

ACADEMIC AND CLINICAL EXCHANGES
**SUCCESSFUL MANAGEMENT OF A COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND
DISORDERS PROGRAM**

John A. Ferraro, Ph.D.
University of Kansas Medical Center

and

Nicholas W. Bankson, Ph.D.
James Madison University

This presentation was designed as a forum for both new and experienced chairpersons/directors to discuss issues and share ideas related to the management of their respective programs in communication sciences and disorders. Drs. Bankson and Ferraro have presented similar sessions at the annual meeting for several years.

Ferraro began the session lightheartedly by presenting the following “Axioms for Being a Successful Chairperson/Director.”

Your two most important responsibilities are:

- Leading the parade, and
- Following it with a shovel!

The Chairperson is looked upon as the department leader, whose job includes facilitating faculty/staff/student development. Likewise, when things “go wrong,” it is usually the Chairperson who is called upon to resolve the situation.

You know you’re in trouble when:

- Nobody likes you.
- Everybody likes you.

The Chairperson is called upon to make important decisions, and decisions are needed when opinions differ. Thus, it may be the case that the decision made by the Chairperson is not favorable to all. In addition, being “too liked” may indicate that the Chairperson is more concerned with being popular than making tough decisions.

Finally, the following quote by baseball legend Casey Stengel was shared with the audience:

“The secret to managing a club is to keep the five guys who hate you from the five who haven’t decided.”

The major portion of the session was devoted to group discussion on various issues/areas. Dr. Bankson presented several options for discussion, including the following:

- Sublimating a portion of your own career in that of your faculty (i.e., how to be a role model for faculty and still survive professionally and personally)
- How to be an effective advocate for faculty.
- Issues related to time/workload, management of resources, merit increase evaluation, providing moral support.
- Choosing the “right” faculty and then mentoring them to success.
- Encouraging “team spirit.”
- Issues related to “funding and freedom” (i.e., management of the various budgets available to the department).
- “Good Dean,” “Kind Provost,” “Caring President,” and other oxymorons of academe (i.e., do’s and don’ts of dealing with upper administration).