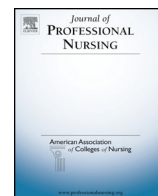




Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Journal of Professional Nursing



Pearls of wisdom for chief academic nursing leaders

Jean Giddens^{a,*}, Patricia Morton^b

^a Virginia Commonwealth University, School of Nursing, Richmond, VA, United States

^b University of Utah, College of Nursing, Salt Lake City, United States

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 26 March 2017

Revised 20 September 2017

Accepted 3 October 2017

Available online xxx

ABSTRACT

There is a significant shortage of executive leadership in nursing academia with large numbers of deans have retired and many more are expected in the upcoming years (AACN, 2015). This has resulted in a steady upward trend of nursing schools reporting a change in deans over the past 5 years; many of the changes in academic nursing leadership involve deans who are new to the role. The role expectations of chief academic nursing leaders are very complex and for which few new leaders are completely prepared. This article describes the role and competencies of the chief academic nursing leader and presents “pearls” for success for new leaders assuming this role.

© 2017 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

The position of chief academic nursing leader is critically important for the success of the nursing program. For over a decade, the nursing literature has forewarned of a significant shortage of executive leadership in nursing academia (Adams, 2007; Glasgow, Weinstock, Lachman, Suplee, & Dreher, 2009; Green & Ridenour, 2004). Large numbers of experienced deans have retired with more to come in the future. According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), in 2015 the mean age of nursing deans was 59.4. In fact, 79% of AACN member school deans ($n = 665$) are age 55 or over (AACN, 2016). This reality is also reflected in the steady upward trend of nursing schools reporting a change in deans over the past 5 years. Between 2011 and 2015, schools indicating a change in an academic nursing leader rose from 10.6% of schools to 16.2% of schools (AACN, 2012; AACN, 2013; AACN, 2014; AACN, 2015; AACN, 2016). Many of the changes in academic nursing leadership involve deans who are new. In the past four academic years (2012–2015), the percent of AACN deans new to the role ranged from 38.8% to 42.5% (AACN, 2016).

The title of chief academic nursing leader varies depending on the type of institutions, organizational structure, and unique variations in the areas of responsibility. Titles usually include dean, chair, or director. Regardless of the title one holds, the role expectations of the chief academic nursing leader are similar and complex. Assuming a role such as this is challenging, daunting, and perhaps even a bit scary. Deans are middle managers sitting between university administration and the nursing school's faculty, staff, and students; these competing agendas must be well-managed (Butin, 2016; Wilkes, Cross, Jackson, & Daly, 2015).

There also has been a gradual, yet significant change in the role of the chief academic nursing leader during last three decades – from an internal school level focus on direct operations, to an institutional and external focus (DeYoung, 2000), to a change agent role, with the potential to have a national and international influence on professional nursing practice. The purpose of this article is to describe the role and competencies of the chief academic nursing leader and share “pearls” for success for new leaders assuming this role. The term “dean” is used throughout this article to represent individuals who hold a chief academic nursing appointment.

Roles of deans

The role of dean is multifaceted and complex with both an internal and external focus (Adams, 2007). Serving as a chief executive officer, the dean has the authority and responsibility to ensure operations and outcomes for the school in the broader context of the university and external regulatory agencies. Internal (organizational) roles include overseeing academics, research, faculty affairs, student affairs, and communication. The dean is expected to be a steward of resources including managing the budget, allocating space, and hiring faculty and staff. The dean is often called upon to lead decision making regarding program expansion or closing programs. The dean serves as a mentor, maintains morale, leads change, and manages both up and down. To be successful, the dean must function as an advocate, arbitrator, communicator, and conflict manager (DeYoung, 2000; Krahenbuhl, 2004; Martin, 2005; Redman, 2001).

Although the dean is ultimately responsible for the day-to-day operations and outcomes of the school, many internal duties are delegated allowing the dean to develop a vision and strategic plan for the school, seeking financial support from donors and perhaps from the legislature of the state, and forming key partnerships with alumni and stakeholders

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: jgiddens@vcu.edu (J. Giddens), trish.morton@nurs.utah.edu (P. Morton).

from the community. The dean also is expected to promote the school to potential students and faculty through recruitment and marketing. The dean advocates for the school and serves as the external face that is frequently called upon to explain the successes and unique aspects that distinguish the school from its peers. The dean is a campaigner regarding external policies and/or laws that impact nursing education and healthcare. Some deans also are expected to make connections globally and offer their programs worldwide. Deans must embrace a business orientation, have an entrepreneurial spirit, forge relationships with multiple stakeholders (internally and externally), improve school rankings, expand market share, balance competing interests, and manage the expectations of multiple stakeholders while remaining fair and objective.

Attributes and competencies of deans

There is an abundance of literature that describes attributes and competencies of successful leaders. This section presents common themes from the literature as they apply to successful deans.

Setting and leading organizational change

Successful deans create shared mission, strategic vision, are able to clearly articulate their purpose and vision, and effectively lead organizational change. They are enthusiastic, inspirational, and optimistic. Successful deans are interested in supporting and promoting others and are action oriented (Acord, 2005; Bower, 2005; Capers, 2005; Christenson, 2004; Keef & Woods, 2005; Krahenbuhl, 2004; Mainous & Cavanagh, 2012; Patterson & Krouse, 2015; Watkins, 2013; Wilkes et al., 2015). Leading change often involves taking risks. Successful deans employ a deliberate process to assess risk/benefit, understand the change in the context of the organization, and network to cultivate relationships to successfully elicit the change (Patterson & Krouse, 2015; Pearsall et al., 2014).

Organizational management

Successful deans have the ability to provide direction and oversee the management of their organization. Organizational management includes the resource management of people, finances, and facilities (Potempa, 2005; Redman, 2001; Wilkes et al., 2015), effective delegation (Bower, 2005; Krahenbuhl, 2004), and application of institutional policies and procedures (Bower, 2005).

Intellectual capacity and analytic competence

Being a successful dean requires sufficient intellectual capacity and analytic competence to understand many aspects of this complex role (Krahenbuhl, 2004; Redman, 2001; Wolverton, Gmelch, Montez, & Nies, 2001). Deans should use accurate information to make sound and sometime very difficult decisions (Christenson, 2004; Patterson & Krouse, 2015). It is imperative that deans accurately assess and interpret information objectively and understand the information in the context of the situation and organization.

Professional values

The dean serves as a role model and advocate for professional values for the entire organization. Deans project confidence (not arrogance); they must set the tone for how people should behave and how individuals can expect to be treated (Bower, 2005; Krahenbuhl, 2004; Wilkes et al., 2015). There are a large number of professional values reported in the literature but the most commonly cited include ethical, honest, credible, empathic, and committed (Krahenbuhl, 2004; Patterson & Krouse, 2015; Wilkes et al., 2015; Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002). Successful deans emulate these values.

Communication and interpersonal skills

The ability to listen for understanding, clearly communicate messages, and get along with people is among the most basic and important leadership competencies. These skills are required to develop and sustain relationships necessary to elicit change and balance multiple competing relationships and agendas (Bower, 2005; Krahenbuhl, 2004; Mainous & Cavanagh, 2012; Patterson & Krouse, 2015; Redman, 2001; Wilkes et al., 2015; Wolverton et al., 2001). Deans must also possess emotional intelligence (a component of interpersonal skills) which refers to the ability to recognize and interpret emotions of self and others and use emotional cues to guide responses and behaviors (Selingo, 2016). Messages sent by the dean in formal and informal interactions should be authentic and transparent; such messages affect organizational climate (Poster & Armmer, 2005).

Self-awareness and resilience

Because of the complexity and challenges of the role, successful deans capitalize on their strengths, but must be aware of their limitations where development is needed (Christenson, 2004; Wilkes et al., 2015). Successful deans have an awareness of their leadership style (including the benefits and drawbacks their preferred style) and regularly reflect on situations and actions for leadership growth (Walker, 2005). Resilience, maintaining self-control when things don't go as planned, and admitting to mistakes when they occur are important dispositions of successful deans (Bower, 2005; Krahenbuhl, 2004; Wilkes et al., 2015).

Assuming the dean role successfully

Most new deans have a general understanding of the role and a broad awareness of the competencies and attributes of successful deans. However, having an understanding and awareness of the dean role pales in comparison to the lived experience. This section provides an overview of the areas we found to be critical for new deans to initially focus on and we offer some “pearls” for success in each of these areas.

Onboarding and transition

Onboarding refers to a time of transition with the arrival of a new leader to an organization. Transitions are a critical time for the organization and represent among the most challenging times for leaders (Watkins, 2013). Successful deans move through transitions with an onboarding plan prior to starting the new role. It is helpful to learn as much as possible about the history of the institution and of the school. Faculty are important stakeholders who can assist with the transition and can serve as guides to a new dean (Reilly & Morin, 2004) and fosters shared governance.

The initial weeks to months for a new dean are often referred to as the *honeymoon phase*. New deans have great enthusiasm and are optimistic about the new role they have assumed. However, the honeymoon phase is often short-lived, particularly if difficult problems are identified that require immediate attention. A dean coming from the outside brings a different worldview that may be welcomed or seen as threatening whereas a dean promoted from within may be given a short honeymoon phase and expected to hit the ground running.

○ *Pearl - transition with grace.*

Honor the legacy of the previous dean; acknowledge issues without being negative toward the past. Avoid commenting on previous decisions (good or bad); you don't have first-hand knowledge of variables that were involved in decision-making (Poster & Armmer, 2005). All deans inherit issues and messy situations – referred to as “closet

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

ISIArticles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات