CHANGE IS CONSTANT: THE ONGOING REENGINEERING OF SENIOR ADMINISTRATION IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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Title of Dissertation
Change is Constant: The Ongoing Reengineering of Senior Administration in Community Colleges

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We certify this dissertation submitted by the above named candidate, is fully adequate in scope and quality to satisfactorily meet the dissertation requirement for attaining the Doctor of Education degree in the Community College Leadership Program.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, David. You have supported me throughout this journey in innumerable ways. Your love and support are the reasons I persisted and completed this very important milestone. Words cannot express how grateful I am to you. You are my partner in life.

To my children, Adam and Jennifer, you are my inspirations. I learn from you in more ways than you will know. My hope is that this accomplishment will motivate you to keep learning.

To my parents, Dr. George and Stella Housakos, you encouraged me to pursue this doctorate. Your unending commitment to and belief in education is unwavering. You personify the ideals of lifelong learning.
Acknowledgements

Life takes you along many paths. My path led me to a community college, Harper College, which has become a significant part of my life. This pursuit of a doctorate in Community College Leadership became a natural step along this path.

I would like to acknowledge the talented and wise community college professionals in my doctoral cohort, which we affectionately refer to as DOC 4. Jaleh, Genda, Chuck, Ali, Joan, Judy, Shawn, Mike, Ashley, Stephen, and Nancy, I treasure the time we spent together and all I learned from you. Our discussions, disagreements, presentations, papers, and most importantly, the friendships we made, are the highlights of the past three years.

To Drs. Dennis Haynes and John Pickelman, thank you for serving on my dissertation committee. Your input, suggestions, and comments provided the polishing touches to this research.

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Abstract

Change is typically initiated to improve efficiency and effectiveness or when a new vision is created. Facilitating change within an organization is difficult, particularly when a new leader is appointed. Newly appointed community college presidents almost always reengineer senior administrative leadership upon arriving at their new institutions. What is needed is a change management process that facilitates change while minimizing disruption to the operations, and eases fears among those impacted by the changes. In addition, assessing the effectiveness of the changes is paramount in determining if further modifications are necessary.

The purpose of this study was to explore what precipitates reengineering of administrative structures by presidents new to their positions at community colleges, the processes used in implementing change, and assessment of the reengineering process.

This qualitative study utilized the case study methodology that included personal interviews of six newly appointed community college presidents from across the United States. These presidents were from large and small/medium community colleges, as defined by student full time equivalency, varying geographic areas (urban, suburban, rural), and had previous experience as community college presidents. Multiple data sources, including interviews, documents, and demographic surveys were used to gathered information and insights. The conceptual framework for analyzing data included theories that describe evolutionary versus revolutionary change, Kotter’s (1996) eight-step change process which is considered the seminal research on how change is best facilitated, and heuristics as a means of defining if previous experience as community college presidents influenced restructuring decisions.

The findings revealed that reengineering of senior administration commenced and was completed during the first year of a new community college presidency. Five primary triggers or challenges prompted this reengineering: (a) institutional climate;
(b) attrition/retirements; (c) governance concerns; (d) financial issues; and (e) accreditation findings. None of the presidents, utilized Kotter’s (1996) complete eight-step change process, yet their change efforts were considered successful in mitigating institutional challenges.

As a result of the study findings, the six-step Coons Change Management Model was developed to manage ongoing and iterative change, effectively. The model can be applied to modifications of senior administrative structures in community colleges by newly appointed presidents. The steps within the Coons Change Management Model can also be utilized to facilitate academic changes, as well as other operational changes within organizations.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study explores the reengineering processes community college presidents engage in when they begin a new presidency. This applies to newly appointed community college presidents who have previously served in this position at other institutions. The reengineering process focuses on the top-level administrative restructuring at the community college.

Background and Context of the Issue

Community colleges are experiencing increased levels of turnover and retirements of faculty, staff, and administrators. Community college researchers Berry, Hammons, and Denny (2001), surveyed full-time faculty members in community colleges nationwide and discovered that between 25,000 and 30,000 plan to retire within ten years. Likewise, according to George Boggs (2003), past president of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), many senior administrators are close to retirement age and plan to leave the community college system. Boggs believes these retirement trends will result in the most significant leadership transition in the history of American community colleges. Pasty Fulton-Calkins and Charlie Milling from the University of North Texas have researched community college leadership issues. Fulton-Calkins and Milling (2005) concur that the administrators and faculty employed in the 1960s and 1970s have reached or surpassed retirement age. In their article published in the Community College Journal of Research and Practice they state:

Research reported by the Community College Times gives the following statistics: 1) approximately 50% of the current community college presidents will retire over the next 3-7 years. . . .and 2) in the next few years, 700 new community college presidents and campus heads, 1,800 new upper-level administrators, and 30,000 new faculty members will be needed (pp. 234-235).
This retirement trend in community colleges extends to the senior-most level, the president. Therefore, it is not surprising that community college experts Iris Weisman and George Vaughn (2007) found that 84% of community college presidents plan to retire within 10 years.

The increased rate in presidential retirements creates a vacuum that must be filled. Some presidential vacancies will be filled with individuals who are new to the role of community college president. However, many presidents, after serving a number of years at one community college, seek a change and are hired to fill the same position at another institution. The results of a survey conducted by Weisman and Vaughn (2007), in collaboration with AACC, confirm that community college presidents tend to move from institution to institution. The survey was sent to all public community college presidents in the United States of which 545 responded. Survey results revealed that 27.5% of the respondents had moved into their current position from another community college presidency.

Community college presidents are responsible for the effective operation of the institution. According to Cohen and Brawer (2008), most presidents have a senior administrative council or cabinet comprised of vice presidents and potentially one or two other key individuals who ensure that the goals and vision of the president are implemented. These individuals lead and manage areas such as academic programs, student support, finance, facilities, human resources, and information technology. Although there are countless variations in the organizational structure and scope of responsibilities, these areas, in most instances, are overseen by senior administrators. For example, many community colleges combine facilities and finance into one functional area. The organizational structure of the president's senior administration reflects institutional as well as presidential values and goals.
There is no question that changes in presidencies, regardless of the level of experience in that role, precipitate reciprocal modifications within the organization. As presidents assume their leadership positions in community colleges, changes whether large and small, follow. The scope of these adjustments can vary from simple rearrangement of office space to major alternations to the administrative reporting structures.

Often, boards of trustees hire new presidents because challenges have become evident in the community college and change is required. For example, severe challenges faced by the institution can be fueled by obsolete infrastructures, financial instability, increased demand for services and programs, as well as ineffective management. Newly appointed community college presidents often believe that challenges such as these cannot be resolved effectively without some type of administrative reengineering.

In their book, *The Business of Higher Education*, John Knapp and David Siegal (2009) concur in principle claiming challenges have forced colleges to adopt more business-like approaches in fulfilling their missions. Reengineering and all the changes and improvements it offers to organizations became a popular practice among businesses the 1990s. Authors Michael Hammer and James Champy (1993) define business process reengineering (BPR) as rethinking and redesigning business processes that bring about improvements in performance. Interestingly, according to Hammer (1990), redesign is necessary because the current business environment is driven by constant and unrelenting change. The positive results of reengineering are well-documented among notable companies such as American Express, IBM, and Ford. These companies implemented reengineering process changes that enhanced competitiveness and profitability (Ring, 2001; Brandenburg & Binder, 1999).
However, BPR methodology has been criticized for ignoring the human element. Critics claim that proponents of reengineering, such as Hammer, have ignored research conducted over the past 50 years on organizational change, leadership, participation, and communication (Jaffe & Scott 1998; Ettorre, 1995; Davenport & Stoddard, 1994). In a 1999 *Harvard Business Review* article, Hammer acknowledges that reengineering practices have largely ignored the human dimension of preparing employees for change and taking the time and effort to gain their support and commitment as reengineering is executed.

The conceptual context of reengineering in this study encompasses change and transformation of the senior administrative structure within community colleges. The reengineering of senior administration must be crafted thoughtfully and systematically in order to minimize disruptions and mitigate personal and organizational stress, while moving the institution forward in a seamless and effective manner. The intent of this study is to gain insights into the triggers that prompt organizational reengineering at community colleges, the processes used to facilitate these changes, and the assessment of the effectiveness of the reengineering undertaken.

**The Research Purpose**

**The Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study is to explore what precipitates the reengineering of administrative structures by presidents new to their positions at community colleges, the processes used in implementing the change, and assessment of the reengineering process.
The Driving Questions

The driving questions arising from the purpose are:

1. What indicators precipitate reengineering administrative structures in community colleges by presidents new to the organization?
2. How is the administrative reengineering process implemented in community colleges by the new president?
3. How and in what ways does the new president evaluate the process of reengineering?

Significance of the Study

Any and all reengineering processes within organizations cause alarm and stress on individuals which, in turn, impacts productivity and effectiveness. Considerable agreement in the organizational change literature exists regarding what factors cause anxiety when change is initiated in an institution. Most often, individuals are anxious about the impact the changes will have on themselves, their job, and on their work colleagues (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002; Lau & Woodman, 1995; Weber & Manning, 2001). Individuals are also concerned about why change is being initiated, how decisions are being made, and how change will be implemented.

This study will provide valuable insights into three critical aspects of reengineering processes that impact senior administrative levels at community colleges. First, the research will define the critical incidents or triggers that prompt presidents new to the institution to initiate these changes and how they become aware of these triggers. In addition, the steps used in crafting the change process will be explored. Particular attention will be given to the challenges encountered when changes to senior administration are initiated and the lessons learned from implementing the changes. Finally, the techniques and methods used to assess the effectiveness of the reengineering process will be explored. Insights into these factors will assist future leaders
who are assuming new presidencies in community colleges, allowing them to initiate reengineering in a manner that minimizes disruptions and prompts meaningful and needed change.

**Brief Literature Review**

The literature reviewed offers a contextual lens into the concepts and theories used to situate the study, and analyze the findings. The purpose of the study is to explore the processes used by newly appointed community college presidents to revise and restructure their senior administration. Lessons learned from these presidents can assist newly appointed community college presidents as they undertake this type of reengineering.

An eclectic combination of concepts and theories complement the complex nature of this study. Concepts in the areas of reengineering and total quality improvement, common in businesses, provide insight into why change is initiated in organizations. Heuristics are examined as a means of explaining how community college presidents rely on past experience to assist and guide them with their decisions. The concept of planned change, as articulated by Amir Levy and Uri Merry, professors at the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, explicates the reasons thoughtful change is effective. Finally, John Kotter’s eight steps for effective change serve as a priori themes for analyzing the findings.

**Community Colleges: A Historical Perspective**

Access to postsecondary education is the hallmark of community colleges. For over 100 years, two-year postsecondary institutions have provided access to higher education for the residents of the communities they serve. The original concept to provide the first two years of a baccalaureate experience was crafted in 1901 by several notable educators. William Rainey Harper, the first president of the University of Chicago, Alexis Lanage from the University of
California, and David Starr Jordan of Stanford University, believed that the first two years of undergraduate studies should be offered by dedicated institutions which became known as junior colleges (Brint & Karabel, 1989). The Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944, also known as the GI Bill, sparked exponential growth in the number of community colleges and expanded the original mission (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). This expanded impetus for community colleges was to provide needed educational services to returning service men and women and respond to the needs of the community by offering career and technical programs and developmental coursework that assisted underprepared students (Vaughn, 2006). The contemporary evolution of these institutions took place in the 1960s where they morphed into comprehensive community colleges. The modern community college provides postsecondary education at an affordable cost, promotes personal growth, and enriches the local community (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). The encompassing mission of today’s community colleges centers on their affordability, accessibility, and access to educational services for community members and other stakeholders.

Community colleges are complex organizations led by presidents and chief executive officers who work inexorably to uphold the mission of the community college. According to Cohen and Brawer (2008), effective leadership is paramount to the success of community colleges. Wharton (1998) iterates that the leadership of the community college is the determining factor in its overall effectiveness. Community college presidents work diligently to improve the quality of their institutions and enhance physical assets. These leaders are hired by boards of trustees who expect the president to set the overall strategic vision for the institution. Mobilizing followers toward a vision that is shared by all is the objective of successful presidents (Cohen & Brawer, 2008).
Community colleges are experiencing turnover in leadership at the presidential level. A survey conducted by the AACC in 2006 found that the average age of community college presidents is 58 and that 60% plan to retire within ten years. The pressures and expectations of the position coupled with the fact that many presidents are nearing retirement age, are prompting an exodus.

However, in many cases, sitting presidents do not have the inclination to either retire or take leave from the community college system. The prevalence of this “swirling” phenomenon of experienced presidents accepting a presidency at another community college is evident. In accordance with their new position, administrative changes are made. This study explores the way these changes are undertaken and assessed at their new institutions.

**Reengineering and Total Quality Management**

The best leaders, according to Cohen and Brawer (2008), are those who consider administration to be a process of continuous improvement. The concept of continuous improvement is the cornerstone of total quality management and reengineering processes.

Total quality management (TQM) was introduced during the early years of manufacturing. According to management expert Mary Walton (1986), Dr. W. Edwards Deming, noted professor and author, is considered the father of the modern quality management movement. Walton goes on to explain that Deming offers 14 points for improving quality, one of which is radically overhauling management, and another breaking down barriers between departments.

Reengineering, commonly referred to as business process reengineering (BPR) became popular in the 1990s and is based on Deming’s initial research. BPR is a fundamental or radical rethinking of current practices that brings about significant change (Hammer & Champy, 1993).
Competitive pressures and a sluggish economy often provide the impetus for continued efforts to implement dramatic change. Reengineering remains an effective tool for organizations striving to operate as effectively and efficiently as possible.

The difference between TQM and BPR can be found in the type of change or improvement that is needed. TQM focuses on improving current processes and structures, whereas BPR assumes that current processes are ineffective and a radical redesign is required. TQM or BPR is frequently initiated when community college presidents assume their roles in new institutions. Simple qualitative changes common in TQM such as relocating offices may occur, or radical redesign of processes and structures may be initiated, as prescribed by BPR. These principles are applicable to this study in that they provide context as to why newly appointed presidents initiate change of the administrative structure.

Organizational Change

Organizational change can be evolutionary or revolutionary depending on the issues that are prompting the need for change. Leaders must anticipate change by continuously diagnosing problems and seeking opportunities that may necessitate change (Conner & Lake, 1988). Changes may be required in individual behavior, organizational processes, strategic directions, or organizational design.

Amir Levy and Uri Merry, organizational change experts, have studied the types of changes organizations implement. Levy and Merry (1986), distinguish between first- and second-order change. First-order change involves modifications to functional processes such as organizational structures, communication systems, recognition and reward programs, and decision making processes. These changes are facilitated within the existing mission and culture
of the institution. Conversely, second-order change involves major shifts to the mission and purpose of the organization.

Thus, much like TQM, first-order change is less invasive. Second-order change mirrors BPR in that it involves radical redesign. In either case, Levy and Merry (1986), assert that the processes used to facilitate change are more important than the type of change that is initiated.

**Heuristics: The Adaptive Toolbox**

The term heuristics, also known as naturalistic decision making, is used to explain how individuals use mental shortcuts to make decisions. In their book *Bounded Rationality: The Adaptive Toolbox*, Gigerenzer and Selten explain that humans are often forced to make decisions under difficult conditions and constraints. Gigerenzer and Selten (2001) developed the concept of the adaptive toolbox to illustrate how humans rely on a repertoire of fast and prudent rules based on past experiences when making decisions in uncertain circumstances.

Seasoned community college presidents often rely on past experience when making decisions. This past experience provides a contextual basis for reengineering the senior administrative levels of the institution. This reengineering is necessary to ensure that proper leadership is available to carry out the vision of the new president.

**Kotter: Eight Steps for Effective Change**

Disruptions to operations are minimized when change processes are carefully planned and executed. Harvard University professor John P. Kotter (1996), an internationally recognized expert on leadership and change, noted that change often sparks apprehension and adversely impacts productivity. By examining companies that successfully implemented change, Kotter (1996) believes the negative aspects of change are preventable if two elements are present:
First, useful change tends to be associated with a multi-step process that creates power and motivation sufficient to overwhelm all sources of inertia. Second, this process is never employed effectively unless it is driven by high-quality leadership, not just excellent management (p. 20).

Kotter’s research revealed that 15 of the 100 or more companies studied successfully transformed themselves and that patterns emerged from the 15 that thrived after changes were implemented. As a result, he identified eight critical steps that organizations must go through to facilitate successful change:

1. Establish a sense of urgency.
2. Form a powerful guiding coalition.
3. Create a vision.
4. Communicate the vision.
5. Empower others to act on the vision.
7. Consolidate improvements and sustain the momentum for change.
8. Institutionalize new approaches.

Mismanaging any one of these steps can undermine an otherwise well-conceived vision. These eight steps will be used in this study to code information received on the processes used by newly appointed community college presidents as they initiate change in their institutions.

Summary

The focus of the study is to gain insights and information regarding the processes used by community college presidents when they reengineer the senior administrative levels of the institution. This type of reengineering is necessary to ensure that the vision is activated and goals are achieved. The study is situated in community colleges which have a rich and interesting history. Research affirms that change processes are more important than the type of change that
is initiated. During uncertain times, such as assuming a new presidency at a community college, these leaders rely on past experiences to make decisions when conditions are uncertain. Research conducted on institutions that have successfully implemented change reveal that systematic approaches are best. The information derived from this study will provide valuable information to community college presidents as they evaluate optimal methods for reengineering senior administrative levels within their institutions.

**Description of the Study Design**

The methodological approach to this study is systematic and logical and provides an audit trail that can be used to authenticate processes used to collect and analyze data. This overview of the research design explains not only the methodology, but also why it is appropriate to the research purpose: to explore the processes used by newly appointed community college presidents in reengineering the senior-most levels of the administration. In this section of the introductory chapter are the following: (a) an overview of qualitative inquiry and case study methodology; (b) data collection methods; (c) sampling, site, and participant selection criteria; and (d) techniques to be used for data analysis.

**Research Design**

This study utilizes qualitative inquiry and specifically case study methodology that is situated in the interpretive paradigm. Qualitative research examines the complexities and nuances of an issue, particularly when little is known about the phenomenon (Merriam 2009). According to Creswell (2007), “qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world” (p. 36). He explains further that qualitative research empowers individuals to share their perspectives and stories. Yin (2003) affirms that the realities and experiences of the participants provide context and data related to the purpose of the study.
Merriam (2009) asserts that qualitative studies have several common elements. First, they focus on phenomena that occur in their natural setting. Second, qualitative research attempts to study the phenomena in all its complexity. However, qualitative studies do not attempt to identify cause and effect relationships, which is the intent of quantitative research. Leedy and Ormrod (2009) explain that qualitative research serves one or more of the following purposes: (a) to reveal the nature of certain situations; (b) to interpret new insights; (c) to validate certain assumptions; and (d) to evaluate the effectiveness of policies or practices.

Qualitative research offers a naturalistic approach to exploring why community college presidents elect to restructure senior administration and how this is accomplished. Creswell (2007) explains that there is no manipulation of variables in a naturalistic approach rather perceptions are gathered from participants in a holistic manner. The resulting rich, descriptive data from the study will provide insights that are useful to newly appointed presidents, senior administration, and boards of trustees.

The interpretive paradigm adheres to the belief that reality is constructed not only by the subjective perceptions of the participants of the study, but also by the researcher as an instrument of the study (Johnson & Christiansen, 2004). In qualitative studies, researchers collect data through interviews, examining documents, and observing behavior. They also interpret what they hear, see, and understand. Creswell (2007) provides clarity to this concept when he states, “the researcher’s interpretations cannot be separated from their own background, history, context, and prior understanding” (p. 38). Thus, data are mediated through the researcher who is seen as a human instrument in the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

The interpretive paradigm also speaks to how the research is understood or received by the reader. Merriam (2009) explains that the intent of qualitative research is to seek patterns or
generalizations that help to explain a particular phenomenon. These patterns and themes arising from the findings are thus individually and uniquely interpreted by the reader.

Case Study

A case study is an investigative method of exploring a bounded phenomenon by examining in depth, and in a holistic manner, one or more particular instances of the phenomenon (Merriam, 1998). Case studies are particularly useful for learning more about little known situations or phenomena. Yin (2003) presents at least four applications for a case study model: (a) to explain complex causal links in real-life phenomenon; (b) to describe the real-life context in which a phenomenon has occurred; (c) to simply describe the phenomenon; and (d) to explore those situations in which the phenomenon studied has no clear set of outcomes.

Merriam (1998) believes the delimiting or bounded nature of case study research creates the case. Thus, a bounded case study requires that a framework of the situation or system is well-defined and outlined. Johnson and Christensen (2004) clearly state that, “you must determine what the case is and what it is not” (p. 406). Creswell (2007) simply claims that case studies are bounded because the researcher is choosing what is to be studied. Thus, case study methodology will be used in this study to describe actual situations in which newly appointed community college presidents restructured senior administration. Therefore, both the purpose of the study, and the participant selection criteria serve to bound the study.

Data Collection

Data collection methods, which were used to gather relevant information for this study, include the following: (a) semi-structured interviews; (b) documents; (c) a demographic survey; and (d) field notes. Gathering data from a variety of data sources strengthens the rigor and validity of the study.
**Purposeful sampling.** Study participants possess information and relevant experiences that support the purpose of the study. In addition, participants selected for the study embody specific characteristics, thus purposeful sampling will be used. According to Johnson and Christensen (2004), purposeful sampling is used to draw on the unique characteristics and experiences of targeted participants who can provide relevant data. Creswell (2007) agrees with this statement as he explains further that purposeful sampling “. . . means that the inquirer selects individuals and sites for the study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon of the study” (p. 125). The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) is considered the largest provider of presidential search and recruiting services for community colleges. The ACCT website provides an annual list of community colleges that have recently hired presidents. It is from this list and personal contacts of ACCT staff members that institutions and presidents will be selected.

**Site selection.** Community colleges from across the United States that have recently selected a president with the assistance of ACCT search services will be eligible for the study. In addition, specific focus is on community colleges that have newly appointed presidents who have served at that institution between two and three years. These community colleges will be categorized in two sizes as defined by the Carnegie Size and Setting Classification System for community colleges: (a) medium/small institutions defined as enrolling 4,999 annual full time equivalent (FTE) students or less; and (b) large institutions defined as those having at least 5,000 annual FTE. This focus on two size categories will help to determine if new presidents at larger community colleges initiate restructuring differently than those from smaller institutions.

**Participants.** Individuals selected for the study are newly appointed community college presidents who have served at their respective institutions for two to three years. This criterion
allows adequate time to facilitate and evaluate the effectiveness of restructuring. In addition, these individuals are not new to the role of president, but rather have served previously in this position at other community colleges. This criterion helps to determine if their previous experiences as presidents at other institutions influenced actions taken at their current community colleges. A total of six such community college presidents will participate in semi-structured interviews; three newly appointed presidents from small/medium institutions and three newly appointed presidents from large institutions. Participants will be asked to sign a consent form which is provided in Appendix A.

**Data collection methods.** In order to gather relevant information and data that addresses the purpose of the study, four methods of data collection will be used: (a) demographic survey; (b) semi-structured interviews; (c) documents; and (d) field notes.

A demographic survey will be used to collect baseline and contextual demographic information from participants. In addition, participants will be asked to confirm that they did restructure their administration, and when this occurred. They will also be asked to ascertain if the restructuring achieved the desired results. The survey is included in Appendix B.

The semi-structured interview is the primary method of data collection. This method of interview was selected because it allows for open, two-way conversational dialogue. Semi-structured interviews provide the opportunity for additional follow-up questions that may be necessary to clarify answers and issues articulated by participants in the study. Merriam (2009) explains that the semi-structured interview “allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to the new ideas on the topic” (p. 90). Experts in the field will be solicited as a small pilot study to test both the interview questions and
the interview process. Interview questions mapped to the research driving questions are included in Appendix C.

Pertinent documents such as organizational charts will be collected and reviewed. Organizational charts are graphic hierarchical depictions of the administrative and authoritative structures within an institution. Use of these documents will delineate the organizational restructuring occurring at the institution.

Field notes describing interview observations and impressions will be recorded immediately following each semi-structured interview to make certain researcher recollections are fresh. Two types of field notes will be used during the study. Observational field notes will provide details on the setting in which the interviews are conducted. In addition, reflective field notes will be used to capture commentary on feelings, reactions, and critical reflections of the researcher throughout the data collection process.

**Data analysis.** Data gathered from a variety of sources will be analyzed through a coding system to determine themes and patterns. Validity is strengthened through triangulation of the data sources which include semi-structured interviews, demographic surveys, field notes, and documents. These varied data sources provide the opportunity to analyze information from different perspectives.

Triggers that prompt newly appointed community college presidents to reengineer senior administration will be codified to determine commonalities or differences. Also, a priori themes found in Kotter’s eight steps for successful change will be used to analyze the findings. All emergent themes will be captured to ensure data will not be lost.
Chapter Summary

The case study methodology proposed for this study provides the opportunity to cast a wide lens on a complex phenomenon. Semi-structured interviews allow the participants to describe their perceptions as they answer “why” and “how” restructuring was accomplished at their community colleges. In addition to semi-structured interviews, field work will include review of documents and construction of field notes. The resulting data will be systematically coded and analyzed to determine if patterns and themes emerge. The goal is to present concepts and processes that can be used by other newly appointed presidents as they attempt to facilitate change within their institutions effectively and with minimal interruption.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 provides a brief review of the issue, an introduction of the purpose of the research, and articulates the driving questions of the study. Brief overviews of the study design and related literature are also included. The significance of the study rests in its findings which will assist future presidents who are assuming new roles in institutions as they initiate reengineering of senior administrative structures. These findings will minimize disruptions and prompt meaningful and needed change.

A review of the literature is presented in chapter 2. The historical context of the study focuses on the evolution of the community college, and in particular, the roles and responsibilities of the president. TQM-type evolutionary and BPR-type revolutionary changes are compared and contrasted. Kotter’s eight steps for effective change were summarized and presented as a priori themes. Finally, the concept of heuristics is defined as an effective decision making strategy.
Chapter 3 provides a detailed description of the research design which is a case study. The design is described including case selection, data collection pilot, and informed consent of the participants. Particular attention is given to the case selection process and the participant contact protocol because of its importance to the study. A detailed description of the researcher as research instrument provides a transparent view of this important facet to qualitative research. The chapter also discusses the importance of trustworthiness, reliability, validity, and rigor.

Chapter 4 describes the data collection process and summarizes the data gathered for the study. Multiple data sources are used which include semi-structured interviews, documents, and field notes. Tables are used to summarize the data, allowing key themes to emerge. Also included is a discussion of how data analysis is accomplished using the a priori themes garnered from the theories and concepts. These include contrasting TQM- and BPR-type changes, Kotter’s eight steps for effective change, and heuristics as a form of decision making.

The presentation and analysis of the data are provided in chapter 5. Rich, thick data gathered from multiple sources are presented in quotations and tables. These data are subsequently discussed and analyzed. The analysis of the perspectives and information provided by the study participants is the basis of the research findings, conclusions, and implications for future community college presidents.

As this study seeks to discover why and how newly appointed community college presidents facilitate changes to senior administration, summaries of the insights provided by study participants are included in chapter 6. This chapter includes a summary of the findings and implications for practice, as well as the Coons Change Management Model. In addition, recommendations for further research are offered.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Change is a constant theme within community colleges. These institutions are expected to be nimble and flexible to meet the complex and varied needs of the stakeholders they serve. As chief executive officers of the institution, community college presidents provide the driving force and vision for the institution. Presidents rely on their knowledge and experience to craft a vision that is relevant to contemporary issues and challenges. As presidents accept and transition into similar positions at other community colleges, they more often than not, reorganize or reengineer their senior administrative cabinet to assist them with accomplishing their vision.

Though reorganization of the senior-level cabinet may seem simple and straightforward, it is not. Often, the reorganization is not successful and almost always creates angst for these employees. Complexities and challenges abound surrounding the question: “How can this be done successfully?” If done well, the institution benefits by an increase in productivity, momentum, and a concerted focus on the vision. There is no doubt reengineering of senior management causes a great amount of stress and anxiety as individuals involved have concerns which include why the change is being initiated, how it will be implemented, and what their continued role will be in the new structure. Understanding how and why newly appointed community college presidents reengineer senior management can assist other community college presidents as they undertake similar actions. Limited research was found in the literature regarding the reengineering of community college senior management staff by new or seasoned presidents. Therefore, a noteworthy gap in the community college literature exists.
To address the complexity of this research, an eclectic combination of concepts and theories was purposefully sought. Theories and concepts relevant to this study are pervasive in the disciplines of business, management, sociology, and psychology. The study is situated within the community college environment thus a review of the evolution of these postsecondary institutions is critical, particularly as it frames the changing role of the president over the last decades. The concepts of total quality management and reengineering, common in business, are examined in relation to organizational change theories, common in the fields of management, psychology, and sociology. These theories provide insights into the dichotomy of evolutionary and revolutionary change and how organizational changes impact the culture and operations of the community college. *Leading Change* (1996) authored by John Kotter, is considered the seminal work in the field of change management. Kotter’s eight-step change model is used as the construct for data analysis to determine if the presidents employed systematic change approaches. Finally, decision-making and the concept of heuristics, also referred to as the adaptive toolbox and scripted by Gigerenzer and Selten, examine how and in what ways these presidents rely on past experiences as they restructure senior management at their new institutions.

The purpose of this study is to explore what precipitates the reengineering of administrative structures by presidents new to their positions at community colleges, the processes used in implementing the change, and assessment of the reengineering process. Insights can assist presidents as they restructure or reengineer their senior management in a manner that minimizes disruptions and prompts meaningful and needed change.
Overview of Community Colleges

For over a century, two-year postsecondary institutions have provided higher education opportunities for the residents of the communities they serve. The original concept to provide the first two years of a baccalaureate experience was crafted in 1901 by several notable educators. Three men fostered this significant higher education reform. William Rainey Harper, the first president of the University of Chicago, Alexis Lange from the University of California, and David Starr Jordan of Stanford University, believed that the first two years of undergraduate studies should be offered by dedicated institutions (Brint & Karabel, 1989). These institutions were known as junior colleges and later as community colleges. Originally, a two-year degree was the highest degree awarded. However, over the last thirty years, a few community colleges have begun to confer baccalaureate degrees.

Focus on two-year institutions began in the post-World War II era, when the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly known as the GI Bill, was passed by Congress. The GI Bill supported returning veterans who required retraining to prepare for civilian jobs. This sparked growth in the number of community colleges and expanded the original mission by offering career and technical programs, and developmental coursework that assisted underprepared students (Vaughn, 2006). Perhaps the most definitive declaration of the community college's role in opening postsecondary education to the general public is found in the report from the President's Commission on Higher Education of 1947, also referred to as the Truman Commission. The report outlined the critical role community colleges would serve in the democratization of higher education. The Commission recommended establishing a system of public community colleges across the country as a means of opening access to higher education. They were to afford to all access to higher education at a reasonable cost.
During the 1960s, the notion of higher education for all who aspired to attend college took root across the nation. During this decade, two-year colleges were created at an average of one new college per week (Palmer & Katsinas, 2005). This exponential growth of community colleges experienced in the 1960s and 1970s was in most part attributable to the value placed on postsecondary credentials and career training for individuals seeking to improve their socioeconomic standing. During the 1970s and 1980s community colleges provided increased higher education opportunities for baby-boomers, defined as those born between 1946 and 1964. Throughout these decades, the federal government made it possible for more Americans to attend college through expanded financial aid programs. These decades also saw the introduction of for-profit two-year and technical colleges. According to Cohen and Brawer (2008), although community college enrollment growth continued in the 1990s and in early 2000, intense competition for the same students by private for-profit postsecondary institutions was prevalent.

During the later portion of the first decade of the 21st century, enrollment in community colleges grew again dramatically for a number of reasons. As a result of the Great Recession of 2008, young adults were seeking more cost-effective alternatives for a postsecondary education. In addition, unemployment surpassed 10% in the United States, prompting adults seeking retraining to turn to community colleges in great numbers. According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (NSCRC), the following factors contributed specifically to enrollment growth from 2007 to 2009: (a) availability of workforce training and retooling for the unemployed; (b) lower tuition and fees than universities; (c) outreach that resulted in increased awareness of the value of a community college education; and (d) enhanced structural capacity provided by new campuses, buildings and online education options. Table 1
summarizes this growth in credit-bearing enrollment at community colleges from before 1960 to 2009.

Table 1. *Community College Enrollment: Pew Research Center (2009)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1960</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>5,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>5,600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>6,800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

True to its name, the community college serves as a community institution, providing access to quality educational services at an affordable price. These institutions provide transfer education for those planning to complete baccalaureate degrees, career and technical education, community service programs, and developmental education for the underprepared. In addition, community colleges work with business and industry to develop customized training for employees thus enhancing the company’s ability to compete in the global marketplace. It is evident that community colleges, for over 100 years, have been flexible and consistently evolving to accommodate the needs of the individuals and communities they serve.

Higher education is no longer a luxury or even an option but rather a necessity. This was duly noted by the Obama Administration which placed the importance of higher education in a larger context of social policy and global readiness. In his 2010 State of the Union address,
President Obama described a world-class education as "the best anti-poverty program around" (Obama, paragraph 50, 2010). A college degree and workforce training are critical in the 21st century if the United States is to regain its leadership in the global economy. According to Anthony Carnevale (2010), Director of the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workplace, nearly two-thirds of jobs will require postsecondary credentials or degrees by 2018. To prepare individuals for success in emerging industries, the Obama administration targeted support for career-focused degree and certificate programs in community colleges that provide job-relevant skills for the American workforce.

Guiding community colleges in the accomplishment of their missions are boards of trustees, administrators, and in particular the presidents of these institutions. The men and women serving as presidents are passionate about their work and achieving their visions. These presidents understand that they cannot achieve their visions alone. Rather, they rely on the expertise and assistance of an effective leadership team. The hiring of a president at a community college almost inevitably precipitates the reengineering of the senior-most administrative level to ensure the appropriate structure is in place and, more importantly, that the most effective leaders are in key roles.

**The Community College President**

Community colleges are responsive and innovative in addressing changing workforce needs, policy mandates by state and federal legislation, accountability requirements by accrediting agencies, and the demands of their students. The hallmark of an effective community college is their ability to be flexible and adapt to changing demands.

These complex yet nimble organizations are led by presidents and administrators who work diligently to support the mission of the community college and ensure it is operating within
the policies set by boards of trustees and laws established by federal and state regulatory bodies. Tying the effectiveness of skillful leadership to organizational success is not new or unusual. Cohen and Brawer (2008), believe effective leadership is paramount to the success of community colleges. Wharton (1998) concurs, believing that the leadership of the community college is the determining factor in its overall effectiveness.

A plethora of literature has been written documenting the changing role of the community college president. Pierce and Pederson (1997) report that between 1989 and 1995, more than 150 books, monographs, articles, and reports focused on community college presidents. Two works that specifically chronicle the evolution of the community college presidency were written by Cathryn Addy, President of Tunxis Community College, and Leila Gonzalez Sullivan, Professor of Community College Education at North Carolina State University. These authors provide an insightful and introspective delineation of the opportunities and challenges that defined the community college presidency at a particular point in history.

In her book, *The President’s Journey: Issues and Ideals in the Community College*, Addy (1995) offers a historical perspective of community college presidents based on the issues that were prevalent at that time. Her overview begins with the early pioneers who built campuses, courted politicians for funding, and designed organizational structures borrowed from universities and colleges. Addy describes the second wave of community college presidents as leaders who managed rapid growth and expansion of the community college system. These individuals were challenged by rapidly increasing enrollments and expanding infrastructures. The third and final grouping of community college presidents, Addy feels, was defined by the rapid expansion of technology, particularly as it permeated and influenced the flow of information. To emphasize this point, Addy states, “. . .the impact of technology cannot be
underestimated. It is one of the primary forces shaping how we interact, how we organize, and how we educate” (p. 129).

Sullivan’s (2001) article “Four Generations of Community College Leadership” mirrors the evolutionary phases articulated by Addy. However, Sullivan provides generational labels that succinctly describe the skills sets needed for those historical times. Her description of these presidents divides them into four groups: Founding Fathers, Good Managers, Collaborators, and Millennial Generation Leaders. Beginning with the founding fathers, Sullivan (2001) explains these individuals pioneered the community college movement through uncharted waters, affording critical leadership that allowed the community college system to grow and thrive. It is because of these dedicated men and women that community colleges have successfully provided open access to individuals seeking postsecondary education and critical workforce training. These founding fathers were charged with initial building of community colleges and under their tutelage these institutions flourished by harnessing community support. As a result of their leadership, community colleges became large institutions, with “…enviable physical plants, vast resources, and considerable community support” (Sullivan 2001, p. 561).

Undoubtedly, the work of the founding fathers was critical to the early survival of the community college. Their work was inherited by the next group of college presidents, who are referred to as the Good Managers. Sullivan explains that it was during the 1970s that these Good Managers were confronted with faculty unrest and funding challenges. These challenges were different than those experienced by previous presidents who constructed college campuses and managed enrollment. As funding sources began to erode, these leaders were forced to closely manage expenditures and seek alternative revenue sources.
The third generation of presidents assumed power in the 1980s and faced a myriad of different challenges. Referred to as the Collaborators, Sullivan (2001) explains that this generation “built on (perhaps remodeled is the better term) the strong foundation laid by the two preceding generations, enduring recessions, pressures to be more accountable, public distrust, increasing numbers of underprepared students, and the explosion of the internet” (p. 561).

The fourth and final generation, referred to as Millennial Generation Leaders, was assuming their presidencies at the turn of the 21st century. Sullivan (2001) explains, “. . .leaders in the 21st century will have to inspire trust in their followers to move forward during a period in which higher education is recreating itself” (p. 571). Table 2 summarizes a comparison of Addy’s and Sullivan’s historical perspectives of the community college presidency.
Table 2. Comparison of Addy and Sullivan Perspectives of Community College Presidential Evolution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Addy</th>
<th>Sullivan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Generation</td>
<td>Pioneers who designed organizational structures</td>
<td>The Founding Fathers: Started the community college movement; builders and visionaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>borrowed from colleges and universities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Generation</td>
<td>Managers of rapid growth in enrollment and increasing infrastructures</td>
<td>The Good Managers: Dealt with faculty issues and funding challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Generation</td>
<td>Adopters of technological enhancements</td>
<td>The Collaborators: Provided enhanced transparency and technological capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Generation</td>
<td>Not defined</td>
<td>Millennial Generation Leaders: Recreating higher education in the 21st century</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 21st century has indeed presented unique challenges for community college presidents. Goff (2002) and Eddy (2005) reason that continuous change will surround community colleges, and presidents will be expected to effectively lead their organizations through these changes. Donald Goff (2002), president of Roane State Community College, believes that the role of president is to “inspire trust in their followers to move forward during a period in which higher education is recreating itself” (p. 571). Pamela Eddy, Associate Professor and researcher at The College of William and Mary, is in agreement. According to Eddy (2005), “as college leaders, presidents act to help campus members create meaning during periods of uncertainty” (p. 706).

This profound statement was codified in the American Graduation Initiative outlined by President Obama in 2009. This initiative is challenging postsecondary institutions, and primarily
community colleges, to produce five million additional graduates by 2020. This challenge is
becoming difficult as funding dwindles. Most notably, traditional funding models that relied on
support from federal and state governments have eroded compelling community college
presidents into fundraising roles (Sullivan, 2001; Katsinas, 2005).

Thus, the challenges are great and community college presidents are finding that critical
support from senior leadership is paramount. These challenges include enhancing transparency,
increasing accountability, focusing on student retention and success, dealing with unions, forging
relationships within the community, fundraising, addressing safety concerns, embracing the use
of technology, assisting with workforce and economic development initiatives, and attracting a
talented pool of faculty and staff. Thus, the role of the 21st century community college
president can be described as that of a change agent. However, they cannot accomplish this alone. A senior
management team that is aligned with and reflective of the president’s style is vital to the success
of the organization. This team must fully understand and embrace the vision and goals of the
president who, in turn, relies on these leaders to implement challenging and dynamic initiatives
that ensure success.

Community College Leadership Crisis

The tireless work of the pioneering presidents who created, nurtured and expanded
community colleges since the 1960s is well documented. These presidents performed admirably
amidst an environment of evolving factors including political challenges, social changes,
technological revolutions, and economic uncertainties. They met these challenges through hard
work, diligent planning and fearless execution of initiatives that have placed community colleges
at the forefront of higher education.
In the 21st century, concerns over declining funding, changing student demographics, lack of preparedness for postsecondary studies, accelerating staff and faculty retirements, and intensifying institutional accountability to legislative and governing bodies are some of the challenges facing current community college presidents (Harbour, 2003). These challenges are daunting, causing some leaders to ponder if the community college presidency is worth pursuing. "In issue after issue of the Chronicle of Higher Education, we read of another troubled presidency, another leader worn down or driven out, in distress or under fire" (Hahn, 1995, p. 1).

Likewise, Fisher and Koch (1996) state:

> . . . it is generally agreed today that the college presidency, once the situs of many such powerful, effective, and inspirational leaders, has decayed and all too frequently now is a refuge for ambivalent, risk-averting individuals who seek to offend no one, and as a consequence arouse and motivate no one (p. viii).

Many articles over the last 10 years have been written regarding the leadership crisis in community colleges (Duree, 2007; Weismann & Vaughn, 2007; Shultz, 2001). In 2001, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) released a leadership survey confirming that the impending retirements of community college administrators pose a grave concern for the future of two-year institutions in the United States. According to the survey, the average age of community college presidents in 2001 was 56 years old, with 79% reporting their intent to retire within the next 10 years (Weisman & Vaughan, 2007). To this end, the AACC has declared community college leadership a national crisis. Another study published in 2001 by AACC indicated that nearly half of the community college presidents planned to retire by 2007 (Shultz, 2001). More recently, Chris Duree (2007) at Iowa State University led a large national study representing 38.2% of the community college presidents. This study found over three quarters of community college presidents surveyed, plan to retire by 2012. All of these studies substantiate the looming community college presidency shortage.
Because of the shortage of qualified replacements, vacant community college president positions are often filled by either presidents serving at other community colleges, or those holding chief academic officer (CAO) positions. Duree (2007) and his research colleagues found that the average age of CAOs is about the same as presidents, thus individuals in these key leadership positions are likely to retire at the same rate. These two pools of potential applicants for vacant community college presidencies, are shrinking at an alarming rate. As a result, community colleges are having an increasingly difficult time finding well-qualified candidates to fill executive leadership positions. In some cases, the vacancies are filled by those who have little or no experience in postsecondary education, such as business leaders, politicians, and in some cases high ranking military personnel. This creates a myriad of challenges when these “outsiders” with limited or no community college leadership experience introduce complex business practices and other policies that are threatening to those who have worked in community colleges for many years. These changes bring about angst that the stewardship of the institution may compromise long held beliefs common in academia such as academic rigor and faculty academic freedom in the classroom.

There is no question that the pressure of the position, the extraordinary amount of hours required, and the expectations by all constituents, combined with the fact that many presidents are nearing retirement age, are exacerbating the exodus. However, in many cases, sitting presidents do not have the inclination to either retire or take leave from the community college system. Presidents frequently resign from their current positions to pursue greater challenges at larger institutions or those facing great challenges. This transitional trend among community college presidents is commonly referred to as swirling (Heiberger & Vick, 2001). The prevalence of this swirling phenomenon of experienced presidents accepting a presidency at another
community college is common. The experienced community college president is frequently welcomed by boards of trustees who depend on these individuals to lead the institution, particularly when a new vision or other changes are needed.

The literature confirms that managing change is a critical aspect of the 21st century community college presidency (Nevarez & Wood, 2010; Eddy, 2009; Ottenritter, 2004, Weisman and Vaughn, 2007). These presidents are expected to lead organizations that are nimble and responsive to the needs of stakeholders. Often acting as catalysts, community college presidents begin change processes by reengineering senior administration to meet the challenges, overcome institutional inertia, and revitalize their institutions (Rousche, Baker & Rose, 1989). Senior administrators serve as advisors to the president and lead major units within the organization. Reengineering senior administration most often occurs when the community college president is first appointed to the position. This study explores how these changes are undertaken and if they are successful. It also investigates if community college presidents, who served previously in this role at other institutions, rely on their past experiences to formulate current structures. Insights gleaned from the study will assist future community college presidents as they attempt similar reengineering processes at their institutions.

**Evolutionary and Revolutionary Change**

Change in community colleges is initiated to enhance the achievement of a vision, strategic goals, or to improve quality. Institutional change succeeds when leaders frame goals, visions, or needed improvements and then guide the development and implementation activities that ensure successful results. Effective college presidents understand this. They rely on the skills and talents of individuals in senior administration to facilitate and direct these change efforts. The best community college leaders, according to Cohen and Brawer (2008), are those who
consider the administrative team to be involved in a process of continuous quality improvement. The concept of continuous quality improvement undoubtedly serves as the cornerstone for organizational change, be it *evolutionary* change experienced through total quality management or *revolutionary* change created by reengineering. A review of the constructs and characteristics these two change concepts provides a fuller understanding of how each might be used as the framework for the restructuring of senior administration by community college presidents.

The definition of change is contextual and therefore is dependent on the perspective of the person initiating the change and those affected both directly and indirectly. A common thread among these differing interpretations is that change is characterized by movement. According to research conducted by Huber and Glick (1993), organizational change most often involves:

(a) resetting or restructuring functions by shifting individuals to new or revised roles; and
(b) modifying the allocation of resources.

Most organizational change experts assert that change should be embraced as an ongoing activity in today’s fast-paced and dynamic environment (Burke, 2010; Senior & Swailes, 2010; Johnson & Johnson, 2008; Jones, 2007). Effective leaders recognize the constancy of change and challenge individuals within their organizations to respond and adapt accordingly to environmental factors that can impact the success, growth, and missions of their organizations. Much like the human life cycle, this responsive reshaping and adaptation is needed throughout the life cycle of any organization, and as it transitions through various stages to maturity. Upon reflection, an organization’s life cycle provides benchmarks as to its development and growth, and often defines where it may be heading. According to Klepper (1997), organizations go through four stages, with reciprocal changes evident within each phase. The time spent within
each phase varies; some organizations will linger within a phase while others quickly transition through each. These basic four phases as suggested by Klepper (1997), are as follows:

*Phase 1: Formative Period* - During this initial phase, the new organization is crafting its purpose and vision. Creativity and discovery are vital at this stage. The organization must remain nimble as it seeks to establish its presence and purpose.

*Phase 2: Rapid Growth Period* - Direction and coordination are added and incorporated into the organization to sustain its growth and solidify gains. Change is needed to effectively manage growth.

*Phase 3: Mature Period* - At this point, the growth curve flattens and the organization seeks to find new areas for future growth. Change is necessary to maintain the current state, facilitate new growth, and avoid the possibility of decline.

*Phase 4: Declining Period* - A period of decline prompts substantive changes such as organizational down-sizing and restructuring, or eliminating services. These types of changes relegate the organization back into the first stage as it seeks to recreate itself by establishing a new vision or purpose.

Figure 1 depicts the cyclical nature of these phases. Regardless of the phase, it is important to recognize that change is constant, irregular, and unavoidable if the organization wants to remain viable.
Like all organizations, community colleges ebb and flow through these phases. Continuous measured change to maintain continuous quality ensures community colleges remain relevant to the constituents they serve. The type of change that is initiated by college presidents and their senior administrative teams depends on the challenges that are prompting a sense of urgency and the need for readjustments. To illustrate the dichotomy of change, it can be described as residing on a continuum. The intensity of change rests on two diametrically opposite sides of this continuum; on one end is incremental evolutionary-type change and at the other episodic revolutionary change. The continuum of change represented by the dichotomous concepts of evolutionary/first-order and revolutionary/second-order change is represented in Figure 2.

*Figure 1: Klepper’s Cyclical Nature of Organizations*
Evolutionary change is ongoing and typically involves modifications to business and operational practices which lead to greater efficiencies. It is commonly thought of as continuous process improvement (Orlikowski, 1996; Nadler, 1995). Examples of evolutionary changes include purchase of new technologies and software, modifying policies, and restructuring systems to improve the ease of student registration. Essentially, the organization elects to do things differently, but these modifications are not deemed radical.

Revolutionary change, on the other hand, is considered episodic and occurs when a new operating environment emerges (Dunphy, 1996). In this case, the organization is not modifying common practices, but rather creating new services or programs which require new strategies, structures, and possibly a culture-shift within the organization. As a new community college president is appointed, they often bring with them a strategic agenda, as well as their unique style for addressing administrative and leadership issues. It is not uncommon that newly appointed presidents find modifications to organizational structures and new appointments to senior administrative positions necessary in order to achieve this agenda.

This change dichotomy has been studied by noted organizational change experts and authors Amir Levy and Uri Merry, professors at the University of California. Rather than referring to evolutionary and revolutionary change, Levy and Merry (1986) offer a different
nomenclature for the similar intent: first-order and second-order change. Their research, which included interviews with 21 organizational change scientists, was the first comprehensive analysis of change transformations, from both practical and theoretical perspectives. As a result, Levy and Merry (1986) define and categorize intervention strategies and found that much like evolutionary change, first-order change involves modifications to functional processes such as communication systems, recognition and reward programs, and decision making processes. These changes are facilitated within the existing mission and culture of the institution. Conversely, second-order changes involve major transformational shifts to the mission, purpose, and culture of the organization, and are considered revolutionary.

Interestingly, the concepts of evolutionary and revolutionary change align with two current and widely used organizational improvement models, total quality management (TQM) and business process reengineering (BPR). TQM embraces the concepts related to continuous quality improvement and correlates to slow moving and more gradual evolutionary change. In contrast, BPR, like revolutionary change, focuses on episodic and intense change that forces an organization to reinvent itself by reestablishing its mission, vision, purpose, and even culture. To garner a more in depth understanding of these concepts and their influence on the constructs of change, in depth reviews of TQM and BPR are included, as is a comparison of their applicability.

**Total Quality Management**

Known as the father of TQM, W. Edwards Deming, a well-known American statistician, identified continuous improvement methods as a means of enhancing customer satisfaction (Walton, 1986). Much of Deming’s work occurred in Japan, after World War II centering on the quality and systemic improvement of Japanese manufacturing. At that time, Japanese products
had earned a reputation for being poorly engineered and manufactured. One of Deming’s key tasks was to address these deficiencies. Many of the constructs Deming embedded in TQM were based on Fredrick Taylor’s 1911 scientific management philosophy which was grounded in determinism. “Determinism promoted a philosophy that the future of people, things, and systems was controlled, or determined entirely by history, ruling out novel and unpredictable events” (Delavigne & Robertson, 1994, p.13). Thus, managers pursued efficiencies by focusing on internal factors such as setting quotas and offering incentives that inspired greater production and efficiencies. However, Deming’s contribution to modern management philosophy was a departure from Taylor’s scientific method. He proposed examining variations in the quality of outputs from both internal and external perspectives. This was accomplished by assessing not only common causes that were threaded throughout the production environment but also special causes occurring outside of operational processes. Illustrating this dual perspective, Deming believed that:

. . . . a system must be managed. . . . The performance of any component within a system is to be judged in terms of its contribution to the system, not for its individual production. . . . Optimization of a system should be the basis of negotiation between two people, between divisions, and between customer and supplier” (Scherkenbach, 1991, p. ix).

Deming’s lasting legacy is embodied in the 14 points he crafted for establishing continuous improvement, increasing efficiencies, and enhancing productivity throughout an organization (Deming, 1988). These points are summarized in Table 3. Deming focused not only on the internal forces and constraints as previous management researchers had done, but also on the external forces facing organizations (Walton, 1986).
Table 3. Deming’s 14 Points for Quality Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Create and communicate a long-term vision or purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Adopt the new vision or purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Build quality into all processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Improve quality based on long-term relationships, loyalty and trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Strive for continuous improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Provide professional development opportunities that reinforce quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rely on strong leadership to improve all job functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Eliminate fear, create trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Reduce departmental conflicts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Rely on sound systems and positive morale to improve quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Focus on effective management rather than measures to improve quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Allow individuals the opportunity to take pride in their work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Encourage all to seek self-improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>All employees are responsible for quality, particularly top management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TQM is germane for organizations such as community colleges as they address both internal and external challenges. Internally, balanced budgets, labor contracts, sound governance systems, updated infrastructures, and employee morale are some of the salient issues that require ongoing attention. Externally, demands for transparency, changing student demographics, political and regulatory mandates, economic uncertainties, and technological enhancements
have prompted the need for community colleges to regularly scan the environment and respond accordingly.

The successful implementation of TQM rests firmly with employees who are engaged and passionate about their work. Deming (1988) stressed that continuous improvement relies on the talents of all employees who are expected to work collaboratively. He believed that an organization must harness the “power” of every employee and in order to do so, it may be necessary to radically overhaul management structures to break down barriers and silos.

Robert L. Flood, an internationally recognized authority on organizational change, continued Deming’s research in organizational improvement. He has authored nine books including *Beyond TQM*, which was nominated for the 1993 MCA Best Management Book of the Year. His research revealed that organizations decisively involved in TQM act as interactive networks of communication and control, and these networks have a direct impact on quality. Thus, the absence of effective communication and control, mainly attributable to sound management, can adversely impact an organization. Harvey and Brown (1996) assert that communication between departments may be deficient causing them to compete with one another instead of working together for the greater good of the organization. As a result, inefficiencies and lower quality may transpire and necessitate a change in organizational structure to mitigate these issues.

Community college presidents rely on senior management to oversee all of the organizational departments and lead critical functions. When a new president is appointed, they may determine that the current senior administrative personnel and/or structure are ineffective or unable to advance their intent, and changes are necessary. Making sure the right people are in the
right place, in the right job, and at the right time, is critical in accomplishing their vision for the college.

**Business Process Reengineering**

BPR represents a more episodic, radical, and thus often turbulent form of organizational change. This change process became popular in the 1990s and is also based on Deming’s initial post-WWII research. Initial champions of the BPR movement, Michael Hammer and James Champy, promoted the idea that radical redesign and reorganization may be necessary for a business to increase quality and lower costs. As a former professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Hammer used his training as an engineer to focus on the operational aspects of businesses. He partnered with James Champy in the early 1990s to establish CSC Index, a multi-million dollar organizational consulting firm, to study the ever-changing nature of organizations. Their book, *Reengineering the Corporation, A Manifesto for Business Revolution* (1993), has been cited as one of the most influential books of the 1990s. Their research was a comprehensive case study of four notable companies, Hallmark, Bell Atlantic, Capital Holding, and Taco Bell. Hammer and Champy (1993) discovered that traditional methods of designing workflow based on assumptions about technology, people, and organizational goals, were no longer valid. As a result, they developed seven principles businesses can use to streamline processes, improve quality, save time, and lower costs. These principles are:

1. Organizing around outcomes, not tasks.
2. Identifying all the processes in an organization and prioritize them in order of redesign urgency.
3. Integrating information processing work into the real work that produces the information.
4. Treating geographically dispersed resources as though they were centralized.

5. Linking parallel activities in the workflow instead of just integrating their results.

6. Putting the decision point where the work is performed, and build control into the process.

7. Capturing information once and at the source.

These guiding principles provide insight into what needs to be changed to enhance effectiveness or improve profitability. In order to facilitate the change processes effectively, BPR also delineates a four-step continuous process for change, which includes: (a) identifying processes; (b) reviewing and analyzing those processes; (c) designing modifications for improvement; and (d) testing and implementing the new process. Figure 3 depicts the Hammer and Champy (1993) cyclical and ongoing movement of this four-step BPR change process.
Increased emphasis on profitability sparked organizations to employ BPR which in many cases pointed to the need for enhanced technologies and less staff. Thus, the popularity of BPR began to wane by the mid-1990s as it earned a reputation for being a justifiable method for downsizing organizations. Champions of BPR disagreed. According to Hammer (2005) lack of sustained management commitment and leadership, unrealistic scope and expectations, and resistance to change prompted management to abandon the concept of BPR and embrace new methodologies. As a result, the seven BPR principles have been repurposed into concepts focusing on streamlining operations, commonly referred to as “lean” initiatives. In contrast to downsizing, these principles are now focused on “right-sizing” operations as a means of improving profitability and enhancing quality.
Comparing TQM and BPR

When comparing TQM and BPR the differences appear to be more substantive than their similarities. The most prominent difference is the type of organizational change that is desired. TQM is commonly associated with incremental change, whereas BPR involves radical, ground-breaking change which often requires complementary cultural or organizational paradigm shifts. Time orientation also differs. TQM is viewed as a continuous process that strives towards an ideal such as complete customer satisfaction. In contrast, BPR is often viewed as a series of episodic events that occur when major change is needed. TQM is concerned with the needs, feelings, and perspectives of individuals within the organization which is viewed as critical to achieving organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Most often, BPR practices are firmly focused on what is best for the organization which may be at odds with employee needs and feelings. Thus, BPR is viewed as “unfriendly” to employees, which makes these types of changes more difficult. Finally, key drivers prompting change differ. TQM is often employed when market share is lost to the organization. BPR is most commonly used when there is intense pressure to cut costs and gain a competitive advantage.

Despite these notable differences, there are several overarching similarities. Most notably, both processes support the implementation of planned change that focus on improved quality. Both methods are also customer-centric, as they focus on improvements that bring greater perceived value or satisfaction to customers.

These differences and similarities align with those noted for evolutionary and revolutionary change. The ongoing nature of TQM is characteristic of the evolutionary change process whereas the episodic nature of BPR parallels evolutionary change. Table 4 summarizes
the similarities and differences between evolutionary change and TQM, and revolutionary change and BPR.

Table 4. Comparing Types of Organizational Change Processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Evolutionary Change</th>
<th>TQM</th>
<th>Revolutionary Change</th>
<th>BPR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Ongoing modifications</td>
<td>Focuses on continuously improving processes that lead to enhanced customer satisfaction</td>
<td>Episodic modifications</td>
<td>Radical rethinking of current processes and systems creating substantive change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Change</td>
<td>Planned incremental</td>
<td>Planned, continuous</td>
<td>Planned substantive</td>
<td>Planned, ground-breaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>Modify functional processes</td>
<td>Meeting and exceeding customer expectations</td>
<td>Major shifts in the mission or purpose of the organization</td>
<td>Redefine processes that create improvement and increase customer satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Trigger</td>
<td>Quality concerns</td>
<td>Loss of market share due to poor quality</td>
<td>Profitability challenges</td>
<td>Intense pressure from competition and need to cut costs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly, some researchers believe that the contrast between continuous and episodic change reflects differences in the perspective of the individuals affected by the change, rather than differences in the magnitude of the change (Dunphy, 1996; Conner & Lake, 1999; Nadler, 1998). This appears to be a logical assumption. The perception of the magnitude of change and threat it presents is individually constructed and can be viewed with skepticism and great resistance. Change then often fails because individuals impacted do not agree with and thus do not support the change agenda.
When viewed from a macro-level, most change appears as a repetitive continuous action, much like TQM, with occasional episodes of revolutionary change, such as that experienced in BPR. The view from a micro-level suggests ongoing adaptation and adjustment become common and expected by individuals within the organization, even if revolutionary modifications are integrated into the change agenda. Thus, as modifications become frequent and continuous, they are viewed as the norm and become ingrained within the culture of the organization, even if the change involves substantive restructuring.

In spite of the differences between continuous evolutionary change and episodic revolutionary change, experts agree that any organizational transition should be planned and orderly rather than sudden and drastic (Dunphy & Stace, 1988; Weick & Quinn, 1999; Cummings & Worley, 2009). The issues prompting the need for change illuminate the type of change that is needed. Therefore, time and effort must be dedicated to investigating and evaluating the issues before change is initiated.

Most often, organizational inertia is cited as the key trigger that prompts change. Weick and Quinn (1999) profoundly state “to understand organizational change one must first understand organizational inertia, its content, its tenacity, its interdependencies" (p. 382). Leaders must continuously scan their environments, seeking instances of inertia that prevent their organizations from moving forward. To break this inertia, changes that influence individual behavior, organizational processes, strategic directions, or organizational design are needed (Conner & Lake, 1988; Weick & Quinn, 1999). Thus, it is conceivable that a combination of both change methodologies may be used to address challenges and inertia.

As seasoned presidents assume their new positions at community colleges, reengineering of senior management is so common that it is almost expected. Initiating change mindfully and
systematically diminishes the chances for disruption and feelings of alienation and resistance. The question then becomes: Are these changes considered systemic TQM (evolutionary) or radical BPR (revolutionary)? The answer can be addressed by focusing on two significant realms: (a) the scope of the change; and (b) the perspective of those impacted.

In terms of the scope of the change, if the organization is operating effectively and efficiently, the new president may elect to adopt a more subtle TQM change process. Substantive and threatening challenges such as gross inefficiencies, enrollment declines, accreditation issues, or lack of fiscal oversight, as well as directives from the board of trustees, may prompt the more radical BPR process as a means for change. In terms of perception, as change begins, it directly impacts the individuals involved, and thus may be perceived, regardless of scope and intensity, as revolutionary. Eventually, the change affects the overall operations of the community college and as time passes, the expectation of change may become the norm which creates a rather stable evolutionary climate within the institution.

Rather than attempting to define organizational change as revolutionary or evolutionary, it is more important for administrators to recognize that change is inevitable in today’s environment and that change at the senior administrative level needs to be thoughtfully planned and carefully assessed to determine if additional adjustments are needed. Ongoing, systemic change allows an organization to respond to internal and external factors that could adversely affect its viability and success. Therefore, senior administrators expecting to effectively work with newly appointed presidents, must themselves adapt to any changes made in order to maintain their positions.
The Change Process

Change is inevitable, unstoppable, and even unavoidable. From a personal perspective, change either happens to you, or you impose it on someone or something. Though simple, this example of the “two sides of the same change equation” illustrates the simple reality that change affects people regardless of which side of the change equation they find themselves. Change, regardless of the size or intensity, creates both intended and unintended consequences, much like the law of action-reaction found in physics. Even planned change invokes manifestations of this simple change equation. The literature confirms that change is one of the most multifaceted and complex initiatives undertaken by leaders (Jones, 2007; Tushman & O’Reilly, 2002; Christensen & Overdorff, 2000). This is true for community colleges, where not only must newly appointed presidents guide change large in scope relative to the institution as a whole, but they must also initiate smaller changes pertinent only to the intimate group of their immediate reports.

Presidents are hired by boards of trustees with the expectation to work with the board to set the overall strategic vision, and then take the lead to move the institution forward. Cohen and Brawer (2008) concur and believe mobilizing followers toward a common vision and mission is the objective of successful presidents. The most common approach to facilitate these complex tasks are by transforming the college’s organizational structures. Administrative organizational structures, particularly at the senior-most level, are frequently reengineered by newly appointed presidents to ensure their vision is attained, the mission is maintained, and the institution thrives. Understandably, the introduction of a different organizational reporting structure may seem confusing or in conflict with previous administrative structures causing angst among administrators, staff, and faculty.
Kotter’s Eight-Step Change Process

Regardless of the change method utilized, disruptions to operations are minimized when change processes are carefully planned and executed. Harvard University professor John P. Kotter (1996), an internationally recognized expert on leadership and change, has studied hundreds of organizations that have undergone change processes. His book, *Leading Change*, is regarded as a seminal work on the topic of change. About organizations undergoing change, Kotter (1996) writes:

Their efforts have gone under many banners: total quality management, reengineering, right-sizing, restructuring, cultural change, and turnaround. . . . A few of these corporate change efforts have been very successful. A few have been utter failures. Most fall somewhere in between, with a distinct tilt toward the lower end of the scale. The lessons that can be drawn are interesting and will probably be relevant to even more organizations. . . .(p. 6).

There is no doubt that change or even the prospect of change sparks apprehension and adversely impacts the efficiency and productivity of all involved. By examining companies that successfully implemented change, Kotter (1996) believes the negative aspects of change are preventable and that change can be successfully instituted if two basic elements are present: (a) utilization of a multi-step process that creates power and motivation sufficient to overwhelm all sources of inertia; and (b) leadership that is considered not just excellent but exceptional.

Kotter’s research in 1996 of 100 companies undergoing change revealed that fewer than 15 successfully implemented change. The change efforts Kotter analyzed were referred to by various designations and in multiple contexts including: total quality management, reengineering, right-sizing, and restructuring. Although the labels differed, the reason for implementing change was surprising similar: fundamental changes were essential to address challenging environments that were adversely impacting the organization’s success.
The research also revealed distinct similarities among the 15 companies that successfully implemented change. Their successful change went through eight critical steps. These eight steps grew into the foundation of Kotter’s research on effective change processes. In analyzing data from the remaining 85 companies, Kotter found that skipping steps in an effort to speed-up the process could adversely impact the change agenda. In addition, it was discovered that critical mistakes in any of the phases would impede change momentum. In order to fully understand the importance of each step outlined by Kotter (1996), detailed definitions are offered below, as well as their connections to senior administrative changes within a community college.

**Step 1: Establish a sense of urgency.** It is important to articulate a powerful rationale and business case that justifies the need for change. Over half of the companies, Kotter (1996) observed, were not able to create enough urgency to prompt action. He explains this challenge, “Without motivation, people won’t help and the effort goes nowhere. . . .Executives underestimate how hard it can be to drive people out of their comfort zones” (p. 21). In instances where companies have been successful, leaders facilitate a frank discussion of the challenges facing the organization. The use of outside experts to validate the current situation from a different perspective brings objectivity to the process. However, the question often becomes: How high must the urgency be to take appropriate action? From Kotter’s (1996) research, the tipping point occurs when 75% of the leadership team within the organization agrees that current business practices are no longer acceptable to meet today’s challenges.

A sense of urgency often precipitates a presidential change at community colleges. In these cases, boards of trustees are charged with hiring a new president so that the trajectory of the institution can be changed. The triggers for the change are as varied as the institutions but often surround such issues as fiscal weaknesses, deteriorating infrastructures, high administrator
and staff turnover, and accreditation challenges. Therefore, the sense of urgency is often identified even before the president takes office. Presidents build on this sense of urgency as they develop a plan of action to restructure senior administration.

**Step 2: Form a powerful guiding coalition.** Although the suggestion that 75% of the organization’s leadership should agree that change is needed, change efforts begin with only one or two individuals. The urgency for change then grows continuously to include additional believers who concur that meaningful change will help the organization move forward. Thus, the second step specifies the critical need to gather an adequate number of believers who form the initial core of the change initiative. This group should be highly regarded within the organization, hold notable roles, and have the skills and relationships that build credibility into the process. Regardless of the size of the organization, this core group or guiding coalition, should consist of three to five individuals who champion and lead the effort. This group then reaches out and brings others on board. Building this coalition is crucial in creating the sense of urgency and spreading that sense throughout the organization.

Senior management most often represents the guiding change coalition in community colleges. Although this group carries different titles such as President’s Cabinet, Executive Council, Senior Administrative Team, or Senior Leadership Committee, the membership provides oversight of all functional areas in the college. The newly hired president immediately begins to assess the effectiveness of this group.

**Step 3: Create a vision.** As defined by Kotter (1996), a vision provides a picture of the future and clarifies the direction in which the organization needs to move. The vision functions in four critical ways for any organization: (a) sparking motivation; (b) aligning processes and
projects; (c) providing a filter to evaluate how the organization is doing; and (d) establishing a rationale for the changes the organization will undergo.

Creating a vision is just as critical to community colleges as it is in companies and other organizations. The vision created by the newly appointed community college president should be crafted so that it garners widespread appeal from various stakeholders. The vision must be realistic and credible while supporting prompt action. Thus, it is critical to include the rationale behind the senior administrative restructuring, as the new vision unfolds. The vision then serves as a means of convincing the college that these changes are germane to the continued success of the institution.

**Step 4: Communicate the vision.** Once the vision has been formulated, it must be clearly articulated. Kotter (1996) succinctly states, “A useful rule of thumb: if you can’t communicate the vision to someone in five minutes or less and get a reaction that signifies both understanding and interest, you are not yet done with this phase of the transformation process” (p. 30). Interestingly, Kotter suggests estimating how much communication of the vision is needed, and then multiplying that effort by a factor of ten.

The president must take the time to carefully and intentionally craft a communications plan. Communication efforts should not be limited to one meeting, a presidential address, or a few memos and communiqués. Rather, the message justifying the subsequent need for restructuring to meet the vision must be regularly embedded within all communications while the institution is undergoing change. Deeds (actions), as well as words, can be powerfully effective in communicating the new vision. The president’s transformation of the senior administrative team will fail unless the majority of stakeholders understand, appreciate, and commit to the vision.
Step 5: Empower others to act on the vision. Successful transformations involve large numbers of individuals as the change process progresses. These stakeholders should be allowed to make changes in their respective areas in support of the vision. These changes may include: (a) the reallocation of resources, including dollars, time, and equipment; (b) modifying work processes; and (c) reassigning human capital to align more effectively with the vision. Kotter (1996) explains that empowering individuals to take action involves removing barriers and obstacles that can impede progress. Examples of obstacles include arbitrary rules, inconsistent compensation structures, and ineffective performance appraisal systems.

Becoming familiar with possible obstacles is imperative. Once identified, these obstacles should be removed. If all obstacles cannot be eliminated, they need to be prioritized and the largest most significant ones should be mitigated. As newly appointed community college presidents disseminate the change agenda throughout the organization, they need to garner support from as many individuals as possible, including support from internal and external stakeholders. In some cases, obstacles may include individuals who do not support the new vision which prompts the need to change the organizational structure.

Step 6: Plan for and create short-term wins. Real transformation takes time and this step addresses a factor that is common in human nature. Most individuals find it difficult to sustain long-term efforts unless they see compelling evidence that their efforts are meaningful and make a difference. In successful transformations, opportunities are created for celebrating short-term gains which helps strengthen momentum and commitment to the effort. Opportunities to celebrate progress also create occasions to reflect on the effectiveness of the change and make modifications as needed. Kotter (1996) specifically explains, “When it becomes clear to people that major change will take a long time, urgency levels can drop. Commitments to produce short-
term wins help keep the urgency level up and force detailed analytical thinking that can clarify or revise visions” (p. 40).

During the reorganization of the senior leadership team, presidents must plan and initiate these celebrations which can include highlighting successes prompted by the new structure. These may include improved financial standing, reaffirmation by an accrediting body, successful application and receipt of a grant, and implementation of a major computer information system. These celebrations help to solidify the benefits of the new senior administrative structure in a very visible way, visible to both the group and the entire organization.

**Step 7: Consolidate improvements and sustain the momentum for change.** This step ensures that change efforts are not prematurely viewed as successful. As Kotter (1996) warns, “Do not declare victory too soon” (p. 43). New approaches can be fragile and vulnerable and subject to regression. Premature declaration of victory can impede momentum and allow the organization to regress back into traditional processes. Rather, leaders who have initiated successful change leverage the feelings of success to delve more deeply into the organization to explore other possible changes or fine-tune the change that has occurred. These leaders also have a profound understanding and belief that change efforts will take years rather than weeks or months.

Implicit in this step is the need for the president to engage systematically and frequently in ongoing assessment of the instituted senior leadership change initiatives. Nothing is written in stone, and for newly appointed community college presidents this means critically assessing the new senior leadership structure and having the confidence to admit mistakes were made and that additional changes or readjustments are required. Although this may be difficult to do, failing
to assess the effectiveness of the organizational structure may be detrimental to achieving the vision.

**Step 8: Institutionalize the new approaches.** Change becomes embedded within an organization when it is viewed as normal or “the way we do things around here.” Thus, it becomes ingrained in culture of the organization. Kotter (1996) articulates, “Until new behaviors are rooted in social norms and shared values, they are subject to degradations as soon as the pressure for change is removed” (p. 50). Kotter also believes that two factors are important for institutionalizing new methods: (a) there must be a conscious and deliberate effort to illustrate how the changes have improved the organization; and (b) key stakeholders must believe in and embody the changes.

Embedding change within an organization is the final step within the change process. For newly appointed community college presidents, this involves solidifying a senior management structure and placing appropriate individuals into these key roles. Reaffirming the soundness of the new structure in a deliberate fashion that builds support is important; however, these new presidents must first ensure that the changes are effective. If not, they must be willing readjust, as necessary.

**Contemporary Change Model Influences Community College Change**

Kotter’s (1996) work depicts successful change strategies and has been used as a blueprint, arming change leaders with an eight-step plan of action. However, in his second book *The Heart of Change*, written in 2002, Kotter and coauthor Dan Cohen, a principal with Deloitte Consulting who developed the firm’s Global Change Leadership Methodology, acknowledge that a plethora of questions were left unanswered from his first study. To address these questions, Kotter and Cohen, working with a team of experts from Deloitte Consulting, interviewed over
200 individuals who lead wide-spread organizational changes. Interviewees were asked to define common challenges that are experienced at each step of the change process. The main finding of this study was the need to incorporate a more deliberate focus on the human element by taking into account the feelings of those affected by the change. Kotter and Cohen (2002) explain the main finding of this research:

. . . the central issue is never strategy, structure, culture, or systems. All those elements, and others, are important. But the core of the matter is always about changing the behavior of people. . . .mostly by speaking to people's feelings. . . .In highly successful change efforts, people find ways to help others see the problems or solutions in ways that influence their emotions. . . .(p. x).

Kotter and Cohen (2002) also discovered that successful change leaders are highly skilled at communicating the need for change in very concrete terms and in doing so make their points emotionally engaging and compelling. This builds not mere believers, but champions who fully embrace the change initiative. People do not change their actions and beliefs because they are given data or statistics, but rather they are shown, through tangible means, a truth that influences their feelings. Thus, the core message of their book is that successful change leaders use a “see, feel, change” approach.

These three elements provide an additional humanistic dynamic to Kotter’s original eight-step process. This more humanistic and thoughtful approach to change is important to community colleges as they may be steeped in tradition and ingrained within their cultures. Examples of the humanistic approach are illustrated as follows:

- To See – First, people must be able to visualize or “see” the problem, or solution to the problem, in a way that enables a helpful change in behavior. People must be shown the issue at hand in very concrete terms. This, in turn, builds emotions and helps people engage in the desired change willingly.
• To Feel – Second, these feelings created through the visualization process should not include anger, panic or cynicism, but rather passion, faith, and trust. This assists in building momentum for the desired state by all who are involved in fostering the change.

• To Change – Finally, visualization and feelings transform behavior which becomes embedded within the culture of the organization. This creates a blueprint for future changes that may be needed throughout the college.

The importance of acknowledging feelings and other human characteristics throughout the change process is reinforced by other researchers of successful change. A 2010 book by bestselling authors Chip and Dan Heath, entitled *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard*, provides a more contemporary approach to identifying key factors that lead to successful change. Unlike Kotter who focused only on organizations that attempted change, the Heaths analyzed a broader depth of successful change initiatives including organizational turnarounds, social movements, and even personal transformations. The Heaths assembled research in psychology, sociology, and other disciplines in search of common threads that lead to successful changes. They also cite and incorporate the thinking and work conducted by notable relevant researchers, including Kotter.

The primary assertions made by the Heaths center on research conducted by University of Virginia psychology professor Jonathan Haidt (2006) who authored *The Happiness Hypothesis: Finding Truth in Ancient Wisdom*. Haidt contends that if change is to occur, individuals must apply both their emotional and rationale sides. He illustrates the need for both by providing the following analogy: the emotional side is much like an elephant and the rational side like a rider who is perched on top of the elephant. The rider holds the reins and seems to be the leader, but the rider can be overmatched by the large and sometimes unpredictable elephant (Haidt, 2006).
The Heaths add to the elements in Haidt’s analogy (the rational rider and the emotional elephant) by including a third element: The Path. Along with the rational rider seated upon the emotional elephant, the path depicts the destination. The Heaths (2010) claim, “You must have all three. To change behavior, you’ve got to direct the Rider, motivate the Elephant and Shape the Path” (p. 19). In essence, the Heaths assert that in directing the Rider, you must provide a clear direction or destiny. This includes a clear message or vision as to where you are going and why. To motivate the Elephant you must stimulate a need for change which keeps the momentum going. Finally, to shape the Path you must design an environment and process that make it possible and easier for the change to occur.

Utilizing these three change elements, the Heaths offer steps that provide further context. Figure 4 is a visual depiction of these concepts.

![Figure 4: Chip and Dan Heath’s Illustration of Three Change Elements](image)

While reviewing Haidt’s assertions on the elements of change, the Heaths studied successful change initiatives. As a result, they identified nine steps associated with the three elements of change that are commonly used in successful change initiatives. These steps and their relation to Haidt’s change elements are as follows:
Direct the Rider

- Find the bright spots – focus on success stories related to the change
- Script the critical moves – remove opportunities for paralysis to set in by making the steps manageable and clear
- Point to the destination – describe a compelling, aspirational goal that is understandable

Motivate the Elephant

- Find the feeling – make an emotional connection
- Shrink the change – break down the change into manageable sections
- Grow your people – create a new identity to which people can relate

Shape the Path

- Tweak the environment – make changes to surroundings and point people in the right direction
- Build habits – change habits so that new processes are ingrained and become permanent
- Rally the herd – cultivate group dynamics to build commitment for the change

This change process designed by the Heaths lends a more contemporary twist to the eight steps identified by Kotter (1996). Whereas Kotter’s focus is on substantive organizational transformation, the Heath’s articulate their steps in a manner that can be applicable to either personal or organizational change. In their book, they provide specific examples as to how these steps were used to achieve personal changes such as quitting smoking or losing weight, as well sweeping changes including a university researcher who ended the cycle of child abuse in a group of families, and an entrepreneur who turned his skeptical employees into customer service zealots and saved the company. Regardless of the focus, the steps elucidated by these researchers are strikingly similar. Table 5 compares the steps of the change process as identified by Kotter and the Heaths.
Table 5. Comparing Kotter’s and Heath & Heath’s Change Processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kotter’s Eight Steps</th>
<th>Heath &amp; Heath’s Nine Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish a sense of urgency</td>
<td>Find the bright spots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form a powerful guiding coalition</td>
<td>Script the critical moves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a vision for change</td>
<td>Point to the destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate the vision</td>
<td>Find the feeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empower others to act on the vision</td>
<td>Shrink the change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan for and create short-term wins</td>
<td>Grow your people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidate improvements and sustain the momentum for change</td>
<td>Tweak the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutionalize the new approaches</td>
<td>Build habits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rally the herd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kotter (1996) explains, “In reality, even successful change efforts are messy and full of surprises” (p. 60). Kotter explains further that mismanaging any of the eight steps can undermine an otherwise well-conceived vision. As the seminal work on the topic of change, Kotter’s eight steps were used to code data obtained from the study participants. The question as to the criticality of deploying all these steps will be explored in this study as it applies to reengineering senior management at community colleges. It is intended that the insights gleaned from this study will assist newly appointed presidents as they embark on reengineering their senior administration.

**Decision Making**

Community college presidents rely on a myriad of factors to assist them in formulating decisions. By design, this research focused on newly hired community college presidents, and
particularly those who had served previously in this role at other institutions. The intent was to ascertain what decision processes these community college presidents relied on to facilitate the restructuring of senior administration at their new institutions. An overarching assumption that was critical to this research is that these presidents formulate decisions that are in the best interest of the institutions they lead. This research does not attempt to measure the effectiveness of their decisions, but rather delineates the processes or tools used as decisions are made.

Decision making is fundamental to most daily activities, and community college presidents continually make decisions and choices that impact their institutions and influence stakeholders. The concept of decision making, its applicable theories, models, and processes, cognitive constructs, personal and group affects, as well as a neural-science perspective, have been explored and investigated through the lens of many disciplines.

In particular, decision making is an important area of research in the discipline of cognitive psychology. Researchers assert that understanding the process by which individuals make decisions may be more important than understanding the decisions themselves (Einhorn & Hogarth, 1981; Plott, 1986; Smith 1986). Experts in this field concur and have identified several factors that influence decision making. Those factors include past experiences, cognitive biases, age, individual differences, belief in personal relevance, and an intensification of commitment (Gigerenzer & Selten, 2001; Chu & Spires, 2003; Busemeyer & Townsend 1993). Two related decision making concepts, bounded rationality and heuristics, appear to align with the decision making protocols used by community college presidents.

**Bounded Rationality**

Decision making theories that may have been appropriate for this study were reviewed and analyzed for applicability. The ideal of administrative rationality was eliminated as it focuses
on the bureaucratic rituals of an organization rather than interpretations and reasoning individuals rely on as they make decisions. Probabilistic models such as utility and game theory do not accurately capture the social reality of situations commonly faced by community college presidents to allow them to make informed decisions, thus they were not appropriate for this study. Rather, the concept of bounded rationality is found to provide a framework that allows for the imperfect process and limited information that are common as presidents undertake daily decision making. The intent of this study is not to validate the concept of bounded rationality but rather to utilize the concept as a tool to explore complex decision making processes.

For over a century, experts in the fields of economics and psychology have battled over assumptions about decision making behavior. From their unique disciplinary perspectives, conflicting assumptions have resulted in profound differences regarding theories of choice. Economists have investigated the theory of rational choice (RCT) which looks at deliberations between a number of potential rational actions that can be taken and predicts which course of action actually should be taken. As a result, complex models that predict economic conditions with near perfect accuracy have been developed.

However, understanding that most decisions are made with limited data, by people with emotions, uncertainty, and limitations, has prompted cognitive psychologist to take a more behaviorist approach in studying decision making. Nobel laureate Herbert Simon was a pioneer in advancing these ideals of “uncertainty and limitations” in decision making and setting them within the framework of bounded rationality. Simon (1990) describes decision making as a search process guided by aspiration levels which are goal levels that must be reached or surpassed. An example of an aspiration level is profit or market share for a leader of a business,
or budget attainment and enrollment for a community college president. The concept of bounded rationality assumes human rationality is presented with a series of limitations, including:

(a) time; (b) information; and (c) intellectual capacity (Simon, 1990).

The literature is clear that Simon was the first to identify the concept of bounded rationality. His seminal work on the subject *Administrative Behavior* published in 1947, connects the concepts of bounded and rationality. In doing so, Simon challenged the views of traditional economists who believed that decision making factors were transparent, well-defined, and driven to maximize profit or utility and that decisions were made after all probable alternatives had been carefully analyzed. He questioned these perceptions as he studied a continuum of limitations and uncertainties that affect decision making behavior. Simon asserts that rationality is bounded by limitations of time, information, and cognitive ability and believed:

The capacity of the human mind for formulating and solving complex problems is very small compared with the size of the problems whose solution is required for objectively rational behavior in the real world—or even for a reasonable approximation of such objective rationality (p. 198).

Simon’s vision of bounded rationality has two interlocking components: the limitations of the human mind, and the structure of the environments in which the mind operates. The first component of his vision is structured around the belief that decision making models should be built on what is actually known and proven about the mind’s capacity. Simon (1990) claims that because of the mind’s limitations, humans “must use approximate methods to handle most tasks” (p. 6). The second component of Simon’s view of bounded rationality, environmental structure, is crucial. This component explains when and why simple heuristics perform well. The term “heuristic” is of Greek origin, meaning to “find out or discover” and has been used to define cognitive processes for solving problems that cannot be attributed to logic or probability theory.
Thus, heuristics are mental shortcuts or “rules of thumb” in decision making that utilize self-educating techniques rather than rigorous cognitive abilities.

In order to understand when a person uses a heuristic to formulate a decision, and why the heuristic works well, one needs to consider the structure of the information in the environment. The phrase “ecological rationality” is commonly used when referring to the environmental structure in decision making. A heuristic is ecologically rational to the degree that it is adapted to the structure of the environment. Thus, people adapt their decision making behaviors according to changing environmental and computational constraints such as time, space, and tools (Simon, 1990). In addition, social factors exist within the ecological environment and include other people who are present in the environment when decisions are made (Wilson & Schooler, 1991; Gigerenzer & Murray, 1987). In essence, one of the most important aspects of the external environment is interactions with other people and their influence on the decision maker.

As Simon continued his work on the concept of bounded rationality, he focused his efforts on choice and how it influences a human’s ability to evaluate alternatives. In doing so, Simon introduced the concept of satisficing, a word that originated in Northumbria (a province in England that borders Scotland), meaning “to satisfy.” When satisficing, the decision maker ceases the search for alternatives when one is found that meets the aspiration-level criterion. Thus, satisficing results in setting an aspiration level and then ending the search for alternatives as soon as one alternative exceeds that level (Simon, 1956a, 1990).

The concept of satisficing decision making differs from the concepts of optimization or maximization where only one decision is deemed correct or optimal. Optimal decision making involves a dedicated approach that is unbounded by time. There needs to be a willingness to
commit whatever time is needed to formulate the correct decision which is reached after all possible alternatives are identified, reviewed, categorized, and analyzed. Evaluating all possible alternatives and committing unlimited time are not feasible in a real world context. Making decisions in this way simply cannot be done. Thus, satisficing is a way of formulating a decision with limitations of time and knowledge. It does not require that all data and information are available and analyzed before decisions are made. According to Simon (1990), most tasks are thus handled with approximate methods. These methods include a plethora of strategies including recall and recognition that limits the search for additional information. There is no doubt that community college presidents make decisions in this type of environment.

The concept of bounded rationality defines a naturalistic decision making environment where decisions are made in real-world situations that include constraints of time and information. This naturalistic methodology can be applied to all settings. It is used by everyone, regardless of gender, age, culture, nationality, and socioeconomic background. There are no limits to its applicability. Previous experiences, with similar situations, provide the framework for bounded rationality.

Other noted researchers have added to Simon’s work by further exploring decision making limitations. Anderson, Goeree and Holt (1998, 2001) provided further context by dividing bounded rationality into two opposing segments: static bounded rationality and dynamic bounded rationality. Static forms of bounded rationality somewhat mirror the rational choice form of decision making favored by economists. Static models represent an axiomatic approach to applying probability to choice. In contrast, dynamic models allow for the adjustments humans make when forming decisions in response to past experiences. In essence, past experiences inform future decisions even though other alternatives are available. This allows people to make
sound decisions despite their limitations or bounded resources of knowledge, time, or cognitive abilities.

Proponents of bounded rationality, include Leda Cosmides and John Tooby, directors at the Center for Evolutionary Psychology at the University of California in Santa Barbara. Cosmides and Tooby (1996) have focused their research on evolutionary psychology which seeks to understand the biological evolution of the human mind. They found that humans spend most of their time dealing with disorder or “clutter” in the external environment when formulating decisions. Filters are needed to carve through the clutter. Categorization, or seeking similarities of past experiences when engaged in decision making, is one such filter.

**Heuristics**

A modern seminal work on the topic of bounded rationality was authored by noted researchers and experts in the field of adaptive behavior and cognition Gerd Gigerenzer and Reinhard Selten in 2001. Titled *Bounded Rationality: The Adaptive Toolbox*, their book purports, as did Simon, that bounded rationality is the key to understanding how people make decisions in real-world contexts. Gigerenzer and Selten fashioned the concept of the “adaptive toolbox” which is a repertoire of fast and frugal rules used when making decisions under uncertain situations. Their work imposes additional order and coherence to the concept of bounded rationality as it identifies two common decision rules that are used and proven to work well on a range of problems. First, people are assumed to have access to a reference class of cues or features which are searched; this is referred to as the search rule. Second, the search ceases when the best discriminating feature is identified; this is referred to as the stopping rule. Although these simple steps for searching, stopping, and deciding appear trivial, Gigerenzer and Selten have demonstrated that “real people” use these rules effectively to make decisions.
Gigerenzer began this work with Peter Todd at the Center for Adaptive Behavior and Cognition (ABC) Research Group in 1999. They authored a book titled *Simple Heuristics That Make Us Smart* (1999). In the book, Gigerenzer et al. (1999) proposed that the adaptive toolbox contains a variety of special tools that are deployed for different tasks. Their idea is that the human mind has developed mechanisms or tools (heuristics) that are suited to particular tasks, such as selecting between alternatives, categorizing, estimating, or judging quality. Gigerenzer and Todd claim that just as a car technician uses a variety of tools such as wrenches and pliers to repair an engine, the human mind relies on unique tools to form judgments and make decisions.

When comparing simple heuristics to complex optimal decision making strategies, Gigerenzer and his colleagues discovered that heuristics were equally as effective and, in many cases, more effective than more traditional methods of decision making that relied on extensive unveiling and consideration of all possible alternatives (Gigerenzer & Selten, 2001). Thus, heuristics are efficient decision making strategies that fit within the current environment. They are considered psychological adaptations that have been proven to be as effective as optimal decision making strategies. Optimal strategies, in which all possible alternatives are analyzed, are not used in real-world contexts. The rhetorical question applicable to this situation becomes: How can someone such as the newly appointed college president, gather all possible information and data, and take all the time necessary to make a decision quickly? Many decisions are made within a short period of time, and simple rules deployed through heuristics build on highly complex adaptations including recognition and recall and are considered domain-specific cognitive activities.

This study seeks to identify how and in what ways seasoned community college presidents, now serving at another institution in the same position, make decisions to restructure
their new senior-level administrators. As these individuals are new to the institution, they obviously have limited data and information. Therefore, limited information search is utilized and simple stopping rules are employed when the context is familiar and reasonable solutions present themselves. When using heuristics, the search for alternatives or solutions ceases when a suitable option reveals itself. Limited search and simple stopping rules allow individuals to rely on past experiences to predict outcomes in a similar situation imbued with limited time, information, and knowledge.

**Chapter Summary**

This study attempts to discover how and in what ways seasoned community college presidents make decisions on how to restructure the senior administrative level at a new institution. The magnitude of the restructuring will determine if TQM- or BPR-type changes were initiated. TQM is associated with incremental, ongoing change, whereas BPR is utilized when episodic changes are necessary. The steps used to facilitate the changes will be gathered and analyzed to ascertain if the participants followed Kotter’s (1996) eight steps for effective change. Finally, the concepts of bounded rationality and heuristics will provide additional insights into how decisions were made.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

This chapter presents the design and criteria guiding the study. The research design provides a framework for establishing the soundness and rigor of the study by articulating, in a logical and systematic manner, the research methodology and processes used. The research purpose and driving questions serve as the impetus in the selection of the research design. The purpose of this study is to explore the triggers that prompt newly appointed community college presidents to restructure senior management, identify the steps taken in doing so, and determine how the effectiveness of the changes are assessed. Therefore, the qualitative paradigm, utilizing a case study methodology, was selected as most appropriate to explore this research purpose.

This chapter offers a description and rationale for the following: (a) selection of the qualitative paradigm and case study methodology; (b) site and participant selection protocol; (c) data collection processes and protocols; (d) data analysis procedures; (e) trustworthiness and validity related to this research; (f) limitations of this study; and (g) the researcher as the instrument.

The Qualitative Paradigm

The selection of an appropriate paradigm serves as a framework that defines the values and methods in which the research is conducted. The paradigm represents the worldview within which research is situated and fundamentally influences decisions regarding development of the research design. The purpose of this study is to explore how and in what ways newly appointed community college presidents restructure their senior administration. Since little is known about
this phenomenon, the compelling attributes found in the qualitative paradigm were seen as most appropriate to gain insights and an understanding from those involved in the study.

According to Creswell (2007), “a qualitative study is defined as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting” (p. 2). Merriam (2009) adds to this definition by expounding that qualitative research examines the complexities and nuances of an issue, particularly when little is known about the phenomenon. In contrast, quantitative studies involve inquiry based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analyzed with statistical methods, in order to determine whether the predictive generalizations of the theory hold true. Qualitative research, however, seeks to answer the “how” and “why” of a research topic or purpose. What can be discovered by qualitative research is not sweeping generalizations, but rather perspectives and insights from those individuals relevant to the research topic which can be transferable to similar situations.

In this study, insights and perspectives of newly appointed community college presidents are critical to understanding reengineering of senior administration. This is accomplished by using a naturalistic approach or context-specific setting where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002). This context-specific information is a strength of qualitative research, providing an avenue to capture complex textual descriptions from newly appointed presidents in the natural setting of the community college. Many authors have written about the essential characteristics of a qualitative inquiry. Prominent research authors’ definitions of some pertinent characteristics of the qualitative paradigm as applied to this research are summarized in Table 6.
Table 6. Summary of Definitions of the Qualitative Paradigm Applied to the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Definitional characteristics</th>
<th>Application to the study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creswell (2007)</td>
<td>An inquiry process, understanding a social or human problem, building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting</td>
<td>Information and insights to answer the research purpose garnered from newly appointed presidents to reengineer senior administration through data collection strategies such as interviews, surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merriam (2009)</td>
<td>Examines the complexities and nuances of an issue, particularly when little is known about the phenomenon</td>
<td>Little is known regarding the phenomenon as to the reasons why this type reengineering occurs in a new community college presidency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patton (2002)</td>
<td>Accomplished by using a naturalistic approach or context-specific setting where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest</td>
<td>Data relevant to this research gathered without manipulation or control of variables by the researcher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For qualitative research, data collection methods are employed to gather rich, thick data and information from various sources. These data sources include semi-structured interviews and observations, field notes, documents, and artifacts. Utilizing multiple data sources allowed examination of the phenomenon on multiple levels which provided a deeper understanding. Merriam (2009) refers to this as particularistic and defines the concept of thick data as the completeness or “literal description of the incident or entity being investigated” (p. 43). Description forms the foundation of all qualitative research (Creswell, 2007). It takes the reader into the setting being described thus enhancing their understanding of the phenomenon studied.
Description also allows the reader to draw their own interpretations about meanings and significance.

Qualitative research attempts to discover patterns that emerge by thoughtful analysis from the data gathered. These patterns provide insights and information pertinent to the study purpose. The human element in qualitative research embraces an interpretive framework in that it places value on the participants’ interpretations of reality (Merriam, 2009). These viewpoints and experiences are constructed through the lenses of the participants, thus it is their interpretation of how and what transpired, and why.

The interpretive paradigm also addresses the role of the researcher. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) ascertain that in qualitative research, the role of the researcher is to “study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them” (p. 3). As data is analyzed, interpretations are made by the researcher who is viewed as the primary instrument of the study. Creswell (2007) provides clarity to this concept when he states, “the researcher’s interpretations cannot be separated from their own background, history, context, and prior understanding” (p. 38).

The objective of the interpretive paradigm is to understand or explore human phenomena. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) assert that this type of research requires deep analysis rather than statistical comparisons and generalizations. The goal is a self-reflexive engagement with the phenomena encompassing community college presidents’ reflections on their experiences as they restructured senior administration. Analyzing their responses provided a deeper understanding of this phenomenon. Characteristics of the interpretive paradigm as described by three research authors and applied to this study are summarized in Table 7.
Table 7. Summary of Definitions of the Interpretive Paradigm Applied to the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Definitional characteristics</th>
<th>Application to the study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merriam (2009)</td>
<td>Place value on the participants’ interpretations of reality</td>
<td>Interpretations of the participants critical to this study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denzin &amp; Lincoln (1994)</td>
<td>The role of the researcher is to study things in their natural settings</td>
<td>Participants interviewed at their respective community colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creswell (2007)</td>
<td>Interpretations are made by the researcher who is viewed as an instrument of the study</td>
<td>Contextual background information on the researcher provided</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, situating the study in the qualitative paradigm provided the framework that allowed the researcher to draw on experiences and insights from multiple participants in a naturalistic setting, without manipulation. This resulted in rich, thick data that addressed the purpose of the study and the guiding questions. The interpretive paradigm acknowledged that meaning is constructed by the researcher who is an instrument in this study.

**Case Study Methodology**

Within the qualitative paradigm, various methodologies can be used to address the study’s purpose. According to Yin (2003), each methodology presents advantages and disadvantages relative to the nature of the research question or purpose, the level of control the research has over environmental factors, and whether the lens will focus on historical or contemporary issues. Case study methodology was selected for this study. There is a multiplicity of definitions and applications of case study methodology. In general, case studies have been used extensively in the fields of sociology and psychology and have become a recognized and significant research strategy.
Yin (2003) succinctly states that case study methodology is optimal when the purpose of the study is to answer why or how questions. Yin (2003) elaborates further that the technical characteristics of the case study include: (a) an investigation involving a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context; (b) boundaries between the phenomenon and context that are not clear; (c) the existence of more variables of interest than data points; (d) multiple sources of evidence; and (e) data collection and analysis that benefit from prior theoretical assertions. These distinctive characteristics provided the appropriate justification for utilizing case study methodology to address the purpose of this study.

The turnover of presidents in community colleges has become a germane contemporary community college issue as have the changes that are initiated by these new presidents once they arrive at their new institutions. Utilization of the case study was ideal in exploring why newly appointed community college presidents chose to restructure senior administration and describing how this was accomplished. It also provided the explanatory avenue regarding how the effectiveness of the changes was assessed.

Perhaps the single most telling characteristic of case study methodology is the bounding of the instance, phenomenon or system (Merriam, 1998). Stake (2005) believes that case study is not a methodological choice, but rather a bounded system or choice of what is to be studied. In contrast, Creswell (2007) views case study as “a methodology, a type of design in qualitative research, or an object of the study, as well as a product of the inquiry” (p. 73). Regardless of the specific characteristics of bounding, these authors agree that the delimiting nature of case study research by defining what is and what is not to be studied, is critical.

The study was bounded by its purpose, the context, and the participants. Specifically, the study was situated within community colleges that appointed new presidents with the assistance
of the Association of Community College Trustees’ (ACCT) search services within the past two to five years. Size of the institution, defined by annual full-time student equivalency, was also used to bound the study and proved useful for analysis of the findings in determining commonalities and differences involving senior administrative changes at large versus small/medium community colleges.

Finally, rationale for selecting a single case study for this research is justified by Yin (2003) who succinctly states that a single case study provides an opportunity to observe and analyze a phenomenon that has not been previously investigated. In this study, the uniqueness lies in the fact that this phenomenon has not been explored previously and the findings will assist incoming community college presidents and staff members as senior administrative structures are reengineered.

Thus, the use of a single case study methodology in this research is supported by three critical attributes:

1. Yin’s three conditions were met, as were his technical distinctions of case study methodology.

2. The study is bounded which addresses Merriam’s assertion that this is the single most important feature of case study methodology.

3. Its uniqueness provides justification for using a single case study.

Site and Participant Selection

One of the critical foci of this qualitative inquiry and case study methodology was to gain insights and understanding of a phenomenon from the perspectives of those involved. To address the purpose and driving questions of this study, selection criteria were purposefully crafted to collect rich, thick data from community college presidents.
Purposefully sampling focused the homogeneous selection of information-rich participants. Creswell (2007) explains that this form of sampling “means that the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study” (p. 125). Merriam (1998) enhances this explanation by stating that “purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and, therefore, must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 61).

The study also used maximum variation as a complementary sampling method. Maximum variation acknowledged heterogeneity of participants and their perspectives providing for the rich, thick unique variations of data. Maximum variation sampling allows, according to Johnson and Christensen (2004), “that all types of cases along one or more dimensions are included in the research” (p. 220). Purposeful sampling provided the means of gathering pertinent information and surrounded the study’s purpose, while maximum variation of the participants allowed for the capturing of diverse participant views and accounts from a variety of unique perspectives.

Purposeful sampling criteria with maximum variation for this study included the following: (a) participants were selected from a list of newly appointed community college presidents provided by ACCT; (b) participants were in their current positions for two to five years; (c) participants served previously in similar roles at other community colleges; (d) participants were selected from either small/medium or large community colleges; and (e) participants were selected from community colleges located in urban, rural, and suburban areas. This combination of purposeful and maximum variation sampling for sites and participants increases the likelihood that many relevant facets of the phenomenon will be captured.
Comparing and contrasting these perspectives allows for a more holistic understanding of the phenomena under study.

**Site Selection**

To enhance variety in the purposeful participant pool, attention was given to diversity according to geographic location and institutional size. Community colleges from across the United States that used ACCT search services as a means of identifying and hiring their new presidents were eligible for the study. ACCT is acknowledged as the largest and most notable entity conducting national searches for community colleges presidents and senior administrators. The ACCT website provides a list of community college presidents that have been placed into their positions and includes the placement year. Table 8 summarizes successful 2006 – 2008 annual ACCT search services which assisted with successful the recruitment and placement of 52 presidents over this two-year timeframe.

Table 8. *ACCT Community College Presidential Searches with Successful Placements*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of ACCT presidential searches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, the size of the institutions was considered, allowing participant representation from small/medium and large institutions. Size was defined by non-duplicated full-time student equivalency (FTE) fall term enrollment as articulated by the Carnegie Size and Setting
Classification System for community colleges: (a) small/medium institutions are defined as having 4,999 fall term FTE or less; and (b) large institutions are defined as having at least 5,000 fall term FTE. Of the 52 eligible institutions, Table 9 displays the number of institutions within each size category:

Table 9. Eligible Community Colleges by Size Defined as Fall Term Student FTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Small/Medium Community Colleges</th>
<th>Number of Large Community Colleges</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A total of six randomly selected institutions across the county that met these criteria were part of the study; three were from the small/medium category and three from the large. Within each size category an urban, suburban, and rural institution was selected. These community colleges were located throughout the United States including the following states: Illinois, Minnesota, Idaho, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and California.

**Participant Selection**

The purpose of this research is to explore changes made to senior administration by newly appointed community college presidents. Newly appointed presidents were defined as those individuals who have served in that role at their current community college for two to five years. The incorporation of this specific time frame criterion was important because it allowed sufficient time for the presidents to initiate changes to senior administration at their new
institutions and assess the changes. In addition, the limited number of years assisted with the participant’s substantive recall of events.

Participants also needed to meet the complementary second criterion of having previously served in a similar role at another community college. The intention was to provide an avenue to ascertain the impact previous experience played in formulating changes in senior administration. Table 10 summarizes the final pool of eligible participants.

Table 10. *Study Eligible Participant Pool*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of presidents from small/medium community Colleges</th>
<th>Number of presidents from large community colleges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participant Contact Protocol**

A contact protocol was established to ensure contact procedures were consistent and the multiphase data collection processes were uniform. Yin (2003) affirms employment of a protocol increases the validity of case study research and assists with data collection reliability. Yin (2003) elaborates further that this preparation also prompts the researcher to anticipate possible problems or issues that may arise. Therefore, a contact protocol guided the consistent and systematic solicitation of participants. This protocol included the following steps:

1. ACCT website (with confirmation by staff) identified possible presidential participants based on the established participant selection criteria.

2. Eligible participants contacted via telephone to determine their interest and willingness to participate in the study.
3. Participants sent email correspondence containing the following: (a) brief overview of the nature of the research; (b) copy of the interview questions; (c) demographic survey; and (d) request for organizational charts and other relevant documents.

4. Follow-up telephone call confirming email received and suitable time and location for the interviews and document retrieval agreed upon.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

According to Merriam (1998), data within the qualitative paradigm is represented by words and reflections whereas data within the quantitative paradigm is represented numerically. Thus, qualitative research focuses on word-centered data collection in the form of interviews, observation, and document review (Creswell, 2008; Leedy & Ormrod, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For this study, data was collected from four primary data sources: (a) survey; (b) semi-structured interviews; (c) documents; and (d) field notes. Table 11 highlights each data source, categorizes the method used, and provides an explanation of the data-collection technique.

Table 11. Four Data Sources Employed for the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data source</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Data collection technique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community college president</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Web-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community college president</td>
<td>Semi-structured interview</td>
<td>Face-to-face semi-structured interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational chart</td>
<td>Documents</td>
<td>Institutional website, organizational charts, relevant documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field notes</td>
<td>Researcher notes</td>
<td>Observational and reflective researcher notes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey

The survey (Appendix B) was used to obtain demographic and personal information from participants to contextualize the inquiry. It also provided an avenue for affirming qualifications and experiences of the study participants and an avenue for obtaining other relevant documents.

The survey was administered using SurveyMonkey.com, a user-friendly web-based survey tool that provided a variety of support for online surveys including survey design and distribution. With more than 10 years experience in survey methodology and web technology, SurveyMonkey.com is considered a leading provider of web-based survey solutions.

Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were the primary method of data collection. Patton (2002) succinctly states that the purpose of interviewing is “to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective. Interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit” (p. 341). Merriam (1998) agrees by asserting, “In qualitative research, interviewing is often the major source of the qualitative data needed for understanding the phenomenon under study” (p. 91). The interviews with the participant presidents were undertaken using a conversational approach in a familiar and relaxed setting. Yin (2009) contends that conversational interviews are preferred. He specifically states:

Throughout the interview process, you have two jobs: (a) to follow your own line of inquiry, as reflected by your case study protocol, and (b) to ask your actual (conversational) questions in an unbiased manner that also serves the needs of your line of inquiry (p. 106).

Semi-structured questions allowed the researcher an opportunity to probe, clarify, and gather additional details in order to understand the participants’ perspectives. An interview guide, also known as the interview schedule, was used to assure questions were consistently asked of all participant presidents (Appendix D). The interviews lasted from 60 to 90 minutes,
allowing a degree of flexibility relative to subsequent probing, elaborating, and clarification of answers to the initial questions. The interview questions were provided to the participants via email at least two weeks in advance of interviews, allowing sufficient time for participants to prepare and reflect, if they so desired.

**Documents**

Yin (2009) advocates document collection as another multisource of data, stating, “For case studies, the most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources” (p. 103). In addition, Yin suggests there are three ways to effectively utilize documents: (a) documents can be helpful in verifying correct information such as names and titles; (b) documents can be useful in corroborating information from other sources; and (c) information contained in the document(s) allows inferences to be made. Referring to the usefulness of both documents and interviews, Merriam (1998) asserts:

The data found in documents can be used in the same manner as data from interviews or observations. The data can furnish descriptive information, verify emerging hypotheses, advance new categories and hypotheses, offer historical understanding, track change and development, and so on (p. 126).

The benefit of utilizing documents as a supplementary data source is that they existed prior to the data collection phase of the study, thus they are not subject to recall biases and they cannot be altered by participants in response to the researcher (Yin, 2003).

Documents highlighting organizational structures prior to and after restructuring were obtained from participant community colleges and presidents. In addition, other artifacts such as timelines and communiqués related to restructuring were obtained. The sources of these documents varied, but all were gathered from the study participants. Some were available on the website of the community colleges involved in the study, while others were obtained upon request.
Field Notes

Field notes represent a pictorial script that fosters a quick reflection of a moment in time, recreating a visual image of the situation for the researcher. Creswell (2008) describes field notes as consisting of both observations and reflections. Observations are descriptive accounts of what was perceived through the senses. They capture visual and other cues that may not be transmitted by audio recording or written transcription. Reflections provide accounts of thoughts and feelings that were experienced during the interview. They also provide a description of the setting, themes and substance of the dialog, and reflective perceptions captured during or after the event (Merriam, 2009). Merriam also challenges researchers to be highly descriptive in their field note accounts.

In qualitative research, because the researcher is the primary tool in data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the findings, keeping reflective field notes is beneficial. As an active participant rather than a passive observer in the interview process, the researcher must constantly be aware and cautious not to interject their own perspectives. In this regard, the researcher remained acutely aware that as a senior administrator at a community college, it was imperative to remain vigilant and not impose personal viewpoints during the research process. A field note form (Appendix E) modeled after one prescribed by Creswell (see 2007, pp. 136-137) was used to capture these elements. Johnson and Christensen (2004) state, “It’s a good idea to correct and edit any notes you write down during an observation as soon as possible after they are taken because that is when your memory is best” (p. 188). One form was completed immediately following each participant interview to avoid relying on the researcher’s memory at a later time.
Data Collection Pilot

In order to elicit any problems or difficulties associated with the research protocol and in preparation of participant interviews, two current community college presidents participated in a pilot of the data collection methods employed in the study. The contact protocol was followed and the participants completed the survey and the face-to-face interview. The primary intent of the pilot was to determine if the contact protocol was sufficient, the survey was user-friendly and the interview questions gathered relevant information. As a result of these activities, participant contact protocol was deemed effective and several minor enhancements were made to the demographic survey. In addition, the pilot ascertained that both the technique of the interview process, as well as the questions, were appropriate and elicited the type of information germane to the study. Data collected from this pilot was destroyed and not used in the study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis provides a systematic and continuous exploration of the data collected. The researcher strives to make sense from the data, looking for patterns and relationships both within and between the data sources and to make general discoveries about the phenomena under study. Merriam (1998) suggests that analysis begins as data is collected. Stake (1995) ascertains that it is difficult to determine when data analysis begins and ends as he states, “Analysis is a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as final compilations” (p. 71). Data analysis is not a linear process but rather a spiral. Creswell (2007) depicts this when he states that the researcher “engages in the process of moving in analytic circles rather than using a fixed linear approach” (p. 150).

Within the qualitative paradigm, data analysis occurred through an inductive process that created a contextually rich, descriptive narrative. The study sought to understand and describe
triggers that prompt newly appointed community college presidents to initiate changes to senior administration. Rich, thick descriptions were provided by the presidents interviewed in the study. Qualitative analysis reduced documents, interviews, observations, and field notes from data into meaningful findings. Data was assessed and examined to discover patterns, themes, and concepts, which led to an explanation of the phenomena under study. Miles and Huberman (1994) expound that the researcher must create meaning from a vast amount of data; however, there are few agreed upon methods for doing so.

Segmenting or coding data into categories or groupings allowed for the discovery of meaningful and relevant descriptive words or phrases, which coalesce into key themes and patterns. Creswell (2007) explains, “It is a process of pulling the data apart and putting them back together in more meaningful ways” (p. 163). Johnson and Christensen (2004) succinctly state that, “Coding is the process of marking segments of data (usually text data) with symbols, descriptive words, or category names” (p. 502).

Organizing and preparing the large amount of data gathered from the study participants required a systematic approach. The trustworthiness and validity of this process was incumbent on the careful and meticulous handling of all the data as well as a skillful interpretation. Creswell (2007) asserts that a framework for data analysis brings structure and meaning to the vast amount of data and information. As such, he offers the following stages as a means of structuring the data analysis process: (a) data managing; (b) reading and memoing; (c) describing, classifying, and interpreting; and (d) representing and visualizing. This study followed Creswell’s data analysis spiral framework through the data analysis phase.
Data Managing Stage

The data were readily accessible and sorted for quick access. Digital files for each interview, including the demographic surveys were organized by participant’s name, postsecondary institution, and were placed in color-coded files in a secure cabinet. All digital files were placed on two separate flash drives for additional security and safety.

Reading and Memoing Stage

Johnson and Christensen (2004) describe the process of memoing, as “reflective notes that researchers write to themselves about what they are learning from their data” (p. 501). Johnson and Christensen also suggest that prompt and frequent memoing requires less reliance on memory and enhances accuracy and reliability.

Recordings of the interviews allowed conversations to be heard repetitively, which created a reflective process and the opportunity to discover themes and patterns that could be readily interpreted. Field notes and documents were also reviewed numerous times. Creating reflective notes from these data was an ongoing process and greatly enhanced the accuracy and reliability of the data analysis process.

Describing, Classifying, and Interpreting Stage

After reviewing transcripts and other documents, data was categorized or coded. Coding aided in revealing connections or relationships and assisted in constructing meaningful themes and patterns from the raw data. Creswell (2007) suggests that coding includes parceling the data into small pieces to search for themes and patterns. Merriam (1998) concurs and believes that the categories or codes “become the findings of the study” (p. 192).

Kotter’s (1996) eight steps for effective change were used as a part of the process for data analysis serving as a construct for a priori theming. This framework provided a useful way to
code the study participants’ responses related to processes used in facilitating change in senior administration. Table 12 summarizes these steps.

**Table 12. Kotter’s Eight Steps for Effective Change**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Establish a sense of urgency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Form a powerful guiding coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Create a vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Communicate the vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Empower others to act on the vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Plan for and create short-term wins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Consolidate improvements/produce more change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Institutionalize new approaches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpreting the data involved analyzing and understanding meaning from the participants’ perspectives or the insights that were conveyed. As Creswell (2007) expounds, “In the process of interpretation, researchers step back and form larger meanings of what is going on in the situations or sites” (p. 154). In order not to lose any data, emergent themes will be captured during the coding.

**Representing and Visualizing Stage**

Once the data was categorized and coded for themes and patterns, diagrams and tables were created that concatenated the qualitative data into categories. The categories that were created assisted in a typology classification system that organized the qualitative data into
relationships from the transcribed interviews. Johnson and Christensen (2004) suggest that diagrams can be helpful in making sense of the data. Thus, diagrams and tables were used as drawings and outlines that searched for themes and precipitated the generation or exploration of theories based on these data. Showing linkages or causal relationships between key items in the data were proven to be effective by the researcher in analyzing the data. Findings from the data analysis provided useful insights into the triggers that prompt restructuring of senior administration as well as the processes used to facilitate changes in this regard.

**Trustworthiness: Reliability andValidity**

Regardless of the epistemological approach, trustworthiness is a critical element in all research. Merriam (1998) contends that, “Every researcher wants to contribute results that are believable and trustworthy” (p. 218). Research paradigms have specific criteria for assessing reliability and validity. Qualitative research must be conducted in a rigorous and consistent manner which strengthens credibility of findings and should be judged using the criteria that are developed for and relevant to the qualitative paradigm.

Qualitative researchers have developed a unique framework that addresses the concepts of reliability and validity. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry infers a rigorous, systematic, and logical research process. In use for more than 25 years, their widely used criteria for judging trustworthiness include the concepts of: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is ascertained through five strategies: (a) specific credibility activities of engagement (prolonged engagement with the environment and participants, persistent observation of the environment, and triangulation of data sources; (b) peer debriefing; (c) negative case analysis; (d) referential adequacy (with regard to raw data); and (e) member checks. Transferability is established through thick, rich
description of the natural environment, which allows readers to determine if findings are transferable to their situations or settings. Dependability ensures findings are consistent and can be replicated through detailed documentation of the research process and rationale for methodological decisions. Confirmability refers to the extent to which findings are the result of participant responses rather than researcher bias (degree of neutrality). This is demonstrated through an irrefutable audit trail.

Similar to the strategies pertinent to each of the criteria described by Lincoln and Guba (1985), Yin (2003) delineates four tests for judging the quality of research designs: (a) construct validity; (b) internal validity; (c) external validity; and (d) reliability. Construct validity relies on the tactics of multiple sources with chains of evidence and member checking of preliminary results. Internal validity focuses on matching patterns, building explanations, and logic. Generalizing the findings beyond the immediate case study is what is referred to as external validity or replication logic; theory must be tested by replicating findings. Finally, reliability is achieved through rigorous case study protocol and a dependable case study database. This ensures that proper procedures were used in data gathering, storage, and analysis and that processes can be replicated.

Stake (1995) speaks more directly to trustworthiness as it relates to the specialized work of the case study. Specifically, Stake (1995) articulates two issues that impact trustworthiness: validation and transferability. Validation is achieved through triangulation of data sources and member checks. Transferability, also referred to as naturalistic generalizations, is achieved by applying a variety of strategies and techniques. To establish the trustworthiness of naturalistic research and to aid in the transferability of findings, Stake (1995) believes that the following elements must be present:
1. Commonly known elements of information contained in the research to assist
the reader in judging “the accuracy, completeness, and bias of reports on
other matters” (p. 87).

2. Sufficient raw data.

3. Detailed methodology that can be easily understood.

4. Background information on the researcher.

5. Peer review and member checks.

6. Validity that is clearly defined based on internal factors.

Although the concepts and frameworks, as proposed by these authors are unique, many common
treads are vividly apparent. Table 13 compares trustworthiness concepts from various authors in
the qualitative paradigm.
Table 13. *Qualitative Paradigm Framework Comparison of Trustworthiness*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Validation</td>
<td>Credibility: prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation, member checks</td>
<td>Internal validity: establishing patterns, explanation, logic</td>
<td>Validation: member checks, multiple data sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferability</td>
<td>Transferability: thick, rich description</td>
<td>External validity: theoretical framework, meaning derived from application of findings</td>
<td>Naturalistic generalizations: sufficient raw data, detailed and logical methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependability</td>
<td>Dependability: audit trail</td>
<td>Reliability: case study protocol, case study database</td>
<td>Naturalistic generalizations: transparent methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectivity</td>
<td>Confirmability: transparent audit trail</td>
<td>Construct validity: triangulation through multiple sources, chain of evidence, member checks of preliminary findings</td>
<td>Naturalistic generalizations: Researcher as an instrument of the study detailed in the methodology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Merriam (2009) provides a succinct view of trustworthiness by focusing on the constructs of validity and reliability which are viewed as equally significant. Merriam (2009) specifically defines trustworthiness as, “concerns that can be approached through careful attention to a study’s conceptualization and the way in which the data are collected, analyzed, and interpreted, and the way in which the findings are presented” (p. 210). Thus, careful attention and documentation of the research design, objective data collection methodology and systematic data analysis, and interpretation are at the core of authentic qualitative research, and were practiced
throughout this study. Table 14 provides a summary of Merriam’s (2009) strategies for enhancing the rigor and trustworthiness as they apply to this specific study.
Table 14. *Merriam’s Strategies for Trustworthiness as Related to the Study*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Application to the study</th>
<th>Study phase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Triangulation</td>
<td>Multiple sources of data that confirm findings</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews, reflexive field notes, documents</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member checks</td>
<td>Providing data and initial interpretations to participants to determine plausibility</td>
<td>Participants were asked to review transcripts for accuracy</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient engagement in data collection</td>
<td>Sufficient time spent collecting data allowing the data to become saturated</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews with participants, field notes, documents</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher’s self reflection</td>
<td>Critical self-reflection by the researcher which includes relationship to the study that may impact the investigation</td>
<td>Inclusion of researcher as an instrument and continued self-reflection throughout the study</td>
<td>Research design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer review and examination</td>
<td>Discussion with colleagues regarding the research process, congruency of findings</td>
<td>Monthly meetings with research chair and colleagues to review processes</td>
<td>Data collection/ data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit trail</td>
<td>Detailed description of the research methods used to allow replication</td>
<td>Transparent, detailed and understandable methodology</td>
<td>Research design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich, thick descriptions</td>
<td>Adequate description that allows readers to apply meaning and applicability</td>
<td>Verbatim transcription of participant interviews, detailed field notes</td>
<td>Data collection, data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum variation</td>
<td>Variation in sample selection that increases the range of application for users of the study</td>
<td>Participants selected from community colleges varying in size and location</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategies encompassing trustworthiness were referenced throughout the research process. Credibility and validation were addressed through rigorous interviews with participant presidents at their community colleges. The interviews were recorded and the resulting rich, thick data was transcribed. Participants were allowed to member check what was said by reviewing the transcripts for accuracy. In addition to participant interviews, reflexive field notes and relevant documents provided additional data sources. Data analysis was accomplished using triangulation of these multiple data sources. Theoretical constructs serving as the lens for this study were also used to segment and code data. Transferability was provided within the thick, rich descriptive data which allowed readers to determine if the triggers for change and processes used to facilitate change were applicable to their situations.

The interpretive paradigm, which is situated in this qualitative inquiry, recognizes that the reader will provide meaning to research results based on their experiences and need for such information. In essence, the reader will determine, through their lens, if the research is pertinent to their situation, setting, or problem. In addition, the reader may decide to apply some or all of what has been presented. This “customizable” approach provides flexibility and enhances the probability that the findings will be of value. Thus, readers of this study will determine if the reasons for and methods used in restructuring senior administration at community colleges are indeed applicable to current or future situations. Dependability and objectivity were affirmed by carefully delineating research protocol and processes, allowing others to replicate the methodology. Researcher as an instrument was provided in a transparent and truthful detailing of the researcher’s background as it pertains to the study.
Limitations

Research studies, by their nature, are not perfect, thus weaknesses exist which must be acknowledged. These weaknesses are often referred to as limitations. Experts agree that weaknesses within the design can impact findings. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) claim that, “no research study can be perfect, and its imperfections inevitably cast at least a hint of doubt on its findings. Good researchers know—and they also report—the weaknesses along with the strengths of their research” (p. 276). Creswell (2008) explains further that limitations are frequently caused by factors associated with data collection and analysis. Leedy and Ormrod, as well as Creswell, agree that it is paramount that the researcher identifies potential weaknesses or problems as these limitations may impact transferability of the findings. This study has two limitations: (a) accurate recall by participants; and (b) researcher bias.

Accurate recall by participants. The study relied on participants’ to accurately recall the triggers that prompted restructuring activities and the steps that were used to facilitate the process. To minimize possible challenges, selection criteria for participants were prescriptive and only presidents who had served in their new roles for two to five years were interviewed. Actions regarding restructuring were therefore recent, minimizing challenges with recall.

Researcher bias. Mitigating bias and subjectivity through critical self-reflection, or reflexivity, is paramount within the interpretive paradigm. Since the researcher was a senior administrator at an institution which recently underwent senior-level reengineering, diligent critical reflection was essential. Merriam (2002a) succinctly defines reflexivity as, “critical self-reflection by the researcher regarding assumptions, worldview, biases, theoretical orientation, and relationship to the study that may affect the investigation” (p. 31). Reflexivity also refers to the lens through which the researcher views the world (Guba and Lincoln, 2005).
Throughout the research process, important reflections and thoughts were captured and synthesized, which created an audit trail that fostered a transparent and systematic plan for data collection and analysis. As such, all steps in the research process, including sample selection, communication with participants, and field notes created an exhaustive audit trail for the study. A detailed description of the researcher as a research instrument provides further evidence of transparency and reflexivity.

**Researcher as Research Instrument**

Where quantitative researchers attempt to disassociate themselves as much as possible from the research process, qualitative researchers have come to embrace their involvement and role within the study. The researcher is considered an instrument in qualitative studies as they seek to understand a phenomenon rather than seeking to discover a causal relationship of variables (Creswell, 2004). Therefore, it is important to ascertain the background of the researcher, which includes a 24-year career as a community college professor and administrator.

Upon graduating with a bachelor’s degree in marketing from the Indiana University School of Business in 1979, the researcher began working as a retail manager and concurrently applied and was accepted into the Master’s of Business Administration (MBA) program at Loyola University, Chicago. The Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago recruited and hired the researcher upon graduation from the MBA program in 1980.

In 1986, the researcher was hired as a community college adjunct instructor in finance, where classes were taught in the evening, and was simultaneously employed full time as an assistant vice president at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. During this time, teaching in the community college became a passion and the researcher left her position at the Federal Reserve
Bank of Chicago in 1988. Subsequently, an opportunity became available to serve as the part-time coordinator of the Financial Services program while teaching classes in finance, management, and marketing at the community college. This led to a tenured full-time faculty position in 2000; the appointment included chairing the finance and marketing programs.

In 2004, an administrative position became available at the community college and the researcher accepted the position of acting assistant dean in the Business and Social Science Division. Soon after, a higher level administrative position, managing director of the business outreach unit, became available. The researcher was encouraged to apply, and was accepted for the position. In 2008, the vice president of Enrollment and Marketing resigned and the researcher was asked to assume those responsibilities. This position reported directly to the president of the community college and included membership to the President’s Cabinet.

Throughout this time, the researcher was engaged in various special projects including co-chairing the community college’s re-accreditation process. Other accomplishments include creating an online degree in marketing, launching an honors business club for students, developing dual credit course options for high school students, starting a Small Business Development Center, co-chairing the Campus Master Planning process, and supporting and contributing to the search process for a new president by serving on the Presidential Search Advisory Committee in 2008.

In 2009, a new president was hired and a subsequent reorganization of senior administration by the new president placed the researcher in the role of senior executive to the president and board liaison. This position reports directly to the president and enjoys membership on the newly formed six-member Executive Council that advises the president and provides oversight to the operations of the institution.
It was the researcher’s involvement with the search process for a new president and subsequent reorganization of the senior administrative structure that provided insights into how these changes impact individuals in the community college. Exposure to these endeavors created awareness that research is needed in this area and was subsequently the impetus for this research.

Chapter Summary

This qualitative inquiry using a case study methodology situated in the interpretive paradigm explored the triggers that prompt newly appointed community college presidents to reengineer senior administrative structures and the processes used to facilitate the changes. Purposeful sampling ensured multiple perspectives were gleaned from participants who were from institutions of varying sizes throughout the United States. The participants were newly appointed presidents who were placed in their positions by ACCT search services, the largest recruitment and placement organization for community colleges. Purposeful maximum variation sampling was evident with the incorporation of geographic diversity and the representation of rural, suburban, and urban community colleges.

Data collection included participant interviews of newly appointed presidents. Documents and field notes were gathered and analyzed adding to the rich, thick data provided through participant interviews. The data collected from these multiple sources were analyzed using coding, theming, and categorizing, following Creswell’s (2007) data analysis spiral, consisting of: (a) data managing; (b) reading and memoing; (c) describing, classifying, and interpreting; and (d) representing and visualization.

To ensure soundness, strategies were integrated into the design that addressed the qualitative criteria articulated by Lincoln and Guba (1985) which include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Accurate recall by participants and researcher
bias were identified as limitations of the study. Finally, transparency, trustworthiness, and rigor were maintained throughout the study by employing a systematic and consistent approach to research design, data collection, and analysis.
CHAPTER 4
DATA COLLECTION & DATA ANALYSIS STRATEGIES

Introduction

Qualitative research studies the experiences, insights, perspectives, and reflections of participants. Mertens (1998) contends that data collection is “the vehicle through which the researcher collects information to answer research questions and defend conclusions and recommendations based upon research findings” (p. 285). This chapter will highlight the data collection processes undertaken in the study and strategies undertaken to analyze the data. Four critical elements will be included: (a) participant contact protocol which affirm the credibility and confirmability of the research; (b) descriptive data of the subject institutions and participants which provide a context for understanding and dependability; (c) a summary of the data gathered in the research; and (d) data analysis processes.

The purpose of this study is to explore what precipitates the reengineering of administrative structures by presidents new to their positions at community colleges, the processes used in implementing the change, and assessment of the reengineering process. Guiding questions evolving from the purpose of this study explored the triggers that prompted changes to senior administration by new presidents that had served previously in this role at another community college, the processes used to implement these changes, and how the effectiveness of the changes were assessed. Data gathered from multiple data sources provides for the triangulation of data as facilitated by the theoretical framework presented for this study.

Participant Contact Protocol

This research relied on information and data gathered from participants to ascertain how and why change is initiated in senior management structures when a new community college
president is appointed. Assisting with consistency and objectivity, nominations for possible participants were obtained from the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) search services. A participant contact protocol was used throughout the data gathering phase of the study to ensure consistency and strengthen the credibility of the findings. Six participants were chosen based on established selection criteria:

1. Community college presidents who have served their current institutions for two to five years;
2. Previous experience as a community college president; and
3. Placed into their current position by ACCT.

ACCT provided a list of 52 potential participants who met the selection criteria. From this list, six participants were randomly selected. To enhance maximum variation, and thus emphasize divergent contexts and perspectives that increase transferability of findings, particular attention was taken to ask potential participants from small/medium and large institutions, as well as urban, suburban, and rural locales. According to Creswell (2007), maximum variation “is often selected because when a researcher maximizes differences at the beginning of the study, it increases the likelihood that the findings will reflect differences or different perspectives—an ideal in qualitative research” (p.126).

The randomly selected eligible participants were contacted by email and invited to participate; all six agreed to do so. A date and time for the interview was subsequently secured. Maximum variation of participants from differing locations throughout the United States, representing community colleges that were large and small/medium based on student FTE, necessitated the researcher to travel to the geographic locations for the face-to-face interviews. This was done to foster rapport with the participant as well as to gather non-verbal cues such as tone of voice and body language. Two weeks prior to the scheduled interview, the interview
questions and the Participant Consent Form were emailed to the participants. Having the
questions in advance allowed the presidents to familiarize themselves with the study. Participants
were also asked to complete a brief online demographic survey prior to the interview. All
interviews were confirmed via phone call, one week before the scheduled appointment. Table 15
summarizes the Participant Contact Protocol employed to engage the participants and secure
interview appointments, as well as the timeline.
Table 15. *Steps Used in the Participant Contact Protocol*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 2010</td>
<td>Secured list of qualified participants from ACCT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2010</td>
<td>Email sent to qualified participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2010</td>
<td>Interview secured with participant in California</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 11, 2011</td>
<td>Confirmation email sent with Participant Consent Form, Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 18, 2011</td>
<td>Phone Confirmation for Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 25, 2011</td>
<td>Interview Conducted and Field Notes Constructed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2011</td>
<td>Documents Collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2011</td>
<td>Member Checking of Transcripted Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2011</td>
<td>Interview secured with participant in Illinois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 17, 2011</td>
<td>Confirmation email sent with Participant Consent Form, Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 24, 2011</td>
<td>Phone Confirmation for Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 31, 2011</td>
<td>Interview Conducted and Field Notes Constructed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2011</td>
<td>Documents Collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2011</td>
<td>Member Checking of Transcripted Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2011</td>
<td>Interview secured with participant in Pennsylvania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 16, 2011</td>
<td>Confirmation email sent with Participant Consent Form, Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 23, 2011</td>
<td>Phone Confirmation for Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2, 2011</td>
<td>Interview Conducted and Field Notes Constructed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2011</td>
<td>Documents Collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2011</td>
<td>Member Checking of Transcripted Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2011</td>
<td>Interview secured with participant in Minnesota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 17, 2011</td>
<td>Confirmation email sent with Participant Consent Form, Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 24, 2011</td>
<td>Phone Confirmation for Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 3, 2011</td>
<td>Interview Conducted and Field Notes Constructed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2011</td>
<td>Documents Collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2011</td>
<td>Member Checking of Transcripted Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2011</td>
<td>Interview secured with participant in Idaho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 7, 2011</td>
<td>Confirmation email sent with Participant Consent Form, Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 14, 2011</td>
<td>Phone Confirmation for Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 21, 2011</td>
<td>Interview Conducted and Field Notes Constructed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2011</td>
<td>Documents Collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2011</td>
<td>Member Checking of Transcripted Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2011</td>
<td>Interview secured with participant in Nevada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 23, 2011</td>
<td>Confirmation email sent with Participant Consent Form, Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 30, 2011</td>
<td>Phone Confirmation for Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 6, 2011</td>
<td>Interview Conducted and Field Notes Constructed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2011</td>
<td>Documents Collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2011</td>
<td>Member Checking of Transcripted Interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Background of Community Colleges and Presidents

Background of Community Colleges

Purposeful sampling was used in the selection of study participants, while maximum variation allowed for the capturing of diverse participant views and accounts from a variety of unique perspectives. To enhance variety in the selection pool, attention was given to diversity according to geographic location. In addition, the size of the institutions was considered, allowing participant representation from small/medium and large institutions. Size was defined by non-duplicated full-time student equivalency (FTE) fall term enrollment as articulated by the Carnegie Size and Setting Classification System for community colleges. Within each size category an urban, suburban, and rural institution was selected. Table 16 summarizes the six institutional profiles by presidents used in the study.

Table 16. President and Institutional Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Institution Size</th>
<th>Institution Type</th>
<th>Designation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President 1</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>LU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President 2</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>LS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President 3</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>LR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President 4</td>
<td>Small/Medium</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>SMU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President 5</td>
<td>Small/Medium</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>SMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President 6</td>
<td>Small/Medium</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>SMR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant Demographic Data Obtained From Pre-interview Survey

Information gathered from the online survey provided demographic data on the six study participants. These data included gender, age, ethnicity, educational attainment, and confirmed
that the participants had served previously as community college presidents and thus were eligible for this study.

Four of the participants were females, and two were males. All participants were over 60 years of age and possessed doctorate degrees. Four of the six community college presidents were diverse; three were Hispanic and one was African-American. The remaining participants were Caucasian. Presented in Table 17 are the demographic profiles of the study participants.

Table 17. Demographic Data of the Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age group (years)</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Terminal degree</th>
<th>Number of years served previously as a president</th>
<th>Number of years in current position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LS</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>65 years +</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMU</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMR</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants were disbursed throughout the United States which required travel to their institutions. Gathering information from multiple regions ensured maximum variation as insights and other data were gathered from these locations. Figure 5 includes a map which shows the distribution of study participants.
Reorganization Activity Data Obtained from Pre-interview Survey

Three questions related to the reorganization activities at their current institutions were included in the survey. These questions were asked to confirm these participants had reorganized and thus were eligible for the study. All the respondents indicated they reorganized the administration at their new institutions within the first year. Table 18 illustrates that all six presidents answered affirmatively when asked if they had reorganized while Table 19 presents the findings pertaining to how long these presidents waited before they restructured.

Table 18. Administrative Reorganization at New Institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you reorganize the administration at your current institution when you became president?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The third question was asked to determine if the presidents had achieved the results they had anticipated after the reorganization was complete. Table 20 below demonstrates that five participants indicated the reorganization achieved desired results; one indicated it did not.

Table 20. Assessment of Reorganization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did the restructuring achieve the desired results?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Sources of Data

Triangulation of all study data gathered was used to strengthen the trustworthiness and validity of the study findings. Willis (2007) states that triangulation “is often used as a qualitative equivalent of validity and reliability. The essential idea of triangulation is to find multiple sources of confirmation when you want to draw a conclusion” (pp. 218-219). In addition to interviews and pre-interview surveys, various relevant documents were reviewed and detailed field notes were kept by the researcher.

Documents. Numerous documents were collected that provided insights, historical perspectives, and data pertaining to restructuring activities that occurred when the participants assumed their new presidencies. Most documents were collected from online sources, while some were provided by the participants. Documents included biographies, newsletters,
newspaper articles, reports, organizational charts, communiqués, strategic plans, speeches/presentations, letters, and meeting minutes/notes. Table 21 summarizes the types and numbers of documents collected.
Table 21. *Documents Collected from Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Type</th>
<th>LU</th>
<th>LS</th>
<th>LR</th>
<th>SMU</th>
<th>SMS</th>
<th>SMR</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biography</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper Article</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Chart</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communiqué</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech/Presentation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Minutes/Notes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Field notes.** Another data gathering technique for this research was the use of field notes, both observational and reflective. These were used to record detailed facts about the participants and the interview session, as well as the researcher’s reflections. The field notes described experiences and observations the researcher saw and heard throughout the interview process. These descriptions, such as the interview setting, participants’ non-verbal cues and reactions, coupled with the responses to questions, supplied the study with rich information essential to interpret the findings and draw conclusions. The researcher captured field notes immediately
following each interview. The reflective nature of the field notes provided context to statements made by participants during the interviews.

**Framework for Analyzing the Data**

This section provides an overview of the strategies utilized to analyze the data gleaned from the six participants. Marshall and Rossman (1999) vividly describe this important step in the research process as “bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. It is a messy, ambiguous, time-consuming, creative, and fascinating process. It does not proceed in a linear fashion; it is not neat” (p. 111).

The analysis of the data followed Creswell’s (2007) spiral framework as articulated in chapter 3. This spiral includes four stages: (a) data managing; (b) reading and memoing; (c) describing, classifying, and interpreting; and (d) representing and visualizing. The first two stages will be explained in this section. In addition, an initial discussion of Stage 3, which includes describing, classifying and interpreting, will be presented. This discussion will provide the framework for the detailed analysis presented in chapter 5. Stage 4, which includes representing and visualizing, is presented in chapter 6.

Data managing, Creswell’s (2007) initial step was conducted in adherence with commonly accepted practices. This included transcribing recorded interviews, member checking, and gathering relevant documents into useful and early retrievable formats. Creswell’s (2007) second stage of the data analysis framework, which purports reading and memoing, was accomplished through careful review and rereading of transcripts. Initial reactions, annotations, thoughts, reflections, and themes were captured through the memoing process, as they emerged from the data.
Following reading and memoing, Stage 3, which includes describing, classifying, and interpreting, commenced. The transcripts were coded in two phases. First, descriptive coding was completed as a way of providing meaning in simplest terms which involves a basic form of describing the data. The second coding process included applying analytical codes which answered the very pertinent question: Why is this important? Richards (2005) succinctly summarizes this as, “from interpretation or reflection on meaning” (p. 94). A priori themes facilitated the data analysis process. Themes and concepts that did not align with a priori themes were captured, and categorized. This process ensured data was not lost and allowed the researcher to determine if emergent themes presented themselves. Codes were categorized and recategorized into what Creswell (2007) refers to as categorical aggregations. This process of coding and categorizing was repeated and reviewed multiple times. The continuous reductive process of defining and testing codes as they emerge from the data lies at the heart of the qualitative analysis process (Creswell, 2008).

Initial Coding

It is vital to preserve confidentiality throughout the data analysis process. As such, a designation system was devised to identify the institution and corresponding participant as data was organized, coded, and analyzed. Table 22 summarizes the list of the site attributes and corresponding designations that are used to present and analyze the data. These designations were used to protect the identity of participants.
Table 22. Designations of Study Participants, Documents, and Field Notes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Size</th>
<th>Institution Location</th>
<th>Participant Designation</th>
<th>Document Designation</th>
<th>Field Notes Designation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Pres-LU</td>
<td>LU-D</td>
<td>LU-FN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small/Medium</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Pres-SMU</td>
<td>SMU-D</td>
<td>SMU-FN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Pres-LS</td>
<td>LS-D</td>
<td>LS-FN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small/Medium</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Pres-SMS</td>
<td>SMS-D</td>
<td>SMS-FN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Pres-LR</td>
<td>LR-D</td>
<td>LR-FN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small/Medium</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Pres-SMR</td>
<td>SMR-D</td>
<td>SMR-FN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Priori Themes Utilized to Analyze Data

The framework for analysis is an eclectic combination of theories and concepts elucidated in the literature review chapter. Iterative changes currently undertaken within community colleges have been well-documented. These changes ensure community colleges remain responsive to the constituents they serve. Many of these changes, including reengineering of senior administrative structures, are facilitated by newly appointed presidents, such as those who served as participants for this study. Analyzing the data gathered from these participants addressed the purpose of the study which is to explore what precipitates the reengineering of administrative structures by presidents new to their positions at community colleges, the processed used to implement these changes, and how the effectiveness of the changes were assessed.
A priori themes were derived from the study’s conceptual framework. These concepts and theories included: (a) reengineering; (b) Kotter’s eight-step change model; and (c) heuristics, and are manifested in the following ways:

- **Reengineering.** In reviewing the triggers that prompted the need for change at the senior-most level of these institutions, was the change deemed revolutionary or evolutionary in nature?

- **Kotter’s eight-step change model.** The presidents used a process to facilitate organizational change. How closely did they adhere to the well-documented and seminal work on change by Dr. John Kotter who espouses an eight-step process?

- **Bounded rationality and heuristics.** Participants in the study were all former community college presidents. How did their past experience as a president inform decisions they made when reorganizing senior management?

Data collected from interviews, documents, and field notes were coded and analyzed to these three a priori themes. Emerging themes were also captured and coded, which ensured that data was not lost. The three themes align with the purpose of the study and its driving questions. Table 23 summarizes the connection of the driving questions to the a priori themes.
Table 23. *Linkage of the Driving Questions to A Priori Themes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Driving Question</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What indicators precipitate reengineering administrative structures in community colleges by presidents new to the organization?</td>
<td>Business Process Reengineering as revolutionary change or Total Quality Management as evolutionary change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emergent trends prompting administrative reengineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the administrative reengineering process implemented in community colleges by the new president?</td>
<td>Kotter’s eight-step change process:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Establish a sense of urgency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Form a powerful guiding coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Create a vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Communicate the vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Empower others to act on the vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Plan for and create short-term wins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Consolidate improvements and sustain the momentum for change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Institutionalize new approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How and in what ways does the new president evaluate the process of reengineering?</td>
<td>Heuristics as a means of knowing that change is effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment techniques used to determine effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modifications of the organizational structure after assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter Summary**

Transparency of data is challenging in qualitative research due to the large volume and complexity of the data collected. The primary focus of this chapter has been to display and articulate data in a clear and transparent manner and to provide a sense of scope and meaning. The display also confirms transparency and credibility, and highlights the data that will be analyzed in the following chapter.
CHAPTER 5
DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data which is organized by the questions posed to the community college presidents interviewed for this study. The purpose of this research is to explore what precipitates the reengineering of administrative structures by presidents new to their positions at community colleges, the processes used in implementing the change, and assessment of the reengineering process. Guiding questions evolving from the purpose of this study sought to gain insights and an in depth understanding of this particular topic from a select group of presidents. All data collection methods, interview questions, and surveys, were designed to glean data related to restructuring initiatives undertaken by newly appointed community college presidents, and were aligned with the guiding questions.

The first section analyzes data gathered around the indicators that precipitated reengineering of administrative structures as these presidents assumed their positions at new institutions. The timing of these changes is analyzed. Triggers that prompted the reorganizations are cataloged and analyzed, resulting in emerging themes that offer insight into why they were initiated. Finally, the organizational changes that were made as a result of the triggers are highlighted.

The second section summarizes the processes used by the presidents to facilitate changes to senior administrative structures. The processes articulated by the presidents are compared and contrasted to Kotter’s (1996) eight-step change process which is considered the seminal work on change. As such, Kotter’s eight steps serve as a priori themes for this portion of the study. In addition, the use of heuristics by the participants is analyzed to determine if their previous
tenure and experiences as community college presidents influenced decisions made at their new institutions.

The third and final section focuses on the evaluation processes used to determine if the new structures were effective. The presidents were asked if the changes were deemed effective, what lessons were learned from this experience, and if they would do anything differently in the future.

**Indicators Precipitating Reengineering of Senior Administration**

It is well known that change and the process of change is difficult and disruptive. A major change initiative frequently facilitated by newly appointed community college presidents is the reengineering of senior administration. Therefore, a better understanding of these modifications will assist not only the presidents but those in senior administrative positions impacted by the changes.

**Length of Time before Restructuring was Initiated**

All six participants responded that restructuring of senior administration commenced and was completed during their first year as president. The shortest timeframe was one month with the longest being six months. Thus, it is evident that as community college presidents assume leadership of their new institutions, restructuring of senior administration occurs quickly. Common participant responses to this question are presented in Table 24.
Table 24. *Length of Time for Restructuring*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LR</td>
<td>“Six months after I arrived, I saw changes to upper administration that needed to be made.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-SMU</td>
<td>“Shortly after I arrived, within a few months, I felt that one senior administrator should be charged with running both academic and student affairs, so I started moving folks around to make this happen.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-SMS</td>
<td>“And after I was here a few months, the vice-president of Student Affairs, who had been here eleven or twelve years, and who was a finalist for the presidency, told me he was going to retire. . . .so that opened up the opportunity for me to consider reorganization, restructuring.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Triggers Prompting Reengineering of Senior Administration**

This exploratory study seeks to discover what precipitates the reengineering of administrative structures by presidents new to their positions at community colleges. Thus, study participants were asked to share their insights and perceptions of what triggered these senior administrative changes.

The most common trigger identified by the participants was their college’s institutional climate. They related their belief that the consequences of specific problems and challenges precipitated institutional climate issues. As a result, study participants believed a change in senior administrative staff was required to successful address and tackle these institutional climate problems. The ambiguity surrounding senior administrator attrition and retirements created problems at two institutions, board interference at the large suburban institution caused tension among employees, financial uncertainty and the potential for downsizing left employees at one community college feeling vulnerable, and accreditation problems that threatened Title IV funding at another institution adversely impacted institutional climate.
As the triggers were analyzed, they fell into five categories: (a) institutional climate; (b) attrition/retirements; (c) governance concerns; (d) financial issues; and (e) accreditation findings. Table 25 summarizes which triggers were identified by the presidents.

**Table 25. Triggers Prompting Reorganization of Senior Administration**

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Climate</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attrition/Retirements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance Concerns</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accreditation Findings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each trigger or challenge is defined below. In addition, specific factors associated with these challenges, are reviewed and analyzed.

**Trigger 1: Institutional climate.** Most commonly, institutional climate has been defined as the way in which members of an organization characterize and perceive their working environment (Denison, 1996; Moran & Volkwein, 1992; Verbeke, Volgering, & Hessels, 2000). This includes employees’ attitudes and perceptions which is an important and influential aspect of job satisfaction and retention. Interestingly, research on the subject of institutional climate in colleges and universities confirms that climate is greatly influenced by leadership (Dennison, 1996; Cameron & Smart, 1998; Johnsrud, 2002; Smart, 2003; Volkwein & Parmley, 2000). In
addition, studies confirm that organizational success in higher education is a by-product of a positive institutional climate (Bolman & Deal, 1991b, 1997, 2003). Thus, institutional climate is a predictor of success.

Often, institutional climate issues become apparent when other organizational challenges are present. All participants in the study felt some type of senior leadership reorganization was necessary to address challenging issues that were pervasive before they began their presidencies at their new community colleges. Figure 6 illustrates the connection between the triggers or challenges, and their impact on institutional climate.

![Figure 6. The Connection between Challenges and Institutional Climate Issues](image)

Thus, problems manifested in a college’s institutional climate underlie all the substantive triggers for change in this study. Comments illustrating this point-of-view by the participants included college turmoil and other issues such as poor morale and ineffectiveness; these were the reasons restructuring was needed. Specific statements are included in Table 26.
Table 26. Institutional Climate Issues Noted by Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LS</td>
<td>“When I got here I literally arrived with a total mess. . .the vice president for academic affairs was interim. And the interim had just been appointed. And the interim for the president, before I got here, was the vice president for administrative services. So he had a chance to sit in the president’s office, and then came back on my staff. . . .And then to complicate it, the rumor was, from the board to me, that the vice-president for student development was going to retire. . . .Quite interestingly, when I sat down to meet each of the staff . . . .and I met with the student affairs officer, I said to him I understand you’re leaving at the end of July. . . .And he said who told you I was leaving. . . .I have no such plan to retire.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-SMR</td>
<td>“There was a major problem to deal with, and that was a very unpopular Vice President of Instruction, who had right at the time the previous president left, restructured the instructional unit. . . .So I had to deal with that. . . .She just could not stay. She got a vote of no confidence.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-SMU</td>
<td>“I inherited a guy who, if he had stayed, we would have had issues because of the way he ran the place. . . .so the VP of business was developing all of the budgets, making all of the decisions, no input from anybody, no formal process, nothing. . . .”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LR</td>
<td>“So the first year, I had a major problem with two vice presidents who had created their own silos, one for student services and one for instruction.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only one participant shared the need to assess the college climate and culture before making changes to senior administration:

I decided to. . . . assess the culture. It was a difficult period because when I first arrived, people were getting over what they had experienced over the last three years. . . .instability. So there was a great deal of just distrust, disenchantment . . . .I said I’ve got to change this around (Pres-LU).

The assessment of institutional climate must have occurred quickly as this participant reorganized senior administration within the first two months of his presidency.
**Trigger 2: Attrition/retirements.** Attrition is the unpredictable or predictable reduction in an organization’s workforce. These reductions are normally realized through retirements, resignations, or terminations. Community colleges experience attrition and retirements of faculty, staff, and administrators and respond accordingly. In general, the resulting open positions may be filled, the area reorganized, job responsibilities shifted to another position, or positions may remain vacant in an effort to realize budgetary efficiencies and salary savings.

There has been a great deal of discussion and consternation concerning turnover and impending retirements in community college leadership. The literature revealed that there is a leadership crisis in community colleges (Duree, 2007; Weismann & Vaughn, 2007; Shultz, 2001). Not only are community college presidents retiring at an alarming rate, other key senior administrators are retiring as well (Duree, 2007).

Thus, it would be reasonable to expect the restructuring of senior administration in the early stages of a new presidency would be due to individuals leaving the institution for a variety of reasons, including retirement. However, only two of the six presidents made reference to the retirement of senior administrators as the impetus for restructuring. One president was addressing a regular voluntary retirement:

> And after I was here a few months, the vice-president of Student Affairs, who had been here eleven or twelve years, and who was a finalist for the presidency, told me he was going to retire. . . . so that opened up the opportunity for me to consider reorganization, restructuring (Pres-SMS).

This president utilized this opportunity to restructure senior administration by creating a new position, that of chief information officer. This high level position drew attention to the importance of technology, complementing the nature of the institution, which is a technical college.
In contrast, the second participant was dealing with the aftermath of a reorganization facilitated by a former vice president of instruction. In this case, the new president felt this very unpopular vice president of instruction had to be terminated:

. . . all hell was breaking loose that spring semester. So I had to deal with that . . . She could not stay. . . . And she was truly not the right person for that position. She was not good for this culture. Everything about her was just kind of grating on the faculty. . . . I think the culture is pretty important. You’ve got to get to know it; you’ve got to get to know the people (Pres-SMR).

Whether voluntary or forced, attrition of senior administrators prompted these presidents to reorganize senior administration at their new institutions.

**Trigger 3: Governance concerns.** The term, governance, is broadly defined as the rules and processes by which an organization operates. Community colleges rely on different types of governance process to effectively assist with the successful management and administration of the institution. The organizational governance structure facilitates the development of policies, procedures, and delineates the process of decision making.

Two of the participants experienced vastly different governance issues; as a result, both initiated changes to the senior administrative team. One indicated there was interference from members of the board of trustee when she first arrived, which created a climate of confusion and distrust. The other president, who was leading a multi-campus community college, was experiencing centralized control of all operations from the central office. This was adversely impacting the authority of the leaders of the campuses to govern over their respective colleges. This cumbersome oversight created frustration among employees who needed to wait longer periods of time for decisions to be made. In both cases, the presidents reorganized senior administration in an attempt to mitigate these governance issues.
**Trigger 4: Financial issues.** The ability to obtain sufficient funds to cover expenditures is the basic financial formula organizations rely on to ensure operations continue and missions are achieved. As community colleges operate as businesses in many respects, each must have adequate funding and financial resources to provide relevant programs that serve their communities. Funding is also germane in the development of new programs needed by the constituents they serve.

Limited funding from the states, taxpayers (concerned about increasing taxes as property values decline), and students (not eligible for financial aid and struggling to pay tuition bills) adversely impact the financial status of community colleges. In light of these financial challenges, interestingly only one of the participants stated that this was an issue. “When I arrived, there were financial issues. . . . so there was a need to provide savings because of the budget reductions. So what we’ve done is combine budget cuts with restructuring” (Pres-LR).

Lack of funding was forcing the institution to eliminate programs. As a result, the president reduced the number of academic divisions from five to two in order to facilitate economies of scale and cost reductions.

**Trigger 5: Accreditation findings.** The purpose of accreditation in higher education is to assure the public that programs provided by colleges and universities meet acceptable quality standards. Holding the status of accreditation provides colleges and universities the opportunity to offer federal financial aid in the form of grants and loans to students as a means of paying their tuition.

One community college president was faced with accreditation challenges and was struggling to improve systems, cited by recent accreditation reviewers, as weak. Specifically, this institution’s Title IV (financial aid) funding was at risk because of these weaknesses. The
president elected to reorganize senior administration as a way of addressing and improving this situation. “When I arrived, they had just completed an accreditation review, and were put on warning. The challenge has been how to address all the accreditation issues and building the structures, the systems that are consistent to meet accreditation standards. . . .so I’ve brought in new vice presidents” (Pres-SMU).

Changes Made to the Organizational Structure

Study participants were also asked to explain the changes that were made to senior-level administration after they assumed their new presidencies. This was to better understand the variety, complexity, and dimension (whether large or small) of the reorganizations made. Responses varied but were summarily based on two elements: (a) current college challenges and/or climate issues evident upon their arrival; and (b) their specific preference.

Within the small to medium-sized community colleges, most changes occurred in the academic and student affairs areas. Two presidents reorganized senior administration due to their personal preference. For example, Pres-SMS commented, “I wanted to restructure and put student affairs with academic affairs.” However, another president’s preference was the exact opposite, “I’ve never liked the EVP structure. . . .I decided I wanted to move to a vice-president model – vice-president of student services, vice president of instruction. . . .I knew I had to effect change on both sides” (Pres-SMU). One president of a small to medium-sized college instituted reorganization due to the issues he found present when she came to the institution:

. . . .there was a major problem to deal with, and that was a very unpopular Vice President of Instruction, who had right at the time the previous president left, restructured the instructional unit and moved from all division chairs reporting to the vice-president, to deans to whom the division chairs reported (Pres-SMR).

Presidents at the larger institutions found that triggers were personnel issues. For example, one personnel issue involved an administrator who had created silos in academic and
student affairs, or centralized decision making that proved cumbersome. This prompted the new presidents to make changes in these areas. They also tended to make personnel changes in other areas such as institutional advancement, continuing education, and workforce development. Responses illustrating these changes are highlighted in Table 27.

Table 27. Other Changes Made to Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LU</td>
<td>“. . . what I attempted to do was fortify the campus leadership. So we introduced the concept of campus presidents. And each campus president had a leadership team. So now the campuses, as opposed to the office of college services or the system office, are the core of the institution. Our organizational structure is now more bottom-up than it is top down. . . .The other thing I discovered was that there were people who were reporting up to vice-presidents. . . .who should have been reporting to another area.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LR</td>
<td>“So, the first year, I had a major problem with two vice-presidents who had created their own silos, one for student services and one for instruction. And caught in this massive chasm between the two of them were the students. . . .we had a dean of workforce development in continuing education. That is an area that needed restructuring badly. With the person in place, nothing happened. . . .that area needed a different kind of focus.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LS</td>
<td>“The academic affairs officer obviously had to be replaced. . . .we recognized that the VP of student development, also, they were two positions that we absolutely needed to keep. . . .then the third position that I came up with. . . .was institutional advancement. . . .so I created a vice-president for institutional advancement position.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The challenges faced by the community colleges created institutional climate issues that precipitated changes to senior management as a means of dealing with these problems. The severity of these challenges and climate issues ranged from challenging (subtle) to dysfunctional (severe).
The literature revealed when organizational change is required by an institution, two types of organizational change can be employed by the president or chief executive officer. These two types of organizational change are total quality management (TQM) and business process reengineering (BPR). Prompting the decision as to which type is most appropriate for the situation is the severity or complexity of challenges and issues. TQM is commonly associated with incremental or subtle change, whereas BPR involves radical, severe, ground-breaking change which often requires complementary cultural or organizational paradigm shifts. Thus, routine minor challenges lead to incremental changes such as those associated with TQM, while major or acute challenges lead to revolutionary changes prescribed by BPR practices.

Thus, it is the perceived severity of the challenge or trigger which serves to define the intensity of the change, and also whether TQM or BPR change was necessary. Table 28 provides trigger examples which could precipitate either TQM-type changes or BPR-type changes using the five triggers cited by the participants.
Table 28. Examples of TQM and BPR Changes Using the Five Triggers Cited by the Study Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>TQM Change Needed</th>
<th>BPR Change Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accreditation Findings</td>
<td>Minor findings that require a follow-up report or visit by accrediting body</td>
<td>Significant findings that threaten Title IV funding and transferability of credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attrition</td>
<td>Normal retirements or separations resulting from senior administrators acquiring positions at other institutions</td>
<td>Forced retirements or separations to accommodate new direction or poor job performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Confusing governance processes and organizational structures in need of improvement or revision</td>
<td>Ineffective governance processes and organizational structures in need of complete change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Issues</td>
<td>Minor financial issues that do not adversely impact the institution as a whole</td>
<td>Major financial issues that adversely impact the institution as a whole and prompt reorganizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Climate</td>
<td>Challenging institutional climate that causes frustration and angst but does not prompt effective administrators to leave the institution voluntarily</td>
<td>Dysfunctional institutional climate that forces effective administrators to voluntarily separate from the institution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the participants indicated that changes to senior administration were necessary as a means of resolving issues and challenges they encountered at their new institutions. The magnitude of the issues and challenges precipitated the type of change that was needed. TQM, or subtle and incremental change, was used by one participant in response to normal attrition that was occurring due to a retirement. This, in turn, caused organizational angst and institutional climate issues as employees anticipated changes that would occur as a result of this pending retirement. This president was able to slowly and intentionally facilitate change so that there were no disruptions to operations, and angst was minimized.
The other participants articulated substantive issues and challenges that prompted them to implement BPR-style changes. These included accreditation findings that threatened Title IV funding, forced attrition where individuals were terminated, acute governance issues that left faculty and staff feeling ignored and trustees interfering with operations, and financial weaknesses that prompted a thorough review of staffing levels and organizational structures as a means of realizing efficiencies. Episodic change, synonymous with BPR, was necessary in these cases as a strategy to refocus the institution. Restructuring of senior administration in an episodic manner was how these participants dealt with these situations.

It was the presidents who decided, based on their assessments of the challenges facing the institution and climate issues, which type of change was necessary. Their actions, in terms of how the changes were facilitated, depicted either TQM or BPR processes. The subtle characteristics of TQM changes result in less angst while BPR, by its revolutionary nature, causes a great deal of consternation. Thus, although it is important to understand and lend a deeper understanding as to why changes to senior administration are necessary when a new president is appointed at a community college, it is equally as important for new presidents to acknowledge and understand that change itself is disconcerting and often highly disruptive, particularly if it is perceived to be episodic in nature.

**Processes Used to Facilitate Changes to Senior Administration**

The participants in the study were asked to articulate the processes they used to facilitate change to senior administration at their new community colleges. In addition, because they had served previously as community college presidents, the participants were asked how their past experiences informed their decisions to restructure senior administration.
The Change Process

The literature revealed that research conducted by Dr. John Kotter, from Harvard University, is considered the seminal work on change. Kotter (1996) detailed eight essential steps that are germane to effective change processes. These eight steps were used to code and analyze the data obtained from the study participants.

An overview of each of Kotter’s (1996) steps is provided in sequential order. Then, comments, thoughts and perceptions articulated by the participants as they pertain to each step are presented and discussed.

Step 1: Establishing a sense of urgency. Kotter’s (1996) first step involves examining the current environment and realities. This serves to expose current and potential opportunities, challenges, and threats. All but one of the presidents who participated in the study were dealing with urgent and critical issues and challenges when they arrived at their institutions. These challenges created a sense of urgency and need for action. The presidents, in turn, initiated changes to senior administration as a means of dealing with these challenges. As one participant noted:

When I got here I literally arrived with a total mess. . . . the college had some very, very flush years with a lot of money coming in, and some very bad decisions made with the use of that money. . . . And I think the other thing is there was certainly a sense of urgency created by the fact that I had two interim people when I got here and a third one looking to leave anyway. . . . So, there was a sense of urgency based on the volatility of the senior staff (Pres-LS).

This sense of urgency prompted the presidents to make changes quickly. One president stated, “You have to do it [change] quickly when you first arrive. I had kind of assessed the current environment and discovered that people were essentially dissatisfied with how the college was set up” (Pres-LU). The challenges identified when they began presidencies at their new institutions varied. For one president, a financial crises was deemed particularly pressing, as
is noted in the following quote, “When you have a fiscal crisis, then everything’s fair game, and it gives you an opportunity to say let’s do it differently” (Pres-LR).

Two presidents noted several challenges that prompted a significant sense of urgency. One participant articulated the complexity, as well as the breadth and depth of all the challenges she first encountered as follows:

There were some things that were really bad. The administration not being trusted by the faculty, especially, and some real negative impressions of the environment. . . . We were in audit trouble, and were about to get Department of Ed program review, we were threatened with losing financial aid eligibility. . . . We have other accreditation issues, having to do with off-campus instruction. . . . We had budget reductions. . . . The other thing is just the fact that the workforce training center was operating as its own college. . . . We were way overstaffed in workforce training (Pres-SMR).

Thus, five of the six participants concurred with Kotter’s first step and felt there was this sense of urgency driven by the number and severity of the clear challenges present. However, this first step surrounding a sense of urgency was not apparent at one institution where the participant felt the institution was functioning effectively before she arrived.

Finally, the role of the board of trustees is essential to many community college changes initiatives. This group is primarily charged with ensuring the college mission is met by means of the following: (a) setting direction by formulating policy; and (b) hiring and evaluating the president. It is the integral and complex combination of these two charges which ensures that colleges are led by effective senior administrators. One participant candidly stated, “You’ve got a board of trustees that’s said. . . . just do it and we will back you all the way…And the Board was great. They supported me one hundred percent” (Pres-SMR).

There is no doubt that new community college presidents are hired by boards of trustees to address challenges and weaknesses facing their institutions. This study affirmed that this occurred at the majority of the institutions involved in this research. Not surprisingly, dealing
with challenges and weaknesses provoked action by the presidents. One such action is changing senior administrative structures and identifying individuals who can assist the new president in dealing with these challenges, activating their vision, and realizing a successful change agenda.

**Step 2: Forming a powerful guiding coalition.** The second step to effective change includes forming a powerful guiding coalition (Kotter, 1996). Four of the six study participants engaged a group of individuals, a team, who were instrumental in facilitating needed changes to senior administration at their colleges. The composition of these groups varied. Some were comprised of board members, others by administrators, and some included faculty. Regardless of the composition, according to Kotter’s second step, it is essential that the group assembled has the energy and authority to lead the change effort. Also, key to this step is the tight collaboration and cohesiveness of the team. One president succinctly explained this important step:

> We pulled together an advisory team that really formed consensus around what I really needed to do. . . . So we figured out a way to ensure that there was widespread participation without engaging in anything that is overly hierarchical in terms of an organizational structure (Pres-LU).

Not uncommon, one participant was advised by current senior administrators as to who should be involved in the change process, and was even given suggestions regarding the process. This president stated, “The senior staff that were in place told me who they thought I should meet with. . . . So, it was department meetings, union meetings, meetings with groups that were pretty big on campus” (Pres-LS).

It was apparent that the community colleges in the study firmly believed in shared governance. Therefore, involvement of the faculty in these crucial change decisions was deemed important. Another participant recognized this, “I’ve talked with the faculty senate. . . . I’ve tried not to just go in and say this needs to be changed. . . . and this needs to be done” (Pres-LR).
Of the two presidents that did not complete this step, the reasons given were strikingly different. One participant did not do so because there were no urgent issues facing the college upon their arrival. The second, whose college had serious issues forged ahead without building this guiding cohesive coalition. Interestingly, this institution has been fraught with high turnover in the administrative ranks after the president began his tenure. This president moved very quickly (within the first month) to make changes to the senior administrative structure. It is difficult to assemble a guiding coalition, as prescribed by Kotter, when change is occurring so quickly. One must wonder then if the high turnover prompted these quick actions or if the quick actions caused the high turnover of senior administrative staff.

Although the participants identified different compositions of these teams or constituent groups, forming a guiding coalition was acknowledged by most as an integral part of the change process. This step is particularly important because change is difficult to administer by one person. A guiding coalition that is familiar with the culture, climate, and history of the institution is germane to a successful change agenda. Though not specifically stated, it was alluded to in the suggestion of who to include in the group that it was important that those with social capital within the institution serve in this capacity. In this instance, social capital means close connections within and between different constituent groups. It is vital to have these individuals serve in the guiding coalition that will facilitate change because they have earned the trust of those around them. Formulating the correct guiding coalition allows the change process to move forward and builds credibility and acceptance, as it actively assists the president.

**Step 3: Creating a vision for change.** The third essential step identified by Kotter (1996), is creating a vision. The vision must be clear and simple to express. In adhering to these
tenets, it should therefore direct the change effort and lead to cohesive strategies that drive the change agenda.

All six participants created a vision as they arrived at their new institutions. This vision solidified the need for changes that would be made to senior administration. One participant created that vision after a key senior administrator announced their retirement. The others changed the senior administrative ranks at their new institutions as a means of activating their visions, as well as mitigating challenges.

Two participants had created a vision focused on student learning as a means to direct the senior leadership change effort. This focus provided the impetus to change administrative structures at the senior-most level. This new configuration of senior leaders would provide the leadership and oversight for a seamless student experience and improved student learning activities. One president succinctly stated, “We reestablished our strategic priorities for the institution, focusing on the learning-centered nature of the institution” (Pres-LU). Another participant needed to affect change between instruction and student support services to improve the student experience. These areas were not operating effectively and were cited as such during an accreditation visit. This feeling is evident by his statement, “I knew I had to affect change on both sides. . . . student services. . . . and instruction” (Pres-SMU).

As state resources decline, community colleges are forced to do more with static and diminishing resources. Even though financial distress is occurring at the majority of community colleges, surprisingly only one president shared that their vision was centered on budget challenges. She stated there was “. . . a need to provide a savings because of the budget reduction. . . . the budget was leading. And then we had individuals who were not working . . . who were resting on the job” (Pres-LR).
One community college was struggling with a difficult situation where an entrepreneurial administrator, responsible for workforce development, had created an independent presence within the community. Although this workforce development unit was considered as an integral part of educational programming at the institution, due to the oversight of one senior administrator it was operating as a separate entity and failed to comply with college-wide policies and practices. For example, the administrator had created a separate logo and marketing campaign for workforce development, and failed to comply with standard college procurement procedures. Thus, the president explained that the college’s new vision was to address this issue and reunite the college, “Part of it was to make this one college, not two separate entities” (Pres-SMR).

One president presided over a diverse multi-campus community college system and was dealing with governance issues that needed to be addressed through restructuring of the senior administrative team. “I attempted to fortify the campus leadership. So we introduced the concept of campus presidents. And each of the campuses have a leadership team. So, now the campuses as opposed to the ... system office are the core” (Pres-LU). He felt this change created a bottom-up, rather than top-down structure offering these newly created campus administrators the opportunity to address opportunities and challenges locally which can only be beneficial to the organization.

One participant created the vision for changing the senior administrative structure around the overall mission of the institution. This was a technical college and the president felt that the importance of information technology needed to be reflected more prominently in the organizational structure. The president strongly viewed information technology as critical to the internal operations of the institution and also understood that technology supported instructional
programs. These programs were all technical in nature and thus the institution was heavily invested in computer technology in many forms. The president believed that information technology needed additional prominence within the organizational structure to illustrate its importance and relevance. This vision was formulated after a key senior administrator retirement that permitted the president to promote the senior information technology administrator to a cabinet position. The new president’s vision was to elevate the stature of this important function, “...and that had to do with information technology. ...As a technical college, it should be front and center in terms of having our systems, our processes, our equipment. ...the best we could” (Pres-SMS).

Creating a clear and relevant vision is instrumental in creating a common cause for change. Although the participants articulated a variety of visions, those visions were focused on the challenges at hand. Thus, there is no single common overarching vision that is critical to this step, but rather one that is relevant and germane to the institution.

**Step 4: Communicating the vision.** Though creating a vision is critical in the change process, it must be communicated. Kotter’s fourth step includes using a variety of methods and channels to communicate the vision, which needs to be shared clearly and often. As the vision is communicated and thus serves as the impetus to action, new behaviors emerge, particularly as they are embraced by the guiding cohesive coalition.

All six participants explained how they articulated their vision for the institution. However, their methods for doing so varied. The three presidents from large institutions explained their communication processes as they shared their vision and initiated change. Rather than communicating in an episodic manner, they did so regularly and in multiple venues. They also stressed their reliance on members of the guiding collation, the team, to help disseminate
information. This aligns with Kotter’s step four recommendation regarding communication.

Participants from the large institutions shared the ways in which they communicated their visions with their new institutions, which is included in Table 29.

Table 29. Methods Used in Communicating the Vision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LU</td>
<td>“We have periodic updates with our staff and faculty, which I’m responsible for. . . .I’ve chosen to do it on a relational basis, which is kind of a tenant of what we call the matrix management system . . . .we have the college-wide council, which is made up of managers that report to vice-presidents and above.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LS</td>
<td>“At the semester kickoff meetings, we spend a lot of time talking about initiatives.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LR</td>
<td>I do a monthly, or weekly now, because everything’s changing so fast, webcast. And I just put information out.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the use of communication tools such as email and organizational intranets are prevalent, almost common today, of these three presidents from larger institutions, only one president utilized technology to provide information on an ongoing basis, which was surprising.

Participants from small/medium size institutions communicated their visions in a more personal and informal manner. Rather than large forums and webcasts, presidents from the small/medium institutions relied on small group interactions and one-on-one meetings. The relatively smaller sizes of these institutions made this form of communication possible.

Regardless of the venue or style, it is vital that the vision be communicated in an authentic manner that is meaningful to those receiving the information. Communication should be frequent using a variety of channels to maximize the reach. As new presidents arrive on their
Step 5: Empowering others to act on the vision. Once the vision has been communicated and understood, action is required. Thus, individuals must be empowered to act on that vision. Kotter (1996) explains this involves eliminating obstacles, changing systems that undermine the vision, and encouraging risk-taking or non-traditional ideas, activities, and actions by those involved in ensuring the vision is realized.

One president explained that empowering others to act on the vision involved a collaborative environment. Specifically, he stated “The management team...they work together, and they ensure that policies are implemented...Our academic deans have a body, so do our student affairs deans. And they all lead together...and they’re held accountable” (Pres-LU). This common purpose united these groups around a meaningful theme. The added element of accountability provides a sense of ownership of the vision which closely aligns with Kotter’s fifth step.

The other presidents did not articulate their efforts to empower others to act on the vision. In general, their ability to do so was impeded by ongoing turnover at the senior administrative level that needed to be addressed. Most of the turnover experienced was voluntary; senior administrators were leaving to accept positions with greater responsibility at other institutions or were retiring. Even though the majority of study participants were not able to accomplish this step, they all believed that it was paramount to address the senior administration turnover issue first. This is key because without the proper personnel in place, this step is difficult, if not impossible to implement.
Step 6: Planning for and creating short-term wins. As individuals begin acting on the new vision, it is important to assess the progress, and plan for and acknowledge improvements or in many cases, “wonderful successes.” According to Kotter (1996) this requires systematically analyzing performance (assessment) to determine if the change is yielding the desired results. If the results are positive, the employees involved in the improvements should be recognized and rewarded.

None of the participants indicated they engaged in this step, either the assessment piece or in the celebration of short-term “wins” or successes. Rather, these presidents continued to address issues that were adversely impacting their institutions. This ongoing turmoil prevented meaningful celebrations of successes. Kotter feels to be successful in implementing change, there is a need to recognize and reward progress in implementing a vision in a meaningful and public manner. Perhaps failure to implement this step may be contributing to turnover and other institutional challenges.

Step 7: Consolidating improvements and sustaining the momentum for change. Kotter’s research affirmed that it is important to reinvigorate the process of change with new projects, themes, and change agents. It is step seven in which Kotter shares his belief for continuation of the momentum for change which is facilitated by short-term wins. This is a crucial resultant outcome of step six because once short-term wins have been acknowledged the credibility of the change effort has been established. This allows the organization to bask in the feeling that it has been successful and other change initiatives can bring about similar successes.

Only one of the six participants felt they had completed this step. The vision created by the new president had been cultivated and resulted in the establishment of additional priorities at the college:
Over the course of the last two-and-a-half years, we developed... priorities for the institution. We have one for student learning outcomes. We have one for facilities. We have one for IT. We have one for marketing. We have one for fundraising (Pres-LU).

Yet, this president did not complete the previous step (Step 6) which was to plan for and acknowledge short-term wins. The question becomes, will new priorities, tasks, or endeavors be successful without the public affirmation that short-term wins have been realized? According to Kotter (1996), success is difficult to achieve if even one step of his eight steps for change is missed. Thus, it is imperative to validate success which, in turn, establishes a feeling of organizational momentum which then allows new processes to become embedded within the organization so they become the norm. This step serves to sustain the desired state and creates an environment that is conducive to additional improvements in processes and policies.

**Step 8: Institutionalizing the new approaches.** The final step in Kotter’s (1996) process is accomplished when the change becomes embedded within the culture of the institution. New behaviors emerge that are clearly connected to the success of the vision and thus the institution. As such, the sense of urgency has been addressed, the vision established and implemented, short-term wins celebrated, and momentum created, all leading to a feeling that the new priorities and challenges which have emerged can be successfully addressed. Thus, these new behaviors, values, and beliefs are embedded within the culture and climate of the institution and become second nature.

However, none of the participants indicated that the new structures had become embedded within their institutions. This could be attributed to their relative short tenure as newly appointed presidents at their institutions. All six participants responded that restructuring was an ongoing and iterative process. Table 30 summarizes their responses.
Table 30. **Responses to the Ongoing Nature of Senior Administrative Reorganizations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LU</td>
<td>“I think the other thing is a kind of understanding through trial and error and fits and starts.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LS</td>
<td>“I believe right now that my senior staff – the group that I call the senior leadership team – we are not functioning well at all. And some changes have to be made. And those changes are in process.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LR</td>
<td>“We’re still evolving. And it’s going to take more time to see what’s really going to be the effective thing for us.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-SMU</td>
<td>“I’ve had three vice-presidents of business, and changed out all my deans . . . I’ve never been in a place with so much turnover. . . . I’ve spent the last few years building. . . . a management team. . . . some due to retirement, some moved onto bigger and better things.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-SMS</td>
<td>“Well, we’ve had a variety of iterations.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-SMR</td>
<td>“But I also found out that people perceived that I had brought a lot of changes to the college even before the whole workforce training thing.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rather than institutionalizing changes, the participants indicated that modifications to senior staff were ongoing. In essence, this became an iterative process as the presidents continued to modify and adjust their structures.

Noted Harvard professor, Dr. John Kotter’s eight-step change process is considered the seminal work on effective change within organizations and thus very germane to community colleges. Table 31 summarizes the steps used by the participants when facilitating changes to senior administration, in relation to these eight steps for effective change.
Table 31. *Processes Used in Reorganizing Senior Administration*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kotter’s Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Pres-LU</th>
<th>Pres-LS</th>
<th>Pres-LR</th>
<th>Pres-SMU</th>
<th>Pres-SMS</th>
<th>Pres-SMR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Establishing a sense of urgency</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Forming a powerful guiding coalition</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Creating a vision for change</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Communicating the vision</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Empowering others to act on the vision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Planning for and creating short-term wins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Consolidating improvements and sustaining momentum for change</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Institutionalizing the new approaches</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table illustrates that four of the participants accomplished the first four steps, the most steps completed was six of the eight, and the least was two steps. Rather than utilizing these eight steps, the participants only completed a few of Kotter’s steps.

It is worth noting that the president from the small-medium suburban community college (Pres-SMS) only completed two steps which were to create a vision and communicate it. Interestingly, this is the only president who initiated TQM or subtle evolutionary change. The
other participants completed three or more steps in the process. Their changes were deemed to be more like BPR or radical revolutionary change. Thus, Kotter’s eight steps for effective change were not holistically utilized by the participants in the study; only two to six steps were used with two steps not being used at all.

**Influence of Previous Experience**

The participants in the study were seasoned community college presidents who changed senior administrative structures within the first year of their new presidencies. These changes were initiated to address challenges faced by their new institutions and to assist these presidents in achieving their visions. Analysis of the interview transcripts revealed that none of the participants in the study utilized each and every step of Kotter’s (1996) eight-step change process even though extensive research has shown use of these eight steps is critical for effective and successful change in organizations, large and small. Kotter repeatedly asserts skipping any of the steps in an effort to speed up the process adversely impacts the change agenda. This caveat implies not only that his change process is rather linear in scope, but also adequate time is needed to complete all the steps.

Since these presidents made changes to senior administrative structures quickly (within the first year) and did not employ all the steps of Kotter’s change process, they must have relied on other methods, processes, or practices. When the presidents were asked the extent to which they relied on their previous experience to inform decisions regarding restructuring senior administration at their new institutions, most indicated previous experience was germane to these decisions. This use of heuristics, or cognitive shortcuts, allows individuals to rely on past experiences to make decisions. Interestingly, all six participants offered similar responses when
asked how much their previous experience influenced decisions made at their current institutions. Common phrases illustrating their responses are included in Table 32.

**Table 32. Influence of Previous Experience**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LU</td>
<td>“Everything. . . I had a rich foundation to build upon.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LS</td>
<td>“Obviously the experience I had. . . it adds to your toolbox of skills and experiences, and helps you take a good look at everything.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-SMU</td>
<td>“I came in with my set of experiences.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-SMR</td>
<td>“You know there are lessons learned that I can transfer but one of those lesson learned that I can transfer is that I can’t transfer everything.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The use of heuristics permitted study participants to analyze the issue and review possible solutions based on their past experiences to quickly put a solution in place. Gigerenzer, and his colleagues in their research, discovered that heuristics were equally as effective and, in many cases, more effective than traditional methods of decision making (Gigerenzer & Selten, 2001). Though quite the opposite of Kotter’s research which prescribes a systematic process, heuristics have been proven to be as effective as carefully crafted decision making strategies. Clearly, though the participants utilized some of Kotter’s steps, they heavily supplemented those decisions with the knowledge acquired from their previous experiences as community college presidents.

**Evaluating the Effectiveness of Changes to Senior Administration**

It is logical to wonder if the organizational changes facilitated by these presidents were successful and effective. In this regard, the presidents were asked if the new organizational structures were effective and what lessons were learned from this experience.
A distinguishing feature between organizations that effectively instituted change and those that did not in Kotter’s (1996) research was the methodical and intentional use of all eight critical steps. One would then assume that if the participants did not use each of Kotter’s eight steps, the changes made to senior administration at their institutions would be ineffective or at least not as effective as they could have been. Yet, all but one participant indicated that their change efforts were effective. The specific responses to the question pertaining to the effectiveness of the changes are summarized in Table 33.

Table 33. Effectiveness of the Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LU</td>
<td>“It’s working. Concern about involvement has been diminished.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LS</td>
<td>“We are not functioning well at all...I don’t think culture of the institution...can be overlooked. ...I should have had an outside consultant come in and look at the structure as contrasted to my coming in with the ideas that I had framed.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-LR</td>
<td>“I think the structure is effective. I think yes. We have the right people that can take us where we need to go.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-SMU</td>
<td>“The structure is...about being efficient...the current structure is working because we have the right people in the right places with the right skill sets and backgrounds.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-SMS</td>
<td>“I’m very happy with the changes.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres-SMR</td>
<td>“It’s working very well. The college as a whole is happier with it.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strikingly common among all participants were the findings of how assessment of the effectiveness of these changes was accomplished. This assessment was made by the presidents themselves based on their view that the challenges facing their new institutions had been mitigated by the new structure. Thus, the sole criterion used in assessing the effectiveness of the
changes made to senior administration was diminishing or eliminating these challenges or triggers. The improvements noted most often included increased efficiencies, improved working culture, and increased collaboration within senior administration.

It was found that none of the participants engaged in a systematic assessment that included feedback from others, particularly those impacted by the changes. This more inclusive type of feedback is essential because individuals are impacted by change in a myriad of ways including collegial relationships with colleagues, working relations with subordinates, and professional association with superiors. In addition to its impact on relationships, change or worrying about the possibility of change, influences a person’s creativity, problem solving, and ability to think strategically. If senior administrators affected by change or worrying about the change undertaken by the new president become agitated, unhappy, or concerned for their jobs, those feelings are then superimposed on those who work for them. As a result, an exponentially large number of employees become distracted and productivity suffers. These factors contribute to the negative climate frequently experienced during change initiatives.

The one participant who confided that the change agenda was not effective reflected on the importance of considering culture, or the human element, in change initiatives. This president stated that their community college was not functioning well. Interestingly, this was the only president who articulated that there were lessons learned from the reorganization. The other five participants, all of whom felt the changes to senior administration were effective, mentioned they were satisfied with the results and there were no lessons learned. They stated further that if the opportunity presented itself again, they would make the same decisions and changes.

The president who felt the changes were not effective mentioned that the culture of the institution, an important human factor, had been overlooked and that a consultant may have been
helpful in assessing cultural issues. Additional research conducted by Kotter and Dan Cohen, a principal with Deloitte Consulting in 2002, revealed that for change to be effective there needs to be a more deliberate focus on the human element. This includes acknowledging the feelings of those affected by the change. The importance of recognizing feelings and other human characteristics throughout the change process is reinforced by other researchers of successful change. Similarly, a book by bestselling authors Chip and Dan Heath, entitled *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard*, provides a more encompassing approach to identifying key factors that lead to successful change. The primary assertions made by the Heaths center on human efforts to balance both the emotional and rational sides of change for it to be effective.

Newly appointed presidents need to be cognizant of the human factor when changing organizational structures. That human factor includes the willingness of the presidents to acknowledge and admit that changes may not be working and adjustments are needed. As these presidents appoint new senior administrators, there is a human tendency to support these individuals even if improvements are not occurring or performance is subpar. True assessment includes an objective and honest review to determine if additional changes are necessary.

**Chapter Summary**

Analysis of the data revealed that the study participants changed the senior administration at their new institutions within the first year of their new presidencies. These changes were prompted by a myriad of challenges. Forced attrition, weaknesses in governance, financial issues, accreditation findings, and most institutional climate issues were deemed severe and necessitated business process reengineering (BPR) type changes. On the other hand, it seemed that normal attrition of senior administrators through retirements prompted subtle total quality management (TQM) type changes.
None of the study participants completed all of Kotter’s steps eight steps to facilitate a plan for change. They also relied on past experience or heuristics to guide the decisions surrounding changes to senior administration. Thus, an established plan for change and methods for assessing effectiveness was not used. In spite of this, five of the six participants indicated the changes were effective in that they mitigated the challenges their institutions were facing.

On the other hand, the president from the small-medium suburban community college (Pres-SMS) only completed two steps which were to create a vision and communicate it. That vision was to draw more prominence to the technical nature of the institution through the reorganization process. This president was also the only participant in the study that implemented TQM, or more evolutionary-type changes. The other participants completed three or more steps in the process, and all were deemed as implementing BPR, or more revolutionary-type changes. This correlated to the types of challenges they were dealing with upon arriving at their new community colleges.

Ongoing, systemic change allows an organization to respond to internal and external factors that could adversely affect its viability and success. It is important for community college leaders to recognize that change is inevitable in today’s environment and that change involving senior administrators needs to be thoughtfully planned and carefully assessed to determine if additional adjustments are needed. It is also imperative for new presidents to become more aware that change causes anxiety, which can be mitigated if approached with logic, compassion, and understanding.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This qualitative study explored changes made to senior administration by seasoned community college presidents who assumed presidencies at different institutions. Participants of the study were located throughout the United States at institutions of varying sizes. The triggers prompting changes to senior administrative structures, the processes used in facilitating these changes, and their effectiveness were reviewed and analyzed. The perspectives and processes articulated by the participants were relevant and insightful in addressing the purpose of this research and answering the driving questions. This final chapter will provide: (a) a brief summary of chapters 1 through 5, which established the contextual lens for the research findings; (b) a summary of the findings and implications for practice, which are organized by the driving questions; (c) a recommended iterative change management process, the six-step Coons Change Management Model; and (d) recommendations for further research.

Chapter 1 provided a brief review of the issue, an introduction of the purpose of the research, and articulated the driving questions of the study. Brief overviews of the study design and related literature were also included. The significance of the findings was discussed. These findings will assist future presidents who are assuming roles in new institutions, as they initiate reengineering in a manner that minimizes disruptions, and prompts meaningful and needed change.

A review of the literature was presented in chapter 2. The historical context of the study focused on the evolution of the community college, and in particular, the roles and responsibilities of the president. TQM-type evolutionary and BPR-type revolutionary changes
were compared and contrasted. Kotter’s eight steps for effective change were summarized and presented as a priori themes. Finally, the concept of heuristics was defined as an effective decision making strategy.

Chapter 3 provided a detailed description of the research design which was a case study. The design was described including case selection, data collection pilot, and informed consent of the participants. Particular attention was given to the case selection process and the participant contact protocol because of its importance to the study. A detailed description of the researcher as research instrument provided a transparent view of this important facet to qualitative research. The chapter also discussed the importance of trustworthiness, reliability, validity, rigor, and the researcher as the research tool.

Chapter 4 described the data collection process and summarized the data gathered for the study. Multiple data sources were used including semi-structured interviews, documents, and field notes. Tables were used to summarize the data, which allowed key themes to emerge. Also included was a discussion of how data analysis would be accomplished using the a priori themes garnered from the theories and concepts. These included contrasting TQM- and BPR-type changes, Kotter’s eight steps for effective change, and heuristics as a form of decision making.

The presentation and analysis of the data are provided in chapter 5. Rich, thick data gathered from multiple sources were presented in quotations and tables. These data were subsequently discussed and analyzed. The analysis of the perspectives and information provided by the study participants was the basis of the research findings, conclusions, and implications for future community college presidents.
Findings and Implications

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore what precipitates the reengineering of administrative structures by presidents new to their positions at community colleges, the processes used in implementing the change, and assessment of the reengineering process.

**Driving Question 1:** What indicators precipitate reengineering administrative structures in community colleges by presidents new to the organization?

It is apparent from the participants in the study that reengineering senior administration was necessary to address the issues affecting the community college before they began their presidencies. Although not new to the role of community college president, these presidents assumed like roles at different institutions. Descriptive statements about the issues and challenges facing their new institutions were similar from those at large and small/medium institutions, as well as those located in urban, suburban, and rural settings. The presidents became aware of these challenges quickly through various means, and responded by reengineering senior administrative structures within the first year of their presidencies.

Substantive triggers prompting revamping of senior administration identified by the participants fell into five categories: (a) accreditation findings; (b) attrition of senior administrators; (c) governance issues; (d) financial challenges of the college; and (e) institutional organizational climate and cultural issues. Though these were seen by participants in various degrees of influence on the college, these five prompted the reengineering of senior administrative structures.

As a result of these five indicators or triggers, all study participants believed changes to senior administration were necessary as a means of resolving these issues and challenges. It was
the magnitude of the problems which precipitated the type of change required. Two primary types of changes were utilized: (a) total quality management (TQM) which involved subtle and incremental change, and (b) business process reengineering (BPR) which involved episodic and more radical substantive changes.

The perceived degree of severity of these challenges by those assuming a new presidency promoted initiation of either TQM (for subtle evolutionary change) or BPR (for radical episodic change). These changes can be plotted on a continuum as illustrated in Figure 7.

![Figure 7: The Continuum of Triggers Prompting Senior Administration Reengineering](image)

**Implications for Community Colleges**

Most often, boards of trustees appoint new community college presidents as a means of fostering change within the institution. As they assume their presidencies, these leaders quickly assess the current environment and create a vision for the institution. Addressing challenges and creating a vision regularly lead to reengineering of senior administration.

Incoming presidents must diligently and systematically gather data and information on the challenges facing their new institutions. While it may be important to move swiftly in this regard, it is also imperative that new presidents thoroughly assess the situation before initiating change. Although the board of trustees may be anxious for the new president to move quickly, due diligence in gathering data and information is time well spent.
Community colleges share similar challenges or triggers which may precipitate administrative reengineering. As such, two elements must be taken into account before any new administrative structure is instituted. The first is the understanding that each college is distinctive and therefore, the new organizational structure must be tempered by the uniqueness of the college. The second is the thoughtful acknowledgement that change itself is stressful, disruptive, and creates great upheaval throughout the organization, even though only the senior administrative structure is reengineered.

Often it is forgotten that each organization is unique. These unique qualities are a result, and thus a reflection, of the organizational culture and climate, and must be recognized. Therefore, it is imperative that new presidents gather information and data on key organizational characteristics and attributes from as many people as possible. Gathering information, insights, ideas, and suggestions from employees at all levels throughout the institution can only enhance the understanding of college issues. This conscientious endeavor can prevent a myopic viewpoint, which may occur if the information is only provided by those holding senior positions at the college.

New presidents must quickly discover the unique qualities of the community college. Some helpful information might include: (a) how are organizational decisions made; (b) how and in what ways do college employees collaborate regarding the business of the college; (c) what are the effective mechanisms for communications and information dissemination; and (d) how do employees contribute to institutional objectives. This information will provide insight into the attitudes, customs, and beliefs, which is critical to understanding the climate and culture of the institution, as change is initiated to the senior administrative structure.
Driving Question 2: How is the administrative reengineering process implemented in community colleges by the new president?

Unquestionably, change in an organization is needed for it to remain vital. It is well known that successful change initiatives are a result of a thoughtful process, such as that created by Kotter (1996) in his eight-step change process. However, little is known as to whether higher education institutions, when engaging in change, undertake such an endeavor in a logical, systematic, and thoughtful process. The study gathered data and information from individuals assuming a new community college presidency, to explore their processes for instituting change to their senior administrative team.

It was found that none of the participants in this study utilized all eight steps of Kotter’s change process. Kotter believed that in order for change to be effective, all eight steps must be completed. However, findings from this research found this was not the case. Even though all steps were not used, all but one participant indicated their change initiatives were successful.

These participants were seasoned community college presidents who made changes to senior administrative structures quickly (within the first year). Rather than employing all the steps of Kotter’s change process, the participants relied on previous experience to inform decisions regarding modifications to senior administration at their new institutions. This use of heuristics, or cognitive shortcuts, allowed the presidents to rely on past experiences to make decisions. Though quite different from Kotter’s research, which prescribes a systematic process, heuristics have been proven to be as effective as carefully crafted decision making strategies. Clearly, though the participants utilized some of Kotter’s steps, they heavily supplemented those decisions with the knowledge acquired from their previous experiences as community college presidents.
It was also found that modifying and making changes to senior administrative structures was an ongoing process. These presidents continued to make adjustments due to personnel retirements and resignations. As a result, change to senior administrative structures was not static and fixed, but rather an iterative and dynamic process.

**Implications for Community Colleges**

Newly appointed community college presidents will undoubtedly make modifications to the senior administrative structures at their new institutions. In doing so, a systematic process should be used. This process does not need to incorporate all eight steps in Kotter’s (1996) methodology. But, it should include steps offering multiple avenues to understand the specific community college’s culture and history, as well as ongoing communications with all employees that explain the logical reasons why the changes are needed and how they will be facilitated.

For the institution to operate smoothly and seamlessly, the new president must also thoroughly assess the situation and clearly communicate why changes are needed. This transparency and clarity will allow senior administrators to make effective decisions that are not clouded by fear. Senior administrators need to be aware that change will be ongoing and that resiliency is needed.

As seasoned community college presidents rely on past experiences to inform decisions at their new institutions, these leaders need to be cognizant that organizational cultures differ. What worked at one institution may not be feasible or advantageous at another. Simply superimposing past practices may even impede the change agenda. It may be more appropriate to analyze the current situation to determine if there are past practices that could be adapted and utilized effectively. This is preferable to relying on intuition and processes that may not be effective at a new institution with a unique institutional culture.
Driving Question 3: *How and in what ways does the new president evaluate the process of reengineering?*

Participants of the study did not formally evaluate the effectiveness of the reengineering of senior administrative structures. The presidents determined effectiveness through personal self-assessments of the changes, and did not engage in a systematic assessment that included feedback from others, particularly those impacted by the changes. Rather, the sole criterion used in assessing the effectiveness of the changes to a new senior administrative structure was the mitigation, diminution, or elimination of challenges facing the institution upon their arrival as the new president. The resultant improvements noted most often by the participants included increased efficiencies and enhanced collaboration within senior administration. This was based solely on their self-assessments.

Only one participant in the study confided that the changes made to senior administration were not effective. Though the president did not engage in a formal assessment of the reorganization, through her self-assessment, she determined that institutional issues and challenges persisted after the changes were implemented. This president acknowledged she did not accurately assess the situation, and did not take the time to understand the culture of the institution which is paramount for effective change. Institutional culture involves human elements that define how decisions are made, how power is distributed, and how things happen.

There are lessons learned with each experience, particularly when change is initiated. The expectation would be this type of reflection would occur as changes were made to senior administration. Yet surprisingly, all but one of the presidents articulated that there were no lessons learned and that if presented with the opportunity again, the same changes would be made and processes used.
Implications for Community Colleges

Rather than relying on self-assessment to determine if the restructuring of senior administration is effective, newly appointed community college presidents would be better served by utilizing a formal assessment tool or instrument. These assessment tools can provide a more robust review of the bigger picture. In addition, they provide objective data and information which is preferred to self-assessment.

Change in all its manifestations, large and small, is traumatic and unsettling. Thus, it is imperative that presidents recognize and consider the human element. Predominately, this means acknowledging the feelings of the senior administrators affected by the change. These feelings include stress, confusion, and anxiety. Often overlooked are those who work for senior administrators. Feelings of angst and uncertainty trickle down to these individuals, as well. As a result, efficiencies and productivity throughout the college may be interrupted when presidents are reorganizing their senior leadership team.

The human factor also includes the willingness of presidents to recognize and admit that changes may not be working, and adjustments are needed. As these presidents appoint new senior administrators, there is a human tendency to support these individuals even if improvements are not occurring or performance is subpar. True assessment includes an objective and honest review to determine if additional changes are necessary.

Reflecting on lessons learned is crucial. At each phase of the change process, community college presidents need to take the time to review what went well, and what did not. This introspection, along with data and information from the formal assessment process, provides critical insights on how future change processes can be improved.
Conclusions

It is not unusual for newly appointed community college presidents to institute change when they first arrive at their new institutions. A number of reasons prompt these changes, but most often they involve modifications to the senior administrative team. While these changes are a common occurrence, the challenge for these new presidents is to facilitate change while minimizing disruption to operations and angst among senior administrators and others.

The findings of the study revealed that changes, and in particular reengineering of senior administration, were precipitated by institutional challenges. These challenges created institutional climate issues which, in turn, adversely affected the community colleges. Study findings also found that change was not systematically managed or assessed.

What is needed is a change management model that is useful for new community college presidents and other administrators who initiate change. Specifically, a fluid model is needed to address the ongoing nature of changes that occur in community colleges. As a result, the Coons Change Management Model is presented. The model represents a circular and iterative change management process, which is fitting in any change situation.

Coons Change Management Model

To facilitate change in community colleges, a change management model that is applicable to community colleges, and uncomplicated, is essential. The Coons Change Management Model can be used by presidents, as well as other administrators and managers as they attempt to facilitate change. It is encompassing in nature and can be applied to change initiatives in operational, as well as academic units. The steps are specifically designed to assist with the circular and iterative nature of change. This allows change agents to circle back and revisit steps that may need further attention or repeating, as situations change.
Steps in the Coons Change Management Model

There are six steps in the Coons Change Management Model. The steps include:

1. Define the problem
2. Engage key stakeholders
3. Articulate the vision
4. Build momentum for the vision and celebrate successes
5. Institutionalize the change
6. Assess effectiveness

The circular nature of the Coons Change Management Model consists of these six steps. This change management model accounts for the fluidity of change by incorporating the understanding that steps can be revisited as many times as necessary. By implementing or becoming engaged in some of the steps concurrently, change agents are able to complete different phases simultaneously, which maintains momentum. Knowing that one can revisit steps that have already been completed ensures flexibility of the change process by allowing the person who is initiating the change to make modifications as new conditions arise. Figure 8 illustrates the steps of the Coons Change Management Model and its integrated fluid continuity.
Figure 8. The Coons Change Management Model

**Step 1: Define the problem.** This step involves engaging in a systematic review of the current issues and challenges facing the community college. In gathering this information, new presidents thoroughly investigate external as well as internal factors. External factors include political, economic, socio/cultural, and technological issues that are impacting the institution. Political factors could include federal and state laws and policies focused on postsecondary institutions, which undoubtedly affect the strategic planning for community colleges.
Unemployment due to recessions, local and state educational fiscal reimbursement levels, and state apportionment funding for community colleges, are just some of the crucial economic factors influencing community college viability. Socio/cultural changes such as increasingly diverse community populations, shifts in student demographics, and demand for more online academic programs, impact services provided by the institution. Finally, technological advances, including computer software and hardware, greatly affect the college’s operational systems such as admissions and enrollment as well as the delivery of academic programs and courses. These are examples of the external factors which dramatically impact internal operations of community colleges. Seasoned and new presidents must pay great attention to these factors to ensure the success of their institutions.

It is also important that the new presidents familiarize themselves with internal factors such as organizational structures, customs, culture, and the institutional climate. Specifically, they must purposefully investigate: (a) how organizational decisions are made; (b) how and in what ways college employees collaborate to ensure operations are efficient and effective; (c) how communication flows within the institution; and (d) how employees are assessed in terms of their contribution to institutional objectives. These internal factors focus on human issues, which are germane to the effective management of change initiatives.

Taking time to review and analyze external and internal conditions provides new presidents with a working knowledge of their new community colleges. A careful evaluation of these human elements, along with a thoughtful and caring process of setting expectations, will enable those impacted by the change to better accept the new realities. It also builds trust and reinforces that future changes will be based on data and information specific to the institution, rather than on speculation or past experiences.
Step 2: Engage key stakeholders. For change management processes to work effectively, key stakeholders need to believe, accept, and be engaged in the change agenda. Identifying these individuals should be the first action within this step of the change management process. Newly appointed community college presidents need to become familiar with key stakeholders who can support the change and assist with the implementation of new ideas. This step also embodies the “human factor” so vital to the success of change. Even people who are involved in, and committed to the changes, require time to acclimate to new ideas and become comfortable doing things in a new way. Undeniably, change is embedded with an emotional quality. Thus, providing employees as much advance notice as possible, and encouraging input, allows them the opportunity to work through the emotional aspects of change.

Internal stakeholders include senior administration and other key management personnel. These individuals are responsible for the internal operations of the college. Their commitment to the change agenda ensures that institutional operations remain uninterrupted. Faculty and staff are also critical stakeholders. Through their teaching and academic support, faculty and staff serve as “the face” of the college to students. Perhaps the most important group is the board of trustees. Commitment from this group is essential as they serve as the governing body of the institution and are, therefore, responsible for the overall success of the college. Because these individuals have undertaken a presidential search and appointed the new president, they have a considerable stake in the success of the change agenda.

Honest and trustworthy engagement of all these groups ensures the president has broad-based support for change. This is accomplished when solid professional relationships are created. Although developing these relationships can take time, nurturing meaningful connections with
key individuals, who are trusted and respected by many groups, can assist and support the change process.

**Step 3: Articulate the vision.** The change management process must be articulated in multiple venues, to all stakeholders. Whether using personal communications or electronic methods, regular and clear communication of the vision is needed to build understanding and support for changes the president will be initiating. It is critical that presidents consistently utilize communication methods they are comfortable with and provide broad reach of their message throughout the college and community. In addition to stating why the change is needed, messages need to include timelines and processes that will be used. Moreover, it is germane that presidents communicate when change will be initiated, and what criteria will be used to assess the status of the change process to determine if it is successful.

Personal face-to-face communication is a highly effective method of sharing critical information. It provides an opportunity for stakeholders to view and listen to the president’s message. This can be done in large and small groups, although smaller groups provide the venue to engage in a dialogue rather than in making pronouncements. These forums need to be scheduled regularly and with varying groups.

On the other hand, one cannot ignore the economies of scale and other communicative benefits provided by electronic messaging. These communications can include regular newsletters and other reports posted on the community college’s intranet, recorded audio visual messages, and more contemporary conduits such as social media.

**Step 4: Build momentum for the vision and celebrate successes.** As the vision for the change is communicated, the president must monitor its acceptance and progress throughout the
organization. To accomplish this, momentum points are established within designated time frames. These momentum points serve as milestones providing clues that progress is being made in accomplishing the vision. Thus, they serve as indicators that the vision is being implemented. Meeting these designated momentum points implies acceptance of the vision and institutional improvement.

A vital key component of this step is celebrating progress. As progress is noted, the president must take the time to acknowledge and celebrate successes. This is done through events acknowledging those individuals who have made meaningful contributions, which in turn reinforces the importance of the vision. It is important that celebrations are done publically at the college, shared with as many employees as possible, and take place at regular intervals.

Although these activities are time consuming and require planning, they are essential in building and maintaining the momentum necessary for change management. They also serve as opportunities for employees and other key stakeholders to connect in a personal and meaningful manner, and be recognized for their contributions to the change initiative. Most importantly, celebratory occasions emphasize the importance of ongoing and creative efforts that enhance the institution.

**Step 5: Institutionalize the change.** As momentum points are established and the vision and changes have proven effective, new processes, procedures, and policies become embedded within the institution. These new processes, procedures, and policies are formally documented, widely communicated, and put into practice. It is the active integration of new processes and procedures that facilitates their becoming part of the institutional climate and culture. Once this occurs, institutionalized changes are considered “standard operating procedures” for the community college.
There is a tendency in organizations to wait until a plan is "perfect" before it is implemented. This would be a fine approach if there were such a thing as a “perfect” plan. However, the institution must move forward, and to do that, implementation of the plan for change is required. Implementation of the change allows an institution to discover which parts need re-thinking and re-tooling. It is important to remember that the focus of change is on institutional enhancement, rather than on its impact on individuals or positions.

**Step 6: Assess effectiveness.** This step involves objectively and incrementally assessing the institutionalized changes, to determine if they remain effective. The success of any change initiative must be measured by the achieved outcomes, not by rigid conformance to a previously published plan or schedule. Often, it is difficult for the change agent, which is the president, to critically, deliberately, and objectively assess the effectiveness of the vision and changes they have initiated. Rather than relying on their own self-assessment of effectiveness, community college presidents would be better served by engaging in a more objective assessment process. A universal instrument or tool provides data and other insights into how and why the change initiative is working, and informs future decisions. It also provides transparency, which permits employees to understand why the change was necessary.

If all is operating well, the president has validated that the change is indeed effective; if not, modifications can to be made to ensure the change initiative has accomplished what it was designed to do. The criteria for this important step should be articulated along with the vision in Step 3. This transparency builds credibility for the change process.
Summary of the Six Steps in the Coons Change Management Model

These six steps can be used to manage any type of change. The Coons Change Management Model, resulting from the findings of this research, can be applied to modifications of senior administrative structures by newly appointed community college presidents. The steps within the change management process can also be utilized to facilitate other changes within these institutions. Unlike the eight steps defined by Kotter (1996), which are linear in nature, the six steps defined above are designed to be iterative. In addressing current challenges facing community colleges, including reengineering senior administrative structures, it did not seem that a linear change approach is conducive to success. Rather, a more integrative, circular, and iterative process appears to fit the community college environment. Moreover, the importance of the human element in change simply cannot be ignored.

Timeline for Change Management

Establishing timelines is valuable to keep the change initiative moving forward. Timelines also help to communicate when key phases will be accomplished, and how long the change process will last. The six-step iterative Coons Change Management Model can be completed within twelve months. Steps can be completed concurrently. It is important to note that it is acceptable, and recommended to return to previous steps, if necessary. Figure 9 illustrates recommended time frames for each of the steps in the Coons Change Management Model.
## Implementation Checklist for the Coons Change Management Model

To ensure all aspects of the Coons Change Management Model are considered during implementation, a checklist has been developed. The use of the checklist allows one to focus on the key points of their change implementation strategy. Also included in the checklist, as a useful reference and reminder, is the change management timeline for each step. The checklist is flexible in that it includes areas where other items can be added when addressing pertinent and unique situations. The checklist includes elements that need to be addressed within each step, and is included in Figure 10.

### Figure 9. Timeline for the Coons Change Management Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Define the Problem</th>
<th>Engage Key Stakeholders</th>
<th>Articulate the Vision</th>
<th>Build Momentum for Vision</th>
<th>Institutionalize the Change</th>
<th>Assess The Effectiveness</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Step</td>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Timeframe</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 1 Define the Problem | Review External Factors  
- Political  
- Economic  
- Cultural  
- Technological  
- Other  
Review Internal Factors  
- Structure  
- Economic  
- History  
- Customs/Culture  
- Decision Making  
- Communication  
- Other | Months 1-3 |
| 2 Engage Key Stakeholders | Internal Stakeholders  
- Board of Trustees  
- Senior Administration  
- Other Managers  
- Faculty  
- Staff Members  
- Other  
External Stakeholders  
- Accreditors  
- Elected Officials  
- Foundation Board  
- Business Leaders  
- Other | Months 1-6 |
| 3 Articulate the Vision | Personal Communications  
- Meetings with Trustees  
- Meetings with Management  
- Meetings with Staff  
- Meetings with Faculty  
- Other  
Other | Months 3-12 |
| 4 Build Momentum for the Vision |  
- Acknowledge Progress  
- Celebrate Success  
- Other | Months 6-12 |
| 5 Institutionalize the Change |  
- Create Policies  
- Other | Months 10-11 |
| 6 Assess Effectiveness |  
- Administer a Survey  
- Conduct Focus Groups  
- Utilize a Consultant  
- Other | Month 12 |

*Figure 10. Checklist for Implementing the Coons Change Management Model*
Assessment Form for the Coons Change Management Model

Assessment allows for the systematic evaluation of the change agenda. This feedback is critical in determining if the changes are, in fact, producing desired results. It also provides the opportunity to make adjustments and modifications that may enhance desired results. To determine if the changes initiated are effective, an assessment instrument is needed. Collecting feedback in this manner ensures objectivity, consistency, and transparency. A recommended assessment tool is presented in Figure 11. This tool focuses on assessing changes to senior leadership, but can be adapted to collect information on any type of change.
Change Assessment Survey

Thank you for participating in our Change Assessment Survey. This survey is designed to provide you with the opportunity to tell us how you feel about the change process and changes made to senior leadership.

| Current Position (select one) |  |  |  |  |
|------------------------------|  |  |  |  |
| Administrator | Other Management | Faculty | Staff Member | Other |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The senior leadership change process was well communicated.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I understood why changes were made to senior leadership.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The senior leadership structure will assist the college in achieving its objectives.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>There was adequate input from stakeholders before changes were made to senior leadership.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Changes to senior leadership fit within the overall culture of the college.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The college’s senior leadership has a clear vision of the future.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The college’s senior leadership has made changes which are positive for the institution.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The college’s senior leadership has made changes which are positive for me.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The college’s senior leadership understands major challenges and opportunities.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The college is better today than it was a year ago due to changes in senior leadership.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 11. Change Assessment Survey*
Recommendations for Further Study

Although there is a significant amount of literature on the subject of change, literature specific to change in higher education, and in particular community colleges, is virtually nonexistent. Within the context of challenges that prompt change, further research is needed to determine which challenges are most detrimental to the success of the community college. Business process reengineering (BPR), which is radical in nature, is used to address these types of challenges. In contrast, challenges that do not threaten the viability of the institution but need to be addressed, would be resolved through the less intrusive total quality management (TQM) process. Any administrator or manager could utilize this data to ascertain what type of change process is needed.

Study participants indicated that changes to senior administration were made within one year of their new presidencies. Further study on the timing of these types of changes would help ascertain if there is an appropriate timeframe that is a reliable predictor of success.

Further study on the affect of institutional climate on successful change initiatives is needed. It is important to ascertain if there is a certain type of institutional climate that is most conducive to successful change. It is important for not only presidents, but any community college administrator or manager to consider the importance of institutional climate before initiating change.

The impact of organizational changes on senior administrators is critical to understanding how these leaders viewed the changes. Further study, including interviewing senior administrators, is recommended as a means of ascertaining if they felt the changes contributed to the success of the organization and if they indeed made a difference. Their insights would also provide feedback as to the effectiveness of the change process that was utilized by the president.
Finally, and perhaps most importantly, additional research is needed on reliable and valid instruments that objectively measure the effectiveness of change. This assessment should include feedback from those impacted by the changes. The instrument could be used by anyone facilitating change, and would provide valuable insights as to if, and where, additional change may be required.
References


Goff, D. G. (2002). Community college presidency: What are the challenges to be encountered and traits to be successful. (ERIC Document Reproduction Services No. ED 346082).


Appendix A

Informed Participant Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study that will take place from October, 2010 to January, 2012. This form outlines the purposes of the study and provides a description of your involvement and rights as a participant.

I consent to participate in a research project conducted by Maria H. Coons a doctoral student at National-Louis University, located in Chicago, Illinois.

I understand the study is entitled “Change is Constant: The Ongoing Reengineering of Senior Administration in Community Colleges.” The purpose of this study is to explore what precipitates the reengineering of administrative structures by presidents new to their positions at community colleges, the processes used in implementing the change, and assessment of the reengineering process.

I understand that my participation will consist of audio recorded interviews lasting 60 to 90 minutes with a possible second, follow-up interview lasting 60 to 90 minutes. I understand that I will receive a copy of my transcribed interview at which time I may clarify information.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and can be discontinued at any time until the completion of the dissertation.

I understand that my anonymity will be maintained and the information I provide confidential. I understand that only the researcher, Maria H. Coons, will have access to a secured file cabinet in which will be kept all transcripts, audio recordings, documents and field notes from the interview(s) in which I participated.

I understand there are no anticipated risks or benefits to me, no greater than that encountered in daily life. Further, the information gained from this study could be used to assist newly appointed presidents, boards of trustees, and administration as they undergo similar change. I understand that in the event I have questions or require additional information I may contact the researcher: Maria H. Coons; 26441 W. Falkirk Circle; Barrington, IL  60010; phone: 847.220.5680 or e-mail: mcoons@harpercollege.edu.

If you have any concerns or questions before or during participation that you feel have not been addressed by the researcher, you may contact my Primary Advisor and Dissertation Chair: Dr. Rebecca S. Lake, National-Louis University (Chicago Campus), 122 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60603. Phone: 312-261-3534 or E-mail: rebecca.lake@nl.edu

Participant’s Signature:__________________________________  Date:__________

Researcher’s Signature:__________________________________  Date:__________
Appendix B

Demographic Questionnaire for Study Participants

Date: ________________________

Participant Name: _________________________

Please complete demographic questionnaire below for this dissertation research.

1. **Gender:**  □ Male  □ Female

2. **Age Group:**
   - □ under 40 years
   - □ 40 – 44 years
   - □ 45 – 49 years
   - □ 50 – 54 years
   - □ 55 – 59 years
   - □ 60 – 64 years
   - □ 65 years or older

3. **Ethnicity:**
   - □ Asian or Pacific Islander
   - □ American Indian or Alaskan
   - □ Black, non-Hispanic
   - □ Hispanic
   - □ White, non-Hispanic

4. **Education:**
   - □ Doctorate (Ph.D., Ed.D., etc.)
   - □ Masters
   - □ JD
   - □ Other
5. Current Position

Institution: ______________________________
Job Title: ______________________________
City/State: ______________________________

How long have you been in this position:

From_________ To_________  
month/year     month/year

Annual Student FTE: _________

6. Previous Position

Institution: ______________________________
Job Title: ______________________________
City/State: ______________________________

From_________ To_________  
month/year     month/year

7. Did you reorganize the administration at your current institution when you became president?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

7a. If yes, how long after you become president did you reorganize?

☐ within the first year  ☐ in the second year  ☐ in the third year
8. Did the restructuring achieve the desired results?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to complete this questionnaire. Your careful responses will provide substantive depth and clarity to this study and will aid in providing necessary context.

Maria Coons
Doctoral Student
National-Louis University
mcoons@harpercollege.edu
847.220.5680
Appendix C

Mapping Interview Questions to Driving Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding Questions</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> What indicators precipitate reengineering administrative structures in community colleges by presidents new to the organization?</td>
<td>How long did you wait to restructure after you became president?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What types of changes did you make to the organizational structure?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What triggers prompted reorganizing the administration, particularly at the senior-most level?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> How is the administrative reengineering process implemented in community colleges by the new president?</td>
<td>What process or steps were used to reorganize the administrative at your community college?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In what ways did your past experience as a community college president inform your decisions as you restructured the administration?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> How and in what ways does the new president evaluate the process of reengineering?</td>
<td>Do you feel the new structure is effective? Why or why not?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What lessons were learned from this experience? What would you do differently in the future?</td>
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Appendix D

Interview Guide

Review the Purpose of the Interview

The purpose of this study is to explore what precipitates the reengineering of administrative structures by presidents new to their positions at community colleges, the processes used in implementing the change, and assessment of the reengineering process.

Interview Questions

1. How long did you wait to restructure after you became president?

2. What types of changes did you make to the organizational structure?

3. What triggers prompted reorganizing the administration, particularly at the senior-most level?

4. What process or steps were used to reorganize the administration at your community college?

5. In what ways did your past experience as a community college president inform your decisions as you restructured the administration?

6. Do you feel the new structure is effective? Why or why not?

7. What lessons were learned from this experience? What would you do differently in the future?

Concluding the Interview

At the conclusion of the interview, thank the participant. Inform them that a transcript of the interview will be sent to them shortly, allowing them to check the content for accuracy (member checking).
## Appendix E

### Field Note Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Descriptive Notes</strong></th>
<th><strong>Reflective Notes</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 1:</td>
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<td>Question 2:</td>
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<td>Question 7:</td>
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**Room Map**