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ABSTRACT

New academic chairs and deans can assume their new challenges with less frustration if they understand the essential elements for developing a culture of proactive change. One key concept is transformational leadership, in which leaders employ idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration to achieve results. It is also important to understand that change is a process, not an event; is accomplished by individuals; is a highly personal experience; and involves developmental growth. Chairs and deans will be called upon to play many roles, including change leader, incorporating characteristics of transformational leadership; administrative manager, focusing on daily operations rather than innovation; and college professional, or mentors guiding faculty through team building and professional development. Studies have shown that deans and chairs are instrumental in implementing change at their institutions, with 80% of decisions at universities made at the departmental level. A study of the role of community college chairs in the change process found the following seven concepts for effective change: (1) the president should set the tone by employing visionary transformational leadership; (2) individuals should feel empowered; (3) teams should be used; (4) effective methods for data collection; (5) a focus on quality; (6) the college must be able to respond to change; and (7) constituents should be satisfied with college services. Contains 11 references. (BCY)

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# TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN A CHANGING WORLD:

## A SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR NEW CHAIRS AND DEANS

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## Biographies

**Alexandra Hilosky** is Chair of the Health Science Department and Chemistry Professor at Harcum College, Bryn Mawr, PA. She holds a Master Degree in Chemistry from West Chester University (PA.) and a Doctorate in Science Education from Temple University (PA.). She is a graduate of the Institute for Leadership Training and Development.

**Dr. Britt Watwood** is the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at Herkimer County Community College in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains in upstate New York. At the college on the hill, he oversees 56 full-time faculty in the areas of Business, Health Services, Science, Mathematics, and Physical Education. A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, Britt received his Masters degree in Education from Old Dominion University and a Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership in Higher Education from University of Nebraska. He is also a graduate of the Institute for Leadership Training and Development. He has been a consultant in quality initiatives and strategic planning, and his recent research has been on the role played by community college chairs in leading their colleges' quality initiatives. Britt retired from the Navy as a Commander after 22 years of service. For the past two years, before moving the New York, he was the Assistant Director of the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education at UNL. His research there was on quality improvement, with particular emphasis on the application of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award to higher education. He also worked on technological applications to education, and helped design and deliver graduate courses via Lotus Notes in UNL's Distant Doctorate program. He and his wife, Linda, reside in Herkimer.

**Transformational Leadership in A Changing World:  
A Survival Guide for New Chairs and Deans  
Britt Watwood and Alexandra Hilosky**

Congratulations on your new position! This paper will serve as your survival guide. Its purpose is to provide you with information to help you motivate and move your department to new levels of productivity and achievement through improvements and vision with a quality focus. Understanding the essential elements required for developing a culture of proactive change, during the onset of your tenure, will decrease your frustration levels and enable you to enjoy your new challenge.

This guide is based on a literature search in the area of academic leadership and Watwood's (1996) thought provoking case study of community college chairs, which provides important insights into leadership in a changing environment.

### **TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

The term "transformational leader" was coined by James McGregor Burns in his 1978 book *Leadership*. Burns noted that most bureaucratic activities of leaders were transactional in nature, and that such activity would not be enough to get organizations through the rough times. At pivotal points in an organization's history, a transformational leader was needed to engage the followers and raise them to higher levels of motivation and inspiration. Bass and Avolio (1994) built on this concept and developed their model of the Full Range of Leadership. It provided a continuum of leadership styles, starting with the passive and ineffective laissez-faire style, which is characterized by avoidance of leadership. The Management by Exception styles and the Contingency Reward style are transactional leadership styles. The passive form waits for deviations or mistakes to occur, then takes action when deviations are detected. A more active and effective transactional style is the Contingency Reward style, which positively reinforces behavior. The final style, which Bass believes is most active and most effective, is the transformational leader, who achieves superior results by employing one or more of the Four I's: 1) Idealized Influence; 2) Inspirational Motivation; 3) Intellectual Stimulation and 4) Individualized Consideration.

A fundamental concept of this model is that every leader displays each style in varying degrees, and that each style is appropriate for some situations. However, the optimal profile is heavy in contingent Reward and the Four I's, and light in Laissez-Faire.

One college studied by Watwood was fearful of change, and was marked by laissez-faire and transactional leadership. The other college had transformational leaders who extensively used teaming and shared leadership. Birnbaum (1992) stated that leadership "is not the act of one person, but...something distribute throughout an institution" (p. 186).

- ***Survival Tip #1: Each week of each month, practice one or more of the Four I's of Transformational leadership. Practice reflective Journaling and ask your staff for feedback.***

***Read: Bass, Bernard M. and Avolio, Bruce J. (Eds.) (1994). Improving Organizational Effectiveness Through Transformational Leadership.***

### **UNDERSTANDING CHANGE:**

The Research and Development Center for Teacher Education at the University of Texas

at Austin (Hord et al, 1987) concluded that change: (1) is a process, not an event; (2) is accomplished by individuals; (3) is a highly personal experience; (4) involves developmental growth; and (5) is best understood in operational terms. The focus of facilitation should be on individuals, innovations, and context.

Smith (1996) noted that, with the rate of change today, leaders are required to simultaneously learn and deliver, rather than simply deliver a new product or service. Smith went on to note that, with the pace of change occurring today, leadership should not spend its time convincing others to change, but should instead facilitate others through the change process. DePree (1992) echoed this concept when he stated that leaders must be visible when implementing change, they must understand the context in which their people work and must communicate constantly on the need for change.

- *Survival tip #2: Administer the DISC, Dimensions of Behavior, to your faculty and staff. This instrument will enable you to understand yourself and others by: identifying individual's work behavioral styles in specific environments; creating a motivational environment most conducive to success; increasing your appreciation of different work styles; and minimizing potential personnel conflicts. Once you are informed of the work behavior of your staff you can begin the process of change. Write to the Carlson Learning Company, PO box 59159, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55459-8247.*

*Read: Smith, Douglas K. (1996). Taking Charge of Change: 10 Principles for Managing People and Performance.*

#### OTHER ROLES YOU'LL PLAY:

Three major themes emerged from the seventeen roles identified in Watwood's study (1996). The table below shows the major roles clustered within these themes.

#### Major Themes

Change Leader	Administrative Manager	College Professional
Change Agent	Planner	Educator
Facilitator	Operational Focus	Mentor
Team Player	Market Agent	
Communicator	Coordinator	
Leader	Stabilizer	
Visionary	Frees Instructor	
Referral		
Quality Focus		
Supporter		

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The roles in Change Leader are aligned with the proactive characteristic of a transformational leader as defined by Bass and Avolio (1994). In being a change leader and conducting the roles clustered within this theme, one would tend to utilize the transformational tenets of individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence.

The **administrative manager** tends to be more focused on the details of daily operations rather than the innovation of new changes. Kouzes and Posner (1995) tied managers to transactional leaders and noted that they might be effective, but often failed to achieve the level of personal satisfaction and employee morale that transformational leaders achieved. Managers like the status quo, as they are good at running their system, and do not need change to interfere with the operation.

The theme of **College Academician** also included the role of mentor. Watwood's study of Chairs saw their role as one which guided their faculty and staff through appropriate rewards, team building, morale enhancement activities, and professional development.

- **Survival tip #3:** *Don't forget your own development. You must continue to grow, change, mature and look for new insights. Attend the Institute for Academic Leadership Development.*

#### **YOUR ROLE AS CHANGE AGENT:**

One of the most important challenges facing new chairs is their role as change agent. Seagren, Wheeler, Creswell, Miller, and VanHorn-Grassmeyer (1994) found that community college deans and department chairs are instrumental in implementing change at their institutions. In studying university leadership, Roach (1976) found that 80% of institutional decisions at universities were made at the department level.

Change generates many emotions. Some fear it while others embrace it. Many like the safety of the status quo, but without change, there is no progress. Max DePree, in *Leadership Jazz* (1992), states that change "without continuity is chaos, while continuity without change is sloth, and very risky". (p. 74)

- **Survival tip #4:** *Identify a transformational leader in your organization and shadow them. Pay particular attention to the manner in which they deal with unusual ideas and staff resistant to change. Reflect on this behavior and model it when you encounter a similar situation.*

*Read: Seagren, Alan T., Wheeler, Daniel W., Creswell, John W., Miller, Michael T., and VanHorn-Grassmeyer, Kimberly. (1994). Academic Leadership in Community Colleges.*

*Read: DePree, Max. (1992). Leadership Jazz.*

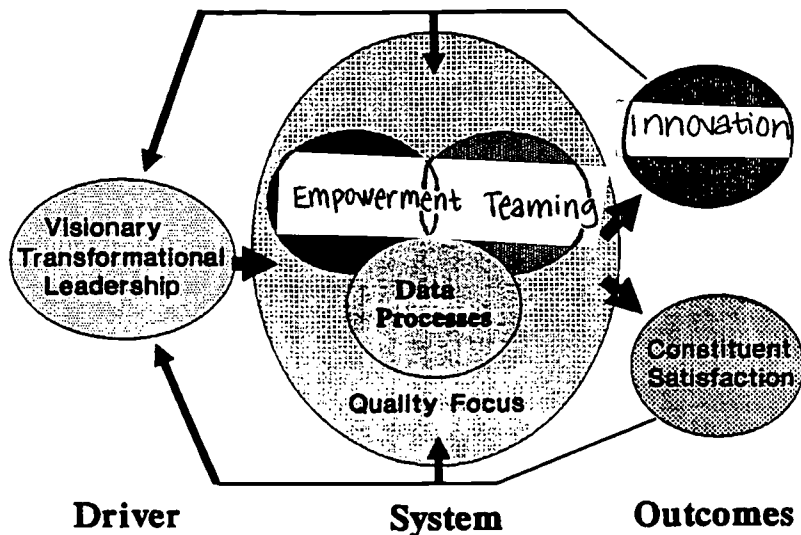
#### **SEVEN CONCEPTS FOR EFFECTIVE CHANGE:**

The inability to change rapidly will hinder a transactional college and make it less effective. Seven concepts emerged from Watwood's study (1996) regarding the role community college chairs should take in the change process of their college.

1. **VISIONARY TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP.** The president must set the tone for his or her college, having clearly articulated where the college is going (vision), as well as employing the tenets of transformational leadership.
2. **EMPOWERMENT.** Empowerment is the degree to which an individual believes that he

or she is free to act on change, without guidance or direction from above. Empowerment is a factor of the culture of an institution (group norms, policies, reward structure), together with the individual's intrinsic motivation and level of skill/knowledge.

## Framework for Proactive Change



3. **TEAMING.** Teaming uses groups of people to creatively sense the environment, generate solutions, and reinforce implementation of change. Teams are also a factor of the culture of an institution.

4. **DATA PROCESS.** An integrated process for gathering and using data as a natural part of daily life is integral to the quality philosophy. Meaningful data should underlie every change process. The quality tools enable the chair to establish benchmarks of quality performance, which in turn form a dateline from which continuous improvement and innovation can depart.

5. **QUALITY FOCUS.** Dobyms and Crawford-Mason (1991) stated that quality required a demanding, difficult, never-ending effort to improve. College leaders must have a customer-focus, developing processes to ensure that they manage by fact.

Empowerment, Teaming, Data Processes and Quality Focus form the *system* under which proactive change can occur. The outcomes of this process are:

6. **INNOVATION.** The degree to which an institution proactively flows with change and uses change to continually improve the products and services that it provides to its community.

7. **CONSTITUENT SATISFACTION.** The degree to which the external customers (students, employers, other institutions of higher education, parents, and the community itself) and internal customers (faculty, staff, and administrators) perceive that their needs are being met (or exceeded) by the products and services that the college provides to its community.

These concepts are linked. Each element on its own will not necessarily lead to proactive change, but taken together, the concepts above become a potentially powerful aid for colleges to use in developing a culture of proactive change.

The role of the chair should be critical in managing the change process of the college, particularly if the president has empowered the chairs to proactively improve their decision. To effectively and proactively deal with change, chairs need to become transformational leaders. This cannot occur in a vacuum. A culture of empowerment, teaming, quality which

starts at the presidential level, is needed as a foundation for a proactive change process at the college. When the leadership, at all levels, works towards continuous improvement, the outcomes will be satisfied constituents and innovative services, two ingredients necessary for college survival.

- ***Survival Tip #5: Collect meaningful data and use it to drive decisions. Use teams to achieve results. Keep focused on constituent satisfaction and innovation.***  
***Read: Dobyns, Lloyd and Clare Crawford-Mason. (1991). Quality or Else.***

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