

more to MOST

SCALING UP EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRACTICES • AN INTRODUCTION

Why scale? Community colleges play a vital role in advancing educational and economic opportunity for many Americans. Without these institutions, our higher education system would be inaccessible to a large portion of our citizenry.

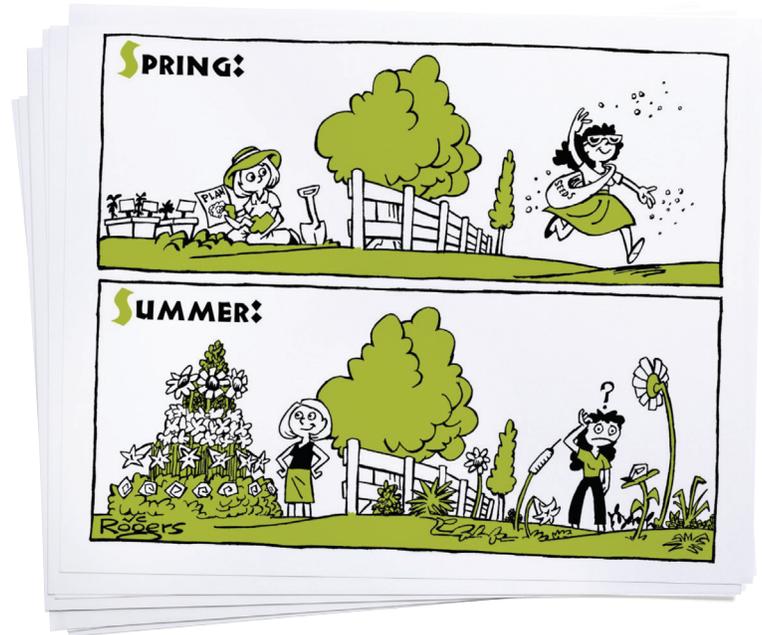
Today, the nation is counting on community colleges to help students obtain a credential or degree and put them on the path to economic security. Given the sluggish economy, dismal national college completion rates, and an increasing mismatch between available jobs and the skills of available workers, community colleges are spending more time in the spotlight – and facing increased scrutiny. Colleges across the country are responding in innovative ways, but sustaining this innovation will require colleges to move beyond small programs, no matter how successful. We're not just asking community colleges to soothe some of our toughest educational and economic woes, we're asking them to do it "at scale."

Though the term is certainly more popular these days, the concept is not new; *scaling up* is part of continuous improvement processes and systems change. Greg Dees, founder of the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE) at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business, offers this definition of scale: "increasing the impact a social-purpose organization produces to better match the magnitude of the social need or problem it seeks to address." A solution that is not consistently available to those that need it will not advance long-term changes that have lasting influence on individuals, families, communities, and our nation. How can community colleges go from serving *some* students with effective programs, to expanding those practices to *more* students, and finally reach *most* of those who can benefit from the program or practice? MDC's guidebook, *More to Most*, is a practical response to that question.



Going from More to Most

Questions of scale don't just begin when you decide you're ready to expand a program; they've got to figure in from the very beginning. When designing programs for scale, you must consider institutional culture, constraints, and objectives, and the potential for change within existing systems. You might think of it as making a landscape plan for a home. You select plants and place them according to how they'll look when they're fully grown; everything might look strange when there's only new growth, but you have to be patient and nurture the plantings, be willing to bear some ridicule, defend your choices, and know that the garden will eventually thrive with plants that complement one another and create a complete picture.

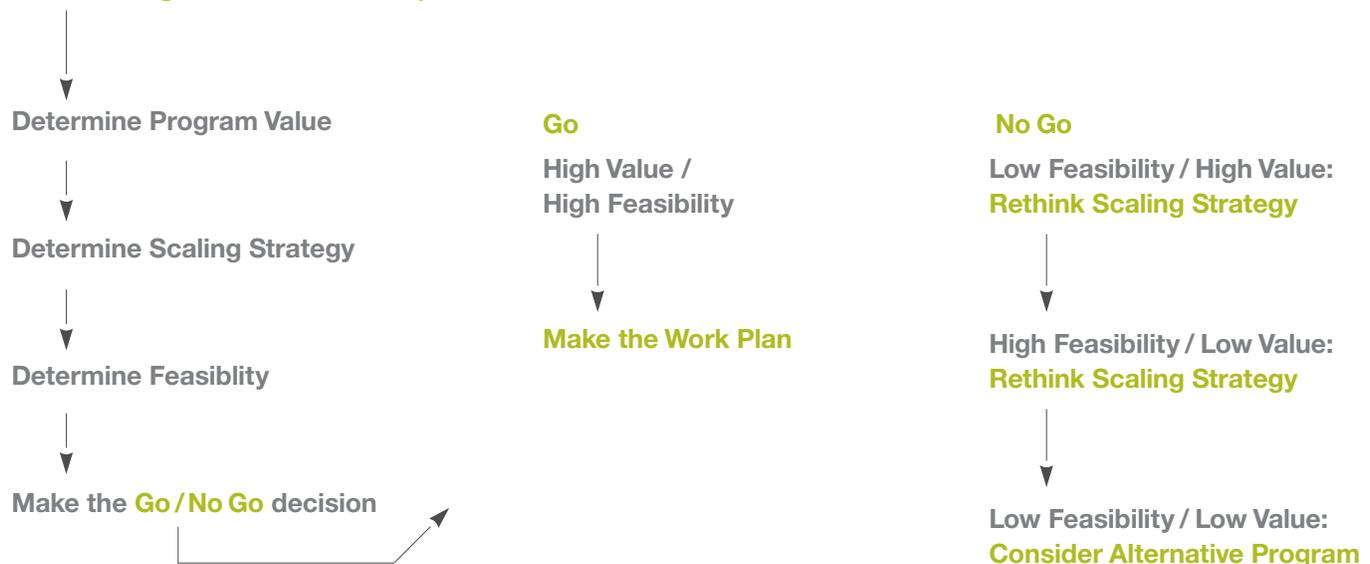


You might have to make a similar defense of a new program design or expansion proposal. Changing your approach will require new capacities and a different organizational orientation to program planning, implementation, and review.

To Scale or Not to Scale

This flowchart presents an approach to making the scale-up decision. *More to Most* explores these steps in detail, with suggestions about how to make these decisions at your institution. A brief description of each step follows.

Choose Program for Possible Expansion



Determine program value: You begin by defining the problem and the desired outcome; then, you determine the value of a particular response. The program slated for scale should have shown promise in addressing the problem, and it should align with institutional priorities. In this section, we look at logic models, return-on-investment calculations, and a case example from Kingsborough Community College.

Determine scaling strategy: Next, you'll select a scaling strategy, considering questions of breadth and depth. You might expand the number of individuals reached or increase the intensity of a program; institutions can duplicate programs within an existing location, take practices to additional sites, or offer professional development that increases the number of individuals who deliver an effective practice. In this section, we look at how these strategies intersect, how to evaluate strategies through an equity lens, and explore a case example from the Academy for College Excellence.

Determine feasibility: Each strategy will have unique institutional implications, so carefully consider the resources (human and financial), relationships, and infrastructure required to begin and sustain expansion. To help make this assessment, we've included the SCALERS framework. Created by Paul Bloom of Duke University's Center for the Advancement of Social Enterprise, SCALERS identifies seven organizational capacities that support successful expansion. MDC has translated the model for community colleges. This section also includes a case example that applies the framework to a program expansion effort at Chaffey College.

SCALERS
identifies seven
capacities
in which
organizations
must be
proficient to
successfully
expand an
enterprise.

SCALERS at the Community College

STAFFING — The effectiveness of the implementation team at assembling resources at their disposal to meet personnel needs, including faculty, staff, student employees, leadership, data collection, and analysis

COMMUNICATING — The effectiveness with which the college is able to articulate clear goals and persuade faculty, staff, students, and community stakeholders to adopt and support the strategy

ALLIANCE-BUILDING — The effectiveness with which the college is able to engage the necessary parties, forming partnerships that support the strategy

LOBBYING/DEMONSTRATING IMPACT — The effectiveness with which the college is able to demonstrate to institutional, state, and federal decision-makers that strategies have substantial benefits, relative to costs

EARNINGS GENERATION/RESOURCE GENERATION — The effectiveness with which the college manages and secures resources to sustain the strategy's infrastructure — revenue, staffing, space, technology, etc.

REPLICATING IMPACT — The effectiveness with which the college develops institutional expertise and commitment to support quality implementation and continuation of an expanded strategy

STIMULATING MARKET FORCES/SUSTAINING ENGAGEMENT — The effectiveness with which the college can create incentives that encourage college leadership, faculty, staff, and students to participate in and value the strategy

This section also includes a Chaffey College case example that applies the SCALERS framework to Chaffey's expansion of their Opening Doors to Excellence program.

Tools for the Scaling Toolbox

More to Most is chock-full of ready-to-use guides to help you rally support, evaluate your programs, and select a scaling strategy that's appropriate for your institution. You'll find:

- a stakeholder analysis to make sure you have all of the right people on your team
- guidelines for reflection on the past and consideration of current supports and constraints
- templates for building logic models, designing evaluation plans, and comparing/contrasting program outcomes
- guiding questions to set up your scaling strategy and a feasibility assessment to help you prioritize the actions necessary for implementation

Where We're Coming From

MDC helps communities and organizations apply demonstrated solutions to the barriers that separate people from opportunity. For more than forty years, we've partnered with community colleges to design, test, and deliver programs that accelerate educational achievement and workplace success. Much of the learning reflected in *More to Most* is an outgrowth of MDC's partnerships with community colleges, most recently with Achieving the Dream (www.achievingthedream.org) and the Developmental Education Initiative.

With over 150 colleges and 15 state policy teams, Achieving the Dream is dedicated to helping more community college students succeed. In 2009, some of those colleges and states were selected to take their Achieving the Dream experience and apply it to the challenge of developmental (remedial) education in the Developmental Education Initiative (DEI), with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Lumina Foundation. As managing partner of DEI, MDC has worked with participating colleges and states to scale-up effective remedial education practices to enable more students to accelerate their progress through developmental education – or bypass it altogether. Many examples in *More to Most* are drawn from DEI and directed toward faculty, staff, and administrators at community colleges; however, we are confident that these resources will translate to other organizations undertaking similar efforts to bring programs to scale.

More to Most
is chock-full of
ready-to-use
guides to help
you rally support,
evaluate your
programs, and
select a scaling
strategy that's
appropriate for
your institution



307 West Main Street
Durham, NC 27701-3215
919-381-5802
www.mdcinc.org



DEVELOPMENTAL
EDUCATION
INITIATIVE
Accelerating Achievement

www.deionline.org