

CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

# Communities of Practice

POWERED BY



California  
Community  
Colleges

**Energy Construction & Utilities**

California Community Colleges  
Workforce & Economic Development

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Engage. Enroll. Employ.

# HISTORY



## HVAC COLLABORATIVE

- Started in 2013. First meeting August 2014.
- 5 colleges, 2 faculty each + industry advisors.
- Value proposition:
  - Create a learning community
  - Share best practices
  - Establish a single voice to industry across the campuses
  - Address large industry need for qualified workers

# HISTORY



## ECU COLLABORATIVES

- Hosted separate roundtable meetings with faculty and HVAC industry leaders.
- In 3 years, 25 gatherings of industry, faculty or both involving 19 different colleges.
- Expanded to Orange and San Diego Counties, High Desert and the Central Valley.
- Later, started COP for Advanced Automation in Orange County. New ones underway in Facility Management.

# TERMS & TERMINOLOGY

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## COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (COP)

- On-going and sustainable groups of faculty and industry who meet regularly to improve student outcomes.
- Community of practice (COP) and collaborative are used interchangeably.
- Previously known as "expert networks".
- Industry trade groups, industry advisory councils and advisory boards are also a form of COP.

# VALUE PROPOSITION



## FOR REGION

- United Purpose - common vision and learning outcomes
- Economies of Scale - increase enrollment, combine resources
- Industry Connectivity - increase college's links to industry, meet industry priorities

# VALUE PROPOSITION



## FOR FACULTY

- Learning - Share ideas, systems of practice. Opportunity for recognition.
- Curriculum Development - Gain input on curriculum, share curriculum.
- Industry Connectivity - Professional development, job opportunities for students, equipment, speakers, funding.



# VALUE PROPOSITION



## FOR COLLEGES

- More engaged faculty
- Access to funding & equipment
- Industry aligned curriculum
- Access to jobs, internships, externships

# VALUE PROPOSITION



## FOR INDUSTRY

- Access to a pool of trained entry-level personnel.
- Share expertise, find like-minded colleagues.
- Give input on curriculum, help design custom curriculum specific to their company's needs.
- Provide needed equipment and funding.
- Opportunities to teach.



# BUILD A "COALITION OF THE WILLING"

## WHAT'S REQUIRED

Faculty with a shared interest across multiple colleges.

Engaged leadership - Dean, VP of Instruction at a lead college.

Leadership from a Regional Director or consultant, preferably one with credibility with faculty and industry connections.





The more committed faculty are the change-makers who are interested in improving their own programs and helping others improve theirs in the interest of improving student success.



# BUILD A "COALITION OF THE WILLING"

## HOW TO 'SELL' TO A COLLEGE

In-person meetings with administrators or Deans. Ask for recommended faculty.

Meet with small groups of faculty - enroll in a workshop or activity that benefits them. Listen to their needs.

Offer to do the heavy lifting to get things underway.



# BUILD A "COALITION OF THE WILLING"

## HOW TO 'SELL' TO INDUSTRY

- Personal relationships are essential.
- Ask faculty to bring in their industry contacts.
- Assure industry they will be rewarded with better qualified workers.
- Let them know who else will be included, commit to be technology-agnostic.
- Set realistic timelines.
- Convene original meetings for industry separate from faculty; identify and share their needs.





# Meeting Structure: Many Possible Models

Base on the needs, demands and commitment of the membership.



## MEETINGS

Quarterly or 2X year

Intersperse large and small group sessions. Meet Fridays when faculty isn't teaching. Focus on tangible outcome - shared best practices, mentoring, collect needs. Meet at different colleges.

## WEBINARS

Great for Industry

Morning sessions for one hour. Focus on tangible outcomes. High profile guest speakers. Needs assessment.

## STRUCTURE

Professionally Run

Large sessions have a facilitator. Agenda provided in advance. Some regional, some state-wide. Align to existing events & conferences. Paid for by SD/RD budget. Networking with food.



## WHAT DOESN'T WORK

Must establish faculty and industry groups separately first, then bring them together.

If you don't have Dean and faculty support, cut your losses and move on.

When leadership changes at a college, be prepared to have to sell the whole idea again...and sometimes you'll fail.

It can be hard to maintain momentum and participation with faculty after they have filled their programs and their students are getting jobs.





Sending one meeting notice a few months in advance and expecting people to show up has been a recipe for disappointment. Instead, plan for a drip campaign with regular updates on why to stay involved, upcoming events, fresh ideas, opportunities for funding, links to articles, etc.



## KEEPING MOMENTUM - FACULTY

Must have a dedicated leader, being paid for outcomes.

Ensure COP members stay involved:

- setting the agenda
- take turns hosting events
- have opportunities to showcase their expertise
- serve as speakers
- get a chance to show off their facilities and programs to the other participants

Regularly sell the "what's in it for them". Listen to their needs.





Engaging college leadership can also be a critical component of success. After you have the Dean or Department Chair bought in, keep them informed about any contact with or asks from their faculty. Even though they may not respond to every email, this will prevent problems down the road.



## **KEEPING MOMENTUM - FACULTY (CONT.)**

Ensure high quality speakers, a well-structured agenda, industry connections and most of all a chance to make a difference – either for students or for themselves.

Mix up your meetings – some on campus, some at employer’s locations.

Must have regular, on-going communication and lots of hand-holding to assure continued success.

At times of lean funding, having funding sources available to provide faculty and programs with software and equipment, travel funding, etc. can make a big difference.



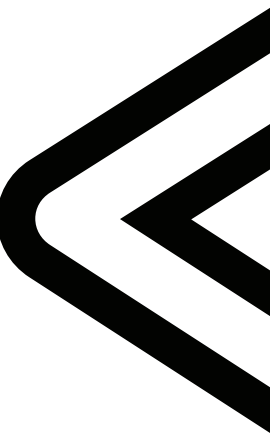
# KEEPING MOMENTUM - INDUSTRY

Ensure high quality speakers, a well-structured agenda, faculty connections and a chance to achieve their goal - a high quality workforce.

Set realistic expectation of the speed at which things can change, particularly when it comes to developing new curriculum or expanding to new campuses.

Agree what the outcomes should be and assure that faculty follow through on the commitments that they've made.

Sometimes you need to do things that industry needs in order to get their active participation, even if it would not otherwise be your priority.



# Long Term Success



## FOCUS

Focus on goals and outcomes. Avoid tangents. Don't get too ambitious. Must show progress and deliver committed results.

## ENGAGEMENT

Must keep industry and faculty engaged.  
Experiment and innovate. Don't give up too quickly. Celebrate the wins along the way.

## ALIGNED GOALS

Ensure criteria for success is aligned to students getting hired, gaining work experience and/or identifying new career pathways.

## LEADERSHIP

Must have a leader/facilitator that manages & directs the operations & communication of the group. Also need a faculty champion and an engaged Dean.



# CONTACT US

## TO LEARN MORE

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