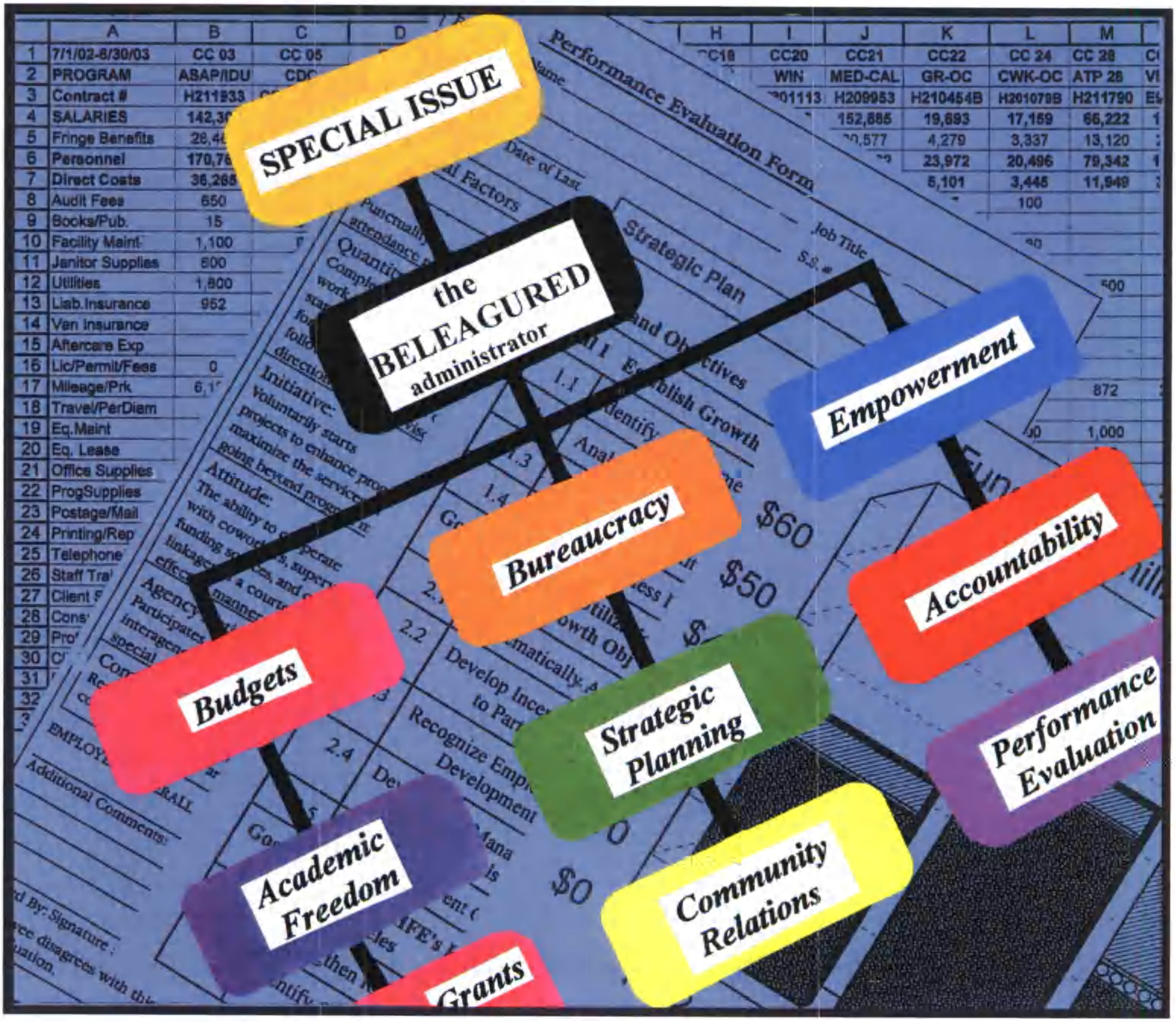
REFLECTIONS

NARRATIVES of PROFESSIONAL HELPING



Volume 12, Number 2

Spring 2006

REFLECTIONS
NARRATIVES OF PROFESSIONAL HELPING

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REFLECTIONS

NARRATIVES OF PROFESSIONAL HELPING

Volume 12 **Spring 2006** **Number 2**

James J. Kelly, PhD, Editor, Ray Berger, PhD, Honorary Editor

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Letter From the Editor

Jillian Jimenez, Ph.D.

This issue of ***Reflections*** tells the stories of administrators who purposively embraced the paradoxes and struggles inherent in their roles. The business of keeping things moving forward is the job of administrators in academia, non profit agencies and government bureaucracies, where service to others is the primary goal. Often times the secondary goal of organizational survival displaces the primary goals in these organizations: focus is lost, roles are blurred and the need for homeostasis and organizational survival overwhelm the original mission of the institution. Administrators struggle with this paradox and the best ones keep their eyes on the prize, in spite of the siren song of ambition and internal power struggles. Another difficult aspect of an administrator's role is the need to resolve the tension between empowerment and accountability. Administrators serve two masters: the professionals or faculty they seek to inspire and the administrators to whom they in turn must answer. This issue pays tribute to administrators' struggles to honor both commitments, in spite of the sometimes conflicting demands of each.

I have had the privilege of working with two outstanding administrators at California State University, Long Beach. The first, James Kelly, is an editor of this issue of ***Reflections*** and former director of the Social Work Department. Jim was both blessed and cursed with a vivid imagination of how things might be and the personal resources to make the possible happen. He was more comfortable with change than most people have a right to be, and this comfort led him to take bold and creative risks as an administrator. One such risk was his decision to provide the seed money for the new journal of narratives founded by Sonia Leib Abels that you are now reading. Jim has been called a visionary many times and with good reason. His faith in what ***Reflections*** could become allowed Sonia Abels' grand vision to become reality.

The second administrator that I have been fortunate to work with is John Oliver, the current director of the Social Work Department, who appointed me as the second editor of ***Reflections.*** He demonstrated his moral courage when he published a narrative about his childhood experience of segregation. Written for our special issue commemorating the 1954 Supreme Court decision known as Brown v. Board of Education, John Oliver's narrative told of growing up in the South under conditions of discrimination and racism, conditions which reappeared regularly during his adult life. John has been an unwavering source of support for the journal, and a steady guide during the rocky episodes that crop up in all such enterprises. He allowed the journal to develop according to its own rhythms and has given me the creative space and freedom that are the reasons most academics seek this life. As far as the journal is concerned, he has resolved the tension between accountability and empowerment wholly on the side of empowerment.

Other administrators may craft their roles in a different way and to different ends; some of these are described in this issue. But ***Reflections*** has flourished under the leadership of James Kelly and John Oliver. For that I thank them both.

CALL FOR NARRATIVES: Special Issue of *Reflections*

Back Into the Storm: Helping Professionals Return to the Gulf Coast

Guest Editors: Brenda F. McGadney-Douglass, MSW, PhD, University of Toledo and Richard L. Douglass, MPH, PhD, Eastern Michigan University

As soon as the wind calmed and the water began to recede, faculty and students in social work, nursing, public health and other helping professions set aside their academic roles, rolled up their sleeves and began the journey of rebuilding the Gulf Coast after **Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in the Fall 2005**. This Special Issue will provide a forum for telling their stories. *Narratives of personal responses are sought from those who embraced roles as workers, disaster volunteers, relief workers, and visionaries to demonstrate the dedication, skill, courage, and selflessness of our professions when tragedy strikes.* We encourage narratives from those in the storm-ravaged areas as well as from persons in communities that welcomed and gave assistance. We seek stories about survival, challenges, interventions, and applications of our research and teaching in a time of need, including non-traditional program development, unexpected lessons-learned, and experience-based insights from those of us who went back to rescue and rebuild. We specifically hope to highlight experiences that involved displaced children, women, and families, how ongoing or crisis-triggered mental health affected response efforts, how academicians responded to extreme poverty, loss of infrastructures, confrontations with death and loss, and how the experience has affected those who returned to support victims and communities. **Narratives may address, but need not be limited to:**

- How did you apply your professional practice in storm-ravaged communities?
- How well did your practice, research, and scholarship prepare you for actually responding to people and communities in need?
- How did your involvement affect your perspectives on practice, teaching and learning?
- How did survivors, displaced people, women, single-men, youth, aged, and others respond to those from practice, academic and other professional roles who were involved in the helping process?
- What were the sentinel events from this experience that have transformed your professional thinking or career choices and academic life?
- If you were displaced, yourself, how did you redefine your roles in social work, health care, or other areas as faculty, students, or field workers?
- What experiences did you have that provided inspiration and motivation to serve others?

Narrative Manuscript Guidelines:

- A cover page, listing title of paper and full name of authors, including e-mail address, mailing address, and phone numbers of all authors.
- The second page must only list the title and a brief 50 to 100 word abstract.
- If references are included, follow requirements of the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual* of the American Psychological Association.
- Paper format: Typed, double-spaced (12 font in Times New Roman and 1" margins) and no longer than 30 pages (including tables and references).

Submissions must be received, in triplicate, *no later than October 1, 2006, to:*

Brenda F. McGadney-Douglass, Ph.D., Special Issue Editor
Department of Social Work
University of Toledo
Toledo, OH 43606

e-mail: bdougla2@utnet.utoledo.edu or,
rdouglass@emich.edu

Bewitched, Bothered, and Beleaguered: Stories of a Grateful Academy Veteran

James J. Kelly, Ph.D. Interim Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs, and Associate Vice President, Continuing and International Education California State University, East Bay

From the author's perspective as a higher education administrator for the past 25 years, he recalls many situations in which the demands of his institution made it difficult or impossible to be an effective leader. With humor and occasional chagrin, the author shares some of these stories. In the end, he learned to play a balancing act between the organization and the individual; the need to husband scarce resources with the need to lead and innovate; and the desire to bring out the best in people with our limited ability to do so.

The theme that runs through this issue of ***Reflections*** is that of balance and perspective. How can we care for people if we are always watching the bottom line? How can we care for people properly when our country's value system is changing? As administrators, how can we find satisfaction and purpose when scarce resources dictate that we do the best we can as opposed to the best we know how to do?[1] How can we draw the best from others, whose level of skills and attitudes sometimes run contrary to our perception of the greater good? How can we enjoy our own lives and achievement despite our inability to do enough to help others? This Special Issue explores these themes in depth.

In her reflections on two decades as a dean of social work, Paula Allen Meares discusses not only the broad issues of prioritization and decision-making fallout, but also her perspective as a female African American administrator. Joanne J. Thompson offers another administrator's view, this time tackling the issue of admissions standards, academic freedom, and the changing nature of higher education. Lloyd L. Lyter explores the dilemma of choosing an administrative position over one's professional passion; freedom sometimes arrives for those who give up being the boss. Shelley Rice Wyckoff explores the nitty-gritty balancing act of hiring and working with faculty while keeping an eye on number one, the student. Using guiding principles, Janet Hoy, Mary McCaffery-Hull, and Patrick Milloy share their experience in creating their best possible management team with an emphasis on flexibility and adaptability. Mary Ann Raymer recounts her experiences as a school principal and describes the principal's role as a balancing act between the needs of students, parents, and community. Using lively descriptions of three administrators she has known, Gigi Nordquist examines the qualities of good and bad administrators. Ruthann Rountree shares what she has learned about the self-serving aspects of human service organizations. In a provocative review of her years as a junior faculty member, Dianne Rush Woods describes the hazards of balancing the competing demands of administration, scholarship, and teaching. Judith Papenhausen discusses how creative thinkers and the establishment can collide if their goals are not carefully molded and massaged into alignment. Amy Krentzman and her colleagues describe how their use of appreciative learning in a service-learning program can reap rewards on multiple levels, including that of the beleaguered administrator. Gary Bess shows what can be in store for the administrator turned independent consultant who hoped the grass would be greener in his own backyard. Finally, in a review of the recent film *Good Night and Good Luck*, Agathi Glezakos comments on the portrayal of media administrators caught in the conflict between journalistic integrity and business survival.

In the pages that follow, I talk about my own experiences as an administrator (and those of others). Every example illustrates the need for balance and perspective in surviving as a beleaguered administrator.

Who Killed the Coach?

At some point in my thirty-year career, primarily as a professor and university administrator, one of the departments I oversaw was Kinesiology and Physical Education (KPE). There was, at the time of my arrival, a tenured KPE assistant professor who was a football coach. When football was dropped from the athletics program, the coach lost his "place," but not, due to tenure, his place. The KPE department had him teach peripheral activity courses. Coach was a very nice and bright man who had unfortunately not remained fit, and had developed cardiovascular disease. His disease had developed to a stage that he had shortness of breath and needed a shopping cart/walker for physical support and to transport his belongings around campus. His goal was to hang on for the length of time needed to get a percentage raise so that he could afford to retire.

The department chair came to me with a dilemma. What do you do with a long-standing, tenured professor whose ability to serve the university is compromised not only by a more limited skill set and failing health, but also by a fitness condition that is the antithesis of that prescribed by the department's mission statement? The chair and I wanted to help. I had my fiscal person review how the coach had been paid; he indeed had been shortchanged by not getting certain raises along the way. We fixed it. With the coach's consent, we put him on a 12-month work schedule, requiring him to work during the summer. These two adjustments would allow the coach to retire at the end of the summer instead of at the end of three years. We were trying to be humane. We wanted to serve the university better. We tried to find the right balance. The coach died that summer.

I Was Told to Fire Someone Because She Was Too Old

In the summer of 1978, Maggie Kuhn, Founder of the Gray Panthers, co-taught a course, with Paul Nathansen of the National Senior Citizen Law Center in Washington, D.C., at the Research I university gerontological summer institute at which I was the director. The course was entitled *Advocacy in Aging*, and it was cross-listed for social work or law school credit. I hired Maggie in September and sent the paperwork through the university to have her appointed as a Visiting Professor of Law and Social Work. While this was occurring, the state legislature passed a law that no one over the age of 70 could teach at this state university. By the time the bureaucracy found my paperwork it was May, and I was summoned to the vice chancellor's office for legal affairs and was told that I needed to fire Ms. Kuhn and hire someone younger than 70 to teach the course. I told the lawyer that if he wanted to fire Maggie Kuhn and be on the cover of Time, Newsweek, or be ridiculed on the Tonight Show, he could, but that I was not going to do it for him. (Ah, the joy of being a faculty member and saying what was on my mind!)

About a month later, I was given a compromise. Once Professor Kuhn arrived, I was to ask her to sign another document that would make her a foundation employee, not a university employee. Thus she could teach there, but would have to give up her academic title and rank. The administration insisted on this policy since they were trying to avoid setting a precedent of hiring faculty over 70 and they did not want any exceptions.

Maggie Kuhn and Helen Gustafson, retired kindergarten teacher, getting ready to demonstrate, 1977

Soon after Maggie arrived, I explained to her the university's position. I told her she would make the same amount of money, but that she would need to relinquish her status because of her age. She calmly and politely refused to sign the new contract, and the university refused to honor the old one. However, since she was there, she taught the course with the focus being advocating for senior faculty at that university. She had a large group of students, both social work and law, including a member of the state legislature. We had demonstrations on campus with older adults carrying signs saying, "Senior Citizens Can Learn But Can't Earn." We made the Sunday edition of the newspaper with a featured issue on the class and issues concerning ageism and the elderly.

Maggie and I were called in to meet with the provost. He explained, in the nicest way possible, why she needed to sign the new paperwork and why he couldn't approve of her being paid as a faculty member. She, as a sweet Presbyterian who worked her whole career in the civil rights area of the church and was forced to retire because of age discrimination there, explained to the provost why she could never settle for ageist behavior a second time in her life.

The course ended. I packed up my belongings, having requested a leave prior to this event. I had endeavored to serve the university at the highest level. As a gerontologist, I was appalled at the idea of age discrimination. As an administrator I was compelled to deliver my superiors' dictates. (Now as an interim provost, I wonder what I would have done in the provost's place.) About four months later, the university finally paid Maggie as a professor.

I Was Afraid I Would Start Screaming at Everyone

I once worked for someone that I fondly called Attila the Hun. Working for this boss helped me to learn more administrative policy than I had ever learned before, but at a huge price. This administrator controlled his dominion through micromanagement, intimidation, and disregard for the personal lives of his inferiors.

Some random examples: He said that no one could plug in a floor heater on the campus without first calling him for permission. During one period of budget crisis, he insisted on signing every single purchase order for the entire university. He had no compunctions about bringing people in on the Friday after Thanksgiving to work on projects he felt needed to be finished. He read every management evaluation in the university and had them changed to his way of thinking before they were shared with the employees. He yelled, he screamed, and he insisted upon approving all hiring.

You could not look better than he looked. At one time I was invited to the White House to attend a ceremony for one of my faculty who was receiving the Medal of Freedom. I was cleared by the CIA and ready to go. I was denied travel because I would miss the dean's council.

Always calling at 5 p.m. on Fridays, he wanted to make sure you were at your desk. When a key administrator would leave, my boss would become the interim for about a year so that he could pare back the area. He would call people at night and on weekends, so people started to screen their calls by listening nearby to their answering machines or waiting to play back their voice mail.

Confounding it all was his tendency to yell the loudest immediately prior to giving raises. Just when I thought I might be thrown out on my ear, I'd get more money. After a few of these berating sessions, I felt I was not necessarily rewarded for doing a good job, though that may have been in the mix, but rather because he felt he had the absolute right to do whatever he wanted to do.

I started to become less patient with my coworkers and subordinates, and felt sick about it. That was when I knew I had to leave. "I'm afraid that if I stay I'll become a different person and I'll be yelling at everyone," I remember telling a friend. When I announced my resignation, my boss was angry, but subdued. He told me the job I was going to would lead nowhere. I was given a spectacular send-off, and the weight of the world lifted off my shoulders.

Responsibility without Trust: Beware of the Micromanager

Having suffered at the hands of more than one micromanager in my career, I've also been privy to similar experiences by colleagues such as the one that follows.

It was Christmas Eve when I called the director of research at the university where I was an administrator. I needed him to sign off on a proposal and assumed, as all right thinking people would, that as Director of Research, he had the authority to do so. When I was informed that he did not have the authority, I got desperate: the proposal had to be signed. If it wasn't delivered that afternoon, it would not be considered by the particular government agency making the award. Potential students would be turned away, and the entire academic program would be in jeopardy, thereby compromising the university.

By the way, the award was a done deal. The funds were for students from underserved communities. Moreover, by funding these students, the university was positioning itself to procure a much wanted off-campus location. Up to this point, it hadn't had the capacity to do so. Receiving the award afforded a win-win-win situation.

The research director was very sympathetic and got on the phone and called the director of the campus auxiliary, who did have signing authority. No answer. He called the chairman of the board of the auxiliary, who had signing authority. No answer. He called the dean of graduate studies and research to whom he reported; he wasn't there. He called the provost. No answer. It was Christmas Eve, not a creature was stirring - no one was even home.

When I, in my car and on the way downtown to the government offices where three people had gathered to countersign the proposal, called the research director again to request a signature, he had to say no. At that particular university, the person who ran the Office of Research, who had served the institution for almost 15 years, who had proven to be the most productive person that office ever had, who had more contact with and knew more about local and federal government agencies than did anyone else in the institution, did not have authority to sign.

I was beside myself. Almost at the appointed site, I again called the same list of people. The same list of the most important people, I should say.

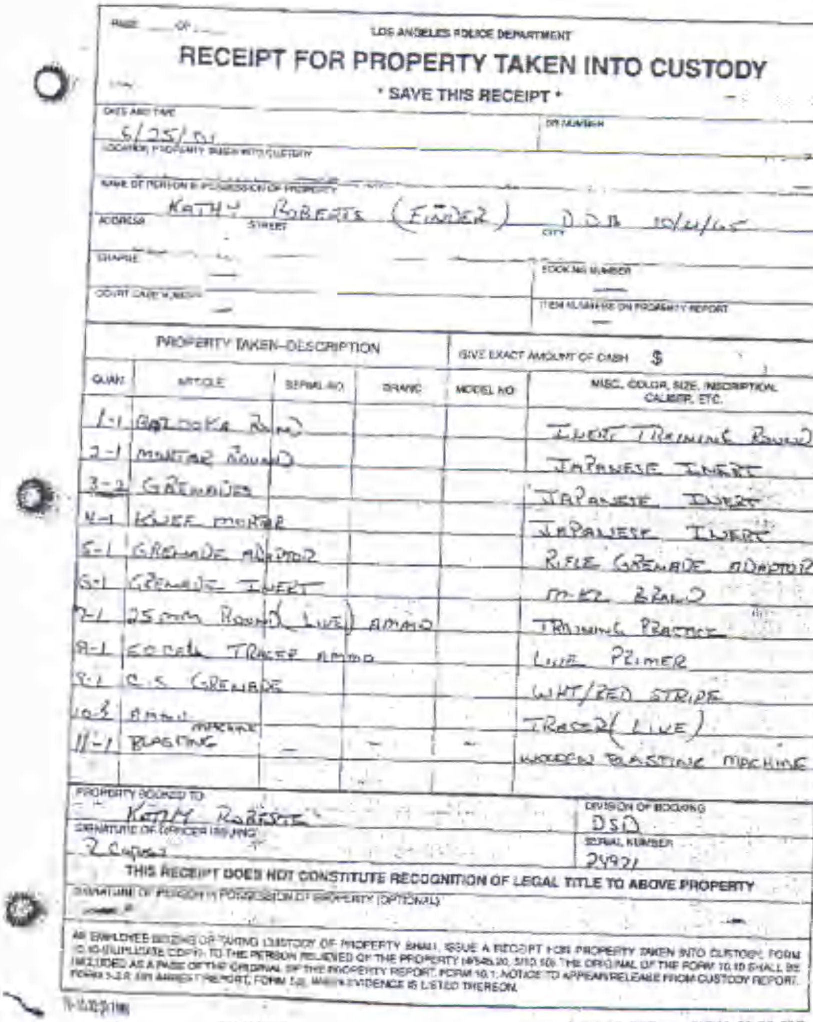
Note: Had I had access to cell phone numbers, maybe this incident would have been just an annoying blip. However, the type of strangling administrative policy that caused this Christmas Eve snafu continues to plague proven and capable managers who are given great responsibility without the commensurate trust.

My colleague served the institution faithfully and productively. He tried earnestly to help out in a crunch situation. He felt forced to sit by powerlessly as events unfolded that should quite clearly have been in his purview to efficiently and painlessly execute. Based upon his commitment to the students for whom these funds were intended, he did finally relent and sign the document. Not long after, the provost called both of us to his office. I was exonerated, but my colleague was given a reprimand. A year later he left to go elsewhere. The university received the award, and it continues 10 years later with $ 2 million per year supporting faculty, staff, and students.

When I Had to Call the Bomb Squad

Most of us would like to take for granted that, barring natural or terrorist disasters, we work in a safe and healthy environment. With the media constantly warning us of dirty air, moldy walls, mercury-contaminated fish, and the like, it's a wonder we don't all wear protective masks every day.

New on the job in an administrative position, I sadly learned that the professor/director of the criminology lab had passed away. I appointed an interim director and asked him to inventory the laboratory so that we could assess the holdings. He was shocked to find live ammunition and grenades, among other items. I asked a sheriff's



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2-1	MORTAR ROUND				JAPANESE INERT
3-2	GRENADES				JAPANESE INERT
4-1	KNEE MORTAR				JAPANESE INERT
5-1	GRENADE ADAPTOR				RIFLE GRENADE ADAPTOR
6-1	GRENADE INERT				MK2 BRAND
7-1	25 mm ROUND (LIVE) AMMO				TRAINING PRACTICE
8-1	50 cal. TRACER AMMO				LIVE PRIMER
9-1	C.S. GRENADE				WHT/RED STRIPE
10-3	AMMO				TRACER (LIVE)
11-1	BLASTING MACHINE	—	—	—	WOODEN BLASTING MACHINE

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DIVISION OF BOOKING: DSD

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AN EMPLOYEE SEIZING OR TAKING CUSTODY OF PROPERTY SHALL ISSUE A RECEIPT FOR PROPERTY TAKEN INTO CUSTODY, FORM 10.10 (DUPLICATE COPY) TO THE PERSON RELIEVED OF THE PROPERTY. THE ORIGINAL OF THE FORM 10.10 SHALL BE INCLUDED AS A PAGE OF THE ORIGINAL OF THE PROPERTY REPORT, FORM 10.1; NOTICE TO APPEAR/RELEASE FROM CUSTODY REPORT, ARREST REPORT, WHEN EVIDENCE IS LISTED THEREON.

department crime lab administrator with whom I worked on a regular basis to take a quick look at the items and to make a suggestion. She said, "Call the Bomb Squad."

Here is the receipt showing what they found.

The chances were very good that the munitions had been there for years and were unlikely to suddenly blow up. I knew that I was obligated to tell my boss that there was a pressing safety issue right away, which I did. I gave my boss the option of waiting to hear the news on Monday instead of immediately to avoid disrupting final exams. He chose to hear immediately; the building was evacuated, the bomb squad brought in, and the munitions were confiscated.

First and foremost, do your best to develop and implement procedures to make the workplace safe and healthy. Inventory all chemicals in labs. Make sure all gas cylinders and tall, heavy furniture and equipment are chained and/or bolted to walls. Develop relationships with the police and with your institution's building and safety department. You just never know what you'll inherit.

Not Enough Resources, Not Enough Staff, and Top-level Disconnect

Part of being beleaguered is feeling frightened of the consequences of speaking up to superiors. Another part is your or your boss's being too long removed from direct client service. Sometimes the system in which you work is in such disrepair it actually threatens lives; you just have to take a stand and be brave. Consider this version of a 25-year veteran nurse supervisor's at a major university teaching hospital email to her boss and the response.

From:	Johnson, Frank
Sent:	Wednesday, August 10, 2005 3:40 AM
To:	Fields, Jane
Subject:	Concerns

I arrived home from work at 7:15 p.m. I left the hospital knowing that each of the nurses on two different hospital units had an eight-patient assignment. At 8:45 PM, I received a call from Rose Clark, R.N. She informed me she was unable to care for eight patients and that she was going to quit as soon as a relief nurse arrived. She explained that the patient in 57-2, according to her understanding of the doctor, would die if she did not receive her pain meds. I did my best to calm Rose. I arrived back at work at 9:15 p.m. When I returned to the room to give the patient IV's and p.o. pills, the patient's mother responded that all the nurses have to do is administer meds and that she did everything else. The mother was crying and did not know why the nurse (Rose) did not want to take care of her daughter. I apologized and explained that the beginning of the shift was overwhelming and that was why I was there to help. I looked into her orders and learned that the M.D. probably told Rose that the patient would die if she did not receive her calcium, not her pain meds. I called the doctor, and we took care of the patient's physical needs.

Before I left, I sat down with Rose to discuss how we could have handled things better. Rose, a new nurse, simply did not have the experience to get the information she needed (calling the doctor back), and on top of that she was handling too many patients. She was crying because the mom and daughter thought she didn't want to help them. She tried to apologize, but they did not seem to accept her apology. Through all this I am aware that Rose is the mother of a handicapped teenager and that she is clearly identifying with the mother's fear and pain.

Jane, I am writing this to you because I am not sure if you are aware of the assignment levels, the nurses' perceptions, and staffing challenges. I feel like we protect you from this information.

Two years ago, I shared with you that I felt the management atmosphere was based on fear of being in trouble or doing the wrong thing. I thought things were better until I attended a debriefing meeting of the pilot project. I shared my concerns that I didn't feel the pilot project was working and that certain changes might be better. The response to me was "that is not an option." My immediate thought was, 'why have a debriefing, why have a pilot? Just make the change and I will live with it.'

Today in the unit director meeting you asked about staffing. I would have shared *my thoughts and concerns, but I have to be careful that I am not being perceived as negative, not supporting change. Others will get told about my behavior.*

The other day I came to work at 7 p.m., and I was four nurses short. I had to pull the admission team from another unit and have the next day LPN come in to work. I cared for seven patients, covered the LPN with seven patients and one admission, and one other nurse had eight patients. There was no unit secretary so the phone rang all night unanswered. I never put on a yellow gown once that night; I couldn't. I did do thorough handwashing and wore a mask. I never stopped, I never ate, I drank one soda, and I was always "nurse unavailable." I left at 9 a.m. remembering when I got home that I hadn't charted on one patient, and didn't label IV tubing. I thought about that night for days. I am out of practice. I am grateful and thankful that the nurses do not walk off the unit, and I will never again ask why IV tubing is not labeled as long as the patient-nurse ratio is 1:8.

I tried to give the staffing office a grid that showed all of the holes in medicine, but I was told it was "not needed." I am writing to you because you asked for input, and I am open to any ideas and suggestions.

From:	Fields, Jane
Sent:	Wednesday, August 10, 2005 8:35 AM
To:	Johnson, Frank
Subject:	Re: Concerns

Frank, I really appreciate your taking the time to share this with me. I have worked incredibly hard to build an environment where people will share the reality because, you are right, I am removed and I also believe I hear bits and pieces. I know everyone is expecting me to have the leadership to know when there just are not enough resources to take more patients; I am prepared to be the voice to our executive staff. I feel like our relationship has grown both out of mutual respect for the values we share and for the differences.

As far as the meeting, my issue is not to challenge what we are doing. The perception was, right or wrong, that the staff was belittled publicly. I am sure you can see that I do expect that we are able to challenge the status quo in an assertive, not aggressive way. In hindsight it would have been better for me to pick up the phone and call you to say, "Frank, I appreciate your input, but your delivery today was perceived as hostile." I am always willing to learn.

Living the situation as you do, do you see the solution as limits to patient care? If you were me, what would be the 1 or 2 things you would do in addition?

Thanks, Frank. I appreciate your candor and very much value your perspective.

The nursing supervisor straddled the line (some might say chasm) between field and office in an attempt to do the best possible for his patients and staff. He did not want to be perceived as a complainer, but on that day when work became a nightmare and he could barely hold onto his caregiving role, he clearly expressed both the facts and his feelings. His boss admitted her error and then announced two new programs: 1) to provide nurses with a "time-out" communication capability when resources cannot keep up with demand, and 2) an online interactive website that enables nurses to immediately tell administrators when issues arise that prevent them from delivering quality care.

Despite these changes, the nursing supervisor decided that his own needs would be best met by giving up his management position and returning to direct care as a nurse practitioner.

"According to the latest projections from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics published in the February 2004 *Monthly Labor Review*, more than one million new and replacement nurses will be needed by 2012. According to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, the number of first-time, U.S. educated nursing school graduates who sat for the NCLEX-RN®, the national licensure examination for registered nurses, decreased by 10% from 1995-2004. A total of 9,353 fewer students in this category of test takers sat for the exam in 2004 as compared with 1995." (American Association of Colleges of Nursing website, October 2005)

I Spent Two Years on a Locked Psychiatric Ward

Many years ago I completed a two-year post-doctoral fellowship at a School of Medicine Department of Psychiatry Research I university teaching hospital. The unit on which I worked was a locked ward for acute patients, but also operated under a community-based model that had a satellite center. Patients living on their own would come in for ongoing supportive therapy and medication regulation.

Not long into my fellowship, we learned that the attending's (physician in charge of the unit) husband was dying of cardiovascular disease. Struggling with the attending's despair and knowing the plight of her nine children, the head nurse, chief resident, and I banded together to help the attending cope with her tragedy. While we were emotionally overwhelmed by what was transpiring in the attending's family, we nonetheless rose to the occasion to form a well-oiled machine to keep the unit functioning at a high level. The chief resident wrote up the orders and wrote prescriptions. The head nurse ran the unit in terms of staffing, patient care, and operations. I did a lot of the supervision of the medical students and ran the community clinics.

We covered for the attending for about 6 – 9 months. She was supposed to be on the ward and running it, but as time went on and her husband's illness progressed, her absenteeism increased. In the meantime, our "team" fell into a comfortable routine in our desire to help the patients, train students, and support our colleague.

Beware of codependency. We thought we were helping her. We became stronger without knowing that she grew weaker. She went further and further into alcoholism – apparently she drank with her husband as he was dying. She died shortly after her husband.

A Streetcar Named Jim: Adapting and Living With Learning Disabilities

In elementary school, I would have benefited from the services of a good school social worker. From 1st through 8th grade, my school placed students in learning groups, labeled as streetcars (slow), busses (medium), and airplanes (high and fast). I was always a streetcar or a third group member. I didn't read well until fifth grade, and I haven't been able to pronounce certain English words or a foreign language because I have some kind of hearing/brain processing dysfunction. In an ophthalmologic study that I participated in when I was 40, it was discovered that I also had some inability with depth perception so that I couldn't fully process some visual information. Everyone thought I should be able to do something well athletically – I was a fast runner – but I couldn't hit a baseball. I once shared these concerns with the chair of my child and family studies department, an expert in this area, and he shared with me a book called *In The Mind's Eye*[2]. The book examines "the role of visual-spatial strengths and verbal weaknesses in the lives of nine gifted individuals…"[3] He said, "Even if you were tested today many, of your learning problems would not show up as recognizable disabilities since you have learned to adapt and deal with them."

By the time I was ready for college, my SAT scores put me at a disadvantage for college acceptance. When I was a junior in high school, my parents were told by my English teacher, "don't even think of college for this one." Unwilling to accept labels and with the tirelessness of an Energizer Bunny[4], I learned to adapt, get along with others, and seek out resources, help, and solutions that would enable me to succeed. Today this would be referred to as accommodation.

I will always be indebted to the Sisters of Charity of Greensburg, PA who taught me for 13 years and did not give up on working with a streetcar. A few years into my administrative career, I learned to adapt by hiring a Ph.D. in English who worked for me for fifteen years. She transcribed my dictated work into the multitude of documents needed to carry out my responsibilities, and we accomplished double the work with our combined skills.

He Who Controls the Wood Floor Space, Controls the World

It seems like I have served on every type of committee in my 30+ years in the Academy, but chairing the Wood Floor Space Committee was my favorite. At one institution in which I had the privilege to work, each manager was responsible for a building on campus. This manager was the only individual who could interface with maintenance, janitorial services, facilities operations, emergency evacuation, police, and so forth.

My office was located in the art department, even though I wasn't the dean of art, and I was responsible for the building's physical operation. With time I grew quite fond of the building and its inhabitants. I made sure that the faculty offices, art labs, and windows were clean, the sinks unclogged, gas leaks investigated and fixed, and graffiti removed. The building housed two museums, one traditional and one avant garde. The collections changed weekly and shows varied immensely from deformed Barbie presentations to spooky darkness with a message. I got to know the individual faculty, students, and press regarding the shows and budgetary responsibilities.

In addition to the art faculty and students, the building housed a special program for 13-16 year old college students and classes for a performing arts high school. The place was a zoo on any given day; great fun for an administrator who got to know and enjoy the people inhabiting the building without being responsible for their faculty or staff evaluations.

Because of this newfound experience working with artistic types, I was asked to chair a committee of users of wood floor space. I never knew that wood floor space was a scarce commodity at a university, or that it was actively fought over by the KPE department, athletic director, dance department, performing arts high school, and the 13-16 year old college students.

Imagine chairing a committee of creative, competitive, free-thinking, hormonally-fluctuating, and youthfully (in body and/or mind) exuberant members. Then try to imagine taking the conflicting interests, time needs, and colorful personalities into account as one attempts to broker a fair distribution of the precious space. Let's just say that my social work training and time spent at the psychiatric hospital helped me immensely.

I Was Once Classified as Mentally Ill by the Psychiatric Diagnostic Statistical Manual

In twenty-five years, through multiple interviews for administrative positions at both Research I and comprehensive institutions, I have not once been asked about my research. The positions I have sought and/or held are all academic ones that emphasize the importance of research, faculty development, and high quality student-generated writing that demonstrates clear understanding of their disciplines.

I'm a gerontologist who once served as a consultant to the United Nations in the area of aging. I am a tenured professor of social welfare who has authored or co-authored 37 publications and participated in more than 100 professional and scholarly presentations, trainings, and program development projects, and been awarded more than $35 million in grants and contracts. And, oh yes, much of my research is in the area of gays and aging.

While I was working on my dissertation at a prestigious private university, I was referred to as "the fag" by members of the doctoral faculty. When I applied to work at a Research I university school of social work, a former student of mine was on the personnel committee. He said I was rejected because my "research was too narrow."

As an openly gay administrator, I have sometimes felt that either I am accepted in spite of my sexuality or flat out rejected because of it. So when I served on a search committee and had the privilege of interviewing a homosexual applicant, I not only asked questions about research because it was appropriate and pertinent, but also because I hoped my approach would be adopted by others. The applicant was noticeably appreciative of my inquiries about scholarly work.

Thank you Judd Marmor,[5] et al, for declaring me normal.

Survival and Success Tips

When we are hired into an entry-level position, those of us with ambition for more control and power, look upward to the next rung on the ladder. If only we were in charge, we think, we could make things better. Then we become managers, our results are inevitably mixed, and we become discouraged. The key is to keep moving forward while putting work in its proper perspective as a part, albeit an important one, but not the only defining part of your life. With a resilient mindset, you can sometimes turn ugly situations into creative opportunities. You can not only survive, but also you can succeed both professionally and personally.

• Be cautious about showing confidence in a way that might be perceived as arrogance. Otherwise you may be done in by the interview process alone.
• When taking on a new job, try these two information gathering ideas: 1) interview all of your subordinates and find out their ideas about making the unit more effective and efficient; 2) interview all equals and find out their perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of your new unit. Their perceptions may be dramatically different than those told to you during the interview process.
• Only reorganize your unit after you know its strengths and weaknesses and after you've identified the key players. The more times you reorganize your unit, the more likely you will be seen as the problem rather than the solution.
• Accept that efficiently (not to be confused with heartlessly) managing money is good, not evil.
• Don't micromanage.
• Communicate clearly and regularly.
• Be collegial, inclusive, and collaborative.
• Help create a safe and healthy physical environment.
• Allow yourself to see others' points of views without becoming indecisive.
• Don't take yourself too seriously.
• Beware of codependency.
• Have an understanding spouse, significant other, close friend, or relative to lean on.
• Get a pet. Plant a garden. Smell some flowers.
• Attend university lectures, sports events, and cultural events. Don't use the excuse that you are too busy.

- Respect boundaries. You cannot or should not always be a friend to your coworkers/ students.
- Protect your subordinates from the wrongdoings of others.
- Talk with mentors and peers.
- Know the difference between thoughts and feelings and magical thinking.
- Get out – don't stay and work for a tyrant or a system that doesn't make credible efforts to right itself. If you, like the women in the movie *9-5*, fantasize about killing your boss, it's time to find a new and improved workplace.
- Check out your anger. If you are hard to live with at home or are taking on the behaviors of the organization, you need to make a change. Wait a day to send an angry email; an email lives forever.
- Treat people the way you want them to treat you.
- Accept that it is a rare administrator that is beloved by all, but it is within reach to be both admired and respected by many.
- Laugh, use humor about yourself, and create light-hearted moments at work.
- Be altruistic.

Altruism As Stress Reliever

Jimmy Carter, while President, was a classic beleaguered administrator. He micromanaged himself - with the help of a hostage crisis, staggering inflation, and the oil crisis- right out of a job. That, one could argue, turned out to be a great thing. He put Habitat for Humanity, an exceptional social services organization, on the map, and personally builds homes for the needy. He created the Carter Center to dig fresh water wells, help cure river blindness, and fight other diseases in the poorest parts of Africa[6]. He did not choose to be the obscure elder statesman playing golf day after day; he has become a role model for all former presidents who have the influence and access to resources to effect change for those in need.

Helping others is good for one's mental health and, by extension, good for one's physical health. According to Irvin Yalom in *The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy, Fourth Edition* (1995)[7], one of the primary categories of curative factors in group therapy is altruism.

Well, we can't all be President of the United States, but we can feel better about ourselves if we participate in direct giving throughout our careers. We can participate in committees and boards, work to change laws that discriminate against or punish the underrepresented, and give time, money, and creative thinking to needy causes and individuals.

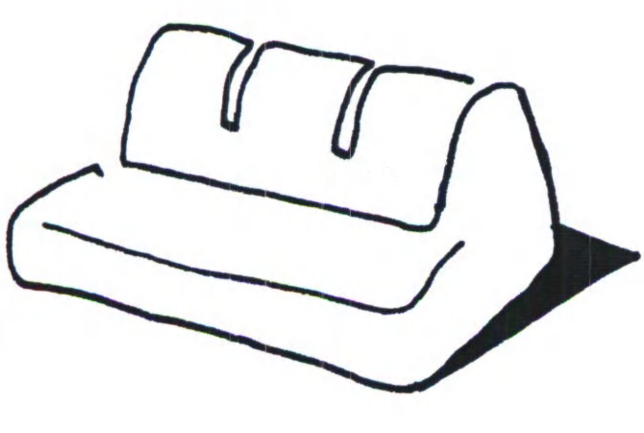
As George Vaillant, M.D., author of *Aging Well* and *Wisdom of the Ego*[8], asserted in his classic series of articles. Based on the Harvard Mental Health project, (in his schema for positive mental health) the upper level coping mechanisms of humor, sublimation, and altruism were essential, health-, life-quality, and longevity-, promoting antidotes to alcoholism and substance use, and part of the routine repertoire of the healthiest, most successful Harvard graduates over several decades.[9]

Understanding the Job Description

Whether or not we do a "good" job in the eyes of others, it nonetheless takes an awful lot of time and effort to use our training and people skills to advance our personal agendas along with those of our profession. As we go through our individual learning experiences, we don't know what we don't know until we get there. I am guilty of having complained about my superiors from time to time, only to have a memory light bulb go on when I, as an administrator, had to take actions that had provoked ire, disappointment, or frustration in others. Being in charge means walking on a tightrope and praying the net holds. You know you are going to fall off the rope from time to time, but you hope your overall performance cushions both you and those you guide.

Some of us accept that being an administrator includes being beleaguered. Others of us do not acknowledge being beleaguered; a condition that includes feelings of exasperation and helplessness. Being a good administrator in either case requires that we channel that "oh, woe is me" feeling into constructive energy and positive results. The choices we make come from our unique sense of balance, our individual perch on the high wire - a position that is tweaked and prodded into place by our values, experiences, personalities, and goals.

Perhaps the best we can do in trying to lead others is to not lose our healthy selves. Laugh, love, give, exercise, pet a dog, and eat your veggies. After all, running the show is only partly under your control.



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Reflections of a Dean: Opportunities and Challenges of Providing Higher Education in a Research Institution

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Many challenges face today's administrators in higher education. The foci of higher education have changed over the years. Monetary issues, politics, legal challenges and decisions, and human nature continue to affect the universities, both public and private, and thus the way administrators do their jobs. This article examines unique challenges the author faces in her role as Dean, as well as global issues that face higher education administrators on a daily basis.

Several years ago I was asked to contribute a piece to *New Directions for Higher Education* (Allen-Meares, 1997), detailing my experiences as a dean at two research institutions. Reading over the article today, very few aspects of the role have changed. If anything, the role of dean— part intellectual leader, part administrator, part researcher, part fundraiser, and part faculty, part mentee— has become more complicated, with emphasis added to utilizing certain management tools, and to the amount of time one allocates to each aspect of the role shifting according to demands. Not only have the pressures on public research institutions changed, monetary issues, technological progress, politics, legal decisions, and quite simply human nature have continued to evolve and affect higher education in profound ways.

Many of these changes have had an impact on the role of faculty in general, as well as how they perceive their roles. For example, faculty traditions such as academic freedom and the tenure process are being questioned. Many changes stem from the change in focus of higher education—not only amongst faculty, but also amongst students, the public, and administrators themselves. Practical skills, the translation of knowledge, multi-disciplinary understanding, and a global focus are all emerging trends that will require administrators to change with the time in order to meet the challenges presented.

The administrator's role within higher education has taken on an element of a creative time management: to whom and what do we give priority, what has got to give in order to concentrate on the largest issues, and who is being shortchanged if we make one decision over another?

Personal Experiences - Observing Changes Over Time

Some of the challenges I face as Dean are unique to my personal situations. My administrative experience in the position of Dean started with a 2-year period at the school of social work in a large, rural, Midwestern, research school (University A). Currently, I am the senior-most Dean at a similar university (University B), although this time we are located in a small urban community. As such, I have seen and experienced many more changes than my fellow deans. Several Presidents and Provosts have come and gone during my tenure at University B. Students' requirements for their professional and research training have changed, as has the way they learn—for instance, the availability and infrastructure of information technology (IT), which is new to many 20th century administrators who started their careers in a classroom with a blackboard and a piece of chalk. Research training, too, has changed with the times, requiring faculty and students alike to embrace multi-disciplinary perspectives and mixed methodologies.

One Illustration of Change from University B

University B has also changed in structure and response to the state, national, and global economy and global events. A very evident example of change is how the University's budget model has been altered since I assumed my current position, from a central University budget to one adapted from RCM, *responsibility center management,* (which itself has seen several modifications). This budget model reflects both a response to the decrease in state appropriations and the nature of the University's largely decentralized and highly autonomous schools and units. Deans and Directors are provided funding and guidance, but in the end are left to manage their school or unit in an entrepreneurial way. This presents the need to manage our schools and units in a manner much closer to private, decentralized universities or to utilize private sector skills and approaches.

Governing faculty, too, are important participants in the RCM model, as they work closely with administrators to communicate priorities and issues that impact their roles while keeping an eye on available resources. We as Deans, alongside members of the governing faculty, ultimately determine the fate — the success or failure — of our own school. Balancing intellectual leadership with cost containment and fund generating activities is both frustrating and stimulating.

While this budget model places Deans and Directors who are *go-getters* in a tremendous position to grow and support their schools' teaching, service, and research programs, it also places them in a situation that may put their schools in jeopardy if they are not successful or state appropriations are further reduced.

The state's contribution to the University's budget has been reduced by over $55M, leaving too few funds to support programs or units when there are financial shortfalls in a particular college or school. Recently, University B has begun a conversation among Deans regarding the taxation policy undergirding the budget model, as well as greater transparency regarding the redistribution of centrally controlled funds to units. Through it all I have been fortunate that the University's Central Administration has historically supported and shown interest in our School and faculty, but many programs and courses at the university and many schools of social work throughout the nation have not fared as well. Talk of consolidation, merger, budget shortfalls, and program elimination continue to circulate throughout higher education around the nation.

Functioning as an African-American Administrator

Another unique experience that contributes to my perspective as an administrator is being both a woman and an African-American. In a general context, African Americans still face barriers in the workplace. A recent article in *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* finds Caroline Turner, author of *Diversifying Faculty: A Guidebook for Search Committees* stating that "[E]fforts to diversify the faculty continue to be amongst the least successful elements of campus commitments to diversity..." (Kayes & Singley, 2005). According to a recent article in the *Christian Science Monitor* (Gardner, 2005), economist Sylvia Ann Hewlett and professor Cornel West completed research that indicated that among minorities "sterling credentials can be overshadowed by personal and cultural traits. Everything from cornrows, ethnic jewelry, animated hand gestures, and certain manicures can leave colleagues thinking, "You're different."

It seems as if universities and private companies alike are trying to diversify, but are finding their own barriers in their efforts to hire, retain, and promote African Americans (and other minorities). If a university is successful in doing so, as Hewlett points out, societal norms and stereotypes can get in the way, with the result that fewer people with those sterling credentials are moving into roles of leadership, regardless of their qualifications and ability.

I have always been a fervent advocate for building inclusive academic communities, which include all persons and all groups. In my personal experience, there are people within the University who are doing the same, and who are truly color blind and see me as Dean, Professor, and Paula, but there are also some who see my race as a liability. There are also those both inside and outside of the University who find my position to indicate the success or failure of affirmative action, regardless of my management experience, accomplishments, and my intellectual capacity.

This is an especially interesting experience to have at the University that defended the most recent affirmative action cases in front of the United States Supreme Court. I have had the opportunity, as both an African American and a social work researcher, to speak out on the results of *Grutter v. Bollinger, et.al.* (see Allen-Meares, 2003), and have also been **expected** to do so. I have had to walk a thin line in many matters that involve race, such as a recent instance of ethnic intimidation, to which the School of Social Work's administration was accused of being too slow to respond. Understandably, it is very much a part of any administrator's job to walk this fine line—that is, to remain thoughtful and constructive in one's actions. However, as an African-American administrator I have found that, due to my race, often there are additional pressures to be open, understanding, and supportive, regardless of the propriety of the request.

Functioning as a Female Administrator

Similar to the expectation of greater understanding when racial issues may be involved, my gender has also been brought into difficult situations within the school. I have been told that, after all, I am the Dean of a School of Social Work, whose very principles call for consideration of minority populations. I have also been told that as a consequence of my gender I am *expected* to take on the role of nurturer. Contrast this to male administrators who are *assumed* to be neutral. While I strive to create an open and welcoming environment within the School, and conflict may include racial or gender issues, this culture is rooted firmly in the ethos of social work, rather than in my personal identity.

As I mentioned in the New Directions piece, there are still hurdles for women to overcome when they have earned a position of leadership. An article in *The Economist* (July, 2005) states that women make up almost half of America's workforce, and yet account for less than 8% of its top managers. The fact is that there are still many more men in positions of leadership, both within and outside of the academic world (although I should note here that this is not the recent case in Social Work education. A quick statistical analysis of the 2005 *Deans and Directors of MSW Programs* yielded 82 male and 105 female administrators, compared to 66 male and 57 female administrators in 1998).

In the Economist article, Booz Allen Hamilton, a consulting firm that provides statistics on American executives, reported that women comprised 0.7% of departing executives in 1998, and 0.7% in 2004. "In between, the figure fluctuated. But the firm says that one thing is clear: the number is 'very low and not getting higher.'" The article offers several reasons why this may be true, including women's lack of access to informal networks, lack of strong mentorship or role-models, and a continuing skepticism about women's ability to lead.

My personal experience has proven this to be a rather accurate assessment of our situation. Thirty years after the feminist movement hit its stride, women must still deal with issues of how to balance a home life and a professional career as a professor or administrator, and the repercussions of the choices they have made. During my career I have been privy to conversations and condemnations regarding my choice to be a full-time academic and administrator, rather than at home with my family. On the other hand, I rarely hear about the fact that I typically stay connected to the office when visiting family members. I believe that in the larger picture neither situation truly prevents a talented, skilled, and educated woman from making choices that benefit both her family and her institution. Balance is the key.

Mentoring the Next Generation of Leaders

The role of mentorship in academia is a gray area in the life of women administrators, and especially those who are women of color. Although definitive sources may vary, Marilyn Loden, a business consultant, is given credit for coining the phrase *glass ceiling* as an effective way to describe barriers in the process of women rising through the ranks of leadership in a male-dominated society (Loden, 2003). In contrast, women of color often describe the barriers they face in making the same journey through the ranks as the concrete ceiling—the obstruction is not only seemingly impenetrable; women of color can't even see what the next level of leadership or opportunity would bring.

Although there is a movement afoot that recognizes the importance of mentoring and nurturing women and minorities in academia, the relative lack of these populations in leadership positions, especially those such as President or Provost, means that mentoring at the administrative level often still involves a greater number of male-to-female mentorships or majority-to-minority mentorships.

I have been fortunate in receiving advice and counsel from several male and several majority mentors in higher education who have served as Provost, Chancellor, and President, and who have shared with me their knowledge and insight into academia, administration, management, and life. The key to facilitating transfer of their insight to other female leaders or leaders of color, is my own ability to effectively lead and transfer the lessons I have learned to the next generation. For example, I am fortunate that I have been able to pass on lessons I have learned by offering guidance and support as a participant in the National Association of Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work mentoring program for newly appointed deans.

Common Experiences: The Nature of the University is Shifting Educational Relevance

It is not surprising to see that large societal trends also greatly affect the experiences of university and college administration. On a parallel scale to the factors of race and gender, the mission or vision of an institution itself affects one's ability to administer programs. There is a shifting paradigm in the academy regarding what matters within its walls.

Whereas years ago the focus of higher education was less practical and more theoretical, today's parents and students are demanding relevance, especially from great public research universities. On every level — local, state, national, and especially global — those who support the public research universities want to know how their investment of tax dollars pays off for the world outside of the ivory tower. It is no longer acceptable to state that our students are learning liberal arts for the sake of learning. According to Judy D. Olian, Dean of the Smeal College of Business at Penn State, in an article in the Chronicle of Higher Education (Mangan, 2003), "We need to show that the education our students have received is very relevant...They need to know that our graduates can meet their needs on Monday morning—not 12 months from now." The state wants an educated workforce, the nation wants MBAs with experience, and the world wants research that can cure disease, assist in eradicating poverty, or further our response to global tragedies.

Students of the Future Require a Different Experience

The university is able to, and does, provide every one of these practical requirements. But at what cost, and how, as an administrator does one balance them? In a Fall, 2005 article for the *Social Work Education Reporter* (Allen-Meares, 2005), I pointed out that the basic tripartite mission of the university – teaching, research, and service – is not likely to change. This is the foundation upon which we have built our system of higher education. However, there is tension between the need for the generation of information and the very real demands of the public and the *marketplace*- the opportunity that exits by creating product rather than knowledge. Products may include the tangibles, such as cancer-fighting drugs, transferable technology products, or those less concrete, such as specialized coursework for continuing education students, targeted coursework for professionals in need of brush-up, or a curriculum in response to Americans who are less and less likely to retire from the same company, or even in the same field in which they started their first job.

Scarcity of Funding Dollars Requires Additional Planning/Different Thinking

Adding more pressure to our response to this shift are the ever-changing funding and finance models. I mentioned before how as the senior-most Dean at University B I have witnessed changes in our specific budget model. More generally, all colleges and universities have felt the effect of the most recent national recession, the withdrawal or redirection of state appropriations, and the impact from major national tragedies which funnel monies to specific causes and away from education. But none has felt the impact more than the public university. While tax revenues are down, state needs are up, and health care costs are rising, educational focus has been placed on K-12 education, and administrators are caught in the middle, required to support both the mandatory responsibility to educate students in the best possible way, and faculty research that can inform and advance the world. In the meantime, dorms are in need of upgrading to facilitate new technology, buildings require maintenance and upkeep, and employee health care costs are soaring.

In response, many detractors call for the university to act like a business instead of a learning institution that promotes freedom of thought and unparalleled independence to explore ideas and concepts. Calls for rightsizing and cuts in unpopular programs have been heard around the nation, placing a large burden on administrators, and an even larger burden on students who have to go without the courses they need to fulfill their majors or the financial aid they need to complete their degrees.

The School has had to make many of those private-sector-type cuts in recent years, limiting building hours, library hours, and having fewer janitorial personnel and services in our building. We also share our physical space with another large program, limiting our ability to expand as our faculty and staff increase, and keep research programs and personnel in house (which has the unfortunate effect of having to spend additional monies to rent space). However, these types of cuts are not always negative. Many systems and procedures have been scrutinized and overhauled, consolidated, or done away with. Processes have been put in place to ensure greater accountability and tracking. Through it all, the faculty and staff remain committed to providing the urgent and core academic services our students require in order to achieve their goals, even if that means tightening the belt elsewhere.

The Changing Faculty

As noted previously, changes within the university processes and culture can have a great effect on faculty members. The debate about the future of tenure and promotion, increasingly tight discretionary funds, and a student body with different needs and requirements all combine to create situations for faculty that simply didn't exist for the previous generation of educators.

Academic freedom, as defined by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP, n.d.), allows professors to research, teach, and publish on topics which may prove controversial. The institution itself typically assumes the role of providing a safe haven for faculty to do so. Similar to the impetus behind the First Amendment, the goal of academic freedom is to encourage the exploration and free discussion of all subjects, regardless of their political, religious, or socially determined worth, and has itself been a hot topic itself, especially after the tragedies of September 11, 2001. For instance, professors who speak out against the American government or support Muslim militarism in any form have found themselves subject to angry and fearful administrators and taxpayers (see http://131.247.89.140/page.cfm?link=article&aid=113 for a press release from University of South Florida's president regarding the termination of Dr. Sami Al-Arian). Crucial questions regarding boundaries and rights are surfacing from recent incidents (see http://www.colorado.edu/EthnicStudies/press_releases/ward_churchill_013105.html for the first press release in the ongoing situation at University of Colorado, Boulder involving Ward Churchill).

An issue closely related to the current debates on academic freedom is the critical examination of the tenure process. Tenure provides faculty members an opportunity to increase their rank, as well as providing an often permanent university home in which to complete their work. Challenges to this process include: a) questioning the wisdom of creating a situation where faculty no longer have to worry about employment, and could therefore potentially let their work suffer or dwindle, b) the structure of how one censures faculty with tenure, and c) the equity of the tenure process for women and minority faculty members, to name just a few. The tenure climate is a particularly hot topic, as reflected in a recent edition of the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (November 4, 2005), which reported that results from a poll of University Presidents indicated that 53% believed that the current tenure system should be replaced by a contract system. It is interesting to note that the majority of those who favored scrapping tenure had never been classroom teachers, do not themselves have tenure, have been president for at least 10 years, and tend to be from private religious institutions (Fogg, 2005).

One of the most difficult struggles today's administrators face is the aforementioned *generation gap* among their faculty. At this point in time, teaching and scholarly publishing are no longer the only skills necessary. Success, merit, and recognition for faculty members require not only excellence in research and teaching, but also the source and amount of external funding, national/international recognition, and an increase in the number and quality of products. The fact that standards for tenure and promotion vary from one institution to the next (I'm sure we have all heard the question "But is (s)he tenurable at University B?), from one department to another, and are often only vaguely related to a candidate, adds to the puzzle for today's new generation of academics.

Additionally, the public expects that faculty will be able to translate research theory to practical application. Providing answers for questions regarding the *significance* of ones research or documenting the *difference* it has made is crucial. This directly relates back to the taxpayer's/supporter's demands that research, teaching, and service have real-world relevance. One notable call for relevance has come from the National Institutes for Health, which have published special articles on the translation of research into policy and practice in several areas of scholarly research.

Another serious challenge presents itself as administrators respond to the whole faculty, which is, obviously, made of up a wide array of personalities, desires, temperaments, and work habits. Very thoughtful consideration must be utilized when trying to reach synergy or consensus among these often very different groups. Just how to strike the balance between those who entered the academy decades ago under a different understanding of what constitutes merit, and those who are recent recruits who bring with them a different set of skills and understanding is an inherent challenge.

Often issues arise when faculty members, experienced and junior faculty alike, reach, or assume they have reached, a status that brings with it privileges beyond those that their peers receive. I have been asked for special compensation, elevated standing, and special review processes and considerations because a scholar perceives that he or she has earned it. Many times that may be accurate, however, in order to create the community and culture that everyone desires, I must consider what community norms have been agreed upon, as well as the greatest good for the greatest number of people with these requests. We are, after all, training the next generation of social workers to provide even-handed services to those in need, and to apply fair assessments and standards in dealing with all populations.

Schools of Social Work: Discipline Specific Challenges

It is especially difficult to react to these challenges within a school of social work. Our faculty, by the very nature of the discipline, tend to be community-oriented and focused on process. As an administrator, I understand and appreciate this mindset; it is, in part, what makes our faculty the best at what they do. As an administrator, I also appreciate the need to act in a thoughtful, task-oriented manner. Whereas research timing and results can be fluid, the leadership to whom I report work on guidelines and deadlines that are sometimes non-negotiable. The need to be focused and organized to get tasks completed in a timely manner is often met with resistance by those not in this position.

Creating a Caring Climate While Emphasizing Education

The fact that we are a school of social work and do not *technically* offer social work services adds another dimension to my experience. Unlike schools of law, public health, or business, some faculty and staff outside of the school have formed views that schools of social work function as clinics and not as academic units on the campus. Consequently, troubled students are occasionally referred to our school for services for personal problems or academic difficulties. I find that I must delicately turn away those who improperly send those in need of assistance our way, while ensuring that the University's resources are adequate to provide necessary services.

Related to an earlier discussion regarding race and gender, our own faculty and staff have indicated that the communal culture of social work and social work research should facilitate an open, cooperative, collaborative, and caring environment. Many have indicated that they would like to spend more school time getting to know one another on a personal level, or more time responding to one another's needs, or the opportunity to reach out or be healed by their peers. Furthermore, faculty members expect Deans to focus their energies internally by providing intellectual leadership, whereas fundraising requires Deans to focus externally. The tipping point between the two obligations is often found by trial and error. Facilitating a collaborative and friendly environment within the school and facilitating collaborative and friendly relationships outside of the school, are both equally important to a successful program.

While I welcome the desire for faculty and staff to connect with one another and with students, and while I want troubled students to receive the best possible services, there are often times when my attention and focus are on budget items, donor relations, serving on committees and boards both on and off campus, and mentoring students in order to keep our school vibrant and alive. These tasks are often on my mind when I hear that people require a more personal touch, my increased attention, or resources outside of what we can provide. And although Deans strive to provide the perfect balance that each member of the school requires, the old adage is true: it is simply humanly impossible to be everything to everyone.

In the effort to be accessible to all, I discovered that I truly missed the day-to-day contact with students. Thus, I have created opportunities and structures to reach out and to stay connected to the student body as a whole by facilitating Dean-Student forums, meeting with student leadership groups, mentoring individual students, participating in dissertation review and oversight, and providing the opportunity for students to join me in ongoing research and publication endeavors. These activities not only allow me to keep a finger on the pulse of the School and enjoy interacting with eager pupils, they give students avenues of access that can enhance their educational experience.

When Business Weighs Greater than the Pursuit of Knowledge

As administrators, what is most often lost in this delicate transferring of attention from one event to the next is our own ability to pursue what brought us to higher education. I believe it is important for administrators to maintain their intellectual pursuits, their quest for knowledge, and their appetite to keep up to date with their profession and the news of the day. It makes us better able to make informed decisions, better discuss issues in our fields in context to the world around us, and helps us maintain our presence in academia (and brings the potential for us to raise our profiles, and, subsequently, that of our schools).

I have discussed how the process of having to decide who gets the next 15 minutes of my time is, some days, a daunting task. What tends to get put aside as I respond to the needs of the School is my own research. Although I have tried to maintain a publishing agenda, I know that often my results would be available sooner, my articles much more plentiful, and my focus greater if only there were more than one of me.

Conclusion

So the question remains: At what point and in what time does one balance each need of this excellent group of people, researchers, and programs? This narrative outlines only some of the important questions and issues with which I deal with on a daily basis as a Dean. It is truly a developmental process. There are learning curves and stumbling blocks, mistakes and missteps, and moments of "Why?" that come with each trial, each crisis, or each hurtful implication. But there are those moments when a student stops me in the hallway to thank me for something that seemed insignificant at the time, or I receive a card with a special note indicating that I have greatly affected someone's life. There are the emails that are sent to celebrate a faculty member's research success, publication, or appointment. There are the mornings when a press release detailing the accomplishments of a student or faculty member is published and congratulations pour in. What becomes most clear is that each individual moment should be met with its own reaction, response, and consequent action.

When all is said and done, serving as a Dean in a large, public research institution means being many things to many people. On a macro level, I am accountable to the people of the State in which the University is located, who require that our School create unique learning opportunities for excellent faculty and students, that I budget my funding appropriately, with care and foresight, and educate the students who attend this university in the best and most responsible way I can. On a micro level, I am accountable to central administration, faculty, students and staff, whose needs are not always in sync. I am also responsible to both donors and students, and giving time to one may necessarily meaning taking time away from another.

Finally, I am accountable to myself. I have shared a few of the challenges I face by virtue of being an African-American, a woman, and a veteran dean. Each adds another layer to the roles I have played, or have been asked to play in the larger scope of dean. It is this last accountability that so often gets lost in the shuffle of a dean's balancing act. At the end of the day budgets can be balanced, faculty needs are discussed and decided, students are learning with leaders in the field, and the state has the opportunity to retain social workers trained to provide service to its citizens. But at the end of the day if I cannot say that I have tried my best, exceeded my own expectations, and acted on behalf of the greater good, it is then I will define myself as beleaguered. Until such time I am balancing those things that need to be balanced, fighting the good fight, and enjoying the overall experience as it happens.

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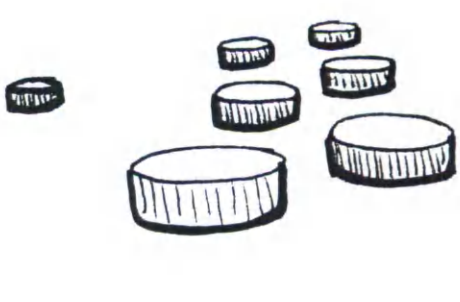

The Perils of Academic Administration: Gatekeeping, Academic Freedom, and Corporatization

Joanne J. Thompson, Ph.D., University of Nevada, Las Vegas, School of Social Work

The following narrative is an account of one social work educator's experiences in higher education administration. Three areas of concern are explored: gatekeeping, academic freedom, and the corporatization of academia. The author discusses issues unique to educational administration, given the challenges for growth and funding, and the organizational weaknesses imbedded in such institutions.

I have been in higher education the majority of my career, with occasional stints returning to the practice community: once to explore the role of state citizens' organizations and the extent to which social workers could be involved as staff; and second, to join the campaign staff in a colleague's efforts to become Governor. Both experiences were highly challenging and informative. I observed the rise and fall of the state citizen action movement (derailed by bankruptcies, campaign irregularities, and misuse of funds, to name a few). My guy won the governorship, and I had the pleasure to work in his administration. Both also greatly impacted me to continue as a social work educator and to keep my hands active in within the world of politics.

When I returned to academia, I was encouraged by a number of women colleagues to explore moving up in the ranks of higher education administration, notably into a position of dean or director. The growth in the number of programs had been profound and surely, there seemed to be opportunities for women to move into those roles. Admittedly, my knowledge of my good friends' experiences served initially to dissuade my interest in such a move: difficult jobs; contentious faculty; ongoing budget/resource issues; dwindling interest and applications for enrollment; increased competition with newer programs; accreditation issues, and on and on. My colleagues also noted problems with survival, with the average tenure in such roles to be between 3 and five years.

In time, I finally crossed the line from being in a comfortable senior faculty role to deciding I would test the waters as an administrator. Upon looking at geographic considerations and manageability of a program, and the fact that my adolescent daughter was open for a change, I narrowed my interests to exploring the New England region. I also wanted to move from a large state land-grant university where the emphasis was on athletics and research(in that order), to an institution where there would be more of a balance between teaching and scholarship. Given the appeal of fresh seafood, easy access to the ocean, skiing and the mountains, and coming to know all of my colleagues in a smaller setting, I was nonetheless confronted early on, by challenging but interrelated dilemmas which struck at the heart of my role and duties as an academic administrator: (1) gatekeeping for the profession; (2) issues of academic freedom; and (3) the corporatization of higher education.

Gatekeeping

Shortly after my arrival to my new position, I discovered the presence of two students who had prior convictions for serious felony offenses and had withheld such information during the course of their admissions. The prior offenses became known only after the students were reported in separate but similar events which required investigation. I was confronted by a number of questions. Had there been deception? Were there reasonable explanations/evidence that both had been "rehabilitated," and had served their time? Had faculty or staff known of their prior records and failed to disclose such information? Did such prior information serve to determine the "worthiness" of the students in terms of their potential as practitioners? What further confounded the situation was the fact that while the other offenses were committed before seeking entry to the school, both individuals were involved in similar incidents while currently enrolled.

As I began to gather information, I quickly learned that our admissions materials did not require disclosure of such information. Nowhere in the application packets were there questions related to prior criminal records, revocation of licenses, and the like. In fact, during an interview, one of the students stated that he chose our school because such disclosure was not required. Both of these situations required enormous time and resources in weighing the facts, seeking the advice of legal counsel, working with university administration determining that students were entitled to their due procedural and substantive due process, and hope that satisfactory outcomes would be achieved.

In both circumstances, I recommended dismissal from the program. My recommendations were subsequently upheld, with no further legal action. In my new role, those experiences proved invaluable in my gaining experience in dealing with those matters which go beyond grades in determining a student's fate.

After those first months, I discovered that such issues are a regular part of the job and required incredible thoroughness and attention to details and facts, immense documentation, advice and assistance of individuals in the legal arena, strict adherence to confidentiality despite whatever was being said "on the street," knowledge of university processes, state and federal laws, and a willingness to make tough decisions. Also, they require enormous time. One major source of frustration is always in trying to make decisions in the absence of documentation. If anything, electronic communication via email has probably saved many of us in trying to re-create documented interactions between various parties involved in adversarial circumstances.

With the above all said, I also suggest that we do not become overly hyper-vigilant regulating/monitoring student conduct, nor should we rule in absolutes. Context and circumstance are important—a prospective student being forthright and honest as to his or her history may well receive different consideration compared to one who intentionally sought to deceive. Time from the original event with no further legal entanglements may also serve as evidence that an individual may be considered as a viable candidate. Students are indeed learners and are not perfect. There are scores of opportunities to transform such missteps into teaching moments which will lead to student growth.

Academic Freedom

Once you think you have cleared one hurdle related to controversy, another comes along and poses even more challenges. The dismissals related to criminal convictions seem pretty straightforward, considering the more complex situations emanating from the events of 9/11; issues of freedom of expression, diversity of views, and growing political conservatism.

What commitment do we have to the profession's code of ethics when we see an ever-growing number of students who do not support concerns related to equality and diversity? For me, this is one of the most troubling issues confronting us in social work education—do we not have a commitment to filter out those who do not support the core underlying values of our profession? Schools of social work and universities are learning environments, and I do believe it is our role to help students reexamine their values, become critical thinkers, and be better informed. Especially in the wake of 9/11, the ever-growing political conservatism we experience has indeed tempered our social advocacy role.

I recently attended a conference on academic freedom that had been sponsored on campus in the wake of attention to a particular faculty member's comments related to gays and lesbians in an economics class. The comments resulted in student complaints, disciplinary action by the Provost, and subsequent overruling by the President. The purpose of the forum was to have open discussion as to how to have both academic freedom and inclusivity. The conference forced me to review the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) statement on academic freedom which stated that:

> Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties.
>
> Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not introduce into their teaching controversial matter that has no relation to their subject.
>
> College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution (1940).

Notwithstanding, faculty have been subject to judicial review regarding expressing their views not only in class but as citizens. One case I am reminded of occurred in the 1950s involving the court case of Paul Sweezy who was investigated by the New Hampshire Attorney General as to his alleged involvement in subversive communist activities (Sweezy v. New Hampshire, 354 US 234 (1957), his refusal to answer specific questions related to the content of his lectures, and whether or not he offered an opinion as to advocate for Marxism. Sweezy refused to answer the questions stating that they infringed upon his 1st Amendment rights. While held in state court to be in contempt, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the decision, citing that to:

> ...impose any strait jacket upon the intellectual leaders in our colleges and universities would imperil the future of our Nation. No field of education is so thoroughly comprehended by man that new discoveries cannot yet be made.

> Particularly is that true in the social sciences, where few, if any principles are accepted as absolutes. Scholarship cannot flourish in an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust. Teachers and students must always remain free to inquire, to study and evaluate, to gain new maturity and understanding; otherwise our civilization will stagnate and die.

Further, the court noted the Open Universities in South Africa policy on the four essential freedoms of a university –"to determine for itself on academic grounds who may teach, what may be taught, how it shall be taught, and who may be admitted to study." The fourth and final point, given the pressures to make adequate enrollments and the rising acceptance rates at many of our schools, poses an interesting dilemma when it comes to admitting students whose values conflict with those of the profession. How many of you have heard the statement, unfortunately more often than not, "I'm here to get my degree, but I don't believe any of that stuff"? I fear too often.

It is true that issues related to academic freedom rest not only with faculty, but students as well. Other than institutional policies regarding student conduct, students do not have access to guidelines such as those by AAUP. The challenges of classroom discourse, taking into consideration multiculturalism and the need to making the academic environment an open and accepting one are becoming increasingly difficult. As an administrator, I have had to deal with classroom situations which led to disruption, divisiveness, and the creation of oppressive, silenced environments. Increasingly, we are all required to staff our classes with adjuncts, many of whom are wonderfully talented people. However, the significant growth of a contingent faculty has hindered efforts at quality control. Many part-time instructors are in and out of the classroom, teach at night, and it may be weeks for an incident to surface—in the meantime, it has seethed and simmered, unbeknownst to me or other faculty. Potentially disruptive situations, often filled with hateful discourse require unique skills in order to de-escalate. Unfortunately, most of our faculty generally, and adjuncts specifically, are not provided the necessary teaching "tools" or skills. Close to half of all university/college faculty are now adjunct. While adding to the difficulties of balancing academic freedom with responsible conduct, this also leads to my third peril, that of the corporatization of academia.

Corporatization of Higher Education: The End of Academia as We Know It

I don't need to spend a lot of time talking about the role of corporate America. Nonetheless, speaking as an academic administrator, I fear this trend may well spell the doom of higher education as we know it. Universities have grown dependent upon the corporate sector for financial support and within university administrations there is now more of a mentality to manage for the bottom line. Growth is predicated upon where there is the greatest opportunity for funding rather than support for the liberal arts, professional education, or even educational enlightenment.

Within the social work field I make the following observations which have had profound impacts on how I try to manage a program: (1) the significant growth in part-time faculty is eroding the quality of education in many of our programs; (2) the presence of a large percentage of adjunct faculty in institutions impacts upon faculty governance, in terms of reducing the proportion of tenured and tenured track faculty who engage in faculty governance, and denying adjuncts from participating in the process; (3) such a trend will continue given the dearth of new faculty coming out of our doctoral programs; (4) rising expectations within universities regarding tenure is reducing the proportion of faculty becoming tenured; and (5) the use of part-time faculty is creating a separate class of cheap labor employees within academia—those with low pay, high enrollment classes, no benefits, and no voice.

If such trends continue, we are faced in the future of having our institutions largely staffed by part-time employees with little or no financial security, with many services outsourced (as evidenced by food services, book stores), and a shift in the balance of power from faculty to the administration. National AAUP data demonstrates the significant decline in membership. If I were starting my career with a new Ph.D., I am not certain that academia, as I now know it, would be my first choice.

Managing Amidst Marginality: Looking Back, Thinking Ahead

When I got into this field, it was during a time of turmoil and excitement. I jumped into my profession committed to overcoming everything, no matter what it was. Like so many others, I wanted to make a difference. Of course, back then, I didn't think we would ever have anything worse than then-President Nixon. It goes without saying that I no longer hold my breath.

My graduate education prepared me well for my career in academia, but only to a point. It surely did not prepare me for the unique organization and function of an academic institution. I have to note that working at a university is beyond anything anyone on the outside would imagine because of the politics, unwritten rules, turf, elitism, and the incredible need to spend enormous time and energy disagreeing over the most trivial issues of absolutely no consequence. An old friend once commented to me that we went into academia because we couldn't make it on the outside. There are days when I do think his remarks hold true. Would we be any better than the Bush Administration if we had been put, as a collective, in charge of FEMA? I think not. It is true that we work in stodgy, traditional institutions which are not terribly innovative or change-embracing. While the demand is on diversifying external funding, our research/administrative infrastructures are weak and understaffed. The extent to which we contribute to knowledge building is not timely and at best, iffy. A colleague and I conducted research on the trends and status of social work programs and submitted the manuscript to a major social work journal almost a year ago. It took us a year to accumulate the data of all schools accredited in 2003, and develop the manuscript. To date, we have not received any feedback. Should we receive a favorable review, I anticipate it will require editing, and by the time the article may be in print, it will probably be 2007, if we're lucky. Will it be considered current? Probably not.

I've often wondered why it is that no one can ever give an earnest non-tenured faculty member a truthful answer regarding the loaded question, "What do I need to do to get tenure?" In the name of academic freedom, we covertly force beginning faculty to imagine the worst thoughts of their fates as they are placed in the hands of those colleagues who have already ventured safely over to the other side – tenure. In the name of tenure and security, we tell them to put faculty governance and teaching aside: they just need to publish. To the wayside go those things once coveted – academic freedom, faculty governance, the pursuit of, and passing on of knowledge.

In closing, I have to say if there are notes to pass on to others who choose to enter the waters of academic administration, they are simple ones: don't take yourself too seriously; surround yourself with competence; find other avenues for growth and exploration (I now have my golf handicap down to 18); have a life outside of academia; you're never too old to take risks (I'm now directing a program in Las Vegas, the fastest growing city in the country and, we don't have admission problems); last, try to convince at least one other fool that this is the greatest kind of job in the world.

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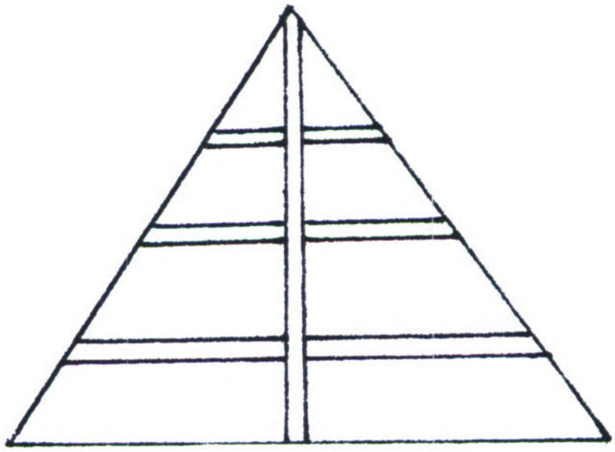


Beleaguered? Be Damned! Be Gone!

Lloyd L. Lyter, Ph.D., Marywood University, School of Social Work, Pennsylvania

At the insistence of colleagues, the author reluctantly assumed administrative responsibilities for his school of social work, giving up the teaching and research duties he truly enjoyed. In this narrative, the author shares some of his experiences (not all enjoyable) in that position; the mismatch of his own interests with the position's responsibilities, and his eventual resolution of the problem – read that 'resignation from the position'. Forget Vini! Vidi! Vici! More apropos is Beleaguered?Be Damned! Be Gone!

My professional career has spanned a quarter of a century. I began with four years of military service that included many social work functions. Since then, I have almost always maintained a dual focus on practice and teaching. I have provided chemical dependence and mental health services, and have many years of experience as a part-time faculty member in social work and non-social work academic programs.

Most of my work as a service provider was at the administrative level. Most of the teaching involved multiple academic programs. One semester I taught in three different programs, in two states, on the same day. I had semesters when, in addition to my administrative responsibilities, I taught as many as five classes – mornings, evenings, and weekends. After many years of this insanity, often feeling like the donut commercial guy on television who met himself at his own front door one day saying, "It's time to make the donuts!", I finally realized that what paid the bills was the administrative work, but what fed my soul was the teaching. With that revelation, it was time to make changes. I decided to follow my passion, not a paycheck. I significantly reversed the balance of my activities. I became a full-time academic, still providing services to chemical dependence and mental health programs on a part-time or consultation basis, but receiving an overall smaller paycheck. I couldn't have been happier.

Over the next few years I increased my scholarship, made presentations at conferences, whenever and wherever possible, and increased the volume of my publications. At the same time, I focused in on my teaching agenda, finding those few courses that both allowed for use of my knowledge and excited me in anticipation of classes. I was also able to become more involved in service to the school, the university, the community, and the profession. I had, in terms of my own interests, arrived!

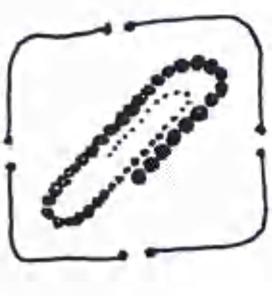
During that period, my university began planning reorganization, moving to a college system. With the university reorganization would also come the need for reorganization within the school. In the spring two years before these changes had to be made, some of my faculty and staff colleagues began to suggest to me that I was the likely choice to become the Director of the School, replacing the former Dean. I had no interest in assuming any administrative responsibilities again; remember, "I had arrived!", so to reinforce that point that fall I moved my office from the university campus to an off-site location 85 miles away where the School also offered its program. The following spring more of my faculty colleagues pressed the importance of me assuming the Director position. That fall I replied by moving my office to an even more remote off-site location, 109 miles away. The next spring even more of my colleagues pressured me to take the Director position. I acquiesced.

That fall I became the first ever Director, School of Social Work. I still had a faculty appointment with some teaching responsibilities, but was essentially an administrator, again! The appointment was for three years, with possible reappointment for two additional three-year terms.

The first year can best be described as the traditional "honeymoon" and one of adjustment to my new responsibilities. I knew my faculty, professional staff, and support staff colleagues; I knew the school; I knew the university; and I knew the university administration. I also knew that some of those relationships would go through natural and predictable changes, given my change in title and responsibilities; that I now had to be in my office on a full-day basis daily; that I had to have, or be able to get, answers for any and all questions that were raised, and to find resolution to all problems that would undoubtedly arise; and that I would be teaching, presenting, writing, and providing services to agencies less than before.

But I was a social worker, and social workers have a commitment to the value of service. This was my opportunity to provide service to the school. I also felt an ethical obligation to my colleagues and my employer. I had no plans to serve three, three-year terms, but I thought I would serve two, which would end with the date of our next CSWE reaffirmation visit. That seemed like a reasonable and manageable length of time to serve as Director. Then I'd end my administrative career, again! Remember, I took a significant salary cut several years ago to leave administration to teach.

One of the more interesting events in that first year came with the hiring of a local, retired social worker who had served as a part-time instructor for the School. He was appointed to a half-time position as Assistant to the Director and placed in the office next to mine. One day shortly after he started his new position, as I came into the School he said the secretarial staff had received a large shipment of office supplies, many of which they gave to him for his office. He said it felt like Christmas. Within five minutes he came to me to say that we didn't have to provide the reindeer to make it quite so much like Christmas. His office and mine have windows that open into a very large window well; we are one level below ground. Apparently a young deer had wandered out of the woods near campus, was startled by a car while crossing the street, ran through the parking lot behind our building, jumped down into the eight foot deep window well, and was looking in at him through his window.



The second year was pretty successful and essentially what I should have been able to predict it would be, given my many prior years of administrative, although admittedly non-academic, experience. I did miss the teaching, scholarship, and service commitments I had to curtail. I also found myself having to be increasingly flexible, creative, and able to deal with ambiguity as I could never be sure what, or who, would pop up on any given day, taking my attention away from the "to do" list I walked into my office with each morning. One saving grace is that I'm a very early riser. Given that, I'm generally in my office somewhere between 6:00 and 6:30 a.m. every day, two to two and a half hours before anyone else arrives. This is usually the time to get to yesterday's "to do" list and make today's, which I'll probably get to tomorrow; again, I feel like "It's time to make the donuts!" I began to refer to the daily uncertainty as "putting out brush fires." Hearing me say that, one of my colleagues gave me a small red and gold placard emblazoned with "Fire Extinguisher"; it was hung above my head, behind my desk.

Fortunately, I genuinely like my faculty, professional staff, and support staff colleagues, the other university personnel I deal with daily, and the university administration. Nonetheless, I was increasingly feeling beleaguered, besieged, and beset. What I don't like is the necessity to be increasingly flexible, creative, and able to deal with the daily ambiguity. After all those prior years of administrative experience, I finally came to realize that I don't like, or at least am not good at, handling details. I tend to see things from the top down; this job necessitated a bottom up perspective. I spent much too much time putting out brush fires; arranging schedules and calendars (which usually were rearranged by higher level administrators); and putting together budgets (although there was only one school, I eventually realized I was responsible for seven or eight budgets – see, even that detail escapes me!).

During the summer between my second and third years I was fortunate to combine two of my passions: presenting my scholarship and traveling. I attended and made a presentation at an international conference in Scotland. The week I was away gave me time to make my presentation, see some sights, relax a little, and reflect a lot. There was no doubt that I would go back to the university and announce to the faculty at the September faculty meeting that I was stepping down from my position to return to full-time teaching at the end of my third year as Director. I immediately felt relief – Beleaguered? Be Damned! Be Gone!

Apparently I was much more convincing in delivering my message of resignation than I had been some five and four years earlier when I said I did not want to be the Director. Some of my colleagues tried to convince me of the appropriateness of staying on as Director, usually only once each. It appears my commitment to stop serving was more palpable than my initial commitment to not serve.

My third and final year as Director has been enlightening. I frequently feel more beleaguered, besieged, and beset than in the prior two years but, drawing insights from my clinical skills, I have no doubt I'm making my own departure from my administrative responsibilities easier by practicing a number of psychological defense mechanisms (e.g., denial and minimizing) to an extreme. I've also been practicing the strengths perspective in my daily functioning, drawing upon my inherent strengths, perhaps in part my ability to practice those same defense mechanisms.

My predecessors were Deans, with administrative appointments. I was Director, with a faculty appointment. My predecessors had authority appropriate to their administrative responsibilities, reporting to the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). I report to the Dean, College of Health and Human Services, who reports to the VPAA. Decisions previously made by my predecessors now must be approved by the Dean. Their authority was supported by their administrative position. As a faculty colleague, I had no true administrative authority. Lacking that administrative authority forced me to succeed based upon my ability to earn my colleagues' trust and their good will. I know I always had that, as that was at least part of the reason they asked me to take this position in the first place. They are all good people, but imagine sustaining cooperation from close to thirty faculty, professional staff, and support staff colleagues, frequently all of a different mind. Does the phrase "herding of cats" have meaning for you?

This final year has been very eventful. I assumed my twelve-month notice of intent to step down would compel the administration to initiate a search quickly. I was wrong. The administration first hoped someone from the current faculty would step forward. No one did. Then there was debate about the structure of the position as it was to be advertised, which led to an increasing delay. I found myself wondering if this was a stall tactic to see if I might change my mind. If so, it didn't work. Eventually a search was begun, but ended unsuccessfully. Now what? I guess my adamant stand was believable, as my colleagues and the administration began to scramble to come up with an alternative arrangement for the upcoming academic year.

In the end, the VPAA came to me to discuss "an out of the box" alternative. Her suggestion was to ask one of my colleagues who had announced he would retire after the next academic year to become one of two Co-Directors for his terminal year, while we did another search based upon a revision to the position that would make it administrative again. That was a no-brainer as he certainly had all of the qualifications, knew the situation, and was respected by staff, faculty, and administrators. The other Co-Director was to be the university's Director of Graduate Admissions who, until one year previously, had served for many years as Director of Admissions and Advisement for the School of Social Work, serving two prior Deans, acting essentially as Associate Dean, without the title. She would move back into the office that she had vacated just a year before when she assumed her university-level position. The match of the proposed Co-Directors' individual skill sets and knowledge of the School, the University, and our students was perfect for the job, and they had a long successful history of working together as a team, as they had not only been colleagues in the School of Social Work over many years, but were husband and wife. I thought the idea had merit, so I supported it. It was a positive step and it didn't involve me extending.

The plan for the following year meant that I could use the summer to finish up all of my responsibilities and still take my four-week summer vacation. Although I did manage to stay away from campus for those four weeks, it was hardly a vacation. I spent several hours each day dealing with e-mail, checking phone messages, hiring and finalizing contracts for part-time faculty members for the fall, and creatively providing coverage for a last minute faculty resignation. Beleaguered? Yes, but Be Damned! I knew I would still soon Be Gone! Actually, not that I would Be Gone! but the administrative responsibilities would be.

I moved from my very large, comfortable Director's office into a much smaller, but psychologically much more comfortable, faculty office. Actually, I switched offices with my colleague who was replacing me. I was able to purge old files and outdated and otherwise unnecessary books from my bookshelves. This helped the transition into my new space. Almost on cue, I began to get calls from agencies for which I had previously provided consultation and trainings asking me if I was available. It was great to be able to say yes again. For the past three years I had to turn down most requests.

I began to feel less 'beleaguered' and more 'gone.' My transition back to full-time teaching status is welcomed. I welcome my change of responsibilities. The inevitable change, again, in relationships with my colleagues is also welcomed. Those colleagues held the obligatory dinner that usually means someone is leaving, but in my case only means leaving the position, not the School. I began the process of making the transition of files, as well as the office, to my replacement. I continued to feel much less 'beleaguered.' I left the Fire Extinguisher sign hanging behind my old desk. My replacement seemed to understand.

I've been winding down this summer. If I had agreed to another three-year term, tomorrow would be day one of year four. As it is, today (honest!) is my last official day as Director, and I'm really looking forward to tomorrow. Beleaguered? Be Damned! I'm Gone! Just maybe, Vini! Vidi! Vici!

P.S.: I'm pleased I was asked to serve, and glad that I did. I left things in good shape for my replacements.

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Program Administration: Dream Come True or Never Ending Nightmare

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It is a challenge to run any organization. It can also be satisfying and gratifying to get things done with few resources. The ample available literature cannot adequately prepare an individual for the issues encountered in administration. In this narrative, the author describes early-on challenges which remain uphill battles, and includes advice for future administrators in the social work field.

My secret dream was to become an administrator…to be the boss…to make a difference…I envisioned my name engraved on the door or wing of a building as a testimony of my contributions. After earning the Master's Degree in Social Work, I was employed for two years in a state agency where I worked with people across the spectrum of race, economic background, physical and mental challenges, and needs such as safety, housing, clothing, and food. The experience was great. I was twenty four years old and grew up quickly just to keep up with the on-the-job issues that confronted me.

Beginnings and Accomplishments

The experience confirmed the notion that I would make greater contributions to people and organizations by serving in a decision making capacity. Therefore, I investigated settings in the field of social work where I could make a difference. I found myself in the Human Resources Office of a major historically Black university. What luck! I was hired.

Starting at the bottom of the ladder with instructor rank was no piece of cake. It was a competitive environment. I worked in many areas of the university, serving on various committees, gained excellent student evaluations, and maintained long work hours (8 to 9 hours in the office and then more at home in preparation for the next day). I volunteered to sponsor a student organization, and supervised field trips and other activities. Each year I did more. Eventually, I gained the respect of colleagues and students. I chartered an honor society for social work students, developed new courses, sponsored workshops, acquired new field practicum sites and wrote a proposal that was approved for a master's degree program in social work for persons who wanted to get a degree near their home town. I played a major role in the accreditation and reaffirmation of the undergraduate and graduate social work programs.

The long trail of "things accomplished" resulted in my appointment as chief administrator of two programs; my secret dream come to fruition. I was on cloud nine with a basket full of things I wanted to do and vulnerable people I had to protect. I felt a need to protect first generation college students who, without guidance, would not stay focused on the goal of graduation; students whose parents put all their hopes and dreams in seeing their child graduate from college; and, lastly, students who only wanted and needed a little help and an opportunity to make it in life. This was easier said than done.

As Chief Administrator or Department Chair (Graduate and Undergraduate Programs) at a small university (fewer than 8,000 students) where the institutional structure is President, Vice Presidents, Dean, Chairpersons and Coordinators, I had two

Coordinators supporting me; one for the graduate program, and one for the undergraduate program. Each program had its own faculty and resources.

Committees: Good and Bad

One of the mechanisms used at universities to get things accomplished is committees. Committees can be good or bad. They are needed but over-used. They can be tremendous "time eaters." Some committees meet twice per year and others monthly, while others meet several days monthly. It is difficult to refuse committee work when all chairpersons are placed on committees at the university and academic unit level.

The advantage of visibility gained by serving on committees within the university and the division is a plus for my department and me. I became known as a hard worker who got things done. I gained a reputation of commitment and quality work tasks, and could be counted on for good attendance and promptness. Serving on committees with colleagues from other academic units within the larger University provided contact and mentorship with diverse, creative people. I felt not only compelled to work hard on each committee, but to have excellent professional presentation. I wanted to look and act professionally, therefore I "dressed up" for committee meetings.

I was careful to avoid negative talk about the person in charge who called the meeting. Although I was in a panic due to my rush, rush, hectic schedule, I pretended all was well. I sat in an attentive, focused position while my mind was not there, but running through a laundry list of things that I had to do that day, the next day, and even the next week. I realized that I was always overextended, but I felt compelled to serve. Saying "no" was to me unforgivable and would be a blemish on my reputation. I had developed as a committed individual who believed in the motto "service is sovereignty." Needless to say, my contributions, which were minimal on some committees, led to assignments on more committees. I became convinced that some committees needed "warm bodies" instead of valuable contributors.

Hours of committee work were devoted not only to meetings, but also to writing reports. For example, an Evaluation and Outcomes committee involved looking at each program objective and outcome, as well as making a decision as to which measurement tool would produce the outcome. Researching various types of tools from pre/post tests to focus groups required numerous hours. Another example is the Promotion and Tenure committee, which requires going back and forth to committee meetings to review applications and sign the signature page.

Periodic employee evaluations are required activities as with most organizations. The faculty is to be evaluated annually by the Department Chair. A comprehensive evaluation of each faculty member is forwarded to the Dean of the school and then to the Office of Academic Affairs. Each faculty is judged with respect to rank and duties, considering performance in teaching, research, and service to the unit, school, university, and community.

University policies stating explicitly the requirements of faculty for promotion and tenure are included in the University Faculty/Administrative Staff Handbook. The policies do not require that an application for tenure be submitted after a number of years as a faculty member. Therefore, the faculty member may choose to continue year after year and not apply for tenure. To do so would require evidence of productivity.

"I don't care about tenure" is the statement from some faculty members. Their desire is to teach their classes, satisfy their office hour requirement, go home, and be involved in little or no committee work. Some faculty remain in this unproductive state for many years without receiving a notice of termination of service. Few or no contributions are made to the academic unit. As a result, the academic unit has warm unproductive bodies that feel no pressure to produce. These faculty are complacent and satisfied in their current situation and have no desire to progress or to achieve tenure. This attitude hinders the growth of the academic unit and the development of students. Needless to say, it drains the administrator.

Accreditation

Another challenge faced as an administrator is the work, time, and stress required of accreditation reviews. Accreditation is a system for recognizing educational institutions and professional programs affiliated with those institutions as having a level of performance, integrity, and quality that entitles them to the confidence of the educational community and the public they serve (Handbook of Accreditation Standards and Procedures, 2003).

Social work programs are reviewed every eight years. A program review is authorized by the president of the university. A self study describing the program compliance with the evaluation policies and accreditation standards of the Council on Social Work Education is submitted by the program. It is usually written be several faculty members or by one faculty member with input from faculty. Preparation of the self study document and the site visit is exciting and productive, yet stressful. The program mission, goals, and objectives are reviewed for consistency with the Council on Social Work education policy and standards. Revisions are made as appropriate.

Faculty are often given assignments of sections of the self-study to write. Responses from faculty are rarely submitted in a timely manner. Editing of sections take hours. Coordinating the faculty, students, administrators and community constituencies for the sessions with the site visitors is a tedious task. The administrator for the program is responsible for the entire activity, including the final editing and mailing of the document. There is pressure to ensure there are no typographical errors, a response to all areas, and submission in a timely manner. Between reaffirmation reviews, things such as evaluation and assessment, reciprocal relations with the community, documenting faculty meetings and review and revision of course syllabi, are forgotten. The administrator has a constant problem of trying to keep all faculty motivated and involved in a systematic, continuous assessment of the program.

The Office Environment

Still another challenge is faculty who cannot seem to get work done due to regular visits by students and colleagues. All too often faculty offices become faculty/student lounges where meals and snacks are being eaten throughout the day. The microwave is humming and the refrigerator door is constantly opened and closed. Coffee and sodas are being offered and served. The round table is lively with loud conversation. Faculty members in the same unit, who are trying to work, close their doors in an attempt to shut out the noise. Students drop in throughout the day to eat and talk about their situations. Faculty seem happy to be available for those who need a sounding board. The difficulty of helping faculty to understand the merit of spending time interacting with students while emphasizing the need to engage in scholarly activities is monumental. It is difficult if and when a faculty member thoroughly enjoys the attention and the company. To have constant visitors is proof of admiration, popularity, and friendship at the expense of making valuable contributions to the academic unit. In most cases, there is no response from faculty when asked "How do you concentrate on writing a grant, writing a publishable paper, revising a syllabus, creating a course, creating experimental exercises or case studies in the midst of lively conversation?" There is no response, just a bewildered look.

The Right Faculty Member for the Job

Being an administrator carries with it the responsibility of selecting and hiring faculty. Selecting the right faculty is essential to achieving the program's goals and objectives. Qualified, enthusiastic, competent faculty tend to contribute the most to the program. I am always aware of the need to choose faculty carefully and not be fooled by the padded resume. The faculty selected should work well with students matriculating at a historically Black college, keep office hours for availability to students, perform service to the university and the community, and become involved in scholarly activities. In addition, I needed faculty with good, positive attitudes who worked well with other faculty. Working collaboratively with others is essential. It means that the faculty is willing to discuss, listen, debate, and accept different views that might result in consensus decision-making. The individual had to be competent in knowledge, values, and skills, have job experience and membership in professional organizations. He or she must be an effective communicator, capable of communicating verbally and in writing to students, colleagues, practitioners, and the media.

Despite an attempt to capture these qualities in a new faculty member, many times that ideal person is not available. The next candidate does not appear to have a third of the qualities of the number one candidate, but the position must be filled because one fewer faculty member will be evidence of non-compliance to the accrediting board. The pressure to fill the vacant position with the "second best" might jeopardize the program and become disastrous.

During interviews of new faculty, the commitment, dedication, love for students, passion for advising students, skill in grant-writing and other "love to" activities are a major part of the session. The new faculty comes on board with amazing plans and promises to make a difference in the program. After several months of no delivery, the faculty member announces that acclimation to the new job is difficult, followed by complaints about the university and the students. The faculty member lacks patience in working with students, and tends to blame students for their learning failures. Such instructors convey the clear message: "I'm here for the paycheck and not to give of myself." They achieved the presumed power of being a university professor when they were hired. This type of faculty talked a good game to get in, presented an excellent resume, and references, but at times, seems to be incompetent, pretentious, and lacking in substance.

Chain of Command

As with most large organizations and institutions during the middle 1990s and early 2000, there was an attempt to streamline management. The approach was to eliminate or reduce middle management. This action left a void in the chairperson's ability to effectively manage people. The titles "team leader" and "coordinator" were used to describe these new functions. Despite these titles, the persons in these positions had no authority that would aid them in relieving some of the responsibility of the department chair/dean. Essentially, the department chair/dean was responsible for everything, but had a middle person coordinating efforts with no authority to act. The situation created a greater burden for the chair/dean to not only manage program activities, but also to track the activities of a middle person who over stepped the bounds of responsibility or did not do enough to make a contribution. In addition, those persons who were supervised by the coordinator realized that this person had no power or authority and therefore tended to overlook them and go to the next higher level. This then produced a strained work environment for the chair, coordinator, and the faculty.

Conflict Resolution

Lastly, one of the most delicate challenges I face as an administrator was being appropriately assertive in resolving conflicts that arose between students and faculty members. The university's customer is the student; however, the faculty member is that person hired to help implement the program needs of the customer and therefore needs the support and backing of the administrator. One must be able to fact find, listen to all parties, and apply a solution that benefits the student and supports the faculty but shows no partiality to either. Solutions and attitude must be diplomatic, firm, appropriate, and justified. There is no way to make these situations work for all parties at all times. I consider myself successful if I am able to get 80-90% to work in favor of all parties. The remaining 10-20% will result in one or more of the parties suffering loss in some aspect. In those cases, I try to minimize the losses, but hold firm on my position in order to maintain consistency and order for the good of the department and the university.

A Proactive Approach to Surviving as an Administrator

Generally, I have not overcome all of the challenges that I have faced over the years. What I have tried to do is establish a daily performance by setting standards, maintaining effective communications with all aspects of the university faculty and staff, nurturing relationships, and motivating students, staff, and associates alike. Specifically, I have tried to address some of the key issues by taking a proactive approach to create some degree of institutional change.

Elements of Approach:

• Use the University Policy and Procedure manual to the maximum extent possible. Apply the rules across-the-board for all employees without exception.

• Bring attention to higher management that the degree of flexibility associated with employment outlined in the Faculty/Staff Handbook of Policy and Procedures encourages abuse of these policies and procedures.

• Maintain constant vigilance on actions and procedures of all staff members to ensure department goals and objectives are met.

• Take every opportunity to reiterate the reason and purpose of our jobs, in an attempt to keep activities, projects, and programs in their proper perspective.

• Be the example of what should be, on handling various situations, pursuits, purpose, university mission, program, and student support.

• Encourage each faculty and staff member to pursue advanced education and extracurricular activities.

• Employ a delicate balance between micromanagement and self-governed open management principles.

My advice to the starry-eyed, twenty-four-year-old social worker of today is: "Go for it!" The challenges are sometimes overwhelming, but so are the rewards.

Here are some things I learned along the way

- You cannot make people do what they do not want to do.

- People are your greatest challenge.

- Expect the unexpected.

- The most difficult part of administration is bridging the gap between providing the service (teaching) and understanding the interaction between the service provider (university/professor) and the recipient (student).

- You can always accomplish more than you think you can with few or no resources if your objective is "I will get it done!"

- Administration and management are not meant for everyone.

- All of the headaches and challenges briefly disappear when that one student or parent comes to you at graduation and says, "Thank you."

References

• Council on Social Work Education Commission on Accreditation. (2003) *Handbook of Accreditation Standards and Procedures* (5th ed.) Alexandria, VA; Council on Social Work Education.

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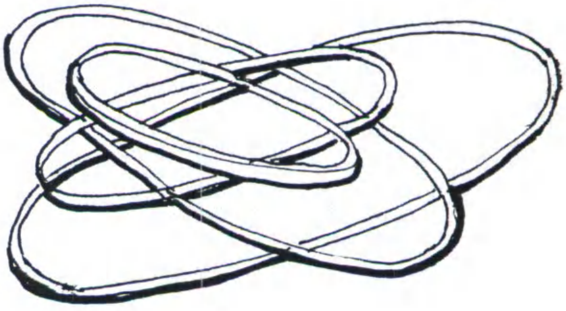


Five Things I Learned About How To Be A Happy Mental Health Administrator

**Janet Hoy, MSSW, Case Western Reserve University,
Mary McCaffery-Hull, Center for Families and Children
and Patrick Milloy, Center for Families and Children,
Cleveland, Ohio**

Three long-time administrators of a large, urban community mental health program are not only surviving, but thriving, despite the overwhelming challenges of their daily work. Through a blend of written narrative and conversation, these administrators describe five strategies they have used to enhance and enjoy their administrative work.

Administrative work in community mental health, much like administrative work in most human service settings, can pose many fist-clenching, stomach-rolling challenges on a daily basis. Three administrators in a Cleveland-based behavioral health program have developed simple, low-tech strategies for managing ongoing challenges while maintaining a genuine enjoyment of their work. Handling situations ranging from staff billing irregularities, to taking over an 800 client site in two weeks with no additional staff, Jim Penman, Mary McCaffery-Hull and Patrick Milloy have managed to look forward to going to work, at least on most days. In the world of beleaguered administrators, that is no small accomplishment!

Jim, Mary, and Patrick are respectively, the vice president, director and associate director of the behavioral health (BH) program for the Center for Families and Children (CFC). CFC is a private, non-profit human service agency with an annual operating budget of $18M, and an array of human service programs ranging from direct service programs such as outpatient behavioral health, to system reform and advocacy work. BH is the largest program at CFC, serving over 5,000 clients annually, with an annual budget of $8.5M, 122 staff and five program sites. These program sites range from inner ring suburbs of Cleveland, to some of Cleveland's most socio-economically stressed and crime-ridden areas.

What follows are elaborations on five of the most significant understandings these three administrators have developed through their work together, described in part through excerpts from a discussion between Patrick, Mary and myself, Janet. (Because Jim is a particularly beleaguered administrator, he unfortunately was unable to attend the meeting in which the conversation took place, but we talked about him so much it felt like he was there!) Something as simple as office location transformed their ability to communicate and collaborate, divvy up tasks in a strengths-based way, and continually learn from each other. Working together in close quarters necessitated shedding ego needs to the extent possible; this helped enable them to embrace the role of "professional problem solver," which is a role not known for eliciting positive feedback. Jim, Mary, and Patrick built upon these five simple, inter-related ideas to create a dynamic, ever-evolving leadership team that is both highly effective *and* fun.

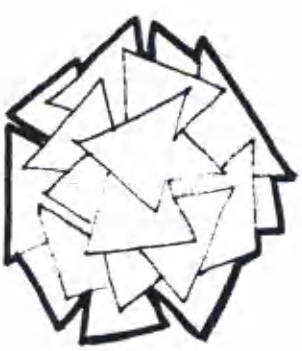
#1 – Location, Location, Location: Where You Sit is Important!

From spacious offices in a trendy downtown district, to a smallish shared office space at a program site in a working class Cleveland neighborhood, Jim, Mary, and Patrick experienced the significance of physical location in their functioning as a team. They began working together as a behavioral health leadership team in a large historic office building in an up-and-coming area of downtown Cleveland. Jim was the head administrator for BH, and promoted Mary and Patrick from supervisory to managerial roles. At this point in CFC's history, the administrative office (referred to as AO) was geographically separate from all of the other program sites. (Plans were unfolding to integrate administration with program staff; this change has since successfully occurred.) This office building was a strictly administrative building, housing administrators and support staff for behavioral health and the other programs of the Center for Families and Children (CFC). Within this AO, Jim, Mary and Patrick's offices initially were on the same floor, but not the same wing. This newly formed team of administrators quickly discovered that workloads and the quality and immediacy of communications seemed directly correlated with the distance between each other's offices.

Mary: *The three of us were on the same floor, but Jim and I were next to each other, and Patrick was way the hell down the hall.*

Patrick: *I was in the other corner of the building.*

Mary: *Yes, and so, Jim would yell - at this point Patrick and I are peers - and Jim, he would yell, "Hey Mary blah blah blah blah blah," and I would say, walk down to Patrick, call Patrick, I am buried here, what the hell is Patrick doing down the hall, you never go to him for things because you can yell, "Hey Mary"... I started thinking that we needed to be together in a room.*



Patrick: *I felt really detached, and I complained about it... I felt like I was too far away, I wanted to be part of what we were doing, but the location of our offices did not readily allow for it.*

They discovered that their team structure mimicked the physical structure of their office locations, despite their best efforts to function otherwise; even while using e-mail and phones to simulate proximity, they found there was no substitute for being able to turn one's head and simply speak out. After numerous discussions, and a failed attempt to move Patrick to a closer office (there was very limited office availability, and the closer office was given to another program administrator), they decided to take drastic measures: all three administrators packed their things and relocated to a single office located at a behavioral health site office on the west side of Cleveland. (While this move was mainly driven by a need to increase proximity between the team members, it was not unnoticed by direct service staff. Those direct service staff who were sharing offices due to a shortage of office space quickly developed a new respect for their leadership team, who wasn't asking the direct service staff to do anything they weren't willing to try themselves).

#2 – Eavesdropping Can Be a Good Thing

Patrick: *...talk about extremes...we went from each having our own large office, to being in one same small space together...and it became so incredibly easy to stay informed about each other's projects, and to get real time updates...it was practically impossible not to...*

Simply by being in the same room, the teammates couldn't help but half-listen to each other's phone calls and conversations much of the time, and found themselves being at least somewhat apprised of what each other was working on at any given moment. Consultations and trouble-shooting with each other occurred on the spot, in real time. The need to provide background explanations for specific situations was greatly reduced.

For example, Mary typically takes the lead in monitoring staff productivity (the hours billed by each mental health clinician). Mary had a series of phone calls with a supervisor, human resource staff, information technology staff, and fiscal staff about a clinician whose billings had abruptly and drastically increased. Prior to this increase, the clinician had not been achieving the hours of billable direct service expected for the position, and had been prompted to do so by supervisory staff. A client of this staff person then called in crisis, during a time when the staff was supposed to be on a home visit with this client. Through many phone conversations, Mary investigated, retrieving and comparing online schedules, sign-in and sign-out sheets, progress notes, and actual billings. Although she hoped to find an alternative explanation, Mary unfortunately discovered that this clinician was submitting fabricated billings. Simply by 'eavesdropping,' Jim and Patrick were able to stay generally abreast on developments in an emergent and complex managerial situation that necessitated immediate action. Mary was able to get immediate consultation as needed with Jim and Patrick in real time, simply by putting the staff she was talking with on hold and turning around in her chair. In between brief conversations and updates with Mary, Jim, and Patrick were able to proceed with other work at their desks, rather than having the down time that would occur if they were waiting around in Mary's office.

Personnel issues can be particularly draining, as administrators are limited in the amount of information they can disclose to the direct service clinicians about why their direct service peer was disciplined or fired. Rumors can run rampant, and administrating can be a lonely task indeed. In addition to speeding up the lines of communication and creating a milieu of collaboration, the simple act of sharing an office also allowed for in-the-moment moral support from people who truly understood the trials and tribulations of one's work.

Patrick: *...the hardest personnel time for me was about two years ago, and entailed dealing with a bunch of personnel issues with a bunch of people at the same time...*

Patrick, in his lead role with human resource issues, found himself having to deal with the staff of a behavioral health program site (that was recently taken over by CFC after the original agency closed down), at which documentation was not in compliance. Not surprisingly, this behavioral health site failed their Medicaid audit. The staff responses to the results of this audit were generally uninterested and unapologetic, and disciplinary action en masse – including suspensions and terminations - was reluctantly undertaken.

Patrick: *If I was in my own little office and bummed... well, that would have been especially tough, because I would have been alone; I might've been able to get up and be able to walk over to the other end of the building to find someone who understands... but maybe not. Having two co-workers right there who really got it and understood ... that was such a support for me... they'd heard it all as it went down, and they knew exactly where I was at...*

#3 – Being a Jack of All Trades Does Not Preclude Mastering Some

In addition to better enabling them to support each other, the shared office of Jim, Mary, and Patrick is an open-door destination for many (including me) who are in need of support and guidance. I currently work part-time as a clinician in CFC's behavioral health program. I recently triaged a potentially lethal situation with a client who was contemplating a homicide/suicide course of action, and I needed to consult. I trotted to Jim, Mary and Patrick's office seeking emergency consultation, without giving a thought as to which of them would be there, odds were that one of them would be, and that was all I needed.

It only struck me as odd later that I had absolutely no preference; that I had the utmost confidence in each of them when it came to such matters. From conversations with other staff over the years, I know I am not alone in this "JMP" mentality. In many areas of general program management, Jim, Mary and Patrick function and are often viewed as interchangeable by BH staff, as well as staff from other departments. However, in talking with Jim, Mary and Patrick about how they organize their work, it was abundantly clear that they have also eked out specializations in terms of the kinds of programmatic issues they manage on an ongoing basis. In terms of day-to-day program administration, they are able to seamlessly integrate their ever-evolving specialist and generalist functions.

The areas of specialization developed by Jim, Mary and Patrick are largely driven by each of their unique strengths and aptitudes, rather than the arbitrary delegating of tasks that initially occurred when they worked in separate offices. While office-sharing is not for everyone, yet another positive by-product of such management model for this team was the opportunity to learn each other's strengths and weaknesses through ongoing proximity, and to carve out mutually agreeable and distinct areas of responsibility for each team member accordingly.

With her logical, detail-oriented mind, Mary quickly and naturally assumed the role of 'data-hound' for the team:

Mary: *Numbers and reporting and the integration of data to make program suggestions is the way my mind works. I don't have to work hard to think that way, it just sort of happens. So, a lot of the number crunching and report generating and counting numbers, daily hours of productivity, those kinds of things have fallen naturally into my arena.*

Patrick's gentle spirit and natural mediating abilities enabled him to skillfully handle sticky labor issues, which has since evolved into a more big-picture human resource function for the behavioral health program:

Patrick: *...that kind of number crunching thinking doesn't come as easily for me. I developed toward handling personnel issues. I started initially with grievances and disciplines and employee problems as they came up...I then gradually started learning and doing more in the broader areas of recruitment and retention, working in close collaboration with CFC's human resource department. And I like that kind of stuff.*

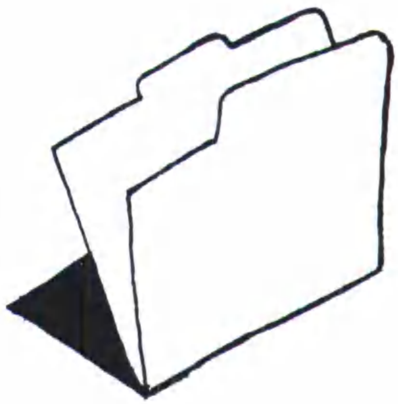
Some of us are obviously left-brained, and others more right-brained in our aptitudes and thinking. However, with Jim, this is not so. With Jim, there appears to be just one big brain, and a multitude of aptitudes so infinite it is anyone's guess. Because he has the capacity to converge, diverge, synthesize, strategize and create uncannily well, Mary and Patrick refer to Jim as "the mutant," and concur that Jim takes the lead in strategic, big-picture programmatic issues:

Mary: *Jim has the best business head of the three of us by far…he can think any given scenario through, he can go to the end result of any given potential action, in terms of what it will likely mean for us programmatically and financially, in five days and five months and in five years. That for me is like swimming in molasses.*

Patrick: *In effect he (Jim) is always playing chess, he is always thinking a move ahead, and he is really good at it. He is one of the brightest people I have ever known. He can keep so much in his mind at one time…watching his mind work amazes me…*

Mary: *We call him "the mutant" in that capacity. He really is amazing, truly amazing… Jim has always been, by longevity, by title, by everything, a rung above us. We have never been on the same rung of the ladder – Jim refuses to think hierarchical ladder terms - but it's true. So, ultimately when the shit comes down it would come down to him; even as we try to be interchangeable, the ultimate responsibility for everything has been Jim's, which is why it is JMP. So, I am happy to know that absolutely every time anybody would need to know where we were with progress notes, I am going to have the answer. I cannot expect myself also to know exactly where we are at any given moment in the hiring process for staff at each of our five sites, and Patrick would know that. Jim needs to have the answer to both of those questions every time he asks, along with answers to multitude of other questions…to give the one big head of Jim, all of that information, our work had to fall out so…. Everybody cannot know everything, though we try, and I still think that's the goal, and that's part of why we were literally in the same office space.*

#4 – Be a Teaching and Learning Community, Not a Dictator State



Whenever I consult with JMP, it is inevitably a learning experience for me. I do not await orders, but rather, find myself participating in JMPs' collaborative process in a way that often brings to mind bell hook's idea of a "teaching community" (1994, p. 129). hooks (1994, p. 130) explains such a community as "…individuals who actually occupy different locations within structures, sharing ideas with one another, mapping out terrains of commonality, connection and shared concern… to engage in dialogue is one of the simplest ways we can begin." JMPs' commitment to process and ongoing learning, both for themselves and those they supervise, seems to permeate every aspect of their daily operations work.

Patrick: *We have never operated in a way in which Jim says 'do this' and we had to follow. There was a time for me, I used to think, WWJD - what would Jim do - and I do not do that anymore…*

Mary: *It would have been functional for Jim to just tell us what to do because of both his capacities and his experiences, just who he is, and we could have been sort of minions. You know: "You go and do this and it should come out that way," and "You go do that and it should come out that way." He (Jim) could have had a team where he was the person telling his team mates or his underlings what to do, and we could have functioned because he would have been entirely capable, we were entirely capable of being told what to do and doing it. But Jim absolutely would not do that, would not, will not, does not, that is not who he is, that is not how he wants* *to do it. We have said all along that the way we have worked initially was way less efficient in time management than it could have been if he told us what to do. To talk about something for an hour and then go off and do our three parts of it is less efficient than one person saying: "You do this part, you do this part, I will do that part, and we will meet at the end." That takes five minutes, instead of the hour discussing how were going to do it. Jim's belief has been that in discussing something for an hour instead of a five minute "You go do this, you go do that," will eventually, over time - and this is exactly what has happened - create the sort of shared mind set. Not the same, but similar. All of those millions of hours of conversation have taken our differences - our differences are always around the table – and given us a common philosophy, a common view of our work.*

Patrick: *There are times where someone will send an e-mail to the three of us, to the JMP thing (an e-mail grouping used by many at CFC), asking a question about the program, such as: "Do you think it would be okay to allow for overtime in this situation?" and I might answer that and many, many times find that Mary answers it and/or Jim, in more or less or the same way. That is what Jim has wanted. People in other departments have commented on it – they'll say to me: "That is the same thing Jim or Mary said." That is what we strive for. Not to think alike, but to arrive at a common conclusion that works.*

Operating from a mutually agreed upon terrain of commonality and connection mapped through hours of dialogue (hooks, 1994) allows JMP to collaboratively generate a range of potential options, solutions and conclusions for any given management situation, rather than limiting Mary and Patrick to a WWJD (What Would Jim Do) dichotomous thinking mindset. Jim has championed this notion of a continuum of 'right' answers, rather than *the* right answer for a given situation, throughout the history of the team.

Mary: *"Generally westward" is an old saying that has been Jim's since I have known him to be in administration. He means we are moving things generally westward - whether you go through Chicago or whether you go through Indianapolis, you are still going generally westward from here (Ohio).*

Patrick: *It is an interesting concept…to move generally westward… like there is a whole continuum of the right decision, so to speak. Jim often says, "I don't know* the *right answer; I would do it this way, but the supervisor wanted it to be put that way. There is a whole continuum of the right thing to do."*

Mary: *Thinking like that has been a struggle for me, because I am the cartographer in life. I am precise and a planner. Embracing this has been a hugely expanding experience for me…*

The notion of 'generally westward' became JMP's mantra and saving grace during perhaps the greatest challenge of their career. Another large mental health center on the east side of Cleveland abruptly closed down, and 800 clients were left without services. CFC was again asked to step in and take over this site, but this time without any additional staff in place, and within a two week timeframe. Patrick led the effort, and spent much of his time triaging and organizing assessments and psychiatric evaluations for a flood of walk-in clients who were in desperate need of medications. Extensive text-book assessments and evaluations that took two hours to complete were a luxury that simply couldn't be afforded; given the sheer numbers of those in dire need of immediate services, the focus had to be on getting basic assessments and evaluations done as quickly as humanly possible.

Patrick: *In that kind of a situation – it was client chaos, medication chaos, you-name-it-chaos – I had to keep in mind the big picture of what we are trying to do there...and I thought, "Okay, we cannot build a mansion with marble staircases and everything, so lets get this rickety piece of wood and build. Let's take this and build a little wooden staircase. It's okay, what we are trying to do is get to a functional place, just baseline functional, where we can see clients, give them medication, get them involved in our system, do assessments and do not worry if it does not look good, because it cannot." That was okay with me, because it had to be...*

Mary: *...it was so important, the ability to tolerate just being there (in the chaotic situation), and the ability to define one's self as worthy or competent, even as the chaos persisted...what I was thinking was, "Well this is chaos, but maybe if we can get a little loosely organized chaos, we are doing a good job here."*

#5 – Leave Your Ego at Home

Thinking in continuums rather than dichotomies can be particularly tedious for those who are ego-driven and feel a need to be right. Egos can also take up a lot of space in a shared office situation. While JMP experienced a multitude of benefits through the simple act of trying out an office share, Mary and Patrick stress that this type of set-up is not for everyone. Those who are highly competitive rather than collaborative could find themselves in dire straits in such an office set-up, or in the day-to-day tasks of administration.

Mary: *I think we all, the three of us, have the ego strength to allow the boundaries to be completely blurred and have trust in each other and in ourselves, so that I am okay if you (looks at Patrick) think I am full of shit, I might be full of shit, and I trust your perspective. Working this intimately as a team is not for everybody, or for the weak of ego strength, or for the blustering kind of ego.*

Patrick: *You know what, that is a really important point because that is another way that we have been able to do this and be an interchangeable team. Nobody here has the bigger ego, to where any of us are striving to be in charge, or to be the best...that does not work in this kind of team. Our personalities work well in that respect; I think we are all naturally a little more self-effacing rather than self-promoting.*

In considering the role of the ego in administrative work outside of the office, Patrick and Mary emphasize that administration is not a job where one is always going to be liked

Patrick: *It's important to have your supports in place, and not to take yourself too seriously, know that people are acting out their intrapersonal issues at work and you are an authority figure/parent, and sometimes there is nothing you can do when people tap into their own issues sometimes...nothing you can do except try to be respectful and fair...and you better not need to be liked...*

Mary: *I echo what Patrick said...And administration, to me, the real title, is professional problem solving, and I do not* *think I knew this in the beginning. I do not think I knew what administration was.*

Patrick: *No, I did not either.*

Mary:... *with this job, what I have learned is the rewards are intrinsic for me and the (tangible) rewards of the program do not get to me. That is not what is on my desk. What is on my desk are the problems - that is our job - and so if a person is hoping for a fair amount of feedback...*

Patrick: ...*'feel-good' feedback...*

Mary: ...*success-related feedback, you can forget about it. What you need to have is desire and energy for solving one problem after another, after another, after another, after another, because that is what administrators do. People do not call us with the good stuff, they call us when the shit hits the fan - with this person, with this client, with a complaint, the list is endless - but that is our job and that is the job of administration...that is what we are here for...There is this saying I have seen: "It is hard to remember you were sent in to clean up the swamp when you are up to your ass in alligators." It takes a certain kind of person to go in to clean up the swamp, knowing full well it is not going to get cleaned out today, next week, or for quite a while, because the alligators are snapping at one's ass, and to be able to say, "I am going to stay here in it...I am going to clean up the swamp, because that is what I went in to do...."*

Conclusion

Jim has recently moved out of the shared office due to structural changes at CFC pertaining to his role as vice president of BH. He is now somewhat removed from the daily operations of BH, and functions predominantly in a strategic planning capacity. Mary and Patrick continue to share an office, and now handle the bulk of operations issues. However, the "terrain of commonality and connection" (hooks, 1994) created through years of dialogue between Jim, Mary and Patrick persists, and continues to sustain them as they work and laugh together.

Although the simple act of sharing an office (#1) was the first step in transforming this team of administrators into a "teaching community" (hooks, 1994), the ideas set forth in this paper emphasize flexibility and adaptability above all else. The purpose of this article was not to suggest that all administrative teams should share an office together. Rather, the purpose was to encourage those who are a part of an administrative team to consider how such things - office logistics (#1), communication styles (#2), task delegation (#3), learning cultures (#4), and ego needs (#5) – may impact the quality of their work life. We share these ideas with the sincere hope that they may be useful or meaningful to those who are seeking to move 'generally westward' in the direction of enjoying their administrative jobs a wee bit more.

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Frustrations Of A Beleagured Principal

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The role of an elementary school principal has changed drastically over the past thirty years. This paper is one principal's reflections on how the responsibilities and expectations both from internal and external constituencies cause frustration for the building administrator.

Role of the Principal

In my 13 years as a public school principal, I have seen the role of the school principal evolve and drastically change. In 2001, the passage of federal legislation "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) highlighted the accountability expectations for all public school educators. Nowhere has that expectation been felt more acutely than at the level of the principalship.

The role of the principal has always been a balancing act between instructional leadership and managerial responsibilities. Elizabeth Shellard, in *Defining the Principalship*, (Principal, March/April 2003) concluded that "...while the principal's role as instructional leader has expanded, his/her traditional management duties have not lessened or disappeared." NCLB has further increased the list of a principal's instructional roles to include data analyst, parent recruiter, staff developer, attendance officer, and tutoring coordinator. The intent of the federal legislation was to increase reading and math proficiency so no child, regardless of ethnicity, special needs, native language, and economic circumstances, would be denied the access to school success as the federal government defines it in terms of standardized tests. The intent is noble; however, the reality of raising test scores is very difficult, especially in an urban setting where I am an elementary principal.

School Improvement Conundrum

The past three years have been especially intense in my school, because we have not reached the state goals and have been in the Pennsylvania School Improvement Process. This process requires that staff, parents and consultants from the state write a plan to improve reading and math instruction, as well as document progress of the plan goals throughout the year. This initiative has forced the school into a mode of "hyper academic" vigilance. Because of the need to focus on instruction to raise test scores, we no longer offer students opportunities to participate in choral or band programs, grade level plays, informative assemblies, or community educational programs. If any of these events do occur, they are pushed to the end of the school year.

The result is that the morale of a faculty under siege to produce better test scores is low. As the instructional leader, I *am* caught between the mandates of the school board and the superintendent to improve scores, and the frustrations of staff who feel they are working their hardest to teach the curriculum outlined by the state. Sixty percent of our students are economically disadvantaged. There are four homeless shelters in our district and three low income projects. Eighteen percent of the students across the district are in special education. Of the 70 special needs students in my grade levels, 40% are mentally retarded.

In addition, the behavior of some of the students conflicts with the morals and values of my middle class staff. There is a definite schism between the behaviors accepted and even needed to survive on the streets and what teachers expect in the school. This "values conflict" is reflected in the number of discipline referrals made throughout the year. Faculty members are extremely sensitive to disrespectful students who raise their voices and often "talk back "to a teacher. This is a common discussion in faculty meetings. Teachers are not willing to spend time teaching appropriate behaviors and problem solving student conflicts. Staff are quick to point out that their responsibility is to teach the curriculum. They feel they do not have time to teach social skills.

Numerous programs are operating in the school to build a more respectful environment. I co-wrote a Comprehensive School Reform Grant which we received from the federal government. This grant specifically deals with changing school culture so all students feel they are welcome in the school. Although this is a substantial opportunity to create changes, it also means additional paperwork and supervision of a resource facilitator who provides staff development and implements classroom activities that foster self respect.

The parents of "disrespectful "students are often verbally aggressive. The behavior they exhibit is imitated by their children and, consequently, the challenge is to teach our children that they must behave one way on the street but another way in the school. We are always attempting to build relationships with parents. To get them to attend Instructional Support meetings or IEP (Individual Educational Plan) meetings is painstaking with only about 50 % of the parents attending. We have planned several parent/student "Fun Nights." By offering parents and children prizes, we do manage to have more parents attend these events. John Dewey would cringe to think that a $25 gift card to Wal-Mart is the motivator for a parent to attend a school meeting!

However, the responsibility to plan and implement these parent events also falls on the shoulders of the principal. The Parent Faculty Organization in my school is two parents who do the entire fund raising events for the school. Thirty years ago when I started teaching in public education, every parent in my classroom belonged to the Parents Organization. Parents who do work are stressed with job and home responsibilities. Parents who do not work, but were not successful in school, are reluctant to return to school to deal with their children's school problems.

In the fall of this year, our teachers went on strike. They have not resolved their contract and have been advised by their professional organization to not participate in any after school activities. The teachers who co-coordinated the after school tutoring last year will not work with students this year. We are contracting with a nationally franchised tutoring company to work with the "at risk" students after school. The first two days of the program, three first graders were dropped off at the wrong bus stops because the tutoring service did not talk with parents about the after school arrangements. The time and energy it takes to prepare for these after school activities again reduces the amount of time relegated to instructional leadership.

As the principal, I am constantly challenged by time constraints. The school day has a defined beginning and end. The school is a fluid, "living organism," which changes daily. School routines and procedures are established; knowing that on any given day emergencies occur which stretch the procedures and challenge the bureaucracy.

Teachers "call off" sick and there are not enough substitute teachers. Therefore, teachers unqualified to teach certain subjects cover the class. The limited numbers of maintenance men are called to another building for a boiler emergency, while the commode is clogged in *my* school bathroom and students have to walk to another hall to use a restroom. I schedule observations of staff only to find an angry mother arguing with the secretary that she needs to see me now about an unsafe bus problem. As much as I plan and schedule my day, unforeseen events— sick children and an absent nurse; buses that arrive late; parents without custody papers; school board members who call to report a parent concern— all take precedence over what I had planned. Each hour of the day I am constantly doing triage. What needs to be done immediately? What can I get finished before the children leave? Can I reach a parent without phone numbers before the end of the day to report a fight and a school suspension? While I manage the building so school can efficiently continue, the focus on instructional leadership to increase achievement is rarely paramount.

Schools do not operate in a vacuum. The relationship between teachers and parents is indicative of how the parent respects and values that teacher and how much that parent is willing to be an educational partner. As the principal, I am often caught between the parent, who is angry and upset with a faculty member, and the faculty member, who feels he or she has done more than what is expected to help a child. Without being in every classroom, every day, all day, it is hard to know what is or is not true from a teacher's or parent's perspective. Building relationships with both parents and staff takes time. Now that I have been a principal in three schools, I know that it takes at least three years to build a relationship with school personnel and with parents.

School personnel are represented by professional organizations. One of the most frustrating tasks of the principal is knowing and abiding by professional contracts. The contracts do not always mesh with the reality of the need in the school at any given time. The custodian does not repair the fire alarm; that is the job of maintenance. The instructional aide cannot be a substitute secretary even though the office has no one to answer the phones. I find myself in a "black market" bartering situation" with staff who will do me favors with the expectation that I "owe" them in the future! Knowing and abiding by the contract saves me time in the long run, even though the demands of employee contracts make no sense in a world of limited personnel and finite resources.

Understanding School Cultures

And then of course there are the children! We all entered the profession to help kids! Why then do so many teachers complain about students? Why is every faculty room a confessional for the faults of the students in every teacher's classroom? The four schools that I have worked in have all had different cultures and populations of students. I have learned something from all of my students and assignments!

I accepted my first assignment to "get a foot in the door" of administration. Two weeks before school was to start, the board hired me to be a principal in two buildings located ten minutes apart... This was a job that only an optimistic female workaholic would have thought a challenge! One school I called Beirut; the other I called Camelot.

Needless to say I spent very little time in Camelot, a school in an upper middle class, white community with a stable neighborhood where people had lived for three generations. The teachers felt they were superior to their colleagues because they had high student test scores, no discipline problems and parents who loved them.

Beirut was a small school on the fringe of the district. Parents moved in and out of Section 8 (low-income) housing. Since there were already "bad kids" at the school, the district decided to move all of the elementary emotional support classes there. Recess involved two roving gangs of students out to get each other every day. To solve the problem, I had the two opposing classes become model "clubs" and arranged for a few naïve volunteer dads to supervise the building of model cars and boats. This kept all the problem students inside the school building. The students never saw the playground nor the light of day from the third week of school until the end of the school year.

This arrangement cost me a fortune but saved an afternoon of discipline each day. Unfortunately, instructional leadership was an after thought to safely getting through the school day without an emotional blowup.

My favorite memory of the boys was the day of the primary election. The municipality used the lobby of the school to set up voting booths. Several of the boys on their way to the bathroom crawled under the booths and squirmed through the legs of the voters as they completed their ballots. It was difficult to explain that these were inquisitive students learning about the voting process!

My second principalship was in a rural/suburban school. Students lived on farms or in a small town on the edge of farm country. Board members had served on the school board for twenty-five to thirty years. The school was their business. I was the first female principal in the district. To say that it was an "old boy's network" was an understatement. The teachers were dedicated, hard working and set in their ways. The majority of teachers were senior staff who lived in the district and had worked at the district *their* entire professional lives.

In the eyes of the board and teachers, my major flaws were that I was female, and that I was not "one of them." The way things were done for years was just fine, thank you! By working ten hour days and weekends, I began to demonstrate that I was serious about their school and this was not a stepping stone to a higher position.

My most outstanding memory of the school was the "bomber incident." An African-American student from Detroit moved into the district. He was definitely not a farm boy and had a chip on his shoulder from the minute he entered the school. He antagonized every adult he met and defied most of them. His parents thought the whole district was racist and the multiple in-school and out-of-school suspensions that their son endured only reinforced their views. We had multiple meetings to convince the parents that he needed an evaluation and special placement. They refused to sign for any testing and the district was pursuing a due process hearing to force the evaluation.

One day the "inner city kid" as he was called, announced in the middle of a science lesson on combustible materials, that he would like to blow up the school. His announcement was investigated and researched with his parents in terms of what materials they had in their house; did he have access to the Internet, etc. That night at the scheduled monthly board meeting, a TV crew showed up, as well as over a hundred parents to complain about the safety threat made to the school. For the next month, the TV crews interviewed residents who lived on the same street as the school. They parked cameras near the school, and with zoom lenses, photographed students coming and going to the school. Sadly, curricular issues were the least of my worries for the remainder of the school year.

I am now a principal in a small, urban setting. My parents are lawyers, nurses, business owners, clerks, drug dealers, drug users, third generation welfare recipients and homeless parents. I spend the majority of the day attempting to solve behavior problems and negotiating with staff to practice "rehabilitative" discipline. Students who feel disenfranchised from the school are disrespectful and needy. I constantly do triage to balance all of the problems sent to me by the staff. A corps of community resources from county and non profit agencies troop through the school daily. I find myself as a case manager for 400 students rather than an instructional leader.

Too Old to Do the Job

I have been an educator for 37 years, thirteen of them as an elementary principal. I reflect over my career and feel that sometimes I am "too old" to do this job. It is not just my perception that the school and faculty are less respected by the community, it is a reality. The school is expected to be a counseling center, a health clinic, a restaurant, a pharmacy, a tutoring center, a homeless shelter, a resource to parents who can't solve neighborhood problems, a psychiatric hospital, and last but not least, a place to educate students. We are expected to do more with less in the face of criticism by government agencies for "leaving some children behind."

The positives of the job are still the students. I started my career because I wanted to teach students. I find that I still get excited by student progress. I still like talking with them; sharing their lives; asking what books they are reading; hearing if their football teams are winning; and building relationships with them. No matter how the job has changed, the hook up with kids is still the motivator that keeps me going when I am exhausted and feel that I have made little progress moving the system. Students still make the work worth it! However, the most frustrating part is that we are leaving some children behind, not because the staff or I give up trying. The complex social, emotional and cognitive problems of some children can no longer be handled in the neighborhood school system.

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The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Administrators I have Known

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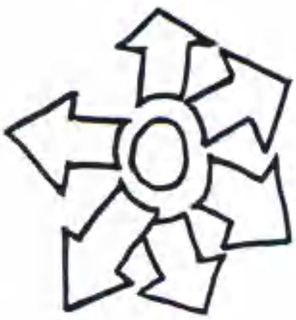
Among the challenges faced by administrators is becoming an effective manager of the people they oversee. In this narrative, one individual's experiences with administrators on several different college campuses is discussed.



I will grant you that my administrative experience is limited. Still, it doesn't always "take one to know one," and, as any Catholic priest who has conducted marriage counseling will attest, you don't necessarily need direct knowledge to know what makes for a good experience.

As a faculty member, I've worked with administrators (at all levels) at several different universities. Most of these individuals are bright, hardworking, well-intentioned folk, doing the best job they can under trying circumstances, with limited resources. A few are true geniuses, with a gift both for administration and managing people. One in a million is the personification of the devil. What follows is the story of one wonderful administrator, one scoundrel, one bully…and the beleaguered faculty member who toiled under them all.

The Good

My favorite administrator was also the first administrator with whom I worked. Jack (all names in this paper have been changed) is a bright, talented, kind-hearted man, frequently referred to by others as a visionary leader. One of the myriad traits that made him a great administrator was that there was nothing that Jack asked an employee to do that he would not willingly do himself. In fact, he often "pitched in" to do the scoutwork of the organization – everything from moving office furniture (including file cabinets), to arranging informational packets for a new student orientation. Jack was a *very* hard worker, in every way. Always the first person to arrive at the office in the morning, he could also often be found "burning the midnight oil" late into the night. This meant that on the rare occasions when circumstances required that employees stay late, no one complained, because they knew that Jack consistently put in longer hours than they ever would.

Jack's management philosophy was simple: hire talented, competent employees, and then….let them be. He detested micromanagers and used to say that he hired people "smarter" than he was – a contention that is blatantly false. You don't rise to the level Jack has achieved without skill and smarts that surpass 90%+ of your peers.

Another feature that made Jack such a wonderful administrator was his management style. Jack took advantage of every opportunity to praise his employees, to "build them up," instead of tearing them down. He would occasionally drop by a faculty member's office, plop down in a chair, and tell the faculty person what a fabulous job she/he was doing. Not once did he drop by to chastise, or rebuke. In the three and one half years I worked with him, not once did I ever hear an unkind word come out of his mouth. Instead, he embodied B.F. Skinner's philosophy: "Catch 'em being good!"

Jack was supportive of his employees in many ways. He treated everyone with dignity and respect, and was invested in each individual's long term good. As one example, when I decided to enter a doctoral program that required a significant amount of time away from the office, Jack was enthusiastically supportive. Not only did he allow me to take the time away, he wrote me a letter of recommendation, frequently asked how I was doing in the program, offered to help in any way he could, and – after he'd left to take a position at another University – continued to provide moral support throughout the duration of my program. He even sent reassuring, complimentary emails half way across the country while I anxiously awaited the results of my qualifying exam.

As Skinner would have predicted, Jack's style created an incredibly motivating environment, in which employees strove diligently to do their best, in order not to let Jack down. By treating people well, Jack engendered a loyalty among his employees that is unparalleled in my 30+ years of corporate and academic experience. His employees – current and former –love him. They don't "tolerate" him, or "like" him; they *love* him.

The Bad

I suppose, after working for this paragon of virtue, I was fated for a fall. Not many administrators could live up to the standard he set. Still, I never expected what came next. After all, I'd been treated fairly well by *all* of the administrators with whom I'd interacted over the years; each had valued my work, and been either positive or neutral in his/her interactions with me. So, to plummet from the zenith to the nadir of administrative experiences was outside the realm of my ken. Frankly, I was flabbergasted by what came next.

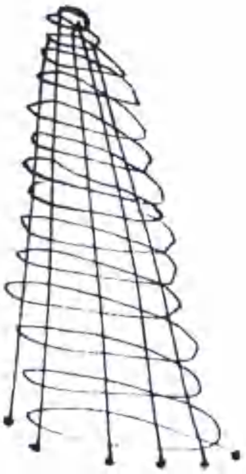
Oddly enough, it was Jack who encouraged me to take the position. Acting again in what he thought was my best interest, and knowing that tenure-track positions are few and far between, he wholeheartedly endorsed the idea that I leave my administrative position and take a faculty position at a smaller university. "But…. it's in Poupon," I said to him when the job offer was made. I was skeptical. Accepting the job would mean moving to an ugly area of the country. It also meant taking a significant pay cut. Still, the notion of finally being able to follow my dream of being a full-fledged faculty member was alluring, and after brief consideration, I made the decision to go.

The days were long and challenging, and my first year at Poupon U. was marked by 15 hour days. (Being given a schedule of classes that started at 8 a.m. and ended at 10 p.m. – a schedule I was given all but one of my semesters there – did much to keep me on campus.) Still, I was finally doing what I had labored many years to do, and, no stranger to hard work, I was content with my position.

Slowly, dissatisfaction began to creep in. It started with the management style of my new department chair, Professor Clueless. I'd heard that university faculties were "collegial;" that when reasonable people disagreed, decisions were "hashed out" in a communal process that, ideally, led to the "buy in" of everyone involved. Faculty sometimes publicly rail at the laboriousness of this process; to them I say try working under a regime in which that privilege is taken away.

Clueless' management style was the polar opposite of Jack's. Jack was hard-working; Clueless spent a good deal of time sitting outside, watching people go by. (Staff and students also reported that Clueless could be found playing solitaire on her computer, or sleeping in her office.) Jack had a collegial management style; Clueless was used to "top down," hierarchical management, and brought that model into the academy. Jack "pitched in" wherever he was needed; Clueless frequently sloughed her work off onto others. Jack was a "people person," always cognizant of others' feelings. Clueless appeared oblivious to the feelings of others: for example, imperiously "summoning" her faculty into the department office, rather than asking them to stop by.

Clueless lacked a well-developed sense of decorum, and "professional" was the *last* word that anyone would have used to describe her. Instead, she was noted for her "adolescent" sense of humor, her boorishness, and her frequent absences from campus.



The Truly Ugly

But Clueless was a relatively *benign* poor administrator. The worst was yet to come. Dean Weed, Clueless' boss, was a man of two faces: the "cheerleader" and the "bully." The first nickname he'd earned from faculty in his college, because he had little of substance to say, so instead would repeat such vacuous phrases as, "We're the biggest and bestest College in our school." The second sobriquet, I came to learn through personal experience, was equally well deserved.

Weed was a man who did not like to be questioned. Even when the questioning was motivated by a sincere desire to understand, he took umbrage at anyone having the audacity to ask him a question. I remember distinctly the first time I asked Weed for clarification. It was during a faculty meeting, in which he had stated that the faculty handbook was to be used as a "guideline," rather than a definitive source. There was one exception, he pointed out, and that was when the faculty handbook included explicit language about the faculty's rights. In those cases, according to Weed, the handbook was authoritative.

Because we were discussing the election of a department chair, and because the wording in the faculty handbook on this topic could be interpreted in different ways, I asked whether, in this instance, the faculty handbook was to be considered a guideline or authoritative.

Weed raised his voice, and in a harsh tone, asked, "What part of the faculty handbook are you looking at?"

Unfamiliar with the tome, I muttered something about the section number and page I was reading. He interrupted, "There are two sections of the handbook. Which section are you in?" Before I could reply, he snarled, "I'm not going to sit here all morning and go through the handbook, page by page, with you," then turned to recognize someone else.

As with so much other communication in life, it wasn't so much *what* he said, as *the way* he said it. The meta-message was clear: "*Don't mess with me*!"

Some months later, Dean Weed decided he wanted to remove one of the members of our Department's retention, promotion, tenure (RPT) committee. interestingly, his decision came shortly after the circulation of an email from this RPT member, supporting a department employee who had been let go. The Dean's ostensible reason for removing this individual from the RPT committee was that the man was in violation of the University's "nepotism" policy.

"How could that be?" several of the faculty wondered. The RTP committee member had been dating one of our faculty, but he had carefully recused himself from considering her file. As far as the faculty were concerned everything was completely "above board." Still, Weed was adamant, so one faculty member went to the Provost to discuss the University's nepotism policy. According to the Provost, Dean Weed had told him that our faculty member and the RTP committee member were living together; a statement that was patently untrue. After much discussion, the Provost agreed that the nepotism policy did not apply, and the composition of the RTP committee remained unchanged.

Shortly thereafter, Dean Weed came to a department faculty meeting, and announced that he would not "certify" (i.e., approve) our Department's RTP committee for the upcoming year. That's right – the same committee that had been constituted, and functioned smoothly, for the previous cycle.

Unfortunately, he informed the faculty of his decision only two weeks before the due date for several faculty members' files. Since ours was a new department, with no tenured faculty, this meant that the faculty had two weeks to recruit and elect willing faculty from *other departments* – no small feat, because the workload was tremendous, and the rewards small. Because the department had had great difficulty with recruitment for this committee in the past (a situation of which the Dean was aware), and because the faculty were happy with the committee as it had been constituted the previous year, I asked the Dean why this decision had been made. He refused to provide any rationale, except to say that the committee member who he had questioned earlier had acted unethically.

Given the difficulties the department had in recruiting members for the RTP committee in the past, and given the fact that there were only two weeks until RTP materials were due, I gently said that I would "contest" the decision, if there was any way to do so.

"You're questioning my judgment," the Dean said, in a cold, hard tone. "I'm not questioning your judgment," I replied, "I'm disagreeing with your decision," to which he reiterated, "You're questioning my judgment.... *But you'll have to rely on my judgment when I review your RTP file.*"

Har Megiddo

Months later, the time came for chair Clueless' regular performance review. Both faculty and students completed a survey and provided input. The results were daunting.

A majority of the department felt that Clueless' performance was below par. Faculty wrote that Clueless was a poor leader; that she behaved unprofessionally; and that she was away much of the time. Her disrespectful behavior was noted, as was her apparent lack of knowledge about policies and procedures. Lack of trust and low morale were other factors that were mentioned. Students were more complimentary than faculty, but many of them also had remarkably unfavorable comments. Imagine, for example, reading that one student had ventured into the chair's office, only to be told to get the hell out.

Dean Weed responded to the negative review in his typical, bullying fashion. He called a special meeting of the faculty, and proceeded to berate the group for approximately half an hour. Not for a moment did he deign to consider that there might be an inkling of merit in the overwhelmingly negative evaluation. Instead, he chose to chastise the victims of the inept administration. The entire faculty were given a thorough "dressing down." They were called "scurrilous," "slanderers," and "backstabbers" (among other choice epithets), and told that their "collective" decision in selecting a new chair – *whatever it might be* – would be unacceptable to the Dean. The only input Weed would consider was individual-level, attributable data – and you can just imagine how eager we were to talk to the Dean after his onslaught.

I have subsequently learned from others that Weed's "reign of terror" had been in existence for a long time. In fact, when one perfectly healthy colleague was sent to a psychologist for evaluation because he had gotten on Weed's "bad side," several long-time, tenured, full professors at the University who provided support for that individual were unwilling to have their names included in the psychologist's report. They were happy to vouch for their colleague's good sense, but they didn't want the university administration to know their names. As one of the men said to the psychologist, "I'm not afraid of much, but I'm afraid of *him* (i.e., the Dean)."

I wish I could tell you that the "powers that be" recognized some of the administrative problems at Poupon U....but that will take a successful lawsuit, I fear. Department chair Clueless was "bumped upstairs" to a higher paying job that has less authority over faculty, but Dean Weed still terrorizes faculty on a regular basis.

As for me, the story has a happy ending. I escaped from Poupon U. to a challenging, upper-level administrative position at a university in the heart of the San Francisco bay area. There, I am privileged to work once again with superlative administrators, and I strive to emulate Jack's style.

After working with some of the best – and worst – administrators in the academy, I've learned a little something about being a good administrator. It is vastly underrated hard work. Still, there's a simple moral to my story. If you want to motivate your employees to do their best work – and have them think well of you forever – treat them with respect, work as hard as you can, and "catch 'em being good"!

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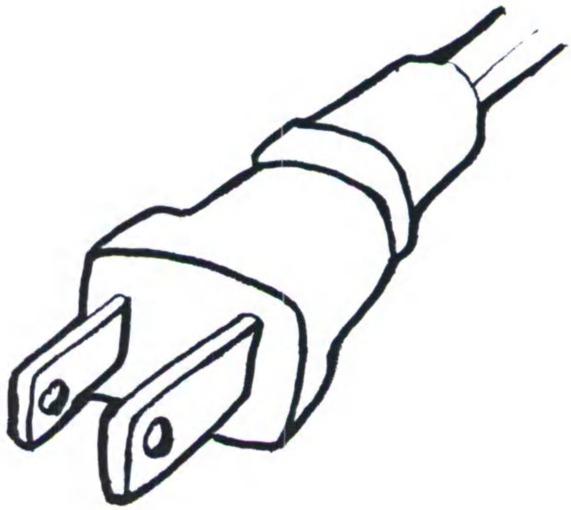


Keep An Eye On The Elephant In The Room

Ruthann L. Rountree, California State University, Long Beach

The elephant in the room refers to the presence of powerful unspoken agendas that underlie self-serving features of large organizations. In this narrative, the author describes her experiences with this phenomenon in a variety of human service organizations. The lesson learned is that success for an administrative social worker stems from his or her ability to manage the elephants running rampant in the organization.

Systems Have Their Own Agenda and Culture

The late author and feminist, Audrey Lorde wrote, "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house."[1] This is one mantra I keep in mind at all times. My experiences in several public and private human service systems have taught me that regardless of the organization's mission—drug/alcohol recovery, mental health, health or women's centers—the system usually evolves into a self-serving entity. Those of us who attempt to manage, whip into shape or co-opt these entities do so at the risk of our own well-being.

I recall the time I diligently worked to monitor and assess staff competence. In the process I uncovered a system of deception concerning patient attendance. The counseling reports for some of the staff were consistently redundant. Several months later I noticed the same pattern on several of the staff's counseling notes.

All of a sudden there was an elephant in the room. Was it possible the patient information was vague because the patient did not come to the appointment? I felt a gentle nudging of the elephant in the room to probe a little deeper. So I started checking the sign-in sheets. Unfortunately, my suspicions were confirmed. My first thought was that the patient did exist but was not signed in. Later, I discovered there were many patients with the same pattern.

I presented my finding to the director, who acted surprised and shocked. Later that week I was invited to a night meeting. Upon my arrival I discovered those in attendance were six counselors, whom I had identified in my report, along with the director. The next couple of hours were spent facing the Spanish Inquisition. Each counselor took a turn threatening, intimidating and challenging my findings and me personally. My only thought was, "Ok, I am dead. This is it. No way can I fight all of these people." After everyone finished, the director asked me what I had to say. I said, "Are we finished? I've got a late date to make." The silence was deafening, I guess that comment was inappropriate. But so were the threats from the staff. The meeting ended, without comment from the director. I quickly headed to my car and the local bar. I danced the night away. The next morning it was clear to me, I was the problem, not the solution. I had inadvertently uncovered a system of deception and corruption that served the organization's existence. The choice I had to make was clear. Within a few weeks I resigned. I did not have a job but I had a clean conscience and I was still alive! I had dodged the elephant.

Organizational culture is the most difficult aspect of a human service agency to understand and even more difficult to change. The culture must be respected but should not drive the decision making. When decision making is surrendered to the culture, the agenda can take a drastic turn from client centered to system serving. The above experience is one example of this system serving pathology.

I offer the following caveats

- The needs of the system should not outweigh the needs of the client system.
- The needs of the culture, if unethical, must be abandoned in favor of integrity, human dignity and fair representation of the minority view.
- The needs of the individuals in the culture also need to be respected and given equal and fair treatment.

If any of these tenets is violated, the social work administrator has to make hard decisions about whether to remain in that system and try to change it. The decision to remain without fighting the system suggests the social worker has been co-opted by money, prestige, fear or a combination of the three. On the other hand, the decision to leave requires a time of reflection and self-examination prior to moving on or entering another system.

I am not suggesting that organizational culture is impenetrable, but it is very resistant to change. Shaping or influencing the culture is a daunting task that requires a planned and organized approach, agreed upon by key actors in the system.[2] It is highly unlikely that a lone ranger (with or without a side kick) can take on the organizational culture.

Politics

Social work education helps to develop administrative tools that can be skillfully applied to a wide range of private non-profit and public systems. There is an essential skill for working in the public setting: political finesse. I suggest that the social worker needs to use diplomacy in order to survive. Unlike the therapist who works in a genuine, transparent and empathetic setting, the social work administrator often finds herself in a hostile environment.

As the director of a small non profit organization, I became involved with a community network of professionals. One aspect of being a dark-skinned African American is that everyone notices you, when you come in and when you are not present. I discovered early in life that sometimes I am the elephant in the room simply because of the color of my skin.

I have tried to balance the "color effect" in my community contacts, but it is like that commercial about EF Hutton: when the lone racial-ethnic minority speaks, everyone listens. That is not to say everyone agrees, not at all. Some people listen to be adversarial, others to be patronizing and others to learn what "they" think. Since there is no way to get out of speaking for the African-American community, I found myself the de facto representative of all African-Americans in many professional networking meetings. Never mind the fact that the organization I managed served less than 10% African-Americans; I still represented African-Americans in the community at large. Although this can be a very powerful position, sometimes it backfires, as it did in the following event.

In attendance at a professional conference in the Caribbean, I was excited to meet a newspaper journalist who showed several of us around the island. He promised to give us a tour as long as I gave him an interview. The elephant, was invisible to me at the time, but it was there. Well, I still have the paper with the interview from hell. In it, my description of African-Americans in the United States was slanted and exaggerated by the journalist, and to my dismay, the leaders of the organization all read the article. To this day I am banned from the organization. (Or should I say I am too embarrassed to attend its events?)

Nevertheless, external politics, advocating for one's community of origin is a required external political activity for the racial ethnic administrator. She may be faced with remaining an invisible catalyst to ensure the needs of the community remain part of the system's vision and focus. This may require assisting the community to advocate for itself by writing letters, holding demonstrations, confronting the power structure and other strategies to keep the system accountable to the community. Learning how to marshal or manipulate political capital can assist the administrator in future endeavors.

There are those who are anxious to sabotage or undercut the social work administrator's efforts. This may be the result of self-advancement, value conflicts, misguided goals or discipline envy. Political finesse is an essential administrative skill, because all persons in the system do not abide by the social work code of ethics.

One of my experiences involved managing a small clinic within a network of several clinics. All the administrators were social workers, but the other staff and upper management were members of other disciplines. Soon after arriving I discovered the elephant in the room. It was a code of conduct that relegated social workers to second class citizens. Through the use of the job description, we were restricted to certain tasks that limited the full scope of our work. During meetings we received lip service validation for our work, but in practice it was clear we were not valued or respected. It was an oppressive working situation that resulted in burn out, nervous breakdowns and in one case, the disappearance of a social worker. Staff and administrators from the other discipline felt superior.

Staffing

One of the most difficult tests for a social work administrator is performing the job with inadequate staffing. It has been my observation that social workers tend to promise the world, despite limited staffing to carry out the tasks. This will cause staff turnover and burnout, and result in even greater staffing shortages. Therefore the social work administrator must develop supplemental staffing.

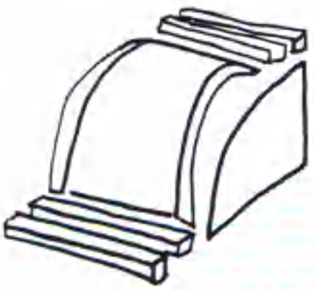
One of my director positions afforded me the opportunity to use eight graduate students who were theology, psychology, communications and social work majors. We developed one of the most productive work groups I have ever managed. The crossover in talents, skills and personalities allowed me to create a mobile training unit that spanned the state of California. It was a unit that received rave evaluations from police, community leaders and government officials. It epitomized the belief in people achieving their potential as a value we need to have for staff as well as clients.

The team we developed used the strengths of each person to establish a high level of trust and interdependence. I hired staff who knew more than me about statistical evaluation, subject matter content and writing skills. What a relief it was to have people support my efforts. The greatest strength of an administrator is to know his or her weaknesses, admit it and hire people who have the needed skills.

Other solutions to staffing I used were to look for supplemental staffing from government funded programs such as the TITLE V and SCSEP (senior employment program). It is a mainstay for locating seasoned workers. Some training may be required, but there are other benefits such as good work ethic, excellent attendance and loyalty. If funding becomes available, hiring the already trained senior is a return on investment. Community workers assigned by the court can also assist with other appropriate and non-confidential assignments.

Other resources to investigate are academic internship options from all disciplines. For example, public relations departments may have the right person to develop brochures, write new articles, and prepare public service announcements.

Finally, community based volunteer placement agencies often have a wealth of volunteers. Many are retired professionals



who are anxious to assist human service organizations in accomplishing their missions. Some organizations maintain their own core of volunteers.

Funding

Securing money is perhaps the easiest task for a social work administrator with grant writing skills. I try not to allow the lack of money to limit my vision. There are funding streams both internal and external to the system. Many administrators assume grants are no longer available, so they allow their program and staff to suffer. On the contrary, just spending a few hours a week searching the web can assist the administrator in securing educational videos, supplies, staff training funds and staffing resources.

In preparing a grant proposal for one human service organization, I worked with the fiscal department to set up a budget that allocated specific costs for each indirect cost. This was necessary because the grant did not allow for indirect or administrative costs. In hindsight I probably should not have written the grant with those constraints. The madness started after the proposal was approved for funding because upper management, including the fiscal department, wanted to know what their cut was. When I reminded them about the reimbursement plan, it was as if everyone developed amnesia. No one remembered the formula we had used to calculate job percentages, reimbursement estimates for the fiscal department, or the subcontracting plan for staff. Consequently, in violation of the terms of the grant, the agency decided to handle the grant like all others, until the first year audit failed and the state stepped in to correct the problem. My saving grace was that I did not sign any checks or give spending approvals. I just managed the budget, and kept receipts and good records. In the end, I restrained myself from saying, "I told you so!"

I have held jobs in a wide range of settings and grant writing has been a routine part of my job. In each position I have succeeded in securing funds. However, the two pitfalls were that I sometimes did not "stick to knitting"[3] and did not remember that all elephants want food (money).

With reference to the first point, the organization has specific goals and objectives linked to staffing and tasks. There were times that I stretched myself too thin trying to accomplish projects that were tangential to the mission. Concerning the second point, I often forget that most people and organizations are not as concerned about the intrinsic value of services and resources for staff; they want to see money come into the system, or more specifically, their paychecks. For most people, the project does not generate enthusiasm without remuneration. The consequences for me failing to see the elephant was that I found myself trying to get buy-in of important staff too late. It is especially difficult to get other departments to buy-in if they do not receive financial benefits, only extra work.

Grant writing and securing additional money can sometimes be the easiest part of social work administration. But, spending the money can also be a problem, depending upon the type of system you are trying to negotiate. I recently learned that public sector entities are the most difficult when it comes to incorporating outside funding. Because of this, one of my grants took two years to get off the ground.

I had a contractor from the Midwest, a group of technical experts—housed in another department, needing to get bids for anything purchased over $1500 and no direct staff assigned to manage the grant, except me. Talk about setting yourself up to fail; this grant was the handwriting on the wall. I have no idea how I managed to complete the project after three years and many tears. During each change in the fiscal period I had to monitor and track the location of the funds, and I almost lost the funding to the umbrella organization. To summarize, you need to know spending criteria, protocols for sign-offs, budget years and how to get around all of these pitfalls before securing funds for a large organization.

Time Management and Burnout

Many social work managers have time cards that reflect 60-70 hours per week. The social work administrator may not come in at 8:00 am sharp; however, you will usually find him or her burning the midnight oil trying to complete the range of tasks and assignments. This working pattern is often the result of social workers serving as managers as well as line staff. Social work direct practice skills are significantly different from social work management tasks. Many social work managers are trained clinicians, but the reverse is usually not true. Therefore, social work administrators do not have a sufficient number of qualified subordinates to whom to delegate projects.

Our body, mind and spirit will eventually manifest the side effects of bad work habits. Unless social work administrators take seriously the need to balance our lives, we may not live to see retirement. I am frequently amazed to read the names of social work administrators who die before retirement or soon after. We applaud their success, achievements and impact on the quality of life for others. But the value of self-sacrifice has to be balanced with moderation; the drive to serve has to be balanced with a drive to survive. Today, I have chronic pain, perhaps because I did not heed my need for self-care. I failed to balance my work ethic with learning how to play as hard as I worked. Now I am forced to rest and adopt a new, more careful work paradigm.

There are many people who told me," if you drop dead tomorrow, the system will go on." I hate to admit this is probably true, because I always felt what I did made a big difference. The truth is that if I did a good job, I should be able to leave and work will continue smoothly. Only time will tell the outcome of my efforts.

What we as social work administrators need to discover is how to balance our personal lives with the macro systems we attempt to manage. If my personal life is not in order, perhaps my success with the macro system will not be as effective. Taking an ecosystems perspective as a social work administrator may be the solution to finding true homeostasis. As we create interventions to manage the macro system, these or similar strategies must be applied to our lives.

Whether we golf, meditate or enjoy our significant other, building healthy infrastructures will help to alleviate the human costs associated with managing large systems. Perhaps our true successes are shown in how well we survive the systems we manage, not our success in changing them.

Social work administrators will need to closely monitor their own strengths and the tools needed to negotiate various human service systems. In some cases those who are wise will learn which systems to tackle (circus elephants) and which to avoid (wild raging bull elephants). Despite collaborations, negotiations and administrative tools, managers will have to learn and use personal survival techniques to work in the 21st century organization.

This narrative has helped me to focus on my 25 plus years in social work. I remain optimistic about the potential for social work administrators to accomplish great goals and improve the quality of life for workers and clients. However, on-going self examination and management of multiple goals and agendas are essential tasks for survival and success.

Homage

This paper is a homage to Tessie A. Cleveland, DSW, MPH, who served as a mentor, elder culture-keeper, and friend. I offer a tribute to this great social work warrior who fought a good fight until the end. For those who did not know her, she was the consummate beleaguered administrator. I had the great blessing of working with her, learning under her, and growing as a result of her leadership.

Dr. Cleveland helped me to understand that African-American administrators cannot forget they represent a host of underrepresented and disenfranchised community voices. Many of our natural and spiritual gifts are drawn from the universal consciousness of our ethnic community, and it is to that community we must ultimately remain true. The successes and failures we experience as administrators will impact the future prospects of community members. The question was once asked, "Am I my brothers' or sisters' keeper?" The answer is an emphatic yes![4] Consequently, the racial/ ethnic administrator is constrained to accomplish multiple agendas: manage the organizational system, advocate for the community of origin, address the needs of the client and maintain professional standards and ethics.[5] Tessie Cleveland was that type of administrator who used her talents and skills to intervene on multiple levels. On the organizational level she established a social service delivery system that addressed the full range of client needs from advocacy to direct intervention. This required creating and managing interdisciplinary networks, acquiring resources from external sources (funding and staff), community relations and routine staff development activities. She accomplished these tasks along with proving leadership in the community, serving as a consultant, mentor, instructor and coach for students and professional social workers. Helping people achieve their potential was her prime directive, and she worked tirelessly to achieve that goal.

Many people feel she left this plane of existence too soon because there were more lessons to learn from the "consummate administrator." However, I trust and believe that she ultimately accomplished what she was assigned to do. She successfully demonstrated excellence in combining the full set of micro to macro social work skills. Her life, accomplishments and professionalism represent the model social work administrator. Most importantly she taught me how to keep an eye on the elephant in the room.

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Scholarship, Administration, Teaching and the Junior Faculty Administrator

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The following narrative addresses the author's struggles as a junior faculty administrator to balance scholarship, administration, and student services. She addresses the crises faced when determining which domain to prioritize during periods of her emerging career. The opportunities and dangers associated with these choices as well as the techniques utilized to navigate the process are presented.

What happens when the beleaguered junior faculty member becomes a partner in establishing a new department with the prerequisite focus on programmatic structure, student services, and a primary focus on accreditation? For me, this status as a new junior faculty member and administrator faced with the co-responsibility of successful accreditation presented a situation of both opportunity and danger. This article describes my experience in meeting this crisis.

Spring 2001

Two senior faculty members sat with me as we outlined the work plan for the rest of the spring and summer. It was clear that much needed to be done to get the program up and running and accepted by several layers of university committees. Not only were we engaging in an intellectual and academic exercise, but the process also proved to be extremely political. Many in the University were hostile to a new program, especially one that was both applied in nature and expensive. So in addition to increasing my workload, I also had to become a political strategist. I also had to develop at least 40 field placement opportunities for our first class of students, start the benchmark process, develop policies and procedures, a student handbook and a field manual. As if this were not enough, I also had to write a proposal for Title IV-E funding for the school. And I had to do all this, while teaching and preparing for my second-year tenure review.

These activities extended through the summer and required that I take on the role of Director of Fieldwork. Because I had prior experience, this did not seem a hardship. However, once into it, I recognized that it was a significant time commitment. In addition, the writing of our policies, our syllabi and our manuals took the entire summer.

The opportunities associated with developing a new program were numerous. I was able to work closely with senior faculty in advisory board, academic senate, community outreach and curriculum development meetings. Our joint efforts made the launching of the new MSW program possible. In this type of environment, key senior faculty were able to recognize administrative and clinical strengths that I possessed. These working relationships have persisted over time and I can request support as needed.

The dangers associated with this intense up-front effort were significant. In presenting the department before university committee members who were hostile towards approving the program, I established myself as a potential competitor and enemy to individuals who might one day sit on my promotion, tenure and retention committee. In affiliating myself closely with the founding chair, I became associated with an infamously political personality on campus. Those who liked him might provide support, those who saw him as an enemy might target me because he, having tenure, was untouchable. I was concerned about serving as a surrogate target for Dr. T.

One major danger was the choosing of an administrative priority over a research/writing priority at the beginning of my career as a professor. My focus was on syllabi, benchmarks, policies, manuals and memorandums of understanding. This time-consuming process shadowed the quest for funding, buying out time for writing, and establishing a solid writing/research schedule.

Finally, the department had to grow and it did. We had a full professor returning from sabbatical as well as a new assistant professor during the first year of our program. I had accepted and been given administrative authority by my chair. In many ways this administrative status/power conflicted seriously with my junior faculty status/power. This caused conflict that continued through the third year of the program. Ultimately, I had to make space for others to enter the program, while serving as a back-up or unofficial assistant director of the program. It was and continues to be the most difficult portion of my job in the department.

Summer 2004

Our program is established and we are into the second year of the summer block program for MSW students at our Concord Campus. This was even a greater time commitment which required Friday and Saturday day-long seminars, field site visits, as well as individual student advising. The program is run and administered by myself and another junior faculty member and three field faculty members with some clerical assistance.

In addition, the student handbook and the field manual for the 2005-2006 program needed to be rewritten, and the field placements selected and completed for 50 second year students in the non-summer block placement. While I have junior status in the university, I have 25 years of experience in the social work profession, so during this process I actively participated as de facto program coordinator. This also proved to be a very costly time commitment.

As if this were not enough, I also had a book contract, a memorandum of understanding to complete a book chapter and a journal article that had been submitted and needed a re-write. In addition, a grant to support a research project had been awarded to me in Spring 2004.

During the summer, I completed the book chapter, arranged for the book contract to be extended, completed the journal article and postponed my research study. Overall, I achieved some success towards my scholarship goals. It was an incredibly busy summer and was satisfying on many levels, but frightening when I stop to think about the work. Administrative goals were met; but my scholarship goals were not all met. The tenure clock ticked on. I and my junior faculty colleague were good university citizens, involved in governance and curricular development, but we struggled to accomplish our research goals.

The opportunities related to developing and administering the summer block placement programs were great. We really enjoyed the autonomous functioning possible within this summer environment. My colleague and I modified the curriculum to ensure that it met the needs of the year-round model and taught classes seminar-style. We met the requisite hours required for courses, but had day-long seminars rather than 3.5 hour classes. We gained lots of experience; learned from our mistakes; and developed a special rapport with this cohort of approximately 35 students. In addition, we were able to forge a much closer relationship with our field faculty.

The dangers were significant. The passion that we poured into making the summer program work had to be diverted from somewhere. Whereas many faculty use their summer as the time to begin, continue and complete their work, I was not able to attain all of my writing goals. I made progress on a journal article and a book chapter and completed them both. I failed to complete the work necessary for a social policy book contract and needed the extension. Also, as I administered the summer program, the issue related to actual power and attributed power reached a crisis point. In fall of 2004, the addition of a new associate professor was quite contentious. Questions related to the temerity of an "assistant professor" serving as an administrative type were raised and had to be addressed. The crisis precipitated by this contention and my increased sense of danger resulted in some changes in how I conducted business and the assignments that I was willing to accept. This led to conflicts between the Chair and myself that we have happily resolved. I started addressing other domains, student service and scholarship at this juncture.

Winter Quarter 2006

This quarter, I have extricated myself from some of the responsibilities associated with my role as unofficial associate department chair and chief trouble-shooter. However, as a founding member of the Social Work Program, there are responsibilities that I cannot drop. As the institutional memory of the department, I am asked questions, invited to meetings and continually asked to provide feedback on issues too numerous to mention. We have added two tenured faculty members and an associate professor, yet the workload has not eased. In the hustle and bustle of too much work and too few rewards, we lost my partner-in-administration and scholarship, the other assistant professor, to another university.

The dilemma this quarter is that I am an integral part of the accreditation preparation committee and I am also trying to find time to complete my fifth year retention document. As instructed by a mentor in my Ph.D. program, I was prepared to put that document together over a weekend and place it in the office awaiting the review of the committee. At the same time, it became clear that there were some fundamental flaws in the Social Work Program self-study document that needed to be addressed before it was sent out for review. This development created a crisis in the department that called for all hands to be on deck.

Again, I was eyeball deep in the time consuming process of reviewing, editing, consulting and getting the CSWE self-study in good order. I believe my efforts have been successful, but not without a cost! Achieving both objectives—completion of the self-study and the tenure review dossier— created a personal crisis for me. As a founding member of the department, my heart and soul remain committed to the department and the need to successfully complete the accreditation process. On the other hand, my academic survival depended on completing the work for the dossier. In this case, I spent the weekend working on the CSWE Self-study, and during the week I spent one 15-hour period working on the dossier (into the wee hours of the night).

As an active junior faculty member, I am supported and rewarded in many ways for my willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty to support the goals of the department. On the other hand, this behavior, I believe, impedes my ability to complete the necessary work on my research and scholarship.

The opportunities during this period included the ability to work on the completion of the self-study process, to establish a stronger relationship with new faculty because the issues related to actual and attributed power are resolved, and to work closely with the Chair as the department's "institutional memory" for the purpose of infusing that memory into the last of the accreditation process. Some of the weight of the accreditation process has been taken on by other faculty in the department. The Chair of our department has worked to spread the workload to other tenure and non-tenure track faculty. This has really been successful. As such, rather than being constantly overwhelmed by the process, I can accept a portion of the responsibility and depend on others to also take up their part. I can bring to bear my memory and involvement in the process to ensure that we are consistent in our approach and in our write-ups. This shift has allowed me to place more emphasis on student service, curricular development and scholarship which is what I need to do at this juncture. I would say that it hasn't freed me to do as much work as I would like, but I am definitely able to go in the right direction.

There are still a few challenges as we move down the path towards accreditation. As much as I have been able to pull back, the demands are still high and exceed my capacity from time to time. For example, completing my dossier and essential portions of the CSWE Self-Study both demanded my attention at exactly the same time. I chose the CSWE Self-Study first (without the program, I have no academic future at my university) and then basically used a student technique (the all-nighter) to complete my dossier. This type of work or these types of choices result in feelings of high anxiety and exhaustion. One can only work like this for so long. I look forward to the completion of the accreditation process because the need to attend to the domain of administration will subside considerably.

Scholarship versus Administration

On the one hand, as a junior faculty member my path is pre-ordained. The University has its requirements; they expect and support me in being productive and making progress toward tenure. On the other hand, there are other prizes that can hold the attention of those of us who have worked in the corporate or nonprofit world prior to becoming a professor. Chief among these are professional pride, creativity, and the satisfaction that comes from building a program from the ground to the ceiling.

One of my dear friends in a first-year Ph.D. class said, "I haven't birthed any children, but I've birthed, with great pride, several programs." Helping to shepherd a program through the accreditation process, writing self-studies, developing curriculum in concert with other faculty is important work. This work keeps the university scholarship alive and functioning and infuses it with new ideas and opportunities. Developing protocols, managing schedules, advising students, planning graduations and graduation banquets, directing field programs and creating summer programs, all of these administrative tasks merge with scholarly tasks. It is not as simple as black or white. One has to balance many demands and use many of the skills that we advise our social work clients to utilize.

The Third Domain: Student Service

There is a third factor. To this point, I have presented the crisis of balancing scholarship (as defined by research and publications) and administration. The third factor is student service: the teaching and mentoring of students. It sometimes gets lost in the maze of "publish or perish" and administrative work. Teaching is, in fact, my passion; it is the reason for my choosing a teaching university rather than a research institution.

I stay in social work education because I love to teach. I love having the time to prepare and deliver an effective lecture. I want to ensure that the next generation of social workers receives culturally competent and effective training. As a faculty member of color, I feel responsible for providing some of this training. The payoff is wonderful and the result is competent students. I hope at some point to have more time to think about and write about the work that I do with them.

Having the time and energy to focus on students is essential. Being able to come to campus and prepare for the day; being able to use office hours effectively; having time to really review the work of the students and to give them honest and helpful feedback, is important work that competes with writing an article, conducting research, and revising a self-study. There is no question, the student takes priority. The following is an example of student feedback that confirms to me the need to incorporate services to students in the overall balancing act that is essential in our work.

This student graduated after two years of struggling with her writing abilities. She utilized the student writing center and worked diligently to produce professional quality papers. She told me the following during a drop-in office hour:

> *"Professor Woods, I know that you do not remember this. However, when I first attended your class, I handed in a paper. You read it and gave it back to me without a grade. You said, 'I know that you can do better than this. This is what I want you to do. Take the extra time and make the corrections.' You do not know what a difference this made to me. No one had ever stopped and taken the time and said, 'I know that you can do better than that.' Not only did you take the time, but also you told me what and how."*

We can create a more meaningful environment for students from lower social economic backgrounds and first generation college attendees, but it takes time and focus. The battle between administration, scholarship and finding time for review of student work and meaningful interaction with students is a no-brainer.

I'll end with a few techniques that I believe allow me to do the work I do with pride and conviction.

Partialize

Identify your goals specifically as they relate to the three spheres described above. What are your professional goals for the first to sixth year of the tenure track process? Tie things into tenure, but remember that isn't the only goal. What do you want to do to elevate the status of your students, the communities affiliated with the University, you and your family? Take all of these things under consideration. Attempt to do something on a daily basis that assists you in supporting the academy, your professional growth and development, and that of your students.

Social work is a value driven profession. Keep your values intact through this onerous process and be willing to draw a line in the sand when it truly feels as though you are being forced to short-change your students, your tenure-goals or your university assignments. When we feel that our activities are in balance with our basic values it takes us a step closer to satisfaction in our work and the career path we have chosen.

Manage Time Well

Even if you are not an organized person, identify techniques that help to save time. Utilize Blackboard, minimize meetings, electronically score exams, utilize discussion boards. Stick to your schedules and work with people who will assist you in doing so.

Do Not Personalize the Political

I think that I have had one of the greatest mentors in the world in my Chair, Dr. T.

Relatively thin-skinned, I am more like a Rodney King "Can't We All Just Get Along?" than Dr. T., who accomplishes his goals "By Any Means Necessary." During our work together in the department, I have known him to work with and fight with many of the powers that be in the University. He keeps his eye on the prize and pushes for results. Not soft-spoken, he is nevertheless caring and concerned about the university, faculty governance, racism and sexism in the academy, student progress, accreditation and many other issues. Above all, he is a political person. His intention is to drive his agenda home and he does not often fail. In all of this, he does not go out of his way to create enemies. The lesson in this for me is to keep my eye on the prize, know that I am gong to lose some battles, fight passionately for what I believe, remain a realist, and stay in the battle.

Get Mad, Get Over It, and Proceed

When we were initiating the program, members of other departments felt that we were encroaching on their territory. During one meeting, we heard the chair of a department state that an MSW program was not needed on our campus because graduates of other departments were being hired in those positions and could do that work. I saw red. I noted that two of my esteemed senior social work faculty members listened politely, then proceeded to present chapter and verse the need for a new social work program. At no time did they blow up or tip their hand. I learned or have tried to learn this talent. I have to admit that I'm still working on it. I am, however, able to move on.

Non-Academics can Lead to Greater Academic Opportunity

At the least, I have been a good soldier in the battle to create a solid, multicultural, urban social work program during fiscally challenging times. It is essential to develop strong working relationships with your chair, dean, fellow faculty members in the department and the larger community. A willingness to dig in and engage in the good, the bad, and the ugly of administrative work is appreciated by those who work with you, and I have found that often if you are helpful, help will be returned to you. Those who work very hard and who bear many burdens are often rewarded. While burdensome, the effort of founding a program, developing curricula, and creating a field-university connection, can pay off.

There are other questions to be asked and answered. How do race and racism play out in the life of a junior faculty member of color? When should you dig in your heels and prepare to fight, versus when to "let it ride" and live to fight another day? How do we best protect ourselves?

I ask these questions often. I'm pleased to be a junior faculty member in a University where I can ask questions openly and share my concerns and challenges with colleagues about the three spheres of scholarship, administration, and student services.

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Hazards of Thinking Outside the Box: When Bureaucracy Blocks Success

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This narrative describes how the bureaucratic function of a large and complex system can block the progress and movement of creative and innovative programs. In the University setting, academic program administrators are encouraged to "think outside the box" and devise new and innovative programs. When programs created to produce win-win situations between an academic nursing program and external health care partners became very successful, they were subjected to increased scrutiny by the system even after being vetted through proper channels. The result of the detection of an unconventional or novel program is to assign an overseer to initially investigate what "rules" are being bypassed and what risks exist to the system. The result is a slow down in program implementation and a risk of dissatisfaction for the external partners, as the program process may now be subject to renegotiation.

My adult professional life has been lived in ten year cycles beginning with clinical practice, leading to teaching my clinical specialization in an academic institution, branching to teaching graduate level courses and finally to academic administration. When I accepted the position of Director of Nursing in a large academic program I soon recognized it is the worst job I ever loved.

Many facets of this position are enjoyable and even personally rewarding, but some of the essential skills that are central to an effective clinician and educator do not translate well to a mid level administrative position. These include autonomous decision making at the implementation level, critical assessment and development of unique and innovative solutions, and a tolerance for multiple and varied outcomes. This position involved directing an academic unit comprised mainly of doctorally prepared, highly motivated and success driven, professional women who had diverse interests, abilities and ambitions. It was not the complexity of management of the academic unit or the varied members that created the largest challenge for me, but rather the resistance of the organizational bureaucratic structure to implement creative and innovative programs.

When interviewing for an administrative position, several questions are always asked of the applicant concerning leadership style and problem solving. As there are standard questions, there are also standard, almost obligatory answers the informed interviewee supplies. These include describing one's personal management style as participative, collaborative and respectful of multiple points of view. Almost to a person, interviewees describe their problem solving as creative, innovative, and "able to think outside the box." Some persons are truthful about this ability and early in their administrative careers they frequently discover that many of those within the system who advocated residing in the territory "outside the box" were those who built the "box" and whose job it is to guard the lid. This is realized when attempting to implement innovative approaches to complex problems.

The environment outside the box is fraught with hazards and residing there is frequently prohibited due to the rigidity of established rules and regulations supporting the bureaucratic structures or forbidden under the guise of risk management. The remainder of this article will highlight the problems encountered and strategies implemented to develop programs that implemented new approaches to customary course content delivery or created alternate financial support mechanisms from community partners.

I began my administrative career in the midst of a nursing shortage crisis and the demand for nursing graduates was very high. There was not a shortage of applicants as there were about ten students for every one state-funded admission slot. It was also a time when health care facilities were given incentives to retain their clinical nursing staff and sought to offer them additional educational opportunities. The opportunity to create health care service/academic partnerships was golden.

Creation of the RN-BSN On-Site Programs

My predecessor had begun the concept of the on-site nursing program in which additional sections of the existing nursing program courses were offered at a health care facility, and that facility "reimbursed" the University for faculty salary. This was seen by the healthcare facility as an effective retention incentive for their staff to have convenient access to advanced nursing education and simultaneously impact the quality of nursing care delivered by their employees. These programs expanded the capacity of the program at no additional cost to the University and generated FTES for the program. The amount of salary reimbursement generated was small and these programs probably stayed "under the radar" These programs were proposed and approved by the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services who ensured they did not violate any educational regulations of the institution.

The success of these programs grew, and more health care institutions requested to have an on-site program for their employees. As the number of the programs increased in size, it became necessary to add the cost of a faculty coordinator and other operating expenses. There was frequently a small amount of additional funds as the facilities contributed a flat rate for faculty salaries and this difference became known as the differential. These funds were accumulated yearly and used for faculty development and travel, the purchase of educational media for classes and for the occasional laptop computer. Formal documents or MOU's (memoranda of understanding) existed between the facilities and the College of HHS, and stipulated the terms of the agreements.

These programs represented the classic win/win situation, as the health care facilities achieved increased staff retention and a better educated workforce. The nursing program increased its capacity and FTES generation and gained a modest revenue stream to provide for unfunded faculty needs.

If you are thinking at this point that disaster is about to strike, you are correct. The administrative personnel and the bureaucratic structure underwent a dramatic shift and many of the players changed. The success of the programs now represented about one-third of the FTES generation and the faculty salary revenue generated was increased to over $100,000 a year in each program. This amount of action and revenue was now lighting up radar screens.

The management and operation of these programs underwent review for more than a year. I can only speculate on the reasons for such a thorough examination of programs that did not violate existing rules and regulations but that were distinctly surviving outside the "box." After extensive review and vetting of the financial arrangements and MOUs, surprisingly little changed in the structure of the programs. The on-site programs acquired their name because they were delivered on-site at the health care facility but are now called the off-site programs because they are offered off campus.

The price of these programs was initially fairly low because the programs utilized their tenure track faculty for the didactic component of the on-site delivery and used the generated funds to release these faculty from some of their clinical courses, thereby assuring educational consistency and quality in both on and off campus programs. The cost of the clinical faculty is less and does not usually include benefits. These practices have been altered and the healthcare facility is now being charged the cost of the tenure track faculty with benefits for the didactic portion of these programs, thereby increasing the cost of the program. Since I am no longer with this University, I am not sure how this additional revenue is utilized. The idea for these programs may still be golden but the goose may have died in the process.

Creation of Cohort Programs

The nursing shortage also created the possibility for additional partnerships to form. Because of the lack of supply of nurses, healthcare facilities were forced to employ traveling nurses and temporary staff at inflated prices. This created opportunities for nursing programs to receive funding from health care facilities to increase the number of basic nursing students educated. When creating these partnerships between service and academia, the nursing leaders in service expect to negotiate with the nursing leaders of the nursing programs.

The original concept is forged here as the objectives of the program for both parties are clear and the terms of the agreement are mutually beneficial. The basic tenet of these cohort programs is that the health care agencies will donate funds to cover the faculty salary needed to teach a group of students, usually a cohort of ten throughout the entire program. If this clinical cohort is added to the pool of state-supported students, these additional students are added to existing lecture courses and the facility donates the faculty salary needed to cover the clinical laboratory faculty. If several (3 or more) facilities are willing to contribute simultaneously, the cost of the additional didactic and clinical faculty salaries are shared. One main object was to keep the program affordable and to assign the student cohort population to clinical experiences in the sponsoring facility to maximize recruitment.

As the MOUs were generated, the faculty salaries were considered gifts and the funds were handled through the university foundation. If these programs were seen as grants, an enormous indirect cost (35-45%) would have been extracted, thereby reducing by almost half the number of students who could be accommodated by this program. While this method of handling the program funding did not violate any rules, it was viewed by some as "maverick" and nonconformist and not in the best interest of the University at large. A word of caution is needed. You must consider whose box you are thinking outside of. It became clear that program innovation may lead to bureaucratic conflict when goals collide.

Creation of an Accelerated Entry Level Master's Program

The opportunity to create an Accelerated Entry Level Program presented itself. This was in partnership with a major healthcare organization and the brainchild of two senior faculty. These faculty created a solid but ground breaking Accelerated Entry Level Master's program for persons with a baccalaureate in a related field. The potential funding source for the program was anxious for the program to begin and was moving at light speed (the speed of business) to bring the funding to reality. The faculty needed to move the program proposal through the undergraduate and graduate level curriculum committees. The time needed to seek approval of this "cutting edge" program was problematic for the funding source. Ultimately, perseverance prevailed, but the stress on all parties was considerable.

Lessons Learned From the Outside Box

If you are going to create innovative programs and implement them in a bureaucratic system, the following suggestions might be useful:

• Find someone credible within the administrative structure to share the vision and help carry the message.

• Clearly understand the arguments against what you want to do and prepare your case carefully.

• Lead with the advantages to the University, the students, truth, justice and the American way and lastly, to your programs.

• Keep a seat open for yourself at the table and stay part of the negotiations.

• Have meetings before the meetings to understand the resistance and smooth the way.

• Stay strong and laugh it off when things get crazy.

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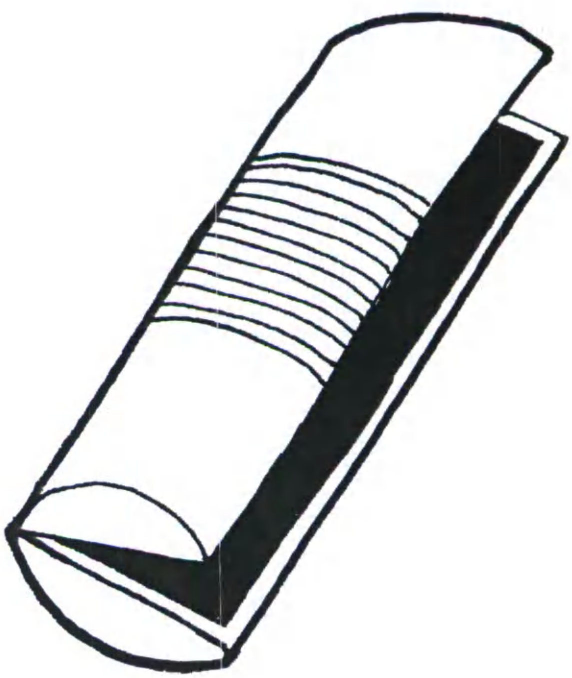

THREATS TO THE BELEAGUERED ADMINISTRATOR: LOVE, MISSION, AND CAMARADERIE

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An attempt to reduce stress, headaches, and sleepless nights among students and staff in a university service-learning program, led to governance via the nine best practices described in this narrative. Using appreciative inquiry as the theoretical framework, current and former staff members were asked to tell stories of times when the service-learning program functioned at its best. Excerpts from the stories indicated that a number of the best practices helped set the stage for peak moments in the organization's history.

Introduction

In January 2002, I became director of Common Ground, Long Island University's service-learning program at its Brooklyn campus in New York City. This was my first opportunity to direct a program on my own; however, I had several years of experience as an administrator, social worker, academic advisor, and assistant director in working groups of all shapes and sizes, pursuing different missions. To varying degrees, I had been a beleaguered administrator and had observed the variables in the work environment that seemed to increase stress and feelings of being overwhelmed, and others that seemed to alleviate them. I sought to draw from these experiences and introduce program norms designed to reduce administrative fatigue as much as possible. As I approach my fourth anniversary as director of Common Ground, it is a good time to take stock and evaluate the impact of these interventions, and to share solutions and ideas with beleaguered colleagues.

Like many service-learning programs across the country, Common Ground links classroom learning with real-world experience. It takes the traditional idea of volunteering and weds it to the curriculum of an academic course. For example, students in a graduate history class on the Holocaust are offered the opportunity to volunteer at Self Help Community Services' Brooklyn Holocaust survivor program. These students, who are learning about the Holocaust at the university from books, lectures, films, and library research, work directly with Holocaust survivors at Self-Help. Thus, academic content comes to life with real dialogue as survivors form relationships with students and ultimately share their stories.

Another successful partnership exists in the political science department. Students in an introductory course on power and politics learn the structure of city government and criminal justice administration. These students volunteer at the New York City Department of Probation. Here, they work with probation officers in the courtroom and interact directly with probationers. Another partnership has formed in the art department, where students in an elementary school art education course prepare and conduct workshops for children whose parents are incarcerated. These art workshops take place at the Osborne Association, an organization that offers services for people in prison, those formerly incarcerated, and their families.

When service-learning works well, it is a diamond with several facets. Students learn the academic curriculum in more depth and remember it for years to come after linking it with real-world experiences. Students also gain work experience, an intrinsic sense of satisfaction, and a resume that looks great to future employers. Classroom instructors enhance the learning environment as students link the curriculum to real-world experiences in class discussion. The community agency is pleased to have college student volunteers. The clients of these agencies benefit from the energy and good will of college students. The service-learning program receives a sense of satisfaction from making helpful linkages, and the university contributes meaningfully to the surrounding community. Finally, students indicate on our end-of-semester questionnaire an improvement in attitude toward community involvement, an increased sense of social responsibility, and an improved understanding of social and cultural differences (Kuwahara et al., 2005). These shifts in attitude hold promise for ongoing community involvement over a lifetime. Thus, students, instructors, future employers, community agencies, clients, the service-learning program, the university, and the larger social world all profit. The challenge lies in coordinating, promoting, monitoring, evaluating, and maintaining the program to maximize its effectiveness—while at the same time avoiding becoming beleaguered in the process.

The task we faced was formidable. The Brooklyn Campus has over 11,000 students, all of whom are potential participants in Common Ground. The campus offers hundreds of courses per semester; again, any of these could incorporate a service-learning component. In addition, we needed a way to establish relationships with a range of organizations so varied that they would offer something of interest to students in health science, business, education, the arts, social sciences, and humanities experiences that would directly relate to their courses and career aspirations.

Keeping track of our community partners, courses, and participants represented an administrative task involving a blizzard of paperwork. Maintaining the accuracy of information on our community agencies, numbering as high as 60 at any given time, presented an ongoing challenge. We found early on that an ambivalent or shy student is discouraged by a wrong number or incorrectly listed agency contact. Recognizing and rewarding our student participants was another essential objective, as was rewarding our community partners. Recruiting students and faculty, and winning them over to the merits of service-learning represented a marketing, outreach, and sales component. Recruiting new agencies was another necessity, as was responding to frequent agency inquiries in a timely manner. Individual counseling sessions would also be necessary to help students explore their interests and examine the transition in role identity that comes from taking that first hesitant step into the world of work.

Finally, we needed to examine the results of our efforts from three perspectives: those of student, faculty, and community participants, and share this information with the larger university community. We needed help for this project in its entirety—financial support, staffing, and guidance. In summary, the opportunities to become overwhelmed, multi-tasked, stressed-out, over-extended—in a word, beleaguered—were endless.

Previous headaches and sleepless nights had taught me three things. First, working with a team offers several benefits beyond sharing work and dividing labor. The sense of community and fellowship possible in a good working group has the potential to restore the energy expended by working hard toward a shared goal. I searched for sources from which to create a small staff, and eventually created one of graduate assistants, social work interns, and work-study students. Each year as students graduate or progress in their studies, staff members are replaced.

Second, an egalitarian model is a worthy goal. A working group in which power is shared, and decision-making is consensus-driven, reduces the feelings of alienation and subjugation often found in steep hierarchies. Group process also offers the benefit of considering multiple solutions to problems if all staff members are invited to brainstorm and contribute ideas. Third, open and frequent communication is key. Sub-grouping, secrets, and misinformation all serve to divide working groups against themselves and frustrate the task of working toward a shared goal.

In response to the beleaguering stress and strain, and enlightening success and reciprocity of previous work experiences, we developed the following "best practices" from which to govern the administration of Common Ground. These best practices are summarized below.

Best Practices

• **Egalitarianism.** At weekly staff meetings, responsibility for chairing and facilitating the meeting rotates. Decisions are made by group consensus.

• **Empowerment.** Staff members are encouraged to take a task and run with it. They are given the dignity of the responsibility for doing their work. We are guided by Booker T. Washington's adage, "Few things can help an individual more than to place responsibility on him, and to let him know that you trust him."

• **Weekly staff meetings.** Without fail, weekly staff meetings are held. Each semester we determine the hour of the meeting based on a time when all staff members can be present. We have chosen evening hours when this is the only opportunity for us all to be together at once. This presents an inconvenience at times, but the benefits in terms of open communication are worth it.

• **Support.** We have been given consistent support from the university since our inception.

• **School work priority.** Since most staff members are students, it is emphasized that their studies take priority over Common Ground activates. Paradoxically, this seems to increase participation and follow through on work assignments.

• **Hiring policy.** Staff members are hired based on their ability to be responsible and reliable.

• **Recognize all stakeholders.** Staff members are acknowledged for their contributions each week at staff meetings. Program participants are given a "celebrate your achievement" party at the end of the semester. Community agencies are thanked by inviting them to a panel discussion on a compelling topic in social welfare which we organize each semester.

• **Evaluate outcomes and share the results.** Each semester we evaluate participants, faculty, and community agencies via questionnaire. Their responses are analyzed and presented in the program's annual report.

• **Seek outside guidance**. Common Ground is governed primarily by an advisory board made up of faculty and community partners. Advisory board meetings take place annually where our work is presented and advice is sought.

Theoretical Framework

To understand the administration of Common Ground from a theoretical perspective, we employed the lens of appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). Appreciative inquiry explores what gives life, vitality, meaning, and purpose to an organization; it examines the peak moments of a department's functioning. This approach helps to highlight the creativity, joy, and passion that often lie buried under layers of routine administrative work. An analysis of peak moments helps provide information on their causes and preconditions, which can be used to stimulate their occurrence.

When applying the lens of appreciative inquiry to the realities of the beleaguered administrator, it appears that contemporary organizations are trapped in a problem-solving paradigm. One finds that most administrators see their role essentially as one of "problem solver." They spend time at their agencies primarily focused on problems—breakdowns and failures of the past—in an effort to understand the causes of sub-optimal functioning. The proponents of appreciative inquiry argue that focusing primarily on problems produces a mechanistic mentality in which the organization is approached as a problem to be solved rather than as a mystery to be embraced. This creates a downward spiral of motivation. How excited can one be by a role that promotes an obsessive focus on problems?

In addition to focusing primarily on problems, the administrator is also beleaguered by a Western administrative paradigm that views resources in exclusively economic or technical terms (Parameshwar, 2004). This leaves us with a chronic sense of scarcity; there are a multitude of worthy programs competing for funds, personnel, and technology, engendering scarcity. Appreciative inquiry enables the beleaguered administrator to appreciate the multidimensionality of resources and to recognize that abundance can come from spiritual and psychic resources that can be deliberately leveraged toward administrative ends.

Appreciative inquiry suggests the beleaguered administrator transcend the problem-orientation and scarcity perspectives, and focus instead on moments of functioning when productivity, teamwork, and resilience are at their best. In this exploration of Common Ground, we examine the peak moments of our work together as a way of understanding what has been working well and igniting our imagination of new possibilities for the future.

Our Approach

Using appreciative inquiry as an organizing model, recently during our regular staff meeting the staff members of Common Ground were asked to tell stories about their peak moments with the program. The objective was to explore staff members' high points as administrators of the Common Ground Service-Learning Program and what they thought caused them. We sought connections between the staff's perceptions and the best practices employed. Which of our best practices were really useful? We then invited current and previous staff members to co-author this article with us. To capture their perspectives, we asked them to write down their responses to the following questions:

1. What do you most value about yourself (a) as a person and (b) a staff member of Common Ground?
2. What do you like most about working here?
3. Tell about a time when you felt most passionate and excited about working here—a time when the boundary between work and play blurred.
4. Tell about a time when you have seen Common Ground at its best.
5. For questions #3 and #4, please explain what you think made those moments possible.
6. What, in your opinion, gives life and vitality to Common Ground?

A total of eight staff members—four current and four former—agreed to join us in this joint effort.

What Staff Members Said

A number of themes emerged from the written remembrances of peak moments with the program. These themes included a shared mission; staff camaraderie; the satisfaction of working with student participants; staff performance; new skills acquisition; and appreciation of staff and student diversity. Each theme is discussed below.

Shared Mission

Each staff member stressed the importance of the overall task of Common Ground, that is, linking students to the community through service-learning. Staff members derived satisfaction from this shared goal and identified it as one of the things they liked most about their work. Several staff members emphasized the ways in which students may benefit:

> *Service learning is an extremely important aspect to enhance students' learning. I think that all students should be required to volunteer and give a little of their time to those less fortunate.... Common Ground provides a vital element to enhancing the quality of a students' educational experience in more ways then they could have possibly imagined.*
> *—Nicole Kuwahara*

> *I felt very passionate about the program throughout my tenure with it. It was very stimulating to work with individuals engaged in experiential learning. I was particularly invigorated at the beginning of the semester witnessing the excitement, curiosity and anxiety surrounding the program. I was thrilled to be able to help connect students with various community agencies to explore their interests.*
> —Maurice Gattis

Other staff members emphasized the program's benefits to the community:

> *As a staff member of Common Ground, I feel that helping people to help others is rewarding on two levels: to give students the experience of broadening their own horizons and the opportunity to feel great about themselves, and also in providing help to needy individuals throughout the city.*
> —Dana Gruber

> *My individual contribution to a venture that assists other people in impacting their community through service learning, and working with a team of people with the same goal, is an incredible opportunity.*
> —Marcia Ellington

Other staff members emphasized a sense of shared commitment to the program's mission:

> *Common Ground ... is comprised of good quality staff members that are able to contribute to the group while sharing the same goals and aspirations.*
> —Viet Dang

> *There are three elements that are vital to the success of Common Ground. Selfless individuals in the community doing good work, staff*

with their hearts and minds fixed on the mission of the program, but mostly the students who are inevitably changed by their experiences.
—Joseph Chiechi

Staff Camaraderie

Each staff member commented on the sense of community and camaraderie experienced among the staff. For some, this was a favorite aspect of working for Common Ground, for others, staff cohesiveness was identified as the reason for the success of the program.

A number described how community and teamwork were generated:

As individuals, everyone who works at Common Ground brings a little something different to the table, but as a group, we gel perfectly. It is this sense of camaraderie and the diversity of our individual experiences that I love about our group.
—Dana Gruber

Our weekly meetings are the foundation of our group. It is a time where we can talk to one another, catch up on new events, keep track of our progress, and ask for advice or suggestions. It is the best time to discuss our success and problems. We are able to discuss our ideas or opinions and to move on as a team.
—Viet Dang

Some identified the egalitarian model as a reason for the group's camaraderie, and others noted the tolerance and respect they felt when voicing their opinions:

I enjoyed the egalitarian and collegial atmosphere. ...most decisions were made by the staff collectively. I was really impressed that we had a different chairperson for each staff meeting.
—Maurice Gattis

...Our staff meetings exemplified Common Ground at its best. Each staff member was given equal importance, rotating the chair of the meeting each week. Each agenda item was given thoughtful consideration. No person or idea was treated with less than the utmost respect, and the students and their experiences and well being were always given top priority.
—Joseph Chiechi

Common Ground is an extraordinary place to work.... The group comprises of the best staff members. They encourage me to be myself and voice my beliefs. The work environment facilitates discussion, communication, and collaboration. Common Ground promotes members to voice their opinion, to communicate freely.
—Viet Dang

Their stories told of staff interactions infused with warmth and humor. Staff members noted the sense of friendship or family they felt toward their colleagues, while others noted the playfulness evident in staff meetings.

I have seen Common Ground at its best when staff meetings take place on Monday nights where the staff not only talk about how to help the students more, but also are

all good friends and really work well together.
—Grace Lee

Staff meetings were times when I forgot that we were co-workers, and felt the camaraderie of friends. With such humor, intelligence, open communication and respect circling the table, we as a team developed ideas easily, organized quickly, followed through with plans and evaluated events and programs efficiently. To see ideas become reality...was very exciting.
—Laura Segundo

It was always invigorating to attend weekly staff meetings—to have an opportunity to be surrounded by others who shared not only a common vision of the program's mission, but to be spending moments with people who were your family away from home. We accomplished the tasks set forth, but were also able to laugh, joke, be inspired, cry, commiserate, and be able to be ourselves with the feeling that we were understood.
—Nicole Kuwahara

Demarcations between work and play have always been distinct; however, one moment of crossing over between the two surfaced in one of our weekly staff meetings. On this particular occasion a 'playful' competition evolved from who makes the most creative agendas. During this moment, the staff was relaxed and leisurely about the agenda for a while, but soon returned to the serious business of getting things done.
—Marcia Ellington

One staff member made note of the annual change in personnel, caused by graduation or academic advancement. However, she suggested that staff members who continue into the subsequent year carry forward the group's norms.

The frequency of the turnover rate is high, however this is due to the fact that a majority of the staff is made up of students. Therefore, year to year there is always someone new in the organization. However, the positive personality, charm, and kind nature of the staff who do remain allow newcomers to feel a part of a family.
—Nicole Kuwahara

Satisfaction of Working with Program Participants

A favorite part of the job for many staff members was the satisfaction of helping program participants and seeing them succeed:

[Students] give uniformly positive feedback about their volunteer experiences and clearly feel good about the work they do. Knowing that we've done our part in enriching the lives of others by opening their eyes is Common Ground at our very best!
—Dana Gruber

I valued the interaction with Common Ground students who were interested in making an investment of time in the community by volunteering, and in themselves by immersing into new opportunities.
—Maurice Gattis

We had the wonderful opportunity to help students tap into their interests, apply college learning to service to the community, and help in some cases to open a person's eyes to the real New York City.
—Joseph Chiechi

Talking about the program and my own experiences in volunteerism and service-learning, encouraging students to participate, supporting them throughout the process, seeing them mature as the result of their important work, and rewarding them in the end was awesome.
—Joseph Chiechi

Staff Performance

Many staff members reported that the program excelled during special events, such as the biannual "celebrate your achievement" party and the panel discussions. However, a surprising number felt the program was at its best at the level of its more everyday, mundane moments and daily interactions.

We operate at our best most times. We are a very busy group of people with many other things going on in our lives, but despite this, we all put a lot of work and care into Common Ground and do a job which I think is great.
—Dana Gruber

I cannot pick an individual moment in which Common Ground appeared better than other times. I suppose it would be better to say that we were a great team, working our "best" all the time from something as simple as filing to more complex as celebrating each other's personal victories.
—Laura Segundo

It's difficult to pinpoint when exactly Common Ground has been its very best, because I think the collaboration of each and every moment has contributed to the successes of the staff and the program.
—Nicole Kuwahara

Each individual tends to focus on his or her area of expertise and then collaborate with other members to accomplish a common goal. These events represent Common Ground at its best moment. Without teamwork, nothing can be accomplished. A good program such as Common Ground is based primarily on the members of the group to build foundation, stability, and quality.
—Viet Dang

New Skills Acquisition

Two staff members indicated what they liked most about working for Common Ground was the chance to learn and practice new skills.

The act of helping each person that we encounter and the ability to learn relevant people skills, passed on from staff to staff, makes working at Common Ground a very rewarding experience.
—Marcia Ellington

Projects are team based and therefore utilize communication skills, teamwork, and organization skills. Being part of Common Ground helps build these essential

> *skills that are the foundation to work effectively with anyone. These factors are needed on the job, in school, or in any type of organization or group that requires human interaction. Common Ground is a great place to gain the experience of coordinating meetings, developing discussion panels, and creating different presentations.*
> —Viet Dang

Diversity

Only one staff member noted that cultural diversity gives life and vitality to the program, but the diversity of our staff and of the students we serve is so rich it warrants comment here. Staff members are Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese, Jamaican, African-American, Peruvian, Haitian, Jewish, and Italian. The students we serve are equally diverse. One indication of Common Ground participant diversity is the array of religious affiliations participants indicate on our end-of-semester questionnaire. In Spring 2005, students indicated they are Jews, Catholics, Christians, Greek Orthodox, Pentecostals, Jews for Jesus, Seventh Day Adventists, Muslims, Hindus, and Mormons (Kuwahara et al., 2005).

> *Common Ground lives and breathes diversity; that is its most recognized quality. Students and staff of varying dispositions and descents are involved in this effort.*
> —Marcia Ellington

Discussion

While Common Ground enjoys the unique privileges of receiving ongoing support from higher administration and lack of strict mandates and pressures, the results of our conversation with current and previous staff members indicate that the program runs well in part because of the best practices employed. Specifically, weekly staff meetings, the egalitarian model, a shared sense of mission, new skills acquisition, diversity, mutual engagement in a meaningful, altruistic task, and the sense of community were all themes indicated by the staff to be at the heart of the program. These themes promote human interactions that reduce stress, burnout, misunderstandings, subjugation, and unfairness that undermine many working groups and beleaguer many administrators. In accordance with appreciative inquiry, this conversation demonstrates that non-concrete, non-technical, and non-economic resources, such as motivation, enthusiasm, sense of community, passion, and love can be cultivated and nurtured, and yield meaningful and satisfying results that create energy and reduce the usual beleaguering stresses we find in administration.

We found that our best practices enhanced the sense of gemeinschaft and reduced the sense of gesellschaft so commonly engendered by modern administrative bureaucracies. Introduced by the sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies (1957), gemeinschaft, or "group feeling," refers to a departmental culture and a configuration of relationships epitomized by a nurturing family climate. Gemeinschaft is a sense of primary group in which relationships are direct, face-to-face, and intimate; where members experience camaraderie and a sense of unconditional regard. Gesellschaft, or "company feeling," on the other hand, is exemplified by a spirit of bureaucratic impersonality. Interactions are seldom face-to-face, and relationships are mediated by contractual obligations; acceptance is conditional. As the responses to our questions indicated, a sense of gemeinschaft appeared to permeate how our members experienced the culture of the department.

When we asked our staff about times when they were most passionate and excited about their work, we tapped into a variety of stories that awakened in the members a sense of motivation. If there is one lesson we learned, it was that peak moments of engagement, brought alive through storytelling, are an important part of outcomes assessment and can help a group to achieve significant program outcomes.

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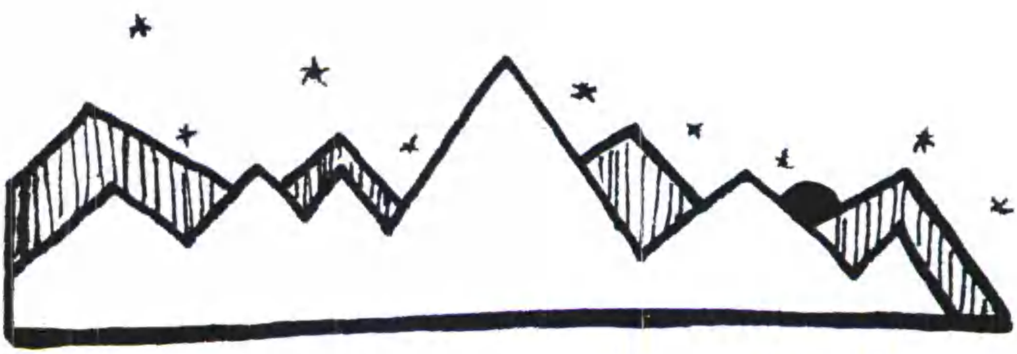

Consulting: A World Of Personal, Financial, And Professional Fulfillment – Maybe!

Gary Bess, Ph.D., California State University, Chico

Being a consultant is most managers' fantasy. As the fantasy goes, you are free of day to day repetitive duties, you can pick and choose your involvements, and you don't have to work when you don't feel like it. And, of course, clients will be knocking at your door. The reality of building a consulting practice without the safety net of a pay stub is explored. Questions such as— What services to offer? How do you charge for services? How do you find your consulting niche? – are addressed.

Almost everyone wants to be a consultant – I naively did before I became one! When you are in the 9-to-5 management grind, which is actually 7-to-10 between breakfast and late-night committee meetings, you may feel unappreciated for your labors, confined by arcane policies, managers, or Board members, and in a dead-end rut of finite income and creative expression. Well, about 14 years ago I made the break from serving as an executive director of a health and human services agency in a large metropolitan area and threw my laptop (which was much heavier back then) into the consulting ring.

My decision to enter the world of consulting also coincided with my family's impending relocation to a semi-rural university community, where the same professional opportunities that I had found in urban areas were unavailable. It presented a special challenge in that I would be moving about 500 miles north of the health and human services community that I knew and where I was known. This would mean that adequate communication and regular travel would be essential components of my consulting business. Fortunately in the early 1990s, the Internet was emerging as an inexpensive vehicle for communicating and sending documents, and there were two commercial airports, one that was a 30 minute driving distance from my soon-to-be home office, and the other was 90 minutes. Working at home – a dream come true?

I knew nothing about the consulting business before I became a consultant. I entertained the common fantasies that most workplace Dilberts have that can be summed up in one word – "FREEDOM!" As a consultant, I would be in control. I would be able to schedule my work hours with no early or late-evening meetings unless *I* decided to have them because it was imperative that *I* meet with clients. I would also be able to work from home, picking and choosing my projects, and taking on only those that I found personally meaningful and professionally challenging. Then, too, there would be the opportunity for creative expression. I would not be fettered by political considerations about who might be offended by my report or recommendations, or whose toenails I might need to polish in order to rearrange agency priorities.

Consulting also conjured an expectation that I would be recognized for having done a good job, which would be shown through fair compensation, repeat engagements, and expressions of appreciation from satisfied clients. And, with regard to fair compensation, there would be unlimited financial potential in that my earnings would depend upon me alone and not personnel committee members who, as volunteers, fixed executive compensation based on their own standards and wages.

Consulting would be my Utopia – a world of personal, financial, and professional fulfillment. Or, so I thought!

Starting out on what amounted to a new career wasn't easy. I was on the high wire without the safety net of a pay stub. I wondered what do I actually have to offer that has value? How do I get the word out that I'm available to consult? How much should I charge and by what method? Should it be by the hour, by the project, or possibly as a retained service? And, of course, what are the risks and benefits of consulting?

So, where did I begin? I did what others who have preceded and followed me have also done: I consulted with a consultant on how to consult. I had known Audrey (not her real name) before she had started a consulting business about three years earlier. Although her niche was different than mine, the insights she provided helped ground me as I began to build my consulting business. Beyond Audrey's encouragement, I don't recall many specifics about our conversation, except for one. She said, "Don't be needy." What profound words! I suddenly felt like a grant deadline had been extended by two weeks.

Don't be needy. Those three words said it all. They lifted the pressure that I had felt to hit the pavement running and to have immediate success. They also helped me understand the angst I had experienced as I followed up on my early proposals for consulting services. The follow-up was always difficult, not because I didn't want the work, but because I did not enjoy the feeling of being "needy" as I called to inquire if a client had reached a decision. Realizing that a decision to contract with me would not be affected by whether I called or not, I happily discontinued the practice. Since then, as a matter of professional policy as well as to preserve my own sanity, I seldom call clients to inquire about submissions. I wait to be informed if my proposal has been accepted or not.

I claimed a bedroom as my first home office. I brought in additional telephone lines, plugged in my thermal paper fax machine, and configured my dial-up modem to the Prodigy on-line service. I learned quickly that work is work and home is home, and yet the separation between the two isn't always easy to accomplish. I decided not to answer the home telephone during business hours, and to try, though not always successfully, to stay off the office computer after hours and on weekends. While it is fairly easy to avoid the home telephone during the workweek, it is not as easy to stay away from the home office during off-hours. Whatever time I may save by not commuting to work or going out for power business lunches, is often spent when my computer monitor beckons me during off hours to squeeze in just a "little" more work.

The work I initially found as a consultant came from colleagues and competitors who both wanted the same thing – to benefit from my recent experience as an agency director. They were interested in *defector intelligence.* Assuming that loyalty to my former employer had waned and that intellectual property clauses were unenforceable, they approached me to gain information about my former agency's prior successes – successes that were not necessarily my own. Their interests were mostly connected to grant writing and other resource development activities within the same service industries.

As I reflect on my earliest days of building my consulting business, the most effective means of attracting clients was through word of mouth based on successes achieved for other client agencies. Today, the majority of new contracts continue to come to my company through these informal networks of satisfied clients.

I have advertised, however, from lean time to lean time, admittedly without benefit of a marketing consultant who no doubt would tell me that I needed to invest more money in advertising for a longer duration to achieve the big payoff of new clients. Arthur Andersen likely took the marketing consultant's advice as they are now a household word, and have even served as official vote counters at the Academy Awards. But, for me, I haven't advertised much. My sponsorship of the local Little League teams on which my son has played has truly not been an attempt to attract business from irate umpire-baiting parents of young ballplayers, but rather a charitable gift toward America's number one sport. I do admit also to hopes of ensuring my son's succession to the big leagues after which "remember your parents" would be the only consultative advice that I would render to him.

My first few years as a consultant were lean. Those who wanted to drain me of intellectual property did so and moved on. During this period I began to better understand my marketable strengths and the arena I would work within. As an agency director, you are expected to understand, if not be expert, in several complementary management domains, i.e., financial management, resource development, planning and program development, human resource management, board relations and management, and community relations. I had some experience in all of them. I learned quickly that resource development in general, and grant writing in particular, were ever necessary and consistently marketable skills. They provide the lifeblood of agencies. Being able to write a grant proposal and knowing the local funding community were the basis of a large portion of my initial consults.

Grant writing also provided me with a clearer sense of my client base. While institutions large and small have a need for grant writers, I realized that my sensitivities were with the "little guy" – smaller agencies with fewer resources and plenty of heart – and I decided that I would focus my work with them. This was a pivotal decision in that while many of my clients were addressing substantial unmet needs among diverse populations, which as a social worker I applauded, they also lacked the resources to engage a grant writer, and I was not interested in working on a commission basis. There is an ethic in fund raising that says that fundraisers should be paid for their labors like other professionals, such as attorneys, and their compensation should not be tied to whether they are successful or not. So, working for commission on the contingency of the grant being funded was not an option that I would consider. Besides, the grants themselves generally do not include extra dollars for a well-written proposal, and so where would payment come from even if the grant were funded? This meant that some could afford my services and others could not. The best that I could do, which has continued to this day, is to introduce a sliding fee schedule that unfortunately is not zero-based, yet is somewhat scaleable based on key variables (e.g., how much other work I have at the moment and the agency's operating budget).

There remained the question of what to base my charges on. Many consultants charge by the hour and often, as I've learned, government service contracts require an hourly rate. I knew well before I began consulting that my focus and my sheer brilliance are not constant and can change from hour to hour. During some hours or partial hours I exude tremendous energy and intelligence, and can be highly productive. During other hours I can be dense and lethargic. Though perhaps I keep plodding to productively develop a draft document, as I reread it an hour later the pearls that I had just crafted are actually unclear, non-compelling, and, if I'm honest with myself, something that I wouldn't fund let alone expect a funder to embrace. So, what do I do? Do I rebate fees for that hour of compromised brilliance?

Deciding not to bill by the hour unless forced to do so by client policy, I looked at two other means of structuring my compensation. One method is by product and the other is by retainer. I found both to have merit and to be preferred by agency clients in that they could accurately budget for this expense and be assured of a finished product. Product-based billing assumes that the contractor can estimate his or her resource requirements to complete a proposal or report, or to carry out a strategic planning process. Retainer, by contrast, establishes the consultant as a part-time *ex-officio* member of the agency's staff, available to the agency within a delimited scope of work. This too provides assurance to the agency that certain production benchmarks will be achieved.

I currently offer both options to clients. If there is a major funding opportunity available, which requires intensive and yet short-term activity in order to write a winning proposal, the product option is likely the better choice. This is often the case in government funding initiatives, or when an agency needs a program evaluated or a strategic plan written. I estimate the required number of hours, which I hope will be more reliable than the last building contractor's estimate that I received. It includes subcontractor costs such as for data retrieval and entry, as well as for travel and supportive services.

If on the other hand, the agency is interested in acquiring longer-term assistance, such as in grant writing or continuing program evaluation as part of quality assurance activities, a retainer is the better alternative. Here we agree to a scope of work, such as the submission of at least two proposals for funding each month or the compilation and presentation of client satisfaction data on a quarterly basis. The projection of two proposals each month are minimums, however, in that as any successful salesperson or businessperson will tell you, to keep customers satisfied, provide more than they expect.

Years ago when I lived in New York City, I learned this important simple strategy. I would meet a friend for a beer at the local neighborhood watering hole on the East Side. At the risk of embellishing or sounding like I imbibed to excess, after every few drafts the waitress would bring us one on the house. The lesson was clear – *we appreciate your business*.

Retainers are structured month to month so that they can be terminated at any time. I do this because I truly don't want to be in situations where my services are no longer required and/or appreciated. If there is magic between us, which usually involves the agency's director and me, the relationship endures. If there isn't magic or if our best efforts do not lead to successful proposals, or if there is dissatisfaction with the evaluation results that I provide, why remain? I think too that this approach creates a strong drive that keeps me focused on making sure that this never happens.

The freedom to leave and move on to new opportunities is not generally found in unsatisfactory management work situations after the honeymoon has ended, when meaning and purpose are lost, or getting out of bed each morning is like rising from revelry. Managers often remain long after they and their employers would have supported a mutual parting. Financial dependence, pride, and lack of comparable opportunities are often the cited reasons. It is much easier for consultants to voluntarily or involuntarily move at either their own behest or that of the contract-agency. As a consultant, the stigma associated with this departure can be easily masked by such phrases as "It was a temporary consult and now they are fine without me," or "We couldn't agree on an approach and *I* ended the consult."

The bravado that I have just expressed and the ability to move from work assignment to work assignment are much easier today than in the early years of business when consulting gigs were not as many. I think that intuitively I always understood, however, that as a consultant I served at the pleasure of the organization's director. So, why attempt to structure something different than this? If my products are good and appreciated, I remain for the duration of the task; if things are not working, well then neither am I!

Though I've honed in on grant writing, as it constituted my first service, and has been a mainstay for the past 14 years, my consultancy has also evolved into other areas, and with each, there have been challenges. Today, the range of my consulting services includes needs assessments, program evaluation, strategic plan development, program development, and nonprofit management advisory services. I have a tendency not to say "no" to new work, which on the one hand has kept me busy and has stretched my competencies, and on the other, has meant that I keep others busy, as well, bringing them on to help.

This has had several effects: (a) I've provided meaningful human services work for others; (b) I've been able to stabilize a diversified agency client base; (c) I've given true meaning to the word "associates" in Gary Bess Associates; and (d) I've had to deal with internal quality control. Unlike big consulting firms where you know that Mr. Price or Mr. Waterhouse are no longer directly serving clients, the work that we obtain comes primarily through my reputation as a consultant. This acknowledges, of course, that if my reputation is not as stellar, or at least someone's star is brighter, consulting opportunities are not forthcoming.

Anyway, with competent management cloning somewhat more complicated than sheep and dogs, it took quite a while and several botched unions before I found a staff that could produce the quality of work that clients deserve and that I feel comfortable endorsing. The challenge, as I've come to understand it, is that there are those that are technically competent (e.g., good writers and good researchers with an abundance of passion for the underserved). What they lack, however, is the ability to understand how service programs work, and as writers and interpreters of evaluative findings, we need to be able to explain how and why certain things are necessary or have occurred.

There are also those that are great *program people*. They can connect the dots, work wonders with clients, motivate others to believe as they do in the viability of their programs, and make each dollar stretch. Yet, they cannot organize their thoughts to explain how programs work, and what skills and knowledge staff needs to do their job, or they are unable to write in a readable, compelling style that my clients and a funder expect to see. In their hearts, they know that providing services is where they belong, and yet they apply as grant writers or program evaluators, based on their direct and inarguably solid human service experiences and lack of other employment opportunities in a semi-rural community. They cannot, however, effectively use a keyboard to translate in MS Word their experiences to other contexts and settings.

Finding someone with both competencies – technical writing and strong program experience – is the challenge. There are few that offer both. I've hired employees with certificates in technical writing or degrees in English, and I've hired employees with solid private nonprofit and/or public agency experience. Few have demonstrated the ability to do both well. To the degree that I've been able to recruit macro social workers, I've done so, believing that our education best prepares us for this level of human services involvement.

There's yet another necessary dynamic in addition to basic competencies that has also caused me to stumble in my pursuit of a staff with the *right stuff*. No, it's not Alan Shepherd's or John Glenn's launch pad daring, as this is a given. Anyone who has attempted to address a social problem already understands that its complexity is equal to, or even more complex than, rocket science. The other requirement is speed. Years ago when lawyers Leonard Jacobi and Steve Myers broke out from the tradition that said that attorneys should not advertise and offered low-cost divorces on late night TV, it was a new era for the legal profession. They earned their money in true populist form on a mass volume of clients.

Well, I'm a populist of sorts, at least with regard to the way that I've gone about building the consulting business. Our clients are small to medium size agencies and universally don't have a lot of money. I defer to other consultants, presumably larger businesses, to go after big client contracts where one or two may be sufficient to support a consulting division or the business overall. For me business is based on volume, and hence staff members need to be quick as well as capable. They need to be able to draft a letter of intent or a full proposal, from beginning to end, with a sketch framework provided by the client. Or, they need to be able to quickly comprehend the client's program, and be able to identify standardized evaluation instruments or create new ones to address research or needs assessment questions. Once the data is received, it needs to be speedily manipulated with written findings of significance organized and presented in the appropriate form to the client.

I do not own up to being a hard task master (though my beleaguered employees certainly do not have time to contribute an article to *Reflections*), but as a practical matter, the ability to produce a good first draft the first time and within a reasonable period is a job requirement that I place on others and myself. And, not everyone can do this.

In retrospect, I'm clearly glad that I made the move to becoming a consultant. Today I have four employees and a network of a half dozen consultants that work with me. Every day is filled with challenges, though they are mostly the rewarding kind. Some clients have been with me (or me with them) for 10 years or more. Others are more recent, and with each new assignment there is something new to learn, such as a new twist on a conventional need, a new way of responding, and new energy and excitement that lasting change will occur as help is on the way.

I'm a little smarter today than 14 years ago. Yet, I see few shortcuts along the path that I've walked. Each step was necessary toward building a consulting business. There have been many changes during this time, though throughout, there has also been the constancy that good work translates into satisfied clients and through word of mouth, more work. A board member used to say, if you satisfy one client, he or she will tell a friend, but if you dissatisfy a client, he or she will tell 10. It's good to have clients as friends.

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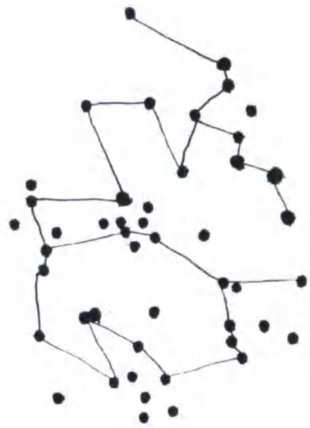

Movie Review: *Good Night and Good Luck*

Agathi Glezakos, Ph.D., California State University, Long Beach

Good Night and Good Luck portrays the journalist Edward R. Murrow's passionate response to the unfolding of disturbing national events, and the difficult decision an administrator has to make as he weighs the preservation of his company and the tenure of an admired but politically controversial employee.

The movie, in black and white, takes place in the United States of the early 1950s, when the Junior Senator from Wisconsin, Joseph R. McCarthy, feverishly hunts those whom he suspects might have any association with the Communist Party. McCarthy conducts investigative Senate hearings, acting more like a one-man committee rather than as the Chairman of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. Any criticism of McCarthy's incriminatory tactics subjects the critic to scrutiny, interrogation, and harassment.

Good Night and Good Luck opens with a retrospective speech by Ed Murrow (David Strathairn) at a dinner in his honor given by the Radio and Television News Directors Association in 1958. In his speech, Murrow reflects upon his years with CBS five years earlier when he used his weekly program, "See It Now," to challenge the McCarthy witch-hunting hearings. At that time, Murrow said, television was used "to detract, delude, amuse and insulate us. It was fat, comfortable, and complacent." In the course of around ninety minutes, the viewer is presented with back and forth scenes that alternate between CBS's news studio and offices, the neighborhood jazz bar where the news staff congregates, the private lives of studio employees, and archival McCarthy footage.

Fred Friendly (George Clooney), the producer of Murrow's "See It Now" Program, shares Murrow's passionate opposition to the toxic McCarthy hearings. The objective of their collaborative work is to awaken the public's conscience to the McCarthy-inspired growing paranoia of communist infiltration; the destructive effects of character assassinations; the impact of arbitrary, unilaterally made decisions on the lives of accused citizens; and the inherent dangers of a political system that lacks due judicial process. "See It Now"— which Murrow always ends with the phrase: "Good night, and good luck"— becomes the forum through which Murrow blends news reporting with powerful commentaries. In Murrow's actual broadcast scripts, delivered by Strathairn in persuasive fashion, the viewer is captivated by the eloquent and elegant use of the English language. He informs the public of the week's events on the Senate floor and appraises the effects of McCarthy's feigned accusations of individuals' political ideologies and supposed involvement with communist, subversive and un-American activities.

The chairman of CBS, William S. Paley (Frank Langella), initially supports Friendly and Murrow's work but remains skeptical about possible adverse effects of Murrow's commentaries on CBS. In private discussions, he shares his skepticism with the supportive Friendly and the obstinate Murrow. Paley's skepticism graduates to real concern in the face of pressure from government representatives and program sponsors. Beset by threatening external pressures and unyielding staff, Paley finds himself the principal player in a contest between the survival of CBS and that of an esteemed broadcaster. The survival of CBS depends on his administrative decision that would appease the program's critics and sponsors. Murrow's broadcasting career depends on his willingness to comply and compromise his convictions. Paley's ultimate decision to discontinue "See It Now" is a powerful sign of how television news had already become a money-making enterprise subject to external pressures.

The movie concludes with a return to Murrow's speech at the dinner party in his honor. Strathairn passionately and convincingly delivers Murrow's own words about journalism, integrity and the obligations of journalists.

In *Good Night and Good Luck,* director and co-writer George Clooney, co-writer Grant Heslov, and cinematographer Robert Elswit present the viewer with an intense historical account of one of the country's most shameful periods, and, in subtle fashion, make connections between past and present political processes, authoritarian tactics used to influence public opinion, diluted news reporting to appease powerful sponsors and resolution of administrative dilemmas that protect the organization.

The historical importance of the events portrayed in *Good Night and Good Luck* is unquestionable. Any reservations about Murrow's ability to view the events of the time objectively dissipate with the powerful effects of the archival footage. The viewer is dumbfounded by McCarthy's image on the screen, his presentation of a politically perverted ideology during a televised rebuttal and his ability to paralyze the rational thinking of so many of his fellow Senators and of most of the nation. The acting is skilled, dynamic, and captivating. Strathairn's stellar performance is electrifying and deserves the Oscar nomination he received. Paley, a giant figure at CBS, is the compassionate, tolerant and yet shrewd administrator. In an era when executive decisions are less litigious he takes decisive actions unilaterally and he performs his role superbly.

Good Night and Good Luck is a must-see movie, not only because of the impressive technical and artistic talent that it presents, but also because of its historical significance, its relevance to current events, and its thought-provoking and soul-searching content. Do not miss it.

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Special Issue

Guest Editors: Karen Smith Rotabi and Denise Gammonley

International Social Work Education Exchange: Study Abroad and International Field Placements

This special issue focuses on study abroad and international field placements, from the perspectives of students, educators, and host country facilitators. *Reflections* seeks narratives that encompass experiences in teaching, hosting individual students and student groups, personal travel logs, and curriculum design. While submissions that focus on any country or culture will be considered, particular interest will be given to developing countries and countries in transition from war and colonialism.

Narratives may address but need not be limited to the following:

- Host country social workers perspectives on their role as guide, emphasizing cross-cultural learning activities
- Host country social worker perspectives on the benefits and burdens of facilitating study abroad or international field placements
- Travel logs of students or social work faculty that tell a story about their "ah-ha" moments as they explore differences in culture, social work models, and cope with dynamic learning environments
- Social work educators' experience in facilitating study abroad, and their experience in engaging host country nationals and social work students in mutual learning activities, including challenges of language translation and interpretation
- A discussion of ethics in the international learning experience, including issues of development voyeurism
- A discussion of globalization, neo-colonialism, power, and oppression in the context of international social work education
- Application of the theory of reciprocity or exchange theory to international social work education
- Reflections highlighting the role of indigenous facilitators in the learning experience, especially those giving women in developing countries and opportunity to share their perspectives
- Reflections highlighting the incorporation of village customs such as traditional medicines, music and dance, and rites of passage into the international education experience

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Send any questions to smithkm@email.unc.edu
Deadline for submissions January 1, 2007

REFLECTIONS
NARRATIVES OF PROFESSIONAL HELPING

Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping (ISSN 1080-0220) is published quarterly by the University Press at California State University, Long Beach under the auspices of the Department of Social Work. Annual Subscription Rate: individuals, $40.00; libraries and institutions, $65.00; outside USA, add $15.00. Single copies: $10.00. Payment: check, money order, or credit card (Visa or MasterCard, please include number and expiration date). Please send to **REFLECTIONS: CSULB; 1250 Bellflower Boulevard, Long Beach, CA 90840-0902.** We remind subscribers to please immediately notify Reflections of address changes, providing both new and old addresses. Please allow six weeks for address changes to take effect.

The purpose of ***Reflections*** is to publish narratives, personal accounts that describe and explain the process of helping others and shaping social change over time. The journal seeks to build a literary tradition for critical study. It encourages stories that convey a sense of immediacy, portray practice across diverse populations and capture the range and variety of strategies and systems within the helping professions. The journal publishes stories of professional helpers such as ethicists, psychotherapists, community organizers, case and group workers, policy makers, family and child practitioners, health and mental healthcare providers; educators, researchers, and administrators in the helping professions. Historical and contemporary narratives are encouraged.

Narratives should give readers a fresh perspective about the practice of change. Narratives explain and describe events, results, conflicts, complicating actions, and how, why, and what was done. In narratives, the writer evaluates the experience, whether or not there is a resolution, and explores the meaning of the experience. Some narratives end with a coda; a perspective on what occurred.

Writing Instructions and Submission: Manuscripts are peer reviewed. Articles appropriate to the journal's purpose are reviewed anonymously by members of the Executive and Editorial Boards. Publication decisions require about two to four months. All articles are copyedited before publication.

1. Authors are expected to use APA format.
2. The manuscript length depends upon the temporal sequence of the event.
3. Include, on a separate page, a brief abstract (no more than five lines) written in the same style as the narrative.
4. Place identifying information such as name, affiliation(s), title(s), address, and phone/fax numbers **only on cover page.**
5. Send three (3) printed, double spaced hard copies of the manuscript, **set in 12 point Times New Roman** to the editor.

Upon Acceptance of the article for publication, please supply your manuscript in rich text format (RTF) on a 3.5" Windows or MS-DOS floppy disk along with one additional hard copy.

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