

Iowa Lakes Community College

Five Lessons Learned, 2005 – 2009

AQIP is good for Iowa Lakes and produces identifiable continuous improvement outcomes/results, but ...

- We need to continually communicate to College employees actions taken and procedures implemented as a result of AQIP-related processes. It is important to validate the process by communicating to employees how the process and/or action projects have made Iowa Lakes a better place to work and learn.

AQIP is an on-going process in which action projects provide the foundation and catalyst for continued improvement, growth and success, but ...

- We need back up plans for action strategies implemented. When we commit to an action project, we need to identify resources needed as part of the planning process that do not rely solely on receiving external funding to support.
- We need to be more careful about the action projects we choose. Do not allow the “cart to drive the horse,” but rather focus on what we can realistically accomplish with the resources we have at hand.

We need to continually market to our college employees the AQIP purpose, goals and how ongoing college operations relate.

- Continued communications to all employees is essential (e.g., regular updates in the weekly electronic college newsletter – *Info In A Minute*).
- We need to do a better job of linking collegewide informational publications like Info In A Minute to the AQIP process.

After four years, all Iowa Lakes employees understand what AQIP is and why we are an AQIP college.

- With a college of this size, we continually have turnover, so it is difficult to keep all employees informed of the AQIP process and philosophy.
- It is essential that new employee orientations include information about AQIP as our accreditation process, our AQIP history, and how they can get involved in ongoing continuous improvement processes.

Teamwork across campuses and employee classifications is essential for continuous improvement efforts.

- Getting more employees involved in action project committees led by employees from all areas of the college supports shared vision and collegewide support for initiative. It also helps to continuously educate employees and spread the workload.