

How to Move Up the Administrative Ranks

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What's the only job market in higher education with plenty of openings and opportunities to move up? The leadership track. People inside colleges and universities, board members, and even many search consultants agree: There is a paucity of leadership talent equipped to meet the increasingly vexing challenges the higher-education sector faces. So if you've got the right orientation and motivation to be a campus leader, there is almost certainly a place for you and no better time to try.

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I have come to that conclusion based on my work as a higher-education consultant, a role that lets me see the inner workings of dozens of institutions each year. The leaky leadership pipeline is becoming increasingly problematic. The tenure of senior higher-education leaders continues to get shorter, and *The Chronicle* and other news outlets are constantly reporting on institutional leaders who are being forced out or quitting because they have just had enough. Rather than being excited about the prospects for “new blood,” campus leaders and trustees bemoan that (a) their options for filling major administrative roles are limited, and (b) they are forced to choose the “best available candidate,” rather than someone who wows or excites them.

You may have similar concerns, especially if you have ever been part of a search committee for a top post or attended a forum in which a leadership candidate spent 45 minutes talking about why they want to join your institution. You may have asked yourself, “Is this as good as it gets?” And, “How can

a role *this* important produce a slate of candidates so unimpressive?” At a time when the need for visionary and values-driven leadership is more important than ever, satisfaction with the quality of job candidates appears to be at an all-time low.

Why Aren't Better Leaders Available?

Many factors explain the dearth of quality leaders. An obvious explanation is people's increasing interest in having both a life and a career — something that can be hard to balance given the demands of senior leadership roles. Rather than seek to redesign appropriate boundaries for a leadership opening, many otherwise promising candidates choose not to pursue the role at all.

Another factor is related to higher ed's [failure](#) to take leadership development or succession planning seriously. While the corporate sector routinely identifies and develops internal talent to fill key positions, colleges and universities often default to national searches — believing that the best candidates are “out there,” not “in here.” Institutions always seem to be looking for ready-made leadership candidates rather than taking the time to develop internal prospects.

Expectations for these roles are also changing, and many candidates continue to project old models of campus leadership — charismatic, directive, heroic — rather than demonstrating that they are collaborative, adaptive, and inclusive, and thus, capable of building the trust and support required to manage modern challenges.

Finally, we need to be honest about just how difficult these roles have become. Today's chairs, directors, deans, vice presidents, provosts, and presidents are expected to be bold change agents while preserving cherished traditions. They must increase enrollment while the pool of students continues to decline and attract international students as visas are being denied and revoked. They must speak with moral clarity — but avoid controversy at all costs. They must cover escalating expenses without increasing tuition, and they must advance institutional fairness and inclusion while never — *ever* — uttering the phrase “systemic inequity.”

In short, they are expected to do the near impossible. Given these seemingly intractable challenges, it is no wonder that senior administrative roles in higher ed do not seem all that appealing. Many would-be leaders take one look and decide: No thank you.

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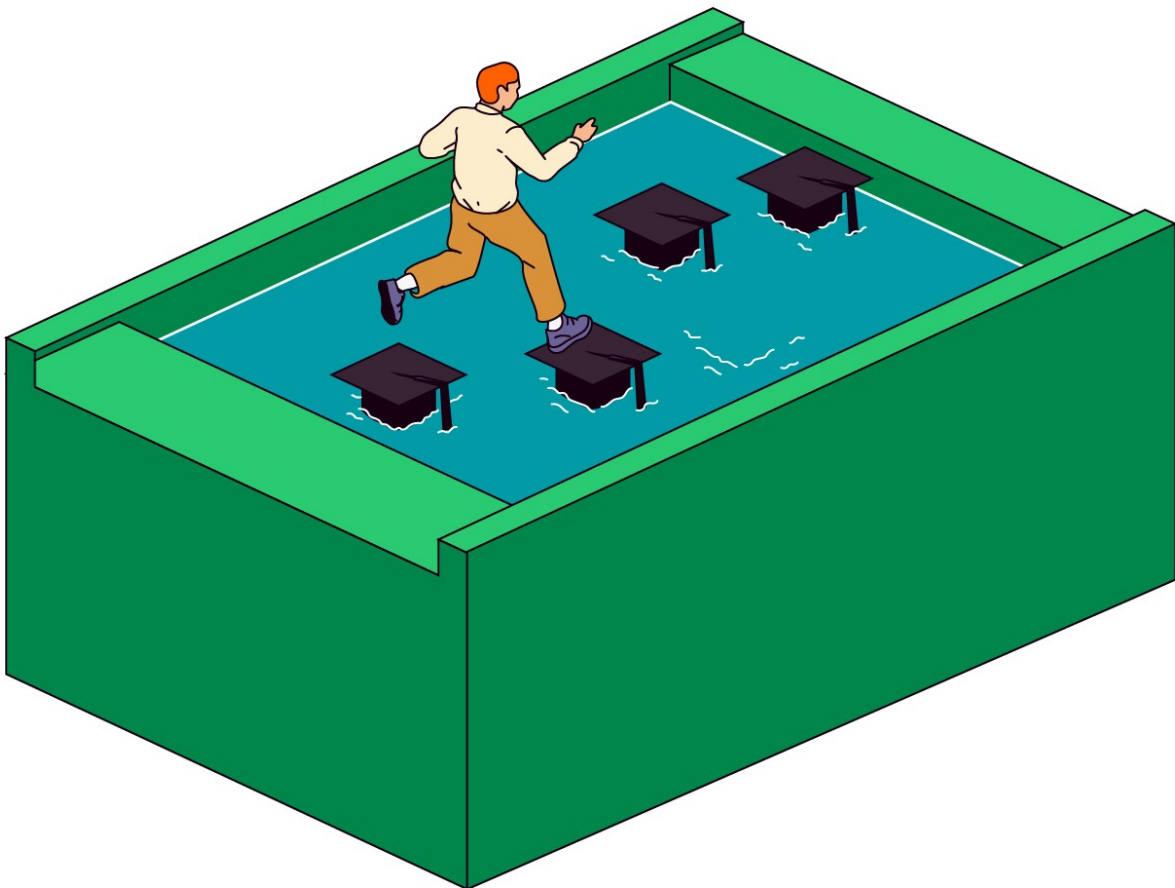
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In a *Chronicle* essay, “[You Could Not Pay Me Enough to be a College President](#),” Daniel W. Drezner, a professor and academic dean at [the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy](#) at Tufts University, summed up the problem: “There are not a lot of folks who are able to do these jobs well. They require a unique blend of scholarly gravitas, organizational competence, political skill, and fund-raising prowess. What worries me about this acrimonious moment is that the longer it continues, the number of folks willing and able to do these jobs will shrink into nothingness.”

Perhaps You Could Fill the Leadership Void.

How can you assess whether you have the mindset, motivation, and skillset to lead effectively in this environment? Throughout my career, first as a university vice president and now as a consultant, I’ve had countless conversations with faculty and staff members who wanted to pick my brain about whether leadership was right for them. After hundreds of these coffee chats and Zoom calls, I’ve developed a set of questions to help my conversation partners evaluate their readiness and fit for leadership roles. If you’ve been pondering the next step in your career, these 10 questions can help clarify whether you should take the leap.



1: Why Do You Want a Leadership Role?

Moving into leadership may mean shifting from project coordinator to project director, moving from faculty member to department chair, or accepting a management role higher up in an institutional hierarchy. Whatever the level of your potential career move, it's worth asking: What's driving you to consider this path? Are you motivated by service or status? Do you want more autonomy or more power? Is a leadership role the quickest path to a bigger paycheck, or is it a way to achieve critical reforms or remove barriers for colleagues you care about? To be blunt: If your only or main motive is status, power, or pay, you will very likely be a terrible leader. Please consider another career path.

It is possible that you never considered a leadership role until someone else suggested it. When I was still working at a university, I oversaw a highly competitive academic-leadership program. After the first day of a new-cohort kickoff, a faculty member pulled me aside to say, "I have no idea what I am doing here. I don't belong with these people. I have no interest in moving into admin."

But I had seen her in action in multiple committee meetings, and she wowed me almost every time. I shared that and discussed with her the letters of support that had accompanied her nomination: "They see you as someone smart, organized, and strategic. They say that you help groups agree on plans of action and then move them from concept to implementation."

"That's just being efficient," she said.

"That's just being a leader," I responded.

As we talked, she shared that she had considered leadership roles as somewhat distasteful and generally held by people with questionable motives and self-serving ambition. She didn't want to be viewed in that light. Our conversation helped her reimagine leadership as a way of advancing the success of others — a role she has now embraced as a dean at a prestigious research university.

While I was certainly more open to leadership roles than this now-dean was, I often lacked the confidence to pursue them. That's why, throughout my career, opportunities came my way when someone else nominated me for a role, not because I applied for them. In almost every case, I said to myself, "There is no way I can do this, and I will quickly be discovered as the fraud that I am." But every time I took a leap, I figured it out. Odds are, if you are considering a leadership role mostly because other people trust you and want you to, you will be successful.

2: Do You Possess the Key Competencies Required to Be an Effective Leader?

Leadership assessment and development are core components of my consulting work, and they give

me an opportunity to engage with administrators who are thriving as well as those who are struggling. Those thriving tend to be open to reimagining what leadership looks like, while those struggling often hold tight to older models that include demanding excessive control, swooping in to solve problems rather than teaching others how to solve them on their own, and needing to be an expert rather than demonstrating curiosity and allowing others to reveal their wisdom.

To be effective in these roles, you need to demonstrate and cultivate multiple leadership qualities. Below are four broad categories of leadership traits that are especially important. As you review the list, think about how you stack up. Do you possess these competencies now? In which are you strong and in which do you need development?

Strategic Thinking

Environmental scanning: a practice of gathering and analyzing information about the internal and external environment to identify potential opportunities and threats and to make informed decisions.

Pattern recognition and systems thinking: the ability to see recurrent themes and interconnections and use that information to plan for the future.

Vision and strategy: communicating a compelling vision for the future and translating it into achievable strategies.

Relationship and Influence Skills

Political savvy: recognizing sources of power and navigating organizational dynamics.

Stakeholder engagement: building trust and credibility among diverse constituents, including students, faculty and staff members, alumni, donors, trustees, policymakers, and community members.

Coalition building: forging alliances to move ideas forward.

Change management: supporting people and organizations as they adapt and evolve.

Communication

Active listening: making others feel heard.

Openness to feedback: hearing criticism without being defensive and responding to it in a constructive manner.

Effective storytelling: communicating through stories that engage audiences and bring ideas alive.

Personal Resilience

Maintaining composure: remaining calm during times of duress and crisis.

Adaptability: being willing to pivot in response to changing needs or new information.

Flexibility: releasing attachment to specific outcomes and being open to possibilities you had not previously considered.

Positive mindset: demonstrating optimism in the face of challenge or criticism.

Courage: the willingness to take principled risks, speak difficult truths, and make unpopular decisions to advance institutional interests — even in the face of internal or external political pressure or personal cost.

Not possessing all or even most of those leadership traits does not mean you are not leadership material. Even the most effective and experienced leaders often have room for improvement. What matters most is your willingness to recognize where growth is needed, make a plan to get better, and commit to it. For example:

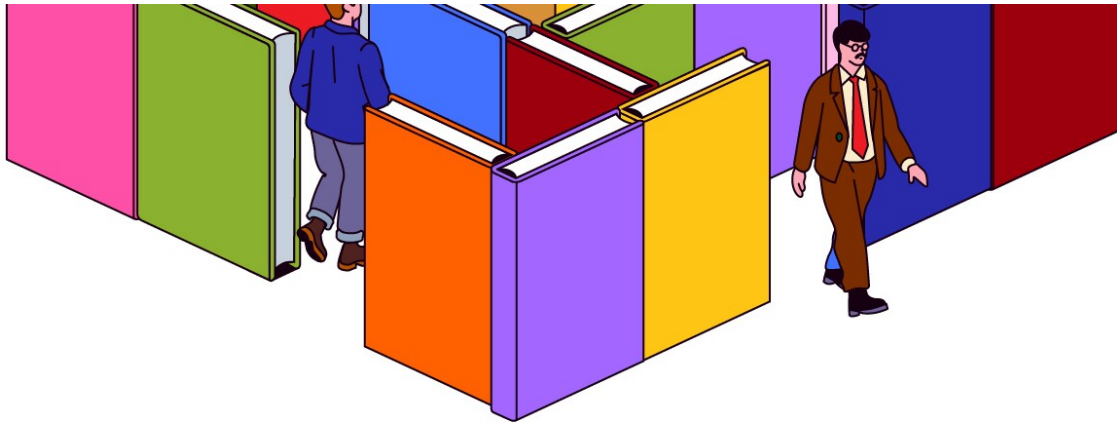
Maybe one of your weak spots is inflexibility. If you have received feedback that you are known for being rigid, experiment with not taking a firm stand on an issue and see how it changes the conversation.

If environmental scanning is not a muscle you have developed, start each day by consuming three very different sources of content and then reflect on how what you've learned connects to your institution. In a typical work week's time, you'll have insights from 15 different sources that might help you spot important trends. And yes, TikTok counts as a source — but only consult it once a week.

Say coalition-building is not your strong suit. Maybe you find it challenging to get people on board with your ideas. Observe someone who does this well and make note of their techniques.

Remember, despite what some people believe, no one is born a leader. The best leaders are effective because they observe others, practice, and regularly refine their skills and style over time.





3: Are You Willing to be Political?

It's often said that the word "politics" comes from the Latin words "poli" meaning "many" and "tics" meaning "blood sucking parasite." While that is [not actually true](#), it feels like it could be, and that's why many people with intelligence and integrity resent having to engage in organizational politics.

The thing is, leadership in higher education is inherently political. If you recoil at that assertion, you're not alone. When giving talks on organizational politics, I often ask audiences to identify with one of the following perspectives:

"Good work should speak for itself. I refuse to engage in organizational politics."

"I know I have to engage in organizational politics, but I resent it."

"I can navigate organizational politics and know this is just part of workplace survival. I don't get too stressed about it."

"I love the strategy and intrigue of organizational politics. Who's in? Who's out? I find it all fascinating!"

After a few laughs, I offer a sobering truth: Anyone unwilling to engage in organizational politics won't succeed in leadership. Many smart, principled leaders (both current and would-be) struggle with that reality. In my experience, "I don't do politics" is a common refrain among highly talented and educated people who believe their intellectual strengths and technical expertise should be sufficient to pave the way for results and recognition. They often equate politics with manipulation or moral compromise. But at its core, politics is simply how things get done in complex organizations. It's about understanding influence, aligning interests, and building coalitions.

And yes, it's messy. Competing agendas, ambiguous authority, secret relationships, unspoken hierarchies — it's all there. But the best leaders don't avoid politics, they handle them with integrity. They listen carefully, build broad-based support, and find ways to move their organization forward without intentionally hurting others in the process. They recognize the dirty tricks employed by others

but don't use those strategies themselves.

One of the strengths of politically savvy people is their ability to identify sources of power within institutions. Curiously, this is a common trouble spot for would-be leaders. While many assume organizational power comes from one's title or role — which are presumed to confer legitimate power — plenty of campus administrators complain they have plenty of responsibility but little true power.

That's because authority in higher education is diffuse, with decision-making shared — or contested — across governance bodies, boards, committees, and the like. As a result, leaders must attempt influence through persuasion, consensus-building, and moral authority rather than relying on directive control. They must also recognize that there are times when people without formal leadership roles have more power than those with fancy titles. That powerful pool includes people with technical expertise, strong networks, access to information, and influence that stems from being respected, trusted, and admired.

4: Are You Comfortable with Conflict?

When I observe floundering campus leaders, I tend to see one of two core issues: a lack of focus or a lack of courage. Lack of focus makes it difficult to establish priorities, allocate resources strategically, and sustain organizational momentum. But a lack of courage is even more debilitating because it prevents leaders from confronting hard truths, making unpopular but necessary decisions, or standing firm in the face of resistance. Without courage, even the best strategy falters, because the leader is unwilling or unable to take the risks required to move ideas forward.

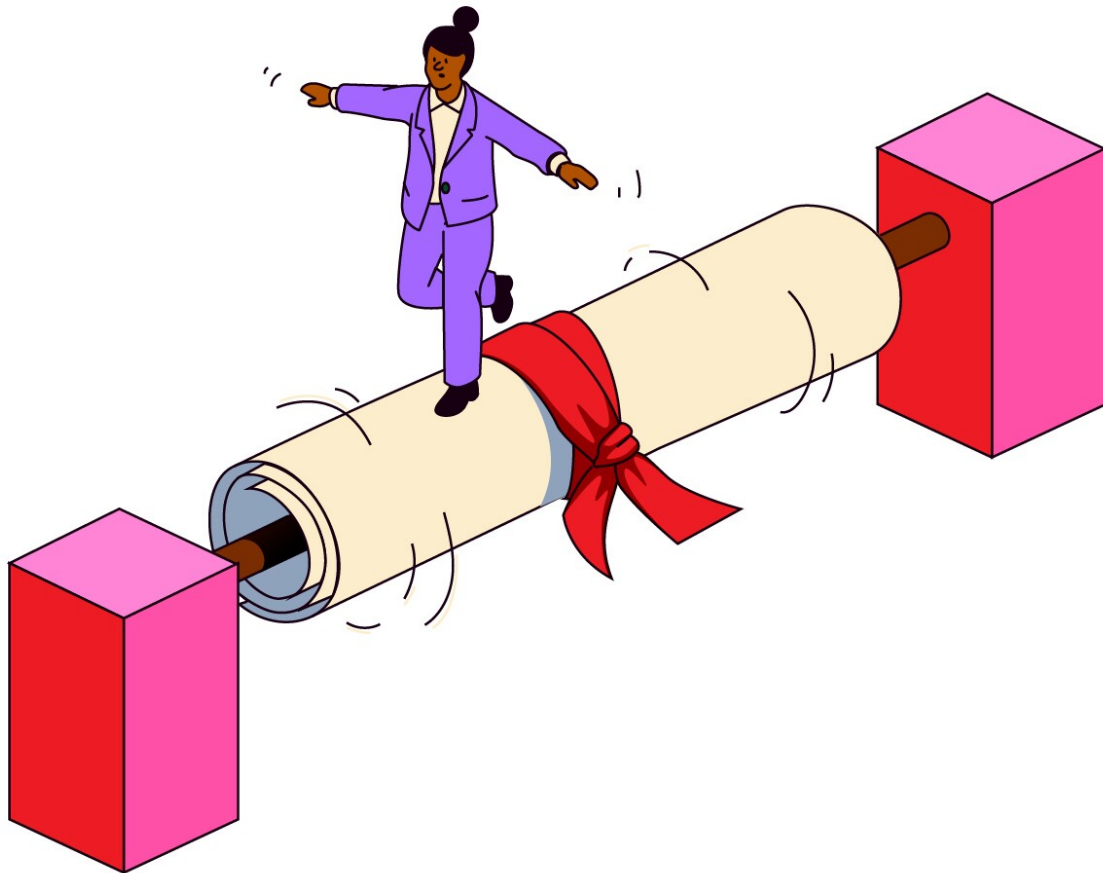
Higher education is rife with competing priorities, which means an effective leader will inevitably make some people unhappy. To be a good fit for leadership, you have to be comfortable with managing conflict, tackling sensitive issues directly, considering alternate views without being defensive, disappointing some people, and working toward long-term trust rather than striving for short-term harmony — all of which requires courage.

I've often seen administrators avoid conflict when budgets must be cut or when an academic program is no longer viable. Eventually, however, they do act, although their solutions may be less than ideal. But leaders are often completely paralyzed when it comes to dealing with combative or problematic people. I am consistently surprised by the number of leaders who cannot summon the fortitude to call out bad behavior or underperformance. Instead of delivering action-oriented feedback directly and coaching someone to success, they often resort to what Kim Scott, author of [Radical Candor](#), calls “ruinous empathy” — the practice of protecting someone's feelings by not telling them an uncomfortable truth they need to hear.

In his book [Possible](#), the negotiation expert William Ury argues that the inclination to minimize

conflict is counterproductive. What we need, he writes, is more conflict not less, because “the best decisions result not from a superficial consensus but from surfacing different points of view and searching for creative solutions.”

Ultimately, leadership will be hard for you if you have trouble coping with disputes and friction or lack the patience to achieve mutually beneficial solutions. However, it is possible to increase your comfort with conflict. Several strategies can help, such as reframing conflict as an opportunity for deeper understanding. Rather than resisting conflict, lean into it as a way to identify what is important and needs attention. And accept that avoidance does not increase harmony — it only delays clarity and erodes trust. Want to assess your conflict style? Take this [30-question assessment](#) to gain insights about whether you might be a competer, problem-solver, compromiser, accommodator, or avoider.



5: Are You Willing to Put Yourself Out There?

Many of us were raised to believe that doing good work is the path to success. And sometimes that's true. But too often, the reward for good work is just more work. Worse, all of that extra work may not

directly result in recognition, let alone the kind of leadership position you want.

To position yourself for a key administrative role, you have to get out there and push. Moving up often requires asking for opportunities, increasing your visibility on campus and in national or international arenas, and building your skills to be ready for new roles. To that end, there are steps you can take inside and outside of your institution.

Inside your institution, you might:

Let people know you are interested in opportunities to lead.

Apply for new roles even when you do not possess 100 percent of the required qualifications.

Ask for stretch assignments to build and demonstrate your abilities.

Accept an interim assignment to gain hands-on experience.

Volunteer to lead a high-profile project such as an accreditation review or a big-issue task force.

Ask to be part of a leadership-development program.

Participate in search committees.

Create or lead a group of people with similar professional interests.

Serve as a mentor to others.

Make an effort to get to know colleagues across your institution to understand the challenges they are facing and to position yourself as a resource for them.

Outside your institution, you may find it valuable to:

Assume a leadership role in a professional association.

Join a nonprofit board to learn about governance, fund raising, and organizational dynamics.

Become engaged in local civic activities.

Demonstrate your expertise and creative thinking by speaking at conferences.

Write columns and opinion pieces.

Serve as a peer reviewer for an accreditation committee.

In boosting your skills and visibility, don't neglect to ask people to support your leadership aspirations. Seek feedback on your leadership readiness from trusted colleagues. Look for opportunities to meet search consultants so you will be on their radar when the time is right.

One of the best strategies for moving from where you are to where you want to be is to have someone

else recognize that you are ready for your next leadership role and to serve as your advocate. Being recommended for an opportunity often carries more weight than applying for a role directly. Don't hesitate to let friends and colleagues know about your career aspirations, and ask them to share your name when colleagues and search consultants ask for recommendations.

Do these strategies seem distasteful? Like shameless self-promotion? Do your best to get over that, because these are the tactics the seemingly "lucky" ones have been employing for years to advance their careers.

6: Do You Have a Brain Trust?

A brain trust is a personal board of advisers who can suggest potential solutions to vexing problems, help you wrestle with ethical dilemmas, critique your decisions, and even give you early warning signs of trouble ahead. This is a group of people who you are confident will have your back and provide guidance and support as needed. It can be incredibly lonely in a leadership role, and a brain trust can offer a vital sense of connection, perspective, and accountability.

If you don't have a brain trust yet, who should you include? Here are a few key players:

The strategist. Someone known for their ability to see the big picture, connect the dots, and imagine the next best move.

The insider. A person with a deep understanding of institutional culture and of the people who make things happen.

The right hand. A person close to, and trusted by, a senior leader already in power. Your right hand can alert you to emerging developments and help you recognize when the time is right for you to seize new opportunities.

The external peer. A colleague at another institution who can serve as a sounding board and offer a reality check when things inside your institution seem confounding.

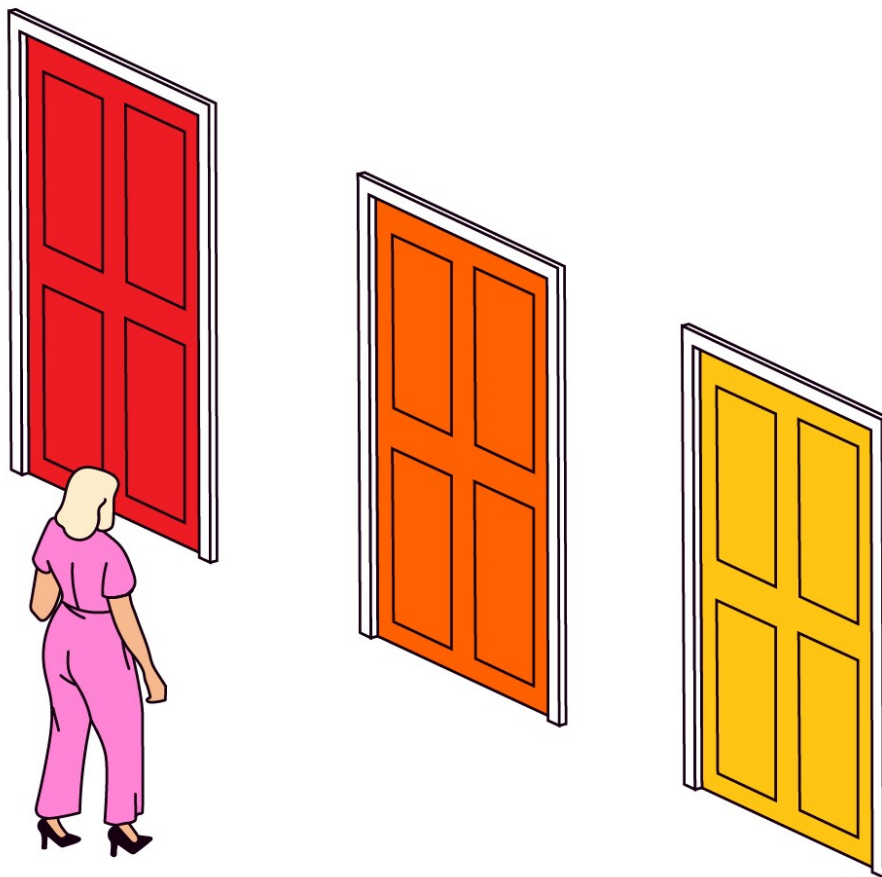
The up-and-comer. A rising voice or leader who is ambitious and unafraid to ask hard questions. An up-and-comer can offer fresh insights and alert you to emerging expectations.

The truth-teller. The one who will tell you what you need to know, however hard it is to hear. The truth teller can point out your strengths while also alerting you to blind spots or weaknesses that need your attention.

A brain trust doesn't have to be large, formal, or even permanent. And it does not even need to include members from your current institution, especially if you are new there, but it should be assembled strategically. Keep this inner circle strong by checking in with its members regularly,

expressing appreciation for their support, and reciprocating whenever possible.

People often ask, “Do I have to formally invite people to be part of my brain trust?” The answer is of course not. In fact, I don’t recommend that you do because it could create uncomfortable pressure or expectations for reciprocity. Your brain trust is just a group of people you know you can turn to now and then and trust. And some members of your brain trust can be people you don’t actually know — they’re leaders you admire and learn from merely by observing them in action and mimicking how they operate.



7: Will You Be Able to Take Care of Yourself When You’re Busy Taking Care of Others?

I recently had a conversation with a vice president who is leading a major organizational restructuring. His team is not on board with the change, and, in fact, is mostly resisting. They need constant reassurance, he grumbled, and hold him to unreasonable standards when it comes to supporting their emotional needs. “What about *my* emotional needs?” he asked. “This is hard for me, too, and all anyone wants to do is give me a hard time. I have feelings as well. I am, after all, human.”

The exchange was another good reminder that leadership can be lonely. You will often be called upon to take care of others without the benefit of having anyone do the same for you — or even express appreciation for your efforts to support them.

Certainly, if you are the kind of person who needs regular validation for a job well done, you are very unlikely to find a leadership role fulfilling.

Self-resilience is essential in management roles. The most effective leaders find meaning in challenge, draw on an internal sense of purpose, and take intentional steps to maintain their own physical and mental strength. That often requires establishing boundaries, protecting both your time and energy, cultivating reflective practices and strong relationships, and going to bed before your work is done.

To assess your ability to take care of yourself in a leadership role, consider these questions:

Do I cope well when things don't go my way?

Do I receive criticism as useful guidance for improvement rather than annoying chatter to be dismissed?

Do I have the emotional stamina to support others when they are struggling to deal with change or disappointment?

When something goes wrong, do I think about it as an opportunity to do things better the next time?

Do I see a setback as a test of resilience rather than proof that the odds are stacked against me?

Am I willing to change my mind?

Hint: We are looking for a series of Yes answers there.

8: Do You Talk More Than You Listen?

Old models of leadership relied on the person in charge being perceived as an expert. New models rely on leaders who can harness the wisdom of others. If you have a tendency to talk more than you listen, you may miss opportunities to uncover insights and make better decisions. Rather than being the one with the right answers, consider being the leader with the smart questions. That means practicing inquiry over advocacy.

Advocacy is about expressing opinions and seeking to persuade, while inquiry is about seeking information and understanding. In their 2021 book, [*Humble Inquiry*](#), Edgar and Peter Schein argue that — in a world that overvalues telling — you can be much more effective when you focus on asking as a strategy for learning and for building relationships.

As an advocate, you:

State your views.

Describe what you think and why.

Express your opinion.

Recommend a course of action.

By contrast, with inquiry, you:

Pose questions.

Facilitate discussions.

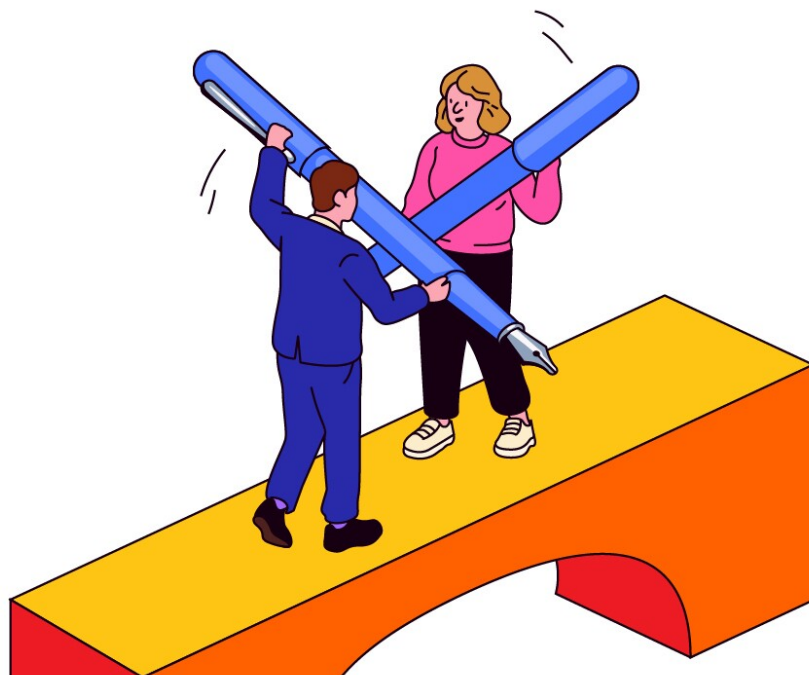
Encourage debate.

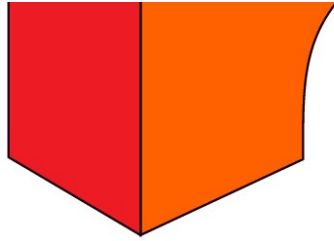
Welcome input.

Seek multiple sources of wisdom.

Inquiry requires a sense of vulnerability and a willingness to admit that you might not have all the answers and that there is more to learn. While advocacy focuses on persuading others of your position, inquiry invites you to slow down, ask thoughtful questions, and remain open to the possibility that what you believed to be true was never actually true at all.

If being right and resolute is important to you, a higher-education-leadership role may be a challenge. However, if you are open to listening, learning, and changing your mind, you may earn recognition for your ability to make wise decisions in partnership with others. And this is likely to make you a popular and successful leader.





9: Are You Prepared to Deal with Critics Intent on Blocking Your Progress?

As you advance in your career, it often becomes obvious that not everyone is rooting for your success. As you assume new duties and increased visibility on the campus, you may become a target for people who question your competence or qualifications or who want to undermine you because they are envious of your success. While it's understandable to be hurt when that occurs, it is essential to be prepared for it to happen.

To reduce the chances of being undermined, identify who might want to squash your success. On that list might be people who competed with you for your position or backed another candidate, as well as those whose opinions are regularly marginalized and who may now feel further sidelined. Rather than wait for antagonists to sabotage you, invest some time in relationship-building to prevent potential critics from turning into active opponents.

Still, you have to be ready in case those efforts don't work. Your opponents might criticize you in public to diminish or embarrass you. You have to learn how to be strategic, and respond with surprise and curiosity rather than anger or defensiveness. If they try to work against you behind your back, be ready to call upon your brain trust and allies to minimize your opponents' sway and speak up about your values and integrity.

Resilient leaders recognize that resistance and criticism often come with the territory — and they plan for it. They understand that pushback isn't always a sign of failure; in fact, it's often a sign of progress. Rather than taking resistance personally, they approach it with curiosity:

“What's driving this reaction?”

“What is this feedback trying to tell me?”

“What is the most strategic way for me to respond?”

How you cope with criticism will influence your effectiveness in a leadership role. Will you be a resilient leader who accepts that you will not be universally admired and prioritizes upholding principles over pursuing popularity? Or are you more likely to struggle with a need to be liked, and thus, avoid unpopular (but necessary) decisions and accept less-than-optimal solutions in an effort to

minimize upset? The latter will undermine institutional interests and damage your credibility as a decision-maker.

10. Will You be Able to Tell When It's Time to Go?

If you are happy being an individual contributor, you can often remain in the same role and at the same institution for a long time. But leadership roles often have expiration dates and require regular turnover. This is a challenge for people who are deeply committed to an institution, to their colleagues, and to a place they prefer to live. It can be hard to imagine giving up a life that includes interesting work, good friends, and a sense of comfort for the uncertainties of a new leadership post, on a new campus, and in a new state. But digging up roots and moving on is generally a requirement for those who want leadership roles in higher education.

Several years ago, I [wrote a blog post](#) about watching a nature show with my husband that focused on the fate of a litter of lion cubs after the male of the pride was killed. Soon after his demise, a new male lion arrived on the scene. While he cozied up to the mother of the cubs, he proceeded to kill each of her offspring by piercing their sweet furry necks. At that point, my husband leaned over to say, “Just like what’s happening at your work.” He was right. A new president had arrived, and leadership team members were being knocked off one by one.

While newly installed campus administrators are not known for killing their direct reports, they do often kill their prospects for continuing in their roles. That’s why it’s important to be ready when leadership transitions occur on your campus. There are steps you can take to signal that you can be useful to the new leadership, and either hold on to your position or move up. But even your best efforts may be unsuccessful, especially if the new leader is intent on signaling that it is time for bold change. Keep your network strong and always have your CV up to date, because you never know when it will be time for you to go.

Even if you are not forced out of your leadership role, you may determine that you should no longer stay where you are. Signs that it is time to move on may include the following:

You no longer believe in where your institution is headed or how other leaders are leading.

You are regularly asked to carry out decisions you don’t agree with.

Your protégés appear to be of more interest to higher-ups than you, and they are invited to projects and events that would normally be reserved for you.

It’s well known on the campus that you want to move up, but you aren’t being offered a bigger role.

Most of your time is focused on “managing up” rather than moving things forward.

While you used to be recognized for your novel ideas and strategic thinking, your suggestions no longer seem to resonate.

A reorganization is in the works, and you will soon be reporting to someone you do not admire or respect.

Should you find yourself facing any of these signs, it is normal to feel dejected or abandoned. You invested considerable energy into your institution's success, and it appears you are no longer wanted. But the situation is not uncommon, and it will be up to you to plan your exit strategically. You can do so by being gracious, focusing on where you are going rather than what you are leaving, and expressing appreciation for the colleagues you will miss. Your goal is to be remembered for the professional way that you departed.



Key Takeaways

As you consider your answers to the questions I've posed, perhaps the most important takeaway is to evaluate what is motivating you to pursue a leadership role. While moving into, and up, the

administrative ranks may bring opportunities to broaden your perspective, expand your influence, and shape the future of your organization or institution, it will also come with potential downsides. You will face heightened scrutiny and may be drawn into uncomfortable conflicts. The pressure may even prompt you to question your own competence and stamina. If your motivation is grounded in a desire to serve others, solve complex problems, and advance meaningful change, the path may be worth it. If something else is motivating your interest in a leadership role — money, status, power — your success and satisfaction are far less likely.

Higher education needs better leaders, and it needs them now. In particular, it needs leaders who are humble, courageous, curious, emotionally intelligent, politically savvy, personally resilient, and comfortable dealing with uncertainty and ambiguity. If all of that sounds like you, or like the person you see yourself becoming, it's time to get started. You don't have to be perfectly prepared — you just need to be ready to listen and learn.

Leadership Resources

Books

The Song of Significance: A New Manifesto for Teams, by [Seth Godin](#) (2023)

Radical Humility: Be a Badass Leader and a Good Human, by [Urs Koenig](#) (2024)

Possible: How We Survive (And Thrive) in an Age of Conflict, by [William Ury](#) (2024).

The Organizational Politics Playbook: 50 Strategies to Navigate Power Dynamics at Work, by [Allison M. Vaillancourt](#) (2021)

Reframing Academic Leadership, by [Joan V. Gallos](#) and Lee G. Bolman (2021)

Strategists First: How to Defeat the Strategy Trap, by [Ryan Hays](#) (2023)

Say the Right Thing: How to Talk About Identity, Diversity, and Justice, by [Kenji Yoshino](#) and David Glasgow (2023)

Radical Respect: How to Work Together Better, by [Kim Scott](#) (2024)

Podcasts

The Power of Mattering: [How Leaders Can Create a Culture of Significance](#)

HBR IdeaCast (episode 1,037): [What We Know About Leading with Intuition](#)

I Hate it Here (season nine, episode five): [No One Wants the Top Job Anymore](#)

The Insightful Leader: [Avoiding the Likability Trap at Work](#)

HBR on Leadership (episode 126): [Change How Your Colleagues See You](#)

Articles

Forbes magazine: [How To Avoid Derailment In This Very Uncertain World](#)

Fast Company: [6 Ways Leaders Can Build a Reinvention Mindset](#)

Insight magazine: [Making Communication Work ... at Work](#)

Harvard Business Review: [Now is the Time for Courage](#)

Fast Company: [3 Management Styles that Beat out Aggressive Leadership, and How to Master Them](#)

Higher Education Today: [Shared Leadership As a Strategy for Leading in a Time of Crisis and Beyond](#)

The Chronicle: [The Management Corner](#)

Reports

American Council on Education: [The American College President 2023 Edition](#)

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The Chronicle: [The Essential Leadership Primer](#)

Videos

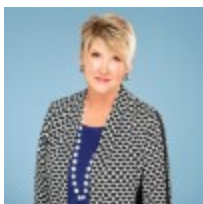
TED Talk: [Ken Chenault: How Great Leaders Innovate Responsibly](#)

YouTube: [Kim Scott: How to Lead with Radical Candor](#)

YouTube: [Introduction to New Power](#)

TED Talk: [Joe Davis: Is Generosity the Most Underrated Leadership Skill?](#)

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About the Author

Allison M. Vaillancourt provides organizational consulting services as a vice president and senior consultant in Segal's organizational effectiveness practice. Prior to joining Segal, she spent three decades as an administrator and faculty member at large public research universities. Browse her previous columns in the [Management Corner series](#) on administrative-career issues. You can

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