

Category 1 – Leadership – 45% 63 pts Sterling Challenge Response –2012

Category 1 Question	Strengths	Opportunities
<p>1a. Vision and Values: How do senior leaders set and communicate organizational vision and values?</p>	<p>Values and vision are established by Leadership Team. Communication includes a monthly Leadership Team meeting, summary reports to the Industry Advisory Committee (IAC), an annual report to the National Visiting Committee (NVC), weekly staff meetings, a newsletter, and web pages.</p>	
<p>1b. Vision and Values: How do senior leaders show commitment to those values?</p>	<p>As an integral part of the culture, Senior Leaders collectively support consensus decisions, despite possible differing personal points of view. Leadership commitment is shown by example of the Senior Leaders' actions in follow-up to Leadership Team meetings. Vision and values are promoted through the web site, and in meeting agendas. Validation of Vision and Mission is accomplished biannually at the start of the 3 phase evaluation cycle.</p> <p>At every presentation, IAC meetings, NVC meetings, Vision and Values and mission are deployed and re-communicated to stakeholders. The vision, values, and mission are; now culturally and procedurally embedded. FLATE bifold cards, with the vision, values, and mission have been created and distributed to stakeholders. Data summaries are systematically reviewed with the staff, and at leadership meetings, and IAC and NVC meetings.</p> <p>FLATE performance and commitment to values, vision, and mission has been recognized nationally by the National Science Foundation (NSF) ATE at national events.</p> <p>As an example of commitment, FLATE identified a need for greater outreach to industry through feedback from several sources including the stakeholder</p>	

	surveys. The Leadership team reviewed the data and established actions in response. The response included press releases published in manufacturer association newsletters and websites.	
2a. Promoting Legal and Ethical Behavior: How do senior leaders demonstrate their commitment to legal and ethical behavior?	Guidelines and training are provided by the host facility, are deployed, and enforced. The Leadership team demonstrates desired behavior and sets an example. Ethical behavior is explicitly stated in the guiding principles.	
2b. Promoting Legal and Ethical Behavior: How do senior leaders promote an environment that requires it?	Leadership has developed an ethical statement and deployed it to staff, as well as other stakeholders through the website. The ethics statement is incorporated into organizational values. The culture of FLATE is reinforced by Senior Leaders, based on their ethical codes of conduct prevalent in the engineering profession, by the example of the Senior Leaders who project exemplary ethical behavior on the staff. Background checks are conducted, as well as in depth interviews with prospective new hires. FLATE operates in an environment of the host organization. FLATE has developed a statement of ethical expectations for FLATE employees, volunteers, and stakeholders, to further nurture an environment conducive to ethical and legal behavior at the host facility, checks and balances are established, and ethical and legal behavior are encouraged. Expectations for employee conduct are written into the Employee Handbook available on the college intranet.	The refinement opportunity is to better deploy and make more systematic the focus and environment conducive to ethical behavior among the volunteer and stakeholder population.
3a. Creating a Sustainable Organization: How do senior leaders create an environment for performance improvement and innovation?	FLATE has established a key organizational objective focused on the sustainability of the FLATE mission beyond FLATE's grant period. Leadership understands the requirement to institutionalize activities that are effective in sustaining the FLATE mission after grant expiration. Examples include partnering with Dream It Do I, the Manufacturers Association of Florida (MAF) outreach brand, to take up this aspect of outreach activity for the long-term. Similarly, professional	The opportunity is to develop a systematic process for identifying all those key objectives, activities, and aspects of the mission that require sustainability, then to develop actions to build sustainability in those

	<p>development activity continues through the ET Forum. An element of FLATE Sustainability includes annually building strategies and objectives and activities developed through the annual Evaluation cycle, and particularly, the development of a specific strategic goal about sustainability. The annual plan includes activities and objectives for long-term sustainability, also supported by the current budget. Although the total operational budget may shrink, sustainability continues to be related to the core vision and mission, and skills and competencies.</p> <p>FLATE has been recognized as the entity trusted to guide effective use of State educational funding. That is to say, the State of Florida Department of Education (DOE) has designated FLATE in legislation that FLATE represents assurances that the State investment in research technologies are effectively transferred to workforce development.</p>	<p>areas.</p>
<p>3b. Creating a Sustainable Organization: How do senior leaders create an environment for workforce learning?</p>	<p>The system in place for development of strategy and objectives includes a feedback review of data and information, then analysis of the same, followed by action planning, and modifications based on the input.</p>	
<p>3c. Creating a Sustainable Organization: How do senior leaders create an environment that fosters customer engagement and delivers a consistently positive customer experience?</p>	<p>Annual evaluations of staff are conducted. Personal and Professional goals are established in dialogue with the supervisor. Additionally, individual work needs are identified, such as equipment and tools required, or personal and professional development needs, or both,</p>	
<p>3d. Creating a Sustainable Organization: How do senior leaders create an environment to accomplish your mission and strategic objectives?</p>	<p>in order to be more capable of accomplishing FLATE goals. Customer and stakeholder focus are continually reinforced through the culture as well as activities involving staff directed at stakeholders around the state.</p>	
<p>3e. Creating a Sustainable Organization: How do senior leaders participate in organizational learning and succession planning?</p>	<p>Skill sets are identified and documented for staff and the Leadership Team. The Executive Committee (senior partner college administrators) is in place to provide a link for FLATE to the partner colleges' administration, which facilitates selection of potential</p>	<p>The opportunity exists to develop a systematic succession plan, not just for Leadership but also for key FLATE staff and</p>

	successors to the Leadership Team.	activities needing to be sustained. It is necessary to identify and develop individuals who can take leadership roles, take charge, and manage the activities going forward.
4a. Communications: How do senior leaders communicate with and engage the entire workforce?	<p>Communication methods include those described earlier, plus Principal Investigator (PI) Meetings, the Made-in-Florida program, weekly staff meetings, the web site, the <i>FLATE Focus</i> newsletter, NSF ATE Centers joint exhibits, <i>Florida Trend's NEXT</i> magazine promotion, bi-monthly MAF Board Meetings, MAF advisory committee meetings, the FLATER Blog, the semi-annual ET Forum, and various workshops and presentations.</p> <p>Feedback is solicited at meetings, through the agenda, actively through emails, and at other venues, through multiple surveys regarding stakeholders, and one on one solicitations. Adobe connect is used at meetings when appropriate to facilitate involvement of distant stakeholders.</p> <p>The culture encourages solicitation of and giving feedback and input. The use of a number of 2-way tools encourages communication. Every interaction with partners is interactive, and is built into meeting agendas. Additional extensions of FLATE communications is facilitated through MAF newsletter articles, regional manufacturers associations (RMA) meetings and newsletters, and communications through the RMA networks. Best Practice Booklets, developed by FLATE, are published and distributed to enhance partnerships with the RMAs supporting their activities and their members.</p>	<p>Opportunity exists to develop stronger ties geographically and the 2-way communication structure to assure interaction with stakeholders in all geographic regions of the State.</p>
4b. Communications: How do senior leaders encourage two-way communication?		
4c. Communications: How do senior leaders take an active role in reward and recognition programs to reinforce a	<p>Recognition by leaders includes informal recognition for staff, such as lunches or comp time for extra work.</p> <p>FLATE leadership focuses the staff on actions related</p>	<p>Opportunity exists to make more use of the host organization rewards</p>

<p>customer and performance focus to accomplish the organization's objectives?</p>	<p>to goals and objectives as defined in the Evaluation Plan. FLATE Industry and Educator awards target volunteers and stakeholders who are active and supportive of the FLATE Mission, in their daily activities. Recognition is also made and publicized on the web site and through the Industry Honor Roll. FLATE Leadership has direct involvement in nominating FLATE staff and stakeholders to independent award solicitations, such as Educator of the Year award, Tampa bay Technology Forum award, FACC award, High Tech award for curriculum, the FLATE educator and Industry reps of the year, MAF awards, internal host awards, and more. The FLATE-developed, Toothpick Factory training workshop received a nationally recognized award. Awards apply in all key organizational objective areas, i.e. curriculum, outreach, and professional development.</p>	<p>system to recognize FLATE staff, as well as other educational and general community-based award systems.</p>
<p>5a. Focus on Action: How do senior leaders create a focus on action to accomplish the organization's objectives?</p>	<p>Data are collected according to measures identified in the Evaluation Plan (e.g. event evaluations, attendance, etc.) These data are reviewed as collected.</p>	<p>The approach should be made more systematic, so that data can be aggregated and analyzed, to view the entire picture, to proactively address specific opportunities for improvement.</p>
<p>5b. Focus on Action: How do senior leaders create a focus on action to identify needed actions?</p>	<p>Data are reviewed with staff at weekly meetings, and at monthly Leadership Team meetings by exception. Annually, the Leadership team reviews and updates each FLATE objective. Measures are being incorporated into a system for review, and is supported by a budgeted activity.</p>	
<p>5c. Focus on Action: How do senior leaders create a focus on action to improve performance?</p>	<p>In leadership teams and in staff meetings, and IAC and NVC meetings, data are used to identify gaps in performance of processes and systems, and to define the expectations of activities. Based on these data actions are established and executed; actions are monitored. Actions are assigned in the meetings and tracked through accomplishment.</p>	
<p>6a. Governance System: How does your organization review and achieve management accountability?</p>	<p>External audits in financial and management areas are and continue to be conducted by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the host organization (HCC).</p>	
<p>6b. Governance System: How does your</p>	<p>Monthly internal audits are also conducted as a budget</p>	

<p>organization review and achieve fiscal accountability (including internal and external audits)?</p>	<p>item to reconcile HCC accounting records with FLATE’s budget. A formal internal and external review and approval process exists for multi-level approval of expenditures. Management accountability comes through oversight by the NVC in annual reviews, supplemented by several annual report mechanisms (NVC, Western Michigan University, Annual NSF report, Annual Evaluation report, interactions with NSF program managers at the Annual PI Meeting), as well as monthly Leadership Team meetings. The IAC assists in setting direction and guidelines for management.</p> <p>FLATE interacts with and solicits stakeholders by responding to their needs regarding curriculum, professional development, and outreach. The FLATE Leadership Team has established Guiding Principles to direct activity which inherently protects stakeholder interests.</p> <p>Transparency is accomplished through the publication of FLATE activities and performance through the website, and meetings with the NVC and IAC.</p>	
<p>6c. Governance System: How does your organization review and achieve operational transparency?</p>		
<p>6d. Governance System: How does your organization review and achieve protection of stakeholder interests?</p>		
<p>7a. Legal, Regulatory, and Ethical Behavior: How does your organization address any adverse impacts on society from current and future products, services, and operations?</p>	<p>In order to avoid adverse impacts on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Curriculum development – FLATE has used national standards and aligned itself to stakeholder needs. Stakeholders such as academic and industry partners are engaged. -Professional development – FLATE matches the subject matter and the expert instructor to meet the stated needs and collect feedback on all professional development activities and events for faculty. -Outreach – FLATE collects and analyzes trends and stakeholder needs to accurately guide promotions of career opportunities. Requirements in authorizing the FLATE Tour Director in conducting tours for schoolchildren have become stricter. FLATE has developed a series of Best Practice brochures to document standard processes and to ensure that 	<p>An opportunity exists for systematically soliciting and receiving feedback from industry and graduated students regarding the accuracy of curriculum and skills education provided through FLATE-developed curriculum.</p>
<p>7b. Legal, Regulatory, and Ethical Behavior: How does your organization address compliance with legal and regulatory requirements?</p>		
<p>7c. Legal, Regulatory, and Ethical Behavior: How does your organization address monitoring and responding to breaches of ethical behavior?</p>		

	<p>important activities are sustained and performed systematically, as well as to promote and provide services for stakeholders.</p> <p>An Institutional Review Board (IRB), initiated by FLATE, is now in place at HCC to review and approve all non-exempt FLATE procedures and processes that involve human interactions. Additionally, the proposal has been reviewed by an IRB, which validated that FLATE procedures and processes do not negatively impact individual.</p> <p>Potential adverse impact could include inaccurate curriculum with regard to meeting the needs of industry. In addressing this risk, FLATE reviews the offerings of the adoptive colleges, reviews ET activities and focuses on the feedback and interaction at the ET Forums. Feedback and input come from curriculum framework reviews, detailed interaction with faculty about what they are teaching, MSSC validation, interaction at an annual meeting with 4 year schools that articulate the degree, and targeting professional development in areas of need, as well as feedback from the DOE.</p>	
<p>8a. Societal Well-Being and Community Support: How does your organization plan for and contribute to the well-being of your environmental, social and economic systems?</p>	<p>FLATE's contribution to the social and economic systems of Florida are reflected in the Mission. Demonstrated actions include: development of the statewide AS degree program; outreach contributing to the enhancement of the manufacturing industry contribution to society and the overall economy; giving direct testimony to the Florida legislature in support of Statewide manufacturing and Education initiatives; and direct input to the DOE curriculum development and implementation activity</p>	<p>The opportunity is to develop an approach to prioritize how resources are used to address and focus on important aspects of environmental, social, and economic systems well-being and benefit for colleges.</p>
<p>8b. Societal Well-Being and Community Support: How does your organization actively identify, support, and strengthen key communities?</p>	<p>Partnerships are established such as with MAF, RMAs, with the IAC, the ET Forum, and through events with individual manufacturers or educational institutions, as well as through the development of curriculum for distribution to community colleges, high schools, and</p>	<p>Opportunity exists to better align activities regarding support and community interaction with the strategic goal of</p>

	<p>technical schools. Partnerships are also developed with the DOE and Workforce Florida to jointly identify and support stakeholder needs.</p> <p>FLATE supports and funds travel for faculty professional development, and career outreach for students. Recognition for partners is provided through the Annual Awards system, press items, and the Corporate Honor Roll website.</p> <p>Key communities include the students and their parents, the educational community at large, and industry.</p>	<p>sustainability. To enhance long-term sustainability and support for FLATE's mission in Florida FLATE builds on partnerships with NAM and SME, and MAF and the RMAs.</p> <p>Another opportunity is to systematize the selection process for potential partnerships through use of the Guiding Principles.</p> <p>Another continuing opportunity exists to widen awareness of FLATE among far and wide-ranging stakeholders who should know about and use FLATE services but don't.</p>
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Category 2 – Strategic Planning – 45% 45 pts
Sterling Challenge Response –2012

Category 2 Question	Strengths	Opportunities
<p>1a. Strategic Planning Process: How does your organization conduct its strategic planning? What are the process steps?</p>	<p>The Evaluation Planning process is annually cyclical. It establishes and evaluates FLATE goals and objectives, as well as measures linked to those goals and objectives for monitoring their effectiveness. Participants in the process include the Leadership Team, three stakeholder colleges, the National Science Foundation (NSF) sponsor, and the National Visiting Committee (NVC). There is a structured voice of stakeholder input in place through the bi-annual Stakeholder Survey, interaction with the Florida Department of Education (DOE), the NVC, the Industry Advisory Council (IAC), participants in the semi-annual ET Forum, review of trends at staff meetings, and more.</p> <p>There are a number of sources of information and observation of approaches which FLATE brings in and incorporates into strategic discussions. These outside opportunities include: review of other NSF center activities, including the FLATE Director’s participation in NVC and other boards throughout the NSF ATE network; wide ranging contacts with the educational network nationwide and overseas; Leadership team input about technology trends and curriculum and frameworks reviews; and more. Trend spotting is a regular agenda item of the monthly Leadership Team meeting. This activity is intended to uncover potential new areas of importance to FLATE and to establish objectives and actions to address these areas.</p>	<p>An opportunity exists to systematically address Strategic Challenges and incorporate this into the strategic objectives.</p>
<p>1b. Strategic Planning Process: How does your organization conduct its strategic planning? Who are the key participants?</p>		
<p>1c. Strategic Planning Process: How does your organization conduct its strategic planning? How do you identify your organization’s core competencies, strategic challenges, and strategic advantages?</p>		

	<p>In the Strategic Planning process, core competencies are identified by the Leadership Team through discussion and deliberation around feedback from stakeholders. FLATE's core competencies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deep knowledge of the community college environment and the industry; and communication with these groups; ○ Subject matter expertise in a variety of technical areas in ATE disciplines; ○ The providing of a neutral setting to relate and link the industry with community colleges; and to bring together community colleges; ○ Ability to build partnerships ○ Project management to complete deliverables on time and above expectations ○ Financial management of projects ○ Grant writing ○ Data collection and analysis <p>These core competencies support the organizational objectives and missions.</p> <p>Strategic Challenges identified include: achieving a continuous revenue stream; having a positive image perceived by industry and partners around the state, and gaining their active participation in FLATE activities; growing the list of state colleges adopting and implementing FLATE-developed curriculum state-wide; and gaining broader statewide participation in Made-in-Florida outreach.</p>	
<p>2a. Strategic Considerations: How does your strategic planning process</p>	<p>The FLATE grant proposal considered a number of environmental factors and influences, including strengths</p>	<p>The opportunity exists to implement a formal SWOT</p>

<p>address strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats?</p>	<p>and weaknesses, regulatory environment of the Department of Education and the specific college requirements, partner college requirements, and NSF, and State and Federal law. Sustainability and ability to execute the plan are integrated in the plan through allocation of resources and funding. Trend spotting has been added to the agenda for the monthly leadership Meeting.</p>	<p>analysis as part of the evaluation and planning process.</p>
<p>2b. Strategic Considerations: How does your strategic planning process address early indications of shifts in technology, competitors, customers or markets, and regulatory environment?</p>	<p>Shifts in technology, customers and stakeholder needs, and the regulatory environment are identified through constant interaction with peers, stakeholders, and competitors in multiple venues, such as the annual Hi-Tec Conference, annual NSF PI ATE Conference, Industry Advisory Council (IAC) member meetings, with state and regional manufacturer associations, and more. Issues and trends are addressed through discussion and action assignments at monthly Leadership meetings and weekly staff meetings. The longer term issues are addressed and integrated into the annual planning cycle. For example, the issue of need for mechatronics training has been recognized and expertise has been integrated solve the introduction of mechatronics as an area of emphasis in new curriculum.</p>	<p>Opportunity exists to still to fully identify and collect comparative data sufficient to develop projections of FLATE's performance in key areas.</p>
<p>2c. Strategic Considerations: How does your strategic planning process address long-term organizational sustainability through projections of your future performance and competitors 'or compatible organizations' future performance?</p>	<p>The question of long-term sustainability of FLATE relates to long-term sustainability of its mission, since its life as a grant project from NSF is limited. FLATE strategic objectives include emphasis on sustainability as a separate goal. The Leadership team regularly reviews its activities and the segments of its mission which are candidates for seeking means to maintain sustainability. For instance, outreach to students and faculty in the educational community, has been determined to be suitable for sustainability. As a result, ATE is working</p>	

	with MAF and its Dream It Do It campaign to merge or absorb what FLATE's Made In Florida Campaign is involved with.	
3a. Key Strategic Objectives: What are your organization's key short and longer- term strategic objectives?	Objective timelines have been established, and are annually updated for feasibility, priority, and impact. Short-term is determined to be 6-18 months; long-term, 36 months. The objectives and timetable for accomplishing are incorporated into the objectives timetable document.	
3b. Key Strategic Objectives: What is your organization's timetable for accomplishing them?		
4a. Strategic Objective Considerations: How do your strategic objectives address your organization's core competencies?	FLATE has structured the organization on its specific set of core competencies. These are the foundation for developing strategy. Guiding principles have also been developed to perform as the filter for deciding whether to take on new projects and whether they fit into FLATE strategy and into subsequent action plans. Challenges are addressed by the Leadership Team in the development of concepts which are translated into the Strategic Plan and its goals and objectives. Again, as issues are addressed and actions are required, the guiding principles provide a structure for decision making, whether specific activities should be undertaken.	An earlier opportunity for improvement applies here as well. There is an opportunity to systematically address Strategic Challenges, as well as core competencies and incorporate these into the strategic objectives.
4b. Strategic Objective Considerations: How do your strategic objectives address the strategic challenges and advantages identified in your organizational profile?		
5a. Action Plan Development and Deployment: How does your organization develop and deploy action plans?	FLATE Leadership and staff develop specific action activities based on review of data for performance measures and identified gaps. These are assigned based on individual skills and experience and are followed up at the weekly staff and project meetings, or by exception if and when more resources are needed to accomplish actions. Objectives laid out for each of the four high level strategic objectives, are essentially action plans in themselves. Resources are addressed and changed as action plans are developed, based on Guiding Principles, and as these action plans are followed up in meetings.	Develop an approach for identifying and planning specific human resource needs to support strategic objectives, as appropriate. Need to strengthen the link between the Strategic Plan goals and objectives and the action plans designed to deploy the Strategic Plan.
5b. Action Plan Development and Deployment: How does your organization allocate financial and human resources to support the action plans?		
5c. Action Plan Development and Deployment: What are your key performance measures or indicators		

<p>for tracking action plan achievement and effectiveness?</p>	<p>Resources are deployed based on how they affect the outcome of each goal. Human and financial resource allocation is affected not only by federal guidelines relating to the grant award, but also weighting factors and decisions made by the Executive Director, in consultation with the Leadership Team. Allocation is based on immediate and time-sensitivity of each project. The implementation of the mechatronics curriculum is an example of how relevance enters this allocation decision. Once action items are assigned, Leaders follow up in weekly staff and project meetings or by exception through tracking of internal measures to indicate whether the project is on track and whether it meets the expected end results and timelines. Objectives have measures identified and related (with data file locations identified). These are periodically reviewed by the Leadership Team and the staff as well as the IAC and NVC on an annual basis. An example of resource allocation being modified is the decision to end the annual promotion of the manufacturing advertorial in Florida Trend's NEXT magazine targeted to high school students. Data showed that the effectiveness of the advertorial in outreach to high school students was minimal. Resources were directed to other areas.</p>	
<p>5d. Action Plan Development and Deployment: How does your organization establish and implement modified action plans if circumstances require a shift in plans and rapid execution of new plans?</p>		

Category 3 – Customer & Market Focus – 50% 50 pts
Sterling Challenge Response – 2012

Category 3 Question	Strengths	Opportunities
<p>1a. Listening to Current and Potential Customers: What are your organization’s methods for listening to customers to obtain customer requirements, suggestions, or complaints?</p>	<p>FLATE actively listens through a number of means such as: survey of industry and stakeholders, reviewing statewide surveys including the bi-annual Stakeholder Survey, focus group results and published data, soliciting guidance from the Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) and National Visiting Committee (NVC), twice-annual FLATE workshops at the Engineering Technology (ET) Forum (a focus group format), other customer focus groups, advisory committees consisting of members from various colleges, and interaction with customers at public exhibits. Information is usually collected and analyzed for specific tasks or projects; otherwise, it would be distilled through the Leadership Team, exchanged at staff meetings, and applied as appropriate. “Event Reports” are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the various elements of customer feedback.</p> <p>Customer/stakeholder input is reviewed by the Leadership Team, the NVC and IAC. FLATE surveys all groups it contacts, such as teachers at professional development opportunities, students at plant tours, and more.</p> <p>To simplify the collection o customer information many surveys have been put on line. Additionally, changes to surveys have included more</p>	
<p>1b. Listening to Current and Potential Customers: What are your organization’s methods for listening to customers to obtain feedback and actionable information on your products, services, and customer support?</p>		

	standard/core questions across different types of surveys to provide a baseline of commonality in survey responses.	
2a. Customer Satisfaction and Engagement: How do you determine customer satisfaction and engagement?	A bi-annual Stakeholder Survey is conducted to collect information and feedback relating to customer/stakeholder satisfaction. Satisfaction surveys are conducted at every event and tour (both industry host and student/teacher participants). Other means of satisfaction determination include those methods described in Items 1.a and 1.b above. Additional input is collected in partnership interactions, focus groups, and more. Customer loyalty is demonstrated by repeat support for FLATE activities and participation by individuals from the various segments of stakeholders. Loyalty is also determined by event survey questions, and indicated by active participation in events, committees, and other FLATE activities. Data updates circulated within the staff, discussed at staff meetings, and Leadership Team meetings. Comments are collected from staff about potential responses to the data and action is taken as necessary. For example, in relation to Summer Robotic Camps, briefings are conducted for all staff and volunteers before and after each camp, and data I collected regarding participant and parent satisfaction. Data is compiled and circulated for review on a regular basis as it is obtained. Surveys for classes, the ET Forums, and other activities include questions about what participants would like to see changed, what they didn't like, and similar kinds of questions. These are the basis for determining dissatisfaction and to identify dissatisfiers.	Determination of dissatisfaction can be refined and made more systematic to apply to all areas of products and services, such as ET curriculum development.
2b. Customer Satisfaction and Engagement: How do you determine customer dissatisfaction?		
2c. Customer Satisfaction and Engagement: How do you use this information for improvements throughout your organization?		

	<p>Survey information is compiled and reviewed aggregately at staff meetings and Leadership Team meetings, and action items are developed. These data are also used to develop new or improved processes and procedures. An example is the development of the Tour Agenda checklist used to standardize the approach to all activities required for all tours.</p>	
<p>3a. Product Offerings & Support: How does your organization identify product and service offerings and support to meet and exceed customer and market expectations?</p>	<p>Any new product or service developed is checked against organizational goals for alignment and put through the filter of the FLATE Guiding Principles to ensure alignment with objectives. Customer support is provided directly by FLATE staff and volunteers as well as indirectly through users of FLATE curriculum frameworks and other products. Key customer support mechanisms include communication access through the FLATE and the Made In Florida (MIF) websites, numerous tours and events, the annual ET Forum, IAC and NVC meetings, as well as the typical communication methods of email and telephone.</p>	<p>There is opportunity to evaluate and refine the methods of access provided to customers and stakeholders.</p>
<p>3b. Product Offerings & Support: How does your organization enable customers to seek information and conduct business with you?</p>	<p>Support materials are developed and made available to users of FLATE frameworks, professional development support materials and training sessions, and workshops and materials like the Toothpick Factory. The bi-annual Stakeholder Survey was initiated as a result of opportunities identified in previous Florida Sterling self-assessments. This is an example of a proactive approach undertaken to assure stakeholder expectations are identified and met.</p> <p>Key customer support mechanisms include communication access through the FLATE and MIF</p>	

	websites, numerous tours and events, the semiannual ET Forum, IAC and NVC meetings, as well as the regular typical communication methods of email and telephone. Links on websites have been added in many areas that can lead customers and stakeholders to the information they are seeking. This approach was undertaken in response to customer feedback from web site users asking for better ways to access FLATE information.	
4a. Customer Segmentation: How do you use customer, market, and product offering information to identify current and anticipate future customer groups and market segments?	A basis for customer segmentation is defined by the governing proposal/contract with the National Science Foundation (NSF). Also, the Stakeholder Survey is used to expose the fact that large numbers of FLATE stakeholders who are unaware of FLATE's many services and products. This data offers FLATE leads for greater outreach and dissemination of information about FLATE. FLATE also partners with the Manufacturers Association of Florida (MAF) and the MAF Center for Advanced Manufacturing Excellence (CAME) to jointly identify customer/stakeholder segments that have been or are or should be involved with FLATE activities. Additionally, targeting of groups and segments for pursuit is based on FLATE goals and Guiding Principles as well as guidelines and requirements from specific FLATE contracts, such as FES, NSF, and BITT.	Continued opportunity exists to more systematically identify and prioritize prospective customers/stakeholders of FLATE to increase outreach and awareness of FLATE and the NSF contribution and investment in Florida.
4b. Customer Segmentation: How do you use customer, market, and product offering information to determine which customer groups and market segments to pursue?		
5a. Customer Data Use: How does your organization use customer, market, and product offering information to improve marketing?	As discussed in several other areas, multiple communication access methods provide conduits for soliciting and collecting feedback from stakeholders, customers, and partners. The biannual Stakeholder Survey, conducted in 2009 and 2011 provides a direct means of collecting feedback and ideas for new	The opportunity above also is related to this item.
5b. Customer Data Use: How does your organization use customer, market, and		

<p>product offering information to build a more customer-focused culture?</p>	<p>or expanded services, products, and activities. The stakeholder survey results have instigated a more active relationship and partnership with the regional manufacturers associations (RMA) including providing support for industry tours, invitations to attend IAC meetings, encouraging industry tours for students, and more.</p> <p>Outreach to Manufacturing has been enhanced through RMA activity, participation in the annual MAF Summit and related activities, and the Florida Sterling Conference including the STEM Forum and the Education Summit.</p> <p>With the advent of the Stakeholder and other surveys, and the development of actions within the staff and the IAC and NVC, the focus on customer is enhanced in all aspects of FLATE activities within staff and the volunteer/stakeholder core.</p>	
<p>6a. Relationship Management: How do you build and manage relationships to acquire new customers and build market share?</p>	<p>Many of the customer access and stakeholder feedback approaches described in the items above also double as means to build relationships with customers and stakeholders including, supporting associations and industry organizations through attendance at conferences and meetings, and use of the exhibit booth at events, campus visits, providing common marketing support materials to ET curriculum framework adopters, building of relationships and connections through the Florida Department of Education (DOE), partnerships with industry groups, and making and keeping contacts with State agencies and all stakeholders such as the MAF and RMAs.</p> <p>FLATE provides support to customers financially, physically, and intellectually. FLATE has developed</p>	<p>Develop a systematic approach to extend FLATE branding statewide, perhaps through state funding, the ambassador program, RMAs, new partnerships, etc., in order to contact and connect with potential customers and stakeholders. Build a method specifically for building relationships with potential partners and stakeholders to</p>
<p>6b. Relationship Management: How do you build and manage relationships to meet and exceed customer expectations in each stage of the customer relationship?</p>		
<p>6c. Relationship Management: How do you build and manage relationships to increase loyalty and repeat business, and gain positive referrals?</p>		

	<p>branding and strong name recognition through its activities in the State of Florida and nationally. FLATE extends the customer relationship to partners of prospective partners, and builds relationships with potential partners, customers, and stakeholders.</p> <p>Relationship building and maintenance begins with initial contact. Frequent interaction with various customer/stakeholder segments including personal contacts, the FLATE Focus newsletter, interaction through RMAs and the MAF, and interaction through the IAC and NVC.</p> <p>The FLATE organizational culture is emphasized within staff and within the volunteer/stakeholder core, reinforcing personal interactions and proaction in maintaining relationships. Actions are reviewed with the staff at weekly meetings to reinforce the customer-focused culture.</p>	<p>convert them into actual customers, partners, and stakeholders.</p>
<p>7a. Complaint Management: How does your complaint management process ensure complaints are promptly and effectively resolved?</p>	<p>As inquiries/complaints come in, they are handled on a case-by-case basis individually by staff, with guidance from senior staff and leaders if necessary. Then, at the weekly staff meeting, and monthly Leadership Meetings, if necessary, issues are brought up to deal with the inquiry/complaint systematically from an organizational point of view.</p>	<p>The opportunity exists to aggregate complaint information for analysis which would facilitate identification and response to trends.</p>
<p>7b. Complaint Management: How does your complaint management process recover customers' confidence, satisfaction, and engagement?</p>	<p>The weekly staff meetings provide the venue fo staff to be exposed to customer issues across the organization.</p> <p>Once the complaint is brought into the formal FLATE structure, the complaint is addressed proactively.</p>	

Category 4 – Measurement, Analysis, & Knowledge Management – 40% 40 pts
Sterling Challenge Response – 2012

Category 4 Question	Strengths	Opportunities
1a. Performance Measurement: How do you select, collect, and use data and information in your daily operations?	<p>Selection of measures is guided by the grantee’s, National Science Foundation (NSF), requirements, although specific measures are decided within FLATE’s Evaluation Plan where selected measures are aligned with the three high level key organizational goals, Curriculum Development, Outreach, and Professional Development. High level Effectiveness Measures aligned with these are identified, as well as lower level objectives with measures. The Annual National Visiting Committee (NVC) meeting, monthly Leadership meetings, and weekly staff meetings are used to monitor FLATE objectives and actions through these key measures. Periodic collection and compilation of data is reviewed during the year to communicate progress and performance. Measures are established aligned with strategic objectives, encompassing the entire organization, and used for tracking overall performance and accomplishment of strategic objectives. Data selection is guided by finding similar programs and processes and collecting comparative performance data (e.g. for</p>	<p>While great progress has been made, the opportunity exists for continued development of systems for identifying comparative data needs and source.</p>
1b. Performance Measurement: How do you select, collect, and use data and information to track overall organizational performance?		
1c. Performance Measurement: How do you select, collect, and use data and information relative to progress on your strategic objectives and action plan s?		
1d. Performance Measurement: How do you select and use key comparative data and information?		
1e. Performance Measurement: How do you select and use voice-of-the-customer data and information (including complaints)?		

	<p>summer robotics camps and curriculum effectiveness activities). FLATE Leadership seeks comparative information and data, and benchmarks when interacting with other NSF ATE organizations. Resources are similar among NSF ATE Centers, which results in sources of comparison beyond just activities. Comparisons are drawn from similarities in the resources that support ATE activities.</p> <p>Voice of the Customer and customer feedback and input are selected through data collected in a number of different surveys of different segments of customers and stakeholders. Various surveys, guided by organizational goals and objectives, by the NSF award contract, by the NVC as a governing body, and the Industry Advisory Council (IAC), are conducted. Information from these surveys is compiled, and analyzed in varying venues, such as staff meetings, Leadership meetings, and NVC and IAC meetings. Actions are developed based on these analyses.</p>	
<p>1f. Performance Measurement: What are your key organizational measures, including financial performance measures?</p>	<p>Key organizational measures include those that monitor and track the three key organizational goals in Curriculum, Outreach, and Professional Development. The FLATE Effectiveness Measures table outlines the key organizational measures. FLATE budget is tracked by the host college and is overseen by NSF.</p>	

<p>2a. Performance Improvement: How do you review and analyze organizational performance?</p>	<p>The National Visiting Committee (NVC) evaluation is used annually to review performance and to identify opportunities at the strategic and objective/operational levels. The Leadership Team and the Industry Advisory Committee (IAC) are also involved in the performance review process and in the implementation of operational priorities. At the weekly staff meeting, staff members review a segment of performance data and establish priorities for improvement actions as necessary. Goals and the objectives timeline are reviewed regularly at Leadership and staff meetings, and make adjustments to the current environment. The External Evaluator continuously monitors the evaluation processes and procedures and submits a formal annual evaluation report to NSF. Annually FLATE submits the required grant report update to NSF, and the NSF Advanced Technology in Education Centers (ATE) Survey.</p>	<p>Opportunity exists to establish a system to measure success at sustainability of the FLATE mission, products, and services. For example, while there are methods in place for professional development, such as the ET Forum and the summer institute, there's a need to gage the results of nurturing the professional development culture and commitment to a newer generation of faculty.</p>
<p>2b. Performance Improvement: How do you identify and set priorities for improvement?</p>		
<p>3a. Data and Information Availability: How do you ensure data, information, and knowledge accuracy?</p>	<p>Data are reviewed and spot-checked by senior leaders to ensure data entry accuracy. The review consists of seeking and identifying "outlier" and inconsistent data. Shared directory files are regularly reviewed with the entire staff to ensure files are up to date. Security is enhanced by use of passwords, restricted access, firewalls, and anti-virus software, and is supported by the host organization,</p>	
<p>3b. Data and Information Availability: How do you ensure data, information, and knowledge integrity and reliability?</p>		
<p>3c. Data and Information Availability: How do you ensure data, information, and knowledge timeliness?</p>		
<p>3d. Data and Information Availability: How</p>		

do you ensure data, information, and knowledge security and confidentiality?

3e. **Data and Information Availability:** How do you ensure data, information, and knowledge availability to workforce and suppliers, partners, and customers as appropriate?

Hillsborough Community College (HCC). Collecting information on line minimizes transcription errors and multiple-handling on paper.

Based on FLATE's affiliation with its host, HCC, there is an extensive network of data backups and system redundancies; specifically by using two independent servers in two geographically separate locations, two websites for information availability, and two independent resources for information technology support. FLATE participates in the HCC Emergency Preparedness Plan. Local data is backed up to servers on a regular basis. Maintenance of the shared directory is locally reinforced to ensure timeliness and accuracy of data.

FLATE has a standardized procedure for prioritized data collection and entry. There are criteria for weighing priorities. Expectations are established for documenting and entering data.

Data security is governed by HCC policies and procedures. Confidentiality is not significant except for administrative data (employees, pay, etc.) which is governed by the college processes as well. Confidentiality is not an issue with FLATE performance data since that is aggregated and contains no confidential information. There are safeguard in the system regarding progressive passworded access and system firewalls.

	Data is made available to staff through passworded access. Availability to customers and stakeholders through distribution in the FLATE Focus newsletter, and at IAC and NVC meetings. Summative data is available publically on the FLATE website as well.	
4a. Knowledge Management: How do you collect and transfer knowledge from and to your workforce?	FLATE information is readily available to staff, through methods including use of the website and posting of goals and objectives in the office. Discussions of implementation level tasks occur at weekly staff meetings. Processes and procedures for at least one staff position are documented and updated regularly in a FLATE office manual (soft and hard copies) to support systematic knowledge transfer and retention. Additionally other forums, as discussed earlier, are available for collection and transfer of knowledge and identification of best practices, such as surveys, the FLATE Focus newsletter, and participation in meetings. Process improvement activities incorporate and build workforce knowledge and best practices into modified processes.	An opportunity exists in the development of a systematic means to rapidly identify, collect, and use best practices to innovate and improve FLATE processes and systems. Additionally, it is not clear how knowledge is methodically collected from stakeholders and integrated into FLATE processes and in the planning process.
4b. Knowledge Management: How do you transfer relevant knowledge from and to customers, suppliers, and partners?		
4c. Knowledge Management: How do you rapidly identify, share, and implement best practices?		
5a. Information Technology Management: How do you ensure hardware and software are reliable, secure and user friendly? the continued availability of data and information and systems in the event of an emergency?	Information technology is governed by HCC. Some data are housed at the Florida Department of Education.	Although HCC procedures also govern emergency preparedness generally, it's not clear how, if disrupted, FLATE ensures business recovery and continuity.
5b. Information Technology Management:		

How do you ensure the continued availability of data and information and hardware and software systems in the event of an emergency?

Category 5 – Workforce Focus – 30% 30 pts Sterling Challenge Response – 2012

Category 5 Question	Strengths	Opportunities
<p>1a. Capability and Capacity: How do you assess current and future workforce capability and capacity needs, including skills and competencies?</p>	<p>Capacity needs are defined by the strategic goals based on National Science Foundation (NSF) and Industry and education community input and needs. Capacity needs remain constant throughout the term of the grant award. Positions are defined up front in the grant application and award. Assessing workforce capability and capacity is accomplished informally by the FLATE Executive Director in reviewing personnel skills and knowledge against the needs of FLATE to accomplish its mission.</p>	<p>There is an opportunity to systematize the method used by FLATE for assessment of workforce capability and capacity.</p>
<p>1b. Capability and Capacity: How do you assess current and future workforce capability and capacity needs, including staffing levels?</p>		
<p>2a. New Workforce Members: How do you recruit, hire, and place new workforce members?</p>	<p>Diverse thinking in the full time and volunteer workforce is enhanced by inclusion of a diverse array of volunteers from education, industry, business, government agencies, and industry community groups. Recruitment of diverse thinking is addressed through feedback from the varied stakeholder groups and advisory councils. Staff recruiting and hiring rigorously evaluates prospect capabilities and diversity of background and experience for integration of various perspectives into the workforce.</p> <p>Diversity in a geographic sense is enhanced by increased interaction with additional stakeholders state-wide, including membership on the National Visiting Committee (NVC), in the Industry Advisory Council (IAC), and rotating meeting venues to</p>	
<p>2b. New Workforce Members: How do you retain new workforce members?</p>		
<p>2c. New Workforce Members: How do you ensure the workforce represents the diverse ideas, cultures, and thinking of your hiring and customer community?</p>		

	<p>various locations around the state.</p> <p>Retention of the workforce is accomplished through systematically providing challenging opportunities and engaging and empowering the workforce. At weekly staff meetings, staff is involved in review of performance measures, then engaged in problem-solving activities when measures indicate unfavorable levels and/or trends.</p> <p>Hiring practices, governed by the host college, ensure that all candidates for positions have equal opportunity for selection, and are selected from the general pool of prospects available to the college</p>	
<p>3a. Work Accomplishment and Change Management: How do you organize your workforce to accomplish the work of your organization?</p>	<p>At weekly Staff Meetings, the staff is organized around required functions and specific projects initiatives linked with strategic objectives, and as needs arise. Ad hoc teams are formed as needed to work on these projects and initiatives.</p> <p>A dedicated staff person is assigned to manage the various volunteer project teams including the IAC, NVC, and the Executive Committee.</p> <p>The focus on stakeholders is reinforced through deployment of organizational guiding principles, and review of metrics, which inherently are focused on stakeholders and customers, and problem-solving activities in response to metrics review.</p> <p>Workforce capacity needs are essentially constant due to the requirements of the National Science Foundation (NSF) award.</p>	<p>An opportunity exists to specifically address strategic challenges systematically through workforce organization.</p>
<p>3b. Work Accomplishment and Change Management: How do you organize your workforce to reinforce a customer and business focus?</p>		
<p>3c. Work Accomplishment and Change Management: How do you organize your workforce to address your strategic challenges and accomplish your action plans?</p>		
<p>3d. Work Accomplishment and Change Management: How do you organize your workforce to manage changing capability and capacity needs to ensure continuity, prevent or minimize workforce reductions, or manage periods of workforce growth?</p>		
<p>4a. Workforce Climate: How do you ensure, measure, and improve workplace health,</p>	<p>The host college, Hillsborough Community College (HCC) plans and policies are used to ensure</p>	

<p>safety, and security including different workplace environments?</p>	<p>workplace health and safety and staff security. Needs are driven by OSHA and regulatory requirements and, on tours and outside events, by the individual host facilities, whether schools, businesses, or others.</p> <p>At Staff Meetings, and during staff on-boarding, the staff is oriented to health, safety, and security requirements.</p> <p>Workforce policies pay and compensation, and benefits are governed by personnel policies of the host college.</p>	
<p>4b. Workforce Climate: How do you support your workforce via policies, procedures, and benefits?</p>		
<p>5a. Organizational Culture & Elements of Engagement: How does your organization determine the key elements that affect workforce engagement and satisfaction, including different workforce groups and segments?</p>	<p>FLATE determines engagement through weekly staff meetings, tour and event surveys of staff, industry volunteers, and participants and the bi-annual stakeholder survey. This survey has been conducted in 2009 and 2011. The Stakeholder survey demographic information allows identification of satisfaction by various segments, including educators, administrators, industry, and other segments.</p>	<p>There is an opportunity to develop a systematic means for identifying specific elements and factors that are most important to stakeholders.</p>
<p>5b. Organizational Culture & Elements of Engagement: How does your organization foster a culture of open communications, engagement, and high performance work?</p>	<p>FLATE fosters a culture of open communication and engagement through discussion and weekly follow-up with staff at regular meetings and ongoing interactions regarding projects progress tracking. The culture of FLATE is to be inclusive of ideas and opinions of staff, partners, and other stakeholders. This is nurtured by the many venues for stakeholder interaction, including IAC meetings, NVC meetings, industry tours, the ET Forum, and more. FLATE Staff individual annual goals are established and reviewed in discussions and communication with the Executive Director. For example, regarding the FLATE Ambassadors, ideas are discussed and</p>	

	<p>shared at meetings of staff, the IAC, and other volunteer groups.</p> <p>There is the FLATE Hero recognition for industry partners regarding their support and participation. Recognition is spotlighted in the FLATE Focus newsletter, to highlight volunteer activity, and the annual FLATE awards for educators and industry supporters.</p> <p>Leadership team meetings are used to identify information and to help to transfer knowledge across the organization to volunteers and other stakeholders. Also, communication is exchanged with participatory colleges, as well as with prospective participant colleges on an expanding list. There is also regular two-way communication with several divisions of the Florida Department of Education as a conduit for openly sharing knowledge with other colleges. There are a number of social media vehicles used by FLATE as well.</p>	
<p>6a. Performance Management: How does your workforce performance management system support high-performance work?</p>	<p>Recognition (either personally or in email) is given to staff whenever specific high performance is noted. The host college cyclical performance evaluation system is used annually and supplemented with the FLATE annual goals discussion for each member of the staff. Support for high performance is provided to the staff through the use of tools and other resources. The staff evaluation system includes individual goals linked to FLATE objectives.</p> <p>FLATE uses the host college recognition systems for recognizing staff as well as informal recognition in staff meetings and in the office.</p> <p>Staff is engaged regularly at weekly meetings used</p>	
<p>6b. Performance Management: How does your workforce performance management system support workforce engagement?</p>		
<p>6c. Performance Management: How does your workforce performance management system reinforce a customer and business focus and achievement of action plans?</p>		

	<p>for general communication of information as well as review of performance measures and action planning to solve problems and improve performance.</p> <p>FLATE performance measures implicitly bring attention to customers, stakeholders, and the business. Reviewing organizational performance measures linked to strategic objectives consequently brings focus, which is reflected in the FLATE guiding principles. Emphasis is placed on customer focus at staff meetings, such as timely and responsive callbacks to stakeholders.</p>	
<p>7a. Assessment of Workforce Engagement: How do you assess workforce engagement and satisfaction (formal and informal methods)?</p>	<p>This is accomplished through interaction with staff, at weekly staff meetings, and through tour and event surveys of industry volunteers. The biannual Stakeholder Survey is conducted among all stakeholders. Event reports also capture description of some of the anecdotal situations related to workforce and stakeholder engagement. Some differentiation occurs through the various methods, such as surveys at tours, informal means in the office, etc.</p>	
<p>7b. Assessment of Workforce Engagement: How do these differ across workforce groups and segments?</p>		
<p>8a. Learning and Development System: How does your learning and development system address organizational core competencies, strategic challenges, and accomplishing your action plans?</p>	<p>This is accomplished through FLATE staff discussions about individual goals. The Executive Director and each individual staff member separately identify goals and come together annually in dialogue to reconcile and agree on a set of individual goals that are aligned with FLATE goals. Specific individual needs are assessed for a match with the person and personality, and appropriate training is identified. Just-in-time training is provided to staff members regarding individual needs in support of goal accomplishment.</p>	
<p>8b. Learning and Development System: How does your learning and development system address organizational performance improvement and innovation?</p>		
<p>8c. Learning and Development System: How does your learning and development</p>		

<p>system address ethics and ethical business practices?</p>	<p>FLATE and staff take advantage of host college (i.e. HCC) resources particularly in the IT support and training area.</p>	
<p>8d. Learning and Development System: How does your learning and development system address a focus on customers?</p>	<p>Although individuals may not be in a leadership position by title, they are expected to and they perform as leaders, situationally. People are hired and brought in to the organization based on a basic, threshold level of skills and capabilities for the open position. They are then placed in working situations and expected to perform and learn, with some mentoring by the senior leaders or other experts.</p>	<p>There is opportunity to establish a more systematic, straightforward means of determining the effectiveness of training and development of individuals; no metrics exist.</p>
<p>8e. Learning and Development System: How does your learning and development system address learning and development needs?</p>	<p>Sterling criteria are used as the template for leading and managing the organization, and enhancing the development of senior leaders and the leadership team. Further development is reinforced through cross-pollination at meetings and in other venues and with other methods to share knowledge and expertise. Staff are expected to ultimately take ownership of all aspects of projects and activities for which they are the primary contact. As core competencies and strategic challenges are addressed, learning and development activities are developed to support sustainability of the FLATE mission; skills and capabilities and knowledge are pursued to enhance or develop new core competencies of FLATE which support the FLATE mission.</p>	
<p>8f. Learning and Development System: How does your learning and development system address reinforcing new knowledge and skills on the job?</p>	<p>Cross-training is endemic because of the small size of staff; staff cross-training is pervasive so that most critical skills are covered by backups, or plans in place to bring in outside skills for certain tasks. The host college, HCC, provides mandatory ethics and diversity training for staff.</p>	
<p>8g. Learning and Development System: How does your learning and development system address evaluating the effectiveness of workforce development and learning systems?</p>		

	<p>Focus on customers at FLATE is accomplished through individual performance evaluations and follow-on discussions and the establishment of individual staff member goals which link back to high level FLATE objectives which focus on stakeholders.</p> <p>Individual evaluations and goal planning sessions serve to meet FLATE-identified and individual-identified personal training needs.</p> <p>The FLATE Executive Director immediately gives opportunity to staff members to explicitly use new knowledge and skills on the job after returning from training or outside developmental events. The breadth of development opportunities include education, training, coaching, mentoring, and work-related experiences, as appropriate.</p> <p>Evaluation of development and learning systems ties back to organizational performance. Overall organizational performance is an indicator of the effectiveness of training and development systems. Organizational performance is informally used to gauge effectiveness by the degree of goal accomplishment, and potentially by reviewing complaints received. Additionally, peer recognition and recognition by the National Science Foundation (NSF) in the form of grant renewal are indications of effectiveness. Also, when putting the new skills and knowledge to use after training, whether the staff member is able to accomplish the task in a better way, is also a measure of effectiveness. Continued training opportunities follow when previous training is found to be effective.</p>	
<p>9a. Career Progression: How do you</p>	<p>Career progression is managed through monitoring</p>	<p>An opportunity exists to</p>

<p>manage career progression for your workforce?</p>	<p>and evaluating individual performance and individual goals setting and development. Besides preparing the employee for current work within FLATE, there is also an eye toward the expiration of the grant so that employees are prepared beyond FLATE for follow-on positions, perhaps at the host college. Employees are empowered and take leadership roles and decision-making roles in specific projects assigned in the course of regular FLATE business.</p>	<p>establish a systematic succession plan comprised of identifying the positions requiring succession, identification of prospects to fill those positions, and a plan for developing those individuals.</p>
<p>9b. Career Progression: How do you manage succession planning for management and leadership positions?</p>		

Category 6 – Operations Focus Sterling Challenge Response – 2012

Category 6 Question	Strengths	Opportunities
<p>1a. Work System Design & Requirements: How do you design and coordinate your key work systems?</p>	<p>Driven by the National Science Foundation (NSF) grant, work systems are developed and based around the core organizational goals: organizational sustainability, curriculum development, professional development, and outreach. Each of these is a work system, although they are not independent of one another.</p>	<p>It's not clear how support processes are coordinated to enable the key operational processes and work system outcomes.</p>
<p>1b. Work System Design & Requirements: How do you determine which key processes will be internal and which will use external resources?</p>	<p>The driving forces behind the goals and work systems are established through information collected in funded projects, in focus groups, leadership monthly meetings, meetings with experts in the field, and with other organizations. FLATE takes advantage of support process services at the partner institutions [i.e. Hillsborough Community College (HCC), St Petersburg College (SPC), and University of South Florida (USF)].</p> <p>This information is supplanted by knowledge gained through established partnerships, in teams, from staff, and advisory groups, such as the Industry Advisory Council (IAC), National Visiting Committee (NVC), ad hoc communities, and the community college advisory groups and the ET Forum.</p> <p>A dedicated staff person is assigned to manage the various volunteer groups, and to manage their activities supporting FLATE work systems.</p> <p>Support processes have been documented and coordinate with the key work system processes to</p>	

	<p>ensure they are enabled.</p> <p>Based on defined core competencies, some activities supporting the core competencies are outsourced, while the core is not. For example, overall development of curriculum is a core competency retained internally, but some outside expertise is needed and sought to support final development. External sources for key processes are determined as necessary if not entailing outsourcing the whole aspect of core competencies. Guiding principles and the Leadership team using the principles make decisions for external or internal sources for key processes.</p>	
<p>1c. Work System Design & Requirements: How do you determine key work system requirements, incorporating input from customers, suppliers, partners, and collaborators as appropriate?</p>	<p>Key requirements are determined through evaluation of industry standards and procedures, focus group input, formalized feedback collection, accepted best practices comparisons, and feedback collection and interaction with the process customer at all stages of process development. The same process used for developing curriculum is scaled down and similarly applied to the appropriate process level. Also see 2.a. below.</p> <p><u>Key work system Requirements:</u></p> <p>Curriculum: Meet Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) standards, pertinent to technician education and training; meet NSF needs for improved technician education in Florida.</p> <p>Professional Development: Pertinent to the needs of faculty in State of Florida programs.</p> <p>Outreach: Increase awareness of manufacturing careers among future prospects to increase the number of current and future technicians to service and meet the needs of the high-tech industry.</p>	
<p>1d. Work System Design & Requirements: What are these key work system requirements?</p>		

<p>2a. Work System Management: What are your organization's work system(s)?</p>	<p><u>Key work systems:</u></p>	<p>An overall opportunity here is to improve the way improvement is made. In other words to use a systematic process improvement structure such as PDCA or any number of other logical problem-solving tools.</p>
<p>2b. Work System Management: How do you manage and improve these to achieve success?</p>	<p>Curriculum: Includes needs assessment, curriculum development, delivery of curriculum, feedback collection, and implementation of improvements.</p>	
<p>2c. Work System Management: How do you control overall costs of your work systems?</p>	<p>Prof Development: Includes needs assessment, development of customized content, presentation, feedback collection, and implementation of improvements.</p>	
<p>2d. Work System Management: How do you prevent defects, errors, and rework?</p>	<p>Outreach: Includes market analysis based on the segment, product development (based in the previous two work systems), product delivery (based in the previous two work systems), feedback collection, and implementation of improvements.</p> <p>Support: Includes grant management and engaged communication with stakeholders.</p> <p>These all contribute to organizational success and sustainability by providing resources, supporting partnerships with stakeholders, and providing services and products to customers/stakeholders. These are managed through evaluation and analysis of performance measures and data. Leadership and staff monitor measures to identify actions required to modify and guide performance of the work systems. The Leadership team monitors performance of the work systems using feedback from stakeholders and customers and tracking progress through metrics. Overall costs of these work systems are controlled by shifting ownership of processes (i.e. in an effort to establish sustainability of FLATE's mission at grant expiration) through partners, with guidance and instructions for operating the processes. Costs are reduced by reviewing and integrating best practices and standardizing processes so that process costs</p>	

	<p>are minimized by repetitively running the process as a standard procedure with improvements that have been built in over time.</p> <p>Minimizing defects, errors, and rework is accomplished through review of processes based on feedback from stakeholders and standardization of procedures. Actions are planned for improvement based on the data and reviews of metrics in staff meetings, Leadership meetings and IAC and NVC meetings.</p>	
<p>3a. Emergency Readiness: How do you ensure work system and workplace preparedness for disasters and emergencies?</p>	<p>This is accomplished through the HCC host policies and procedures.</p> <p>FLATE's main office is essentially dependent on the host college policies and procedures. However the dispersed nature of the activities by FLATE affords an opportunity for redundancy in activities around the state. In this way, continuity is assured even in the event of an emergent occurrence in any regional part of the state.</p>	
<p>3b. Emergency Readiness: How do you ensure continuity of operations and recovery after disasters and emergencies?</p>		
<p>4a. Work Process Design & Requirements: How do you design and innovate your key work processes?</p>	<p>Innovation and improvement of work processes are accomplished through collecting feedback and identifying needs from stakeholders, then seeking best practices. Innovation is also initiated beyond merely the use of accepted work practices, by cultivating a culture that encourages innovative ideas. An example is the use of the required curriculum framework as a survey template for finding if industry needs are being met.</p> <p>Key work processes build-in evaluation and improvement, like debriefs for tours and framework reviews every 3 years for curriculum. Staff consistently reviews progress of processes at meetings and seek to identify opportunities for</p>	

	<p>improving performance.</p> <p>Analogous processes in other organizations are systematically selected through a set of selection criteria, so that comparison and benchmarking can be conducted to identify best practices and innovations for assimilating into FLATE work processes.</p>	
<p>4b. Work Process Design & Requirements: How do you determine key process requirements?</p>	<p>Response is the same as for work systems above. Key requirements are determined through evaluation of industry standards and procedures, focus group input, formalized feedback collection, accepted best practices comparisons, and feedback collection and interaction with the process customer at all stages of process development. The same process used for developing curriculum is scaled down and similarly applied to the appropriate process level.</p>	
<p>4c. Work Process Design & Requirements: How do your design process and requirements address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New technology? • Product Excellence? • Cycle time, productivity, cost control; and other efficiency and effectiveness factors? 	<p>Same as for work system above except that work process requirements are more specific at the point they intersect the key operational processes. Innovation and improvement of work processes are accomplished through collecting feedback and identifying needs from stakeholders, then seeking best practices. Innovation is also initiated beyond merely the use of accepted work practices, by cultivating a culture that encourages innovative ideas. Key work processes have built-in evaluation and improvement steps.</p> <p>New technologies are identified through feedback, and observance of trends and best practices in similar NSF ATE Centers nationally. These are evaluated by the Leadership team and integrated into processes as deemed useful (e.g. use of social media to enhance the outreach work system). Standardized processes are tested and modified as necessary. Key</p>	

<p>4d. Work Process Design & Requirements: What are your key work processes?</p>	<p>work processes comprising the Work Systems are: Curriculum: needs assessment (defined by state and individual college requirements), curriculum development, delivery of curriculum, feedback collection; implement improvements Prof Development (PD): needs assessment, development of customized content, presentation, feedback collection; implement improvements Outreach: Market analysis based on segment, product development (based in the previous two work systems), product delivery (based in the two previous work systems), and feedback collection; implement improvements, Event management (camps, PD events, etc.), newsletter and blog. Support: grant management, engaged communication with stakeholders. These contribute to organizational success and <i>sustainability by providing resources, supporting partnerships with stakeholders, and providing services and products to customers.</i></p>	
<p>4e. Work Process Design & Requirements: What are the key requirements for these work processes?</p>		
<p>5a. Work Process Management & Improvement: How does your organization relate your key work processes to the work systems?</p>	<p>Processes are measured by evaluating the contribution of the specific work process to the overall goal level accomplishment. It is ultimately measured by milestones. Processes are managed by ensuring adherence to accepted procedures, reviewing feedback from stakeholders in each step, and analyzing and making improvements as necessary. Review of collected feedback at staff meetings, and at meetings or other communication channels with staff, stakeholders, volunteers, and advisory group meetings. Information is also collected through FLDOE from other entities for use as best practices, and from published papers.</p>	<p>As above, an opportunity exists to adopt a systematic problem solving and/or process improvement structure. Improvement approaches could be documented and made accessible for future reference.</p>
<p>5b. Work Process Management & Improvement: How does your organization ensure day-to-day operation of these processes meets key process requirements?</p>		

<p>5c. Work Process Management & Improvement: How does your organization manage your supply chain and ensure suppliers are effective and enhance your organization's performance?</p> <p>5d. Work Process Management & Improvement: How does your organization improve your work processes to achieve better performance, reduce variability, and improve products and services?</p>	<p>Supplier relationships are managed through consistent communication, involvement in teams and process management, and providing feedback information and metrics/data. An objective is to convert the relationships with key suppliers into partnerships, particularly those on a critical path. Partners are key suppliers of Webmaster services, IT system and support, data (from FLDOE), center evaluation, NVC oversight, HR management, budget services, and physical space.</p>	
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