

What Engineering Deans Should Know: Where Are You Going and How Do You Get There?

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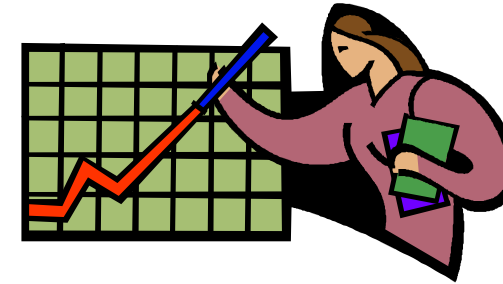
ASEE Engineering Deans Institute
April 11, 2010

Essential Organizational Activities that Keep the College Healthy

- ❖ Administration
- ❖ Financial Management
- ❖ Strategic Planning
 - New initiatives



Administration (Leadership)



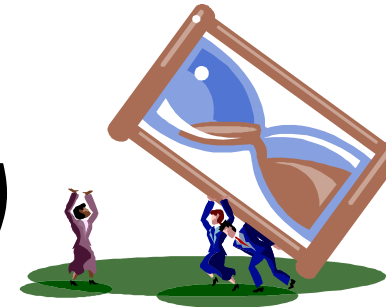
- ❖ Facilitator within the college, advocate within the university, ambassador outside the university
 - Responsible for your college
 - Important part of the larger organization
 - Obligation to contribute meaningfully to the university leadership team
 - Visible and representative presence
- ❖ Establish clear expectations
 - Set a path moving forward (strategic plan)
 - Performance, behavior, responsibilities and authority
 - Understand and adhere to personnel policies and deadlines for review
 - Involve input from others on both performance and expectations
 - Handle personnel problems sooner than later – they do not go away on their own
 - Pay attention to hiring
- ❖ Build strong relationships and make personal contacts
 - Chances are that situations you run into are not unique, and you need to be comfortable picking up the phone
 - Work with community and business leaders
 - If there are troubles brewing, share them with your provost
 - Involve your provost (and others) in brainstorming and troubleshooting so that the solution supports a shared vision
 - Take the time to meet each faculty member during the first year

Administration (cont.)

- ❖ Communicate with those around you
 - Information is power
 - Do not surround yourself only with people who agree with you or have the same perspective
 - Do surround yourself with visionary thinkers who are firmly committed to college goals
 - Learn or create communication protocol (be very careful about email)
 - Understand whatever you say or do will reverberate because you are dean
 - Meet regularly with your office and college staff - they are your lifeline
- ❖ Make those directly above you and directly below you in the chain of command look good
 - When things go well, give credit to those around you
 - When things don't go so well, take the credit yourself
 - Praise in public; criticize in private; be magnanimous
- ❖ Do not feel the need to make a decision on the spot
 - Think and talk to others
 - Most things do not need a decision instantly
 - Operate on the 40 to 90 rule
 - Decide which battles are worth fighting and which ones are not
- ❖ Seek continuous improvement in all you do
 - Needs to be accountability and openness
 - Continue learning (national conversations, leadership, higher education, technically)
 - Have some connection to strategic plan in this regard
 - Keep some supervision/coordination of accreditation activities in the deans office

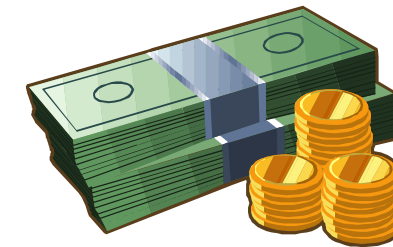


Administration (cont.)



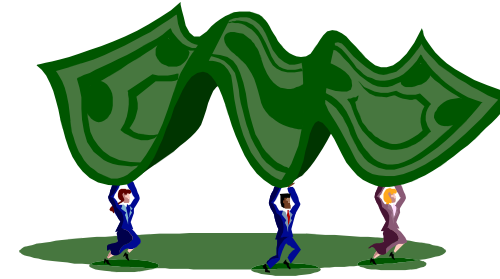
- ❖ Make sure the administrative structure supports you and the culture you wish to develop
 - Reflect your personality, style and what is meaningful
 - Set up your team so the college operates in your absence
 - Delegate
 - Processes are important
 - Physical layout plays a role
 - Hire the most competent, reliable, hard-working associate dean you can find
- ❖ Realize you can not make everyone happy
 - Do not worry about whether people love you
 - Much of what people think about you and what you are doing is based on misperceptions and lack of information
 - Take actions and make decisions that enable you to look at yourself in the mirror each morning
- ❖ Be strategic with where you put your time and energy
 - You have limited supply of both
 - Prioritize what a dean must attend and when it is appropriate to send a designee
 - Meeting attendance can become overwhelming and it becomes a challenge to find time to work
 - Schedule time to think
 - Do not let 10% of the people take 90% of your time (CAVEs)

Finances



- ❖ Understand your college and university finances
 - Budgets, budgeting and reporting processes
 - Funding sources
 - Expenditures
 - Be able to spot issues and opportunities
- ❖ Have regularly scheduled meetings on financial matters
 - Hire a business manager who will help you get where you need to go AND keep you off the front page of the newspaper (for negative reasons)
 - Review the budget, expenditures and forecast
 - Allow for timely changes and corrections
 - Identify ways to leverage funds and increase efficiencies
 - Review all accounts with each department chair and business manager twice a year
- ❖ Ask questions
 - You will be forgiven (at first)
 - Do not just accept, “well, it’s always been done that way”
 - Dean is ultimately responsible party in all financial matters
 - Do not get drawn into the blissful state of ignorance
 - Be cautious about abdicating final authority in decision making

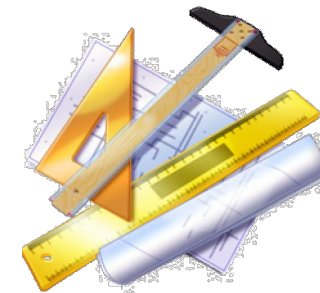
Finances (cont.)



- ❖ Approach budgeting process as
 - “Annual planning and budget”
 - Budget is one way the college
 - reaches its goals
 - emphasizes what is important, necessary, strategic
 - Review and assess accomplishments
 - Reminder of past decisions and input
 - Tie new initiatives to strategic plan and to budget plan
 - bring people into the conversation
 - individuals, units, leadership team, dean team
 - this is not Oz
 - Follow the same process for reductions (one-time and permanent)
 - hold brainstorming sessions to suggest savings
 - at all levels (individual, department, college, institution)
 - efficiencies, reductions, additional resources, change the game
 - host informational sessions to relieve stress and nervousness

Strategic Planning

- ❖ The most powerful thing you can provide is information
 - If people are up to date on where your college is going, on its capabilities and dreams, opportunities often present themselves
 - The same opportunities may be lost, however, if they do not have ready information
- ❖ Develop a clear understanding of the environment and culture in which people are expected to operate
 - Mission, vision, shared values
- ❖ Develop a clear understanding of goals and priorities for your college
 - Even if a strategic plan exists, a new dean offers the opportunity to revisit, affirm or revise/update it
 - Take advantage of other strategic planning opportunities (university, high-tech community, departments) to shape and connect your college strategic plan
- ❖ Bring your various constituents into the process and get their buy-in
 - Take the time to set up the process carefully
 - Allow for several different opportunities for input and leadership
 - Be deliberate about involving all those affected
 - Ask only what you are prepared to give and follow up
 - Make sure individuals can identify how they fit into the plan
 - If others have a hand on shaping the plan it becomes their own
 - they are more likely to live it
 - they are more likely to accept decisions based on these shared plans



Strategic Planning



- ❖ Make your strategic plan the focal point of all decisions
- ❖ Connect decisions formally as a
 - Reminder
 - Learned behavior
 - Way to familiarize various constituents about your plans
 - Way to temper or defuse negative reactions
 - Way to determine and inform focused actions and day to day activity
 - Mechanism to discuss, formulate and choose new initiatives
- ❖ Make the strategic plan work for you
 - Highlight accomplishments and tie them back to the plan
 - Create a report card and disseminate it
 - Define focused actions that are the priority for the short term
 - Provide a mechanism for people to easily remember the plan and to quote it
 - Provide talking points on actions and accomplishments
- ❖ Keep administrators informed about your college's priorities for the coming year and over the long term
- ❖ Determine how these priorities dovetail with personal performance