

Anoka Tech & Anoka Ramsey Strategic Planning – Final Input from the Cambridge Chamber Board Members

1. What 5 words do you hear in the business community that describes us?
 - I really don't hear much outside of the chamber
 - Affordable
 - Community based
 - Willing to work with industry
 - Don't hear much and would like more marketing – postcards a couple times a year
 - Growing, asset to the community, essential, grateful,

2. How does your actual experiences with us compare with what you expected?
 - It meets my reality well.
 - Great accommodations for special needs
 - Great school to get generals and stay close to home
 - Credits transfer easily
 - PSEO has been a great experience
 - The nursing dept. has been better than my experience in the business side.

3. How can the colleges better integrate with the business community?
 - I think it is doing a nice job so far. It offers programs and education for businesses. And has a presence on the Cambridge Chamber.
 - Open Houses invite community to tour school
 - Grow Minnesota
 - Lack of Workforce in the Trades and Manufacturing area
 - Fast Track welding program
 - Doing more with basic skills of employees

4. What is one thing we can change to achieve excellence?
 - Partner with transportation from here to Anoka Tech so we can have more trades programs
 - Partner more with local entities: make computers available to public; have "visit your community college day" brochures available at local businesses/organizations
 - 55 and over classes
 - Refreshers for advanced skills
 - Offer more online
 - More continuing ed classes – update for licensures
 - Credits need to transfer easier
 - Need to provide accurate info to students regarding classes they need and where they will transfer
 - More assistance with accurate education planning
 - Continue to grow your outreach.

5. What would you like to see changed at the colleges to better meet your needs?
 - More classes at Cambridge campus - many of my students are frustrated when they need to drive to Coon Rapids for classes when the Cambridge campus offers the degree
 - More continuing ed for licensures and updates
 - More communication for classes serving business needs
 - More synergy between the campuses.

6. What about our histories helps/hinders us?
 - I don't think people realize how many "non teen" students you have.
 - Great history of individual student focus.
 - Perception of what a community college can offer
 - Facilities and equipment – lack of trades

7. What could the colleges do to position us better to meet the needs of the future?
 - More high tech colleges
 - Change early to be on top of the future
 - Basic personal finance classes
 - Life skills classes
 - Ethical skills – basic work ethic skills
 - Add more life skills to Associate Degree
 - Get younger workers ready to fill in the gap baby boomers will leave
 - Have more vocational type training that meets the real needs of industry, such as what is offered in vocational schools. Examples, machinists to engineering degrees, welders to engineering, others where there would be some drop off points at 2 years like the AD RN, but then able to go on for PHD in Nursing. But it would be beneficial for so many other industries. Where "real time" skills are learned.

8. What value do you place on liberal arts/technical education?
 - Technical field – a lot of opportunity
 - Good, but don't want to waste time and money on classes that don't matter – classes need to be applicable to field
 - Post-secondary doesn't necessarily mean a 4 or 2 year degree – it could be a certificate program
 - High value.
 - A lot of value - I see many of the students I help graduate making more money than they were previously and more satisfaction.
 - Liberal arts does not do much for job preparation
 - High value.... the job market supports technical training for entry level positions. Many move up the ladder while in a workplace environment. Practical experience is the best teacher, and then growing with industries.
 - I think there is greater value in the technical education as opposed to the liberal arts when assessing how we can best set our youth up for future success.

9. What more could the colleges do to better prepare our students for the next steps?
 - Focus on job-related skills; more on-the-job experience
 - The job search/after college/graduation prep... resume course, etc. this would be much more beneficial to the adult student than the "first year experience" course many of my students are required to take.
 - I really like the PSEO for the high school kids
 - High tech training and more trades programs
 - Students need to understand the importance of post-secondary education and consider it to be just as valuable as a four year institution, but local, convenient and cost effective.
 - Bring the students out into the community for events to take part in.
 - Students have little financial know how and professors are usually ill equipped personally to provide that education.
 - Technical training, in which they could go out and get a job to actually pay off their loans

10. What priorities should we consider as we go through our strategic planning process?
 - Partnerships with business and schools. Offering programs that match future needs in the community.
 - Focus on current job markets not just future markets
 - Job shadowing programs - manufacturing

- Evaluating programs based on labor market information of in demand/high growth careers - and careers upcoming for the future.
- Stay on top of Technical education
- Fast implementation of programs in response to industry needs
- Workforce centers – partner/communicate – what are they hearing/seeing
- Look at the job market and create capacity that way, rather than training masses for only a handful of positions that are out there. We have to have more vocational training in our area.