

Workforce Development Coalition System Definition and Leverage Point Identification Committee Activity Summary 1998-1999

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Workforce Coalition Leadership, Membership, Vision, & Mission Overview

Leadership

The initial leadership that chartered the Workforce Development Coalition:

- Rocky Scott, President, Greater Colorado Springs Economic Development Corporation
- Mark McCord, President & CEO, Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce
- Dr. Marijane Paulsen, President, Pikes Peak Community College

The Workforce Development Coalition Vision

- The greater Pikes Peak region will be a community in which all stakeholders (individuals, education and training institutions, businesses, non-profit agencies, and government entities) recognize and embrace the pivotal role of workforce development in achieving personal fulfillment and regional economic prosperity.

- To put in place long term programs and systems to coordinate and integrate the many initiatives and institutions involved in developing our workforce to meet the current and future workforce needs in all sectors of the region's economy.

Workforce Development Coalition Subcommittees

- Vision Development
- System Definition
- Membership Identification and Recruiting
- Measurement, Accountability, and Reporting
- Coordination, Communication, and Public Awareness

The System Definition Committee

Committee Leadership:

- Chair: Nina Polok - Hewlett Packard
- Vice-Chair: Debbie Sagen
- Corporate Workforce & Economic Development
- System Process Facilitator: Bob Powell
- Continuous Improvement Associates

Members:

- Ken DeGrasse - Harrison School District #2
- Dee Funkhouser - Pikes Peak School-To-Career Partnership
- Roger Hamilton
- Charlie Huff, Dave Bamberger & Associates
- Karen Jasmund - Pikes Peak Workforce Center
- Beth Ann Lipskin
- Pierpont Associates & Pikes Peak School-To-Career Partnership
- Jan Martin, Martin Business Group
- Elaine Naleski - School District 11

System Definition Committee Vision, Mission and Focus

The System Definition Committee's initial meeting was held on July 17, 1998. In the first few meetings the group developed a Vision and Mission.

Vision:

- We understand the system of workforce development in the community and how it impacts the individual throughout his or her life.
- We develop the ability to identify key changes to the system that will improve the probability of long-term individual, employer, and community success.

Mission (main points):

- Develop a system diagram that reflects current workforce development initiatives which affect the ability of an individual to learn and be an effective and agile lifelong worker.
- Identify and develop recommendations to exploit leverage points in the current workforce development system which offer the greatest opportunities for learning & development
- Identify and develop recommendations for changes to the existing system for workforce development.

Focus:

- In the first few meetings the group decided on taking a systems thinking approach to defining the system. The model used the following as a focusing statement.
- Workforce Model Focusing Statement - Success means individuals having good jobs, employers having good workers, the community having a sustainable economy and a workforce system that is adaptable to changing workforce supply and demand.
- This statement makes the point that when the economy is good, we need to develop workers to fill the open jobs, and when the economy turns down, we need to attract or grow companies to employ workers without jobs.

Model Review Workshop

We developed an initial model and held a model review workshop on 1/27/99 at the Antler's with 24 representatives of business, education and government to get input from people who had not been on the team.

Selected comments from the 1/27/99 Model Review Workshop

What went well ...

- The structure is necessary and although complex, produced useable information.
- Systems thinking is an awesome tool.
- Relationship building opportunities.
- The quick lesson on systems definitions.
- Open dialogue, active participation.

- All sessions seemed to go well. Well organized.
- Great group of people gathered together.
- I appreciate all the work done prior to this meeting.

What we could improve ...

- Less complexity - strive for simplicity.
- Allow more time for interactive dialogue, grounding.
- Small group needed more quiet area to concentrate.
- More context - for those who have little exposure to this kind of thinking/model.

Work following the Model Review Workshop

Following Model Review Workshop:

- We incorporated 25 of 49 workshop suggestions into the model.
- We restructured the model to clarify and simplify the reinforcing & balancing feedback loops.
- We added additional structure.

The Investment in this effort

The team time

- 36 team meetings @ 2 hours
- 2 workshops @ 2+ hours
- 3 quarterly meetings @ 2 hours

Total team time = 41 x 2 x 8 = 656 person-hours

HP/Nina Polok add'tl support with minutes/plots

- 39 meetings @ 1 hr, 3 workshops @ 4 hrs = 51 add'tl hrs

Total HP time: 51 hours

Continuous Improvement Associates support time

- 36 team meetings @ (2 hrs + 8 hrs = 10 hrs) = 360 hrs
- 2 major model reworks @ 60 hrs = 120 hrs
- 2 workshops @ (2 hrs + 20 hrs = 22 hrs) = 44 hrs
- PMI, Workforce Strategies, Final Report presentations = 24 hrs

Total CIA time = 548 hours

Total time invested: 1255 hours

The Systems Thinking Approach

What it allows:

The systems thinking methodology allows an organization or a community to go

- from a "Mess" of Issues / Problems
- to a Theory of the System

- to Strategies
- to Project Planning: Who's going to do what by when.
- to Project Tracking and Reporting
- for Workforce System Effectiveness Improvement

Using systems thinking we:

- Identify the self-reinforcing feedback processes for growth.
- Identify the balancing feedback processes which limit, or will limit, growth.
- Identify the balancing feedback processes which resist, or will resist, the changes to be made.
- Define strategies and action plans to implement reinforce growth and reduce limiting forces.

The Systems Model

In developing the model the team met approximately 41 times for 2 hours each through 8/31/99 including workshops, quarterly meetings, and final review. See following pages.

Strategy Matrix

Below is an example matrix for defining strategies.

| Strategy Matrix: Functions vs. Key Success Loops & Driving Forces | | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|----------------|--|
| | Key Success Loops & Driving Forces | | | | |
| Community Organization or Individual | Loop R1 Develop Local WF | Loop R2 Worker Immigration | Loop R3 Counseling Effectiveness | Loop XX | Summary of Strategy for each Function |
| EDC | | | | | |
| Chamber of Commerce | | | | | |
| City Council | | | | | |
| Human Resource Mgrs | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | |
| Summary of Strategy for Each Loop or Driving Force | | | | | |

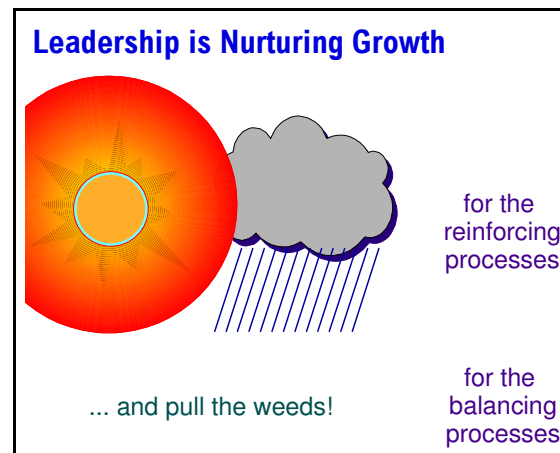
... adapted from Clayton Christensen, "Making Strategy: Learning by Doing," *Harvard Business Review*, Nov/Dec 1997

Leadership

This is the approach we'd take in a garden (see below). For reinforcing processes we provide sun, water, and food; and for balancing processes we pull the weeds.

Leverage

The leverage in the system is in promoting favorable activity in the key feedback loops, the loops around which people have energy. An early activity is to identify community activities supporting the key loops and organize projects/dialogues around key loop structures. Like a bicycle chain, a feedback loop is only active if all links in the chain move.

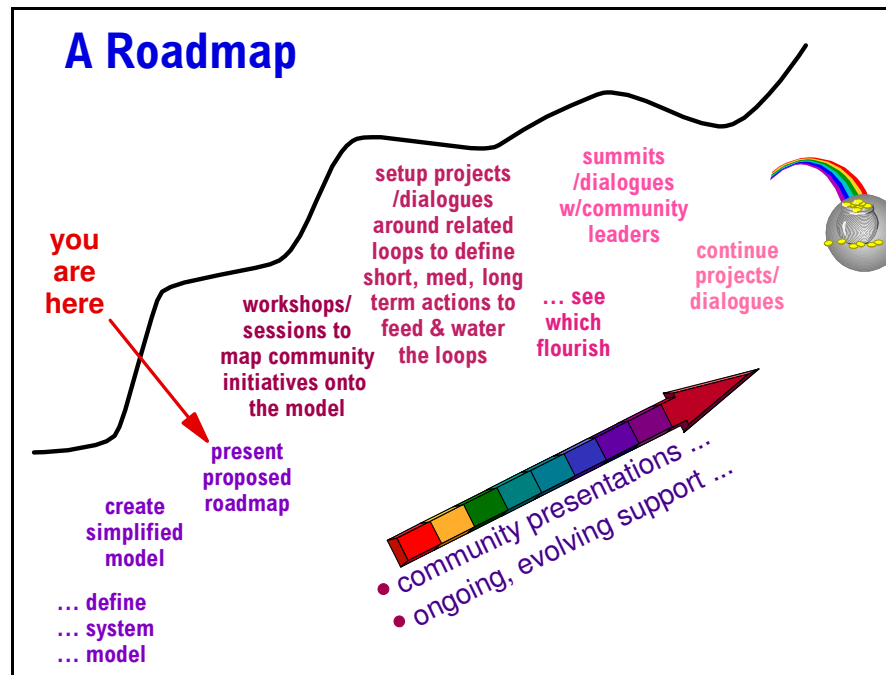


To do this we ...

- Identify weak links in the key loops.
 - Identify what promotes beneficial activity at the weak links.
 - Identify what's limiting beneficial activity at the weak links.
 - develop policies that promote beneficial loop behaviors.
- ... and take action to
- create new beneficial loops
 - break or reduce the influence of limiting loops to improve performance
 - increase beneficial loop behavior
 - reduce constraints at weak links
 - create new communication links to inform on progress
 - develop & implement new measures to monitor loop performance
 - institute environmental scans for externals that affect loop performance

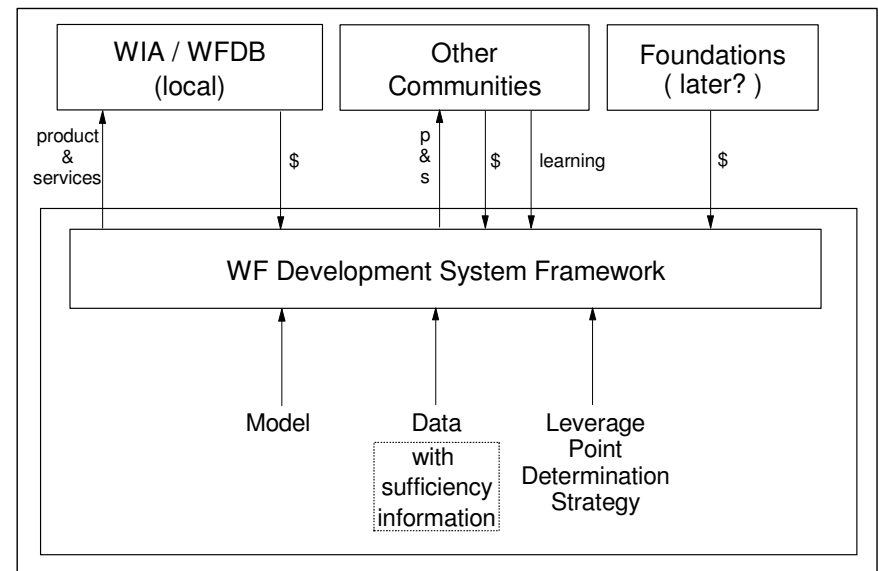
The Road Map for Future Work

- The road map the group presented at the 8/31/99 Project Wrap-up Meeting (see diagram also):
- Define system model.
- Create simplified model.
- Present the proposed road map at the end of the committee's model development work.
- Hold workshops/sessions to map community initiatives onto the model.
- Setup projects/dialogues around related loops to define short, medium, and long term actions to "feed & water" the loops.
- See which loops flourish.
- Hold summit/dialogues with community leaders.
- Continue projects/dialogues.

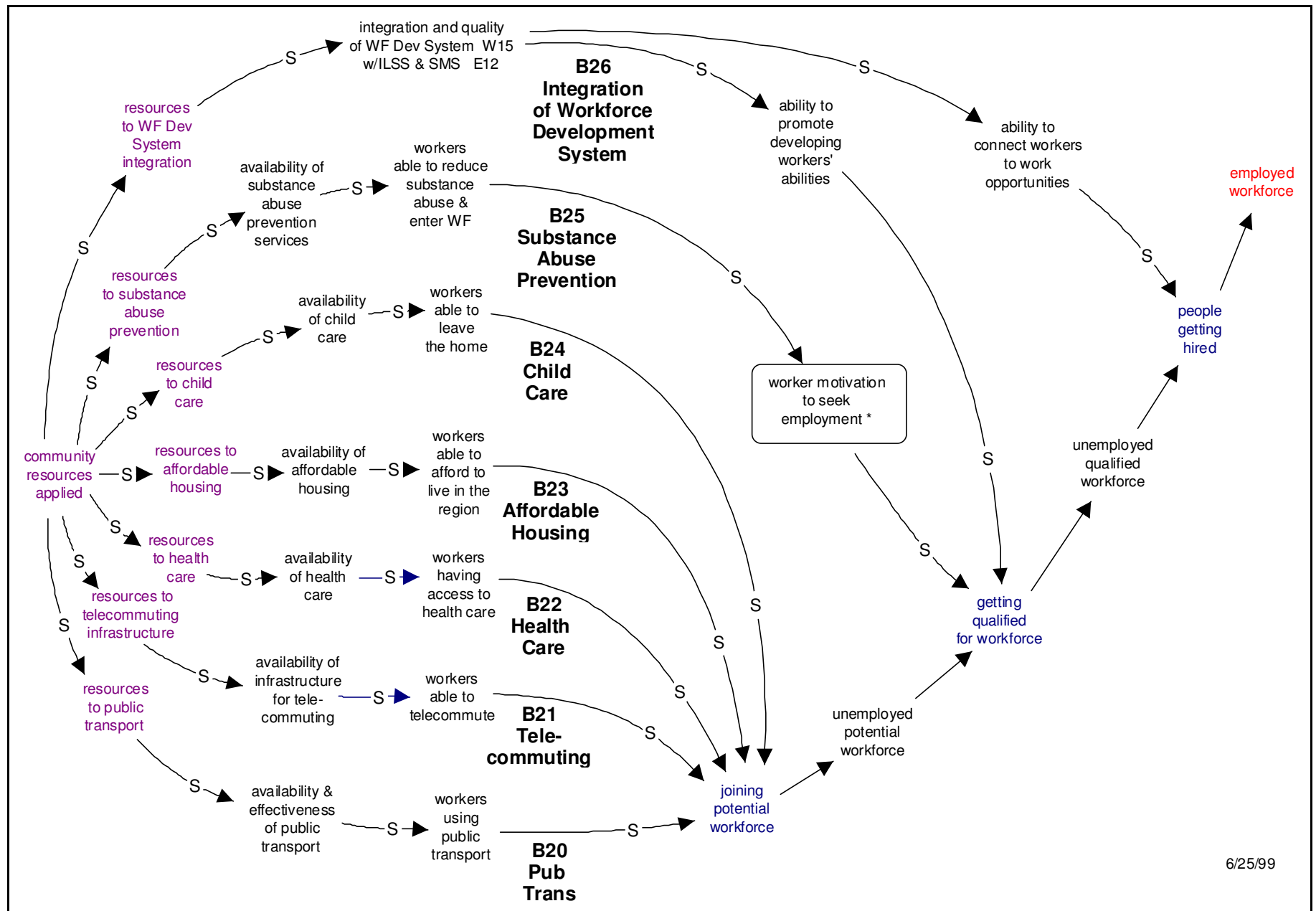


Following System Definition Group Activity

Rocky Scott proposed the diagram below as a possible way to make the model available to other communities and support continued work. This could provide funding and allow us to learn, not only from our community experience, but also from the experience of other communities.



Workforce Model - Supplemental Loops B20 - B26



6/25/99

The Workforce System Model
Underlying Stock & Flow Structure

