

Academic Forum: Communication Strategies For Effective Leadership

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Learning Objectives

- At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:
 - Identify strategies for effective communication with faculty and administrators
 - Identify and explain the 10 basic principles of the Harvey Executive Leadership Model
 - Identify strategies for effective management and apply these to problem resolution

Leadership Demands on Department Chairs

- Duty or rotation
- Chair role has changed
 - Must see the bigger picture
 - Must lead with vision and focus on detail
 - Occupy front-line leadership
- Colleges must have strong department leaders

A decorative graphic in the top-left corner of the slide. It features a glowing blue sphere with a bright white highlight, positioned at the intersection of a thin white vertical line and a thin white horizontal line. The background is a gradient of dark blue to purple.

What Are Some Basic Behaviors That Deans
Look For In Department Chairs?

Dean's Expectations of Department Chairs

- Departmental adherence to campus mission
- Well thought out departmental plan
- Strong role in providing critical campus data
- Minimal conflict in their unit
- Effective department advocate and able to place campus or college priorities over personal or departmental interests when appropriate.

Dean's Expectations of Department Chairs (Continued)

- Recognize limits of argument and persuasion and know when to yield or concede issues.
- Avoid over stating a case in order to win a concession or gain resources. Accurate honest assessment is best.

Expected Personal Attributes

- Integrity
- Honesty
- Trustworthiness
- Credibility
- Civility
- Candor

Top Desirable Characteristics of a Department Chair

- Problem solving
- Honesty
- Good Communication
- Follow through
- Energetic and industrious
- Part of the team
- Committed
- Ability to motivate and unite department to achieve goals, in particular goals in line with college's strategic plan
- Ability to walk line of loyalty and trustworthiness to both dean and department
- Creative and analytical (vision along with data analysis)

Least Desirable Characteristics of a Department Chair

- Policy violators
- Complainers
- Unethical behavior
- Going around or “over” the Dean’s head
- Self-serving
- Uncreative
- Lazy
- Unable to express ideas clearly
- Not a team player
- Says one thing to the dean but tells another story to the faculty
- Avoids hard decisions to avoid confrontation with faculty
- Inability to communicate key issues to faculty
- Waits for some one to tell him/her what to do or how to accomplish something

What You Always Wanted To Tell Your Chairs

Ericson III and Mallard (2008)

- Lead and solve problems instead of just being an advocate
- Develop realistic budgets and budget requests
- Demand excellence from you faculty
- Focus on institutional mission instead of just the department needs
- Pay attention to personal passion and commitment
- Collect data and make assessment a priority



Effective Communication Is
Necessary For Effective Leadership

Foundation for Effective Leadership Communication

Higgerson and Joyce (2007)

- Use the institutional mission to empower performance
- Set precedents carefully
- Share decision-making criteria to inform requests
- Establish your leadership credibility
- Build relationships

Trust and Credibility

- Communication is the primary mechanism to build credibility
- Knowledgeable, truthful, transparent motive, trustworthy
- Know organizational hierarchy and follow communication protocols
- Inform dean of accomplishments

Trust and Credibility (continued)

- Do not whine when representing unit needs especially when request is inconsistent with larger college goals or priorities
- Chair should not defer decisions to the dean
- Open and productive communication
- Not wise to personally attack the dean

Cultivate Team Relationship

- Chair must exercise leadership in establishing communication
- Chair has considerable influence over frequency and type of communication with the dean.
- Seek dean's counsel on important issues – keep dean informed of important issues and potential problems
- Respond to dean's need for information and equip the dean with information for promoting department

Cultivate Team Relationship (continued)

- Do not demand, negotiate
- Do not dwell on points of disagreement from the past. Get past things.
- Pick battles judiciously – reasoned discourse is good, a temper is not
- Convey to faculty a sense of partnership with the dean
- Support decision finally made

Strategize Communication

- Knowing when and how to approach
- Choice of channel
- Choice of language and tone
- Eliminate anything that interferes with transmission of the message
- Distrust – distorts all communication

Know Policies and Procedures

- Process and Procedures are your friends.
- Deans assume knowledge of policy and expect adherence to policy and timelines
- Deans assume chairs are managerially competent
- Must know when not to address issues alone

Responsibility For Information Sharing With Faculty

- Expectation that knowledge is shared and discussed when asked to do so.
- Equally important is to know when information is not to be shared

Basic Principles of the William R. Harvey Executive Leadership Model

- Vision
- Work Ethic
- Academic Excellence
- Team Building
- Innovation

Harvey Basic Leadership Principles (Continued)

- Courage
- Management
- Fairness
- Fiscal Conservatism
- Results

Harvey Basic Leadership Principles (Continued)

- Vision

A visionary leader:

- Sees the “big picture”
- Is action-oriented
- Looks beyond the horizon and “dreams no small dreams”
- Can persuade others to follow their lead
- Able to convince others to take ownership of their vision

Harvey Basic Leadership Principles (Continued)

- **Work Ethic**
 - Essential to effective leadership
 - Vision and planning are useless without a good work ethic
 - Hard work cannot be compromised

Harvey Basic Leadership Principles (Continued)

- Academic Excellence
 - Is an essential element of higher education
 - Must “set the bar high”
 - Lead, guide and nurture students wherever you are

Harvey Basic Leadership Principles (Continued)

- Team Building
 - Collective competencies are better than individual competencies
 - Group energy and effort will produce better results when utilized for the common good
 - Trust is essential to team building

Harvey Basic Leadership Principles (Continued)

- Innovation
 - An effective leader must be able to:
 - Dream bold new dreams
 - Be able to “think outside of the box”
 - Think about not what is, but what could be

Harvey Basic Leadership Principles (Continued)

- **Courage**

- Must have the courage to listen and receive input on any subject
- In the final analysis, you must have the courage to stick to your convictions
- Discipline and perseverance are essential ingredients

Harvey Basic Leadership Principles (Continued)

- Management
 - Is not the same as leadership
 - An effective manager is an enabler- gets the job done
 - Helps others to better utilize their skills and knowledge – to do a better job
 - “Things that get measured, get managed.”
 - Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are effective tools for measuring performance

Harvey Basic Leadership Principles (Continued)

- Fairness
 - Should be kept at the center of every interaction and all decision-making
 - Decisions may not be popular, but should be fair

Harvey Basic Leadership Principles (Continued)

- Fiscal Conservatism
 - You cannot spend money that you do not have
 - You must be accountable for the money – you must be accountable to yourself

Harvey Basic Leadership Principles (Continued)

- Results
 - All other leadership principles lead to results; if your results are not justifiable, the other steps have failed
 - The means must justify the end
 - Technology is not the solution – it is a means to an end
 - Effective leaders must be results-oriented

Strategies for Effective Leadership

- Analysis of Case Studies
 - Formation of Break-Out Groups
 - Review of Six (6) Case Studies
 - Break-out Group Reports