008, p. 3). Change begins, and is framed, using an organization “positive core” based on the personal and organization “high point” stories and experiences (Priest, Kaufman, Brunton, & Siebel, 2013). The positive core or organizational strengths, which include traditions, distinctive competencies, expressions of wisdom, and past achievements, are identified through collegial storytelling and dialogue. The positive core becomes the starting point for creating positive organizational change (Cooperrider, et al. 2008, p. 3). Therefore, the focus for organizational change is not solely on problems and failings, but emphasis is placed on organizational strengths, successes, opportunities, and innovations (Kadi-Hanifi, Dagman, Peters, Snell, Tutton, & Wright, 2014).

AI asserts that “the human systems move in the direction of the question they most frequently and authentically ask; knowledge and organizational destiny are intimately interwoven; what we know and how we study it has a direct impact on where we end up” (Cooperrider & Godwin, 2011, p. 6). Thus, the change plan will be formulated with program strengths and assets at the forefront of the initiative. The plan stage of the PDSA model will be undertaken based on the AI assumption that “an organization is a ‘solution to be embraced’ rather than a ‘problem to be solved’” (Cooperrider et al., 2008 p. 5).

An Appreciative Inquiry approach connects to the strengths-based pedagogical approach practiced by some faculty within the Wasakam program. The belief that success leads to further success is espoused and enlivened by some program instructors and professors. AI frames program improvement using ideals promoted through the program. Engaging faculty in the change process by using AI perspectives will hopefully make the change plan more palatable and inviting to all faculty members. Additionally, working together to identify program *high points* and the *positive core* will serve to build relationship and to foster trust among faculty members.

### **Critical Organizational Analysis**

While the PDSA change cycle and AI provide a framework for change, organizational change is more complicated than what the simple model depicts. Cawsey et al. (2016) elaborate on the complexity of organizational change by noting, “Change leaders need to comprehend the complexity and interrelatedness of organizational components: how analysis needs to occur at different organizational levels, and how organizations and their environments will shift over time, requiring further analysis and action” (p. 64). In light of this quotation, this section expands on the organizational change readiness assessment of Chapter One and analyzes critically the WPSI and the Wasakam program by exploring relevant change models, assessing the current organizational state, and describing the envisioned future state.

#### **Relevant Research Models**

An array of models exist to frame and to contextualize organizational problems. In their work, Cawsey et al. (2016) describe the Nadler Tushman Congruence Model, Sterman’s Systems Dynamics, Quinn’s Competing Values Model, and Greiner’s Model of Organizational Growth. All of these models adopt a systems perspective and focus on the role of organizational leaders in directing and managing change (Cawsey et al., 2016). Additionally, Cawsey et al. introduce Stacy’s Complexity Theory which challenges the traditional controlled, goal orientated, and managed approach to change. The models provide comprehensive and detailed paths to change. The complex and meticulously described processes of these models do not address appropriately the Wasakam PoP. The models described by Cawsey et al. appear to be better suited to change initiatives that involve greater numbers and a greater diversity of stakeholders and seek to achieve radical alterations to organizational norms. Contrary to these models, the simplistic design of the PDSA cycle provides a manageable and valid model for the Wasakam change plan.

For example, rather than employing a separate systems or complexity theory model, the expectation to conduct an organizational analysis is embedded in the plan stage of the PDSA cycle. During the plan stage of the cycle, change agents are expected to conduct an organizational analysis by defining the system, assessing the current situation, and analyzing causes (Cleary, 2015). The PDSA model emphasizes the cyclical and interconnected change which is responsive to educational continuous improvement approaches in education.

### **Current Organizational State**

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) will be embedded as part of the plan cycle of the PDSA model. Thus, this critical organizational analysis will begin with the identification of program strengths. The philosophy and approach of the Wasakam program is a core strength. The program's philosophy ascribes to Indigenous pedagogy which positions learning as holistic, lifelong, and unique journey for each child (Battiste & Henderson, 2009). Students are taught to nurture the intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual growth of the children in their classes. Students learn how to interpret and deliver provincial curriculum in meaningful and culturally relevant ways. Local Indigenous teaching and practices are central to the program.

Extending on the inclusion of Indigenous pedagogy, the place-based approach to education is another program strength. Within the delivery of the program, local traditional stories are valued, local knowledge and ways of knowing are embraced, and Indigenous languages are promoted (Johnson, 2012). The place-based approach highlights the importance of partnerships and relationships to the program. A third strength of the program are the relationships which have been established with numerous school divisions, education authorities, and various other organizations. Finally, at the positive core of the program are the number of program graduates who have secured employment and who provide quality educational



experiences to children throughout the north. Of 2015-2018 program graduates from one of the main WPSI campuses, over 85% were employed within three months of convocation.

Despite the many strengths of the program, challenges exist. Many of the challenges faced by WPSI and Wasakam program are linked to the newness of the organization and the merging of college and university programming. With both the institution and the program in their infancy, organizational identity, practices, norms, and policies are still evolving.

One challenge within the program is the lack of collegial relationships among faculty. Collegial relationships have not developed organically among faculty, particularly with faculty who work at different campuses. Practices to orientate faculty members and to create a team environment among colleagues have not been implemented. In addition to the dispersed delivery model, individual personalities and differing views about education have contributed to a lack of collegiality. Without capitalizing on the strengths of all faculty, the program has not reached its potential.

A second challenge is a lack of institutional information and data. Practices such as holding regular program advisory committee and sponsor meetings have not been ingrained within the program's practice or culture. Feedback from employers and other vital stakeholders is not gathered systematically. Likewise, meaningful feedback from program graduates is not accessible. Response rates to graduate follow-up surveys which gather student perspectives as to the quality, relevancy, and value of the program are low. The low response rates have been attributed to factors such as not having the active email accounts of graduates, graduates not having access to internet, and graduates disinterested in the process. Therefore, responses from the Wasakam Bachelor of Education program graduates are collated with the three other

programs within the Faculty of Education. Data from only the Wasakam graduates are not available, nor are data based on program delivery site.

Although identified previously as a strength, some partnership have created challenges for the Wasakam program. Partnerships with community organizations have contributed significantly to the growth of the Wasakam program. In community-based programs, First Nation education authorities subsidize the cost to deliver the program locally. Consequently, the First Nation bands are heavily invested in the success of their students and expect the program to graduate educated individuals capable of providing quality instruction in their communities. However, for many students in the Wasakam program in First Nation communities, their kindergarten to grade twelve education systems did not prepare them for the rigour of university studies. As the *Reforming First Nations Education: From Crisis to Hope* (2011) report notes:

For over 35 years, numerous reports have documented the very serious problems with the provision of First Nations education in Canada, including teacher training, retention and recruitment, the development of culturally-appropriate curriculum, language instruction, parental engagement, and funding necessary to deliver a high quality education (p. 1).

The creation of a shared vision for the Wasakam program is challenged by the reality that often students in First Nation communities enter the program lacking the requisite skills to undertake university studies and the expectation of community leaders and sponsors that their student graduate. In addition to the institution, the Wasakam program is answerable to the First Nations systems which have contracted the program to provide a service.

In conducting a critical organizational analysis, the systems to which the Wasakam programs belongs must also be considered. The recent installation of a new institutional president has led to new priorities for WPSI. The president's focus appears to be on strengthening college and trades programming. Some faculty are fearful that this focus will be detrimental to university programming. Also, the development and expansion of Indigenized programming does not appear to be at the forefront of the president's leadership agenda. Both the provincial government and the new president emphasize *accountability* within programming. The emphasis on accountability, depending on its enactment, could support or derail efforts to create a shared vision within the Wasakam program. Within changing political realities in which resources are limited and divergent interests are evident, conflict is likely to arise (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 201). Whether the anticipated conflict impairs Wasakam's effectiveness or serves to challenge the status quo and to rejuvenate the organization is yet to seen.

### **Future Vision**

Building from the program's strengths, efforts must be made to address the challenges described above. According to McCauly, Duberely, and Johnson (2007), "organizations organize most aspects of what we do and how we do it" (p. 4). As a relatively new institution and a relatively new program, WPSI and the Wasakam program are still in the process of organizing. As the organizing of the program evolves, the emergent culture has both supported and hindered program growth and the formation of program identity (Schein, 2010). The change plan seeks to solidify program identity and to re-imagine the organizational culture. In the future, faculty will ground their teaching practices in a shared program vision. The shared vision creation and enactment of the shared vision will rely on a collaborative organizational culture. Ultimately, the shared vision and collaborative culture will lead to improved learning for program students.

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

To achieve the aforementioned future vision, three possible solutions are introduced and evaluated in this section. The solutions are described, and the strengths and challenges of each are critiqued. One solution is selected to address the problem of practice. This solution is used to inform the content of the improvement plan.

#### **Solution 1: Maintain the Status Quo**

A first solution to the lack of shared vision within the program is to maintain the status quo. Currently, a shared vision of the program does not exist among faculty. Thus, a unique vision of the program exists at each of the two main campuses and in each of the community-based programs. Consequently, students graduate from the Wasakam program with differing skills, knowledge, and attitudes based on delivery site and the biases of instructors and professors.

An argument can be made that the current status quo ascribes to the place-based pedagogical approach supported by the philosophy of the Wasakam program and resist the homogenization of colonialism. The program's Elders' group advocated for a placed-based approach to education for the teacher education program. As stated by Nichols, Howson, Mulrey, Acherman, and Gately (2016), a place-based approach to education identifies connections between one's self and his/her community as the "hallmarks of optimum pedagogy" (p. 27). Aligning with the perspective of the program Elders, Gruenewald (2003) asserts that place *makes* us and that place teaches about the world and our lives (p. 621). Therefore, the divergent manifestations of the Wasakam program are consistent with place-based education which considers the context of the physical, social, and cultural environment and encourages students to develop their own meaning and understanding (Nichols et al., 2016). The status quo of the

Wasakam program challenges the traditional approaches to education which have either ignored or minimized the relationship between culture, place, and teaching (Gruenwald, 2003).

Further to this, Johnson (2010) identifies place-based education as a process to decolonize and to reinhabit the land through understanding the ways in which Indigenous people and their places have been exploited and damaged. The current practices of the Wasakam program enable local histories, stories, and ways of knowing to be honoured, respected, and included in curriculum. Within the program, the absence of shared vision promotes the Elders' vision of a teacher education program that is responsive to community needs and situations and that embraces Indigenous pedagogies, cultures, histories, and perspectives.

In addition to aligning with the ideals espoused by the Elders' group, the solution of maintaining the status quo is supported by institutional policies and practices. As mentioned in Chapter One, like other Canadian post-secondary institutions, programs at WPSI must participate in regularly scheduled program reviews. The review process solicits input from faculty and facilitates opportunities for colleagues to engage in critical conversations about the program. Additionally, input is solicited from other stakeholders including current students, program graduates, and representatives from local school divisions and educational authorities. In the final stage of the process, individuals who are external to the institution complete an evaluation of the program. The data and information collected through the process is intended to acknowledge areas of strengths and to identify areas requiring improvement. Therefore, any issues relating to a lack of a shared vision should be recognized through the review process. However, challenges do exist with the current institutional approach to program reviews. The Wasakam program has existed for ten years and has not yet undergone a review. A review was

scheduled for the 2017-2018 year did not happen as faculty did not mobilize to act and the position assigned to oversee the process was vacant.

**Resources needed.** The maintenance of the status quo requires no additional resources. The program will continue to function and to be delivered in the same manner.

**Benefits and consequences.** As no new resources are required, this solution does not challenge the financial or the human resources of the program. Not deviating from the status quo does not disrupt the practices and pedagogical methodologies of faculty. However, without disruption to the status quo, improvement will not occur and the problem of practice will continue to exist.

### **Solution 2: Appointing a Single Program Chair**

The Dean of Education provides leadership to the Wasakam Bachelor of Education program. To facilitate the daily operations and functioning of the program, the dean has appointed three program coordinators. A program coordinator is situated at each of the two main WPSI campuses and the third coordinator who oversees the community-based programs is situated in a regional centre. The duties of program coordinators vary, but the coordinators typically oversee the student admission process, coordinate the scheduling of courses, oversee practicum placements, deal with student issues, and liaise with academic advisors and sponsoring agencies. In addition to coordinating the site-based program, each program coordinator carries a full teaching load.

The second solution to create a shared vision of the Wasakam program proposes that a full-time program chair position be created and that the three program coordinator positions be eliminated. While this solution is a departure from current practice, it is consistent with the approach used in other WPSI programs. For example, the early childhood education program has

one program chair who oversees program delivery program at the two main campuses and in various communities. The program chair would assume coordination responsibilities for all of the Wasakam programs, regardless of delivery site.

A singular program chair would be tasked with fostering a collegial climate, supporting effective teaching practices, and facilitating communication among faculty members and the dean (Craig, 2005; Gonaim, 2016). The chair would implement practices and processes to ensure regular and meaningful interaction among faculty. Through regularly scheduled program meetings and site visits, the chair would connect with all faculty. By establishing regular communication, the chair would begin the process of creating a more collegial organizational culture. Additionally, the chair would assume responsibility to ensure the creation of required policies and documents. The chair would become the *expert* on program delivery, content, policies, and practices. A single chair would provide consistent structure to the program and ensure that a shared program vision was enlivened across delivery sites.

While numerous benefits are associated with a singular chair, challenges also exist. The creation of singular chair seems contrary to the Wasakam philosophy of *all of us*. A singular chair would centralize power and allocate too much authority in a lone person. The chair would interpret program philosophy, vision, and practices according to her perspective. Thus, the views and opinions of others will be minimized. Also, the chair will most likely be connected with one of the main campuses and may not fully appreciate the contextual realities and challenges faced at other program delivery sites. The process of determining the chair could be problematic. If the chair is appointed by the dean, some faculty may resist working with her.

As one of the three current program coordinators, I am in a position to advocate for this structural change with my colleagues and my dean. Recent issues including errors in student

programs, concerns relating to program quality, and faculty vacancies make this a viable option for the organization. As a restructuring of current practice, the creation of a program chair position could be viewed as part of the program's evolution.

**Resources needed.** The creation of a full-time position for a program chair relies on significant resources. Most notably, the solution will require an annual financial commitment of the individual's salary. The actual dollar number will fluctuate significantly based on the individual's rank (i.e. instructor, assistant professor, associated professor, or full professor) and pay scale category. Based on the current collective agreement, annually, the program will need to pay an extra salary of between \$95 000 and \$130 000. Currently, the three program site coordinators receive \$4 000 for their extra work and, when possible, a one course, reduction in workload. Although the costs will increase, the expectations and responsibilities of a full time program coordinator will also increase. However, the salary costs could be mitigated potentially through the re-allocation of the current staffing budget and re-configuring of faculty workload. Some faculty are under-used and carry the minimum workload. By reworking and increasing the responsibilities of their positions, extra money may not be required to fund the chair position.

In addition to salary costs, the program chair will require a generous travel budget. While much communication can be done through the use of technology, in order to appreciate the program contexts the chair will be required to visit each site on a regular basis. The distances between delivery sites is significant. The two main campuses are located approximately 400 kilometers apart. The community-based programs are located hundreds of kilometers from either of the main campuses. Table 2.1 provides an overview of the travel costs associated with a one night visit between the main campuses.



Table 2.1

## Sample Cost in 2017/2018

Sample cost of a one night visit from one main campus to the other main campus

<b>Mileage</b> Using a fleet vehicle from the institution Return trip 800 kilometers x \$ .45 mileage	\$ 360.00
<b>Hotel</b> One night	\$ 130.00
<b>Meal Per Diem</b> Two days 2 days x \$ 43.25	\$ 86.50
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$ 576.50

As travel is part of the job requirement, the program chair would require a work cell phone and a laptop computer.

**Benefits and consequences.** Program chairs play a leadership role in developing organizational vision (Armstrong & Woloshyn, 2017). Program chairs assume responsibility for administrative tasks such as developing budgets, schedules, and policies (Armstrong & Woloshyn, 2017). A program chair would ensure that effective processes and practices were established and followed related to student intake, meeting provincial certification requirements, and sequencing of courses within the program. A program chair would take a leadership role in creating unity and cohesion among the program delivery sites. The assignment of these tasks to the program chair adhere to parameter articulated in the institution's collective agreement and be designed to not duplicate or infringe on the work of the faculty dean. The chair would provide support and strategic direction for the program. Communication and collaboration among faculty members would be enhanced. The chair would provide oversight and ensure that the spirit of Wasakam or *all of us together* would be enacted.

As a consequence of having a program chair to provide leadership and guidance to the program, some of the autonomy enjoyed at the separate program delivery sites would be reduced. The appointment of a current faculty member to the position of program chair may potentially transform existing relationships between colleagues (Gonaim, 2016). The program chair may be confronted by resistance and opposition by her colleagues within the program. Additionally, the solution would position much power and authority in a singular position, rather than being inclusive of some or all faculty members.

This option also changes the current practice of having three site-based program coordinators. This solution will impact the workload and duties of these individuals. Two of the current coordinators would be disappointed with the structural change. The elimination of site-based coordinators could impact the daily delivery and operation of the program. A different atmosphere would be created with a singular coordinator. For some faculty, the new atmosphere may be interpreted as positive, for others negative. Thus, the enactment of this solution could negatively affect faculty morale.

Despite these challenges, this solution is a viable and realistic option. The approach mirrors standard practice within the institution, and by reconfiguring current job assignments, the salary costs could be minimized.

### **Solution 3: Collaborating to Create a Shared Vision**

Rather than maintaining the status quo or relying on the leadership of a singular individual, the third solution calls upon existing faculty to work collaboratively to establish a shared program vision. This solution tackles issues related to organizational culture and requires participation from all faculty.

As expressed in a previous section of this plan, the existing organizational culture has contributed to a lack of shared vision within the Wasakam program. Organizational culture identifies how members conceptualize and experience their work environments (Schein, Ehrhart, & Macey, 2013). Schein (1996) described culture as:

the set of shared, taken-for-granted implicit assumptions that a group holds and determines how it perceives, thinks about, and reacts to its various environments. Norms become a fairly visible manifestation of these assumptions, but it is important to remember that behind the norms lies this deeper taken-for-granted set of assumptions that most members of a culture never question or examine.  
(p. 236)

Thus, organizational culture can be considered the *personality* of the organization (Florenthal & Tolstikov, 2012). The study of organizational culture applies social psychology, sociology, and anthropology lenses rather than an individualist perspective (Schein, 1996). The collectively shared beliefs, values, and assumptions are the focus of organizational culture (Denison, 1996; Schneider & Barbera, 2014).

In university environments, culture is established in a variety of ways. Some researchers highlight the impact of the beliefs, values, and assumptions of the institution's founders on university culture (Beyetekin, Yalcinkaya, Dogan, & Karakoc, 2010). Other researchers believe that the values and experiences of faculty have a significant impact on program or department culture (Florenthal & Tostikov-Mast, 2012; Schein, 1996). Regardless of how it emerges, the culture within a university influences faculty's commitment, engagement, and willingness to take risk (Beyetekin et. al., 2010). As the founders of the Wasakam program developed the program based on the concept of *all of us*, I believe that the attitudes and practices of faculty are highly

responsible for the existing culture. Instead of the philosophy of *all of us*, individualist approaches to work dominated and ultimately formed the program's culture.

The third solution of a collegial approach relies on the creation of a collaborative culture to create a shared program vision. A collaborative culture is characterized by colleagues actively and willingly engaging in innovative and problem-solving endeavors that benefit both individuals and the organization (Salas, Salazar, Feitos, & Kramer, 2014). Using the work of Bendermacher, Egbrink, Wolfhagen, and Dolmans (2016), the desired program culture will be formed on shared values, commitment to quality, and collective responsibility. To achieve this desired culture, the influence of organizational factors on culture must be considered. Based on work related to *quality* culture in post-secondary environments, Table 2.2 highlights organizational factors which serve to promote and to inhibit quality organizational culture.

Table 2.2

*Promoting and Inhibiting Organizational Factors Impacting Quality Culture*

Promoting Elements	Inhibiting Elements
Focus on continuous improvement Organizational structures Quality assurance practices Decision-making inclusive of staff and students Consideration given to evolving student needs Clear policies, procedures, systems, responsibilities Leadership commitment and skills Create climate of trust and shared meaning Articulation of policies	Hierarchical structures Staff and students not included in organizational decision-making Lack of policies, procedures, systems, responsibilities Top-down approaches to quality management implementation Lack of leadership commitment and skills Lack of clarity related to program expectations

*Table 2.2 Promoting and Inhibiting Organizational Factors Impacting Quality Culture. Adapted from "Unraveling Quality Culture in Higher Education: A Realist Review" by G. Bendermacher, M. Egbrink, I. Wolfhagen, and D. Dolmans, 2017, Higher Education, 73, p. 45*

A university culture inclusive of the promoting elements of Table 2.2 results in improved staff/student learning and development, improved student and staff satisfaction, and continuous improvement of teaching-learning processes (Bendermacher et al., 2010). These results are achieved through elations, shared knowledge, empowerment, shared ownership, and agency.

Building upon the work of Bendermacher et al., the third solution seeks to involve all faculty in the change process. The solution incorporates activities and events where faculty develop productive and supportive professional relationships. The three site-based program coordinators will be asked to take on greater leadership responsibilities. They will be expected to meet regularly, to take ownership for faculty professional development, and to establish program improvement priorities. New norms requiring faculty to interact regularly and to discuss program successes and challenges will be established. Individual faculty members will be asked to assume leadership roles with the plan. This solution and the continued improvement of the program will become the responsibility of all faculty. The solution proposes specific strategies in the creation of a shared vision and provides a cultural foundation for continuous improvement. The collaborative approach of the third solution can be positioned as building on existing program structures. Therefore, the solution may not immediately trigger negative feelings such as discomfort, resistance, or unease that can occur when individuals are forced to change. The approach validates established traditions and enacts the philosophy of *all of us*. Most, importantly, the solution is an inclusive process that seeks input from all faculty. Additionally, the solution aligns with the movement in universities to flatten the organizational hierarchy and to implement more collegial management and leadership processes.

A significant challenge to this solution is the commitment required by faculty. Program coordinators will be expected to allocate more time attending meetings and working on program-

level initiatives. Likewise, faculty will be required to participate and to engage in program meetings and program-level undertakings. I must assume that the plan will meet with resistance and a lack of support. As the plan deals with complex issues of culture, I cannot assume that the plan will be simply or quickly enacted.

**Resources needed.** A challenge to the successful implementation of this solution is the availability of time. Faculty have limited time available within their schedules to meet and to work collaboratively. Collaboration will need to happen in a well thought-out way capitalizing on times when teaching loads and faculty travel is minimal.

Additionally, this solution will require financial support. As outlined in Chapter 3, this solution involves a faculty retreat. A faculty retreat will cost several thousand dollars to cover travel, accommodations, venue, meals, etc. Funds will also be required to support additional program meetings that will need to occur. However, the increased meeting times will align with practice in other faculties, thus money should be available to support the initiative.

**Benefits and consequences.** A collegial solution to the shared vision problem of practice will have the greatest impact on student learning and program integrity. Beyl (2010) asserts that to be meaningful and to have the most significant influence, the development of program-level outcomes, which are entwined with a shared vision, should be an inclusive and a comprehensive process. The solution encompasses an approach that addresses organizational issues related to culture. By addressing issues of culture, new group norms and group identity, which support impactful change, will be established (Singh, 2013). Additionally, a creating collaborative culture will empower faculty to become leaders and to utilize their expertise. The solution also aligns with Appreciative Inquiry, which stresses that change must focus on how people think rather than what they do (Priest et al., 2013, p. 22). However, changing organizational culture is

not simple nor quick. Resistance from faculty must be anticipated, and adequate time will be required to see systemic improvement.

### **Analysis of Solutions**

For substantive change to occur, the status quo must to be challenged. Maintenance of the status quo will not address issues of program integrity or quality nor will the learning experiences of students be improved. Considering the other proposed solutions will not negate the place-based educational practices. Rather, the shared vision created by faculty will be mindful of contextual differences and inclusive of local cultures.

The financial realities faced by post-secondary institutions in the province make the creation of the second solution, the creation of a program chair position, highly unlikely. Universities across the province have been tasked to reduce administrative expenses. Thus, introducing a new managerial position in the current political climate seems infeasible. Although significant money will be required at the outset, solution three appears to be the most likely to implement approach. The implementation of the plan is realistic and able to be enacted. The solution capitalizes on the strengths of current faculty. The approach is also reflective of the *all of us* philosophy of the Wasakam program.

### **Leadership Approaches to Change**

The leadership approaches selected to enact the proposed change must align with the solution selected for implementation. Therefore, to respond to the organizational environment and to support to the Wasakam problem of practice, an adaptive and team leadership approach will guide the change process.

Within the Wasakam program, I view myself as an emergent leader. I am a program instructor, program site-coordinator, and currently the acting senior academic coordinator.

Although I am not in the leadership position of dean, the current program dean supports the plan and my role as the leader of this change initiative.

### **Adaptive Leadership**

Adaptive leadership is constructed on the belief that leadership “is more of a process than individual capabilities” (Randall & Coakley, 2006). As described in Chapter One, adaptive leaders challenge and enable people within the organization to address complex and challenging problems and issues (Northouse, 2016). In addition, adaptive leadership is concerned with how individuals change and adapt to new workplace realities. The third solution relies on a collaborative approach to create a shared program vision and, thus, aligns well with adaptive leadership practices. Adaptive leadership responds to the complexity embedded in the solution and underpins the goal of faculty empowerment. The leadership approach facilitates the creation of documents and artifacts, but also recognizes the impact of change on individuals and organizational culture.

The problem of creating a shared vision for a university program is not well-defined (Squires, 2015). Thus, the solution requires multiple perspectives, collective learning, and participation in a cyclical problem-solving process (Khan, 2017; Squires, 2015). Through the meaningful engagement of a broad range of individuals, adaptive leadership circumvents the traditional hierarchical and bureaucratic approach to change (Randall & Coakley, 2006; Squires, 2015). Adaptive leadership theory supports the realization of a shared vision through mutually derived beliefs and organizational direction (Khan, 2017).

In addressing change, adaptive leadership both “preserves what works” (Wolfe, 2015) and enables divergent approaches to flourish (p. 64). *Preserving what works* reflects the Appreciative Inquiry approach of formulating change plans based on organizational successes.



By having faculty identify individual and organizational successes, change is introduced in a positive manner. As well, the past work and efforts of faculty are validated and celebrated. As the change leader practicing adaptive leadership, I anticipate that the positive introduction will influence the emotions of the faculty and help to ensure that I am cognizant of the potential impacts of the proposed change on individual. To engage faculty emotionally, the change plan will be presented as something that builds on historical successes and enhances the work being done. In addition to *preserving what works*, Wolfe (2015) notes that change will also involve loss. This statement is particularly relevant in creating a shared vision and reforming organizational culture. As the change leader I must be aware that the shared vision which is created will not be inclusive of all of the ideas, beliefs, and values of faculty. As part of the plan, I will need to acknowledge the feelings of loss and act to mitigate potential consequences that the loss could have on the plan.

The tenets of adaptive leadership also correspond to values espoused by the Wasakam program. Adaptive leadership recognizes that change is neither linear nor simple to enact. Connections among the past, the present, and the future are emphasized. Northouse (2016) notes that little quantifiable or scientifically derived data exist in relation to the effectiveness of adaptive leadership. Support for the leadership approach has been derived from anecdotal and observational data. The approach reflects Indigenous research and pedagogical methodology that rely on and value the sharing of knowledge based on oral history, storytelling, and conversation (Kovach, 2010). Also, the approach adopts the Wasakam *all of us* philosophy by positioning leadership as an inclusive and shared practice. Although I have proposed a change plan, the plan is flexible and reliant on the ideas of faculty. The plan is designed to engage and to empower all faculty.

## **Team leadership**

Like adaptive leadership, team leadership stresses the process of empowering individuals within an organization. Heinen and Zaccaro (2008) describe team leadership as “a process by which one or more individuals direct, structure, and facilitate the collective efforts of team members to achieve team effectiveness” (p. 1515). Like adaptive leadership, a team leadership approach is suited for complex and dynamic situations where multiple stakeholders have voices, agendas of individuals and/or coalitions conflict, and high levels of information are dealt with (Zaccaro, Rittman, & Marks, 2001). Team leadership, therefore, is well-suited to address the Wasakam problem of practice. Program faculty are passionate and have differing views about public education and the content of teacher education programming. As the change leader, my role is not to discredit or to devalue individual perspectives: rather, my role is to provide a safe venue for colleagues to engage in professional and challenging discourse around issues that impact the delivery and quality of the program. Solution and compromises are not imposed by me, but rather they are achieved through collegial debate and discussion.

In workplace environments, teams are “a type of organizational group that is composed of members who are interdependent, who share common goals, and who must coordinate their activities to accomplish these goals” (Northouse, 2016, p. 363). The power of effective teams is encapsulated by the Bolman and Deal (1992) assertion that teams “can elevate the performance of ordinary mortals to extraordinary heights” (p. 34). Thus, a team leadership approach values both collaboration and the opportunity for individuals to excel. The individual and team balance suits the Wasakam problem of practice. Faculty members will be expected to work collaboratively to contribute to program improvement: however, individual autonomy and related academic pursuits will also be nurtured. For example, when course outcomes are

reviewed, faculty who are experts will lead the process to integrate land-based teaching into program curriculum. This team approach will improve program quality and enable individuals to extend their skills across course areas.

The team leadership approach is enmeshed with organizational culture. As Lumby (2012) states, culture impacts power. In organizations, such as universities, that ascribe to hierarchical leadership models, the implementation of team leadership requires the development of a shared and cohesive culture that supports collaborative efforts (Bolman & Deal, 1992). For teams to function effectively within the Wasakam program, faculty will require training that introduces them to a collaborative culture. As the change leader, I will need to articulate the purposes and goals of team collaboration. Also, I will need to provide parameters to guide individual behaviour and team functioning. As teams emerge, I must recognize that the team leader is instrumental in defining team direction and organizing her colleagues. Therefore, as the change leader, I must be willing to empower others and actively model how to lead others in collaborative processes (Curry, 2014). The team leadership discourages the Wasakam faculty to be passive receivers of change. This leadership approach will provide a foundation for collaboration, utilize the expertise of faculty, and create an environment of shared leadership.

Adaptive and team leadership are complementary approaches that align with the collegial frame for organizational change. Within the Wasakam program, these approaches challenge the traditional hierarchy of post-secondary leadership and require that faculty take ownership of the program improvement process. The approaches align with the problem of practice by providing both a leadership framework and contributing to the creation of a collaborative culture. Both leadership approaches advocate for a voice to be given to a wide number of stakeholders. To

ensure that voice is given and that the improvement plan is understood, a communication plan is required.

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

Effective organizational change plans delineate and describe communication processes (Lewis, 2007). Within organizations, communication processes are influenced by culture, structures, power distribution, and employee diversity. In addition to these elements, organizational leaders directly and indirectly impact organizational culture and communication (Men, 2014). Therefore, the communication strategies selected for the change plan are entwined with principles of adaptive and team leadership approaches. The plan to communicate change considers how the organizational improvement plan will be presented to garner support from different stakeholder groups. The plan to communicate the need for change is framed using the *prechange* and *developing the need for change* phases of Cawsey et al.'s (2016) communication strategy.

### **Prechange Communication Phase**

During the *prechange* phase, change agents convince senior administration about the need for change and solicit the support of the proposed plan (Cawsey, et al., 2016). I believe that senior leadership at WPSI will support the plan to create a shared vision among faculty of the Wasakam program. As mentioned previously, the institution's president and Governing Council are focused on quality programming. In educational contexts, a shared vision is foundational to ensure program quality and consistency: "Until educators can see describe the ideal school they are trying to create, it is impossible to develop policies, procedures, or programs that will help make that ideal a reality" (Dufour and Eaker, 1998, p. 64). Extending this quotation to the Wasakam problem of practice, until faculty identify common purposes, aims, and beliefs,

program consistency and quality will remain elusive. In addition to aligning with a priority of senior administration, the plan enhances the institution's program review requirement. Therefore, in considering the *prechange* communication phase, as detailed in Chapter 3, I am optimistic that when the dean presents the plan to the senior administration, they will support and embrace the objectives of the plan.

### **Developing the Need for Change Phase**

While the *prechange* phase will focus on seeking the support of senior administration, the *developing the need for the change* communication phase will focus on creating awareness and support among faculty members and the program's Elders' group. This phase is crucial to the change process. Within organizations, numerous priorities compete for people's attention (Cawsey et al., 2016). During this communication phase, efforts will be made to convince faculty and Elders of the importance of the initiative. If faculty are cynical and resistant to the plan, the initiative is unlikely to succeed, and further, future change initiatives will be negatively impacted (Thundiyil, Chiaburu, Oh, Banks, & Peng, 2015).

The *developing the need for change* communication phase will be implemented using the guidelines and protocol described by Katz and Dack (2013). At the retreat described in Chapter 3, a facilitator will use the following questions to initiate discussion:

- What are the strengths of the program? What successes has the program experienced?
- What is shared vision?
- What do I believe the shared vision of the Wasakam program to be?
- Is a shared vision important? Why?
- How does a shared vision relate to my students and my work with Wasakam program?

This approach will provide an opportunity for faculty and Elders to interrogate the problem of practice from their own perspectives. In addition to individual reflection, the process provides a venue for professional dialogue to occur related to the problem and the program.

This approach to communication matches the adaptive leadership goals of encouraging collective learning and framing change as a benefit to the greater good of the organization (Khan, 2017). The discussion embraces tenets of Appreciative Inquiry by focusing on strengths and successes. Faculty are given voice and collectively the problem of practice is explored and implications appraised. Additionally, the approach positions the change plan as a collaborative endeavour.

### **Dealing with Resistance**

Despite the initial communication efforts to engage faculty in a collaborative process and to acknowledge past program successes, I anticipate that some faculty members will approach the change plan with resistance. Resistance is a common reaction to organizational change (Campbell, Carmichael, & Naidoo, 2015). By the nature of the challenges it addresses, adaptive leadership generates resistance (Loren, 2005). Traditionally, resistance to change was considered a threat and an enemy to change; however, recently resistance to change has been repositioned and interpreted as a resource and a type of commitment to change (Bareil, 2013). When understood and framed positively, leaders can use resistance to improve plans and to reap better end results (Ford & Ford, 2009). Applying the tenets of adaptive leadership, I will use resistance to challenge my preconceived ideas and beliefs.

Resistance to change emanates from an individual's personality and her interaction with environment and impacts individuals cognitively and emotionally (Coghlan, 1993). In part, the resistance that may emerge with the Wasakam improvement plan will be rooted in the existing

organizational culture. The multi-site delivery model and the autonomous nature of faculty work have nurtured an individualist culture where individual goals and pursuit supersede program priorities and needs. Also, the relatively short-term relationships due to faculty turn-over and the hiring of sessional instructors have influenced organizational culture. Consequently, the culture has not cultivated trusting and respectful relationships among all faculty members. Thus faculty members may be resistant to engage in a plan perceived to interfere with their autonomy and potential lead to loss of professional freedom. Early resistance to the plan will be anticipated and will be included as part of the change plan. As the plan evolves, I anticipate that some of the initial resistance will dissipate as a more collegial approaches to work are slowly embedded into organizational culture.

Although challenging, I will need to embrace resistance as an integral part of the change process (Erwin & Garman, 2010). I anticipate that the resistance to the change plan will manifest in different ways. Some faculty may resist passively by not engaging with the process, not attending meetings, or not volunteering to participate in activities. Other faculty members may challenge the concept of a shared vision and/or insist that a shared vision has already been created through the oral teaching of the Elders. Resistance may also arise as some faculty might conceptualize the plan as forcing Indigenous philosophy and pedagogy to conform to Western educational practices.

Before the plan is communicated, I will identify and work to establish positive working relationships with the faculties who I anticipate will resist most strongly. One-on-one will need to frame the *why* of the change plan in terms that will resonate with their perspectives. Based on the work of Ford and Ford (2009), I will need to position the resistance as feedback and challenge myself to assess what I can learn from the resistance to augment the change effort. I

believe that the individuals who may resist the plan care deeply about the program and that opposing views can contribute to effective change (Bareil, 2013). However, I recognize that I will not be able to transform all of the resisters. If the resistance becomes too detrimental to the change process, I will adopt a more traditional mindset of resistance. If behaviours escalate, the dean may need to become involved, and a discussion will occur with the individual about her unacceptable behaviours (Erwin & Garman, 2010). The impact of the individual's resistance on her colleagues and the program will be discussed respectfully. If an extreme situation arises, the matter may need to be considered in terms of the collective agreement and respectful workplace policies (Bareil, 2010).

I anticipate that the plan to communicate the need for change to senior administration will be rather linear. The need for change will be shared with administration and feedback will be received. The plan to communicate the need for change with faculty and Elders will embrace adaptive and team leadership. The need of change will be introduced by having faculty and Elders voice their perspectives and opinions. Based on the content of the plans and knowing the faculty, an approach to work with resisters was also considered.

### **Conclusion**

Chapter Two focused on the planning and development of the organization improvement plan. The plan will be considered through a collegial frame. The PDSA cycle and Appreciative Inquiry, which resonate with collegium, are the models selected to guide the change process. The selected solution to address the problem of practice relies on a collegial approach to create a shared program vision. This solution aligns with adaptive and team leadership and these approaches will be used to implement the plan. Finally, the chapter concludes with an overview of the plan to communicate the need for change. In Chapter Three, the details of the collegial



solution plan are presented, the PDSA cycle is revisited as a means to monitor and to evaluate the plan, ethics are considered, and a communication plan formulated.

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

This organizational improvement plan focuses on creating a shared vision for the Wasakam Bachelor of Education. The creation of a shared vision will result in tangible products such as a vision statement and program-level outcomes. Also, to ensure the long-term adoption of a shared vision, the plan seeks to establish a collaborative culture among faculty. Ultimately, I anticipate that a shared program vision will lead to improved learning experiences and outcomes for all students in the program. Aligning with the goal of a shared vision, the plan applies a collegial frame and relies on team and adaptive leadership approaches which will capitalize on faculty expertise. In this chapter, plans for implementing the change initiative are outlined, monitoring and evaluation strategies are presented, and key ethical considerations are addressed. Additionally, a communication plan is proposed and future considerations are explored.

#### **Change Implementation Plan**

Organizational change has been described as “an ongoing process of discovery, with thoughtful questions continually being asked throughout the change journey” (Mento, Jones, & Dirndorfer, 2002, p. 46). Echoing this statement, a change plan implemented with a collegial frame must remain flexible and able to respond to the discoveries made and the questions posed by stakeholders. Table 3.1 on pages 72 and 73 provides an overview of the strategies and actions that I propose to enact to create a shared program vision. I recognize that the plan may be amended to incorporate input from faculty. The content of Table 3.1 has been designed to meet the goals of:

1. Creating a shared vision for the program through the development of program-level outcomes, a vision statement, and other tangible program products

2. Creating a collaborative culture among program faculty to ensure the shared vision is sustained and supported in the future

To achieve these goals, the change plan incorporates several activities and spans two academic years. The first activity, a faculty retreat, is foundational to the plan. The agenda for the retreat will include trust building activities, the identification of the program's *positive core*, and an introduction to the creation of a shared program vision and program outcomes. Given the complexity of the plan's goals, faculty will be asked to meet and to work together throughout the first year. By the end of the academic year, a shared vision and program outcomes will be established. In addition, I expect that a more collaborative organizational culture will begin to emerge.

As detailed in Table 3.1, during the second-year faculty interaction and collaboration will be enhanced through the continued use of faculty meetings and the introduction of program coordinator meetings. During this year, faculty will review program policies and revise course-level outcomes. Also, faculty will be encouraged to determine priority areas for program improvement and growth.

Table 3.1  
*Change Implementation Plan - Outline*

What	When	Who	Why
<p>Faculty retreat (face-to-face)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community- building activities</li> <li>• Identification of <i>positive core</i></li> <li>• Exploration of vision</li> <li>• Review of original program documents, Wasakam philosophy revisited</li> <li>• In teams, begin work on vision</li> <li>• Time permitting- goals of program, link to program-level outcomes</li> <li>• Change plan introduced</li> </ul>	<p>Year 1 - August</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prescribed holiday time over, no teaching responsibilities</li> <li>• Tuesday afternoon – Thursday afternoon</li> </ul>	<p>Dean, faculty, representative from the program’s Elders committee will be invited</p> <p>A facilitator from outside of the institution will be hired to lead the retreat</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of the “Plan” cycle.</li> <li>• Faculty input and involvement for plan embedded in retreat’s activities.</li> <li>• Strategies to build a more collaborative shared and participation of faculty members encouraged.</li> <li>• Development of a shared understanding of the program by all faculty members.</li> <li>• Notes from the meeting will be recorded and documented for reference purposes.</li> </ul>
<p>Faculty meetings (facilitated by technology)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of three ½- day faculty meetings will be scheduled.</li> <li>• All meetings – begin with instructor, student or program success, effective teaching approach, program updates</li> <li>• September meeting – faculty will form 4 or 5 teams. Teams will begin work on vision statement and review program-level outcomes. Volunteers solicited for two subcommittees. One committee will create and distribute a survey to program graduates; the other committee will create and distribute a survey to employers.</li> <li>• January meeting – subcommittees will present surveys for approval. Teams continue to work / collaborate on vision statement and program-level outcomes.</li> <li>• May meeting – survey results shared by subcommittees, implications for program explored. Vision and outcomes reviewed</li> </ul>	<p>Year 1 - September, January, May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To accommodate teaching schedules, meetings may need to be scheduled in late afternoon / early evening</li> </ul>	<p>Dean, faculty, Institutional Research, representatives from the Elders committee will be invited</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular meeting will be used as a means to create shared identity</li> <li>• Team leadership approach by having faculty members take the lead on tasks.</li> <li>• Opportunity for discussion</li> <li>• Connections among faculty reinforced</li> </ul>

<p>Faculty meeting (face-to-face)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro activities as per ½ day meetings</li> <li>• Full day meeting. Vision statement for program and program-level outcomes will be established. Once established the vision and outcomes will need to be approved by the program's Elders' group</li> <li>• Team-building activities will be incorporated</li> </ul>	Year 1 - June	Dean, faculty, Institutional Research, representatives from the Elders' committee will be invited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision and outcomes will provide framework to ensure consistency in skills and knowledge acquired by program graduates</li> <li>• Face-to-face interaction will help to develop positive relationships among faculty members</li> </ul>
<p>Monthly site-based program coordinator meetings (facilitated by technology)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinators discuss program success and challenges. Identify shared professional development and research opportunities. Review of program policies begins. Strategy for creation of needed policies developed (eg. professional unsuitability, new faculty orientation guide).</li> </ul>	Year 2	Three site-based program coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and reinforce connections between program sites</li> <li>• Support and learn from colleagues</li> <li>• Collective response to program-level issues</li> </ul>
<p>Faculty meetings (facilitated by technology)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of three 2 hour faculty meetings will be scheduled.</li> <li>• Structure as per Year 1</li> <li>• Program initiatives identified and reviewed including review of course-level outcomes</li> <li>• Teams may be created to work on particular projects</li> </ul>	<p>Year 2 – October , January, April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To accommodate teaching assignments, the meetings may need to be scheduled for the late afternoon – evening</li> </ul>	Dean, faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular meeting will be used as a means to create shared identity</li> <li>• Team leadership approach by having faculty members take the lead on tasks.</li> <li>• Opportunity for discussion</li> <li>• Best practices in terms of teaching shared</li> <li>• Connections among faculty reinforced</li> </ul>
<p>Faculty meetings (face-to-face)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of one day</li> <li>• Priorities for program growth and evolution will be established and evaluated (assessment of course-level learning outcomes, creation of new partnerships, training ideas for students, new programming initiatives).</li> <li>• Time allocated to community-building activities</li> </ul>	Year 2 – August, June	Dean, faculty, Institutional Research, representatives from the Elders' committee will be invited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular communication</li> <li>• Faculty learning from one another</li> </ul>

While Table 3.1 provides a linear overview of change strategies and timelines, the plan has been conceptualized and will be enacted using the circular Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) model. The cyclical foundation of the PDSA model integrates regular assessment and revisions to the plan based contextual on realities (Tichor-Wagner, Wachen, Cannata, & Cohen-Vogel, 2017). This fluidity complements the experimental mindset of adaptive leadership (Loren, 2005) and the decentralized approach of team leadership. Additionally, the gradual introduction of change with time allocated for reflection is responsive to the logistical and emotional impacts of change on faculty. As the change leader, I must ensure that the plan does not overburden or overwhelm faculty. Focusing on the goals listed in the previous section, the PDSA model will direct the change plan. The implementation of the plan corresponds to the *plan* and *do* stages, while the *do*, *study* and *act* stages align with the measurement and evaluation of the plan.

### **Plan Cycle**

The plan outlined in Table 3.1 will not be imposed upon faculty. Rather than introducing the plan by unilaterally defining the problem and providing predetermined solutions, the change process will be introduced to faculty by the use of appreciative inquiry. A facilitator external to the program will engage the faculty in the process of identifying the program's *positive* core (Priest et al., 2013). At the faculty retreat, the past successes of the program will be shared, examined and analyzed. Program improvement based on historical successes will be introduced. The problem of practice and the change plan will be presented from a positive and generative perspective (Aslund, Backstrom, & Richardsson, 2011). Using an adaptive leadership approach, faculty will be given time at the retreat to process, diagnoses, and understand the problem of practice before the change plan is imposed or solutions are offered (Wolfe, 2015). Faculty

feedback related to the problem of practice and the plan will be solicited. Conversations will also occur as to the personal and program impacts of the change plan.

### **Do Cycle**

Within the PDSA model, the *plan* stage flows naturally into the *do* stage of the change, which focuses on the enactment of the plan. Table 3.1 provides a timeframe of when specific change activities will be introduced. The first change activity undertaken will be the creation of a shared vision statement. As the primary change agent, I will lead this process which will begin at the August retreat and which may take several months to complete. At the retreat, each faculty member will be asked to generate a personal vision of the Wasakam program. The individual visions will be shared and validated. The personal visions will inform and influence the shared vision which is created for the program (Senge, 2006). Eventually, faculty will work in teams and as a singular group to create collaboratively a program vision. The final program vision statement will rely on and integrate the perspectives of faculty, program Elders, and original program documents. Additionally, input from program graduates and employers will be solicited. To acquire feedback from graduates and employers, faculty members will work in teams to create and distribute surveys to each of the stakeholder groups. To improve relationships among faculty, the teams will be composed of individuals from differing program delivery sites.

As an adaptive leader, I must recognize the emotional effects that creating a shared vision will have on individuals. The shared vision may challenge the beliefs of individuals and require a shift in thinking. As the shared program vision statement evolves, the values espoused in the statement will provide the foundation for subsequent change strategies. The shared vision will be

embedded in the program-level outcomes, policies, and other program related documents and practices.

Although the first PDSA cycle will not be complete, as the shared vision begins to solidify, work will begin on the creation of program-level outcomes. I anticipate that either at the retreat or at the September faculty meeting in year one, I will broach the need for program-level outcomes. As an adaptive leader, I will encourage faculty to consider the need for, the benefits, and the challenges of program outcomes. Faculty will work in teams during faculty meetings and outside of meeting times to create program-level outcomes that reflect the shared vision of the program and reflect foundational knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Ensuring that there is adequate time for reflection and whole group collaboration, I am cautiously optimistic that the program-level outcomes will be established by the end of June. Adequate time is required to optimize the team leadership approach to change. To achieve their goals, teams require time for individuals to assume leadership roles and time for team members to influence the perspectives of their colleagues (Wang, Waldman, & Zhang, 2013). The subsequent change strategies, as outlined in Table 3.1 on pages 72 and 73, will be implemented strategically and be continuing iteration of the PDSA cycle.

The processes used to address the first goal of the change plan will also contribute to the realization of the plan's second goal – the creation of a collaborative culture. Bringing faculty together to create a unified vision will foster stronger relationships among colleagues. As the improvement plan continues to emerge, colleagues will be asked to collaborate and to contribute to the enhancement of the program. As an adaptive leader, my role is to *give the work back to the people* (Northouse, 2016). This means that I will provide some direction and some structure; however, I will empower and expect individuals to take ownership of their work. Faculty will be



encouraged to think creatively and to work collaboratively. Faculty will be supported and expected to work with and to rely on their colleagues to accomplish program-related tasks.

The adaptive and team leadership approaches support a collegial change framework. When employing a collegial framework, staff become empowered by the devolution of power by leaders (Singh, 2013). As part of this plan, faculty members will assume leadership roles and take ownership over specific tasks. This approach will capitalize on the skills, knowledge, and abilities of faculty and will enable faculty members to exert meaningful influence on the evolution of the program (Pearce, 2004). As the evolution progress, as the change leader, I will be tasked to ensure the transition from the current to the desired state is managed.

### **Managing the Transition**

The creation of a shared vision and the establishment of a collaborative culture are departures from the isolationist norms that prevail within the program currently. This section identifies the need to manage the transition from the status quo to a new organizational reality. The implications of transitioning from site-based program manifestations to a shared program vision and the transition from an autonomous to a collegial culture are considered. These transitions are analyzed in terms of organizational strategy, stakeholder reaction and empowerment, and potential implementation issues and challenges.

**Alignment with organizational strategy.** The organizational improvement plan aligns with directives given by the institution's president relating to the consistency and quality of program delivery. The importance of this directive is highlighted by the contacting of an external consultant to assess and make recommendations on WPSI's existing quality assurance practices. Also, the published review of the provincial college system and an anticipated review of provincial university programming have drawn attention to program integrity at WPSI (Usher &

Pelletier, 2017). The creation of a shared vision within the program connects with institutional and provincial expectation related to program quality and integrity.

The Wasakam program is highly regarded within the institution and has received accolades from various provincial organizations for its approach to teacher education which melds Western and Indigenous pedagogy, perspectives, and knowledge. The program is lauded for enlivening the mission, vision, and mandate of the institution. To ensure that the program continues to fulfill its mandate and continues to elicit a positive reputation, WPSI is obligated to ensure a vision for the program that is universally understood and enacted by all faculty members regardless of delivery site and that provincial certification standards are met. Thus, the proposed improvement plan aligns with organizational strategy and responds to social justice aspects of the institution's mandate.

**Understanding stakeholder reactions.** As the main change agent, I anticipate that the reaction of stakeholder groups to the plan will vary. Because their involvement will determine the success of the plan, understanding and preparing for the reaction of faculty is essential. Aligning with Cawsey's et al. (2016) classification of stakeholder reaction, I anticipate that some faculty members will react positively, some will react negatively, and that others will be ambivalent. An individual's reaction to change is interwoven with her beliefs about change. Beliefs about change can be categorized as discrepancy (belief that the change is needed), appropriateness (belief that change design is correct), efficacy (belief that the change can be implemented successfully), principal support (belief that formal leaders support the plan), and valence (belief that the change will be beneficial to the individual) (Armenakis & Harris, 2009). The four beliefs of discrepancy, appropriateness, efficacy, and valence will be problematic for the Wasakam change plan. Some faculty may view the plan as irrelevant, as they may be content

with the status quo. Other faculty may feel that a shared vision is required but may balk at the collaborative design. Other faculty may argue that the various program manifestations are required to ensure responsiveness to contextual realities. Finally, some faculty may be defensive about the change, feeling that the plan attacks their abilities and professionalism or comprises the original premises of the program.

Understanding that all faculty may not be supportive of the plan, highlights the importance of the faculty retreat and collaborative activities. The retreat will underpin the plan, and, therefore, must introduce the notion of the plan in a positive and respectful manner. The anticipated reactions of faculty underscore the adaptive leadership tenet that organizational change should be presented as a compelling, collaborative, and non-threatening endeavour (Randall & Coakley, 2007).

Along with faculty, the reaction of the Elders' group must be understood. As the creators of the program, the Elders are intimately invested with the program and concerned that the integrity of the program is maintained. In the past, the Elders have attempted to formalize the aspects of the program through the creation of an instructor's handbook. Although a version was drafted, a finalized document was not completed as consensus was not achieved with the Elders group as to what should be included in the handbook. Based on this effort and conversation that I have had with various members, I believe that the Elders' group will welcome the plan and be willing participants in its implementation.

**Empowering others to achieve change.** Higgs and Rowland (2005) connect the following leadership competencies to successful change:

- Engaging others in the need for change;
- Ensuring that the change is based on depth of understanding;

- Engaging others in the whole change process and building commitment; and
- Ensuring that people are challenged to find their own answers and that they are supported in doing this (p. 127).

This list of competencies equates clearly successful change with the empowerment of others.

This perspective is akin to team leadership approaches which relies on the collective knowledge-based and expertise of all employees to respond to organizational complexities (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007). Empowerment is foundational to the improvement plan. Faculty will be expected to provide direction, to voice opinions, and to assume leadership roles.

**Supports and resources.** As identified in Chapter Two, this solution requires both human and financial resources. The plan will place additional expectations upon faculty. Contrary to past practice, faculty will be expected to meet a minimum of five times per year. At the retreat in August, I will present a meeting schedule. While I cannot force participation, the purpose and importance of the meetings will be stressed. The dean will also iterate the expectation to participate in the meetings. In addition to the meetings, faculty will be asked to complete tasks related to the change plan. In the second year of the plan, demands on the site-based program coordinators and faculty will increase. Program coordinators will be expected to meet monthly. Internal professional development sessions will occur and be facilitated by faculty. These new expectations will be placed upon faculty with no change to their workload and without financial compensation. The plan introduces new norms and new culture. The disruption to the status quo requires that I garner commitment and support from the faculty. The plan must be introduced to faculty in a way that validates their work and positions their expertise as the source of improvement. Using adaptive and team leadership, I will focus on empowerment and endeavour to have faculty take ownership of the improvement strategy.

In addition to the resource of time, financial support is also required. When meeting face-to-face, significant expenses will be incurred since faculty will be required to travel hundreds of kilometers. In addition to travel expenses of faculty, Elders will have their travel expenses covered and an honorarium will be given. Given the highly-regarded position of the program in terms of student enrollment numbers and reputation, and with the president's focus on program quality, I am cautiously optimistic that the change plan will be financially supported by the institution.

**Potential implementation issues.** Although not stated explicitly in Table 3.1 on pages 72 and 73, a major issue in developing a program vision is the melding of Indigenous and Western pedagogies and perspectives in the program. Battiste (2013) notes the challenge of merging knowledge systems: "Bringing two diverse knowledge systems together needs some consideration of the assumption underlying each foundation and where the points of inclusion or merging might seem advisable. The need then becomes one of developing "trans-systemic" analyses and methods ..." (p. 103). Faculty and program Elders currently have conflicting views as to whether the Wasakam is based on Western pedagogy and inclusive of Indigenous perspectives or whether it is an Indigenous program responsive to Western system requirements. Consequently, a universally employed trans-systemic approach has not been adopted, with some locations applying mostly Western approaches while others have embraced land-based pedagogies in all aspects of the program delivery. The creation of a shared vision touches on personal values, beliefs, and ideals and for some faculty will stir deep emotions. The implementation of the plan could be stalled by the unwillingness or inability of faculty to collaboratively create a shared vision for the program. I anticipate that conflicting worldviews will be a significant challenge. Although not the sole solution, the original documents of the

program proposal will be revisited and members of the Elders invited to work with faculty. As an adaptive leader my role will be to focus the work, rather than determine the correct answer.

Another implementation issue may arise around the perceived ownership of the program and the Wasakam model. One of the individuals who facilitated the development of the program and who is still an employee of WPSI, but does not work with the program, is protective of the program and hesitant to share the historical program documents or to collaborate with faculty to improve the program. The individual has talked about seeking copyright rights for the program and the Wasakam model. Therefore, a second potential implementation issue could relate to resistance by an influential individual toward faculty and Elders working together to create a shared vision and influencing the Wasakam model. To mitigate this issue, the individual will be invited to participate in the change process. Additionally, clarity over program *ownership* will need to be determined.

A third implementation challenge relates to the instability of faculty and the reliance on sessional instructors. The program struggles to recruit and to retain faculty. Of the approximately fifteen full-time permanent position, two new faculty were hired at the start of the 2017-2018 academic year. One of these faculty members left at the end of the fall term. Over the last three years, a minimum of two permanent full-time positions have remained vacant. The program relies on sessional instructors to teach on campus and in communities. Research indicates regular and meaningful faculty-student interaction promotes student engagement, increases student motivation, and increases the academic self-confidence of students (Kezar & Maxey, 2014). Research also indicates that sessional instructors interact less frequently with students, spend less time preparing, and have lower academic expectations for students (Umbach, 2007). In addition to being detrimental to student learning, the reliance on sessional instructors and the high

turnover of rate of faculty may be problematic to the creation of a shared vision. Without a consistent complement of faculty, a shared vision will be challenging to create. Also, without a stable faculty, the improvement plan tasks may not be completed and a collaborative culture may continually need to be nurtured.

**Limitations.** The goals of creating a shared vision and re-imagining organizational culture will not be achieved easily. The process to establish a shared vision can be time-consuming, challenging, and stressful (Casey, 2005; Huffman, 2003). Likewise, Schein (2010) notes that simply announcing “a culture change” is meaningless (p. 326). The specific culture elements that require change must be identified. The process to change the problematic culture elements are highly variable and may take years to complete (Schein, 2010). The presented change plan is limited in its scope and proposes only a few strategies which may not garner immediate or measurable results. The complexity of the change goals cannot be underestimated.

While the plan focuses on a collegial and shared leadership approach to change, the influence of the program’s dean cannot be underestimated. Literature describes the ability to inspire and to create vision as one of the most powerful tools that an educational leaders possesses (Murphy & Torre, 2015). Likewise, in the study of organizational culture change, research indicates that interventions that seek to change culture must focus on leadership (Schneider, Roma, Ostroff, & West, 2017). The current dean supports the change plan; however, the current dean’s term ends at the conclusion of the next academic year. The plan is limited as strategies to address the possible change in personnel to this key leadership position have not been formulated.

As described in the other sections of this organizational improvement plan, the change initiative relies on the support and participation of faculty and Elders. Additionally, financial

resources are required. Without these human and fiscal supports, the plan will not succeed.

Although a thoughtfully developed and comprehensively prepared plan is developed, a critique of potential challenges and limitations provides a realistic understanding of the actual implementation process. The next section presents realistic approaches to monitor and to evaluate the plan.

### **Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation**

The aforementioned challenges and limitations of the plan will be monitored throughout the change process. Leaders who effectively enact change develop plans inclusive of valid monitoring and review practices (Higgs & Rowland, 2005). For the purposes of this plan, a shared vision will be measured in terms of tangible outcomes such as the creation of a vision statement and program-level outcomes. Measurement and evaluation of the plan will include the collection of *soft data* that documents faculty interaction and engagement believed to contribute to a collaborative organizational culture. I recognize that the implications of a shared vision on students' learning experiences and outcomes require long-term analysis which is beyond the scope of this plan.

The PDSA cycle which will guide the development and implementation of the change process will also be used to direct the monitoring and evaluation processes. The iterative change path of the PDSA model mirrors the non-linear path of creating a shared vision. In the broader field of education, the PDSA change model is seen to reinforce the concept of continuous learning and improvement (Conzemuis & O'Neill, 2002). While each of the *plan*, *do*, *study*, and *act* stages contribute to the cyclical approach, the latter three stages are most directly linked to monitoring and evaluation. In addition, the *do*, *study*, and *act* stages reflect a collegial framework. Embedded in each of the stages is continuous interaction and contributions of faculty.



## **Do, Study, and Act Stages**

As part of the monitoring and evaluation process, the *do*, *study*, and *act* stages resonate with aspects of the collegial approach. Like the collegial approach, the *do*, *study*, and *act* stages allow for a fluidity and goals which are changing and sometimes ambiguous (Manning, 2013). Although not categorized, the continuous assessment embedded in the PDSA cycle ensures that short-, mid-, and long-term change strategies are evaluated. During the *do* stage, the change strategy will begin to be implemented, and formative data will be gathered to assess the effectiveness of the intervention (Taylor et al., 2017). For example, the first iteration of the *do* stage will be the initial work at the retreat in creating a shared vision. At the end of the retreat, faculty will be asked to complete exit slips. The information gathered on the exit slips will provide a sense as the impact, benefits, and challenges of the event. Additionally, suggestions provided by faculty will be captured in the meeting notes and used to inform the plan.

More formal analysis of the change strategies will occur during the *study* stage, and the ideas that were made during the *plan* stage will be revisited. The *study* stage for the first PDSA cycle will occur at the June faculty meeting. At the end of the first year, the creation of a shared vision and the creation of program-level outcomes will provide tangible measurement evidence. In addition to the tangible products, the processes used to enact the change will be considered in terms of their effectiveness (Donnelly & Kirk, 2015). For example, the process to create stakeholder surveys will be reviewed. Also, to evaluate the on-going creation of a collaborative culture, the number of program meetings held, the attendance, and the topics discussed will be examined.

Finally, the *act* stage creates the bridge between change strategies. During this stage, the change which was implemented will be either adopted or abandoned (Taylor et al., 2017).

Therefore, if regular and productive meetings were held during the plan, then regular program meetings will become the norm of how the program operates. A continuous evaluation cycle, such as the one embedded in the PDSA model, will be instrumental to keep the plan on track and to reinforce the goals of the change initiative (Mento, Jones, & Dirndorfer, 2002).

### Measurement Data

While the PDSA model provides a framework for the monitoring and measurement process, the model does not prescribe the data to be collected nor the measurement tools to use. Aligning with the change implementation plan outlined in Table 3.1 on pages 72 and 73, Table 3.2 outlines the data which must be gathered and evaluated. To ensure the measurement of both plan goals, the data collection table is divided into two sections to correspond with each of the goals.

Table 3.2

*Overview of the data to be collected to monitor and evaluate the change plan*

<i>Do</i> action	Data to collect/ measurement	When	Monitor / evaluation
<b>Goal 1 Creating shared vision through the development of tangible products</b>			
Vision statement	Statement created and approved by Elders' group  Statement included in program documents such as program handbook	End of Year 1  Progress will be formatively assessed after each program-level meeting	Statement completed  Program documents updated
Program-level outcomes	Outcomes created and approved by Elders' group and the Curriculum and Standards Committee  Outcomes included in program documents such as program handbook	End of Year 1  Progress will be formatively assessed after each program-level meeting	Program outcomes approved  Program outcomes published in program documents
Review of course description and course outcomes	Revised course descriptions submitted to institution's Curriculum and Standards Committee for approval. Then, forwarded to registrar for inclusion in calendar  Course outlines updated	Begin Year 2 – anticipated that work will extend beyond the scope of this plan	Monitoring checklist of course descriptions and outcome revision kept  List of changes submitted for

	Revised descriptions and outcomes stored on shared network drive  Course-level instructional and assessment practices shared and documented		organizational approval kept  Course guide manual created for instructors
<b>Goal 2 Establishing a collaborative culture to sustain shared vision</b>			
Faculty Retreat	Agenda, notes and/or documents  Attendance  Exit slip – completed by faculty members. Faculty will identify something they learned, topics for next meeting, ways to improve meeting, program concerns, etc.	Year 1 - August	A template will be used to summarize information from each meeting.
Faculty meetings / professional development sessions	Number of meetings held during each academic year  Agendas, notes and/or other documents  Attendance  Exit slips completed by faculty	Reviewed and compared to previous meetings.  Summary made after Year 1 and Year 2 of plan	Meeting summaries will be evaluated at the end of each year
Coordinators' meetings	Number of meetings held during each academic year  Agendas, notes and/or other documents  Attendance	Reviewed and compared to previous meetings.  Summary made after Year 2 and Year 3	Summary template will be used.  Professional development will be tracked

The data which will be collected as outlined in Table 3.2. will not only gauge the progress of the change plan, but will bring "...to light insights and learning themes (concepts) by directing and guiding change strategists and implementers to think actively about the learning that is going on during the change process" (Mento, Jones, & Dirnorfer, 2002, p. 56). The collected data will be inclusive of both formative and summative information. The formative data will assess growth and guide the cycle of the plan. For example, based on progress and feedback from faculty, the process and time allocated to the creation of the shared vision will be amended. The summative data will evaluate the effect of the plan. For example, at the end of the first year whether or not program-level outcomes have been created will be used to judge the success of the plan.

Although Table 3.2 provides a timeline and a description of the data to be collected, the data

collection framework will be used as a guide rather than a prescribed course of action. Like the change plan, the measurement plan must also be flexible to adapt to the contextual realities.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

As the change leader, I will assume responsibility for the administrative tasks associated with data collection and storage. For example, I will be responsible for recording notes at faculty meetings and collecting exit slip feedback. To help ensure confidentiality, all faculty will be asked to submit exit slips via interdepartmental mail when meetings are not held in a face-to-face format. Hard copies of data will be stored in a secure filing cabinet in my office. These processes follow the established protocols of WPSI's Research and Innovation department.

Although I will assume administrative responsibility for the data, aligning with the collegial framework, the data will be *owned* by all faculty members and the program. Therefore, the information will be accessible to all faculty via electronic documents stored on a shared network drive. At the end of the first year of the plan, attendance at meetings will be analyzed and documents (for example agendas and notes for each program meeting) will be studied to determine if a sense of shared vision and collaboration emerges. A collaborative approach to data analysis will help to fulfill the goals of the plan. People who participate in data analysis take greater ownership of the information, make more use of it, and take better care of it (Patton, 1997). Additionally, the processes used to reach consensus and engaging with colleagues to find meaning in the data provide an opportunity valuable learning and an opportunity to foster professional relationships (Patton, 1997).

While I will take the lead of this process, all faculty will be encouraged to participate. When conclusions have been reached, the information will be communicated with faculty. Not only will the measurement and monitoring of the plan gauge the progress and success of the

change initiative, the data that will be collected will lead to new questions and inspire new directions for organizational change. The PDSA cycle of change challenges leaders to view organizations as evolving and transforming.

While the collection and storage of data will align with prescribed WPSI research standards, the entire plan must be assessed to ensure that it is ethical.

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

In undertaking organizational change, leaders are expected to enact their plan ethically (Cawsey et al., 2016). The following set of questions can be used by leaders to assess the ethical implications of their actions:

- Are you following rules that are mutually understood and accepted?
- Are you comfortable discussing and defending your choices?
- Would you want to be at the receiving end of your own actions?
- Would the world be better or worse if everyone acted as you did?
- Are there alternatives you could consider that rest on firmer ethical ground? (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 221).

These questions encourage leaders to be reflective and evaluate the level of mutuality, generality, openness, and caring of decisions and actions (Bolman & Deal, 2013). To be ethical, leaders are expected to act fairly and justly. In an educational context, ethical leaders possess those attributes and are expected to act in ways that enhance the learning experiences of all students, especially those marginalized by the dominant system (Ehrich, Harris, Klenowski, Smeed, & Spina, 2015). Considering this statement and my context, of the listed questions, the questions asking whether I would want to be on the receiving end of my actions and whether the world would be a better or worse place if everyone acted as I did resonate most strongly with me. These questions align

with a collegial framework and team and adaptive leadership. The two questions encourage me to evaluate my actions in terms of their influence of others. These ethical questions ensure that *all of us* are considered in the development and implementation of the plan.

The ethical consideration of this organizational improvement plan are explored further using the five principles of the ethical leadership (respect, serve others, just, honest, and build community) proposed by Northouse (2016).

### **Respect**

Respect requires leaders to accept the uniqueness of the individuals and value the insights, beliefs, and attitudes of others (Northouse, 2016). Ensuring that an atmosphere of respect is maintained throughout the improvement process will require deliberate effort. Some faculty have dominant personalities and occupy unofficial positions of power based on traditional knowledge and time with the program. When faculty are given opportunities to share and provide input, I will need to ensure that all voices are given opportunity to speak and to be heard. A strategy, such as a sharing circle, may need to be incorporated when serious or more complex issues are being discussed.

### **Serve Others**

Service to others is at the heart of the improvement plan. The ultimate aim of the change initiative is to ensure that program graduates acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be responsive teacher. Further to this, the plan and the Wasakam program strive to address the assimilative educational practices that have contributed to the loss Indigenous languages and knowledge (Battiste, 2013). Additionally, the collaborative emphasis of the plan seeks to enhance the knowledge and skills of all faculty.

**Just**

The principle of justice is central to Wasakam program and the improvement plan. Through the creation of a shared program vision, the plan endeavours to ensure that all program students receive a quality education that is inclusive of both Indigenous and Western knowledge, practices, and pedagogy. Also, the plan seeks to mitigate imbalances for those who opt to study in their home communities.

**Honest**

Northouse (2016) defines honest in the following way: “But being honest is not just about telling the truth. It has to do with being open with others and representing reality as fully and completely as possible” (p. 346). Currently, much of the communication and conversation that occurs among faculty members focuses on superficial topics and information. Discussions about student achievement, graduate skills, and program purpose do not occur. The change plan expects that faculty will engage in critical and honest conversation about strengths and shortcomings of the program and values of education. This level of discussion will challenge faculty to be open, authentic, and sensitive to others.

**Build Community**

As mentioned in previous sections, the improvement seeks to establish collaborative culture within the Wasakam program. Therefore, the plan seeks to establish a professional community to enhance the educational experiences of students. As Northouse (2016) suggests, ethical leaders seek to guide their colleagues towards a common goal. The improvement plan which will be undertaken using adaptive and team leadership approaches, will use the creation of a shared program vision and a collaborative culture to create community.

The term *mino pimatisiwin* meaning “good life” is used often by Wasakam faculty. As teachers, we support our students in their journeys of *mino pimatisiwin*. *Mino pimatisiwin* focuses on living life according to the Seven Teachings of love, respect, courage, humility, truth, kindness, and sharing. Thus, this improvement plan for the Wasakam program must also ascribe to the ethics embedded in *mino pimatisiwin*.

Connected to the Seven Teachings is the change leader’s duty to share information and to communicate truthfully and respectfully with stakeholders. The following section presents a communication plan to be used throughout the plan’s implementation.

### **Change Process Communication Plan**

Communication plays a vital role in the successful implementation of an organizational change plan (Saruhan, 2014). Echoing the problem addressed in this organizational improvement of creating shared vision, an effective communication plan serves to alleviate uncertainty and to create shared meaning (Sydow, Campbell, Carmichael, & Naidoo, 2015). To be effective, communication during a change initiative should be consistent, clear, on-going, and include discussion of both the plan’s successes and its challenges (Lewis, Schmisser, Stephens, & Weir, 2006). While the unstructured and more spontaneous nature of informal communication spread information rapidly, formal communication channels should be established to report on the plan’s progress to various stakeholder groups (Saruhan, 2014). In this section, the communication plan that will be used to report on the progress of the Wasakam program organizational improvement plan is outlined.

A formal communication strategy outlines the strategies to share information with internal and external stakeholders. The internal stakeholders of the Wasakam improvement plan include the following three groups: program faculty including the dean, senior administration of



the institution, and the program's Elders' group. As the leader of the initiative, I will enact a communication plan that incorporates elements of adaptive and team leadership. At times, I will be the individual facilitating communication. At other times, faculty members may be asked to lead. While it may be my role to provide information, the communication that will occur with the stakeholder groups will encourage open discussion and debate. I will welcome the opinions and expertise of others.

### **Communication with Faculty**

Regular and on-going communication with and among the program's faculty is foundational to the change plan. To segue to the plan's introduction, at the August retreat faculty will be asked to begin the process of formulating a shared vision for the program. The connection between shared vision and improved student learning outcomes and experiences will be highlighted. After that discussion, I will then introduce my organizational improvement plan. The plan will be positioned as a proposal or starting point, and faculty feedback will be encouraged.

Also, at the retreat, the schedule for faculty meetings will be distributed. Beginning at the retreat and continuing at subsequent meetings, faculty will be asked to work in teams. The requirement of teamwork represents a re-culturing of the program to an environment reliant on shared, cohesive, and collaborative efforts (Curry, 2014). I anticipate that the team approach will contribute to greater communication among faculty. As well as an opportunity to continue work on the plan, the faculty meetings will provide an opportunity to assess the plan's progress and impact. The last meeting of the academic year will occur in a face-to-face format. Face-to-face meetings are crucial to the communication strategy for the format tends to encourage faculty engagement and to decrease miscommunication (Cawsey et al., 2016). Not only will the four

meetings provide a venue to communicate and to enact the plan, the meetings will support the creation of a more collaborative culture.

To augment the faculty meetings, communication about the change plan will occur through other means. After each meeting, I will email notes from the discussion to each faculty member. Linked to the goal of creating a more collaborative culture, the dean will be asked to send monthly emails. The emails will serve as a venue to report on the change initiative, but they will also provide a forum where program news, successes, and challenges are shared. Aligning with adaptive and team leadership, the content of the emails will not be the sole responsibility of the dean. Faculty will be asked to contribute to the monthly emails. In year two of the change improvement plan, communication will be facilitated through regular meetings of the three site-based program coordinators. The site coordinators will form a leadership team within the program, and their work will contribute to the enactment of the shared vision and the establishment of a collaborative organizational culture. The faculty communication plan aligns with the literature that asserts that effective communication incorporates various communication channels (Lewis et al., 2006).

The expectation of regular communication is infused in team and adaptive leadership approaches. As the change leader, I seek to provide the structures and create an environment that promotes open and regular communication. These leadership perspectives, along with the PDSA model, champion a dialogic approach to change communication. Tsouska (2005) contends that “change is produced through the way people talk, communicate and converse in the context of practical activities, and collectively reassign symbolic functions to the tasks they engage in and the tools they work with” (p. 103). Hence, the proposed communication plan provides

opportunities for faculty to collaborate, to discuss, to debate, and to create meaning around the change initiative.

### **Communication with Senior Administration**

In addition to the aforementioned faculty-focused *horizontal* communication strategy, a *vertical* plan must be established to communicate with senior administration of the institution (Saruhan, 2014, p. 148). After I identified my problem of practice, I shared the concept of my organization improvement plan with my direct supervisor, the program dean. This initial meeting occurred at a face-to-face format. While the dean offered suggestions and cautions, she gave me her support for the plan. As the plan moves forward, the dean will assume the primary responsibility to communicate formally with senior administration. The formal communication plan relies on existing communication structures. These structures include the dean reporting to the institution's Senior Administrative Council (SAC) and the Senior Administrative Leadership Team (SALT). As a member of these groups, the dean presents periodically on program initiatives. At the SAC and SALT meetings, senior administration will have the opportunity to examine, to critique, and to assess the progress of the plan. I have communicated with the dean my desire to attend the SAC and SALT meetings when the plan is shared. It is through these councils that formal support from senior administration will be obtained. Also, changes to course and program descriptions and outcomes must be approved by both the Curriculum and Standards Committee and the Learning Council. This will also foster communication and feedback from other deans, instructors, and staff.

In addition to the formal venues, many informal opportunities to discuss the plan will arise. As a small post-secondary institution, informal conversations among senior administration, staff, and faculty occur frequently and naturally. Although I have not shared the improvement

plan formally, the institution's president is aware of it through our informal hallway conversations. While a formal venue to communicate the progress of the plan is imperative, the informal and spontaneous conversations that occur naturally on campus provide a channel to dialogue with administration.

### **Communication with the Elders' Group**

The Wasakam program's Elders are another internal stakeholder group who must be considered in developing a communication plan. As the plan is implemented, the Elders will ensure that the original philosophy and intentions of Wasakam are infused in the change actions. I will contact and invite all members of the Elders' group to the August retreat. My invitation will be done following local protocols and will include a tobacco offering. Additionally, I will provide the Elders with the schedule of faculty meetings which will be encouraged to attend. Before a vision statement or program-level outcomes are adopted, approval from the Elders will be required. The Elders' insights and wisdom will guide the faculty in creating a shared vision to reflect "an environment or space where people bring their whole selves, their stories, their voice, their culture, their symbols, and their spiritual experience to their learning" (Battiste, 2013). WPSI faculties and programs are expected to include Elders in the program delivery and creation, therefore; I anticipate that the money will be available in the program's regular budget to cover the cost associated with the Elders' involvement. .

### **Communication with External Stakeholders**

Finally, a plan to communicate the progress of the initiative to external stakeholders must be developed. External stakeholders of the Wasakam program include representatives of local provincial school divisions, representatives of local First Nation education authorities, and student sponsoring agencies. These organizations provide experiential learning opportunities to

students, employ program graduates, and fund students to study within the program. Some members of local school divisions and educational authorities will be invited to provide feedback on the Wasakam program by completing an online survey created in year one of the plan by faculty members. The collated results of the survey, along with additional information about the change plan will be shared with the external stakeholders at a Program Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting. Program Advisory Committees are composed of volunteers with relevant expertise who meet regularly on a long-term basis to advise on the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of a program (Schaffer & Rouse, 2014). Although the Wasakam PAC has not met for several years, institutional expectations have changed and I anticipate that a PAC meeting will be held in late spring of year one of the change plan. The PAC will be led by the program dean, but I will also participate.

The communication strategy for the shared vision problem of practice should not be considered in isolation or as a separate part of the plan. As the change leader, the communication approaches that I use will influence the success of the improvement plan. Adopting elements of adaptive and team leadership, my approach to communication focuses on authentic and open exchanges of ideas. I perceive the change plan communication strategy not as venue to tell or direct people, rather as opportunities to engage individuals meaningfully in the change process. The focus of the plan and the use of the PDSA model incorporate and require regular and critical conversations to occur. Ensuring meaningful and truthful conversations among stakeholders will help to ensure the successful implementation and adoption of the plan.

### **Conclusion**

Chapter Three provides the final details of the organizational improvement plan. In this chapter, a collegial fame is used to develop monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, to consider

ethical aspects, and to create a communication strategy. As a whole, the plan provides a research informed solution to the Wasakam leadership problem of practice relating to a lack of shared vision. Through the use of adaptive and team leadership approaches, I will use the Plan, Do, Study and Act cycle to guide and assess the change process. To ensure a thorough understanding of the issues, the problem and potential solutions were examined in terms of organizational contexts, benefits, and challenges. A collegial approach which mirrors the philosophy of the Wasakam program was chosen to create a shared program vision to ultimately improve the learning outcomes and experiences of program students.

### **Conclusion: Next Steps and Future Considerations**

This organizational improvement plan endeavors to respond to the lack of shared vision within the Wasakam problem of practice with the goal of ensuring that program graduates are equipped to be excellent teachers in kindergarten to grade twelve educational systems. The narrow and timed scope of the plan will begin the process; however, I recognize that the creation of shared vision and reimagining of organizational culture are continuous journeys. This continuous approach to improvement is embedded in the PDSA change model which encourages the on-going evolution of the Wasakam program.

While the goals of the improvement plan relate to the creation of a shared program vision and collaborative culture, I anticipate that the plan will have a far reaching influence. The plan seeks to improve the program so that all program graduates are well-equipped to teach in the kindergarten to grade twelve systems and who automatically meld Western and Indigenous in their instructional practices. My hope that their experiences in the Wasakam program will inspire graduates to tackle social justice issues in their classrooms through the use of student-centred, collaborative, experiential, and place-based approaches (Reynolds & Brown, 2010). Additionally, I am optimistic that their training will encourage program graduates to challenge the educational norms that privilege certain students and marginalize others. When these penultimate goals are met, the Elders' vision will be achieved.

The strategies presented in the plan are the start to fulfilling the Elders' vision. Creating and sustaining a shared vision is an on-going process. A logical next step for the plan is the revision of course descriptions and outcomes. Based on the Wasakam philosophy, the program courses were created with *topical outlines* instead of course outcomes. However, the institution mandates that courses have student learning outcomes. Over time instructors have adapted and

generated their own learning outcomes based on the topical outlines. While similarities exist, standard outcomes for each course are not utilized by all faculty. Although the course descriptions, as printed in the institution's academic calendar, have remained standard, the description have never been reviewed since they were approved in 2008. Therefore to adhere to institutional policy and to ensure alignment with the vision statement and program-level outcomes, faculty need to review course descriptions and to create course-level outcomes.

Despite the ideology foundation of the Wasaskam program, the program struggles to ensure that Indigenous pedagogy, knowledge, and perspectives are central to the curriculum in *a good way*. Among faculty members, the debate as to whether the program is a Western education program inclusive of Indigenous perspective or an Indigenous education program configured to fit Western standards remains unresolved. Within the faculty, crucial conversations about the melding of educational perspectives do not occur regularly. A collective understanding must be created regarding Indigenous pedagogies and perspectives that are informed by, but distinguished from expressions and personal beliefs. Additionally, in the last few years, the program has self-identified as *land-based*. Despite the application of this descriptor, faculty have not discussed or shared what land-based education means collectively in the context of Wasakam. Thus, a next step of the proposed plan includes the exploration, refinement, and shared understanding of how Indigenous pedagogies should frame the program.

To better communicate the share vision, faculty should develop orientation and program resource materials. The materials will benefit all faculty, but will be key to acquaint sessional instructors in community-based programs with the program. To better support faculty, to build collegial relationships, and to communicate the shared program vision, faculty should consider establishing a mentorship program. Experienced faculty members would connect with new



instructors or professors. The mentor and the new instructor or professor could meet either face-to-face or virtually. These faculty supports would help with the communication of a shared vision and would help to ensure program quality and consistency.

Beyond the Wasakam program, the successful implementation of the organizational improvement plan could have significant implications for Woodlands Post-Secondary Institution. An external reviewer was contracted recently to assess quality assurance practices at WPSI. I had the opportunity to share my perspectives on the role that a shared vision could play to improve program consistency and to enhance student learning. The reviewer indicated that she would recommend a shared a vision approach in her report and that she would also suggest to the vice-president academic and research to consider seconding me part-time to work on the institution's quality assurance strategy. Thus, the content of this organizational improvement plan has the potential to inform institutional practice.

In conclusion, this organizational improvement plan presents strategies to create a shared vision for the Wasakam program. This plan seeks to improve student learning by having faculty work collaboratively to create a vision statement and problem-level outcomes. These products will be used to inform the delivery, content, focus, and pedagogical approaches used by faculty. The PDSA model used to implement and to evaluate the plan provides a framework for on-going reflection and revision to the plan. The plan and the leadership approaches selected are responsive to and respectful of the unique context and philosophy of the Wasakam program. The ultimate goal of the plan transcends the Wasakam program and WPSI. Ultimately, through the enactment of the plan, schools and teacher across the North will better meet the educational needs of their students.

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