

Workplace Analysis

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Organizational Development & Learning Project

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Organization: Central New Mexico Community College (CNM)

Summary

For this analysis I focused on my primary work team, the Simulation Team (AKA Sim Team). The Sim Team is responsible for providing healthcare simulation services to healthcare training programs at CNM. The Sim Team is part of the academic division at CNM, and is part the School of Health, Wellness, and Public Safety (HWPS).

My role in the team (and in the organization in general) can be best described as an internal consultant. My role is to work with faculty to develop, revise, and evaluate simulation-based instruction. I also conduct faculty development to train faculty on best practices of simulation-based instruction. After working with faculty, I transfer information to the rest of the Sim Team. All other members of the Sim Team are focused on operations. In other words, they are responsible for conducting the simulation scenarios.

The management of the Sim Team is currently in transition. Over the past year CNM has removed two simulation management positions. One was the Director of Simulation, the other was the Sim Lab Manager. Management of the Sim Team has been transferred to the Lab Manager for the School of HWPS. The HWPS Lab Manager is responsible for all instructional labs and training facilities. In addition to the Sim Team, roughly 12 instructional support staff are supervised by the HWPS Lab Manager. The HWPS Lab Manager has only been with CNM for about six months.

For this analysis I have asked the Sim Team to be the collective stakeholders. The Sim Team has limited influence outside simulation-based instruction at the simulation center. As a team, we have the ability to change and alter many aspects of our operations, including aspects associated with organizational learning.

There are six total staff members. Four hold the title of Simulation Technician, one holds the title of Simulation Technical Specialist, and I hold the title of Simulation Education Specialist.

Analysis Methodology

I asked each member of the Sim Team to take the Culture Meter Survey and the Learning Organization Survey and send me a copy of the results. I received results from all members of the team for both, except the new manager. As a group, I conducted a group interview using the Brene Brown questions. I decided to ask each question and had some impromptu follow up questions for many responses. For the Brown questions we often made a distinction between the whole organization and just the Sim Team. I completed the Marquard questionnaire alone in an effort to avoid survey fatigue among team members. I chose to limit the analysis to the Sim Team due to complexity and size of CNM. The HWPS Lab Manager declined to respond to the surveys. He stated that he has not been with CNM for very long and felt that his responses could skew the results. In addition, he has no prior experience with simulation-based instruction or in healthcare simulation centers. The Sim Team works with a large set of faculty members. However, no individual faculty member spends significant time with the team. I did not think that the surveys needed to be altered. However, the Brown Questionnaire had one question that created difficulties for the team. This was the question regarding “sacred cows.” Due to the varied mental models discovered over what a sacred cow is I will disregard this question in the analysis.

For the survey results (Culture Meter and Learning Organization Survey), I totaled all responses and divided by six to get averages for each score. For the sake of simplicity, I am not looking at standard deviations or other statistical data.

There is a possible compounding factor in this analysis that might influence the results. The Sim Team was recently engaged in a conflict with a faculty member. Since this has not been fully resolved it is possible that stronger negative perceptions were reported than what might be reported without the background conflict. I spoke with the team about not focusing on recent events when taking the surveys.

Results Summary

Conducting this analysis revealed several surprising results. In general, the results indicate that the Sim Team is not as much of a learning organization as I initially thought. Scores and perceptions of CNM are lower than what the Sim Team rates itself. With any large organization I do expect there to be a level of “in-group” bias. CNM employs over 500 employees.

The Culture Meter Survey average score placed the Sim Team in Stage 3. My conclusion regarding this is that the Sim Team is in a state of transition and our relationship with the new manager has not been established. This may be causing self-defensive thinking and actions to form due to the uncertainty.

Results from the Learning Organization Survey were more surprising than the Culture Meter Survey. The Sim Team average scores were above average for Psychological Safety, Appreciation of Differences, Time for Reflection, and the Learning Environment Composite. However, Openness to New Ideas and Information Collection were in the bottom quartile. Scores for Experimentation, Analysis, Education & Training, and Information Transfer were all in the second quartile. These scores yielded a surprising bottom quartile for Learning Process Composite and Leadership that Reinforces Learning.

The low score in Information Collection was not surprising by itself for several reasons. Simply put, simulation-based instruction is interactive theater and the number of elements that are required for effective simulation are much larger than most other industries. In fact, I estimate the complexity of healthcare simulation to be near actual healthcare practice in a hospital setting. CNM has recently started adding tools to better collect and document data. However, CNM's abilities in this area are just developing and far from being well developed.

The scores of Openness to New Ideas (bottom quartile) and Experimentation (2nd quartile) were the most surprising from the Learning Organization Survey. The Sim Team frequently needs to try out new techniques in an effort to improve the realism. The Sim Team is encouraged to improve their moulage (stage make-up/mock wounds) skills. This discrepancy may call into question if the members of the Sim Team were focusing on CNM as a larger organization or just the Sim Team.

Interview responses uncovered several interesting themes. The most important was the feeling of detachment from the rest of the organization and the perception of communication issues. Another theme was that the level of uncertainty is high, but the discomfort from the uncertainty is low. A similar theme of variability of customer (faculty) actions and reactions was mentioned in several of the questions. In other words, predicting how faculty will act during simulation instruction was highly variably and created uncertainty even with the same healthcare program.

The primary central organizational learning issue for the Sim Team is "learning processes." The low score in the Learning Organization Survey and from several interview (Brown) responses support this. In addition, Openness to New Ideas can be interpreted as part of "learning processes" since trying something new is by definition an act of learning. During the interview the Sim Team quickly pointed out that the focus of the team was to complete tasks related to simulation-based instruction. In addition, other responses from the interview pointed towards a task focus versus a learning focus.

The results do point to other organizational issues that will need to be addressed. Some of these issues are beyond the control of the Sim Team. For example, a theme of the interview was that faculty constantly fail to come prepared for simulation-based instruction and frequently violate CNM Simulation Center Expectations. The CNM Simulation Center Expectations is a memo providing specific expectations and responsibilities for faculty and the Sim Team. Another issue that is currently being discussed is Sim Team identity and value to CNM. The removal of managers who filled critical roles and tasks has created an impression among the Sim

Team that we are of low value to CNM as a whole. While these issues are not organizational learning issues directly, they have a profound impact on how organizational learning is/is not performed at CNM.

Marquardt's Learning Organization Profile

This section will outline the profile scores for each section.

Learning Dynamics: 16

While the Sim Team does anticipate problems and tries to abate them, the vast focus on learning at this time is individual. The focus is primarily individuals learn to bring things to the team versus the team learning together. CNM is a college; however, the focus on employee development is low. Funds for training must be “fought” for each year and comes from external grants versus being budgeted for.

Organizational Transformation: 16

CNM exhibits a paradox. For a teaching organization, the value on staff and faculty development is low while the focus is on teaching our students. The organization is overly compartmentalized and it is difficult to get your voice heard if you are a lower-level employee.

People Empowerment: 14

While the Sim Team has a large level of control in many aspects of its operations, the ability to work towards meaningful changes is difficult. For example, many higher-level operations changes must get approval from a leadership team. The Sim Team notices communication issues within healthcare programs at a high rate. This is evidenced by faculty members showing up to simulation events without knowing what is going on or their role in the event.

Knowledge Management: 12

Information transfer between most of CNM is email and the occasional larger meeting. Recently CNM has started having annual convocations for all staff. Most convocations have been regarded as a waste of time and money. Technology has been added at CNM that can improve many aspects of knowledge management. However, the technology and its use is in the initial stages. The Sim Team is an early adopter and frequently works with CNM technology department to de-bug technology.

Technology Application: 13

The Sim Team uses a large array of instructional technology not found anywhere else at CNM. However, our ability to effectively use the other tools (I.e. MS Sharepoint and Blackboard) are hampered by inefficient systems and lack of complete support. The Sim Team

must frequently solve technological problems with CNM systems on our own. The Sim Team frequently hits blocks to implementation of software to improve operations or collect data.

Results: Learning Organization Survey (Edmondson)

Results for this survey are listed below. Total number of respondents=6.

Category	Scores	Average Score	Quartile Comparison
Psychological Safety	77.1	82.3	3rd
	68.6		
	77.1		
	88.6		
	88.6		
	94.3		
Appreciation of Differences	78.6	72	3rd
	57.1		
	78.6		
	71.4		
	60.7		
	85.7		
Openness to New Ideas	82.1	79.2	Bottom
	71.4		
	89.3		
	71.4		
	85.7		
	75		
Time for Reflection	51.4	68.1	Top
	54.3		
	71.4		
	77.1		
	85.7		
	68.6		
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT COMPOSITE	72.3	75.4	3rd
	62.9		
	79.1		
	77.1		
	80.2		
	80.9		

Category	Scores	Average Score	Quartile Comparison
Experimentation	53.6	66.7	2nd
	53.6		
	85.7		
	67.9		
	64.3		
	75		
Information Collection	35.7	51.2	Bottom
	50		
	57.1		
	52.4		
	42.9		
	69		
Analysis	54.3	65.3	2nd
	54.3		
	65.7		
	62.9		
	71.4		
	82.9		
Education and Training	57.1	76.6	2nd
	59.5		
	92.9		
	76.2		
	81		
	92.9		
Information Transfer	50	67.3	2nd
	60.7		
	73.2		
	60.7		
	76.8		
	82.1		
LEARNING PROCESSES COMPOSITE	57.9	60.3	Bottom
	50.3		
	63.3		
	61.7		
	64.1		
	64.7		
LEADERSHIP THAT REINFORCES LEARNING	55	65.8	Bottom
	62.5		
	82.5		
	70		
	65		
	60		

Results: Culture Meter Survey (Logan)

Survey results from all six respondents are below.

Culture Meter Scores	
	13
	18
	17
	14
	10
	18
Totals:	90
Average:	15
Results:	Stage 3
	Survey results in this range show signs of Stage Three. People engage in anything that's going on, with energy and commitment, but when you listen closely, they talk mostly about themselves and focus on appearing smarter and better than others. They think they're focused on team concerns, but their actions show their interest is personal.

Organizational Culture and Values Questionnaire (Brown)

This questionnaire was conducted as a group interview. All six (6) member of the Sim Team and our immediate supervisor (HWPS Lab Manager) was present.

1) What behaviors are rewarded? Punished?

The team immediately pointed out that there are not many rewards other than verbal praise from a client. The team stated that planning ahead was punished due to the high number of last minute changes to simulation plan. It was clear that this created a high level of tension since the team desires to plan ahead to avoid issues. However, planning too far ahead can create re-work if details change.

2) Where and how people actually spending their resources (time, money, attention)?

The Sim Team stated that the focus was on the tasks associated with providing simulation-based instruction. The team also noted that scheduling (coordinating team members and time related details of operations) is another focus. A discussion on inefficiency that exists with our operations came up. When asked to rate how inefficient

we are as a group the score was 3 out of 10. (0 no inefficiency and 10 being outright ineffective.)

3) *What rules and expectations are followed, enforced and ignored?*

The team generated the following answers for this question.

Followed:

- Instructor needs regarding scheduling
- Sim Packets (Simulation scenario documentation)
- Flexing hours to meet needs of clients/avoiding overtime
- Trying to follow a workflow (in an effort to improve operations)

Enforced:

- Manikin treatment and care/protecting simulation equipment (note: the manikins cost \$50,000+ each)
- Not calling 911 during a simulation
- No overtime to the staff

Ignored:

- Rules about talking and texting during a simulation (faculty not watching student performance)
- FERPA issues (leaving student info out in the open, failure to dispose of student info correctly)
- Client groups appear to communicate within their group poorly (faculty are not prepared for simulation)

4) *Do people feel safe and supported talking about how they feel and asking for what they need?*

This question created some issues since we have different experiences within the group versus outside the group. I decided to get different scores for each. 0 is no issues and feelings of total support, 10 is absolutely no safety and impossible to ask for help. The lower score is better. The majority of the team gave an internal score of 1. When asked about the whole of CNM there was a bimodal effect. Those of us that have had frequent contacts with other departments and teams rated issues at a 5. Those of the team that did not have frequent contact outside the Sim Team gave a score of 2.

5) *What are the sacred cows? Who is mostly likely to tip them? Who stands the cows back up?*

This question is being omitted due to a lack of shared mental model of what a “sacred cow” is. The responses from each team member had no theme to them and there was no consistent response. There was a short discussion about how I always encourage the

team to re-evaluate why we do what we do. The team also noted that we avoid creating topics that are “off-limits” to discussion and evaluation.

6) *What stories are legend and what values do they convey?*

The majority of the stories that we tell are humorous and focus on either something that happened in a simulation event or with problem solving. Stories that are focused on our technology issues demonstrate our value to “simple solutions first” such as “starting over” (turn off and turn back on) if the manikins have issues. The other stories demonstrate our value of having fun under stressful situations and the ability of humor to help people relax.

7) *What happens when someone fails, disappoints or makes a mistake?*

The team pointed out that within team this depends on the stress level. They noted that when stress is low to moderate the interpersonal reactions are productive and “goes well.” On the other hand, the team noted that when stress is high team member do not react well with each other at times. They noted “sharp responses” being more likely under high stress.

On the other hand, the team reported that interactions with members of other groups/teams is highly variable. This variability exist even within members of the same outside group. The team stated that this can span the whole spectrum.

8) *How is vulnerability (uncertainty, risk and emotions exposure) received?*

The first response to this question was “depends on what,” followed by “depends on who we are dealing with.” The team stated that within the group uncertainty is well received and understood as part of the job. When dealing with outside individuals the uncertainty response varies greatly. With reports of poor risk/uncertainty behaviors all the way to very adaptive behaviors.

9) *How prevalent are shame and blame and how are they showing up?*

The team reported low levels of shame in the team. In fact, the team stated that they have high psychological safety with interactions with each other. The team reported that stress was a major factor for the emergence of blame. The team stated that high stress situations were much more likely to cause internal blame.

The team reported that they endure frequent “passive aggressive” behaviors from clients (faculty). They reported that attempts to shame the team or a member of the team result in strong group reactions against this type of behavior. There are some clients that are more likely to blame individuals or the Sim Team than other groups.

10) What's the collective tolerance of discomfort? Is the discomfort of learning, trying new things and giving and receiving feedback normalized, or is there a high premium put on comfort (and how does that look)?

The team reported a high level of tolerance to discomfort. Based on prior questions, the level of uncertainty is high in the job and variability of interactions is high. This leads the Sim Team members to be more tolerant of discomfort. However, this tolerance of discomfort does not indicate that they are comfortable. The impression given in the discussion was that they would like to reduce the level of uncertainty with operations details and with interpersonal interactions.

Selected Organizational Learning Problem for Project

This analysis has yielded numerous issues that need to be addressed regarding organizational learning regarding the Sim Team. The primary difficulty is in determining what to address first. The other difficulty is knowing that without addressing the other organizational learning issues at the same time the outcome may not be significant. I have decided that addressing systems thinking and the mental models related to systems thinking should be the focus of this project and the first step for the Sim Team.

Systems thinking involves developing a better understanding of where the Sim Team sits in the larger system. This includes knowledge on how to improve the relationships in the organization and new methods to improve services. From systems thinking the Sim Team should be able to develop innovative ideas on how to address issues that confront the team.