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# The Academic Workplace: Perception versus Reality

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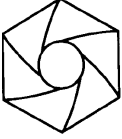Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.umb.edu/nerche_pubs

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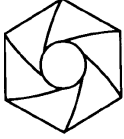
**New England Resource Center *for* Higher Education**

## *About the Author*

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## *About the New England Resource Center for Higher Education*

**The New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE)**, founded in 1988, is dedicated to improving colleges and universities as workplaces, communities, and organizations. NERCHE addresses this issue through think tanks, research, consulting, professional development, and publications.

## *Abstract*

Why are faculty becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the quality of the academic workplace?  What accounts for burnout and low morale among so many college and university faculty?  Is work life for professionals any more satisfying in the business world?  What can academic leaders learn from business executives who work vigorously to reenergize their enterprises?  Are corporate strategies aimed at enhancing the quality of work life applicable to improving satisfaction and productivity in our colleges and universities?

These concerns were addressed by a number of education leaders at a conference on faculty work life jointly sponsored by the New England Resource Center for Higher Education and the New England Board of Higher Education in December 1988.  This article setsforth contrasting viewpoints on a range of critical variables that affect the nature of the academic workplace and have a direct impact on the quality of faculty life.  In an era of increasingly scarce resources and organizational uncertainty, it is anticipated that the crisis of faculty vitality will intensify.  Strategies and options for enhancing the condition of faculty at this critical juncture in academe's history warrant serious attention as higher education in New England charts its future development.

The academic workplace "ain't what it used to be."  Either that assertion is true or it never was what those inside or outside academe perceive it to be.  Beyond the campus the academic workplace is often viewed as a safe, insulated enclave where, for the most part, faculty "do their own thing," have more control over their lives than most other white-collar and certainly blue-collar workers, are masters of their own fate, have more than ample vacation time, and are free to be creative, outspoken, and imaginative.

Reality, however, does not mirror the illusion.  Many academics will tell you that those perceptions are idyllic images that were always more ethereal than actual.  While such ideas succeeded in luring people into academe, they could not sustain the image.  They say that the academic workplace is not a congenial, collegial, cooperative place, but, rather, a competitive, controlling, isolating, highly hierarchical place—neither conducive to nor encouraging of cooperative efforts and behavior, pervaded by a "we-they" mentality that often pits administrators and faculty against each other.  That's academe?  The truth probably lies somewhere in between, and variations exist among colleges and universities as well as within a particular institution.

What is clear is that there is growing dissatisfaction among faculty in colleges and universities across the country and that burnout among faculty increasingly concerns academics.  When asked if they had to choose again, would they make their career the academic profession, approximately one out of five say they would not.[1]

Changing economic and social conditions have affected the faculty view of academe as the place to spend their professional lives.[2]  Economic rewards for academics have never been especially attractive vis-à-vis other professional positions, but other benefits of the career and its accompanying life style generally compensated.  Moreover, once faculty were committed to academic life, there were few external enticements to leave.  Now, however, an inflationary economy and greater institutional retirement pressures have given economic concerns new import.  That academe has not adequately provided alternative rewards to compensate for this economic differential looms important and exacerbates an increasingly problematic situation.

The heyday of the sixties, when colleges and universities could afford to be highly selective in recruiting faculty, is a remnant of the past.  Academic

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[1] Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, "Survey: Faculty Attitudes on Social and Educational Issues," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, December 18, 1985, 26.

[2] Howard Bowen and Jack H. Schuster, *American Professors: A National Resource Imperiled* (New York; Oxford University Press, 1986).

labor market studies indicate that faculty shortages, already occurring in certain fields, are likely to be aggravated in the next decade.[3]

As of 1986 there were over 650,000 faculty members teaching in American colleges and universities.  As many as one-third are employed part time.  Almost 75 percent of the full-time faculty are tenured, and their average age is approaching fifty years or older.  The majority of faculty members have witnessed dramatic changes in the nature of their institutions—growing scarcity of resources and accountability, particularly in the public sector—and a shift in societal attitudes toward higher education from optimism to skepticism about the value of a college education.  These changes may be partly attributed to the social and political turbulence of the sixties and the slow economy of the seventies.

Many faculty feel that the institutional norms that prevailed when they began their careers in the fifties and sixties are virtually obsolete, in part because the economic boomdays have passed and perhaps even more because they have little control over the existing institutional rules that undergird the governance and finance structures of colleges and universities. They share with their younger colleagues the feeling that life in academe is far less serene than hoped for, and at times even threatening.  During the next two decades academe will change dramatically as thousands of new faculty members will be needed to replace those who are retiring. California alone will have to replace 8,500 to 11,000 faculty by 2005.[4]

Observers of higher education are predicting that it will become more difficult to recruit and retain necessary faculty in the next twenty years.  Higher education is already experiencing shortages in a number of professional fields, including computer science, business, and mathematics.  What gnaws at faculty lives?  Why are the notion of lifetime employment, a nine- or ten-month work calendar, and the relative freedom of movement not adequate incentives or rewards for potential or current faculty?  Why do faculty admit to all these benefits and add in the same breath the disenchanted refrain "but we're trapped."  How then does academe begin to attract highly qualified faculty and transform our colleges and universities into more desirable workplaces?  How do we begin to better understand an environment that both liberates the mind and traps the spirit?

The New England Resource Center for Higher Education and the New England Board of Higher Education jointly sponsored a conference on the

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[3] David W. Breneman and Ted I.K. Youn, *Academic Labor Markets and Careers* (New York: Falmer Press, 1988).

[4]  Elizabeth Berry, "Newly Hired Young Scholars Should Be Nutured," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 21, 1989, A36.

academic workplace in December 1988 at the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston, Massachusetts, to address these concerns. Faculty members and administrators from public and private colleges and universities in New England, state higher education offices, and organizations concerned with higher education gathered to explore theories and perceptions of what constitutes a productive workplace and ways to apply those criteria to faculty work life. Participants discussed the roots of faculty dissatisfaction, the value issues involved with dealing with them, and some practical steps that can be taken to bring about improvements. Their commentaries focused on specific structural and behavioral variables that affect the quality of work life, including institutional mission, leadership, synergy, rewards, and collaboration.

The keynote address, "The Academic Workplace of the Future: Opportunity, Power,and Innovation," was delivered by Rosabeth Moss Kanter, professor of business administration at the Harvard Business School. Respondents included Claire Gaudiani, president, Connecticut College; David Harris, assistant professor of management, Rhode Island College, and Robert Woodbury, chancellor, University of Maine system. A presentation, "Collaboration among Faculty," was given by Kenneth Bruffee, professor, English Department, and director, Scholars Program, Brooklyn College. I presented the concluding address, "Exploring New Vistas Beyond the Classroom: Options and Strategies." (At the time I was associate director, Commission of the Future of the University of Massachusetts, and senior associate, McCormack Institute of Public Affairs and the New England Resource Center for Higher Education, University of Massachusetts, Boston.) What follows is a summary of the proceedings.

## *Identification of Mission and Purpose: Institutional Imperative or*
## *Organizational Obstacle?*

*Corporate leaders are increasingly emphasizing the need to identify an organization's mission and purpose, streamline activities, and focus on the organization's strengths in the hope of optimizing efficiency and productiviry. Not all higher education policymakers endorse that approach. Some academic leaders question the validity and applicabiliry of transferring such strategies from the corporate world to academe. Underscoring their skepticism is the contention that one of the hallmarks of the academic organization is that it is characterized by unclear goals. Attempts to achieve consensus among individual faculty members with regard to an organization's purpose and mission, while desirable in a business organization, may end up being dysfunctional within academe simply because such a notion is antithetical to the nature of the academic organization. Of critical import is the need for leaders to energize faculty and administrarors to periodically reexamine an*

*institution's mission so as to better understand where the institution is headed and why, and to ascertain how to ensure that all those within the institution can reach their fullest potential.*

*Kanter:* As I was putting my thoughts together, I started to have a fantasy about the analogies between these two sectors, the world of business and the world of academe, and what kinds of headlines might appear in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* if the academic world resembled the business world a little bit more. For example, we might have reports like: "The English Department is considering a leveraged buyout. In a surprise move, the tenured professors expressed the desire to go private, spin off the comparative literature group in order to pay off the debt, and therefore have more control over their own fate, because they knew where there were markets for their services that the university administration was unable to tap." Or this item: "To resist a hostile takeover by the math department, the statistics group, which was threatened with a loss of positions should that consolidation take place, was looking for a 'white knight' to acquire them and search for another university that wanted a statistics department, and they were all going to move." Well, ridiculous as those stories seem, I think some of the reasoning and tension is there. I do know of whole academic units that have sought to be acquired by another university that they thought would treat them better. Or departments that say if we controlled our own fate, we know we could do better than being part of this academic institution.

To be sure, there are instances of excessive greed and abusive use of information for personal gain in the business world. But the very pressure that American business is facing today is forcing a dramatic rethinking of structure, of organization, of the quality of work life, and I do think we have a great deal to learn from the struggles that are going on there.

The first recognition that businesses have come to in recent years, because of the pressures that they have been under, is the need for focus and mission in an institution. This is a dramatic rethinking of the dominant model of success, which advocates producing as much as you can of as many things as you can. I think it could provoke a dramatic rethinking for the public sector, the nonprofit sector, and the educational sector as well. There was once the notion that success meant diversification, that success meant having one of every department you could think of. Success meant being in lots and lots of different businesses and activities.

But increasingly, in a resource-constrained world, it is impossible to be excellent and have a diffuse mission. The underlying rationale here is simple: if an organization attempts to excel in too many areas, individuals' energies and expertise become dissipated. So, more and more, businesses' strategy is to focus. And they are focusing on their own internal units of strength or what is referred to as "core competencies." Which means, of course, divesting weak

departments but letting somebody else have them, which might then build a critical mass and make it tremendously great.  It also means divesting themselves of activities that are extraneous to their core mission.  One of the major trends in the corporate world at the moment is eliminating huge corporate staffs, including the staffs providing not only "administrative services," which were seen as administrative checking and control, but also eliminating those performing services that were not part of the core mission of the institution and could be better done by a subcontractor, an expert in the area.

We see it happening even in the academic world.  One distinguished university I know is saying, Look, we aren't going to run our own food service.  Marriott does it better.  There are people who supply certain kinds of help, who are specialists and experts, who take pride in it, who think that's terrific, and we don't need all our internal administrators and employees doing things that are extraneous to our mission.  We are then a band of faculty doing what we know how to do, providing the services we know how to provide rather than diversifying, generalizing, needing to do everything ourselves in the form of employment.

That kind of strategy is becoming a major trend in the corporate world.  I am watching corporations give up their food service, their laundry, their print shop, to outside contractors who do it much better and with a sense of pride, thereby reducing a lot of the antagonisms that occur within the institution because of conflicting views over how the organization should channel its energies.  So going private with some parts of the organization might make sense in order to focus on what the core mission is.  But, of course, it is not enough to just say, Fine, we're now going to become more specialized and concentrate on our areas of excellence in which we can take pride, develop depth, develop critical mass, and we won't try to be all things to all people.  But, in order to do that, you also need a sense of mission or institutional purpose.  Some of you may think it odd to hear me say that business is rediscovering morality and a sense of shared purpose and value to society.  But when I look at the companies that are role models, that other companies are trying to emulate, they are all organizations with a strong sense of purpose and a stated sense of values that have been in place for a long time and whose leaders see their job as communicating those values to everybody in the organization, so that the whole organization is infused with a sense of mission.

Companies point to Johnson & Johnson.  It is not a bad model for the academic world.  J & J has approximately 150 business units or departments, each with its own distinctive function, and they are like academic departments in schools. Each has its own board of directors, its own leadership.  They run on a very decentralized basis.  Yet what holds that whole company together is a credo, a one-page credo, a statement of values, which says: We are here to improve the health of people and that's our prime mission.  They list profit as the last one.  That statement of values has sustained them for a very long time.  People say that's just lip service, that anybody can have a written statement of

values, but the leadership take it very, very seriously.  The chairman of J & J spent his first two years traveling the world with that credo, holding "challenge meetings" in which he got his staff, the professionals and managers of that company, to review that statement and say, Do we mean it?  Do we believe in it?  Does it guide our actions?  Should we change it if we don't believe in it?  And they recommitted to it.  It was just such a sense of shared purpose, for example, that allowed J & J to act so fast during the Tylenol poisoning scandals, to immediately remove the product from the stores at great cost to the company, because of a shared commitment to values.  And in terms of allowing a decentralized organization to function without tensions and rivalries and armed warfare, it comes from a core set of values and beliefs and a sense that being part of this larger entity means that the work I'm doing makes a bigger contribution than what I do individually.

*Woodbury:*  We ought to think hard about what we can and can't learn from what's going on in "best business practice."  I am serious about thinking hard about what works in the analogy and what can be carried over.  We have to think very hard about what the values may be in the mission of the business enterprise and what is very different in the academic enterprise.  I suppose we start getting a little sloppy and maybe a little religious when we start talking about the mission of the university, but I think there are some differences that are so fundamental that we ought not to forget them when we go to business practice and see what can be traded over.  The mission of the university is research, teaching, and service.  Through these activities we create, apply, and disseminate knowledge and in so doing educate competent individuals and help solve societal needs.  Moreover, there are issues like the integrity of language that one might think about.  It is the core of the academy; it may not be at the core of the business enterprise.

My point simply is that we ought to be very, very careful about moving examples from one kind of organization to the other.  Some of you, particularly more senior people, will remember what I think remains the favorite book on academic organization, *Leadership and Ambiguity,* Cohen and March's work on the college presidency, which described the university as an organized anarchy.  One of the properties of organized anarchy, of course, was unclear goals and purpose. Many people read that as ridicule of university organization.  One ought to remember that part of the message was that much of the strength of the university lay in its properties as an organized anarchy.[5]

Let me comment now on the first point [Kanter] focused on, namely, the great importance of getting clarity of mission and a sense of commitment to that mission.  I can't remember colleges and universities talking about

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[5] Michael D. Cohen and James G. March, *Leadership and Ambiguity: The Amercian College President.* The Carnegie Commission for Higher Ediucation (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974).

missions a few years ago.  In fact, most people would have laughed if you talked about mission statements, and most of the elite colleges didn't have such things.  But as the enterprises have become more complex and taken on new tasks, such as technology transfer involving linkages with industry, discussion about mission and "what are we doing" has become much more visible on campuses and everywhere.  It certainly has for us and I think it has for others.  I think this is healthy.  Although I notice whenever I mention to the board of trustees or to the faculty that we should relook at our mission statement, people boo and put their heads down and say, Not this one again, and, Does this mean we have to do strategic planning, too?  At the same time, it is healthy, and the point is well taken for us to be much more self-conscious about the missions and to energize ourselves from time to time to think about what we are trying to do.

*Gaudiani:*  Kanter talked about the importance of focus, and many institutions of higher education of all different sorts do have a mission.  That mission provides the basis for our knowing why we are a part of a particular institution.  Often it is a well-led effort.  We do measure and examine the degree to which new ideas continue to make the mission statement true for the institution, rather than taking it off in other directions.

*Kanter:* Infusing an organization with purpose allows people to focus on their passion for excellence.  Leadership in excellent organizations is constantly pushing people to beat their own records.  This is another new theme that is emerging in the business world in response to all the challenges that we face today.  Continuous improvement is a major buzzword.  Borrowed from the Japanese notion of Kaizen, it means that no matter what you do, you must try to improve on it, go one step further, make it even better.  Leaders in those organizations are in essence seeing a theme a year.

*Woodbury:*  I am uneasy about [Kanter's] comment on leadership.  I am reminded of the story of why in Paris, as throughout France, they build triumphal arches for the heroes out of stone, so that when the hero comes through there is something handy to throw at him.  I think in a university one has to be thoughtful about the question of leadership because the real issue is, How do you energize leadership throughout an institution?  A faculty role is fundamentally a leadership role.  The key question in the institution is, How do you create an environment that energizes leadership throughout an institution?  In terms of the theme of improvement, [Kanter] suggested that we ought to have a theme a year, or something of that sort.  Well, I know people in Maine are sick of my coming up with a new theme.  They just get finished dealing with one, and, Lord, he has another one.  But the point is well taken that the notion of how we do better is not a chancellor or a president's concern—although it is a cheerleader role—but how we energize leadership about quality throughout the institution.

### *Seeking Synergy*

*As businesses face increased uncertainty and competition, corporate leaders strive to instill in workers the will not only to maximize their own potential but to help tap the full potential of their coworkers. The emphasis on working with other members of the organization who have complementary expertise rather than in isolation is aimed at optimizing organizational efficiency. The underlying assumption is that in the decompartmentalizing of people and their work, and through the encouragement of interdependent, interfunctional work modes, innovation is more likely to occur. Moreover, the theory of synergy is based on the premise that the overall organizanon will thrive as long as some components of the organization maintain strong performance.*

*Kanter:* So the sense of purpose of the institution, focus, mission and values, leadership themes, and an emphasis on continuous improvement and on campaigns for excellence that we can all participate in and contribute to that make it easier for all of us to continually get better at the work we do, is the first thing I think businesses are trying to do in response to their demanding environment.

The second thing they are trying to do is find ways of fostering an organizational climate in which the members value the organization so that the whole is worth—beyond monetary terms—more than the sum of its parts. That magical buzzword, synergies. My favorite chapter title in my new book is "Desperately Seeking Synergies." Because one of the things behind the takeover movement in American industry is that the whole is not worth more than the sum of its parts either financially or in terms of productivity. And I would say that if we look at most universities, they probably would be subject, if they were in the private sector, to a lot of hostile takeovers. Business leaders say that the breakup value—the net financial worth and potential productivity—of separating these is going to be greater, because you are not getting optimal productivity by having them together. The challenge that businesses are struggling with is, How do you get the greatest efficiency and effectiveness of having this particular combination of resources or this particular combination of departments? Even when we want them to be as strong in pursuing their own direction as possible, this is a struggle. There is going to be an emphasis on what we contribute to each other as well as what we do separately. In many ways, I think this is the one part of academic life that disturbs me the most from an organizational standpoint.

Warren Bennis once said, after his term as president of the University of Cincinnati, that the university is harder to change than a graveyard. I'm not quite that pessimistic but I feel that the kind of segmentation between areas that occurs is probably greater, except in professional schools, than in any other

kind of organization I have ever observed.  Look at the tradition and power of the disciplines.  I'm a discipline-based person; I think it is incredibly important.  But in terms of innovation, not only getting productivity out of shared facilities and a shared resource pool, but in terms of innovation, most major innovation—breakthroughs in thought, breakthroughs in invention—occurs at the boundaries of disciplines, not clearly within them.  When I look at the organizations that are most innovative it is either because of people who have somehow managed to cross boundaries—they may appear to be within a discipline, but they have managed to get ideas and an infusion of thought from cross-fertilization with other areas.  It comes as well because of interdisciplinary, interfunctional kinds of projects, and it comes because of connections with some set of users, some market for the ideas or the images.

Where do you find synergies?  Where do you get productivity and organizational effectiveness, that is, where do you get the most value?  Not from a set of rivals but from a set of possible resources and other groups that exist in your organization.  When I looked at places that are dominated by rivalries between fields and functions, I discovered that, contrary to popular hypotheses that competition breeds excellence, competition breeds the desire to both kill the rival and not necessarily meet the highest possible standards of productivity internally.  You can hold standards without letting people fight with each other over who gets a tiny piece of a scarce resource.

*Woodbury:*  I find the notion of synergy particularly compelling.  In *The Change Masters* Kanter talked a bit about the creation of parallel organizations or how you create ways of cutting across organizations that aren't regularized on the chart.[6]  I find that probably the healthiest thing you can do in an institution is figure out other ways for people to come together and collaborate, to cut across disciplines, across categories, across constituencies.  It may be the most effective way of encouraging people to become excited, effective,and renewed in an institution.  In the University of Maine system, we are trying every way we can to find ways for faculty to work across disciplines and across fields.  We recently disseminated a new honors journal that is published jointly by the Honors programs on all seven campuses.  I think we ought to seize every opportunity to capitalize on those kinds of relationships both for what they do in terms of teaching and providing energy for the institution and for new learning intellectually.

*Gaudiani:*  Our institutions of higher education do profit from being in synergistic relationships with other institutions in the community.  Synergistic experiences could be a part, a normal part, of academic life for all people who teach, if we planned for that to happen.  I looked around at other professions

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[6] Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *The Change Masters: Innovation for Productivity in the American Corporation* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983).

and discovered that what I thought was true *was* true—that doctors and lawyers get together monthly in their respective counties and in those meetings they constitute a group with respect to which the rest of us are lay people.

In the original conception of these county medical societies and bar associations, the idea was for the professionals in practice to take responsibility for the quality of that profession in their local area.  In the 1880s, when law and medicine were organizing county medical societies and county bar associations out of the AMA and the ABA, we had an MLA, a Modern Language Association, and we had an American Historical Association.  We had the same kinds of analogues in education.  We had a National Education Association.  But we didn't get it together.  We didn't band into local, county-based units that put all the members into a professional relationship with one another.  Imagine all the people from schools, community colleges, colleges, and universities who care about history gathering once a month and doing the things that historians do together.  And imagine that on another night, people who care about biology, physics or mathematics, or English or foreign languages would also find each other.

## *Rewards and Incentives*

*One of the fundamental tenets of understanding how organizations work is recognizing the direct correlation between organizational incentives and rewards and individual creativity and productivity.  In academe there is greater dissonance than in the corporate world between what the organization does to reward individuals, that is, the faculty, and how they are actually rewarded.  Faculty for the most part are recognized for their productivity and rewarded externally by their peers in their respective fields, primarily beyond their own institutions.  Moreover, faculty tend to identify with and are more committed to their disciplines than to their institution.*

*As academic organizations seek to find ways of increasing the compatibility between individual productivity and organizational effectiveness, more consideration must be given to conferring internal rewards and acknowledging individuals' accomplishments within their own institution.  Monetary rewards, which can be problematic in academe, are not the only viable alternative.  Even in companies there is a growing emphasis on nonmonetary forms of rewards, which are a key variable in increasing individual motivation to produce high quality work.*

*Kanter:* Despite the advantages enjoyed by those in the academic workplace, there are so many anomalies, when you think about it from an organizational point of view, that it is easy to see where the problems might lie.  Imagine a type of work for which the principal career rewards to individuals come primarily from external sources, not from their employer, but from outside their institution.

Or imagine a kind of work for which a principal reward is not having to do it. One of the ways we reward faculty is by excusing them from responsibilities.

Or imagine a kind of work for which there is a loose, nonexistent relation between individual productivity and organizational productivity. Could we solve the institution's budget problems by having each of the faculty produce twenty-five more books? Or publish more articles in academic journals? The connection between organizational effectiveness and individual careers and their rewards is nonexistent. Also imagine a type of work in which there is either distance from customers or outright hostility. Sometimes our customers are the ones that we want to avoid, saying, If I only didn't have to teach, I'd have more time to do my own work.

What would we think about organizations that are run on all these bases and what would we think about organizations in which departments wish they could go private, as an LBO, because of outright hostility—rivalry, if not hostility, that exists between and among departments and between departments and their administration? It says to me that for all the benefits of the organizational models in higher education, there are also some structural weaknesses. And those structural weaknesses have an impact on individuals' perceptions of the kinds of opportunities their career affords, the extent to which they can determine their own fate, and the degree to which organizational conditions permit them to be innovative.

*Woodbury:* I will sound jaded now. I remain as baffled today as I was twenty years ago about how to deal with the issue of rewards, and I listen very carefully to [Kanter] about some of the things that are going on, and I find it difficult and disturbing to accept not only what she says about them but also what I say about them. I guess I honestly believe that the part about all the noneconomic things you can do, such as giving people recognition through various awards and plaques, can be taken seriously. I think there are ways of saying publicly, We value what you do. So often people like me start with the assumption that faculty have to change, that it would be nice to get some fresh blood into the institution, and we talk a language that does not start with people being valuable. If we can suggest any way to tell people that what they do in classrooms and in scholarship is critical to the institution, that it is part of the reward structure, we should.

When it comes to resources, I remain baffled. At the University of Maine system we work in a collective-bargaining situation, as many of you throughout New England do. The opportunities to use resources in terms of salaries, in ways that suggest "reward" is very, very difficult, although we have some merit pay as, I think, most of our colleges and universities do. Perhaps the best reward is to use resources to help people do their jobs and to help teams by providing resources. One of the most effective things would be to create "pockets" of resources—discretionary funds—all through the institution, not just

for the presidents and chancellors but for deans and department heads, and for groups of people who could then say, Hey, try something new, and here are some monetary resources to help you do it.  But I find the whole topic of rewards extremely difficult because of the complexity of the academic enterprise and the kind of "product" we deliver.  I just don't find examples in the private sectors particularly helpful to me, and it may be one of the areas in which I find the difficulty of borrowing successfully from the private sector most disturbing.

*Harris:*  To be very honest with you, I have some reservations about Kanter's comment about rewards, particularly pay.  We all know of institutions in which pay is an issue, particularly regarding the fixed and variable portions of the pay.  In my institution fixed pay is controlled by the union.  There is absolutely no way that can be effective without some type of contract negotiations.  Variable pay does not exist, nor has it ever existed in my institution, and I do not expect it to change in my institution.  So I do not believe that pay as a reward, as part of the reward system, is going to change in the immediate future.  I am a firm believer that rewards can be granted in other ways and that such forms of recognition as giving individuals mugs and awards and badges and holding ceremonies in their honor are very valuable for faculty people and should be explored thoroughly.

Another area that should be further explored is the opportunity for growth and learning.  I think that this opportunity for me to participate in this conference is an opportunity to expand myself a little.  It is an opportunity for me to grow and learn.  I think that participating in some type of change effort, being on a project team, an interdisciplinary team, is an opportunity to grow and learn.  There are many opportunities that don't cost money, and I believe that institutions must explore beyond the limits of what they know about reward systems and take some creative leaps.

*Gaudiani:*  I am setting up a system whereby our sabbatical program would entail giving faculty as much as 80 percent of their salaries.  Basically, if faculty are successful at getting external funding for their sabbatical, I am telling them that they will receive some kind of bonus.  Moreover, I will ensure that the faculty member's department also receives a cash gain from what we would be spending for sabbatical support to the department, so that we create an impetus for teamwork and not create jealousy of a person who receives an NEH grant or an NSF grant but instead a real sense of pride because that persons achievement reaches down to the benefit and strength of the individual's unit.

## *Liberating and Empowering Faculty*

*Empowering and revitalizing our faculty depends largely on the extent to which institutions successfully undergo certain structural changes. Of increasing importance is the need to effectuate greater compatibility between institutional missions and goals and rewards for faculty. Adapting the existing structure would allow institutions to reward faculty more equitably for professional work, other than teaching and traditional scholarship, that draws on their academic expertise but is performed beyond the normal classroom workload. The creation of institutes, centers, and other units would serve as bridging mechanisms from which faculty could engage in outreach and extension activities and promote greater linkages with various sectors of society.*

*Elman:* If we identify the goal of the conference as the "liberation of our faculty," though we do not want to think of ourselves as enslaved, we do want to think of ourselves as empowered. That word is heard more and more in talk about faculty needs and with regard to elementary and high school teachers. We need to become empowered to do the things we so much want to do to revitalize ourselves. Empowerment and revitalization depend on several things happening. We need to expand the instructional and dissemination activities beyond the geographical bounds of the campus. In addition, we need to adapt our traditional structures and procedures to accommodate the interrelation of disciplines and reward faculty. I am big on rewards for faculty—for their professional work!

We've talked so much over the last five years about bridging the gap between theory and practice. If you pick up any of the recent national reports on the condition of higher education—on the curriculum—we talk about integrating theory and practice and integrating the liberal arts and professional education for our students. But we need to do the same for our faculty—encourage them to integrate theory and practice. Yet we have done very little to motivate faculty to turn their efforts and to use their expertise beyond the classroom. Two bases for initiatives seem evident. one source has to come from the individual faculty. The old dictum that God helps those who help themselves has considerable credence. We need to think unto ourselves about options that we can pursue. But that cannot suffice. There must be institutional initiatives as well, and, more precisely, our institutions have to establish mechanisms and policies that buttress and support the kinds of activities that faculty are eager to engage in.[7]

What are some of our options? Let us think beyond the classroom. Faculty can engage in professional work outside of the classroom. Too often we tend to think that only the faculty in business, in engineering, and in the medical professions can engage in various forms of consultation and technical

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[7] See Ernest A. Lynton and Sandra E. Elman, *New Priorities for the University: Meeting Society's Needs for Applied Knowledge and Competent Individuals* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1987).

assistance.  But that's not true.  Whether or not faculty are compensated for their work—and that whole thorny issue is terribly important, but we may not be able to explore it today—the fact is that our faculty are needed in every area of society to work beyond the classroom.  We have talked about collaboration, but mainly in terms of faculty within the same discipline reaching out to an agency beyond.

What if faculty members in one institution adopted a school or a local hospital, a government agency or a recreation center or a small business and decided to pool their effort and collaboratively offer their professional and academic expertise to further advance the effectiveness of these respective organizations?  We can work together as economists, political scientists, and as health professionals to form collaborative networks within our institution and then extend those to outside agencies to work with them.  We can come together as faculty either individually or collectively and hook up with our continuing education units—with cooperative extension, with agricultural extension.  Look at your organization charts.  Whether you are in a community college, a comprehensive institution, or a research university, consider the various units affiliated with your institution and how individual faculty can align themselves with these units.

We need to think about creative leave policies.  Our guest president from Connecticut referred to the interesting sabbatical policy she has initiated at her college. But we tend to think only in terms of sabbaticals.  That is too limited.  One option is to have our administrators take the initiative to create leave policies whereby faculty do not have to wait six or seven years to earn a few months off to engage in a particular project or a particular collaborative effort.  The money may be there to do it.  We must begin to think innovatively interms of budgeting and using resources that are not just earmarked for departments.  Another option is to introduce institutional exchanges.  It is most desirable to have study abroad programs and international exchange programs for faculty.  But how many of our institutions right here in the Boston area have initiated institutional exchanges through which we begin to look at some of the policy problems in Brockton?  In South Dartmouth? In Springfield?  In Boston?

And say we are going to bring together faculty from various institutions to tackle certain infrastructure problems.  It seems to be much more laudable and assume much more import when our faculty come to us and say that they are going to do applied research or supply technical assistance in Bangladesh or some other foreign country.  But it is more important to begin tackling the problems close to home.  So if institutional exchanges are worth pursuing, what then do they imply?  And what do we have to do to ensure that our institutions are really going to promote this kind of professional outreach?  The first thing we need is to reexamine our institutional structure for rewarding

faculty for their work.[8]  Institutional mission and purpose as noted by others provide a foundation for thinking about where our institutions want to be headed.  They need not merely state their goals but match their goals with comparable rewards.  If we really want our faculty to engage in professional activities and public service, let us not tell them to do that, yet just total the articles and books they have published when we evaluate them for promotion and tenure.

In addition, we need to create bridging mechanisms whereby faculty can become affiliated with such units within their institutions as institutes and centers that are outreach groups and extensions of the institution that can work with various outside agencies. To address the question of how we handle faculty consultancies beyond one's own institution, we have to think about instituting "practice plans."  What are practice plans?  In short, they are used primarily but not exclusively by medical schools to tackle, among other things,the problem of consultancies, which gives some folks the shivers.  One school of thought maintains that faculty who engage in any kind of consulting work are really "double dipping" and should not be indulging in such practices.  But there are ways of introducing policies within our institutions, like practice plans, that enable faculty to work together through units whose benefits can accrue to the institution.  And perhaps most important, we need to be really radical.  We need to ask ourselves, if we are going to respond to the needs of society and if we are going to graduate competent individuals, does the department structure enable us to achieve these outcomes most effectively?  The world and the world's problems are not organized according to academic departments. Yet we keep that structure and do not modify it in any way to try to have faculty be more mobile, to look at problems from an interdisciplinary perspective and attack some of the outstanding critical issues that warrant our attention.

## *Teams and Collaboration*

*While teamwork is becoming a more common and integral component of organizational life in business, teams remain somewhat of an anomaly in academe.  The academic organization is still overwhelmingly characterized by individuals working independently of each other rather than in a collaborative mode.  But colleges and universities may want to think anew about the benefits of working in teams.  Businesses are encouraging teamwork, which seems to enhance not only individual productivity and morale but organizational productivity as well. Funhermore, teams provide individuals an anchor to work*

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[8]  See Sandra E. Elman and Sue Marx Smock, *Professional Service and Faculty Rewards: Toward an Integrated Structure* (Washington, D.C.:NASULGC, 1985).

*from and feel connected to, thereby providing greater security than would exist through their working independently.*

*Collaboration is clearly emerging as a critical phenomenon in improving the quality of life. It involves the coming together of colleagues not only to create a "product" but, even more important, to exchange ideas in an open, nonthreatening context and to approach common specific challenges—ones which may be difficult and formidable and perhaps unprecedented—that they confront either in the same or different institutions. What is illuminating is that the very process of collaborating can become the catalyst for change. As individuals engage in the process of collaborarion they are actively learning, or reacculturing, themselves. With their new learning they are able to alter the way they think about things and accordingly how to develop appropriate approaches to problematic siruations.*

*Kanter:* Another aspect of life in the workplace that I would like to bring to your attention briefly is that business organizations increasingly are aware that in order to be successful they have to encourage people to work in teams. Teams are effective in part because of the growing interdependent nature of many of the tasks in business organizations. Business leaders find that teams not only provide people with more control over their work because the team can get a bigger assignment as a group than the individual alone, but the teams provide people an opportunity to learn from one another and therefore augment themselves.

Teams provide support. Teams provide a basis for understanding the shared values of the organization. They are finding that even in terms of work that is done individually, as a salesperson who is sent out to call on customers separately, the work is more effectively accomplished if that person feels linked to a team doing similar work and making joint decisions. Yet again, the nature of academic work is such that we do it in isolation rather than in teams. To most people in academe a team means a committee and more meetings to attend, which is something we all try to resist. One of the things that impresses me at the Harvard Business School is that we do teach in teams. We have a teaching group and we sit and talk about teaching and about what we are going to say in class the next day. We divide the responsibility so that each of us creates some of the teaching plans. Thus I get from my colleagues a detailed analysis and set of notes—and I have to produce the same thing on some other issues. I must say that when I first walked into that room with those eighty students, I arrived feeling that I was part of something bigger, that there was a team behind me and with me, and I was not walking in alone.

*Bruffee:* The Harvard Business School experience just described is undoubtedly the exception rather than the rule. Many of us in this profession feel that our opportunities are limited, that our expectations are not met by the interests and skills of our students, and that we are isolated from one another

and from our colleagues in other professions.  By the nature of the case, we tend to blame these feelings on the economics and demographics of late-twentieth-century American higher education, which we think has contributed to the debasement of our scholarly pursuits.  I am fully aware of the effect these economic and demographic forces have on ourselves and our students.  But the economics and demographics of higher education are not the only cause of our current state of mind.  Indeed, I think they are a minor cause of it.  Skim any reputable history of American colleges and universities and you will find that, on average, the economics and demographics of higher education in America have never been much different.  Most American college students have always been poorly prepared, most college professors have always been out on a limb, and the yellow brick road so enthusiastically traveled in the *Wizard of Oz* has never begun in a college classroom.

As the newly appointed director of freshman English at Brooklyn College in 1971—the first year of open admissions—I was to organize, more or less from scratch, a program of courses in writing at all levels, remedial to advanced, to meet the needs of the masses of unprepared students.  As you might guess, many of my colleagues rejected these alien students on principle.  Many of them left.  They retired or, if they couldn't retire, they took a walk.  Many of those who took a walk walked the halls.  They remain gainfully employed by the City University of New York in a state of what I believe psychoanalysts call passive aggression.  In point of fact, their aggression wasn't always so very passive.  Truth be told, I really didn't know in any systematic way how to do any of the things I had been asked to do, least of all reach out to those of my colleagues who flatly rejected what was happeningto us.  I don't mind admitting I was desperate.  In my despair it occurred to me that there must be other people in my shoes at the other City University campuses.  Surely they must know how to cope better than I.  When I phoned them, they all claimed that they were as desperate as I.  In a spasm of mutual suspicion and distrust, we agreed to have a beer together.  I had never heard of any of them and they had never heard of me.  I hoped, I dearly believed, that someone in this anonymous crowd would help me understand and accomplish my difficult new task.

And help me they did, enormously.  But not in quite the way I had expected.  I thought I would ask some questions and they would dish up the answers.  As it turned out, before any of us had seen the bottom of the first beer, all of us had admitted to one another, convincingly and beyond a shadow of a doubt, that none of us knew how to do what we were supposed to be doing.  Not only did none of us know the answers, we quickly discovered that we didn't even know the right questions.  We agreed to meet and talk.  We began converging Saturday mornings on a mutually convenient Manhattan coffee shop.  To focus our discussions, we decided to give ourselves some reading assignments.  We chose several texts that one or another of us thought might offer some help in looking at the needs of our students, if

possible, in a larger than merely academic context.  Working together this way we gradually began to make some striking discoveries about our students, ourselves, and our profession.  In fact, what we found out about our students was not unlike what we found out about our profession and ourselves.

As we read and talked about what we read, my colleagues and I began talking about education in general and teaching in particular in a way that was quite different from the way we had ever talked about them before.  And the change in the way we talked about what we were doing signaled a cultural change in ourselves.  In fact, I would say now, the change in the way we talked about education and teaching was more than a signal of change.  Change in the way we talked was the cultural change itself that we were undergoing.  The language we were using literally constituted the small transitional community of which we had become devoted members.  Learning as we were experiencing it was not just inextricably related to that new social relationship among us.  It was identical with and inseparable from it.

To paraphrase Richard Rorty's account of learning, it was not a shift inside us that now suited us to enter new relationships with reality and with other people.[9]  Learning was that shift in our language-constituted relations with others.  The idea of a "pedagogy of reacculturation" surfaced.  We began to consider the possibility that a pedagogy of acculturation could meet our needs.  From our readings and discussion we learned that reacculturation is at best extremely difficult to accomplish.  It is probably next to impossible to accomplish individually.  What does seem just possible to accomplish is for people to reacculturate themselves.  That is, there does exist a way in which we seem able to sever, diminish, or renegotiate our ties to one or more of the cultural communities we belong to and at the same time gain membership in another such community.  We can do all that if, and it seems only if, we work collaboratively.

What we have to do, it appears, is create a temporary transition or "support group" that we can join on the way, so to speak, as we undergo the trials of changing allegiance from one cultural community to another.  The main agenda is for conversation to sustain us while we learn the language, mores, and values of the cultural community we are trying to join.  This "pedagogy of reacculturation" had been right under our noses all along.  What we had been doing ourselves was exactly that. We were engaged in the complex, tortuous, aggravating collaborative process of reacculturation.  We were faced with a situation that seemed alien to us, one which our training as carrel rats, conventional academic humanists, English-teacher types, did not seem to prepare us to do.  First, in self-defense, we acknowledged the degree of affinity

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[9]  Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

that existed among us.  Second, we formed a transitional group on that basis.  Third, we assigned ourselves tasks to do collaboratively: we read.  Fourth, we met regularly.  Fifth, we treated ourselves well and had a good time.  In short, all of us, feeling isolated, disappointed, and trapped in our jobs, got to know one another, our peers, whence we thought might come our help.

Gradually we came to ignore many of the archaic traditions, conventions, expectations, and received wisdom of our profession that were making it hard for us to do the job we were committed to doing and that made it all but impossible for many of our colleagues to acknowledge the need for doing it at all.  We learned not to place the authority for what we were learning in either the "real world" or in our deepest selves.  We learned to place the authority for what we were learning in the consensus among us, and often in the exciting, challenging, argumentative dissent that arose among us.  We placed the authority for what we knew in the comrnunity of knowledgeable peers that we had formed.  Although we learned a lot from what we read, we learned even more from one another's responses to what we read.  Each of us began to change, and we discovered that the most powerful force changing us was the influence of the others.  In the process, we became what amounted to a new cultural community that talked about education as quintessentially collaborative.

*Woodbury*:  I think the observation about working in teams and collaboration across disciplines in the institutions is extremely powerful.  There are many common elements between Professor Bruffee's commentary on conversation and how you have a conversation in the institution and then bring other people into that conversation, and some of Kanter's observations about collaboration are extraordinarily well taken.  The linkage of the two conceptual notions is extremely compelling.  The theme of better communication and better collaboration is where I would put my money in trying to figure out how to make all of us feel we are doing something important.


## *Channels for Change*

*An organization's capacity for change depends largely on the extent to which key faculty members are involved in the decision-making process to institute specific changes.  The more these influential faculty are willing to mobilize their colleagues at the grass-roots level to support the proposed change, the greater the likelihood that change will be institutionalized.  Substantial change that can ultimately enhance the quality of work life is perhaps most likely to take place as individuals allow themselves to engage in close collaborative work in which a common language evolves among people and effective means of communication are established.  When faculty and administrators afford themselves the opportunity and sustain the momentum to engage in open conversation from which new ideas and a new gestalt for*

*communicating emerge, innovation is most likely to occur.  The kind of conversation needed requires a rethinking of how individuals in academe are acculturated to survive.  A shift in human dynamics is needed from that of emulating only independent work modes to realizing the benefits of codependency and interdependence as faculty engage in the creation, application, and dissemination of knowledge.*

*Harris*:  What is perhaps most important is building trust and commitment to the goals and missions of the institution.  Building bridges is a tireless, never-ending process.  The need for more cross-discipline and cross-departmental coalitions, as Rosabeth Kanter expressed, is very, very important.  Colleges and universities are unique and certainly the diffusion of power is real.  Each university is distinct, unique from the others.  How one addresses that has to be, I believe firmly, from the grass-roots level.  The opportunity to change is at the grass-roots level.  Faculty, faculty groups, faculty senates, faculty councils and committees, are the vehicles for change.  I have been on many faculty committees.  Some are extremely powerful and others are not.  So it is a matter of picking and choosing those faculty who have the power to influence their respective administrations and are able to mobilize that power to bring about change.  At the micro level—at the unit and individual level—is where the most opportunity for change exists.

*Bruffee*:  That opportunity exists when we allow ourselves to take part in tight-knit collaborative undertakings in which we implicitly accept an inheritance—an intellectual and normative framework—that we easily forfeit when we accede to archaic, traditional notions about who we are, what we are doing, from which derives the authority of what we know.  This inheritance is what Michael Oakeshott describes in his essay *The Voice of Poetry in the Conversation of Mankind*.  He writes,

> As civilized human beings, we are the inheritors neither of an inquiry about ourselves and the world nor of an accumulating body of information but of a conversation, begun in the primeval forests and extended and made more articulate in the course of centuries.  It is a conversation which goes on both in public and within each of ourselves. …Education, properly speaking, is an initiation into the skill and partnership of this conversation in which we learn to recognize the voices to distinguish the proper occasions of utterance, and …[to] acquire the intellectual and moral habits appropriate to conversation.  And it is this conversation which, in the end, gives place and character to every human activity and utterance.

The view expressed by Oakeshott does not assume that thought and knowledge are "essential attributes" of the human mind.[10]  It assumes that they

are constructs generated by social interaction.  We can think because we can talk with one another, and we think in ways we have learned to talk with one another.  In short, the range, complexity, and subtlety of our thought, its power, the practical and conceptual uses we can put it to, and the very issues we can address result directly from the degree to which we have been initiated into, and continue to pursue, what Oakeshott calls the "skill and partnership" of human conversation.

One of our tasks as college instructors and administrators—a task it seems to me we have been guilty of neglecting in recent years—is to establish and maintain social relations and community beliefs that foster a kind of conversation—an honest, intellectual exchange of ideas—that members of our community value.  In order to know more about conversation, we have to understand and cultivate among ourselves the kinds of community life that establish and maintain conversation.  Conversation among ourselves—not "hard facts"—is the source of our thought and the source of the authority of our knowledge.

There are several obstacles to accepting this view of the authority of knowledge.  One obstacle is the graduate training that most college instructors have enjoyed.  Graduate schools, for the most part, teach us that conversation, collaboration, and community activity are foreign and inappropriate to academic work, especially in the humanistic disciplines.  Humanistic study, especially, we have been led to believe, is a solitary life and the vitality of the humanities lies in the talents and endeavors of each of us as individuals. Even our public image of scientific research is of the heroic, white-smocked individual working alone in his lab.

What we call "discussion" in our classrooms, our graduate seminars, and on the floor of our professional conferences is more often than not unrecognizable as conversation. It is an adversarial activity, pitting individual against individual.  Our presumed goal is to assert what one literary critic has called "will to power over the text," if not over one another.  If we look at what we do instead of what we say, we discover that we tend to think of knowledge as something we acquire and wield as individuals relative to one another, not something we generate and maintain in company with and in depending upon one another.

## *Facilitating Faculty Accomplishments*

*Colleges and universities cannot expect to enhance both the quality of faculty work and their work life if we continue to impose a culture that seeks uniformity in terms of what faculty do.  Institutions claim teaching is highly*

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[10]  Michael Oakeshott, *The Voice of Poetry in the Conversation of Mankind: An Essay* (London: Bowes and Bowes Publishers, 1959).

*valued, the implication being that it is concomitantly rewarded, and that good teaching is a sine qua non. Yet in the overwhelming majority of our research and comprehensive universities, as in some colleges, rescarch, traditional scholarship, is not only an expected activity, it is paramount. Many faculty do not share that notion. Academe needs to do a better job of helping faculty to increase the compatibility between their own goals and aspirations and the goals and expectations of their respective institutions.*

*Gaudiani*: We are so locked into the way we handle faculty. We expect everyone to teach the same number of courses and we expect, especially in certain kinds of institutions, everyone to do research, and some people do and some people don't and it all comes to be a kind of sham that sets in because we negate individuals' differences and institutions' varied functions. The emphasis on teaching may or may not be very important, but we proceed as if it is. We start to live at some kind of distance from what we say we want to have happen. I have suggested at a number of institutions that we look for ways of helping faculty, working with a department chair or perhaps a dean, depending on the size of the institution, to develop three-year plans for themselves. Such plans would set forth specific goals with respect to teaching, research, and service. In a setting in which there is no plan, a faculty member's annual report comes in and a president cannot know whether an account of an individual's accomplishments means one has far surpassed or barely met his or her projected goals because a president does not have a context in which to read it. That individual's achievement may not be as acutely clear to him or her because it hasn't occurred in a planning mode with any reference point.

So I am suggesting that we begin to think about helping faculty—even tenured professors—plan to make their own dreams come true. Think for a moment what happens to many faculty members once they are tenured. The story of Tristan comes to mind. Remember the part in the story where he is beaten by Morhalt and the poisonous venom seeps into his heart and he begins to die? Then his manservant loads him into a little boat and pushes him off to sea with neither oar nor sail. That's a little bit like what we do when we tenure academics. We say, "Go in peace," and we push them off. Those people remain members of their department, but we no longer really have a way of measuring what they do. It's true that there is a review to full professor, but all along the way and once they are full professors they are out there at sea in their own little area of their own discipline in their own department in this small institution or this large institution.

That is the isolation we hear faculty members discuss and that Ken Bruffee described to us. It is a real problem, and we as academic leaders are responsible for addressing it. Some of our colleagues who are out to sea learn to read the stars, rip up the plank and use it as an oar, and get somewhere. But you know that's a lot to expect. Because nobody tells you to rip up, for example, the seat in front of you and use it as an oar; nobody tells you

how to chart the stars because before you were pushed off you were on land, being measured and coached and interacted with much more consistently. We should help folks plan and encourage faculty to measure their own achievement and have a sense of rhythm, because people's lives go in stages, and people may have periods in their lives when different sorts of things appeal to them.

*Elman*: As we begin to think about and encourage faculty to explore new vistas and enhance the vitality and dynamism of the academic workplace, let's keep the following thoughts in mind. one, do our institutions allow us to take risks? Why do some and not others? Two, is it okay to fail at your institution, and what does failing mean? Three, do we have any policies whereby our senior faculty members view the nurturing and development of junior faculty as part of their responsibility? Four, to what extent do you see any of your colleagues or yourself being rewarded for zeal and commitment, for enthusiasm, for new ideas? And fifth, which may be more germane for folks at our comprehensive and research institutions than at our community colleges, do we ever reward faculty whose grant proposals do not get funded?

If we can learn anything from the business world, it is that in the academic workplace we should always attempt to maximize our potential. That means thinking of ourselves as knowledge agents, as change agents, and as reflective practitioners acting on behalf of and in concert with colleagues and students who play a key role in allowing each individual's unique potential to be fully tapped. Be introspective and be risk takers and explore how you can work together within your institutions, among your institutions, and beyond these institutions.

There can be little equivocation that the academic workplace is in a state of transition. Not only has the profile of the student body and the faculty changed dramatically since the1950s and 1960s, but many of the norms and policies that have been in operation in our colleges and universitites over the last three decades have become obsolete; others are being questioned. Clearly, when organizations undergo significant shifts in the status and morale of their personnel, the need to reexamine the quality of the workplace assumes greater import. Academe is no exception. The NERCHE/NEBHE conference on challenges in the academic workplace was a significant first step toward assessing the condition of work life in academe and developing plans for renewing its vitality in New England colleges and universities.

For change to take place, faculty and administrators from different types of institutions have to be able to air a number of critical issues in a "value-free," nonthreatening environment. The conference accomplished that goal and more. Perhaps the most noteworthy outcome was the participants' increased understanding of the complexity of the issues and challenges facing our colleges and universities and the extent to which the demise in the quality of

academic work life is indeed endangering the vitality and dynamism of academe.

While there was a high degree of consensus among the participants regarding the identification of problematic issues that warrant serious attention, there was, by contrast, far less unanimity with respect to the meaning of some of the fundamental tenets that underscore academe, such as institutional missions and goals that have a direct impact on work life.

There was considerable agreement that academic leadership should seek greater institutional synergy and could do so partly by encouraging and facilitating greater collaboration and teamwork among faculty both on individual campuses and interinstitutionally.  Far more problematic is the issue of how to adapt the existing faculty reward structure. The chasm in many colleges and universities between the kind of professional work faculty engage in and would like to engage in as faculty and the work for which they are rewarded is deepening.  Nonetheless, higher education decision makers remain perplexed as to how to transform the existing faculty reward structure that is one of the most ensconced traditions in academe.

The conference engendered a cacophony of ideas posed by both the speakers and the participants: some offered hope, others presented provocative challenges, a few suggested strategies for change.  Though resolution of the issues was by no means anticipated by the conference organizers or the participants, there was at least one issue on which an overwhelming majority of individuals were resolute: academe must be extremely cautious with respect to whether and to what extent approaches, strategies, and goals can be effectively adapted from the business world.  That academe has historically functioned according to a unique set of norms that have in turn cultivated a unique gestalt should not begiven short shrift.

If indeed we are witnessing a demise in the quality of the academic workplace—and there is no compelling evidence that indicates a reversal in that trend—faculty and administrators need to engage in "conversation" that will generate opportunity-powered ideas that will in turn contribute to building a satisfying workplace for the future.

Now that the seminal issues have been articulated, the next step in the ongoing dialogue is to begin formulating policies and procedures which will provide incentives that will empower faculty to be innovative and create institutional flexibility that allows risk taking. These incentives will provide the basis for the reacculturation of faculty members who ultimately will not only identify with and foster their disciplinary affiliation, but their affiliation as a member of a collective institution as well.  Such efforts may no longer be an option but rather an imperative if academe is to remain a dynamic rather than static enterprise.