MAXIMIZING LEADERSHIP SKILLS FOR IMPACT BEYOND THE IR/IE OFFICE

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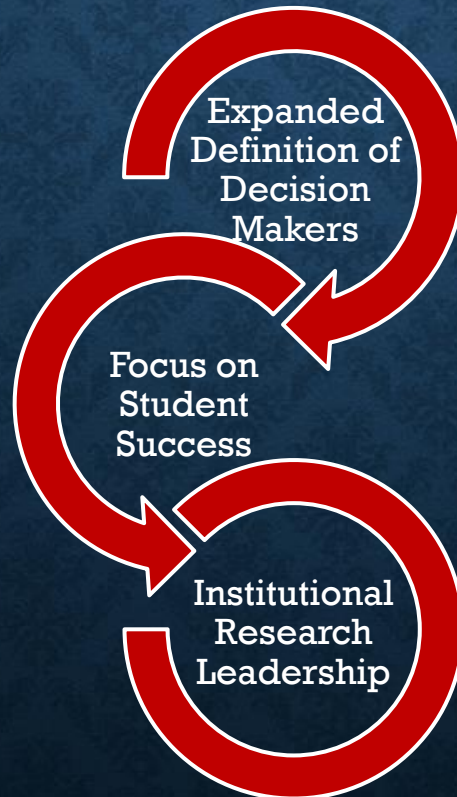
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QUESTION 1

AIR recently unveiled the statement of inspirational practice, which calls for IR as a profession to adopt a new model focused more on student success. How will leadership impact progress toward this goal?

LEADERSHIP'S IMPACT ON INSPIRATIONAL PRACTICE

Statements of Aspirational Practice For Institutional Research – Association of Institutional Research (AIR)

Expanded Definition of Decision Makers

Focus on Student Success

Institutional Research Leadership

IUPUI selected as 1 of 10 Pilot Institutions

STATEMENTS OF ASPIRATIONAL PRACTICE INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH LEADERSHIP

- Institutes strategic plans for growing and maintaining an institution's analytic and data capacities.

- Communicates the value of data-derived information in a holistic model of decision making that includes professional judgment, institutional mission, and environmental factors.

- Leader of the institution's data governance strategy.

- Ensures that decision-makers have timely and useful information.

- https://www.airweb.org/Resources/ImprovingAndTransformingPostsecondaryEducation/Documents/Statement%20of%20Aspirational%20Practice%20for%20IR.pdf

LEADERSHIP'S IMPACT ON INSPIRATIONAL PRACTICE

Vision – Institutional Research and Decision Support (IRDS)

The office will provide accurate, timely, and actionable information to support decision making at IUPUI. Using information from this office will allow greater coordination and alignment of activities to achieve maximum effectiveness in regard to IUPUI's Strategic vision, mission, values, and goals related to **the success and learning of our students** *as well as overall institutional effectiveness.   Our vision is to be a national leader in institutional research and decision support in higher education.*

LEADERSHIP'S IMPACT ON INSPIRATIONAL PRACTICE

IRDS Key Strategies Aligned with Statements of Aspirational Practice

- Develop a comprehensive integrated data infrastructure (student, faculty, staff, facilities, financial, research, community impact, and strategic planning indicators) to provide unprecedented access to data for decision makers across IUPUI.

- Optimize the use of enabled technology such as Tableau to put data in the hands of decision makers. The technology-enabled data reports will allow users to explore, interact with, and analyze information that is actionable and tailored to specific decisions.

- Build evaluation and assessment capacity across IUPUI so that information exploration, interpretation, and analysis are used to support evidence-based decision making and improve student success, learning, and institutional effectiveness.
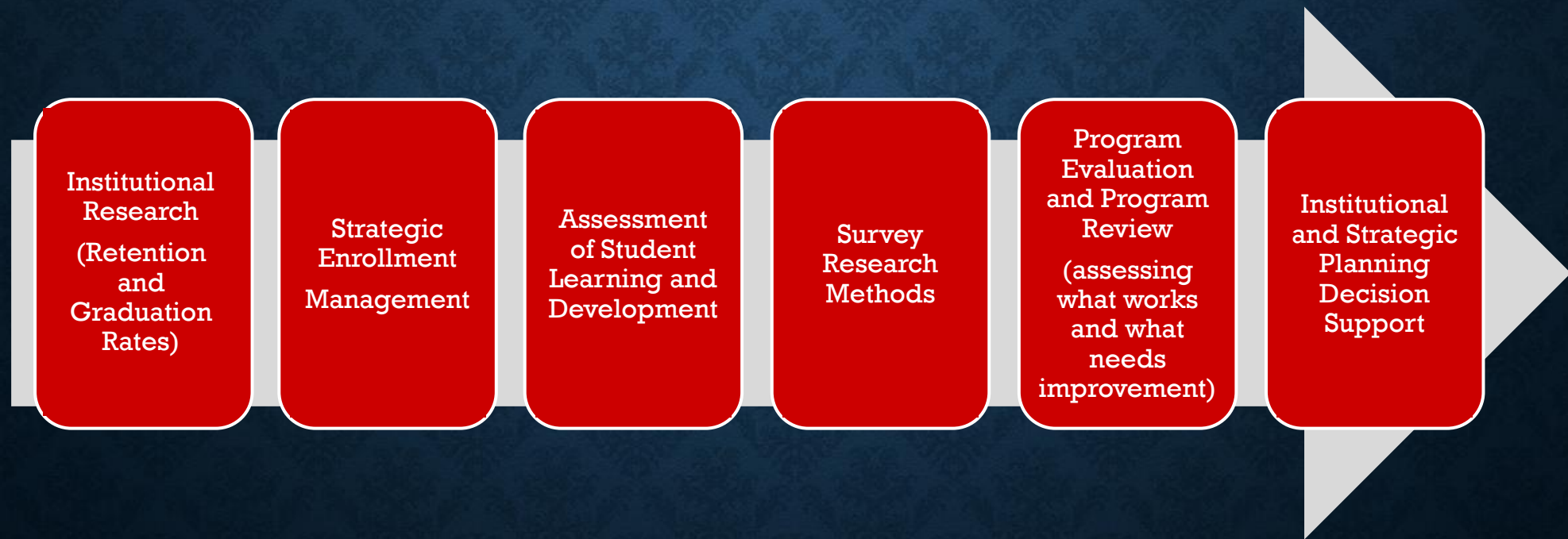
QUESTION 2

What is a specific example of when your leadership skills led to a positive change at your institution?

EXAMPLES OF LEADERSHIP SKILLS LEADING TO POSITIVE CHANGE

- Leadership of:
  - Assessment
  - Program review
  - Collecting of evidence for the HLC accreditation evidence file and collecting annual strategic planning metrics

- All of these require interpersonal and leadership skills as well as technical/analytical skills. The key is understanding the people involved, how they think about these processes, and what is important to them, and working with people on a long-term and highly personal basis can begin to change attitudes, which changes actions. Our work in these areas is now of higher quality and also perceived more positively.

QUESTION 3

Do you have an example of when your leadership skills led to opportunities to help people or organizations outside of higher education (such as non-profits, community service, schools, etc.)?

BENEFITS OF LEADERSHIP SKILLS BEYOND INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

Using Leadership for Positive Change Inside and Out of your Organization

- Institutional Research has a unique set of skills that can be beneficial to multiple types of organizations and discussions.

- Keep your exposure to potential discussions of impact at your institution high so you can offer the benefit of your aid.

- When you see an area that has interest to you don't be afraid to ask to be involved.

BENEFITS OF LEADERSHIP SKILLS BEYOND INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

- **Institutional Research has a unique set of skills that can be beneficial to multiple types of organizations and discussions.**

Skills Beneficial to IR and Other Organizations

➢ Incorporate theories, concepts, and tools from for-profit organizations and apply it to both the institution and nonprofit evaluation processes

➢ Adopt clearly defined frameworks to define problems

➢ Collect relevant data to ultimately improve effectiveness

Implementation of These Skills Can Help:

➢ Bring innovative tools

➢ Challenge Institutional Researchers to rethink their roles

➢ Improve effectiveness

QUESTION 4

Is it important for <u>all</u> IR professionals to have leadership skills? Why or why not?

THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING LEADERSHIP SKILLS IN IR

- Leadership skills allow IR personnel to:
  - Serve as critical change agents/influencers.
  - Play an important role in ensuring that key decision makers have information/data needed to make critical decisions, policy changes.
  - Be effective narrators and tell institutional stories with data
  - Understand the anatomy of decision making at the institution.
  - Understand data structures and ensure that decision makers can navigate information effectively.
  - Serve as a "reality check" and provide insights to all decision makers---even those higher on org. chart.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING LEADERSHIP SKILLS IN IR

IR Leadership and Reframing Organizations
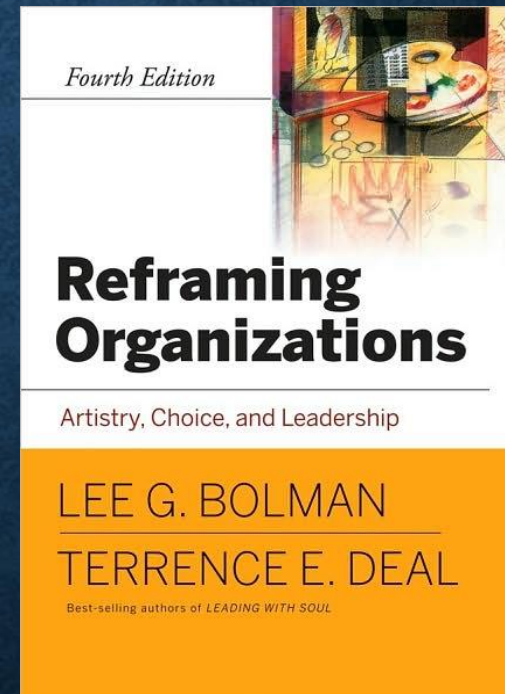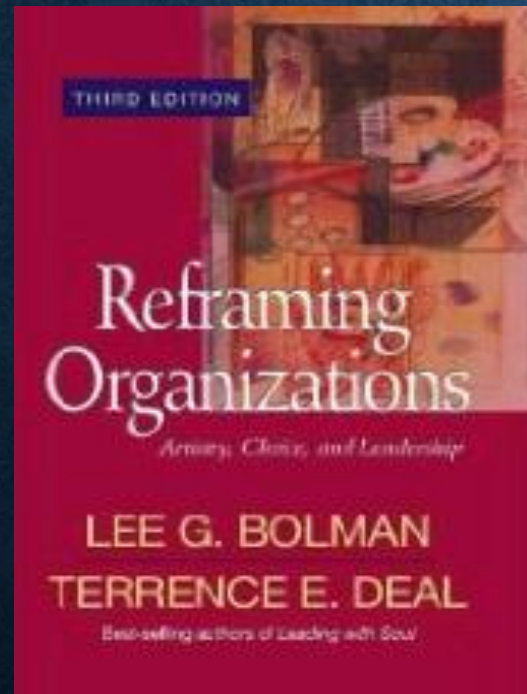
THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING LEADERSHIP SKILLS IN IR

IR Leadership and Four Frames

Structural
- grounded in rationality.
- correct formal arrangements will help reduce problems and enhance organizational efficiency.
- organizations exist to attain clearly articulated goals and objectives.
- Institutional problems can be resolved through careful analysis.

Human Resources
- centers on the dynamic interactions between organizations and people.
- emphasize the importance of good organizational-person fits
- Believe that organizations should invest in people and develop policies that sustain high commitment, involvement, empowerment, and diversity.

Symbolic
- what an event means is more important than what actually happens.
- events have multiple meanings because people interpret experience differently.
- culture has a fundamental role in holding an organization together and uniting people around shared values and beliefs

Political
- politics is simply the realistic process of making decisions and allocating resources in a context of scarcity and diverse interests.
- view organizations as dynamic political arenas comprised of competing individual and group interests.
- assumes that goals and decisions result from bargaining negotiation, and jockeying for position among competing stakeholders.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING LEADERSHIP SKILLS IN IR

Reasons for Multi-Frame Thinking in IR

- Operating from all four frames can lead to more effective IR office and communication of IR results to diverse stakeholders.

- Important to be aware that users of information often operate from one of more perspective.

- Institutions are composed of individuals who have their own perspectives of what the best course of action should be when institutional researchers present information designed to address complicated issues.

- Learning to apply all four perspectives may increase understanding of how institutional research is interpreted by users with diverse perspectives.

- Explicating multiple views of reality will result in more compelling presentations and actionable results.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING LEADERSHIP SKILLS IN IR

Other Reasons Leadership Skills Are Important

- It's absolutely necessary

- One of our most important functions is to be a leader and educate on appropriate uses of data

- We often know information on critical initiatives before other people – how we share is critical
    - Can be difficult to share "negative" feedback
    - Confidentiality is also important

- Sometimes it's necessary to push back – even against people who are higher on the org chart

QUESTION 5

For the person who's introverted and not naturally a "people person", what are some practical ways in which they can develop their leadership skills?

PRACTICAL WAYS TO DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Framework

Personal Competence: Self-Awareness
Emotional Awareness: Recognizing One's Emotions and Their Effects
Accurate Self-Assessment: Knowing One's Strengths and Limits
Self-Confidence: A Strong Sense of One's Self-Worth and Capabilities
Personal Competence: Self-Regulation
Self-Control: Keeping Disruptive Emotions and Impulses in Check
Trustworthiness: Maintaining Standards of Honesty and Integrity
Conscientiousness: Taking Responsibility for Personal Performance
Adaptability: Flexibility in Handling Change
Innovation: Being Comfortable with Novel Ideas, Approaches, and New Information
Personal Competence: Motivation
Achievement Drive: Striving to Improve or Meet a Standard of Excellence
Commitment: Aligning with the Goals of the Group or Organization
Initiative: Readiness to Act on Opportunities
Optimism: Persistence in Pursuing Goals Despite Obstacles and Setbacks

PRACTICAL WAYS TO DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Framework

Social Competence: Empathy
Understanding Others: Sensing Others' Feelings and Perspectives and Taking an Active Interest in Their Concerns
Developing Others: Sensing Others' Development Needs and Bolstering Their Capabilities
Service Orientation: Anticipating, Recognizing, and Meeting Customers' Needs
Leveraging Diversity: Cultivating Opportunities Through Different Kinds of People
Political Awareness: Reading a Group's Emotional Currents and Power Relationships
Social Competence: Social Skills
Influence: Wielding Effective Tactics for Persuasion
Communication: Listening Openly and Sending Convincing Messages
Conflict Management: Negotiating and Resolving Disagreements
Leadership: Inspiring and Guiding Individuals and Groups
Change Catalyst: Initiating or Managing Change
Building Bonds: Nurturing Instrumental Relationships
Collaboration and Cooperation: Working with Others Toward Shared Goals
Team Capabilities: Creating Group Synergy in Pursuing Collective Goals

PRACTICAL WAYS TO DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Perceptions of the relationship between extraversion and leadership (action, assertiveness, boldness, dominance, energetic, talkative) and the relationship between introversion and leadership (passive, quiet, reserved, shy, unadventurous)

- Understand specific strengths with each dominant type of personality: speaking vs. listening; getting attention vs. cultivating composure/being observant, etc.
    - Balance in teams (can't be all extroverts or introverts): fit for purpose or fitness for use = effectiveness
- Develop good interpersonal or social skills (communicate and inspire)
- Build trust (walk the talk)

QUESTION 6

In chapter five of the Handbook of Institutional Research, Voorhees and Hinds suggests that effective IR happens when we get out of the office and engage people on an interpersonal level. What is the key to doing this without neglecting the heavy load of reports that consume our time?

KEYS TO GETTING OUT OF THE OFFICE AND ENGAGING PEOPLE

- In-depth and productive discussions help focus the project

  - Can narrow the scope and minimize rework

- How can you combine projects

  - Twice the projects doesn't have to equal twice the work

- Can routine projects be automated to allow time to focus on research?

- Sometimes we need to say no

  - Offer to find alternative solutions, but sometimes spending significant time on an "interesting to know" request isn't a productive use of time.

KEYS TO GETTING OUT OF THE OFFICE AND ENGAGING PEOPLE

Mindset:

- Recognize that one person (IR Director) alone cannot fulfill all of the required/critical responsibilities for the position (e.g., understanding all processes related to external reporting)

- Get work done is not an isolated activity but a process (there is dependency in getting work done and perhaps getting it done well)

- Get out of the office and engage people help us to understand the broader picture of work and learn about resources available (knowledge and skills, ideas and practices, financial resources, tools, etc.)

Strategy (prioritize and delegate):

- Keep inventory and calendar (what has to be completed and by when)

- Identify collaboration opportunities (e.g., working within and across departments/offices on relevant projects)

- Avoid "Office Space – Milton Waddams" Syndrome (http://www.imdb.com/media/rm257871616/tt0151804?ref_=ttmi_mi_all_sf_5)