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## Action Project

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**Institution:** Lake Superior College  
**Submitted:** 2008-01-31                      **Contact:** Sue Stenerson  
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### Timeline:

Planned project kickoff date: 01-01-2007

Target completion date: 01-31-2009

Actual completion date: --

### A. Give this Action Project a short title in 10 words or fewer:

Community Engagement

### B. Describe this Action Project's goal in 100 words or fewer:

The goal is to define the current process of developing and scheduling activities and events, identifying where improvements are needed to make the process more efficient, and recommending the necessary changes to the process.

### C. Identify the single AQIP Category which the Action Project will most affect or impact:

Primary Category: Supporting Institutional Operations

### D. Describe briefly your institution's reasons for taking on this Action Project now -- why the project and its goals are high among your current priorities: \_

This project is a direct result of comments and recommendations made during our second Vital Focus Conversation Day held in Fall 2006. Responses from faculty and staff indicated that increasing Community Involvement was an on-going problem that presented opportunities to improve the college's stature in the community. This discussion led to the adoption of an institutional goal, "Community engaged in Lake Superior College and LSC engaged in the Community". Recognition of the value of events held on campus is the key to engaging the community and promoting the college.

### E. List the organizational areas - -institutional departments, programs, divisions, or units -- most affected by or involved in this Action Project:

Areas directly affected are: Public information, Workforce Development, Academic Affairs, Students, Facilities, and the Community

### F. Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve:

Improvement in the communication flow and work processes between those planning and scheduling events and those who must prepare the building or provide services for the scheduled event.

### G. Explain the rationale for the length of time planned for this Action Project (from kickoff to target completion):

Processes will be developed by June 2008. Pilot procedures will be implemented over the summer of 2008, effectiveness of the pilot procedures will be evaluated during Fall Semester 2008 and by January 2009, final procedures and evaluation will be completed.

### H. Describe how you plan to monitor how successfully your efforts on this Action Project are progressing:

Teams will use a SWOT analysis to identify core issues, evaluate available tools and resources, develop recommendations for change, test recommendations with stakeholders, implement recommendations, and evaluate effectiveness of the change through monitoring of number, type, and participation in events. The

number of events will be tracked and participation in Fall 2008 events will be monitored. Satisfaction surveys will be distributed at several events to determine participant perspective. Surveys distributed to LSC members will determine degree of improvement in internal processes. Minutes of meetings will be posted to the committee blog at <http://blog.lsc.edu/engage>

I. Describe the overall "outcome" measures or indicators that will tell you whether this Action Project has been a success or failure in achieving its goals:

An increased number of events posted appropriately to R25 will result in a reduction in the number of date/time conflicts between events that are held on campus or in the community, will reduce friction between departments and divisions through greater communication and greater community involvement/attendance at on-campus events.

J. Other information (e.g., publicity, sponsor or champion, etc.):

The team will develop and utilize feedback questionnaires to be used to improve the quality of on-campus events, investigate methods to incorporate facility and food service needs into the Web Viewer program.

K. Project Leader and contact person:

Contact Name: Steve Wagner, Vice President of Workforce Development  
Email: [s.wagner@lsc.edu](mailto:s.wagner@lsc.edu)  
Phone: (218) 733-5934 Ext.

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### Annual Update: 2008-08-05

A. Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.

This action project team struggled with defining the direction this project should take. Many thought the best way to approach this issue was to assess what the college was doing in terms of community events and refine the process, if in fact there was a process. Others wanted to develop and produce events that would engage the community. The check-up visit reviewers met with the team during the May 2007 visit and helped this group work through a decision-making process. During the 2008 year, the team assessed how current campus events are created, scheduled, implemented and evaluated. An informal survey revealed standing events and how new events are planned or simply occur. A working event procedure document, an event checklist, and an evaluation form were developed.

*Review (09-14-08):*

It appears that the college has made preliminary progress on this project. The use of the basic survey was an excellent way to shed some light on the processes that exist, currently. Going forward will be based on the description of the project and the information given in the update. As it is not clear what type of documentation has been done on the process one suggestion that could help the college move forward is for the team to map out the process as it currently exists. Simultaneously the team should attempt to develop and map a desired process. Once both are complete a comparison of the two maps may show where there are disconnects in the process and where there are opportunities for improvements. These disconnects in the maps can be used to direct the next steps in the project. The college might consider creating a survey which can be given to the various stakeholders to identify the actual needs of both the college and the community. This can allow the college to focus on vital customer needs.

B. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.

A SWOT analysis and meetings with campus personnel most directly affected by events on campus, such as maintenance and food service and scheduling, identified issues and opportunities for improvement. The new documents and an overview of the testing plan were presented for feedback to the Foundation Board and the President's Council, as well as those previously mentioned constituents.

**Review (09-14-08):**

The use of SWOT is an excellent method for identifying potential areas for improvement, well done! As part of the improvement plan it is important to include appropriate measures to ensure that they are working, and to identify further needs and areas for improvement.

**C. Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project.**

Next steps include several testing activities. The team will meet with Student Life and the Student Life programming board, the health education coordinator, the Foundation alumni director, the Intercultural Center, and the workforce development department, since these areas generate the most activity scheduling. These groups will be asked for input on the proposed processes and the working documents. The evaluation form will be tested with events that were planned during the spring and summer. In the fall, the entire planning and evaluation system will be applied as a pilot to events that are still in the planning stages. Based on the pilot, revisions will be made where necessary and the process will be institutionalized during the spring term.

**Review (09-14-08):**

This plan sounds very good and should give the institution the information it needs for implementation and continuation of the improvement process.

**D. Describe any "effective practice(s)" that resulted from your work on this Action Project.**

Nothing to report at this time.

**Review (09-14-08):**

**E. What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project?**

The team has identified two major challenges: the first being the cultural change within the institution in moving to a more structured event planning process, and the second challenge being sustaining the project through ownership in a department and/or point person.

**Review (09-14-08):**

A suggestion for sustaining the project may be to have it championed by a member of the senior leadership. This can help ensure visibility and that it is appropriately deployed across the organization.

**F. If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help to stimulate progress on this action project, explain your need(s) here and tell us who to contact and when?**

N/A

**Review (09-14-08):**