

CRA New Chairs Workshop

Snowbird, UT
23 July 2012

Panelists

Organizers

- Mike Gennert, Fmr CS Head, WPI
- Darrell Whitley, CS Chair, Colorado State

Speakers

- Peter Bloniarz, Dean College of Computing & Information, Albany
- John Paxton, CS Dept Head, State
- Martha Pollack, Vice Provost Academic & Budgetary Affairs, Michigan

Nuts & Bolts of Managing a Department

Mike Gennert, WPI, Chair

John Paxton, Montana State

Darrell Whitley, Colorado State

Nuts and Bolts – Mike Gennert

- **You** set the tone for the department
 - Culture, shared governance, academic standards, ethics, integrity
 - Respect staff, facilities, students as well as faculty
 - Don't get mad... and **don't** get even. Listen first
- Calendar & workflows
 - P&T, Annual Reviews, Annual Reports, Budget, Adv Bd, Hiring, ABET, Academic/Fiscal deadlines
- Understand finances: \$ rules
- Delegate & prioritize
 - Trust but verify
 - Meet regularly with Dean, Assoc DH, Admin, Lab Mgr, students
- If you don't write it down, it didn't/won't happen
 - while (true) { communicate early & often }
- The Kids Come First

Nuts & Bolts – John Paxton

Prepare to hit the ground running!

- **Understand key financial resources**
 - Fiscal year accounts: e.g. instructional, program fee, computer fee, equipment fee
 - Carryover accounts: e.g. teaching assistant reserve, equipment reserve, indirect costs, foundation, industry affiliates program, grants
 - Look for “green” monies
- **Learn (via books, conferences, mentors)**
 - Advancement: CASE Development for Deans Conference
 - Leadership: Harvard Management Development Program
 - Management: The Practice of Management (Drucker)
 - Accreditation: ABET workshop
 - Curriculum: SIGCSE, ASEE, Frontiers in Education conferences
- **Use systems thinking to find low hanging fruit. Act! Serve!**
 - Curriculum, Research, Space, Advancement, Public Relations

Nuts and Bolts – Darrell Whitley

Mentoring:

- Devote 1 faculty meeting a year to diversity and retention.
- *Unlocking the Clubhouse*, Jane Margolis.
- National Center for Women in Information Technology.
- Get a mentor for yourself.

Delegating:

- Develop and use an Executive Advisory Committee (or Associate Chair).

Merit Reviews/Evaluations:

- Be honest even if it is uncomfortable.
- Make sure the criteria for evaluation are clear. Get buy-in.
- Get to know the Administration: know the players well.
- “What gets measured, gets improved”

Don't grease the Squeaky Wheel; use resources for a purpose

Dealing with Stakeholders

John Paxton, Montana State, Chair

Peter Bloniarz, Albany

Mike Gennert, WPI

Martha Pollack, Michigan

Dealing with Stakeholders - John Paxton

Be creative!

- **Alumni**
 - linkedIn group, departmental website
- **Industry**
 - Advisory board, scholarships, retreat board room, course instructors, equipment and software donations, Industry Affiliates Program, new professor support, annual report
- **The Dean**
 - Align with priorities (e.g. interdisciplinary option, Global Advocate), solve problems (e.g. research expenditures, FTE credits taught)
- **Communication Tips: Made to Stick, Heath and Heath**
 - Simple, Unexpected, Concrete, Credible, Emotional, Stories

Stakeholders - P. Bloniarz

- Plan a long term goal and strategy. Let everything flow from that.
- Understand people on both an organizational and a personal level. What is their ability to help your department reach its goal? What motivates them personally?
- Tailor your messages. Take feedback. Adapt.
- You are the representative of your department. It's about you and them. You need to work together.
- Don't feel you need to do everything yourself. Use your constituencies and other stakeholders to deliver messages.

Dealing w/ Stakeholders – Mike Gennert

- All: You can never have too many friends
 - Get acquainted – visit, lunch, coffee, tours, ...
 - Understand them and their needs
 - How can they help you and how can you help them
- Deans: Thinking like a Dean & Managing Up
 - Only bring up (preferably solved) hard problems
 - Problems scale by 10 – Faculty: \$1K, Chair: \$10K, Dean: \$100K, ...
- Peers: Potential allies
 - Most of **your** problems were/are/will be **their** problems
- Reports: Try to be fair, consistent, serious
 - Identify the **few critical people** and keep them happy
- Advisory Boards: Know what you want from your board
 - Advice, \$, placement, program review, leverage with administration, ...

Managing Up – Martha Pollack

Five Cardinal Rules for Working with a Boss

1. Never surprise your boss.
2. Don't provide a core dump: instead analyze, summarize, and recommend.
3. When you bring up a problem, also pose potential solutions.
4. Figure out how to work with your boss' other direct reports.
5. In private, be frank and critical and help your boss avoid making mistakes. In public, support your boss' decisions.

BAKER'S DOZEN: FALLACIOUS ARGUMENTS FOR REQUESTING FUNDING

- *Bucket argument*: "I've divided my unit budget up into different buckets and one of them is really empty and so I need more money for that empty bucket." (Never mind that some of the other buckets are overflowing.)
- *Tribute argument*: "I know that I could fund this myself, but my unit needs some kind of tangible signal that you value us and what we do."
- *Forgiveness argument*: "Sorry, but I've already spent the money. So you're just going to have to give it to me."
- *Urgency argument*: "There's no time to think about this-I've waited so long to ask that need an answer right now."
- *High Road argument*: "I think about programs and what's good for the organization. All you think about is money."
- *Poor-me argument*: "You're always so hard on my unit. We never get anything."
- *Intellectual superiority argument*: "You just don't have enough expertise for me to explain to you why this initiative is important."
- *Futures argument*: "OK, I get that there isn't enough funding for my initiative this year. But how about if you commit right now that you'll fund it next year or the year after."
- *End-run argument*: "If you won't give me the funding, I'm going straight to your boss."
- *Washington monument argument*: "If you won't give me the money to avoid cuts, then I'll have to stop doing something that's really valuable to the organization (eg., teaching calculus)." Name refers to the story is that when asked to make cuts, the National Park Service says that the only option is to close the Washington Monument.
- *Deferral of leadership argument*: "If you won't give me the funding I want, then you have to tell me what to cut out of my budget so that I can carry out this initiative."
- *Unit ranking arguments*: "Our unit can't hold on to its top ranking if you don't provide funding for this initiative." OR "Our unit will never become top-ranked if you don't providing funding for this initiative."
- *Physical threat argument*: "Do I need to jam this pencil through your forehead so you get the point?"

Strategic Thinking

Darrell Whitley, Colorado State, Chair

Martha Pollack, Michigan

John Paxton, Montana State

Mike Gennert, WPI

Peter Bloniarz, Albany

Strategic Thinking – Darrell Whitley

Reactive Planning:

- A plan does not have to be a roadmap, just an itinerary .
- Have a vision you can explain to both faculty and to the administration.
- Don't let the vision get in the way of opportunity.
- Most opportunities are unplanned; you must be prepared to act.

Keep Promises, Over Deliver:

- Know what you can do.
- Prioritize. Know what is important.

Mechanics:

- We have a Spring Retreat (8 hours) and a Fall Review (3 hours).
- We have an “Action List” for the year.
- Use resources to enable major goals.

Some Random Thoughts about ~~Thinking~~ Strategically Acting

- Martha Pollack

1. It's easy to spend all your time keeping the trains running. Avoid that! Keep a list of your goals and read it weekly.
2. Prioritize: Have no more than 3 strategic goals at once.
3. "Choose your battles wisely." Sometimes you have to let the smaller things go, to improve your chances of achieving the bigger things.
4. "Keep your friends close and your enemies closer." (Sun-tzu) Don't underestimate the power of lunch.
5. "All politics is local." (Tip O'Neill) Make sure you understand the culture of your department, school, and university.
6. "[You are] not good enough or strong enough or wise enough to do everything that needs doing." (Teresa Sullivan) Consult with your faculty, your dean, the relevant associate deans, the other department chairs...and don't forget your students and your staff. You need their wisdom, their support, and their work to make change.
7. "You can get a lot done if you don't care who gets the credit." (Ralph D. Winter) Enough said.

Strategic Thinking - John Paxton

Three specific goals with actions to operationalize

1. Grow funded research (200K to 1M in 5 years!)

- Clear message to faculty
- Differential faculty assignments
- Hire well and work on retention
- Increase the number of Ph.D. students

2. Be more interdisciplinary

- Interdisciplinary Option
- More flexible minor
- Web Design Course with Art Department
- Robot room

3. Be more international

- Short term study abroad courses
- International Engineering Certificate

Use **advancement** to procure resources to better accomplish these goals.

Strategic Thinking – Mike Gennert

- Congrats on becoming CEO of CS, Inc.
 - Only *you* have the whole view. Think long!
- Leadership
 - Set vision, prosecute mission, take care of people
 - *Glory is not a conserved quantity* – G. Tryggvason
 - Power is never given, only taken
- If you lack strategic training / experience ...
 - Get an Advisory Board with it
 - Read / study leadership / business
- Hiring, tenure, retention: 40-year impact

Strategic Thinking (P. Bloniarz)

- Plan a long term strategy and build towards a goal. Don't try to do everything at once.
- Don't try to fix your past, but build for the future.
- Be realistic. Know your capacity to deliver. Don't over-promise.
- Stretch. Have an idea of what's possible and make a case of why you're a good investment.
- Be flexible and take advantage of opportunities. Do a "strategic scan" of the environment and maximize the alignment of the stars.
- "Tyranny of opportunity." Don't be infinitely flexible. Remember your goal and build towards it.

Break

Introducing
CRA Exec. Dir. Andy Bernat
CRA Board Chair Eric Grimson

Group Problems

Organization

1. Groups of 4-5 people
2. Introduce yourselves
3. Person whose birthday is next is *Scribe*
4. Clockwise from Scribe are *Facilitator, Presenter*
 - Scribe – Write ideas down, make up .ppt slides
 - Facilitator – Keep group on task
 - Presenter – Tell us group's ideas
5. 20 minutes brainstorming
6. 4 minutes to present

Your Charge

- Suggest ways to deal with your assigned scenario
 - May be ambiguous, underspecified, open-ended
- Define the problem
- State the issues
- Identify guiding principles
- Suggest approaches
- Consider possible assistance

Final Q&A

Thank you
&
Good luck!