

Optimizing Shared Governance

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Background

Shared governance is a long-valued essential university practice of including key stakeholders in decisions based on the stakeholder role and elements of the decision. Shared governance is generally viewed as a good idea by university stakeholders, and universities that have successfully embraced it have been more resilient in weathering challenges. Still, many universities struggle with shared governance.

Problem

The problem was the lack of faculty involvement and representation of faculty voice in critical institutional decision-making, which impeded full achievement and sustainment of appropriately shared responsibility and cooperative action per the Statement on Shared Governance at Athens State University.

Question

What communication and decision-making processes best ensure full achievement and sustainment of appropriately shared responsibility and cooperative action at Athens State University, as defined in the formal Statement on Shared Governance?

Inquiry

1 Document Audit	Audited 456 ATSU documents.
2 Heuristic Reflection	Compiled Heuristic Self-Search Inquiry results.
3 Congruance Model	Assessed organization for congruence related to shared governance.
4 Integration Synthesis	Integrated and synthesized findings, using the Virtual Business Model as a guidepost, to develop potential solutions.

Nadler-Tushman Congruence Model-Adapted. From “A model for diagnosing organizational behavior, by D. A. Nadler & M. L. Tushman, 1980, *Organizational Dynamics*, 9(2), p. 47. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0090-2616\(80\)90039-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/0090-2616(80)90039-X) Note. Copyright 1980 by Elsevier. Adapted with permission. Model adapted to show potential solution input, expected outputs, and the impact on components of the transformation process by improving fit.

Building social capital through effective communication improves shared governance.

Strategic Vision

Efforts to achieve the mission, vision, and values at Athens State are aligned and efficient. The University is a great workplace, with a culture of communication and employees who are satisfied that they are valued and respected. Graduation rates rise, and graduates are prepared for careers. The optimized shared governance system prepares the organization to successfully address emerging issues and trends.

Potential Solutions by Rank

- 1 . Develop a shared governance communication plan.
 - 2 . Create a decision-making framework for shared governance.
 - 3 . Revise documents.
 - 4 . Create a shared governance taxonomy.
- ✓ **Decision: Develop a communication plan.**

Change Management Plan

Purpose of creating a communication plan

Reframe shared governance activities so that communication has a central role in those activities and codify that role so that shared governance communication shifts from informal to formal communication actions.

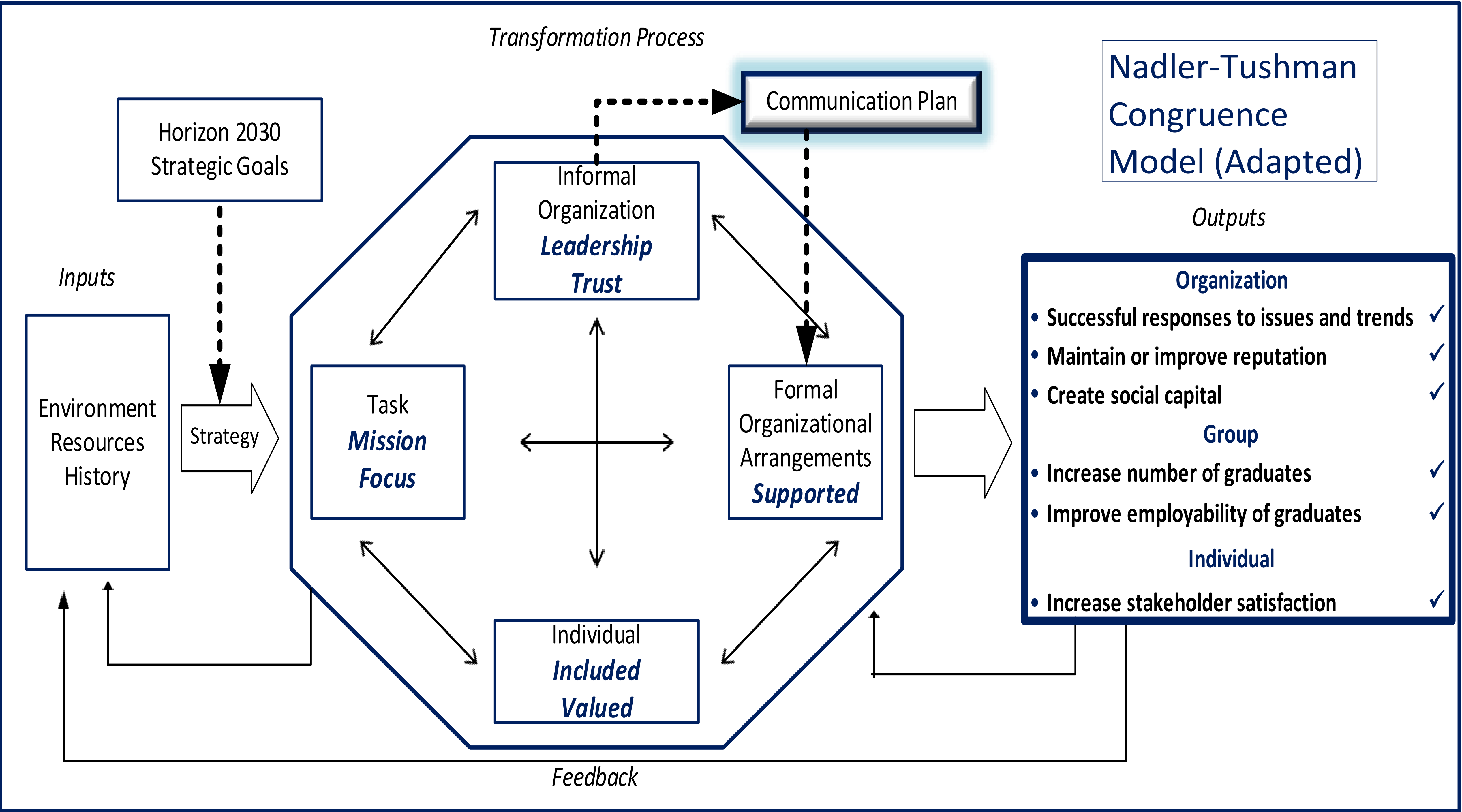
Message

“Hear and be heard, understand and be understood.”

Plan

Implementation of the communication plan entails identifying communication actions needed to support the shared responsibility and cooperative action required for effective shared governance and infusing those actions into the formal processes of the organization.

Impact of the Solution on the Organization



Change Process

Implementing the communication plan involves the ADKAR (Prosci, n.d.) approach, resulting in changes in individual behaviors and guided by the communication council, with the president as sponsor.

Participants will receive training, support, and have multiple opportunities to provide feedback, and the process audited.

Implementation efforts are planned to start in Spring semester 2024 and be initially guided until the end of the spring semester of 2025 for a total of 67 weeks. An implementation action plan, timeline, and communication plan will be used to complete the process.

Prosci. (n.d.). *ADKAR® Model*. www.prosci.com

Acknowledgments

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