ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP in CHALLENGING TIMES

By the National Center for Professional Research Ethics

CHALLENGING TIMES signals a need for Thoughtful Action.

Leadership problems interact.
Structural, cultural, financial, interpersonal, scholarly, and

SPENDING TIME PUTTING OUT FIRES SIGNALS A NEED FOR THOUGHTFUL ACTION.

Nothing happens in isolation
Structural, cultural, financial, interpersonal, scholarly, and leadership problems interact.

Critical Capabilities

Student Learning: Appropriate quality, volume
Scholarship: Research innovation such as publications that gain impact
Service, Outreach: Contribute to institutional mission
Governance: Ethically, legally, fiscally responsible

DYSFUNCTION: EXAMPLE

Lack of transparency, hidden agendas; faculty involve
Departmental business at a standstill; in gridlock

DYSFUNCTION: EXAMPLE

Repeated inability to hire, retain quality faculty, staff
Faculty schisms, battles, flareups
Culture that suppresses or hides problems; punishes criminal, etc. (arrests, lawsuits…)
Serious misconduct: discrimination; sexual; financial; etc.

Total Score:
DYSFUNCTIONAL EXAMPLE

- Factionalized faculty
- Leadership gridlock
- Low morale in academic, faculty, and students
- No cohesive plan for the future
- Inability to hire or retain faculty and students
- Curriculum stagnation and uneven scholarly standards
- Academic and cultural leadership dysfunction

DYSFUNCTION: EXAMPLE

- Quantiifiable Measures:
  - Boardroom evaluations
  - Financial diversity

- Qualitative/Subjective Indicators:
  - Leadership shortcomings
  - Schism, internecine conflicts

SOLUTIONS AND APPROACHES

How can you stop fighting fires...

Scenario 1:
The other person is totally off base, confused, neurotic, stupid and/or just generally wrong.

Scenario 2:
The other person might have a point; you could be mistaken or have misunderstood.

It's likely some combination of the two.
Whichever it is, you are in an unpleasant situation.

First...
You need to know — and be clear about — some things about yourself and your situation.

Self-Knowledge

And aggression only escalates.

Query:
Have YOU ever been persuaded by being insulted, contradicted or shouted down?

Philosophical Centering
Why are you doing this job?
(overlaps with self-knowledge)

Articulate your unit’s purpose and mission

Create an elevator pitch for your unit

Questions or concerns?
Key takeaways?

1. Create a ONE MINUTE or shorter elevator pitch for your unit, connected to its purpose and mission.
2. Participate in a Critical Friends discussion: be prepared to report back.
3. Remember that there are books available to support your development—use your funds!

Questions or concerns?
Key takeaways?