

SUCCESSION PLANNING AND RECRUITMENT

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PART I. UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUE

1. **Everybody is Getting Older – Understand Your Demographic Data**

Reality of an aging workforce and gaps in the leadership pipeline requires an innovative approach to attracting and preparing the next generation of leaders.

Motivation—you need to have a comprehensive understanding of your region (the demographics, the opportunities and the challenges).

- Who is attracted to the region?
- Are they interested in a rural, suburban, or urban environment?
- What is the climate and culture of the region?
- Are there internal candidates that can be groomed/prepared to step in? What can you offer to keep them there?
- What can you offer an external candidate to be attracted?
- What attracts candidates to the region?
- Where do people want to spend their career? Is it their launching point or their final destination?

2. **EXODUS OF FACULTY**

The traditional career path and length of tenure is changing.

- Previously presidents may have stayed 10-20 years and worked in possibly 1-2 institutions. Recent data shows turnover between 5-10 years with presidents working in 3 or more institutions over their career.
- Previously technical college presidents generally stayed within technical colleges, but some are now looking to the more comprehensive institutions for new opportunity.
- Heavy reliance on adjunct professors has resulted in a lack of people in the pipeline, and lack of interest in pursuing the presidency from those in the traditional pathway.
- Competing opportunities available to faculty make the presidency less desirable.
- The [2015 AACC CEO Compensation Survey](#) found that 80 percent of CEO's plan to retire in the next 10 years, and 35 percent indicated they would retire in the next five years. This will impact the competition for qualified candidates.
- IPEDS data is showing the trend towards presidency is coming more and more from nontraditional pathways (e.g., student affairs, development, workforce training, and other mid-career professionals).

3. **WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP ROLES**

The community college sector has led the country in the appointment of women to lead institutions. They tend to come from the faculty ranks or support services positions (counseling e.g.,).

- The question is, has this trend plateaued? Who is in line to replace them?
- Women are being attracted and recruited to more lucrative fields.

4. **EXODUS STATE VS. FEEDER STATE**

Consider whether Wisconsin is a state that provides opportunities for administrators to stay within the state, or whether administrators tend to exit the state for outside opportunities. (New Jersey and West Virginia tend to lose people to other states because there is not a lot of opportunity within the state. California on the other hand tends to hold onto its administrators as there are lots of opportunities to move around within the system.)

- What is the culture of the state?
- An intentional approach to professional development that includes women and minorities is an important factor.

PART II. UNDERSTANDING RETIREMENT

1. Does the retirement system attract candidates?

Some states have attractive retirement options. Retirement options can encourage people to stay and attract others to the state.

- Recent publicity in Wisconsin related to public employees may discourage potential candidates, so it is important to explain options to candidates—e.g., is it formula based?
- Some professions (military, police officers, other public servants) provide options that encourage people to leave and pursue another career that allows for a second retirement. This is a reality of some professions and does impact whether someone will stay or move on.
- Is it a state plan that is predictable and secure or is it reliant on market volatility? (When the 2008 downturn happened, many presidents wound up working longer than they had planned.

2. Why do Presidents retire when they do? What makes them reconsider?

A variety of factors impacts a president's decision to retire, among them, health, quality of life, family matters, and motivation for the job. In addition, the relationship between the president and Board of Trustees can impact one's desire to stay.

- Is the board loyal to the president?
- Is the president still excited about the job? Do they have the energy/will to finish their agenda?
- Throwing money at the president to extend them may not always be the best approach. It is a delicate balance between maintaining the current president and preparing the next generation.
- There are options to make the transition from a long-term president to new leadership smooth. One option is to hire a provost to groom for the presidency.
- In addition, you can honor the legacy of the outgoing president while taking advantage of transferring knowledge and friendships to the new leadership.
- Consider the current VP structure—are you prepared to identify new leadership?

PART III. POSITIVE STEPS FORWARD

1. Build on statewide leadership development, growing internal leaders.

Building an internal leadership program is motivating to the institution. Having a statewide program can attract VPs and deans from other states.

- Identify 15-20 individuals to participate and expose them to budgeting, planning, and other aspects of leadership.
- The positive impact of the investment is: it can help to transfer knowledge, advance a positive culture, allow different people to learn, and it permeates the institution.
- The risk is: some may leave.

2. Recruiting - be more sophisticated in recruitment strategies

Recruitment is more complex—you can no longer rely on ads and email blasts. HR departments are meant to manage staff, not recruit.

- There is a lot of competition for candidates.
- Recruitment is a labor-intensive component to the search process, and requires a combination of a preacher, a salesman, and a nun to be effective.
- A strategic recruitment effort is a must.

3. Within the law - do what you can to hang on to desirable Presidents.

State or local laws may restrict the options/incentives that can be granted.

- Understand the culture and be sensitive of the community (faculty, and community at-large)—what is acceptable.
- The board decides within the limits of the law about perks (auto, housing, health insurance, evaluation process) and incentives.
- Presidents tend to know what other compensation packages include. Note: candidates expect to come in at the level of the outgoing president.

4. Be flexible (salary bump) in hanging on to President, may be below market.

Consider your options—is a salary bump worth investing in to hold onto a long-time president? (Outgoing salary/compensation impacts the next presidency.)

- Know how to negotiate—it is a competitive market.
- Candidates will consider:
 - Family concerns—is this the right move for their family? (spouse/partner; children; extended family)
 - Quality of life (culture, location, retirement, compensation)
 - Ability to work with the Board.