



College and Career Transitions Initiative

LESSONS LEARNED

Site Partnership: **San Diego Community College District**

As the CCTI project moves forward, it is important to document lessons learned so that those following will be better equipped to develop successful Career Pathways. This "Lessons Learned" section should focus on the knowledge you have gained by this experience and what new strategies could be taken into the future. These lessons should reflect on:

- what was done right
- what could have been done differently
- how the processes and interactions could be improved

... to be more effective in the future.

LESSONS LEARNED		KNOWLEDGE GAINED NEW STRATEGIES FOR FUTURE
1	Integrating an introductory college class with project based learning techniques has been a very successful strategy when working with students who would not typically be considered "college bound".	Providing relevance through project based learning strategies to the college curriculum clearly demonstrated that "at risk" high school students can achieve college level learning outcomes, when teaching strategies are modified and content is connected to real world experiences. This works.
2	Our project chose to work with an inter-city high school program that serves a highly diverse population of students, of which many are new immigrants. Many of these students have required extensive ESL instruction in addition to remediation of basic skills, which has prevented some of them from taking courses in the career pathway.	The intensive strategies that were developed were not realistic for this population and were placing undo pressure on the high school partner to implement a transition strategy prematurely. New Strategy: Build sequential, practical strategies <u>after</u> assessing the priorities and needs of the students and the high school program.
3	Trying to implement multiple strategies simultaneously did not work well. It became too overwhelming for the high school, when they were also trying to adjust to a major high school reform initiative. What would we have done differently? Postpone engaging this high school in the project until it had time to establish the new "small school" structure .	Too many changes occurred for the high school simultaneously; their investment in fulfilling the grant objectives was minimized during this conversion period. However, we agreed to continue working on the goals at a slower pace. New Strategy: Prioritize and implement one strategy at a time.

LESSONS LEARNED		KNOWLEDGE GAINED NEW STRATEGIES FOR FUTURE
4	<p>Although both the community college and high school were extremely committed to the project from the start, program changes resulting from the high school reform initiative, as well as changes in staff members (both college and high school) hindered implementation of some of the strategies.</p> <p>Lesson learned- expect and learn to creatively accommodate change! Be flexible and continuously responsive to stakeholder needs.</p>	<p>A formal Memorandum of Understanding should be developed between the community college and high school, clearly defining expectations of each stakeholder, and formalizing all commitments made.</p> <p>New Strategy: MOU will be structured to facilitate the transitioning of new staff and team members in the instance that key members are no longer engaged in the project.</p>
5		