Developing Academic Leaders

Cultivating the Skills of Chairs, Deans, and Other Faculty Administrators
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University Leadership Council Publication Information

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*Cultivating the Skills of Chairs, Deans, and Other Faculty Administrators*
Leadership Development Web Resource Center

As a supplement to this publication, the University Leadership Council is pleased to provide members with access to an online resource center of leadership development materials. These materials were collected during the course of over 100 research interviews with university provosts and other senior leaders, community college presidents, directors of external programs, association heads, and on-campus leadership development administrators. The resources—documents, templates, samples, and tools developed at colleges and universities across the country—are organized on the University Leadership Council’s website in two ways: by subtopic area and according to the role (e.g., chair, dean) that the materials support.

Web Resource Center Content

- Council-created resources: Summary of Off-Campus Leadership Development Programs; Guide to Assessment Resources; Selected Readings on Leadership Development
- Collateral materials, created at colleges and universities across the country, organized by subtopic area:
  - Action Learning Projects
  - Sample Application Forms
  - Case Studies
  - External Partner Selection
  - Development Planning
  - Executive Coaching
  - Hiring and Performance Management
  - Just-in-Time Support Resources
  - Marketing and Promoting Programming
  - Program Evaluation
  - Session Facilitation
- Selected materials organized by role-specific category: Chairs, Deans, High-Potential Leaders, and Faculty and Staff Managers

The Web Resource Center can be accessed through: http://www.educationadvisoryboard.com/ulc

Multiple Uses for Leadership Development Materials

- Individual faculty members access tools for assessing leadership competency and readiness to determine whether to pursue academic leadership track
- Program directors consult case studies and action learning project resources when creating content for homegrown leadership development program
- Deans refer to just-in-time support resource examples when creating online resource portal for new and existing chairs
- Provost accesses executive coaching materials to better understand coaching models and provide new deans with coaching resources
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New Challenges, Higher Stakes…and a Shallower Pool

1. Much More Than Managing the Status Quo
   Academic leadership roles today are different and more challenging than in decades past; rather than just maintaining the status quo, current leaders must allocate scarce resources, direct complex change initiatives, and make influential decisions at a rapid pace.

2. Basic Management Skills No Longer Enough
   Managing in the present environment necessitates that academic leaders at all levels possess advanced leadership skills; in addition to more basic communication and conflict management skills, modern academic leaders must also be able to set vision, think systemically, and drive results.

3. New Regulatory Requirements Further Strain Administrator Capacity
   Accountability initiatives aimed at measuring the quality and cost-effectiveness of higher education have increased the administrative burdens on academic leaders at all levels of the institution. In addition to having their previous responsibilities, academic leaders must now devise robust data collection systems, closely monitoring these processes to ensure that accountability information is collected and correctly reported to various government entities and accrediting bodies.

4. Higher Stakes Attached to Leadership Missteps
   The risks at all levels have also never been greater. In addition to dealing with multiplying legal land mines and increasing faculty-administration tensions, academic leaders today must contend with an unprecedented level of visibility. Whereas in past decades, news of an error or scandal would spread slowly via word of mouth, now that story can be blogged about or tweeted out to a national audience within hours.

5. Pool of Potential Academic Leaders Getting Shallower
   The percentage of faculty at four-year institutions who are tenured or tenure-track is decreasing, as is the percentage of full-time faculty at two-year institutions. The shrinking pool of potential academic leaders renders it even more important for institutions to invest in the development of those individuals who have an aptitude and willingness to take on leadership roles.

Prevailing Leadership Development Approaches Limited

6. Corporate-World Services Often Miss Mark
   Provosts who have tried using trainers or consultants from the corporate world for leadership development report that their services seldom translate well into the higher education context. Corporate sector approaches and strategies are often difficult to convert into the higher education environment, where shared governance and the tenure system can impede implementation. Additionally, any use of corporate jargon by presenters will cause faculty to quickly tune out.

7. A Drop in the Bucket: Off-Campus Programs Not the Solution
   National leadership development seminars organized by membership organizations and consortia range in value and focus, and the number of new-in-position academic leaders who stand to benefit from these programs far exceeds the number of seats available in national programs annually.
8. **Missing the Institutional Context**  
Off-campus programs miss the institution-specific context, which is often critical for leaders to fully understand how particular issues manifest themselves on campus. Also missing is the opportunity for participants to build key relationships with colleagues from across campus.

9. **Goal of This Study: Cost-Effective Excellence in Institution-Based Leadership Development**  
- Strong foundational skills for early-career department chairs
- Just-in-time support for common but unpredictable high-risk situations
- Individualized support and rich, structured feedback for deans
- Inclusion of non-faculty leaders to achieve scale and facilitate organizational change
- High-potential leaders program for long-term succession planning

I. **Cultivating Core Leadership Skills in Department Chairs**

10. **Chairs on the Front Lines of Leadership**  
Chairs make a great majority of institutional decisions; one study concluded that 80 percent of institutional decisions take place at the departmental level. Whether institutions achieve major academic affairs goals—improving retention, containing costs, boosting faculty productivity, building new revenue-generating programs—hinges on countless decisions happening at the departmental level.

11. **But Often Thrown Straight into the Deep End**  
Yet most chairs receive surprisingly little preparation for the role, especially in contrast to the preparation provided to managers with a similar level of responsibility in other sectors. Outside of academia, leaders typically begin getting supervisory experience early in their careers, with ongoing, formal support and feedback to assist them in developing as managers. In contrast, faculty often spend 15 or more years in their profession before becoming chair, and the chair role is often the first time they hold major management responsibilities.

12. **When Offered, Chair Training Too Focused on “Administrivia”**  
While only a small fraction of chairs receive any formal training before moving into their role, progressive institutions provide new chairs with more than just a few days of orientation. And while most institutions that offer training for new chairs tend to focus on policies and procedures, best-practice institutions instead help chairs build the core leadership skills critical for succeeding in the position.

13. **Focus Program on Building Skills, Not Processes or Policies**  
Best-practice programming for chairs differs from typical training in three key areas:

   - Content is focused on building skills, not knowledge of policies and procedures
   - Duration is 20 to 40 contact hours spread across months, not a one-time training
   - Delivery is grounded in the tenets of adult learning theory, not overly didactic

14. **Successful Mentoring Difficult to Engineer, More Difficult to Scale**  
The majority of strong chairs state that having a great mentor was critical to their success. However, in any organization it is difficult to engineer productive and positive one-on-one mentoring relationships. Thus, pairing all new chairs with a good mentor match, year after year, is nearly impossible.
15. **Support New Chairs Through a Facilitated Peer Mentoring Program**
Best-practice institutions provide all new chairs with the individualized and ongoing support that characterizes a productive mentoring relationship through a facilitated peer mentoring structure. Peer mentoring brings together a cohort of eight to ten new chairs for a series of monthly, confidential conversations. These meetings create a safe, supportive environment where chairs can discuss the challenges of their role while establishing collegial relationships with other new chairs from across the institution.

16. **Seven Key Components of Successful Peer Mentoring Program:**
- Restricted participation
- Absolute confidentiality
- Monthly commitment
- Informal, scheduled after work hours
- Focused on discussion about chairs’ challenges
- Prepared agenda as contingency plan
- Facilitator with experience as chair

II. **Delivering Just-in-Time Support to Department Chairs**

17. **Procedural Information Either Completely Irrelevant…or Absolutely Vital**
Department chairs need policy and procedural information to be able to do their job on a daily basis, and to handle unpredictable situations when they arise, but the volume of important—or potentially important—information is enormous. Procedural information is most useful when accessible to chairs on a “just-in-time” basis, rather than conveyed all at once during a beginning-of-year orientation.

18. **Offer Just-in-Time Support for Common but Unpredictable High-Risk Situations**
The problems chairs encounter are non-predictable, but they are usually not unique. After interviewing successful chairs about the major challenges they encountered during their first years in the role, the University of Missouri System created a compendium of common issues, paired with actionable guidance that chairs can reference online if and when a particular situation arises.

19. **Create a “One-Stop-Shop” Webpage for Chairs**
Because chairs benefit from quick and easy access to policy and procedural information, Kansas State University has created a comprehensive resource portal where chairs can go for information relevant to the chair role. On this “one-stop-shop” page, chairs can access resources such as the administrator’s handbook, important dates and events, labor-saving forms and templates, and recommended readings.

20. **Embed Sample Correspondence Within the Chair Handbook**
Florida State University’s chair handbook contains sample templates for common correspondence. Communications for events such as job offers, annual performance evaluations, and nonrenewal of appointments are included in the appendix of the handbook.
21. **Push Information Out to Chairs Electronically, at the Moment They Need It**
   In addition to making it easy for chairs to seek out the information they need, best-practice institutions also actively push out policy and procedural information to chairs during the times they are likely to need it. These e-mail blasts contain information regarding upcoming seasonal calendar events, such as course scheduling, planning on-campus interviews, and handling departmental retirements.

III. **Providing Customized Development Resources for Deans**

22. **Deans Require a Different Approach**
   For a number of reasons, the leadership development approaches that work best for chairs, such as classroom-based instruction and peer mentoring, are not the best strategies for supporting decanal development:
   - **Scale:** Even at a large university, only a few new deans step into the role each year.
   - **Unique Needs:** Deans have usually had significant leadership experience before assuming the role, and thus their strengths and development needs tend to be less uniform than those of new chairs. The dean role can also vary significantly from college to college, even within the same institution.
   - **Competition:** Inherent competition among deans makes creating an environment where deans share openly and work collaboratively with other deans more difficult.

23. **Provide Deans with a Self-Service Guide to Development Resources**
   Because deans’ development needs are more individualized, leadership development and support for deans can be more self-directed. A self-service resource guide provides deans with an overview of the leadership development resources that are available locally and nationally, including: online modules, self-assessment tools, off-campus training programs, and recommended readings.

24. **Executive Coaching Is for Strong Performers, Not Remediation**
   In sectors outside of academia, executive coaches have been used for decades to supplement the coaching and guidance provided by mentors and supervisors. Though in the past many organizations used executive coaches for remediation purposes, today executive coaches are typically hired to help promising leaders get better.

25. **Coaching Faces Cultural and Logistical Hurdles in Higher Ed**
   Many senior leaders in higher education are unaware of executive coaching; others believe the practice belongs in the corporate world, or is solely for low performers. Still others may have interest in working with an executive coach, but may be concerned about how the decision will be perceived by others. Finally, logistical obstacles may impede leaders from working with coaches.

26. **Education and Support Structures Reduce Barriers to Acceptance**
   Higher education institutions that have used executive coaches to good effect with deans and other senior leaders have made a concerted effort to educate all leaders about executive coaching and how it is used. These institutions have also put in place support structures to reduce the logistical burdens on leaders who are seeking a coach.
27. **Higher Ed Experience Is Most Important Coach Selection Criterion**
Leaders from academia who have contracted with executive coaches report that experience within higher education is the most important factor to consider when choosing an executive coach. The human resource departments of local companies and members of the university’s governing board can both serve as referral sources for effective coaches.

28. **Coaching Isn't Cheap, but Can Pay High Dividends**
With executive coaching fees averaging $300 to $500 per hour nationally, coaching is not an inexpensive option. However, at institutions where executive coaches have been used to accelerate the performance of senior leaders—many of whom have purview over millions of dollars of faculty time and institutional resources—the investment in executive coaches has proven to be worthwhile.

29. **Use Periodic Review as Opportunity to Provide Comprehensive Feedback to Deans**
Reasoning that more detailed information on decanal performance would benefit the institution and the deans themselves, the University of Texas-San Antonio reformulated the decanal periodic review process to include more robust feedback from a broader audience.

30. **System Collects Richer Information, Produces More Actionable Feedback**
In the new system, the feedback that respondents submit is aligned with predetermined areas of decanal performance, such as planning and budget management. A range of stakeholders, including all faculty and staff in the college, can contribute their feedback to a dean’s periodic review via online survey.

### IV. Scaling Leadership Development to Reach All Leaders

31. **Going Beyond Just Academic Leaders**
For reasons of both scale and mission, institutions may choose to selectively expand leadership development initiatives across the entire enterprise, including both academic and non-academic leaders. By design, these programs bring together faculty and staff from the academic affairs division with leaders from the student affairs and administration and finance divisions of the institution. This study profiles three case institutions that expanded leadership development programs to include non-academic leaders.

32. **To Provide Management Fundamentals for All Supervisors: Core and Elective Leadership Modules**
In one case, administrators at a profiled institution developed a certificate program that supervisors complete in modular fashion. The year-long program includes approximately 60 hours of leadership and management content, provided through modules that are three to six hours in length. Modules are designated as “core” and “elective” so supervisors can work toward a leadership certification by completing a set of required and optional courses.

33. **Reaching a Critical Mass at Low Cost**
The modular approach has proven to be effective for reaching a critical mass of managers at a large institution. Costs can be contained by utilizing preexisting faculty, staff, and administrators to teach course modules as part of their “service” requirement to the institution.
34. **To Prepare for Organizational Change Initiatives: Cohorts of Key Leaders**
   The two other case study institutions adopted a cohort-based approach to scaling leadership development across the institution. For example, Rice University developed a year-long program for cohorts of 25 leaders as part of the institution’s ambitious plan to transform itself across Rice’s second century of operation.

35. **Training Linked to Strategic Goals**
   Participants in Rice’s program are selected based on their ability to enact institutional change, and each cohort is composed of leaders from a range of departments and offices within the institution. The program’s curriculum, which was developed by an executive education expert from Rice’s business school, is aimed at building in faculty and staff the skills they will need to enact change on an organizational level.

36. **To Improve Communication Across the Institution: Cohorts of All Managers**
   Centralia Community College developed a campus-wide, cohort-based approach to leadership development. Data from Centralia’s climate survey showed that the majority of faculty and staff felt cross-campus communication was poor, prompting the institution to develop a campus-wide program.

37. **Possible on a Tight Budget**
   Different than Rice, Centralia launched its year-long program quickly and on a very tight budget. Instead of contracting with an outside firm to develop curriculum, Centralia’s vice president of human resources developed the curriculum framework himself, drawing on his own experience with leadership development workshops and developing the content for each session on month-by-month basis.

38. **Sustain Cohort Programming Through Partnerships with Nearby Institutions**
   Instead of suspending the cohort program after a critical mass of the institution’s managers had been through it, Centralia instead opted to partner with nearby peer institutions to offer the program. By banding together with neighboring institutions, Centralia was able to preserve the continuity of the annual program and further cut costs.

V. **Preparing Top Talent for Succession to Senior Roles**

39. **Classic Succession Management Not Transferable to Academia**
   Corporate-world succession management, which involves pinpointing future leadership gaps and then identifying and grooming talent to fill those specific positions, cannot be easily transported into higher education. The flat and siloed organizational structure of colleges and universities makes identifying both future vacancies and potential successors difficult. Even when successors are identified, few institutions have the necessary structures in place to support their development for future roles.

40. **Prepare High-Potential Leaders for Senior Roles Through Selective Cohort Program**
   One component of succession planning that does transfer well to academia, and that is being used with success by a growing number of colleges and universities, are high-potential development programs or “Hi-Po” programs.
41. **Highly Selective Admissions**
   In best-practice programs for high-potential leaders, candidate selection is very rigorous, reserved for the top 5 to 10 percent of emerging leaders. Hi-Po participants are selected based both on their current job performance and their potential for senior leadership; individuals who are strong performers, but who lack the interest, drive, or abilities to succeed in high-level leadership positions, are selected out during the admissions process.

42. **Preparation for Senior-Most Roles**
   Successful Hi-Po programs focus on skills critical to future leadership positions. While some attention is paid to more fundamental leadership skills associated with achieving results through others, the majority of programming centers on the skills needed to translate strategy into action, a key challenge of senior roles.

43. **No Cutting Corners**
   Hi-Po development programs are defined by major investments of institutional funds and participant time. Program resources, perks, and communications signal to participants—and to the broader university community—that the institution values rising leaders. Program participants may receive over 100 hours of professional development across the year, kicked off by a week-long intensive and punctuated by regular cohort meetings.

44. **Key Components of Effective High-Potential Development Program**
   - Highly selective admissions
   - Cohorts of 8 to 15 Hi-Po leaders
   - Content focused on building senior leadership skills
   - Minimum of 40 to 60 contact hours with cohort
   - Program components and perks signal major investment by institution in rising leaders

45. **Leadership Development Web Resource Center**
   As a supplement to this publication, the University Leadership Council is pleased to provide members with access to an online resource center of leadership development materials. The materials—documents, templates, samples, and tools developed at colleges and universities across the country—are available for review and download at [www.educationadvisoryboard.com/ulc](http://www.educationadvisoryboard.com/ulc).
   Organized to assist members in developing and implementing various components of on-campus leadership development programming, the resource center includes materials on:
   - Action learning projects
   - Case studies
   - Just-in-time support resources
   - Executive coaching
   - Hiring and performance management
   - Marketing and promotion
   - Program evaluation
   - Session facilitation
These diagnostic questions reflect the essential ingredients of approaches used by best-practice institutions. Members may use them to determine if the full range of best practices is being used on their campuses and to evaluate whether absences represent an opportunity for investment or action.

I. Cultivating Core Leadership Skills in Department Chairs

1. Does the institution offer new department chairs training focused on building core leadership skills, rather than conveying policy and procedural information? □ □
2. Does this training consist of 20 to 40 hours of ongoing development, spanning 6 to 12 months? □ □
3. Do new department chairs meet regularly for confidential, facilitated discussion of common challenges? □ □
4. Is participation in these meetings restricted to a facilitator and a cohort of 8 to 15 chairs? □ □
5. Is the facilitator a former chair who is a highly skilled manager of group discussions? □ □
6. Does this meeting occur in an informal setting outside of typical working hours? □ □

If you answered “No” to any of the above questions, please turn to:

Practice #1: Year-Long Skills-Focused Curriculum .................................................. 19
Practice #2: Facilitated Peer Mentoring ................................................................. 23

II. Delivering Just-in-Time Support to Department Chairs

1. Does the institution provide a “survival guide” to new department chairs which includes detailed, actionable guidance for a range of problems that new chairs are likely to encounter? □ □
2. Has the institution created an online resource portal where chairs can access all information specific to the chair role in a single place? □ □
3. Does this portal include resources such as a list of important dates and events, frequently used chair documents (e.g., chair handbook), an institution-wide directory of department chairs, and recommended readings for chairs? □ □
4. Does the institution’s chair handbook include templates for common correspondence (e.g., performance evaluations, nonrenewal of appointment, etc.)? □ □
5. Does the institution actively push out policy and procedural information to chairs, via e-mail, related to upcoming events? □ □
6. Do these electronic pushes contain both reminders about deadlines and proven strategies for issues such as managing course scheduling and writing job descriptions? □ □

If you answered “No” to any of the above questions, please turn to:

Practice #3: Minefield Survival Guide ................................................................. 36
Practice #4: Comprehensive Resource Portal ..................................................... 39
Practice #5: Leadership Communication Templates ............................................. 40
Practice #6: Event-Triggered Information Pushes ............................................... 41
III. Providing Customized Development Resources for Deans

1. Does the institution provide deans with a guide to the range of local and national resources that exist to support their development? [ ] [ ]

2. Does this guide include comprehensive information on resources for deans, such as off-campus training programs and assessment tools, such that deans can customize an individualized development approach for themselves based on their unique needs and interests? [ ] [ ]

3. Does the institution provide executive coaching resources to deans? [ ] [ ]

4. Are key constituents educated about the purposes and methods of executive coaching through brochures and collateral pieces? [ ] [ ]

5. Has the institution created support structures, such as a prescreened list of recommended executive coaches, that reduce the administrative burden on deans interested in working with a coach? [ ] [ ]

6. Are deans’ periodic evaluations aligned with predefined strategic imperatives? [ ] [ ]

7. Are a range of stakeholders able to submit feedback on a dean’s performance for the review? [ ] [ ]

8. Is feedback on decanal performance collected via an online survey instrument that gathers both quantitative and qualitative information? [ ] [ ]

9. Does the dean receive a detailed post-review report which includes average scores for predetermined performance areas, as well as qualitative comments? [ ] [ ]

If you answered “No” to any of the above questions, please turn to:

Practice #7: Decanal Development Resource Guide ........................................ 47
Practice #8: Institution-Sponsored Executive Coaching ..................................... 48
Practice #9: Open-Participation Feedback Process ............................................. 56

IV. Scaling Leadership Development to Reach All Leaders

1. To bring all supervisors up to baseline level on management fundamentals, does the institution offer a suite of leadership modules to all managers (academic and non-academic)? [ ] [ ]

2. Can supervisors work toward a leadership certification by completing a set of required and optional courses? [ ] [ ]

3. Does the certificate program utilize preexisting resources, such as business school faculty and HR staff, to administer the program and teach modules? [ ] [ ]

4. To prepare for major organizational change initiatives, does the institution offer cohort-based programming for key leaders from across the institution? [ ] [ ]

5. Are these leaders selected based on their ability to implement vision and strategy? [ ] [ ]

6. Is the curriculum for this program linked directly to goals in the institution’s strategic plan? [ ] [ ]

If you answered “No” to any of the above questions, please turn to:

Practice #10: Core and Elective Leadership Modules ........................................ 63
Practice #11: Cohort-Based Programming ......................................................... 68
V. Preparing Top Talent for Succession to Senior Roles

1. Does the institution offer a year-long development program for a small number of the institution's highest-trajectory individuals? □ □

2. Is the program distinguished by a highly selective admissions process that considers candidates’ current job performance as well as their potential for senior leadership? □ □

3. Does the program focus on developing the advanced leadership skills necessary for success in senior leadership positions? □ □

4. Is the size of each cohort limited to 15 participants; does it meet regularly as a group and foster connections between cohort members that will last beyond the program year? □ □

5. Does the manner in which the program is resourced, administered, and communicated signal to participants, and the broader community, that future senior leaders are highly valued at the institution? □ □

If you answered “No” to any of the above questions, please turn to:
Practice #12: High-Potential (Hi-Po) Development Program .......................... 87
## Focusing Investment on Critical Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chairs</th>
<th>Deans</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 Cultivating Core Leadership Skills</td>
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<td>#9 Open-Participation Feedback Process</td>
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### Elevating Leadership Across the Institution

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<th>All Leaders</th>
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<tr>
<td>#10 Core and Elective Leadership Modules</td>
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<td>#11 Cohort-Based Programming</td>
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### Cultivating Top Talent

<table>
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<td>#12 High-Potential (Hi-Po) Development Program</td>
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Developing Academic Leaders
When the American Council on Education’s (ACE) CAO Census was published in 2009, one particular finding captured the higher education press’ attention: only 30 percent of the 1,700 chief academic officers (CAOs) surveyed for the report stated that they intend to seek a position as president of an institution.

Looming Crisis in Higher Ed Leadership

The CAO Census: A National Profile of Chief Academic Officers

“Even though ACE data on the presidency show that the most common path to that position for first-time presidents is through the CAO position…over two thirds of CAOs are not interested in becoming presidents or undecided about the position.”

CAOs Intending to Seek Presidency

n=1,715 provosts at four- and two-year institutions

30%

The headline of the Inside Higher Ed’s article about the report’s release read, “Happy but Not Looking to Be Chief,” and a number of articles that ran in The Chronicle and Inside Higher Ed across 2009 and 2010 warned that the United States is facing a “looming crisis,” as most provosts are not interested in becoming presidents.
However, when examined more closely, the data from *The CAO Census* tells a different story. While 45 percent of the CAOs surveyed for the report stated that they did not intend to seek the presidency, a full 25 percent indicated that they were “undecided.” Viewed from another angle, a headline about the report could read “Majority of Provosts Definitely or Potentially Interested in Becoming President.”

**On Closer Look, a Different Story**

*Majority of CAOs Definitely or Potentially Interested in Becoming President*

CAOs “Intending to Seek” or “Undecided” About College Presidency  
n=1,715 provosts at four- and two-year institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intend to Seek Presidency or Undecided</th>
<th>Do Not Intend to Seek Presidency</th>
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<tr>
<td>55%</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intend to Seek Presidency or Undecided</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>N=45%</th>
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<tr>
<td>30% Intend</td>
<td>25%</td>
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In fact, data from an ACE report published in 2008 shows that, between 1986 and 2006, the share of presidents coming from CAO roles actually increased, from 23 to 31 percent.

**CAOs Becoming More Likely to Assume Presidency**

![Bar chart showing Presidents' Immediate Prior Position (1986-2006)]

Rather than a crisis at the top of the leadership rungs, Council research suggests that the greater leadership emergency in higher education is occurring across the middle and lower portions of the organizational chart, impacting academic leaders such as chairs and deans. And, Council research indicates that, rather than experiencing a “looming” crisis, higher education is actually in a leadership crisis right now.

**Imploding at the Bottom, Not the Top**

- Higher education’s leadership crisis not within top ranks
- Crisis actually occurring now, within dean, chair, and faculty leadership ranks

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
Today’s academic leaders must allocate scarce resources, direct complex change initiatives, and make influential decisions rapidly. Managing in this environment necessitates that leaders possess advanced leadership skills: setting vision, thinking systemically, and driving results. Additionally, accountability initiatives aimed at measuring the quality and cost-effectiveness of higher education have increased the administrative burdens on leaders at all levels.

### Unequipped for the New Landscape of Higher Education

*Responding to a Fast-Changing Environment (vs. Stewarding the Status Quo)*

#### Challenges Now Facing Academic Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Austerity</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Heightened Risk</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Reallocating diminishing resources</td>
<td>• Defining and demonstrating effectiveness to internal and external stakeholders</td>
<td>• Multiplication of legal landmines</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Maximizing efficiency</td>
<td>• Prioritizing investments</td>
<td>• Heighted tensions between faculty and administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Generating new funding</td>
<td>• Increased reporting burden</td>
<td>• Decline of civility</td>
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#### Skills Critical to Success

- Strategic Resource Allocation
- Managing Change and Transition
- Anticipating Financial Impact of Decisions
- Fundraising Skills
- Setting and Advancing Long-term Goals
- Aligning Unit and Institutional Objectives
- Data-Driven Leadership
- Instilling Accountability
- Dealing with Difficult People
- Managing Conflict
- Facilitating Teamwork
- Negotiation

All of these new challenges are occurring in an environment of heightened risk. Academic leaders today are working in an atmosphere of multiplying legal land mines and increasing faculty-administration tensions, all while contending with an unprecedented level of visibility due the increasingly rapid news cycle and the rise of social media outlets.
Meanwhile, the percentage of faculty at four-year institutions who are tenured or tenure-track is decreasing, as is the percentage of full-time faculty at two-year institutions. The shrinking pool of potential academic leaders renders it even more important for institutions to invest in the development of those individuals who have an aptitude and willingness to take on leadership roles.

**Pool Getting Shallower**

**Faculty at Four-Year Institutions**

- 2004
- Not tenured or no tenure system: 48%
- 44 years or younger: 17%
- 45 to 54 years: 16%
- 55 to 64 years: 5%
- 65 years or older: 5%

**Faculty at Two-Year Institutions**

- 2003
- Part time
  - 44 years or younger: 11%
  - 45 to 54 years: 13%
  - 55 to 64 years: 12%
  - 65 years or older: 2%

- Full time, 38%
  - 45 to 54 years: 12%
  - 55 to 64 years: 16%
  - 65 years or older: 5%

Of course, a booming national and international industry in leadership development does exist. Hundreds of firms large and small offer consulting and on-site training programs to corporations, and to public sector and nonprofit organizations. In the United States alone, more than $56 billion dollars are spent annually on training and professional development within the corporate sector.

A Booming Industry in Leadership Development

$56 B Annual U.S. Spending on Training in Corporate Sector

However, provosts who have tried using trainers or consultants from the corporate world report that their services seldom translate well into the higher education context. Corporate sector approaches and strategies are often difficult to convert into the higher education environment, where shared governance and the tenure system can impede implementation. Additionally, any use of corporate jargon by presenters causes faculty to quickly lose interest.

Lost in Translation

Services Designed for Corporate World Seldom Succeed in Higher Education

- **Applicability**: Recommendations incompatible with shared governance, institutional culture
- **Culture**: Corporate jargon alienates faculty
- **Credibility**: Facilitators unable to establish credibility and rapport

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
And while there are a number of off-campus seminars and training programs created solely to develop higher education leaders, these offerings are limited in two ways. First, the number of new-in-position academic leaders who stand to benefit from these programs far exceeds the number of seats available each year in off-campus programs held across the country.

**A Drop in the Bucket**

*Seminars with Higher Ed Focus Not Able to Reach Critical Mass*

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<th>Total</th>
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<td>50,000</td>
<td>10,000-12,000</td>
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<td>≈1,000</td>
<td>Seats in Off-Campus Training</td>
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Secondly, off-campus training programs miss the institution-specific context which is often so critical for leaders to fully understand how particular issues manifest themselves on campus. Also missing from off-campus training is the state and regional funding context, as well as the opportunity for participants to build key relationships with colleagues from across campus.

**Missing the Key Institutional Context**

- Relationships with Leaders Across Campus
- Knowledge of Institution’s Administrative Culture, Key Processes
- Scope, Manifestation of Various Higher Ed Challenges on Campus
- State and Regional Funding Context

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
For all of these reasons, the higher education industry is moving where academic medical centers and hospitals went about 10 years ago, and where the corporate sector has been for decades: developing in-house programming to grow, support, and advance leaders.

The goal of this study is to help member institutions achieve cost-effective excellence in institution-based leadership development while steering clear of the avoidable pitfalls experienced by other institutions and while making the best use of limited leadership development resources.
I. Cultivating Core Leadership Skills in Department Chairs

Practice #1: Year-Long Skills-Focused Curriculum
Practice #2: Facilitated Peer Mentoring
Developing Academic Leaders

Focusing Investment on Critical Roles

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Elevating Leadership Across the Institution

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# Diagnostic Questions

These diagnostic questions reflect the essential ingredients of approaches used by best-practice institutions. Members may use them to determine if the full range of best practices is being used on their campuses and to evaluate whether absences represent an opportunity for investment or action.

## I. Cultivating Core Leadership Skills in Department Chairs

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- Practice #1: Year-Long Skills-Focused Curriculum .................................................. 19
- Practice #2: Facilitated Peer Mentoring ................................................................... 23*
Chairs make a great majority of institutional decisions; one study concluded that 80 percent of institutional decisions take place at the departmental level. The achievement of major academic affairs goals—improving retention, containing costs, boosting faculty productivity, building new revenue-generating programs—hinges on countless decisions happening at the department level.

On the Front Lines

Critical Areas of Chair Impact

- Faculty Hiring, Mentoring, and Retention
- Adjunct Hiring
- Curriculum Development
- Advising
- Program Requirements
- Graduation Rates
- Course and Room Scheduling
- Budget

Running a Small Company

“Chairs are essentially running a small company. They are responsible for as many as 30 to 40 full-time faculty, a dozen staff members, several hundred students, millions of dollars of research funds, and several millions of dollars in operating budgets. Why are we preparing them like they are going to be running a lemonade stand?”

Senior Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
University of Missouri System

Most chairs receive surprisingly little preparation for the role, especially in contrast to the preparation provided to managers with a similar level of responsibility in other sectors. Faculty often spend 15 or more years in their profession before becoming chair, and the chair role is often the first time they have held major management responsibilities.

Research by Dr. Walter Gmelch, author of *Department Chair Leadership Skills* and expert on the department chair role, indicates that only three percent of chairs receive any formal training before entering the role. In contrast, those in leadership roles outside of academia typically begin getting supervisory experience early in their careers, with the addition of ongoing, formal support and feedback to assist them in developing as managers.
While only a small fraction of chairs receive any training upon assuming the role, those institutions that do offer training for new chairs tend to provide only a few days of orientation at most, focused primarily on imparting information about policies and procedural information rather than building the core leadership skills chairs need to succeed.

**Administrivia Overload**

**Policies and Procedures the Typical Focus of Chair Training**

- Overview of Chair Responsibilities
- Leading University Support Staff
- Managing Personnel Records and Files
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures
- Work Life Balance
- Diversity Training
- Compliance Reports
- Faculty Hiring
- Faculty Evaluations
- Course Scheduling
- Budgeting Procedures
- Legal Policies and Issues

Typical Chair Training

- 95%
- <5%

Skill Development

Policies and Procedures

Source: Education Advisory Board Interviews and Analysis.
Practice #1: Year-Long Skills-Focused Curriculum

One of the primary ways in which best-practice programming for chairs differs from typical training is in the content that is covered. Exemplar leadership development programming focuses predominantly on building core leadership skills that chairs need to succeed in their role, only briefly touching on policy and procedural information.

**Shifting Focus to Skill Development**

The skills most critical at the chair level fall into two broad buckets: 1) managing and working with people and 2) advancing unit-level and institutional goals.
The second way in which best-practice programming for chairs differs from typical practice is duration. While typical programming for new chairs is limited to a few days of orientation at the start of the year, the best-practice approach is to develop core leadership skills over multiple sessions spanning the year. At minimum, new chairs should receive 20 hours of training devoted to cultivating core leadership skills.

**More Is More**  
*Allowing Time for Skill Development*

**Not Just a One-Time Inoculation**

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<th>Typical Chair Training</th>
<th>Best Practice Approach</th>
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**Typical Chair Training**
- Half- to two-day session at beginning of year
- Limited contact hours, sessions typically 3 to 12 hours in length

**Best Practice Approach**
- 2 to 3 sessions held across 6 to 12 months
- Each session held over multiple days
- Minimum of 20 contact hours across the year, ideally 40+ contact hours over the year

When sessions are spread across months, chairs have an opportunity to digest what they are learning and to begin applying their new skills to the challenges of the job.
The third way in which best-practice programming for chairs differs from typical practice is content delivery. Best-practice institutions design sessions based on adult learning theory, including interactive case studies and simulations that require participants to practice managing people and advancing goals. These sessions include a range of activities and learning formats to engage participants and train them in new habits of mind.

### Engaging Participants, Delivering Value

#### Common Failure Paths

**Overly Didactic**
- Single lecture may span most or all of session
- Few opportunities for interaction with facilitator, other participants

**Minimally Planned**
- Little attention given to value, variety, sequencing of activities
- Session given over to unstructured discussion, extemporaneous sharing of personal experiences
- Overreliance on participants or volunteer panelists to drive conversation

#### Best Practice Approach

**Carefully Planned and Highly Interactive**
- Pedagogy based in adult learning theories
- Sequence of activities carefully planned to achieve specific learning outcomes
- Sessions are highly interactive, employ range of activities that promote interaction with facilitator and among participants
  - Simulations and role play
  - Case studies and progressive cases
  - Dyad, small-group, and whole-group discussions
- Frequent use of lecturettes, but no extended lecture

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.

For institutions without the scale to sustain an on-campus program for new chairs, the Council has compiled a list of off-campus leadership development programs. This list, and a wealth of other materials that can assist members in implementing leadership development programming, is available on the Council’s Leadership Development Web Resource Center, located at www.educationadvisoryboard.com/ulc.
The majority of strong department chairs state that having a great mentor was critical to their success. However, it is difficult to engineer even one productive and positive one-on-one mentoring relationship. Thus, pairing all new chairs with a good mentor match, year after year, is extremely hard.

**Successful Mentoring Difficult to Engineer, More Difficult to Scale**

**Critical Elements to Successful Mentoring Relationship**

- Mentor seriously invested in mentees’ success
- Mentee likes and respects the mentor
- Mentor’s skills align with mentee’s development needs
- Both parties commit to regular contact

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
Practice #2: Facilitated Peer Mentoring

The University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill has devised a method for providing all new chairs with the individualized and ongoing support that characterizes a good mentoring relationship. UNC brings together a cohort of 8 to 10 new chairs for a series of monthly, confidential conversations over dinner.

Scaling the Mentoring Experience

Primary Objectives

- Create a safe and supportive environment for discussing challenges of the chair role
- Establish collegial relationships with other chairs

Seven Critical Program Elements

- Restricted Participation
- Monthly Commitment
- Contrast to Regular Work Time
- Absolute Confidentiality
- Primary Focus: Facilitated Discussion on Chairs’ Challenges
- Prepared Agenda
- Strategic Facilitation Critical to Success

Facilitated by a former chair, these meetings take place in a safe, supportive environment where chairs can discuss the challenges of their role while establishing collegial relationships with other new chairs from across the institution.
A large part of the facilitated peer mentoring program’s success is contingent on the discussions occurring in a supportive and open environment. Creating this environment requires that participation is restricted to the cohort of 8 to 10 new chairs, plus the facilitator. Also important is establishing ground rules ensuring absolute confidentiality, so chairs feel comfortable sharing their challenges with one another.

### Creating the Right Environment

---

**Four Active Ingredients**

- **Restricted Participation**
  - Participation limited to facilitator plus cohort of 8 to 10 new (or reappointed) chairs

- **Monthly Commitment**
  - Monthly contact critical for continuity, group cohesion
  - If more often than monthly, becomes too great an imposition on chairs

- **Absolute Confidentiality**
  - Nothing discussed in meeting to be shared beyond the group
  - No names used when discussing departmental challenges

- **Contrast to Regular Work Time**
  - Scheduled after formal work hours
  - Wine served, followed by seated dinner

---

The frequency with which sessions occur, and the time during which meetings are held, can also impact the effectiveness of a peer mentoring program for chairs. UNC schedules the monthly sessions and holds them in the evenings, over dinner with appetizers and wine, to avoid inevitable daytime scheduling conflicts and to set a tone that is different-in-kind than the regular work day.
Also important is balancing the content of each mentoring session so it is participant-driven, yet thoughtfully structured and facilitated. The primary focus of every meeting is a facilitated discussion of the chairs’ current challenges. However, once the group’s issues have been addressed, focus shifts to an agenda that the facilitator has prepared in advance to ensure that the meeting remains a good use of participants’ time.

**Participant-Focused, Yet Carefully Planned**

**Facilitated Discussion on Participants’ Challenges**
- Participant share-out is first agenda item, 30 to 45 minutes
- Each chair given three minutes to report on current challenges, propose burning issues for discussion
- Issues raised by chairs given primary importance
- Through facilitated discussion, chairs get suggestions for future action and feedback

**Prepared Agenda of Discussion Topics**
- For every meeting, facilitator prepares agenda focused on issues common to new chairs
- Some or all components may remain untouched, but agenda’s existence ensures entire meeting provides high value

### Monthly Program Schedule

- **5:30-6:15 pm**
  - Mingling and Appetizers
- **6:15-7:00 pm**
  - Dinner and Share-Out Session
- **7:00-8:00 pm**
  - Facilitated Discussion

Monthly sessions begin with wine and appetizers; during this time each participant takes three to five minutes to talk about any current challenges, brag about recent accomplishments, and/or propose a discussion topic. The share-out session typically extends into dinner, and—depending on the topics that surface—the group may spend the remainder of the evening discussing these issues.
Though the discussion at each monthly meeting is determined primarily by the pressing issues that participants bring to the table, over the years some topics have come up repeatedly.

**Discussion Targets Pressing Issues for New Chairs**

- What suggestions do you have for dealing with difficult departmental interactions?
- What is the best way to allocate merit salary increases that align department criteria with unit-level goals?
- What advice do you have for evaluating tenure-track faculty performance?
- How do you recruit and retain stellar faculty within your department?
- How have you developed incentives to reward faculty productivity?
- What are the best ways to encourage department development efforts?
- How do you enhance department mentoring programs?
- How do you improve graduate student recruitment?

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
The success of this practice very much hinges on choosing the right facilitator. First, to garner credibility with participants, it is critical for the facilitator to be a former chair. It is also essential that the facilitator not have direct or indirect line authority over chairs at the time he or she is leading the group, ensuring that all participants feel comfortable talking about their challenges openly.

**Strategic Facilitation Critical to Success**

**Attributes of an Effective Facilitator**

- **Experienced and Successful Chair**
  - Well-respected for service in own department

- **Committed to Other Chairs’ Success**
  - Invested in program but not in him-/herself

- **Outside Reporting Structure**
  - Has no direct or indirect line of authority over chairs
  - Not currently a member of senior administration

- **Highly Skilled Manager of Group Discussion**
  - Listens attentively and asks appropriate questions
  - Able to engage all participants and identify and redirect those who derail or dominate the conversation

While the criteria for an ideal facilitator may seem a tall order, the reason UNC’s model is more successful than traditional mentoring approaches is that the institution need only find one person with the above characteristics, rather than an effective mentor for every new chair.

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
When compared with traditional mentoring programs, UNC’s facilitated peer mentoring model is a more reliable way of extending the benefits of a great mentoring relationship to a large number of new chairs. In addition to addressing all elements required for a productive mentoring relationship, the group format of facilitated peer mentoring allows participants to attach to, and learn from, numerous other individuals.

### Succeeding Where Others Fail

#### Critical Elements to Successful Mentoring Relationship

- Mentor seriously invested in mentees’ success
- Mentee likes and respects the mentor
- Mentor’s skills align with mentee’s development needs
- Both parties commit to regular contact

#### Facilitated Peer Mentoring

- Easy to pick one great mentor invested in group success
- Numerous people to attach to, learn from
- Regularity of group meeting format effective at sustaining participation

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
Improving Chair Satisfaction, Performance, Recruitment

Past participants of UNC’s peer mentoring program unanimously report that their involvement in the program improved their performance and satisfaction in the chair role; deans credit the program for a decrease in the number of problems needing to be elevated to their attention.

A Powerful Recruiting Tool

“I have heard excellent things about this program, and the fact that it exists was a factor in my decision to accept the chair position. You should know that it was a reluctant acceptance, not something I sought out or really wanted to do so early in my career.”

New Chair
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Perhaps most interestingly, as a direct result of the program, administrators are finding it easier to recruit candidates to fill vacant chair positions, as faculty know they will have the program as a support when they step into the chair role.
The positive comments that the program has received from participants in end-of-year evaluations are further evidence of the success of UNC’s facilitated peer mentoring program. Additionally, UNC’s facilitator reports almost perfect attendance at each meeting, further proof of the program’s importance to new chairs.

**Strong Praise from Participants**

“The meeting is a great way to learn how to ‘think like a chair’ along with other new chairs by sharing problems and getting the group’s help in thinking through potential solutions. This program also offers a wonderful camaraderie, especially when you’re in this rather lonely situation of being the boss (often to your many friends).”

“The ‘check-in’ time is tremendously valuable under the heading of, ‘Others are having similar/identical problems as me.’”

“The sessions were helpful for getting ideas on how to handle (or avoid) certain difficult situations and how to structure departmental governance.”

“The Chairs Leadership Program is an outstanding way to draw on and learn from the collective wisdom of experienced administrators at Carolina.”

“Provides a ‘frame of reference’ for my experiences as chair, in a confidential and comfortable environment.”

“THANKS very much. The dinners made my first year as chair...well, I can’t say ‘easier’ since it wasn’t an easy year at all...I should say, the dinner ‘got me through’ my first year as chair with humor and insight gained from colleagues.”

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
Implemented in conjunction, practice #1 and practice #2 can ensure that new chairs are developed and supported. By organizing the content of the curriculum into two to four sessions that occur across the year, and holding facilitated peer mentor meetings on a monthly basis, institutions can complement the classroom learning chairs receive with an ongoing peer support structure.

**Complementing Each Other**

**Curriculum and Mentoring Sessions Serve Different Yet Critical Needs**

**Practice #1: Year-Long Skills-Focused Curriculum**
- 20-40 hours delivered across two to four sessions
- Classroom sessions employing adult/active learning pedagogy: case studies, simulations, small-group exercises

**Practice #2: Facilitated Peer Mentoring**
- 2.5-hour monthly meetings
- Primary focus on facilitated discussion of chairs’ challenges
- Skill development and procedural issues addressed as time allows

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
II. Delivering Just-in-Time Support to Department Chairs

Practice #3: Minefield Survival Guide
Practice #4: Comprehensive Resource Portal
Practice #5: Leadership Communication Templates
Practice #6: Event-Triggered Information Pushes
Developing Academic Leaders

### Focusing Investment on Critical Roles

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<td>#7 Decanal Development Resource Guide</td>
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### Elevating Leadership Across the Institution

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<td>#11 Cohort-Based Programming</td>
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Diagnostic Questions

These diagnostic questions reflect the essential ingredients of approaches used by best-practice institutions. Members may use them to determine if the full range of best practices is being used on their campuses and to evaluate whether absences represent an opportunity for investment or action.

II. Delivering Just-in-Time Support to Department Chairs

1. Does the institution provide a “survival guide” to new department chairs which includes detailed, actionable guidance for a range of problems that new chairs are likely to encounter?

2. Has the institution created an online resource portal where chairs can access all information specific to the chair role in a single place?

3. Does this portal include resources such as a list of important dates and events, frequently used chair documents (e.g., chair handbook), an institution-wide directory of department chairs, and recommended readings for chairs?

4. Does the institution’s chair handbook include templates for common correspondence (e.g., performance evaluations, nonrenewal of appointment, etc.)?

5. Does the institution actively push out policy and procedural information to chairs, via e-mail, related to upcoming events?

6. Do these electronic pushes contain both reminders about deadlines and proven strategies for issues such as managing course scheduling and writing job descriptions?

If you answered “No” to any of the above questions, please turn to:

Practice #3: Minefield Survival Guide ................................................................. 36
Practice #4: Comprehensive Resource Portal .................................................... 39
Practice #5: Leadership Communication Templates ............................................ 40
Practice #6: Event-Triggered Information Pushes ............................................. 41
Department chairs need policy and procedural information to be able to do their jobs on a daily basis and to handle unpredictable situations when they arise. However, the volume of important—or potentially important—information is enormous. Procedural information is most useful when accessible on a “just-in-time” basis, rather than conveyed all at once to chairs during a beginning-of-year orientation.

Not Predictable, but Not Unique

Realizing that the problems chairs encounter—while unpredictable—are usually not unique, the University of Missouri System created a compendium of common issues that chairs encounter, paired with actionable guidance that chairs can reference if and when a particular situation arises. The Missouri System developed the guidance statements in consultation with psychologists from the institution’s Employee Assistance Program, HR representatives, and the university’s legal counsel, thereby ensuring that correct and thorough information was provided to chairs.
Through interviews with successful chairs and the university legal counsel, the University of Missouri System identified 39 recurring problems that new chairs are likely to encounter in the course of their duties. These problems, which appear in the online guide, are categorized into seven subtopic areas, allowing chairs to easily access information according to the issue they are facing.

Lots of Ways to Go Wrong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of Chair’s Top Issues</th>
<th>Sample Recurring Problems</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Responsibilities</td>
<td>What if a tenured faculty member is not meeting his or her departmental obligations?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty and Tenure</td>
<td>What must I do if a student is accused of cheating?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
<td>What must I do to protect all parties in a sexual harassment charge?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Affairs and Research</td>
<td>How can I deal with conflicts between two faculty members?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel Issues</td>
<td>What if a faculty member is accused of research dishonesty?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Issues</td>
<td>Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Problems</td>
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</table>
What if a Faculty Member is Accused of Research Dishonesty?

Some examples of research dishonesty include:
- Deliberately issuing false or misleading statements or publications concerning research data or results
- Intentional or reckless distortion or misinterpretation of research data or results

Any person who receives an allegation of research dishonesty must immediately forward the allegation in writing to the dean or director of the academic unit where the accused academic faculty or staff member is located.

For more information about the procedures for addressing research dishonesty consult the University of Missouri Collected Rules and Regulations Section 420.020.

http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/aa/faculty/faqs

Detailed Actionable Guidance

Source: University of Missouri System, ‘FAQs – Faculty and Tenure,’ at http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/aa/faculty/faq2#2, Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
Practice #4: Comprehensive Resource Portal

Because chairs benefit from easy access to policy and procedural information, Kansas State University has created a comprehensive resource portal where chairs can quickly obtain relevant information. On this one-stop-shop website, chairs can access resources such as the administrator’s handbook, important dates and events, labor-saving forms and templates, and recommended readings, all in one place.

One-Stop Shopping

Key Components

- Important Dates and Events
- Frequently Used Resources
  - Administrator’s Handbook
  - Faculty Handbook
  - Labor-Saving Templates
  - Forms
- Department Head Directory
- Professional Development Resources
- Recommended Readings

http://www.k-state.edu/dh/

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.

Although chair handbooks vary from institution to institution and department to department, in general handbooks are the primary source of information for chairs on their administrative responsibilities. Exemplar handbooks should be easily searchable through the institution’s website; list topics alphabetically, thematically, and by common tags; and include templates for common correspondence and frequently used forms.
Florida State University’s chair handbook contains sample templates for common correspondence. Communications for events such as job offers, annual performance evaluations, and nonrenewal of appointments are included in the appendix of the handbook.

Why Reinvent the Wheel?

Sample Letters Provided to Chairs

• Offer of Faculty Employment
• Annual Performance Evaluation
  – Tenure-Track Faculty
  – Tenured Full Professor
  – Tenured Full Professor with Performance Deficiencies
  – Eminent Scholar
• Denial of Tenure
• Nonrenewal of Appointment

Appendix I

Sample Letter of Denial

Date
Campus Address
Home address (by certified mail return receipt requested)

Dear __________,

The University has completed the review of your nomination for promotion to Professor. As you are aware, the support for your tenure and promotion at the department and college levels has not been positive. The President has informed me that after a review of your record and the supporting documents he has decided that he must sustain the judgment of your department and the College and thus is not be able to support your case for the award of promotion to Professor.

As was explained by Associate Dean __________ in his discussion with your chair, the reviewers believed your scholarly record falls...
Alerts for Upcoming Administrator Responsibilities

In addition to making it easy for chairs to seek out the information they need, best-practice institutions also actively push out policy and procedural information at the time that chairs need it. These e-mail blasts contain information regarding upcoming seasonal calendar events, such as course scheduling, planning on-campus interviews, and handling departmental retirements.

For instance, as the season for promotion and tenure proceedings approaches, chairs receive an e-mail from the HR office with procedural details, a list of important dates, and notices of upcoming meetings or related workshops. Information should be kept brief and sent out just when chairs are likely to need it.

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
III. Providing Customized Development Resources for Deans

Practice #7: Decanal Development Resource Guide
Practice #8: Institution-Sponsored Executive Coaching
Practice #9: Open-Participation Feedback Process
### Developing Academic Leaders

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Diagnostic Questions

These diagnostic questions reflect the essential ingredients of approaches used by best-practice institutions. Members may use them to determine if the full range of best practices is being used on their campuses and to evaluate whether absences represent an opportunity for investment or action.

III. Providing Customized Development Resources for Deans

1. Does the institution provide deans with a guide to the range of local and national resources that exist to support their development?

2. Does this guide include comprehensive information on resources for deans, such as off-campus training programs and assessment tools, such that deans can customize an individualized development approach for themselves based on their unique needs and interests?

3. Does the institution provide executive coaching resources to deans?

4. Are key constituents educated about the purposes and methods of executive coaching through brochures and collateral pieces?

5. Has the institution created support structures, such as a prescreened list of recommended executive coaches, that reduce the administrative burden on deans interested in working with a coach?

6. Are deans’ periodic evaluations aligned with predefined strategic imperatives?

7. Are a range of stakeholders able to submit feedback on a dean’s performance for the review?

8. Is feedback on decanal performance collected via an online survey instrument that gathers both quantitative and qualitative information?

9. Does the dean receive a detailed post-review report which includes average scores for predetermined performance areas, as well as qualitative comments?

If you answered “No” to any of the above questions, please turn to:

- Practice #7: Decanal Development Resource Guide ................................................................. 47
- Practice #8: Institution-Sponsored Executive Coaching ............................................................ 48
- Practice #9: Open-Participation Feedback Process ................................................................. 56
For a number of reasons, the leadership development approaches that work best for chairs, such as classroom-based instruction and peer mentoring, are not the best strategies for supporting deans’ development.

Barriers to Creating Development Programs for Deans

- **Not Enough Scale**
  Even at larger institutions, typically only one to two new deans each year

- **Inherent Competition**
  Difficult to create productive learning environment with group of deans who must compete daily for resources

- **Too Much Variation from Dean to Dean**
  - Different strengths and development needs
  - Even within the same institution, dean role varies significantly from college to college

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
Because deans’ development needs are highly individualized, leadership development and support for deans can be self-directed. A self-service resource guide provides deans with an overview of the leadership development resources that are available locally and nationally, including: online modules, self-assessment tools, off-campus training programs, and recommended readings.

Charting Their Own Paths

Resources for Deans’ Professional Development

Recommended Readings

Assessment and Planning Tools

Off-Campus Training Programs

Executive Coaching Services

Online Modules

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
In sectors outside of academia, executive coaches have been used for decades to supplement the coaching and guidance provided by mentors and supervisors. Though in the past organizations have used executive coaches for remediation purposes, today executive coaches are typically hired to help promising leaders get better.

Helping Top Talent Achieve Higher Performance

**Top Reasons Coaches Are Engaged¹**

*Harvard Business Review Survey of 140 Executive Coaches*

“For which of these purposes are your services most frequently engaged?”

- Develop Capabilities of High-Potential Manager: 28%
- Act as a Sounding Board on Organizational Dynamics or Strategic Matters: 26%
- Facilitate a Transition (In or Up): 20%
- Address a “Derailing” Behavior: 12%
- Enhance Interactions of a Team: 11%
- Address Issues in Coachee’s Nonwork Life: 3%
- Assist in Outplacement or “Counseling Out”: 1%

¹ Survey respondents rank-ordered top four reasons they were hired. Percentages represent researchers’ weighted analysis of responses; each coach’s top choice received 4 points, the next choice received 3, and so on.

In higher education, many deans and senior leaders are unaware of executive coaching; others believe the practice belongs in the corporate world or is solely for low performers. Still others may have interest in working with an executive coach but may be concerned about how the decision will be perceived by others. Finally, logistical obstacles may impede deans and other senior leaders from working with coaches.

**Major Hurdles to Overcome**

### Most Academic Leaders Unwilling...
- Unaware of executive coaching
- Think coaching belongs in the corporate world, not higher education
- See coaching as a tool for “fixing” or outcounseling low performers
- Worry how the decision to seek a coach may be perceived by others

### ...or Unable to Benefit from Coaching
- Have no idea how to find a coach effective in supporting academic leaders
- Unsure how to evaluate candidates, structure contract
- Too busy to deal with red tape of internal administrative processes

**Solution:**

- Educating Constituents
- Creating Support Structures

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
The Ohio State University has made executive coaching services available to all senior academic leaders on their campus. To educate leaders about executive coaching and the benefits of working with a coach, Ohio State created a ten-page document and a one-page brochure, both of which are placed in the orientation folders of all new senior hires.

Building Awareness and Acceptance

Ohio State University’s Executive Coaching for Senior Leaders

Ten-page document and brochure
• Placed in orientation folders for all new senior leaders
• Illustrates range of objectives addressed in coaching:
  – Strategic thinking and execution
  – Embracing conflict
  – Fostering trust
  – Inspiring others
  – Relationship building

Key Teaching Points
• For “all senior and high-potential leaders”
• Designed to “bring out the best more quickly” (vs. address underperformance)
• Sessions strictly confidential, separate from performance management

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.

Both of Ohio State’s executive coaching documents are available for download on the Council’s Leadership Development Web Resource Center, which can be accessed through www.educationadvisoryboard.com/ulc.
In addition to educating senior leaders about executive coaching, Ohio State has also taken a number of steps to reduce the burden on senior leaders seeking a coach’s support.

**Reducing the Coachee’s Burden**

**HR Provides Support, Ensures Quality Control**

- **Preapproved Pool**
  - HR screens coaches for fit with academia and institution
  - Negotiates consistent hourly fee

- **Customized Advice**
  - HR and coachee discuss coaching objectives
  - HR identifies two to three coaches, presents bios to coachee

- **Coachee Selection**
  - Coachee meets prospective coaches face-to-face
  - Makes final selection based on fit and rapport

- **Partnership Launch**
  - HR reviews contract, handles purchase order
  - Coachee’s unit responsible for coach’s fee

- **Quality Control**
  - HR receives monthly updates, conducts post-engagement review

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.

First, staff in Ohio State’s human resources office created a pool of executive coaches who have been prescreened for their ability to work well in academia, and who have agreed to charge Ohio State leaders a standard hourly fee. If a dean is interested in working with a coach, he or she speaks with an HR staff member about key objectives; based on discussion with the dean, the HR staff member then selects two or three coaches who are a likely match in terms of objectives and personality. The dean then receives bios for each prospective coach, schedules face-to-face meetings, and makes a final selection based on fit and rapport. The dean’s unit is responsible for covering the coach’s fee, but Ohio State’s HR office offers support by reviewing the coach’s contract, handling the purchase order, and conducting a post-engagement review.
At a cancer research center, a tremendous amount of responsibility falls to chairs; in many ways, the job is more similar to that of a dean of a college. Recognizing the impact that chairs had on the entire organization, about three years ago, The University of Texas's MD Anderson Cancer Center started offering automatic eight-hour coaching contracts to all new chairs, paid for by the central administration.

**Up-Front Institutional Investment**

*Automatic Contracts with External Coaches*

---

**Eight-Hour Contracts for All New Chairs**

- Combination of in-person and phone sessions
- Typically one meeting per month
- 100% participation

**Central Funding**

- Coaching contracts paid through budget of AVP for faculty development
- Additional coaching can be funded through unit’s budget

**Single Coach with Deep Institutional Knowledge**

- 10 years experience with MD Anderson
- Developed and facilitates leadership training program

---

Rather than vetting a pool of coaches, MD Anderson chose to work with a single coach who had deep knowledge of the institution, gained from working as a leadership development consultant and program facilitator for MD Anderson for over 10 years.
With executive coaching fees averaging $300 to $500 per hour nationally, coaching is not an inexpensive option. However, at institutions where executive coaches have been used to accelerate the performance of senior leaders—many of whom have purview over millions of dollars of faculty time and institutional resources—the investment in executive coaches has proven to be worthwhile.

Coaching Isn’t Cheap…but Neither Is Failure
Data from the *Harvard Business Review* suggest, and interviews with higher ed leaders who have worked with executive coaches confirm, that the most important criterion for organizations selecting an executive coach should be whether he or she has experience in a similar setting.

## Experience in Higher Ed Critical

### Important Criteria in Coach Selection

*Percentage of Coaches Rating Criteria an 8 or Above on 10-Point Scale*

Harvard Business Review Survey of 140 Executive Coaches

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<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Percentage Rating 8 or Above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience Coaching in Similar Setting</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear Methodology</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Client List</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience as a Coachee</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background in Organizational Development</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status as Thought Leader in Field</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to Measure ROI</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification in a Proven Coaching Method</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience Working in a Similar Role as Coachee</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience as a Psychological Therapist</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background in Executive Search</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Executive coaches do not necessarily need to have worked in the same role as that of the coachee, though some executive coaches in higher education are former deans, provosts, or presidents. Most important is whether the potential coach has a record of working well with leaders in colleges and universities.
To find effective executive coaches, the human resource departments of local companies, members of the university’s governing board, and even other executive coaches can serve as referral sources.

Finding Executive Coaches

15-20 Largest Companies in Area
• Most corporations have relationships with 10 to 15 external coaches in local area
• Ask VP of HR/talent management to recommend those with experience, aptitude for work in higher education

Members of Governing Board
• Likely to know effective coaches directly or indirectly
• Familiarity with institution increases likeliness of fit

Current High-Performing Coach
• Ask coaches doing good work for you to recommend others

Consulting Firms
• Research contacts warn that large consulting firms typically do not give academic institutions access to best coaches
• Difficult to evaluate quality of coaches offered

Though there are a number of large consulting firms that specialize in executive coaching, Council research contacts advised caution in using these firms to find effective coaches; often large firms do not give academic institutions access to their best coaches—reserving them instead for higher-paying corporate clients.
Reasoning that more detailed information on decanal performance would benefit deans and the institution, the University of Texas–San Antonio reformulated the decanal periodic review process to produce structured, comprehensive feedback from a broader audience.

**Aligning Evaluations with Predefined Performance Areas**

The institution identified five key areas that make up the major components of the dean’s job. During the periodic review process, each dean submits a one-page statement summarizing his or her activities and accomplishments in each performance area.
A dean’s statements are then entered into an online survey instrument; this survey, with the statements embedded, is sent to all faculty, staff, and administrators in the college, and to a range of senior administrators across the institution.

**Guided Yet Open-Ended Responses**

*Evaluation Tool Collects Rich Information from Range of Sources*

Respondents are asked to rate the dean’s performance for each of the five performance areas, via both quantitative and qualitative survey questions. The statements that the dean submitted provide context to respondents as they evaluate the dean in each of the five performance areas.
Compared to traditional periodic review processes for deans, UT San Antonio’s approach provides deans with much richer performance feedback—feedback more likely to help them improve their performance. Rather than a single narrative produced during closed-door conversations, deans receive a detailed feedback report that includes average scores in each performance area, as well as all of the qualitative comments submitted by respondents.

More Actionable Feedback from a Broader Group

Typical Decanal Evaluation Process

Closed-Door Committee Discussions
- Five to twelve individuals speak for all constituents
- Loosely structured, informal format

Result:
Single narrative, synthesizing representatives’ impressions

UTSA Approach

Direct Input from All Stakeholders
- All faculty and staff in college, fellow deans, and senior administrators complete online survey
- Five performance categories, dean’s narrative, and Likert scales structure feedback

Result:
Detailed reports include all qualitative comments, average scores for each performance area

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
IV. Scaling Leadership Development to Reach All Leaders

Practice #10: Core and Elective Leadership Modules
Practice #11: Cohort-Based Programming
## Focusing Investment on Critical Roles

### Chairs

1. Cultivating Core Leadership Skills
   - #1 Year-Long Skills-Focused Curriculum
   - #2 Facilitated Peer Mentoring

2. Delivering Just-in-Time Support
   - #3 Minefield Survival Guide
   - #4 Comprehensive Resource Portal
   - #5 Leadership Communication Templates
   - #6 Event-Triggered Information Pushes

### Deans

3. Providing Customized Development Resources
   - #7 Decanal Development Resource Guide
   - #8 Institution-Sponsored Executive Coaching
   - #9 Open-Participation Feedback Process

### Elevating Leadership Across the Institution

4. All Leaders
   - Scaling Leadership Development
     - #10 Core and Elective Leadership Modules
     - #11 Cohort-Based Programming

5. Highest-Trajectory Leaders
   - Preparing for Succession to Senior Roles
     - #12 High-Potential (Hi-Po) Development Program
Diagnostic Questions

These diagnostic questions reflect the essential ingredients of approaches used by best-practice institutions. Members may use them to determine if the full range of best practices is being used on their campuses and to evaluate whether absences represent an opportunity for investment or action.

IV. Scaling Leadership Development to Reach All Leaders

1. To bring all supervisors up to baseline level on management fundamentals, does the institution offer a suite of leadership modules to all managers (academic and non-academic)?

2. Can supervisors work toward a leadership certification by completing a set of required and optional courses?

3. Does the certificate program utilize preexisting resources, such as business school faculty and HR staff, to administer the program and teach modules?

4. To prepare for major organizational change initiatives, does the institution offer cohort-based programming for key leaders from across the institution?

5. Are these leaders selected based on their ability to implement vision and strategy?

6. Is the curriculum for this program linked directly to goals in the institution’s strategic plan?

If you answered “No” to any of the above questions, please turn to:

Practice #10: Core and Elective Leadership Modules ......................................................... 63
Practice #11: Cohort-Based Programming ................................................................. 68
For reasons of both scale and mission, institutions may choose to selectively expand leadership development initiatives across the enterprise, including both academic and non-academic leaders. For instance, after experiencing and alarming increase in the number and severity of grievances and lawsuits, one institution (kept anonymous because of the sensitive details of the case) designed a cross-institutional program with the goal of touching as many managers as possible.

**Distracting and Expensive Problems**

*Troubling Increase in Grievances and Lawsuits*

- Multi-campus community college
- Over 50,000 students, over 4,000 employees

Limited awareness of institutional policies and manager responsibilities

Avoidance of difficult conversations with direct reports

Unsure of best ways to get work done through others

*Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.*
Practice #10: Core and Elective Leadership Modules

To impact as many faculty and staff members with supervisory responsibility as possible, the institution developed a certificate program that participants could complete in modular fashion. The program includes 10 required core courses, each lasting three to six hours, as well as the choice of two elective courses from a suite of 18 electives offered annually.

**Built for Efficiency and Scale**

**Required Certificate Program for New Supervisors**

- **Core Courses**
  - 10 required courses, three to six hours each
  - Each course offered twice per year
  - Focused on areas where supervisor skill or knowledge could prevent grievances, lawsuits
    - Legal context
    - Employee rights
    - Performance management

- **Elective Courses**
  - Choose two elective courses
  - 18 choices offered annually
  - Focused on more advanced leadership and management topics
    - Delegation
    - Communication
    - Staff coaching

**Sample Core Course Topics**
- Performance Management
- Improving Workplace Culture
- Finance and Accounting
- Critical Legal Issues for Higher Ed Leaders

**Sample Elective Course Topics**
- Communication Tools
- Creating Effective Teams
- Delegating
- Process Improvement

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
The institution has found this approach to be very successful in reaching a critical mass of supervisors. The full 12-course supervisor certification is required for all new managers, recommended for existing managers, and open to aspiring managers by permission.

**Attaining Critical Mass**

*Majority of Supervisors and Employees Impacted*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor Certification</th>
<th>Individual Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Supervisors:</strong> Required</td>
<td><strong>Continuing Education:</strong> Current supervisors may enroll in any elective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Existing Supervisors:**Recommended</td>
<td><strong>Basic Offerings for All:</strong> Four electives open to all employees, regardless of position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aspiring Leaders:</strong> By permission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Supervisors Completing Certificate</th>
<th>Employees Taking at Least One Course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>25-50</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2011</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>≈1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>&gt;50%</td>
<td>&gt;70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Through individual courses, the institution touches even more of its employees. Current supervisors can enroll in any elective module as a form of continuing education, and there are four electives that are open to all employees within the institution. In all, an average of 250 people participate in the program every year. Since being established in 2000, approximately 1,000 employees have taken at least one course through the program, which amounts to over 70 percent of all employees at the institution.
The certificate program is taught and run by faculty and staff who commit their time as part of their service requirement to the institution, keeping direct costs relatively low for a program that touches so many individuals at the institution.

## Utilizing Internal Resources

*Leveraging Preexisting Staff and Administrators*

### Developing a Core and Elective Curriculum

- **Staff Resources Needed to Develop Original Courses**
  - (one-year process)
  - Director Organizational Development: 440 hours
  - Director Employee Relations: 80 hours
  - Two HR Generalists: 40 hours each
  - Advisory Committee: 15 members, eight hours each

### Running the Program Annually

- **Yearly Cost to Certify 50 Supervisors, Train Additional 200 Managers**
  - One FTE Training Specialist: ≈$75 K (runs program, revises curriculum annually)
  - Printed materials and food: $25 K
  - 260 hours of instructor time: indirect cost

**Total:**

- 680 staff and administrator hours
- ≈$100,000 per year

*Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.*
As the program’s director explained, preventing just one lawsuit can save the institution more than the cost of building and running the entire program, not to mention the performance gains that the institution has seen in program graduates.

### Paying for Itself

*ROI from Leadership Curriculum*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost Reduction</th>
<th>Improved Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number and expense of lawsuits has decreased</td>
<td>Managers report improved performance from program graduates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### An Ounce of Prevention

“If you can prevent just one lawsuit, that saves you more than the cost of building and running the entire program.”

*Director of Organizational Development*

#### Survey of Program Graduates’ Managers, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promotes positive image of institution</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complies with institutional policies and procedures</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instills enthusiasm for institution’s mission in direct reports</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligns efforts with institution’s mission, vision, values and goals</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
The next two case studies feature institutions that employed a leadership development initiative as part of their goal of enacting broad institutional change. The first is Rice University, which created a comprehensive, cohort-based leadership development program as a key element of the institution’s plan to transform itself across the university’s second century of operation.

Preparing for Institutional Transformation

Planning for the Second Century

1912
Rice Founded

2004
David Leebron becomes Seventh President

2005
Vision for Rice’s Second Century

2012
Centennial Anniversary

Ten-Point Strategic Plan

Ambitious Goals:
• Substantially raise research and scholarship profile
• Strengthen graduate and postdoctoral programs
• Increase size of the university
• Fully engage the city of Houston

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
Realizing that Rice would need to adopt a leadership development approach that would help participants internalize the institution’s new vision and strategy and create deeper cross-unit relationships, Rice adopted a cohort structure for the program.

Developing the Organization, Not Just Individuals

Cohorts a Key Element of RiceLeaders Program

Focus on Organizational Transformation
(vs. Individual Contributions)

Internalization of vision and strategy
Skills and knowledge to advance change successfully
Deeper cross-unit relationships, perspective
Ongoing structure to support new behaviors

Cohorts of 25
- Selected for ability to implement vision and strategy
- Some participants may not aspire to higher positions
- All leaders on campus (with exception of president and provost) are eligible

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.

Faculty and staff leaders participate in the program in groups of 25; each cohort includes leaders from a range of positions and units across the campus, all of whom are selected based on their ability to implement vision and strategy.
Rice’s leadership development curriculum focuses on building in leaders the skills that will be necessary to reach the ambitious goals laid out in the plan for Rice’s second century. The leadership program, known as RiceLeaders, consists of four modules, each lasting two days, which are spread across a 12-month time period.

### A Curriculum Linked to the Strategic Plan

**Four Two-Day Modules Across 12 Months**

1. **Leadership Concepts and Instruments**
2. **Managing and Leading Teams**
3. **Creativity**
4. **Strategy Implementation**

#### Direct Feedback
- 360-degree and personality assessments
- Three to four sessions with executive coach to discuss results

#### Action Learning Project
- Teams of five pursue projects related to Vision for Rice’s Second Century
- 15 hours

Across the year, participants also complete an action learning project which relates to a component of the plan for the institution’s second century.
To garner the broad participation and institution-wide support needed for the program to achieve its goals, Rice’s VP for administration made a serious investment of his time, conducting hour-long meetings with every single person who was invited into the program.

**Significant Up-Front Investment**

**Building Support One Person at a Time**

VP Administration

- Creates presentation explaining RiceLeaders

Hour-long meeting with each nominee

- x 225

Cohort I  Jan 2007-2008
Cohort II  Sept 2007-2008
Cohort III May 2008-2009
Cohort IV  Oct 2008-2009
Cohort V   Jan 2012-2013
Cohort VI  Sept 2012-2013

\[ \approx 150 \text{ spots} \]
\[ \approx 1.5 \text{ candidates per spot} \]
\[ > 200 \text{ meetings} \]

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.

During these meetings he walked through a presentation making the case for RiceLeaders and illustrating its importance to the institution’s long-term goals. These meetings were no small investment of the VP for administration’s time; in sum, he conducted about 225 hour-long meetings personally in order to lay a foundation of support for RiceLeaders.
Because program participants would be making a significant commitment of their time and energy, Rice felt it was important that the programming they received was of top quality.

Creating a Quality Experience

Tapping the University’s Executive Education Experts

Executive Education Unit
• Week-long intensives in leadership development
• Specialized certificate programs
• 15-20 customized programs for companies each year

Industry Standards for Executive Education Programming
Development and Delivery Costs: $10K-$12K per delivery day
Recommended Session Size: 25 participants max

Dean of Executive Education and Associate Professor of Management and Psychology
• Contracted to manage development, delivery of RiceLeaders curriculum
• Sole facilitator of modules on leadership and managing and leading teams
• Creativity module contracted to Center for Creative Leadership
• Strategy module facilitated by business school faculty

Build It (Well) and They Will Come
Program Completion Rate: Near 100%

An expert in executive education from Rice's business school was contracted to develop the curriculum for the program. This expert also facilitates two of the program's four modules. The strategy module is led by another business school faculty member, and the module on creativity is contracted to the Center for Creative Leadership, a well-respected organization known for providing excellent leadership development programming to colleges and universities.
While the cost-per-participant of Rice’s program is significant (approximately $7,500 per participant), the feedback from participants has been extremely positive, suggesting that the impacts of the program are both deep and lasting.

Early Results

Positive Feedback from Participants

Better understanding of institution’s strategic goals
“I feel like I can now contribute more to the university”

Improved leadership skills
“Should be required for all new department chairs”

Commitment to Rice
“Deepened my relationship with Rice—they invested in me”

Better integration across campus
“New relationships are one of the strongest parts of the program”

The approach Rice took to develop and administer RiceLeaders is appropriate given the institution’s goals, resources, and culture; the next case study is an example of an institution that built cohort-based programming in a less expensive manner.
In 2005, the results of Centralia Community College’s institutional climate survey indicated that only 29 percent of all employees felt that cross-campus communication and relationships were “good” or even “satisfactory”—the lowest scores for any area surveyed.

### Failure to Communicate

*Widespread Dissatisfaction with Cross-Campus Communication*

**Centralia Community College**

*Centralia, Washington*

- 3,574 students
- 225 full-time employees
- 400 part-time employees and adjuncts

![Graph showing the 2005 Climate Survey results with Cross-Campus Communication and Relationships scoring at 29%](image)

To address the communication issues at the institution, Centralia created a cohort-based leadership development program with a major goal of improving communication and relationships between individuals in various units across campus.
Unlike Rice, Centralia launched its program quickly, on a shoestring budget. Instead of contracting for curriculum development, the VP for human resources took on the work himself, developing the outline for the program over the summer, then fleshing out the program for each monthly session as the year unfolded.

**Build As You Fly**

*Leadership Program Launched Quickly, on Shoestring Budget*

**Vice President for Human Resources**
- Develops program and facilitates all sessions
- Executed in course of normal duties

**Budget**: $500

**Three Weeks to Develop Outline**
- Program outline developed over 24 hours across three weeks
- 10 four-hour sessions, held monthly

**12 Hours to Develop Each Four-Hour Session**
- Each month, VP spends 12 hours developing curriculum for upcoming session
- Liberal use of preexisting materials
- Guiding principles
  - *Don’t reinvent the wheel*
  - *Don’t let the perfect be the enemy of the good*

**Total Development Time**: 144 hours

---

Moving Forward

“It doesn’t always take money to build something really good. People get locked into the idea that you need a big budget or you can’t start a program. The reality is you build it and you make it work. The fact that we don’t spend a lot of resources is beneficial because the program is not a target and cannot be removed easily.”

*Vice President of Human Resources*
*Centralia College*

---

During this process, Centralia’s vice president for human resources made liberal use of preexisting materials and content from workshops that he had previously attended. He also searched the web for useful materials.
Centralia runs one cohort of 20 to 22 people per year, deliberately structuring each cohort so the academic affairs, student affairs, and business affairs divisions are all equally represented. Each cohort also includes leaders from all levels of the institution—from directors to senior administrators.

**Focused on Critical Institution-Wide Skills**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Leadership Styles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Importance of Building Trust and Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teamwork and Roles Within a Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The Importance of Setting Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Motivating and Leading Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. “Tricks of the Trade” for Improving Organizational Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Problem Solving Exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Wrap-Up Session and Graduation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participant Profile**

- Annual cohort of 20-22 participants
- One-third from each functional area: academic, business, and student affairs
- Strive for broad distribution of seniority in roles
- Voluntary application

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
Centralia was able to create a valuable experience for the institution's leaders by using concepts and materials that were readily available. For example, the most popular session among participants involves a simulation exercise drawn from four real-life examples of issues that senior leaders at the institution have recently faced.

**Using What’s at Hand**

*Homegrown Simulated Exercise the Most Popular Session*

**Schedule for Mock Executive Team Meeting Session**

**12:30-1:00pm** Setup

- Facilitator presents group with four case studies, redacted examples of recent problems
- Each participant assigned specific role of senior campus leader (VP finance, chief diversity officer, VP academic affairs)
- President “fired,” facilitator leaves, giving team responsibility of final call

**1:00-4:00pm** Participant-Only Discussion

- Participants must manage discussion
- Can make “lifeline” calls to facilitator cell phone for legal questions
- Discussion lasts for 2.5 hours to replicate duration of executive team meeting

**4:00-5:00pm** Debrief

- Facilitator leads discussion on team’s proposed outcomes and process

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
In addition to receiving positive feedback from program participants and their managers, Centralia also has evidence that the program has been effective at improving the communication issues that it was created to address. Just a year after the program was put into place, satisfaction with cross-campus communication and relationships had increased by 10 percentage points on a follow-up survey.

**Measurable Results**

*Improved Satisfaction with Cross-Campus Communication*

*Centralia College Climate and Satisfaction Survey*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of Centralia College faculty and staff who responded that they were “satisfied” or “highly satisfied” with cross-campus communication.

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
By 2010, a critical mass of Centralia’s managers had been through the cohort program. Instead of suspending the program, or making the program a requirement of all managers, Centralia instead opted to partner with nearby peer institutions to offer the program. By banding together with neighboring institutions, Centralia was able to preserve the continuity of the annual program and further cut costs.

Sustaining the Program Through Partnerships

Working with Nearby Peers Preserves Continuity

**2006-2010**

- After five years, 50% of target employees complete training

**Achieving Critical Mass**

- Consistent with other institutions, second half of target population more difficult to recruit than the first
- Centralia considers suspending program, but reluctant to loose momentum

**2011**

- Centralia College partners with two nearby peers
- Each campus sends 10 participants, contributes $500 for food and materials
- Location rotates among three campuses
- Centralia VP facilitates all sessions

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
Centralia’s experience partnering with peer institutions suggests four elements that are critical to the success of a cohort program partnership.

**Critical Elements...**

- **Geographical Proximity**
  Partners within driving distance: ≈1 to 1.5 hours max

- **Institutional Alignment**
  Partners similar in size and mission

- **Presidential Endorsement**
  Senior-most leaders on each campus, including president, publicly endorses program

- **Skills-Focused Curriculum**
  Sessions focus on skills, not institution-specific policies and procedures

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
V. Preparing Top Talent for Succession to Senior Roles

Practice #12: High-Potential (Hi-Po) Development Program
# Developing Academic Leaders

## Focusing Investment on Critical Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chairs</th>
<th>Deans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultivating Core Leadership Skills</td>
<td>Providing Customized Development Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>#7 Decanal Development Resource Guide</td>
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<td></td>
<td>#9 Open-Participation Feedback Process</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6 Event-Triggered Information Pushes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Elevating Leadership Across the Institution

### All Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IV Scaling Leadership Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#10 Core and Elective Leadership Modules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11 Cohort-Based Programming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Cultivating Top Talent

### Highest-Trajectory Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V Preparing for Succession to Senior Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#12 High-Potential (Hi-Po) Development Program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These diagnostic questions reflect the essential ingredients of approaches used by best-practice institutions. Members may use them to determine if the full range of best practices is being used on their campuses and to evaluate whether absences represent an opportunity for investment or action.

### V. Preparing Top Talent for Succession to Senior Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Does the institution offer a year-long development program for a small number of the institution’s highest-trajectory individuals?</td>
<td>❑ ❑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Is the program distinguished by a highly selective admissions process that considers candidates’ current job performance as well as their potential for senior leadership?</td>
<td>❑ ❑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does the program focus on developing the advanced leadership skills necessary for success in senior leadership positions?</td>
<td>❑ ❑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Is the size of each cohort limited to 15 participants; does it meet regularly as a group and foster connections between cohort members that will last beyond the program year?</td>
<td>❑ ❑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Does the manner in which the program is resourced, administered, and communicated signal to participants, and the broader community, that future senior leaders are highly valued at the institution?</td>
<td>❑ ❑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If you answered “No” to any of the above questions, please turn to:*

Practice #12: High-Potential (Hi-Po) Development Program ................................. 87
Classic succession planning involves four components: 1) examining leadership positions across the institution to pinpoint where future vacancies are likely to occur; 2) identifying individuals who, with the right preparation, could move into those roles; 3) providing tailored development and preparation to identified successors; and 4) perfecting the on-boarding process so that successors are contributing in their new roles as soon as possible.

Ensuring Seamless Leadership Transitions

Succession Management

I. Pinpointing Future Leadership Gaps
II. Identifying Talent
III. Customizing Talent Development
IV. Perfecting the On-Boarding Process

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
When executed well, succession management increases the number and quality of internal candidates for leadership vacancies, thereby minimizing the time and cost incurred by the organization in filling positions. Succession management also minimizes the risk that an individual will fail in a new position, and maximizes the immediate impact that a successor has in his or her new role. Finally, effective succession management helps to retain top talent.

### Multiple Forms of ROI

- **Increase Number and Quality of Internal Candidates**
  - Minimize Time-to-Fill
  - Minimize Search Costs
  - Minimize Failure Risk

- **Retain Institution’s Top Talent**
  Focus on developing those most important to keep

- **Maximize Individuals’ Immediate Impact on Institution**
  Create opportunities that challenge high performers while contributing to institutional goals

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
The specifics of corporate-world succession management cannot easily be transported into higher education. The flat and “siloed” organizational structure of colleges and universities makes identifying both future vacancies and potential successors difficult. And, even when successors are identified, few institutions have the necessary structures in place to support their development for future roles.

### Barriers to Succession Management in Higher Ed

- **Hard to Identify Potential Successors**
- **Ambivalent Reaction from Succession Candidates**
- **Lack of Support Structures for Successor Development**
- **No Single Senior-Level Owner**
- **Widespread Institutional Resistance**

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*Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.*
One component from classic succession planning that does transfer well into academia is the concept of high-potential development programs (commonly known as “Hi-Po” programs). While classic succession planning focuses on identifying and developing specific successors for predicted vacancies, Hi-Po programs focus on developing the general leadership skills of a small number of individuals who have the greatest potential for senior leadership, regardless of the exact upcoming vacancy picture.

**Transferable to Academia**

**General Preparation for Small Number of Highest-Trajectory Individuals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Pinpointing Future Leadership Gaps</th>
<th>II. Identifying Talent</th>
<th>III. Customizing Talent Development</th>
<th>IV. Perfecting the On-Boarding Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ No need for one-to-one matches with vacancies</td>
<td>✓ Selective, open, merit-based selection</td>
<td>✓ Less need to customize because not developing for specific role</td>
<td>✓ Small program size makes implementation feasible</td>
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Hi-Po programs are able to bypass many of the obstacles that make full succession planning efforts difficult in the higher education environment.
In effective Hi-Po programs, candidate selection is very rigorous, with program participation reserved for only the top 5 to 10 percent of emerging leaders. Hi-Po participants are selected based both on their current job performance and their potential for senior leadership; individuals who are strong performers, but who lack the interest, drive, or abilities to succeed in high-level leadership positions, are selected out during the admissions process.

**Highly Selective Admissions**

**Top Percentiles**
Ensure cohort quality and control costs by limiting participation to top 5%-10%

**High-Potential, Not Just High Performer**
Select candidates based on current job performance and potential for senior leadership

**Self-Nominations Invited**
Uncover Hi-Pros and promote diversity by allowing candidates to self-nominate

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**Common Misunderstandings of “Potential”**

- **“Mini-Me”:** Younger version of current manager, but may not possess leadership qualities needed in future
- **“Old Faithful”:** Long-time employee, loyal to institution and manager, but may not have potential to perform at higher level even with additional development
- **“The Star Scholar”:** Impressive academic credentials, but may not have interest in supporting others

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.

In the most effective Hi-Po programs, both nominations by others and self-nominations are used to identify candidates. By allowing for self-nominations in addition to traditional nominations, institutions can surface strong candidates who may not be well-known to recommenders, or whose supervisors are not supportive of the program.
Hi-Po programs focus on developing in participants skills that will be critical for future leadership positions. While these programs pay some attention to the more fundamental leadership skills associated with achieving results through others, the majority of Hi-Po content and programming centers on cultivating in participants the skills they will need to translate strategy into action—a key challenge of senior roles.

**Preparation for Senior-Most Roles**

*Content Focuses on Skills Critical to Future Positions*

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**For Success in Current Role**

*Achieving Results Through Others*

- Managing conflict
- Communicating effectively
- Managing performance
- Budgeting
- Delegating
- Improving processes

**For Success in Next Role**

*Translating Strategy into Action*

- Managing organizational complexity
- Driving results
- Selecting and developing others
- Being visionary
- Thinking and acting systemically
- Creating engagement

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Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
In addition to providing content aimed at developing advanced leadership skills, Hi-Po programs are structured to facilitate cohort members in learning with and from each other. Many of the elements that define Hi-Po program structure—small cohort size, regular meetings, year-long program, and considerable contact hours—encourage fellows to forge connections with other future leaders that will last beyond the year of the program.

**Cohort Component Critical**

*Learning from Each Other, Forging Deep Connections*

- **Cohort of No More Than 8 to 15**
  Small cohort size facilitates rich discussion, close ties between participants

- **Year-Long Program**
  Sustained program increases opportunities for learning and bonding

- **Regular Group Meetings**
  Frequent meetings ensure group keeps momentum, continues dialogue

- **Minimum of 40 to 60 Contact Hours**
  Participants spend considerable time learning with and from cohort, form lasting network

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
Hi-Po development programs are also defined by program resources, perks, and communications that signal to participants—and to the broader university community—that the institution values rising leaders and that selection to the program is an honor.

**Signal Value**

*Communicating High Worth of Future Senior Leaders*

- **Superior Programming Resources**
  Distinguished speakers, expert facilitators, and first-rate curriculum indicate gold-standard program

- **Attention to Detail**
  Enviable perks signal institutional investment in program participants

- **Face-Time with Senior Leaders**
  Access to senior leaders increases participants’ understanding of top roles and raises participant’s profile at institution

- **Recognized Honor**
  Language in program communications and public endorsement by president or provost convey program prestige

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
The University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill’s Academic Leadership Program is an exemplar of Hi-Po program development and implementation. Founded in 2002 and available only to academic affairs leaders, UNC’s program is one of the most long-standing and comprehensive Hi-Po programs in higher education.

A Major Investment in Top Talent

UNC Chapel Hill’s Renowned Program for High-Potential Leaders

**Long-Standing Investment**
- Program launched in 2002

**Substantial Time Commitment**
- More than 100 hours across 12 months

**For Rising Academic Affairs Leaders**
- Minimum requirement: tenured faculty member
- Most senior participant: senior associate dean

**Annual Eight-Person Cohorts**
- 60 nominees and applicants annually
- Over 90 graduates to date
One of the unique aspects of UNC’s Hi-Po program is that participants, or fellows, begin their experience by attending a week-long, off-campus summer seminar run by the Center for Creative Leadership in Greensboro, North Carolina. Instead of attending as a group, fellows complete the Center for Creative Leadership seminar alongside professionals from a range of careers and locations, but not with any other UNC fellows.

Intensive Experience Launches Program

- Leadership Instruction from Global Experts
  - Ranked by *Financial Times* as Top Ten executive education organization worldwide
  - Creators of 360-degree assessment instruments

- Safe Environment for In-Depth Feedback
  - Professional facilitators deliver feedback
  - Enhanced privacy due to extra-institutional context

- Out-of-Industry Perspective
  - Fellows participate in program with senior executives from the military, government, corporate, and nonprofit sectors

- Flexible Scheduling for Week-Long Intensive
  - Fellows attend summer training week according to own availability

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.

In addition to allowing fellows flexibility in the week that they will attend the summer seminar, UNC has found that this structure provides other benefits. By attending training with leaders from the private, public, and nonprofit sectors, fellows gain perspectives on leadership outside of higher education that they can build on during the program year. Fellows have also found the anonymity of attending without UNC peers can be helpful, given the Center for Creative Leadership’s focus on in-depth feedback.
After all fellows have attended the Center for Creative Leadership’s intensive summer seminar, UNC’s program formally kicks off in October with a fellows dinner. The bulk of the time commitment for fellows is in the spring semester, which includes two overnight retreats as well as weekly four-hour seminars on topics such as “Vision and Strategic Planning” and “Influence and Power.”

**Over 100 Professional Development Hours Across Year**

**Timeline of UNC’s Hi-Po Development Program**

Source: Education Advisory Board interviews and analysis.
Though some organizations may hesitate to implement Hi-Po programs, for fear that developing their best talent will increase the likelihood those leaders will take a job at another institution, UNC’s experience has been quite the opposite. Of the UNC leaders who have completed the program since it began in 2002, 98 percent are still at the institution today.

### Impacting Fellows and the Institution

#### Strengthening Commitment to Institution
- Exceptional retention rate, 98 percent of fellows still at institution

#### Launching Self-Sustaining Cohorts
- Nine of ten alumni groups still active, meet regularly

#### Filling Senior Roles
- Graduate School Deans
- College Deans
- Dean of Law School
- Dean of School of Public Health
- **Holden Thorp, Current Chancellor of UNC Chapel Hill**

Additionally, of the ten cohorts of fellows, nine still meet regularly as a group for continued development and networking. And a significant number of alumni have gone on to fill senior roles at UNC, including the institution’s current chancellor.