

III.

Environmental Scan Methodology and Process



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Initial planning and development of the entire scan process was a critical first step. It became clear from the outset that assuring contact with a broad section of those involved in the everyday operation of Upstate University would be essential to the success of the project. Interaction could not be limited to only a few participants and it was imperative to remain open to contact with people who were once active with Upstate, but for various reasons were no longer involved on a daily basis. These external contacts provided illuminating information that enriched this report and will strengthen its future use.

Upstate staff were open and communicative, provided essential information and were continuously supportive of the process. Their insights and suggestions set the stage for the first round of interviews. Second round follow-up and “drill down” interviews were typically established at the request and direction of Butler/Helm.

Initial interviews were conducted during the month of October, 2006. These sessions occurred in a number of settings including one-on-one interviews and meetings with groups of six to eight faculty, staff and students. These groups were typically selected on the basis of their areas of assignment. Also utilized were telephone interviews or impromptu discussions with individuals who have knowledge of or interest in Upstate.

During initial interviews, the participants were given an overview of the environmental scan process, assured of anonymity, told the final report would be made available to the Upstate community at President Smith’s discretion, and advised that this step of the process was not designed to find solutions, but rather to scan the current environment within the several broad topic areas previously described.

Those interviewed were not limited to discussion of only the cross-functional areas. However, they were encouraged to use these areas for focus. They were advised that not all topics mentioned or comments elicited during the interviews would be included in the report. Rather those issues that surfaced repeatedly and took on the aspect of themes would be included in the final report for future consideration by the Cross Functional Teams.

Initial interview participants represented the following constituent groups:

- University administration
- College of Medicine
- College of Graduate Studies
- College of Health Professions
- College of Nursing

Hospital administration
Hospital nursing staff and leadership
Campus support departments
Hospital support personnel
Human Resources staff and leadership
Campus and Hospital Directors and Managers
Marketing and Communication staff and leadership
University and Hospital financial staff and leadership
Students
Former University leadership
Community supporters
Members of Upstate affiliated boards and associations

In excess of one hundred individuals participated in the initial round of interviews.

Through analysis of the information gathered during the first round of interviews, themes emerged and a second round of interviews were scheduled and conducted. Except for one group session, these interviews were composed of one-on-one or two-on-one sessions. These sessions allowed Butler/Helm to delve deeper into the themes to assure an understanding of the issues and confirm the validity of the information. Approximately 30 of these interviews were conducted in the second round.

Additionally, during and in between the two on-site rounds of interviews, there were ample opportunities to review relevant documentation of administrative policies, procedures, organizational diagrams and other important Upstate written materials. These included:

Memo describing Role and Authority of SUNY Councils
Upstate University Capital Construction Initiatives
Draft Standards of Professional Relations
Upstate's Institutional Values and Beliefs
Performance Scorecard – CMS Core Measures, Q1 2006
FY2007 Performance Scorecard-Organizational Measures 8/06
SWOT Analysis, September 2006
Prior and Current Organization Charts
Institutional Advancement Summary of Receipts