

WACUBO
Business Management Institute


Why is Change So Hard?

A Holistic Approach to Effectively Navigating
Change

2019 WACUBO Business Management Institute

The New Normal Means Who You Are Isn't Who You Will Be

*"Take a moment to look back ten years. Are things
the same then as they are today? And, when you look
back those ten years, are you doing (exactly) now what you were doing then?"*



Source:
Kouzes, Jim and Posner, Barry (Winter 2017) "Who You Are Isn't Who You Will Be" Leader to Leader.

Change Maker vs. Steward

“In a future of rapid technological, social, and demographic change, colleges will have to innovate to survive, much less thrive. The role of the president will be to create an environment where change becomes both desirable and possible — something to be embraced, not feared.”

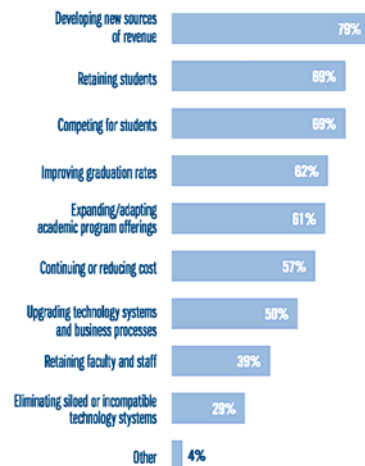
Source:

“The Successful President of Tomorrow” The Chronicle of Higher Education (2019) (p. 16)

Presidential Concerns and the Growing Pressures

FIG. 1: TOP INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES

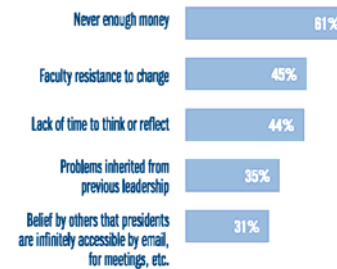
Academic leaders were asked about their major concerns.



Source: “Making Way for Innovation,” based on a 2017 survey of academic leaders conducted for The Chronicle by Maguire Associates

FIG. 2: TOP FRUSTRATIONS

Presidents were asked what frustrated them about their roles.



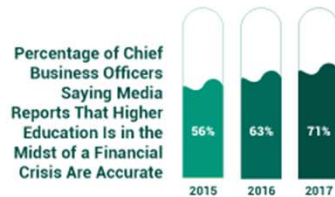
Source: “American College President Study, 2017,” by the American Council on Education and the TIAA Institute

Source:

“The Successful President of Tomorrow” The Chronicle of Higher Education (2019) (p. 10)

Disruptive Change Being Pushed From the Outside

- The future of work.
- Continued stagnation of state funding and the need for new sources of revenue (e.g. public private partnerships).
- State political climate.
- Federal policies and political environment.
- Boards that blur the lines between governance and management.
- Digital learning.



“The emerging picture is decidedly less optimistic than that of previous years. This year, 71 percent of chief business officers agreed with the statement that media reports saying higher education is in the midst of a financial crisis are accurate. That is up from 63 percent in 2016 and 56 percent in 2015.”

Source:
7th Annual Inside Higher Ed Survey of College and University Business Officers. (Conducted in conjunction with Gallop) (2017)

However. . .



“The Biggest frustration of Chief Business Officers, edging out ‘never enough money’ is ‘culture that resists change.’”

Source:
Sustaining the College Business Model (2018). The Chronicle of Higher Education.

What Keeps You Awake At Night?

Security Demands Exceed Ability to Deliver
Privacy **Data Breaches**
Digital Learning **Budget / Resource Concerns**
 Supporting Campus Innovation
 Recruiting & Retaining Talent
 Competing Salaries **1st Amendment**
 Diversity / Inclusion **Student Activism**
 Federal Policies
 Reputational Threats or Crisis



Source:
Information Technology in Higher Education 2017; Survey of Chief Technology Officers (LBCIO)

Disruptive Change Being Pushed From the Inside

- Scarcity of resources.
- Resistance to change.
- Risk of crisis or scandal and the likelihood that it could go viral, leaving less time to respond.
- Student activism.
- An older and more diverse student population.
- Retirements and loss of institutional memory.
- Structural changes, e.g. consolidations, mergers and economies of scale.

*“Any leader who hasn’t faced an
existential crisis on his or her campus
most likely will.”*

Source:
“Preparing for Tough Conversations” The Chronicle of Higher Education (2019) (p. 4)

Disruptive Change Being Pushed From the Inside

- Technical change vs. adaptive change. “Use of position power vs. influence.”
- A sense of disequilibrium and the desire to have answers.
- Fear of the unknown e.g. “will my skills still be valued and marketable?”
- Denial. Too much time spent in “Pity City.”
- Cynicism – questioning motivation for change and “fear mongering.”
- “Thinking Harder.”
- Cognitive blinders – unable or unwilling to understand and address the impact of change on others.
- Fallacy of the Exception. “It won’t work here. We’re different.”
- Failure to seek buy-in from the uncommitted. “You’ll never convince enough key constituents.”

What would you add to this list?



How Can You Manage the Impact of Change With Strategies That Are More Holistic and Positive?

- Understand change fatigue.
- Use data to define the problem in a way that addresses cynicism.
- Create meaning and purpose through involving staff and administrators in proactive ways about the future.
- Engage those whom change will impact to minimize the stress and create change strategies together.
- Developing a formal and on-going internal strategic communication plan.
- Understand adaptive vs. technical change.
- Be willing to test assumptions – option awareness vs. “thinking harder about the same change strategy.”
- Emotional intelligence – social awareness – empathy and organizational awareness.
- Relationship management – inspirational leadership, coaching and mentoring.
- Align the reward structure with new behaviors (e.g. innovation).

How Can You Manage the Impact of Change With Strategies That Are More Holistic and Positive?

- “Gig Strategy.”
- Support Life Long Learning (e.g. training that is aligned with the work of the future).
- Help employees build resiliency – “distinguish between your personal self and your professional self.”

When William McRaven, a former military commander who planned the raid on Osama Bin Laden was preparing to leave the chancellorship of the University of Texas in 2018 after just three years on the job he said,

“Leading a university is the toughest job in the nation – a herculean task.”

- Admiral William McRaven

Source:

“The Successful President of Tomorrow” The Chronicle of Higher Education (2019) (p. 37)

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