



What did the STCC community tell us about ourselves in the SPOT Analysis? And what do we seem to want “more of”?

The SPOT inquiry was developed and analyzed using principles of Appreciative Inquiry (Ai). One of the key tenets of Ai is that we focus on the strengths, the positive outcomes, of our work as an organization to help us identify what we do well and to attempt to identify the factors that contribute to successes within our organization. We use these to generalize from and build on.

The other key tenet is that we try to identify what it is that we want **more of** in our organization and its processes and outcomes. Those help guide us in making choices about where to spend our energies and resources in making improvements. Sometimes statements about ourselves are direct evidence of what we want more of. For example, “We want raises” is a pretty straightforward statement of something we want more of. However, negative or critical statements also reveal or lead to statements of what it is we want more of. For example, a negative statement such as, “I don’t like the way you spoke to me” can be reframed as a statement that reveals what we want more of: “I want you to speak to me with more respect.”

The tables on the following pages represent a rendering of the comments made in the SPOT instruments by STCC’s faculty and staff. The 9 ***Strengths*** statements (bold, italicized sentences in the left hand column) are aggregated from many specific comments about STCC’s strengths. The bullet-list below each of these sentences summarizes various characteristics of each Strength as derived from responses. The order in which these are listed is not necessarily meaningful.

The right hand column is an aggregated list of things STCC’s faculty and staff respondents seemed to “want more of” with respect to each area of strength. The order in which these are listed is not necessarily meaningful. Some of these have been reframed from negatively-stated comments and represent my understanding of what “more of” was wanted by respondents. I do not claim to have clairvoyance and some of my understandings may not be exactly what respondents were thinking. However, I did have the advantage of reading their responses in context and believe that I have captured a good understanding of most of what was wanted.



Analysis

STCC's Strengths	We seem to want more of. . .
<p><i>Our College community is committed to our students and their successes.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student support services • Student-centered • Developmental Studies & ESL • Career preparation • Students' self-confidence, personal skill development, & educational success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Students matter most" attitude in decision-making and actions • Academic challenge • P-t employment at STCC for students • Practica/internships/first hand experiences • Service to underserved student populations • Student support services • Developmental & ESL opportunities • Campus life activities, at all campuses • Advanced (e.g., bachelor's) degrees, as well as graduate degrees • Good basic academic preparation • Financial aid • Child care facility/ support for child care • Transportation for students • Wages/salaries after graduation commensurate to students' preparation at STCC • Faculty professional development to stay on top of latest developments in their fields • Increased student awareness of and comfort in the "outside" [the RGV] world • Improved licensure exam preparation • "Model" Hispanic-serving institution • Articulation agreements • Career & placement support • New programs & new career options • Instruction based on best practices for adult and young adult learners • Distance Learning opportunities for students • Students prepared to enter college and be successful • Short career programs • Continuing education programs for professionals • Language-training "super center" • High-quality departmental advising • Students become independent learners, taking responsibility for their own successes • Extended hours and extended support in libraries and computer labs • Work-study opportunities • Faculty who are outstanding teachers and dedicated to the community college concept



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Analysis

<p>STCC's Strengths</p> <p><i>Our College community is committed to our students and their successes. Continued.</i></p>	<p>We seem to want more of. .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students placed correctly at entry to college• Students congregating, studying and engaging in discussion outside class all across our campuses• Student awareness of deadlines, requirements, etc.• Diversity in the student body• Clinical sites and instructors• Client-centered customer service• Pre-entry orientation to college• Faculty• Ease in completing degrees part-time, or evening and/or weekend• Focus on improved retention and graduation rates from <u>inside</u> the classroom• Interactive classroom learning
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STCC's Strengths	We seem to want more of. . .
<p><i>STCC has a great faculty.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring • Committed • Accessible • Using assessment for improvement • With advanced academic degrees, particularly the Ph.D. • Dedicated • Having rapport with students • Hard-working • Major contributor to student success and making STCC great • 1-to-1 help • Mentoring • Small section sizes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compensation for faculty • Inclusion in decision making • Dignity and respect accorded to faculty • Smaller section sizes • Faculty empowerment • Recognition of faculty efforts & accomplishments • Number of faculty • Faculty members with Ph.D.s • Hispanic faculty • Diversity in faculty • Opportunities to update professional knowledge and skills • Certification system for updated professional knowledge and skills • Long-term contracts or tenure • Faculty rapport with administrators and staff • Feeling of being trusted • Research and publication • Advance preparation for teaching in Dual Enrollment in high schools • Well qualified adjunct and f-t faculty • Faculty dress to model appropriate professional attire to students • Instructors' names printed on course schedule • Use of academic titles • Freedom to construct courses and assessment as individual faculty members please • Focus on improved retention and graduation rates from inside the classroom

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Analysis

STCC's Strengths	We seem to want more of. . .
<p><i>STCC provides access to higher education.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical• Financial (affordability & financial aid)• Location• ADA• Faculty and staff• Mentoring• Student support services• Tutoring• Developmental Studies & College Success• Variety of courses, programs, and awards• Technological• Open-door• Online services• Articulation agreements• Advanced degrees to be available• Campus life• District-wide• Non-traditional students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ESL programs• Responsiveness to access issues• ADA access• Faculty and individual or small-group student interactions and tutoring• Technology• Building and facility development• Weekend classes• Lifelong learning opportunities• Partner with A&M• Distance Learning• BA/BS degrees in education and nursing and allied health fields• Emphasis on upper division courses and becoming a full 4-year institution• Additional instructional sites and campuses• Customized training• Growth in the number of students: Budget & staff in all areas of the College to accommodate 20,000 students• Use of leased/gifted existing buildings to accommodate growth throughout District• Athletic facilities and teams• Staff and funding to support units (i.e., FAS, ITS, Student Services) to support growth in faculty, students, programs & facilities

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Analysis

STCC's Strengths	We seem to want more of. . .
<p><i>STCC serves its external constituents well.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emphasis on our communities• Recreation and arts• Workforce development• Responsiveness to community needs/wants• District-wide institution• Non-traditional students• Good image in community• Continuing education• Lifelong learning• Accurate & detailed data provided• Dual enrollment• TASP [THEA] testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Growth throughout District• Range of programs• Articulation agreements• Greater access for underserved populations in District• Customized training• Programs for Winter Texans and elderly individuals living here year-round• High school contacts with teachers rather than principals or counselors• Youth activities• Outreach activities• Become a 4-year institution• Community member participation in STCC activities• Reinforcement of ties to business sector and support of STCC from business leaders• Growth and development of near-autonomous campus sites• Environmental scanning• Positive support from communities• Expansion of Valley Scholars-like programs for “regular” students



STCC's Strengths	We seem to want more of. . .
<p>STCC has good leadership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive • Empower faculty and staff • Risk-takers • Visionary • Recognize efforts of faculty • Consistent and strong • Innovative • Flexible • Mobile • Unafraid of change • Adaptable • Committed to quality in hiring • Integrity • High standards • Good organizational structure • Approachable • Communicate with faculty • Professional development • Committed to continuous improvement • Building program • Plans for future • Politically astute at state and community levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisiveness in decision-making after discussion • Inclusion of faculty and staff in administrative discussions, thinking and decision-making • Empowerment of faculty and staff • Recognition from administrators for faculty [& staff] • Genuine appreciation of faculty and staff efforts [beyond <i>pro forma</i>] • Staff (faculty & otherwise) that is planned to accommodate about 10% growth every year for the foreseeable future • Administrators teaching regularly • Use of STCC's clout on big issues rather than trivializing it • Partnering with other institutions of higher education • Belief in the people they hire • Flexibility in organizational and policy issues • Resource development • Assessment of organizational matters and distribution of results • Grooming of future leaders • Mingling with students and support staff • Shared governance • Positive support and willingness to pay for STCC from taxpayers • Bottom-up orientation to change processes • Parking

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Analysis

STCC's Strengths	We seem to want more of. . .
<p>STCC has an excellent support staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Caring• Can Do!• High quality• Dedicated• Hard working• Pleasant people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Empowerment for staff• Opportunity for internal advancement• Pleasant working environment• Support staff and salary and benefits for them.• Fun• Internal promotion opportunities
<p>STCC has outstanding technology support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online services• Quality equipment• Media services for students• Distance Learning• Cost effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distance Learning• Computers• Training for internet teaching and use of classroom technology• New program delivery options• Use of technology for assessment• Correct time on the clock in the clock tower (or remove it)• Cutting edge information system
<p>STCC cares about its employees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educational opportunities for employees (free attend at STCC)• "Leave" time for employees/vacation• Empowerment of faculty & staff• Tuition reimbursement (elsewhere)• Medical benefits• Good working environment• Pleasant co-workers and support staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal advancement• Heed to the rank and file• Mentoring• Pay and benefits for all employees• Staff in all areas to avoid overworking existing staff and losing them• Equity between faculty and other staff• Opportunity to speak out safely• Listening
<p>STCC has a good image.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vision• Good marketing• Visibility• Community support for STCC is good• Attractive and clean campuses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support from older citizens who are not participating directly in STCC's educational activities• Hispanic graduates functioning successfully in the mainstream• Culturally sensitive staff and faculty• Assistance to the have-nots of the Valley